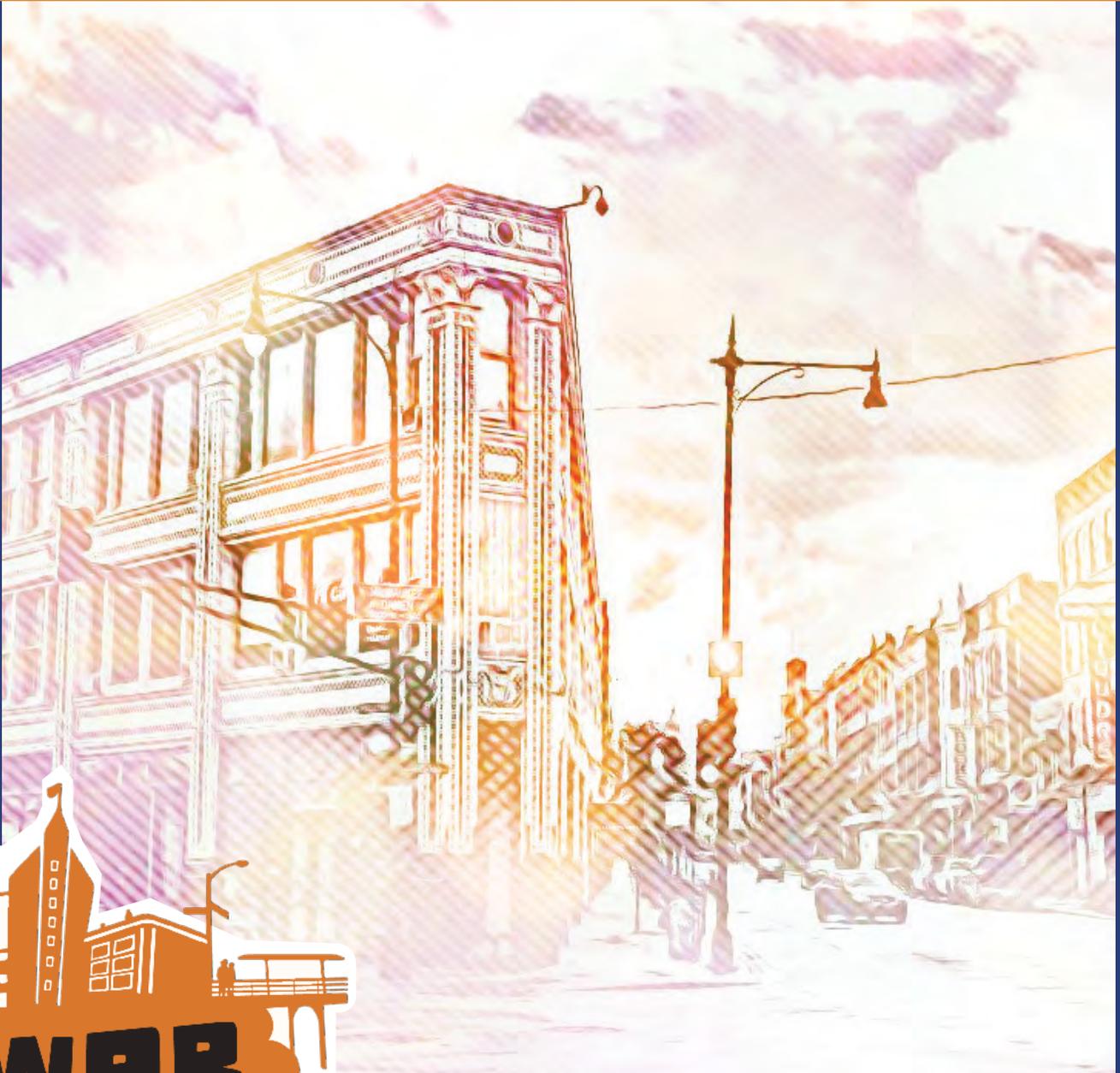


WICKER PARK BUCKTOWN SSA #33

# 2016 MASTER PLAN

AN UPDATE TO THE 2009 MASTER PLAN



# Thank You

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**Joe Hall**, Commissioner

**Marcy Huttas**, Commissioner

## Wicker Park Bucktown Staff

**Pamela Maass**  
SSA #33 Executive Director

**Jessica Wobbekind**  
SSA #33 Program Manager

**Beth Sholtis**  
Former Assistant SSA #33 Program Manager

**Elizabeth Neukirch**  
Public Relations, The Silverman Group, Inc.

## Wicker Park Bucktown Advisory Committee

*Listed alphabetically by last name*

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Chicago Department of Transportation  
(CDOT)

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WPB Resident

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WPB Business Owner | Transit Tees

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Vintage

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**Steve Jensen**  
Bucktown Community Organization  
WPB Resident

**Suzanne Keers**  
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Architecture

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Bucktown Community Organization,  
WPB Business Owner | Lipe Property  
Company

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Chicago Police Department

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Resident+ Business Owner | Access  
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**Neal McKnight**  
East Village Association

**Jerry Mandujano**  
1st Ward

**Sam Marts**  
SSA #33 Committee Member, Bucktown  
Community Organization, WPB Resident +  
Business Owner | Sam Marts Architects

**Brent Norsman**  
SSA #33 Chair + Committee Member,  
Norsman Architects

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Wicker Park Committee, WPB Resident

**Will Snyder**  
Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center,  
WPB Resident

**Ed Tamminga**  
Wicker Park Committee,  
WPB Resident

**Alderman Scott Waguespack**  
32nd Ward

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Prepared by **Teska Associates Inc.** | **Sam Schwartz Engineering** | **McElroy Associates**

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## WPB SSA #33

# MISSION

“ To sustain and promote the prosperity and unique qualities of life of the Wicker Park Bucktown neighborhood and commercial district, whilst preserving its diverse character for the benefit of its residents, visitors, and businesses through the wise and discerning investment of resources to enhance our public ways.



## WPB SSA MASTER PLAN

# VISION

Wicker Park Bucktown is a vibrant, historic, and changing area, comprised of two neighborhoods, that celebrates its eclectic, unique vibe and sense of urbanism.

We will protect, promote, and support the fiercely independent nature of our community, from the residents who live here, to the stores, businesses, and restaurants that serve the community as well as visitors coming to get a taste of what is unique.

We will maximize opportunities and amenities for pedestrians, bikes, and transit riders with beautiful streetscapes, public spaces, and unique open spaces. Our artistic, individual and communal efforts towards expression are cherished and will thrive. We will work to promote housing and opportunities that is affordable to keep the unique flavor, mix of people, and businesses that make Wicker Park Bucktown a community of choice for all generations, backgrounds, and interests.

The breadth of our local organizations brings an opportunity for everyone to become involved in the interests and passions they have to make Wicker Park Bucktown a better community.

## HOW TO USE THIS

# PLAN

The 2016 Wicker Park Bucktown SSA #33 Master Plan serves as a guiding document for SSA #33 as well as a resource for community groups, developers, elected officials, and the City of Chicago. The plan builds upon the 2009 Master Plan, outlining strategies, actions, and specific projects that were supported and refined by the community process. It includes fundamentals as well as big picture ideas and urban space activation concepts. The plan will be used for the next five to seven years, while keeping in mind a long term vision for the community.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Wicker Park Bucktown SSA #33 Master Plan is an update to a plan adopted in 2009. Since the adoption of the last Master Plan, the 606 was built which includes the 2.7-mile Bloomingdale Trail, new development has returned with some of the first TOD projects built in the City of Chicago under the revised ordinance, and The Robey Hotel was approved resulting in the full renovation of the historic and iconic Northwest Tower at Milwaukee, North and Damen Avenues. This plan focuses on the commercial corridors that make up SSA #33: Western, Damen, Ashland and North Avenues and Division Street. While the population of Wicker Park Bucktown stayed relatively flat between 2000 and 2010, it has increased by almost 1,000 residents between 2010 and 2015 as evidence of the development pressure facing the neighborhood.

## CHAPTER 2

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WPB cherishes its independence, range of views and free expression. The diversity of residents, businesses, community groups, arts organizations and volunteer groups meant an extensive outreach process was needed. Highlights of outreach include: 2,800 unique visitors to the website ([www.wpbforward.org](http://www.wpbforward.org)), 6,500 page views, ten quick polls which generated 4,000 responses, idea sharing tools both online and in-person led to over 100 ideas, interviews with a variety of elected officials, businesses, and community leaders, an advisory committee that represented a variety of local organizations, businesses, and elected officials, and four public workshops.

## CHAPTER 3

## ARTS + CULTURE

One of the most recurring themes throughout the planning process was the desire to foster a broad range of arts and culture. Arts and culture is visible within the streetscape, building façades, local businesses, shops, restaurants, murals and public art installations. Residents and visitors come to WPB because of the prevalence of a wide assortment of arts and a culture that respects varying types of innovation and change.

### OBJECTIVES + PROJECTS INCLUDE:

**Support artists who live or work in the neighborhoods** through protecting the Flat Iron Building as one of WPB's art hubs, seeking out ways to provide affordable live-work arts spaces, and identifying opportunities to create a community Makerspace.

**Creatively market and support the arts**, including creative marketing tactics to promote art-related events, continuing to build and enhance an artists' portal on the chamber website, and working with the new Robey Hotel, restaurants and businesses to market the neighborhood to locals and tourist niches.

**Incorporate art into corridors and streetscapes** through cross promotion of local businesses, identifying new locations for public art by local artists, and infusing the arts into streetscape design with local arts talent.

**Expand creative policies and financial opportunities** to support the arts through investigating creation of a fund for local arts, providing incentives to encourage developers to integrate public art within new developments, repurposing vacant spaces for temporary arts-related uses, and exploring live-work possibilities through changes in zoning.

**Support ways to preserve, maintain and further** the preservation of historically significant architecture in combination with fostering innovation in complementary new development. This will include celebrating and raising awareness of WPB history, and encouraging historic preservation and adaptive retrofits of both landmarked and older historic buildings.



Local Artist Performs at North, Milwaukee, Damen



3D Sidewalk Chalk By Local Artists at Events



Parklet Day Event | Puppy Parklet Shown Here



North Avenue Bath House

## CHAPTER 4

## TRANSPORTATION | CHAPTER 4

WPB has one of the most expansive transportation networks in Chicago and a growing share of people are choosing to travel by transit, bike and walking to get around. With three CTA Blue Line stations at Division, Damen, and Western, frequent CTA bus service on each of the SSA corridors, and the Clybourn Metra station - which has the highest daily usage of any Metra station in Chicago outside of the Loop - transit options are plentiful. The neighborhood has also become known as one of the most bike-friendly areas of the City. Adding in the popularity of the 606, a linear park and path that opened in 2015, the Divvy bikeshare system, and the City's first public bike counter, the momentum of bicycling is likely to continue. Yet improvements can be made to improve safety and balance all users from pedestrians to cars to bicyclists and transit-riders.

#### ■ OBJECTIVES + PROJECTS INCLUDE:

**Vision Zero**, an effort to eliminate all traffic fatalities by improving intersection pedestrian crossings, ensuring all pedestrian signals have countdown timers, installing a mid-block crossing at the Western CTA Station, and installing pedestrian refuge islands on Western Avenue to make it easier to cross the street safely.

**Reclaim space for bikers and pedestrians** by providing more space for bike parking, completing bike lanes where they are needed such as along Milwaukee Avenue, locating sidewalk cafes in a consistent zone along the street, improving Polish Triangle and widening the sidewalk along Milwaukee Avenue, and converting parking spaces to parklets for either events or as permanent public spaces.

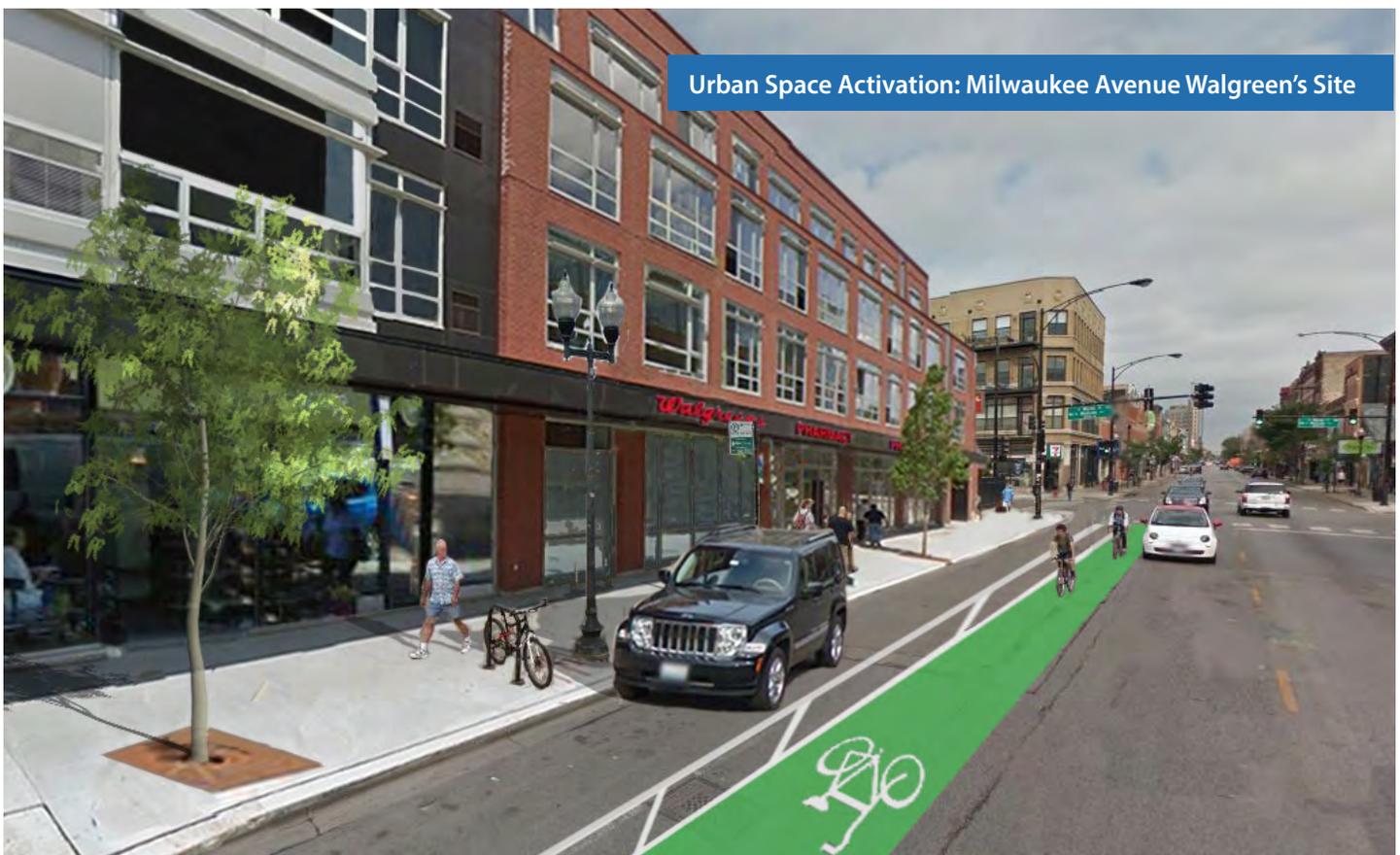


**Improve access points and create a sense of place** through undertaking a comprehensive approach to improve the Clybourn Metra Station and address the underpass. Items include improvements to the station's access points, providing public art under the highway, improving conditions at all underpasses, and installing signage from CTA Blue Line stations to other points of interest.

**Improve mobility** by expanding transportation to balance all users by re-envisioning Milwaukee Avenue, adjusting operations at the Milwaukee/Damen/North intersection to accommodate all users, making existing bike lanes more visible, and sponsoring additional Divvy stations.

**Address opportunities relating to parking spaces and loading zones** through investigating changes to loading zone policies to increase efficiency, consider restricting loading zone enforcement to specific times, and ensuring there are consistent parking regulations for residential parking areas.

**Improve connections** to and from the 606 by extending the 606 east towards the Chicago River, improving connections from the 606 to the north and east in the short-term, and adding directional signage on the road to 606 access points and on the 606 to points of interest.



Urban Space Activation: Milwaukee Avenue Walgreen's Site

## CHAPTER 5

## GUIDE DEVELOPMENT

The character of WPB's commercial streets provide a wide range of mixed-use, retail, residential, and arts-related uses with a strong community character that attracts residents and shoppers from throughout Chicago and beyond. As the neighborhood evolves, the characteristics of new development should enhance walkability, local character, diversity and cultural richness of WPB. WPB has the opportunity to build on its strong traditions and community involvement to support the retention and attraction of local businesses that provide the diversity of experiences that is so treasured in the community.

### ■ OBJECTIVES + PROJECTS

**Ensure quality development** to enhance the unique character of each commercial corridor through the use of design guidelines for Milwaukee Avenue, Division Street, North Avenue, Ashland Avenue, Damen Avenue, and Western Avenue.

**Support existing and attract new small and local businesses** by providing financial support for building improvements, creating a WPB Pop-Up program, marketing spaces based on clusters along each commercial corridor, offering services to small businesses to navigate city, state, and federal incentives, and exploring online tools to support businesses and equip them to survive in the Internet age.

**Promote WPB as a healthy, active community** through partnering with health care providers on healthy community initiatives and maximizing the use of open spaces through better connections and use of The 606.

**Promote a range of housing opportunities** including homeownership for a variety of diverse households, supporting the development of quality rental housing that meets design guidelines, and promoting the availability of affordable senior housing.



DINERS ENJOYING AN AL FRESCO LUNCH AT BIG STAR ON DAMEN AVENUE

## CHAPTER 6

## CLEAN, GREEN + SAFE

One of the most important functions of the SSA is to provide services to improve the public way so that quality-of-life in WPB is maintained and improved. The SSA does this through a variety of means on a daily basis, from graffiti abatement to sidewalk cleaning to snow removal on sidewalks in the winter. These services are vital for a successful business district and provide benefits to all residents of WPB.

### ■ OBJECTIVES + PROJECTS

**Enhance safety and quality-of-life** by maintaining strong relationships between WPB community organizations and the Chicago Police Department, considering the installation of additional surveillance cameras, and offering rebate programs for safety cameras and lighting around property addresses within the SSA.

**Further corridor maintenance and beautification** through cleaning up graffiti, improving landscaping in the right-of-way, maintaining and improving the cleanliness of sidewalks through cleaning, plowing, and garbage/recycling collection, and maintaining the infrastructure of the public way including sidewalks and medians.

## CHAPTER 7

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A detailed implementation plan is included for easy reference, which showcases a summary of every objective, project, implementation actions, and the lead and partner organizations.



BUSTLING MILWAUKEE AVENUE ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

