



Streeterville Neighborhood Vision

2023 UPDATE



SOAR

Streeterville Organization
of Active Residents



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Vision to *Action*

Dear Residents and Stakeholders,

As we reflect on the past decade, it is clear that it was a period of significant change for our neighborhood. Major developments have transformed and shaped our community, including the expansion of Northwestern Hospital; construction of the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab and the Simpson Querrey Biomedical Research Center; and the addition of over 2,000 new residential units including the adaptive reuse of the iconic Tribune Tower and the construction of One Bennett Park, Moment, and the Loews hotel. Coinciding public projects, such as the revitalization of Navy Pier, the reconstruction of Bennett Park, and the Navy Pier Flyover bike and pedestrian bridge, have also played a major role in defining the current character of Streeterville. Along with these developments came substantial growth of new residents, new visitors, and new businesses. SOAR's vision is to thoughtfully support this growth with careful planning and advocacy to maintain our neighborhood's positive reputation and attractiveness.

Looking forward, we are excited by the anticipated future development that will further enhance Streeterville in the coming years. The 400 North Lake Shore Drive residential towers along with the realization of the long-awaited DuSable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River. These projects, along with plans to reinvent and revitalize Michigan Avenue and Redefine

DuSable Lake Shore Drive, will make our neighborhood even more vibrant, inviting, and home to many iconic destinations.

However, we also recognize that challenges exist, due to the ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, aging public infrastructure and building stock, and a perception of reduced safety. We are committed to addressing these challenges, guided by the vision in this plan, as we continue SOAR's role as a tireless advocate for our community.



We are very pleased to publish this updated Streeterville Neighborhood Vision Plan that reflects on the progress of the past, acknowledges the challenges of the present, and outlines a vision for a prosperous future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helene Gershbein". The signature is fluid and cursive.

President, Streeterville Organization of Active Residents (SOAR)

The Vision

We envision a vibrant and diverse Streeterville community that supports a welcoming and high quality experience for residents, business owners, workers, and visitors.

Purpose

SOAR maintains a neighborhood plan to guide the advocacy efforts of our board, task forces, and committees. The last update to this resource was completed in 2015, but much has changed in our community since then. SOAR formed a Vision Plan Task Force lead by volunteer neighborhood experts, urban planners, and real estate professionals to rework the plan to reflect current priorities, challenges, and opportunities. After many months of work, the resulting 2023 Streeterville Neighborhood Vision will serve our community as a road map for future work.

Why Update Now

Streeterville has experienced substantial growth and change over the past ten years, and is also affected by broader national economic, social, and environmental trends. Many of the urban trends that we are experiencing today began long before the COVID-19 pandemic, but have been accelerated by the unique circumstances of the past few years. As just one indicator of change, the recently released 2020 Census shows that the population of the Near North Community Area, where Streeterville is located, has **grown by 31% since 2010, in contrast to the overall City of Chicago population growth of just 1.9%**. Other neighborhood trends:

- Maturing neighborhood with aging infrastructure and building stock, and fewer large scale opportunities for new development.
- Diversification of our neighborhood's people, businesses, and housing options.
- Greater interest in working from home and virtual work places.
- Increased concerns regarding neighborhood safety and security.
- Growing interest in outdoor recreation, high quality community amenities and services, and more emphasis on healthy active lifestyles.



Streeterville Context

Today, Streeterville is one of the most fully mixed-use neighborhoods in the City of Chicago, consisting of high density residential, office, cultural, retail, educational, medical, and entertainment uses. Streeterville plays an important role in Chicago's overall economy due to its unique location, important cultural / tourism destinations, and recreational assets, all in close proximity to the lakefront, Loop, and the Magnificent Mile.

Prominent Institutions

Nationally important institutions comprise a large part of Streeterville. These include:

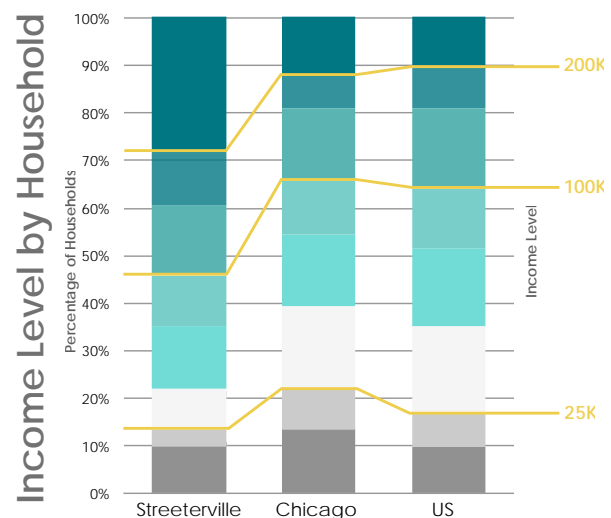
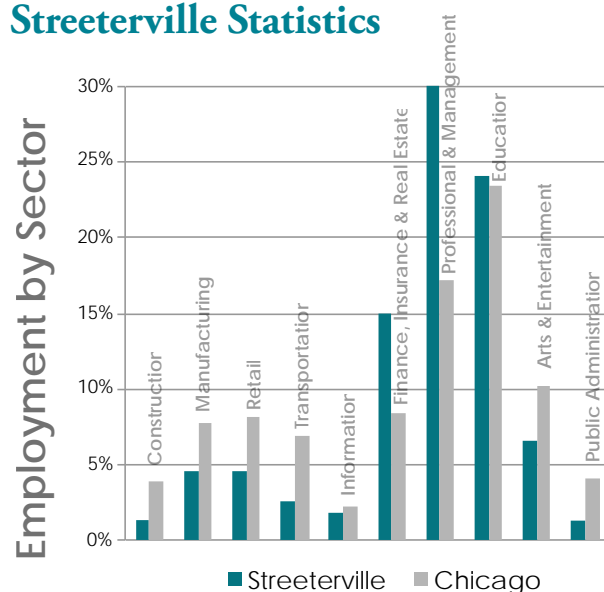
- Northwestern University established a downtown campus 1924
- Loyola University Chicago downtown campus established in 1927
- The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago established in 1954
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital established in 1972
- University of Chicago established a downtown campus for its business school in the 1990s
- Lurie Children's Hospital was built in 2012

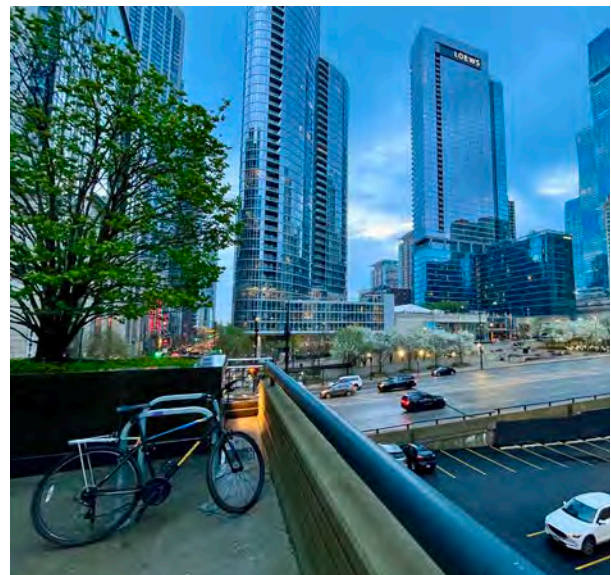
Cultural Destinations

Cultural institutions in Streeterville are tremendous assets to the community and important parts of everyday life:

- The Museum of Contemporary Art, founded in 1967, moved to its current location in 1996
- Navy Pier became home to the Chicago Children's Museum in 1995 and to Chicago Shakespeare Theatre in 1999
- Lookingglass Theatre, located in a reuse project, moved to the Pumping Station in 2003
- Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place opened in 2010

Streeterville Statistics







Community Conversations

We started the plan update by reconnecting with our neighborhood’s stakeholders to discuss current issues and to gather input and ideas for the future. SOAR coordinated a series of community and key stakeholder engagement activities over the course of several months that included both virtual and in person opportunities to connect with Vision Plan Task Force members and other volunteers. The collected input was used to identify priority topics that shaped how principles and recommendations were edited and refined in the 2023 plan.

Streeterville Neighborhood Vision Engagement Activities

- *Task Force of community experts*
- *Stakeholder and institutional focus group meetings*
- *Meetings with local Aldermen and staff*
- *Meetings with City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development*
- *Pop-up facilitated conversations with roughly 100 participants at neighborhood events and activities (such as the SOAR Farmers Market)*
- *Online community survey with 187 responses*
- *Online survey sent to residential property managers*
- *Coordination with other ongoing planning studies, such as the Chicago Department of Transportation’s Curb Management Study*

What We Heard

“More dog friendly parks and other spaces”

“Activate our existing parks with cultural, social, and arts programming”

“Find ways for cultural activities year round”

“Improve safety and aesthetics of underpasses and pedestrian tunnels”

“More family welcoming businesses, activities, and services”

“Better maintain pedestrian crossings and sidewalks”

“Indoor play space for kids in winter”

“Leverage SOAR members to support local restaurants”

“Activate the MCA plaza outside of the Farmers Market times with community activities”

“Reactivate the riverwalk area around the Centennial Fountain”

“Improve and make more use of the library”

“Improve night lighting and security presence”

“Add pedestrian signage at dangerous intersections”

“Community marketplace that showcases local makers”

“Promote public transit usage and improve transit safety”

“Address safety issue within and around the Chicago Red Line Station”



“Regular street and sidewalk cleaning and maintenance”

“Add city compost service”



Community Survey

Coinciding with the in person community engagement activities and outreach, the Task Force published an online survey that was distributed through flyers, partner organizations, and SOAR communications. The survey received 187 responses, of which 77% represent home owners, 15% renters, and the remaining a mix of employees, visitors, and other stakeholders. The Task Force also utilized other relevant community data gathering that was led by the City of Chicago Department of Transportation to inform the recommendations in the plan. Though only highlights from the feedback are summarized here, all of the comments and survey results were collected, shared, and used to update the plan content.

Survey Responses Highlights

Desired New Businesses and/or Services

58% of respondents want **more casual restaurants / coffee shops**, especially those appropriate for families

55% of respondents want **more locally owned shops**, and many noted the importance of SOAR supporting existing small business

46% of respondents want **more food, grocery, and marketplace options**, especially in northeast Streeterville where businesses have closed

Other popular responses include: large retail shops, bars/pubs, and upscale restaurants

Desired Additional Amenities

58% of respondents want more investments in **streetscape maintenance and improvement**, such as adding street trees and landscaping

51% of respondents want greater investments in **parks and open space and other outdoor recreational amenities**

41% of respondents wanted **improved street lighting** to improve the feeling of safety at night

Other popular responses include: bike lanes, public art, plazas, playgrounds, and community gardens



Common Themes from Survey Responses

Evidence to Support Prioritizing Walkability

The 2020 Streeterville / North Grant Park transportation survey conducted by the City of Chicago Department of Transportation showed that:

*Of 791 respondents, **80% chose walking as the most common method of traveling.** This high percentage of walking is unusual compared to other City neighborhoods*

*The survey also showed that people are **most concerned with “conflicts between different road users” and “my personal safety”** over vehicular conflicts, delays, reliability, or other transportation concerns*

Other Themes from Comments

- *Personal safety concerns*
- *Concern about the future of Michigan Avenue, which is the front door to the community and a major amenity corridor*
- *Concerns about cleanliness and maintenance of aging infrastructure*
- *Desire for more community gathering opportunities, especially for key demographic groups of families, dog owners, and young professionals*
- *A growing interest in outdoor recreation, health, and wellness activities*

Our Favorite Places ♥

The community survey asked participants what their favorite places in Streeterville are, and the responses were varied and often surprising. The map on the facing page summarizes what places were mentioned most frequently. The theme across most responses were places where community gathering and social interaction occurs; parks, plazas, markets, and outdoor dining.

Most Popular Response: Lake Shore Park



Why it's popular

- *Community gathering*
- *Dog exercise space*
- *Playground*
- *Recreational facilities and track*
- *SOAR community garden*
- *Views / respite*

Second Most Popular Response: Ogden Slip and the Riverwalk



Why it's popular

- *Outdoor dining*
- *Streetlife*
- *Views*
- *Services and shopping*
- *Safe walking corridor*

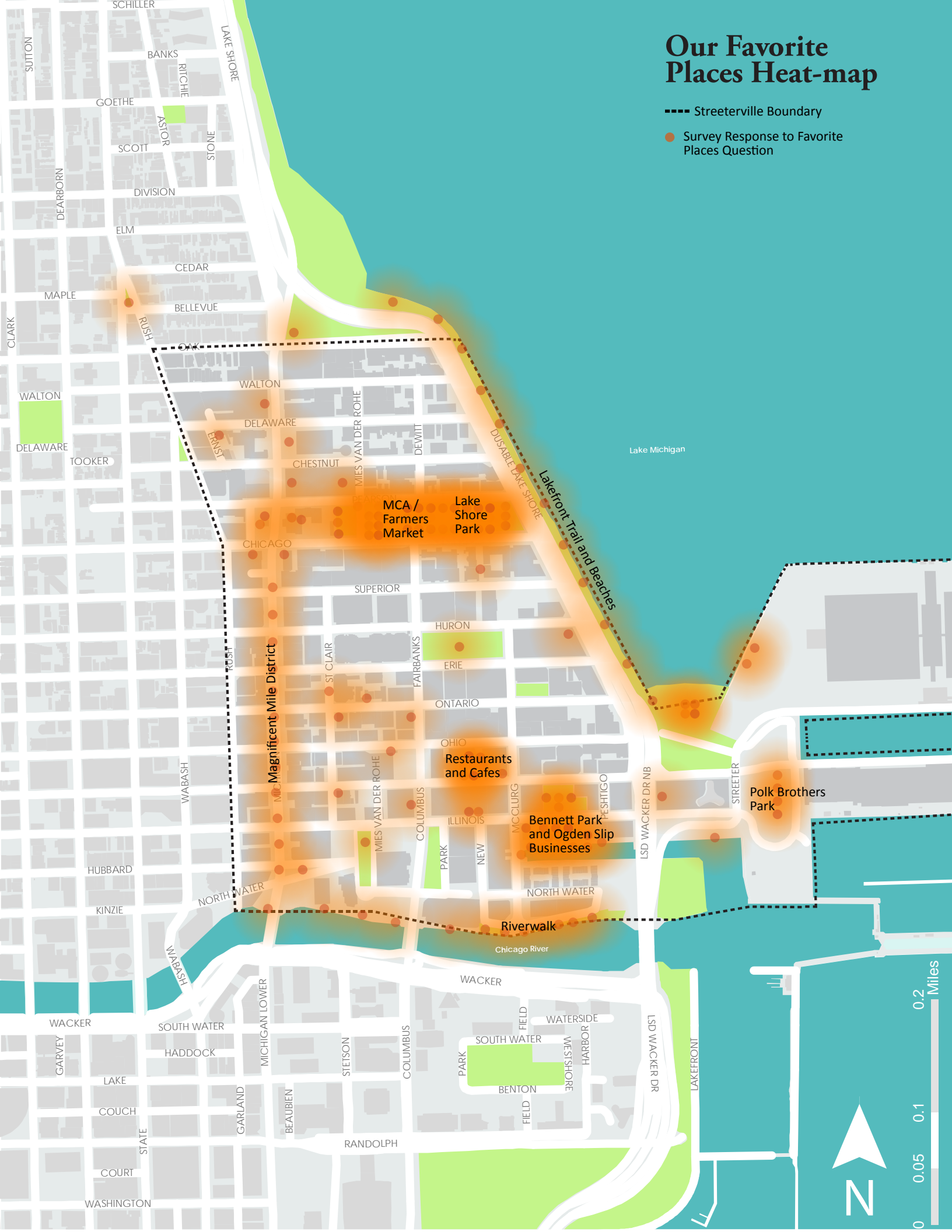
Third Most Popular Response: MCA and SOAR Farmers Market



Why it's popular

- *Social gathering*
- *Food*
- *Healthy and fresh produce*
- *Streetlife / activity*
- *Community supported*

- Survey Response to Favorite Places Question





Guiding Principles + Goals

The following section outlines the approach that guides SOAR's advocacy work on behalf of the community. The principles have been updated from 2015 based on our conversations with community members, and also reorganized into categories that relate more closely to broader City-wide initiatives. In response to recommendations from the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, SOAR organized - where possible - our guiding principles into topic-based categories that align with those presented in the City of Chicago's ***We Will Chicago Citywide Plan***. In a city often characterized by divisive politics and inequities, we believe that there are ways for all communities to work together in addressing the challenges we face, and by doing so, to better support our collective stability and success.

How SOAR Uses Our Principles + Goals

- *Communicating our vision to elected officials and agencies*
- *Planning our events and engagement activities*
- *Establishing and maintaining partnerships with other organizations, institutions, and businesses*
- *Reviewing and commenting on proposed infrastructure and development projects*

1.0 Civic + Community Engagement

It is common to want to live, work, and/or own businesses in a place where you feel welcomed and part of a supportive neighborhood social network. SOAR will continue to focus our community engagement initiatives on activities that bring people together. We will support volunteerism and stewardship, community service, advocacy, and charitable endeavors.



Priority Principles

1.1 Plan community programming that activates our public spaces, community gathering venues, and parks.

1.2 Focus on community activities that are attractive to all Streeterville's major demographic and age groups such as young professionals, families, dog owners, and seniors.

1.3 Ensure that public input, both from SOAR and other community stakeholders, is addressed early in the neighborhood project review process.

1.4 Facilitate relationships between private and public sector project leaders and neighbors through regular meetings to discuss any issues, delays, and/or changes to project or construction plans.

1.5 Promote relationships between businesses, residents, and institutions that are harmonious and mutually supportive.

1.6 Encourage creation of new public gathering spaces in partnership with institutions and private properties.

Community Comments:

"A sense of community that would help neighbor help neighbor"

2.0 Housing + Quality of Life

SOAR works towards a beautiful and welcoming twenty-first century neighborhood that is dense, walkable, and amenity-rich. As our community grows, we prioritize investments in the maintenance and enhancement of our built environment, housing stock, and related services so that we can continue to offer a high quality of life for all residents.



Priority Principles

2.1 Encourage a variety of dwelling unit types and sizes to maximize housing choice for diverse residential family types, sizes, and ages.

2.2 Advocate for blending and cooperation between institutional, entertainment, commercial, and residential uses.

2.3 Identify and protect significant view corridors, historic properties, and character zones.

2.4 Implement streetscape maintenance and improvements to provide a consistent character and quality to the public realm throughout the neighborhood.

2.5 Encourage ground level setbacks for landscape, streetscape, and sidewalk cafes.

2.6 Require investments in the public realm with new private development.

2.7 Promote expanded access to parks and recreational space in Streeterville, including improvements to existing parks, the retrofit of underutilized vacant spaces, and the development of new landscape.

Community comments:

“An indoor play space option for kids would be amazing for the winter.”

“Adding more spaces for people to gather, dine, and relax together”

3.0 Public Health + Safety

The perception of safety and security is an important contributor to a neighborhood's quality of life and ability to attract and retain businesses, residents, and tourism. Historically, Streeterville was one of the City's safest communities, but recent high profile crimes have concerned many of our residents, businesses, and institutions. Our goal is for everyone to feel safe, welcomed, and secure in our community. We achieve this through supporting policing efforts as well as encouraging passive security measures such as improved lighting and street activation.



Community comments:

“Reduce speeding in residential areas”

“Better lighting in residential plazas and at street corners”

Priority Principles

3.1 Work closely with City leadership and the Chicago Police Department through SOAR's Safety & Security Task Force, to implement innovative and multi-faceted approaches to maintaining neighborhood safety.

3.2 Encourage public private partnerships with property owners and the Chicago Police Department to increase eyes on the street.

3.3 Work with property owners to improve buildings' facade and loading docks, and work with the City to improve sidewalk / street lighting to increase night time safety.

3.4 Maintain ongoing communications to alert the community of emerging security issues and programs to address them.

4.0 Transportation + Infrastructure

As our community ages, SOAR prioritizes investments in maintenance and enhancement of the public realm, infrastructure, technology, and transportation systems. The bustling Streeterville neighborhood requires a diverse transportation system that provides safe and convenient access and circulation, with a focus on walkability and public transportation. The major destinations and wide variety of activities in Streeterville necessitate excellent pedestrian, public transit, bicycle, and vehicular options; adequate parking and loading facilities; and clear wayfinding for visitors.

Priority Principles

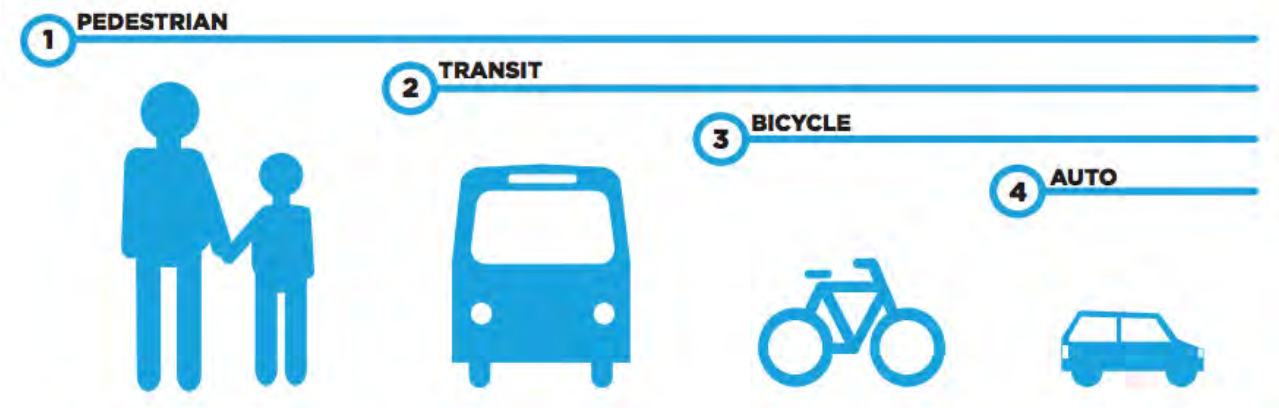
4.1 Use the Chicago Department of Transportation’s Modal Hierarchy (shown below) to guide neighborhood advocacy, which prioritizes walking, biking, and public transportation over private vehicular travel.

4.2 Collaborate with the Aldermen and relevant City agencies to advise infrastructure and public realm maintenance projects.

4.3 Work with the City of Chicago Department of Transportation to improve the safety of existing bike routes and to create new protected ones.

4.4 Encourage pedestrian safety improvements such as midblock connections, widening pedestrian sidewalk space, and traffic calming to support safe walkability.

City of Chicago Hierarchy of Importance for Street Users



Public Transportation Map

Blue Line

Brown Line

Red Line



CTA Bus Stops

Water Taxi Routes:

1

Navy Pier to Museum Campus

2

Union Station to Navy Pier

3

Michigan Ave. to Navy Pier

4

Michigan Ave. to Union Station



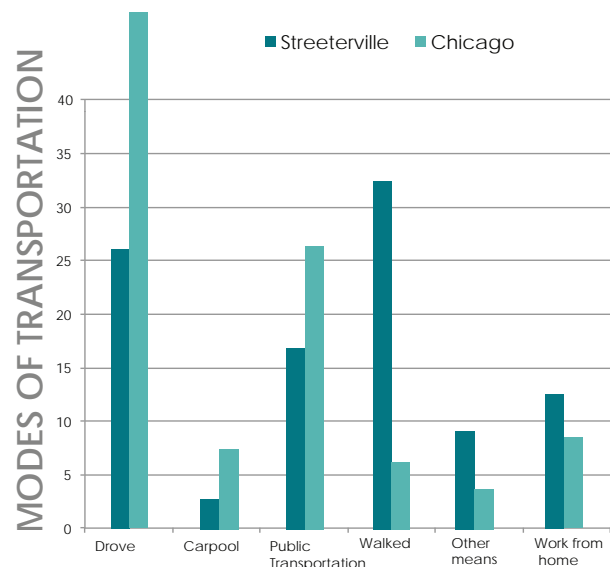
4.5 Advocate for locating loading docks underground or off alleys and away from pedestrian corridors to reduce truck and pedestrian/bike conflicts.

4.6 Advocate for enforcement of ordinances that control illegal loading, double parking, speeding, and other infractions that negatively impact the function of streets and the public realm.

4.7 Coordinate with properties to ensure that all buildings have a strategy for deliveries, loading, service, and package management that doesn't disrupt the public usage and traffic flow of surrounding streets.

4.8 Support and encourage the use of public transit resources in the Streeterville neighborhood, including advocating for improvements to bus stops and routes.

4.9 Encourage traffic management innovations and technologies such as automated signals to improve the function and safety of major thoroughfares in Streeterville.



Community comments -

"Wider and greener sidewalks, more park space, wider streets..."

"To my knowledge, there are NO protected bike lanes in Streeterville...Please advocate for protected bike lanes."

Walking and Biking Map

- City of Chicago Designated Pedestrian Streets (per Zoning Code)
- City of Chicago Department of Transportation Chicago Streets for Cycling Plan (2020) Bike Routes
- SOAR Recommended Pedestrian Improvement Zones
- Divvy Station Location
- Streeterville Boundary

SOAR Recommends Inner Lake Shore Drive Bike Connection



5.0 Land Use + Development

SOAR strives for a balance between the diverse activities and uses as well as new development that sustains and enhances the well-being of the residents, visitors, businesses and employees. Streeterville is truly a mixed use community with significant floor area of residential, hotel, entertainment, institutional, higher educational, and a broad mix of retail services and amenities. Our goal is to maintain a balance and positive relationships between these and future uses.

Priority Principles

5.1 Support creative adaptive reuse of outdated commercial or other underutilized properties.

5.2 Encourage an overall balance of uses, services, and amenities that allows for an active and complete mixed-use community.

5.3 Require active uses at the ground level in all developments and encourage activation of the pedestrian realm with plantings and sidewalk cafes.

5.4 Discourage and beautify standalone parking garages, surface parking lots, and advocate for reductions in parking garage height in new developments.

5.5 Discourage land uses that are likely to have negative impact on the character and livability of surrounding properties.



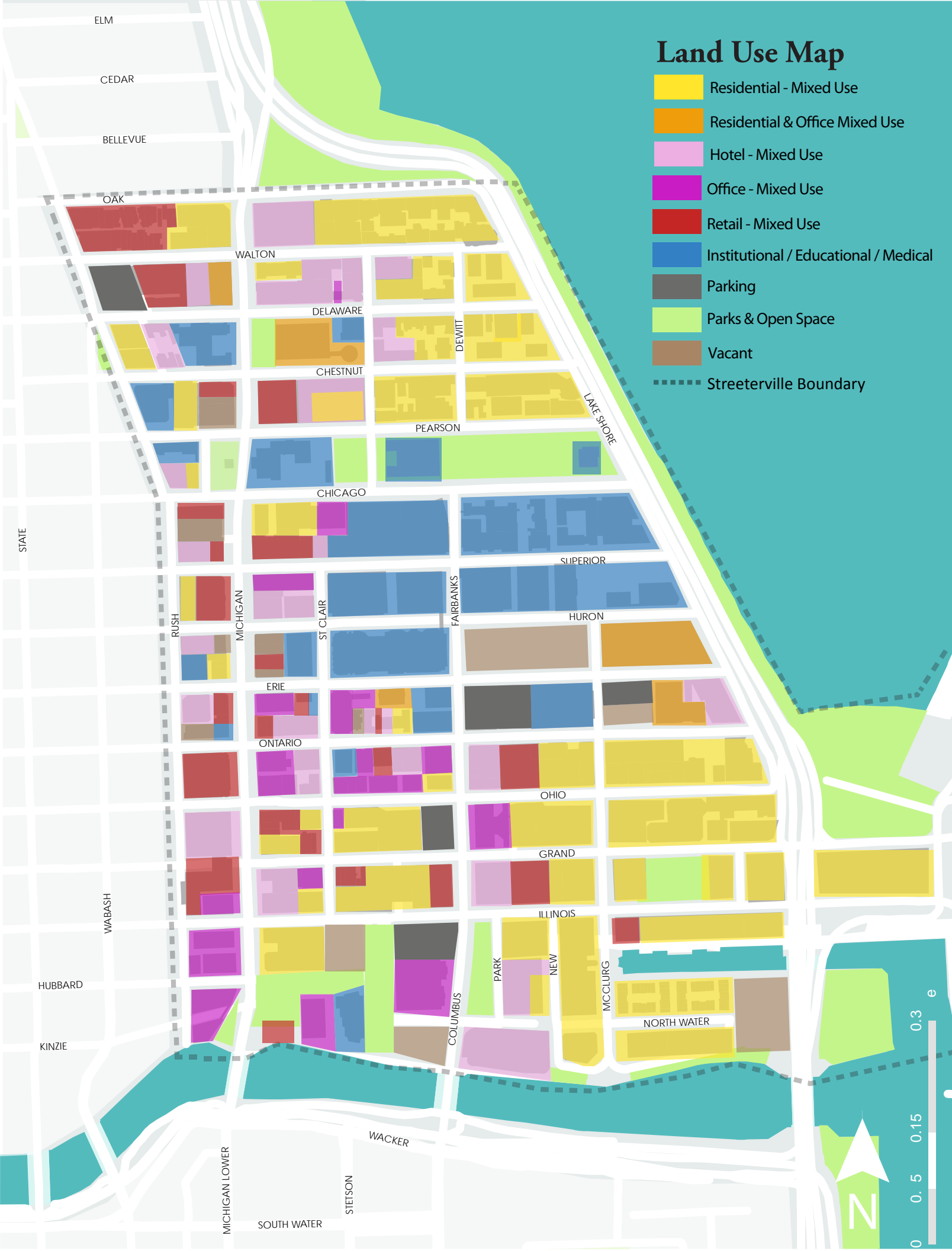
Community comments:

“Keep Michigan Avenue vibrant. If we lose the tourist draw, we lose a lot.”

“Historic Preservation and landmarking adds such a presence and human scale to the community and gives a sense of place”

Land Use Map

- Residential - Mixed Use
- Residential & Office Mixed Use
- Hotel - Mixed Use
- Office - Mixed Use
- Retail - Mixed Use
- Institutional / Educational / Medical
- Parking
- Parks & Open Space
- Vacant
- Streeterville Boundary



6.0 Environment, Climate + Energy

Choices that are made in building design, landscaping, and transportation affect Streeterville's environmental footprint, resiliency, and our community health. SOAR prioritizes sustainable practices in all decision-making. We promote all the components of the City of Chicago's *Sustainable Development Policy* including strategies for energy efficiency, alternative transportation, reduced water usage, nature-based stormwater capture, and alternative energy production.

Priority Principles

6.1 Seek the highest environmental standards in new construction and adaptive reuse projects, using as a guide the City's Sustainable Development Policy.

6.2 Encourage sustainable landscape design and stormwater management practices in both public and private projects such as native plants and permeable paving.

6.3 Advocate for additional tree cover, green roofs, and landscaping be included in all public and private construction projects to reduce the heat island effect.

6.4 Support City efforts to replace street lighting with energy efficient LED technology throughout the community, and also require lighting that is dark-sky rated to reduce light pollution.



6.5 Encourage Streeterville businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and residential managers as well as major institutions to adopt sustainable practices like composting services and waste reductions principles.

6.6 Reinforce Streeterville's identity as a green and healthy community through SOAR's events, activities, and programming.

Parks and Green Roofs Map

 Buildings with Green Roofs

 Streeterville Buildings

1. River Esplanade Park
2. Dusable Park
3. Seneca Park
4. Lake Shore Park
5. Jane Addams Memorial Park
6. Ogden Plaza
7. Connors Park
8. Bennett Park

 Streeterville Boundary



7.0 Education, Arts + Culture

Streeterville is a multi-cultural and multi-generational community that hosts large scale and local education, religious, cultural, and arts institutions. SOAR strives to leverage and connect residents and visitors to these uses, to emphasize our dedication to enriching experiences for all ages.



Community comments:

“Enhance Water Tower library branch as a community gathering space.”

“Add more music and art performances at community spaces”

“Create a local market concept in vacant retail space”

Priority Principles

7.1 Leverage SOAR’s community engagement activities to support the success of local cultural institutions.

7.2 Build awareness and understanding of Streeterville’s unique history, culture, and social context.

7.3 Require cutting edge urban design and architectural excellence (per City of Chicago’s “Design Excellence” standards) to enhance the neighborhood’s sense of place.

7.4 Enhance the public realm with contemporary and culturally relevant public art projects and events.

7.5 Foster coordination and collaboration between arts and cultural organizations and institutions.

7.6 Protect important architecture and historic character buildings from demolition and/or destructive development practices.

7.7 Emphasize the importance of the Magnificent Mile District to Streeterville and the City as a whole.

Cultural Resources Map

- Chicago Landmark Districts
- Chicago Landmarks
- Historic Resources Survey
- National Historic Landmarks
- Neighborhood Cultural Destinations
- Streeterville Boundary



Advocacy Check List ✓

One of the primary roles of SOAR is to represent the needs and desires of Streeterville when reviewing and providing comments on public and private projects, city policies, and other proposals. This check list helps to summarize our main goals and to help us focus our review of projects on our highest priorities.

Core priorities for all projects:

1. Willingness to work with SOAR to coordinate and collaborate with fellow property owners and businesses to promote, maintain, and celebrate our community.
2. Enhances public safety and security through passive and active methods.
3. Prioritizes walkability, biking, and public transportation use.
4. Designs for traffic control and safety of all street users.
5. Incorporates community benefits and contributes to Streeterville's sense of place and quality of life.
6. Uses innovative environmental practices to support SOAR's goals for a sustainable community.

Enhances and activates the public realm

- ☐ Consider innovative ground floor uses (such as lobbies and fitness centers) to activate the street in areas where retail may not thrive.
- ☐ The ground floor on all street facing facades are active uses with non-reflective / vision glass.
- ☐ Avoids expansive blank walls along the street frontage.

- ☐ Goes beyond minimum requirements for landscaping with extensive new softscape, landscape setbacks, and/or planters.
- ☐ Incorporates sidewalk activation through public art, outdoor cafes, canopies, etc.
- ☐ Provides high quality facades to hide all service areas and parking structures.
- ☐ Has a plan to coordinate/manage loading and drop-off along the street and in public alleys.
- ☐ The building massing considers its effects on the street including daylight/shadow and wind.
- ☐ The property has a clear plan for deliveries and package management that doesn't disrupt the traffic and pedestrian flow of the public street.

Supporting Community Safety and Security

- ☐ Building lobby and/or front entrance is designed such that there is a clear view of the street from interior to exterior and vice versa.
- ☐ Building facade, loading zones, and street frontages of the project incorporate pedestrian oriented lighting.
- ☐ Includes security cameras that are shared with the Chicago Police Department.
- ☐ Has a documented security strategy.

Prioritizes walkability, bicyclist/scooter safety, and public transit access

- Plans for enhanced or widened sidewalk space, with a clear unobstructed pathway for pedestrians.
- Does not disrupt the sidewalk with vehicular drop-off zones or other impediments to walkability.
- Minimizes the number of curb cuts.
- Accommodates and enhances adjacent bus stops to improve access and safety (lighting, bump outs, and/or shelters).
- Incorporates universal design principles into the streetscape design.
- Designs required bike racks and bike rooms to be easily accessible and not conflict with other modes of travel.
- Considers bike movement and circulation around and through the project site area.

Placemaking, partnership, and community character

- Provides a design strategy for lighting, streetscape, and facades that enhances the character and identity of the community.
- Restores and/or protects Streeterville's historic buildings and other elements that contribute to the community's character.
- Incorporates Streeterville branding, history, and identity into the public realm design.
- Includes, where feasible, a pocket park, gathering space, and/or plaza.

- Supports and coordinates with other local businesses and institutions.
- Aligns with the City of Chicago's policies for design excellence.
- Property owner or tenant plans to stay connected with SOAR to become part of our community of businesses and property owners.

Environmental Strategies

- Protects existing mature trees, adds additional tree canopy and shade to the site.
- Has a tree maintenance strategy.
- Goes above and beyond requirements to capture, filter, absorb, and slow site rainwater run-off.
- Landscape planting palette incorporates pollinator and native plants.
- Includes a green roof system.
- Has a site maintenance strategy that includes sidewalk maintenance, litter clean-up, and streetscape beautification.
- Reduces noise and other nuisances.
- Incorporates exceptional options, beyond the minimum requirements, of the City of Chicago's Sustainable Development Policy.

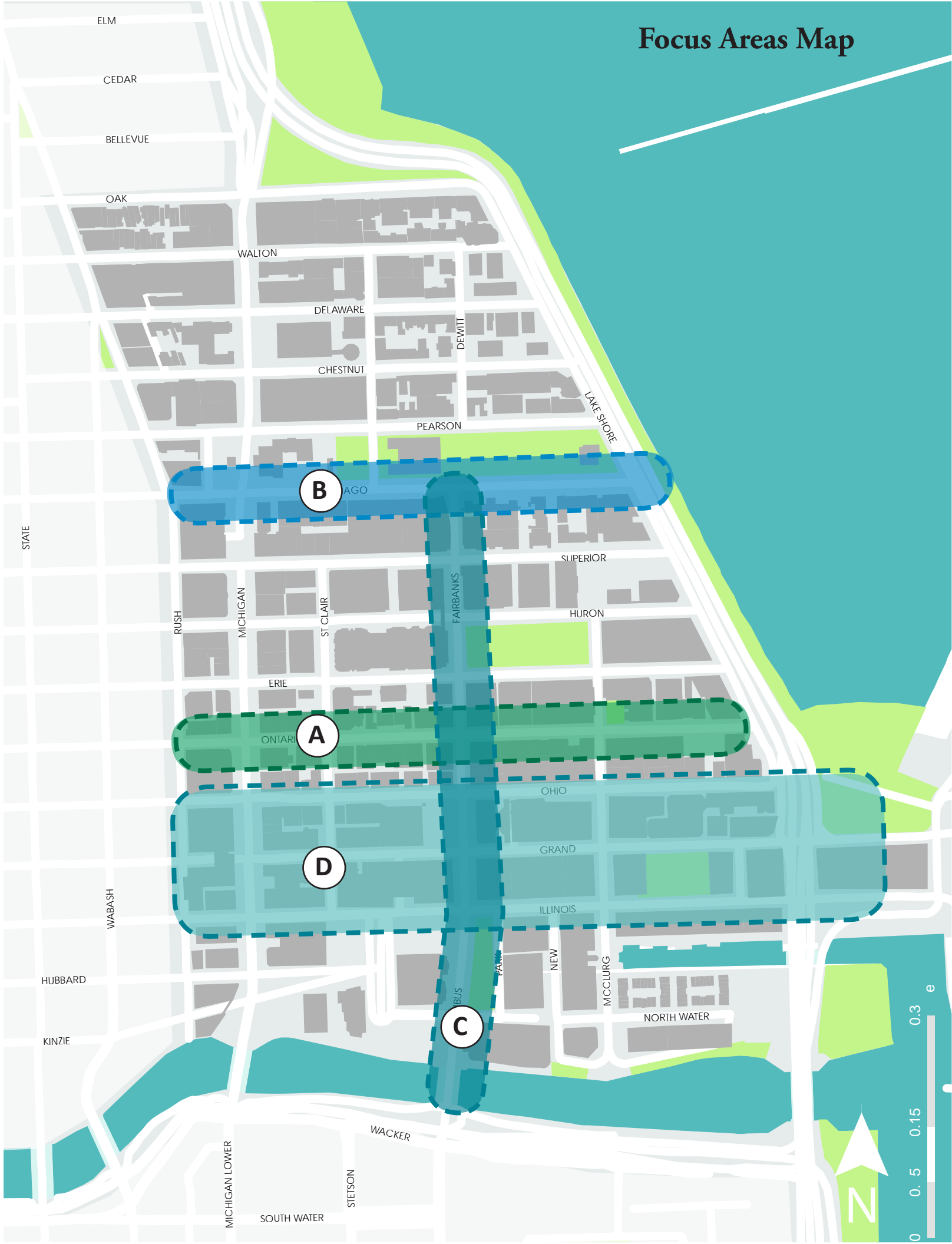


Place-Based Recommendations

To illustrate how the priorities and principles outlined in the previous section of the plan can be applied to future neighborhood improvements, developments, and maintenance efforts, we have compiled specific high level concepts for several focus areas of interest. These corridors were chosen because they are key future improvement zones in the neighborhood that have opportunities for further enhancement to support the vision and goals of SOAR. The five focus corridors discussed in more detail are:

- **Focus Area A:** Ontario Street Corridor
- **Focus Area B:** Chicago Avenue Corridor
- **Focus Area C:** Fairbanks Court Corridor
- **Focus Area D:** Grand/Ohio/Illinois Corridors

Focus Areas Map



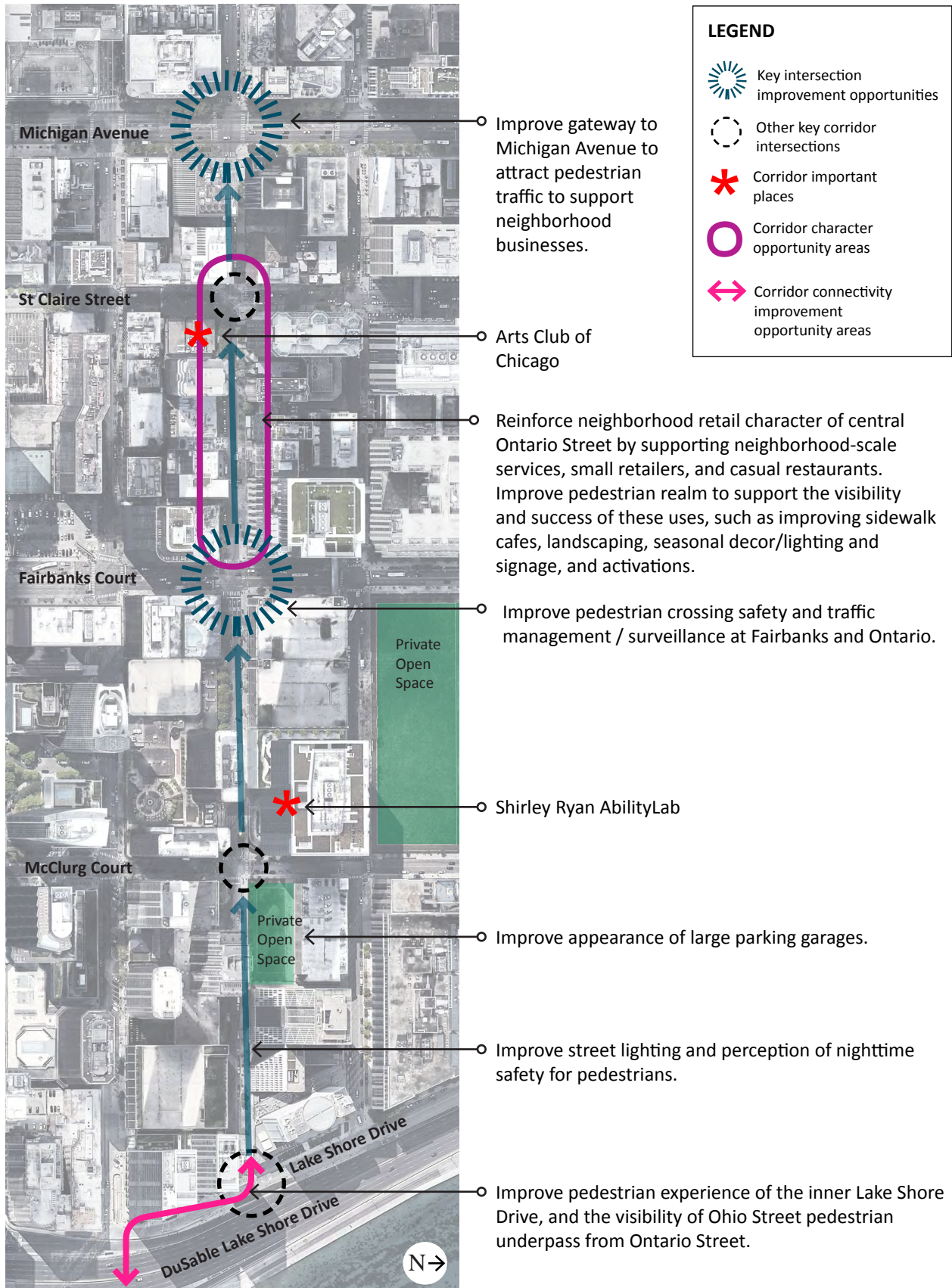


Focus Area A: Ontario Street Corridor

Recommendations

1. Manage traffic circulation and enforce ordinances that prohibit double/ illegal parking.
2. Enforce drop-off locations for hotels along the corridor.
3. Coordinate commercial loading hours and encourage the use of smaller trucks on the busy corridor.
4. Encourage a diverse mix of neighborhood serving businesses along the corridor.
5. Promote pedestrian-friendly business practices and commercial corridor visibility practices such as encouraging creative storefront treatments and pedestrian amenities.
6. Support the beautification, opening, and programming of the open lot at the corner of Ontario and McClurg (410 E Ontario Street)
7. Establish unified wayfinding signage on Michigan Avenue to direct pedestrians to Ontario Street destinations such as the Arts Club of Chicago, local restaurants, and hotels.
8. Encourage business owners to install security cameras and share access with the Chicago Police Department to enhance safety on the corridor.
9. Reinstitute the use of traffic control aids at major intersections to reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety.

Ontario Street Corridor Planning Diagram



Ontario Street Corridor Concepts and Ideas

Reinforce Neighborhood Street Character



Ontario Street is a prime opportunity for Streeterville to create a neighborhood scaled commercial street that is attractive and welcoming. Strategies like highlighting character buildings with lighting, adding string lights, colorful awnings, and signage can help to improve the attractiveness of the street and bring new customers for businesses. Larimer Square in Denver, shown left, utilizes these strategies and is one of the most vibrant gathering places in their downtown.

One of the core components of SOAR's mission is to promote community pride and social connectivity, and that approach can be expanded to supporting area businesses and services like those along Ontario Street. A successful example of this is the transformation of the Ogden Slip area over the past years. By promoting Ontario Street and other business corridors, SOAR can activate our membership to ensure the success of our community's businesses and services.

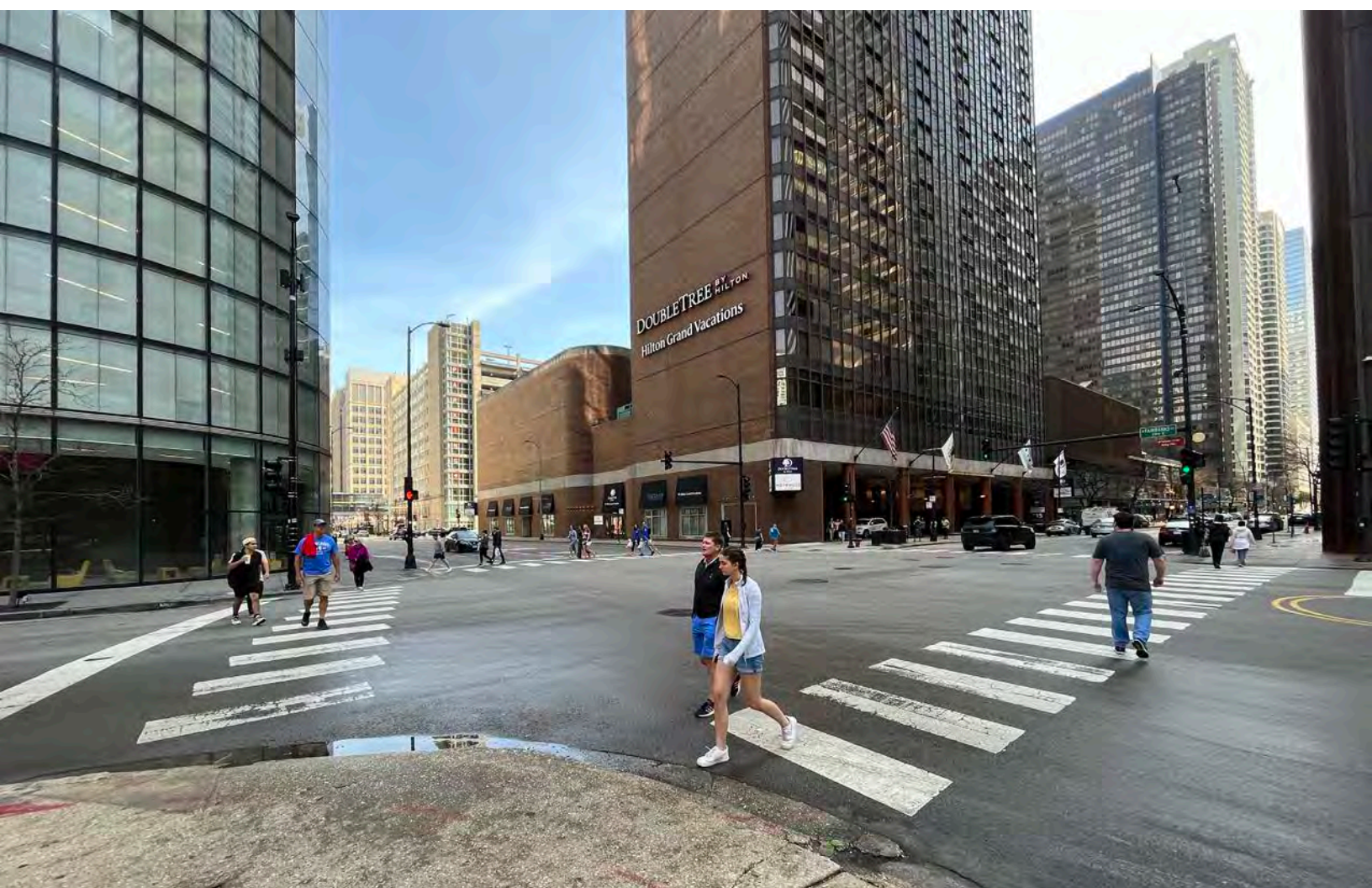
Supporting the success of neighborhood businesses



Pedestrian Environment of Inner Lake Shore Drive



The sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks along inner Lake Shore Drive, especially at the intersection of Chicago Avenue are inhospitable, narrow, and unsafe. Improvements such as corner bump-outs to slow traffic and shorten the crossing distance, widened sidewalks with street trees, and better signage to help visitors find the DuSable Lake Shore Drive underpass are needed along this important perimeter neighborhood street. Shown in the existing conditions at Delaware Place and inner Lake Shore Drive.

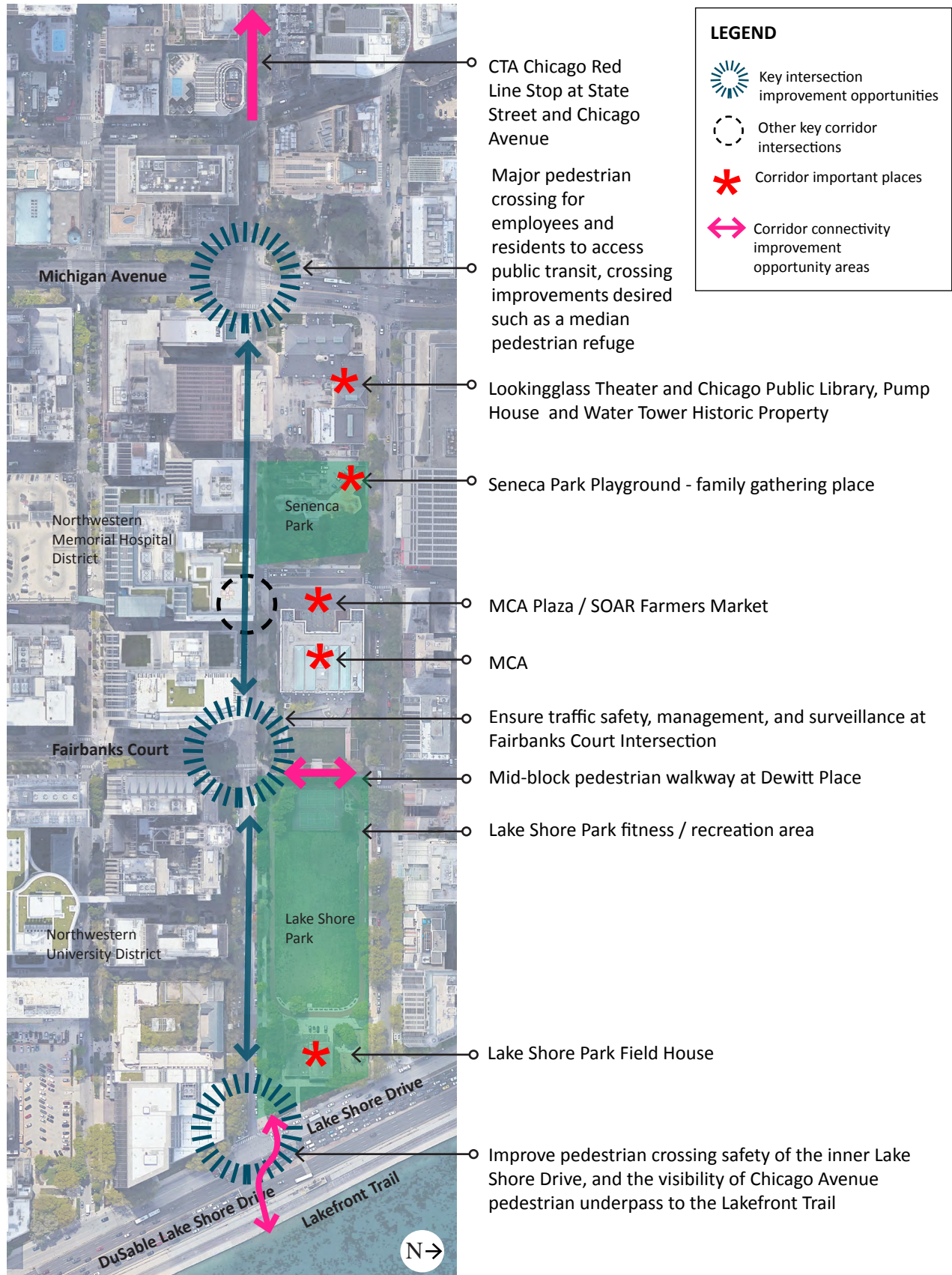




Focus Area B: Chicago Avenue Corridor

1. Enforce traffic rules especially during peak hours to maintain the flow of traffic and reintroduce traffic aids where appropriate.
2. Continue to Invest in improving Seneca Park and Lake Shore Park to expand the use of these key neighborhood park spaces. Encourage adding additional park recreational amenities, landscaping, art, seating, wifi, year round programming.
3. Establish wayfinding signage that helps to direct pedestrians from Michigan Avenue to neighborhood parks, the lakefront, and other local institutions such as the MCA and Northwestern University Campus.
4. Invest in improving the Lakefront Trail pedestrian access to improve use, safety and accessibility.
5. Encourage and support continued bus route enhancements such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) style improvements to the #66 bus lane, signal prioritization, and high capacity or protected bus stops.
6. Enforce parking rules for large tourist buses to reduce the nuisance of these on neighborhood properties and streets.

Chicago Avenue Corridor Planning Diagram

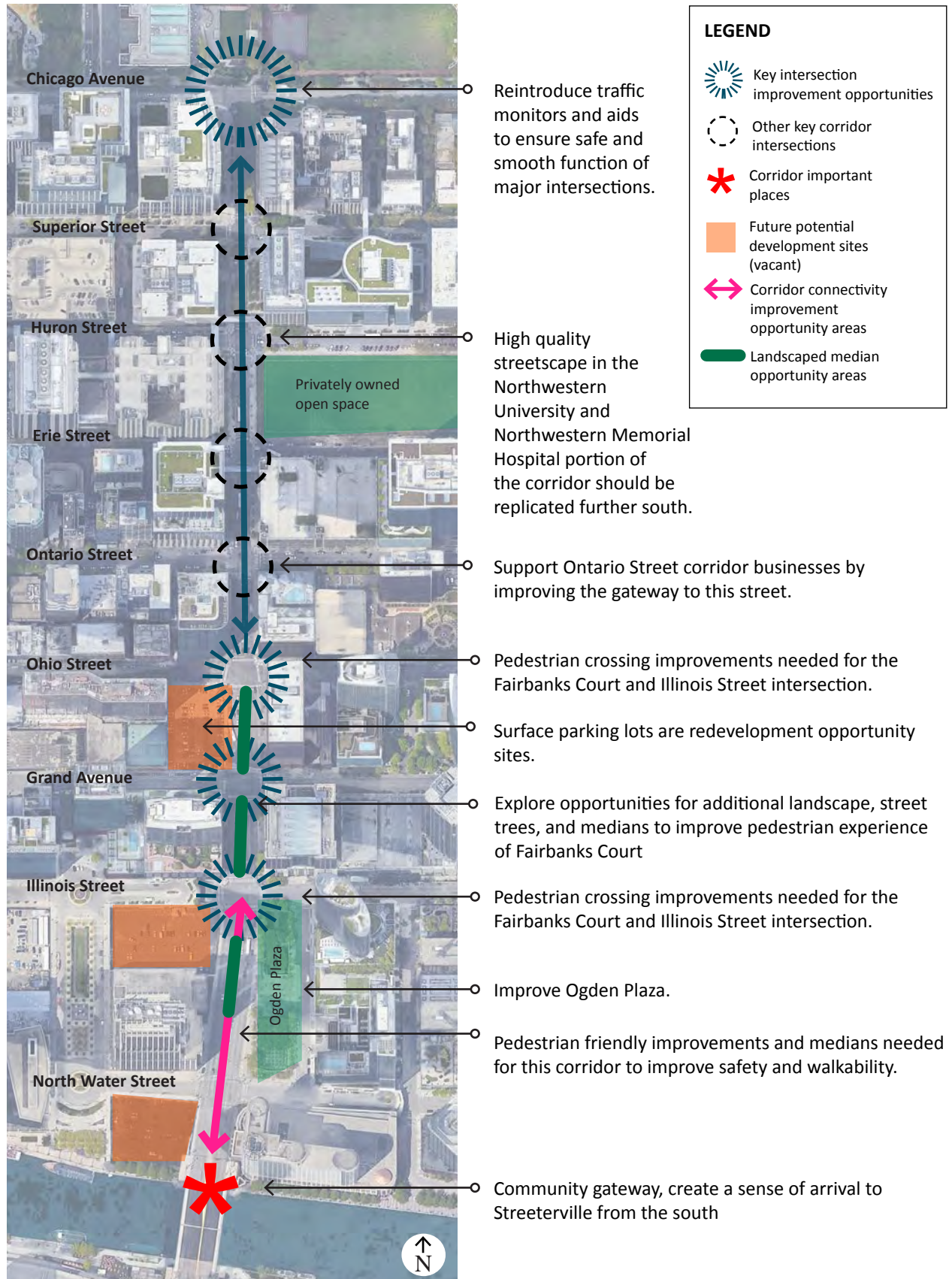




Focus Area C: Fairbanks Court Corridor

1. Encourage the beautification, landscaping, and / or redevelopment of surface parking lots in accordance with the Chicago Landscape Ordinance, specifically the lots at 245 E Ohio (Grand Avenue and Fairbanks Court) and NBC Tower (Illinois Street and Fairbanks Court).
2. Encourage public access and programming of the privately-owned open space which is the largest open parcel in the Streeterville neighborhood east of Fairbanks Court, between Huron Street and Erie Street. Advocate for reserving a portion of this site for open space use as part of any future development plan.
3. Invest in innovative street improvements to slow traffic in off-peak periods on Fairbanks Court and to improve the pedestrian safety and experience of the corridor.
4. Between the Chicago River and Ontario Street, pedestrian improvements are particularly needed such as pedestrian refuges, bump outs, landscaped medians, pedestrian scaled lighting, street trees, and other features.
5. Invest in gateway signage on Fairbanks Court and the River crossing to provide a sense of arrival to the Streeterville neighborhood. This is a major gateway to the community.

Fairbanks Court Corridor Planning Diagram



Fairbanks Court Corridor Concepts and Ideas

Arterial Street Landscaped Median



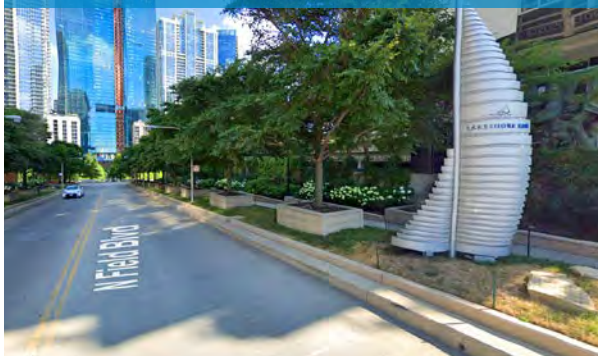
This landscaped median is an example from Chicago's South Loop neighborhood, located along South Indiana Avenue, which is a similarly sized street to Fairbanks Court. A landscaped median along Fairbanks Court would help to slow traffic, provide a sense of arrival, mitigate noise of traffic, improve air quality and stormwater capture, and increase pedestrian safety.

There are only a handful of surface parking lots remaining in Streeterville, and it might take some time for them to be developed. In the interim, to improve the pedestrian experience along the parking, landscape improvements should be made. The example shown is from a recent development in the South Loop community, with City of Chicago required parking lot buffer landscape treatments. These include high quality fencing, shrubs, plants, and trees.

Parking Lot Buffering Landscape



Sense of Arrival for South Gateway



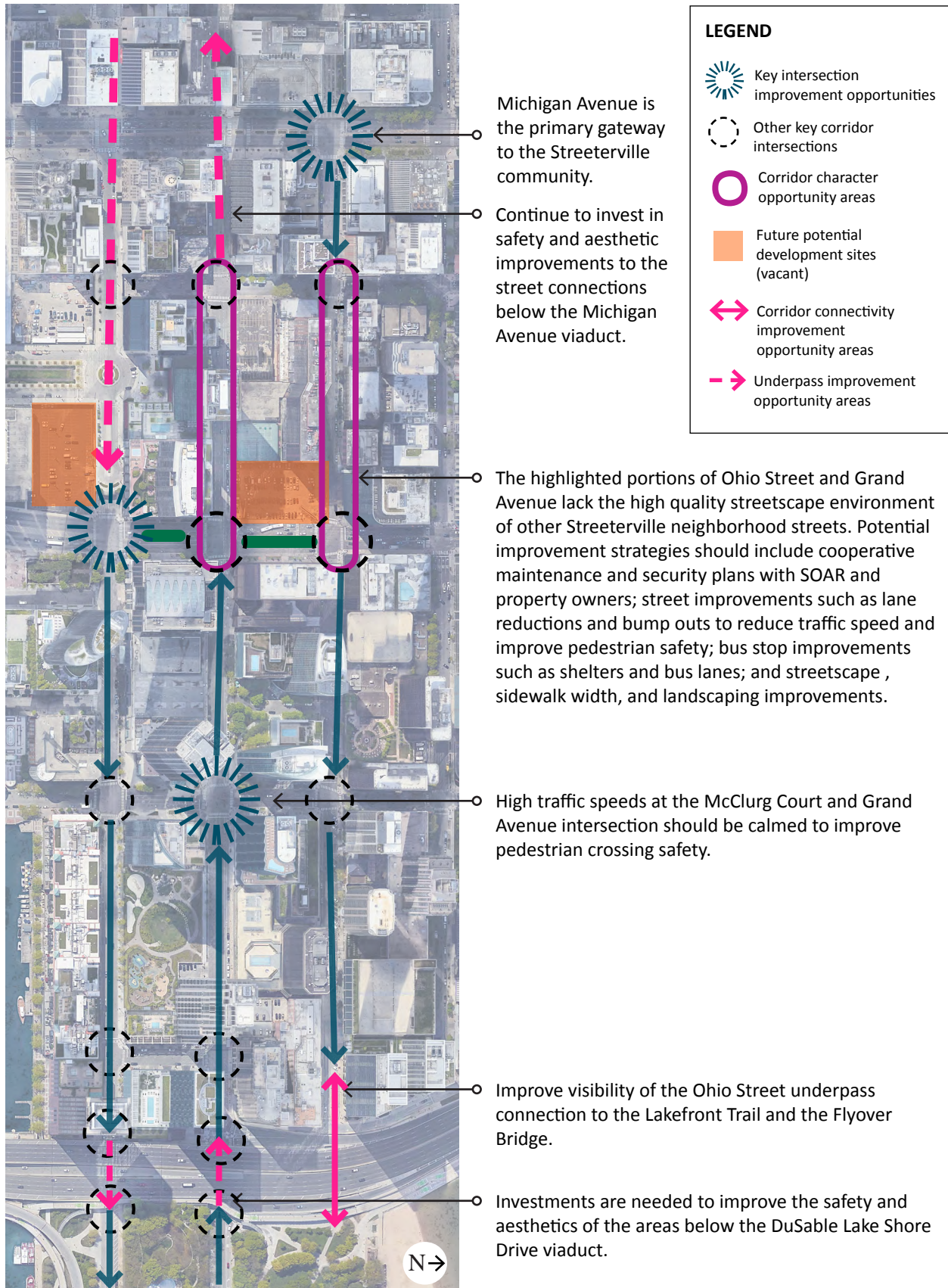
The approach to Streeterville from the south along Fairbanks Court is often used by visitors traveling from Millennium Park. This stretch of Fairbanks Court is particularly inhospitable to pedestrian travel, with higher speed vehicular traffic and narrow sidewalks. Improving this area in conjunction with future improvements to Ogden Plaza would help to create a gateway and provide a sense of arrival. The example shown is gateway landscape in nearby Lakeshore East.



Focus Area D: Grand/Ohio/Illinois Corridors

1. Encourage a diverse mix of uses on the remaining infill sites.
2. Identify the corridor as a neighborhood gateway and invest in unified wayfinding signage that helps guide pedestrians and establishes a sense of place.
3. Encourage widening of pedestrian spaces on the sidewalks.
4. Implement traffic calming measures at the intersection of Illinois and Fairbanks and manage in-flow and out-flow traffic to Navy Pier.
5. Create a barrier protected bike lane and promote a safe and inviting biking environment through the addition of bike parking and maintenance stations.
6. Encourage retail to maintain large transparent openings on the street.
7. Encourage sidewalk cafes to bring more vibrancy to the corridor and eyes on the street.
8. Encourage redevelopment of Ogden park to be more inviting and have more programming.
9. Promote policies that mitigate traffic noise and pollution impact on the surrounding buildings.
10. Enhance lighting and encourage the beautification of the underpasses under Illinois, Grand and Lake Shore Drive.
11. Encourage lighting and art display in vacant retail windows.
12. Continue to improve the maintenance and enhance the recreational amenities at the Ohio Street Beach.

Grand/Ohio/Illinois Corridors Planning Diagram



Grand/Ohio/Illinois Corridors Concepts and Ideas

Pedestrian and Cyclist Improvements



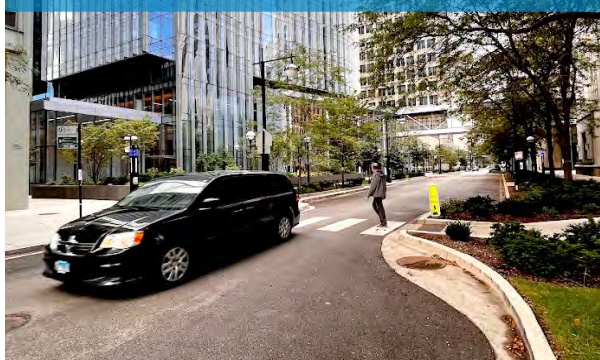
Despite being a major corridor for pedestrian traffic to area hospitals, residences, and tourist destinations - Ohio Street and Grand Avenue have few pedestrian and cyclist improvements. Combined cyclist, lane reductions, and pedestrian improvements would help to improve the safety and attractiveness of these streets. The example shown is of the recently completed improvements to Roosevelt Road, which is another key pedestrian and cyclist route.

The underpass areas along Illinois Street and Grand Avenue are traveled by thousands of visitors and locals. Currently these areas are in disrepair. Because these are important gateways to the community, opportunities for working together with area tourist organizations, the City, and neighborhood groups should be explored to improve underpass aesthetics and safety. The example shown is from Boston and uses lighting to activate the highway underpass.

Underpass Lighting , Safety, and Other Improvements



Pedestrian Crosswalk Safety



Several of the pedestrian crossings (as highlighted on the map on the facing page) are uncomfortable for pedestrians with fast moving vehicular traffic, wide crossing widths, and other impediments. The Chicago Department of Transportation has begun intersection improvements aimed at pedestrians, such as the example on Superior Street shown. SOAR encourages and supports more measure such as these along Ohio Street, Illinois Street, and Grand Avenue.

Plan Acknowledgements

We want to thank Streeterville's institutional leaders, residents, businesses, and government partners who provided input into the collaborative process to update the Streeterville Neighborhood Vision. We especially want to thank the Streeterville Neighborhood Vision Plan Task Force members that volunteered their time and professional expertise to lead this important effort.

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About the Streeterville Organization of Active Residents (SOAR)

SOAR is a not-for-profit neighborhood advocacy organization that was established in 1975. Throughout SOAR's history, the members have been a voice for all who live in, work in, do business in, and enjoy the community. Streeterville is a multi-cultural, thriving, dense, downtown mixed-use neighborhood with many unique opportunities and issues that SOAR works tirelessly to address using a balanced, future focused approach.

www.soarchicago.org