



PLAN COMPRENSIVO

NORTH **CHICAGO**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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THE 411

INTRODUCING THE PLAN

A *Comprehensive Plan* serves as an essential governance tool that outlines the long-term vision and strategy for the City's growth and development over a predetermined timescale, commonly ranging from 10 to 20 years. North Chicago's *Comprehensive Plan* (*Plan Comprensivo*) is tailored to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing North Chicago. Among its focal points would be the city's industrial sectors, the influence of Naval Station Great Lakes, and the role of educational institutions, such as local schools. Designed through a collaborative process involving local residents, business owners, civic leaders, and other stakeholders, the *Comprehensive Plan* proposes actionable strategies for land use, neighborhood revitalization, enhancements in public transportation, fostering community well-being, and support to local businesses and economic development. The overarching goal is to create a unified framework that directs various citywide efforts toward achieving a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future for North Chicago. By doing so, the *Comprehensive Plan* aims to enrich the quality of life for all community members and ensure the city's growth is both meaningful and beneficial.

Un *Plan Integral* sirve como una herramienta de gobernanza esencial que describe la visión y estrategia a largo plazo para el crecimiento y desarrollo de la ciudad en un periodo de tiempo predeterminado, que comúnmente varía de 10 a 20 años. El *Plan Comprensivo* de North Chicago está diseñado para abordar los desafíos y oportunidades únicos que enfrenta North Chicago. Entre sus puntos focales estarían los sectores industriales de la ciudad, la influencia de la Estación Naval Great Lakes y el papel de las instituciones educativas, como las escuelas locales.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2024

In 2016, North Chicago developed a Comprehensive Plan with a lighter touch, generally providing a basic framework for the city's future. As the city was beginning to delve deeper into this framework in early 2020, the global pandemic abruptly interrupted progress. The pandemic altered daily life significantly, reshaping how the community functioned and what it valued. This unforeseen interruption brought planning efforts to a standstill and highlighted new priorities and needs within the community.

During the pandemic, residents of North Chicago had a chance to experience their city from a new perspective, appreciating aspects like walkability, local businesses, and community spaces more deeply. These insights revealed the need for a more robust approach to planning that could adapt to the changed global landscape.

By 2022, it became clear that revisiting and updating the Comprehensive Plan was necessary. The city decided not to just continue where the 2016 plan left off but to completely rethink it in light of recent experiences and shifts in community priorities. This approach meant re-engaging with the community and re-evaluating the goals of the plan with a fresh perspective, focusing on sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity to better meet the current and future needs of North Chicago.

THE COLLECTIVE VISION
FOR THE CITY'S FUTURE
IS CENTERED AROUND
REVITALIZING KEY
SITES AND FOSTERING
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.

Stakeholder Summary

PLANNING PROCESS

The North Chicago Comprehensive Plan unfolds in a structured, three-phase process designed to shape the city's future development and growth. Each phase serves a specific purpose, from initial assessments to vision formation and finally, actionable implementation, ensuring a holistic approach to planning.

THREE PHASES

LAYIN' THE TRACKS

Phase 1 concluded by establishing a foundational understanding of existing conditions and community needs, involving a diverse range of stakeholders through various channels, and producing an existing conditions report and diagnostic report to guide future planning goals and strategies.

THE VISION BOARD

Phase 2 shifted the focus to formulating a shared vision for North Chicago's future, with stakeholders participating in visioning sessions to develop a balanced development plan, leading to evolved planning principles.

FROM TALK TO WALK

Phase 3 transformed these plans into action, finalizing the vision, crafting implementable strategies with an accountability framework, and creating a clear roadmap for implementation, setting the stage for the practical realization of the community's shared aspirations.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

The Comprehensive Plan isn't just a roadmap for policymakers; it has tangible, direct benefits for you as a resident of North Chicago, a business owner, or an invested stakeholder. By strategizing neighborhood revitalization, the plan can aim to enhance property values and improve the overall aesthetics of the community you call home. Plans for enhancements in public transportation could make your daily commute more efficient and less stressful, saving you valuable time and money. Actionable strategies in land use ensure that green spaces and recreational facilities are available, promoting community well-being and offering you and your family places to relax and exercise. A focus on supporting local businesses and economic development can translate into more job opportunities, possibly reducing the need for long commutes to work elsewhere. In essence, the Comprehensive Plan works to make North Chicago a better place to live, work, and raise a family, directly impacting your day-to-day life in a positive way.



In North Chicago, the updated Comprehensive Plan aims to fulfill several key functions:

- **Future Vision:** It establishes a community-supported long-term vision for North Chicago, guiding local government, staff, and partner agencies in planning and decision-making.
- **Land Use Framework:** The plan offers a detailed land use strategy that promotes optimal property use, reduces land use conflicts, and supports sustainable development. This framework is designed to enhance infrastructure, open spaces, transportation options, and economic health, ensuring the viability for future generations.
- **Public Investment Guide:** It directs the City Council in capital planning and investment in community facilities and infrastructure, supporting urban design, neighborhood conservation, and the enhancement of public spaces. The plan is also a critical tool for securing regional, state, and federal grants.
- **Private Investment Guide:** This plan communicates the city's policies on development and business opportunities, providing clarity and predictability to encourage stable and economically viable investments.

- **Implementation Program:** It identifies and prioritizes planning actions and strategies, delineating the roles of the city and its partners in implementation. It also explores potential partnerships and funding sources necessary for future projects.
- **Community Engagement Tool:** The planning process engages residents, city leadership, and stakeholders, facilitating a deeper understanding of the city's strengths and challenges. This engagement is intended to continue, influencing the plan's regular updates and the execution of specific initiatives.





THE VISION

The vision that inspires this Comprehensive Plan and the future of North Chicago came from the city's people. This Plan is a road map to achieve that vision. Through the implementation of this Plan, North Chicago will:

- *Be a diverse community where families can fulfill their dreams;*
- *Provide a safe and secure environment in which to live and work;*
- *Provide an excellent education for its children;*
- *Grow local entrepreneurship;*
- *Attract high-quality businesses to its downtown and commercial corridors;*
- *Attract investment in pharmaceutical and other clean industries;*
- *Create jobs for local residents;*
- *Create and sustain beautiful open spaces and recreational areas;*
- *Leverage the city's lakefront access;*
- *Nurture arts and culture that authentically reflect the city's diverse people;*
- *Invest in housing that meets the needs of a changing population;*
- *Provide increased options for mobility, from walking to biking to transit;*
- *Provide excellent city services;*
- *Support home ownership as a means of wealth-building and neighborhood stability;*
- *Develop under-used or vacant land into community assets;*
- *Respond to climate threats through creative adaptation;*

Together with its residents and its nonprofit and for-profit partners, City leaders will use this plan to build North Chicago's best future.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

P1 | Housing & Neighborhoods

Assesses North Chicago's housing needs in relation to the city's evolving demographics. Solutions support homeownership, home improvement, and the development of new housing products to meet changing needs.

1

P2 | Economic Development

Assesses the local business and consumer economies, commercial corridors, and opportunity sites. Solutions support industry retention, business attraction, the redevelopment of catalytic sites, and regulatory efficiencies.

2

P2 | Recreation & Green Infrastructure

Assesses current park and open space amenities and infrastructure, with solutions that address parks access, improved wellness and quality of life, ecological restoration, response to climate change, and better access to and use of the Greenbelt Nature Preserve.

3

P4 | Mobility & Transportation

Assesses current mobility networks including rail and other transit, sidewalks, roads, bike connections, and trails. Solutions address improving pedestrian and bike networks, making roads safer, and integrating city networks with IDOT and LCDOT systems.

4

P5 | Life & Culture

Assesses how the city recognizes its authentic and diverse population through culture, community, and events. Solutions support fostering positive images of the city, celebrating local cultures through arts and events, and integrating the city's industrial tradition into a positive identity.

5

P6 | Municipal Services & Utilities

Assesses safety, city services, and water and energy infrastructure. Solutions include leveraging community belonging for immigrant families, enhancing community safety through community policing, and addressing environmental resilience of infrastructure.

6

ABOUT NORTH CHICAGO

Regional Setting

North Chicago is situated in Lake County, Illinois, a region known for its blend of urban and suburban settings, as well as its scenic lakes and recreational opportunities. Lake County is one of the northernmost counties in the state and borders Wisconsin to the north. It's a part of the greater Chicago metropolitan area, is in close proximity to Milwaukee, and serves as a significant suburban and economic hub. The City's neighbors reflect the diverse character of Lake County itself. To the north is Waukegan, another industrial city with a large harbor and recreational facilities along Lake Michigan. To the south is Lake Bluff, which contrasts sharply as an affluent residential community. On the western border is Green Oaks, known for its more rural atmosphere and open spaces. Each neighboring community has its own distinct identity, from the more urban character of Waukegan to the upscale residential feel of Lake Bluff, offering a range of experiences and resources that can complement North Chicago. Together, these communities form a tapestry that represents the broader social and economic spectrum of Lake County. North Chicago's location amidst these diverse neighbors offers both challenges and opportunities for economic development, community partnerships, and regional planning.

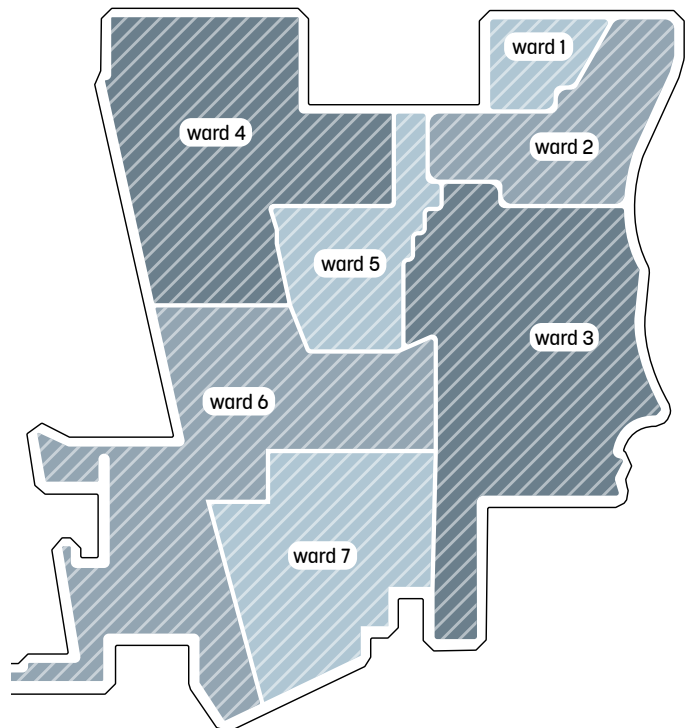


Seven Wards

The city's wards are strategically mapped to encompass both residential and commercial sectors. This helps ensure balanced representation, with alderpersons being attentive to the needs of both homeowners and businesses. Historically, as well as recently, North Chicago's wards have seen shifts in boundaries due to population changes, urban development, and other demographic changes. Periodic redistricting ensures that each ward remains roughly equal in population, adhering to the principle of "one person, one vote."

The ward system in North Chicago fosters a sense of local community and ensures that residents have a direct line of communication to their city government through their elected alderperson. This council member is tasked not only with policy-making but also with addressing day-to-day issues, from road repairs to safety concerns, specific to their ward.

Aldermen from each ward come together in the North Chicago City Council, collaborating to ensure the holistic development of the city while also advocating for the specific needs of their wards. This dynamic creates a balance between city-wide initiatives and localized projects, ensuring that North Chicago remains vibrant, responsive, and inclusive in its governance.



Naval Station Great Lakes

The Naval Station Great Lakes is the U.S. Navy's only boot camp, serving as the Navy's largest training installation and one of Lake County's major employers. Located in North Chicago, the station has significant impacts on the local and regional area. The station is widely recognized as a central hub for naval training, drawing recruits from across the nation. It often attracts high-profile visits from government and military officials and can serve as a mobilization center for naval forces, thereby playing a crucial role in the United States' military readiness.

The Naval Station Great Lakes has a rich history dating back to its establishment in 1911. It played a crucial role during World War I as a training ground for sailors, serving as one of the main induction and training centers for naval personnel. The station expanded significantly during this period, both in size and capacity.

During World War II, the station saw another massive expansion and became a critical part of the U.S. Navy's efforts. It was responsible for training hundreds of thousands of recruits, helping to bolster the U.S. military presence in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. This ever-evolving base includes cutting-edge training facilities and simulations to prepare sailors for modern naval warfare.

THE FLUCTUATING
POPULATION AT THE
NAVAL STATION,
VARYING FROM 4,700
TO 12,000 RECRUITS,
CREATES OPPORTUNITIES
FOR ENGAGEMENT
WITH THE CITY AND ITS
AMENITIES.

Stakeholder Summary

The Naval Station Great Lakes has not only been instrumental in various military campaigns but has also served as a venue for social change. It was one of the first naval bases to train women and minorities, reflecting broader changes in American society. Overall, the station has been a focal point in American naval history, contributing to both military strategy and social evolution.

While its role is nationally significant for military purposes, its localized economic impact on the North Chicago community is limited. The facility's self-contained nature means that trainees seldom leave the base, and many stationed personnel view the academy as a self-sufficient entity, reducing interactions with the local economy and community.

Despite its prominent role in national military training, the Naval Station's impact on North Chicago's local economic landscape is not fully maximized. The station does bring a certain level of national attention to the area, including occasional visits from government and military officials. The military base's self-contained character has curtailed the extent to which it integrates with and economically benefits the surrounding community. The station thus presents a complex picture: it elevates North Chicago's national profile but has not been a panacea for local economic challenges.



STRAIGHT OUTTA HISTORY

Contributing planning efforts and initiatives that have shaped, and continue to influence, community development in and around the City of North Chicago serve, in many ways, as blueprints for the city's future growth.

PHASE 1:

Early Settlement and Industrial Growth

19TH CENTURY

In the 19th century, North Chicago began as a small settlement with humble beginnings. The construction of the Chicago & North Western Railway in 1855 played a pivotal role in its early development, providing easy access to transportation and attracting industrial investments. The railway station facilitated the transportation of goods and people, contributing to the establishment of several industries in the area.

As industries like steel manufacturing, shipbuilding, and meatpacking emerged, North Chicago's population gradually increased. By the 1880s, the community saw a notable population rise, reaching approximately 1,500 residents. The booming industrial sector attracted laborers from different backgrounds, including European immigrants and African Americans from the Southern states, seeking employment opportunities and a better life.

The community's early diversity laid the foundation for the cultural richness it would later embrace. However, with rapid industrialization came challenges such as housing shortages and inadequate infrastructure, issues that early urban planners grappled with in their quest to meet the needs of a growing population.

PHASE 2:

Incorporation and Naval Presence

LATE 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY

In 1891, North Chicago was officially incorporated as a city, and its population continued to grow steadily. However, it was the establishment of the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in 1911 that marked a significant turning point for the community. The Naval Center became a major employer in the area, attracting military personnel and their families from all over the United States. As a result, the community became more culturally diverse.

The military presence also impacted the local economy, as businesses catering to the needs of the military personnel flourished. North Chicago became a hub for military-related services and support, solidifying its reputation as a defense-oriented community. This period witnessed a population surge, with approximately 8,000 residents, reflecting the impact of the Naval Training Center and the broader industrial growth in the region.

As North Chicago's population became more diverse, the city drew Eastern European immigrants seeking employment, notably at companies like Washburn and Moen.



PHASE 3:

Population Boom and Urban Development

MID-20TH CENTURY

Following World War II, North Chicago experienced a significant population boom and urban development. The post-war economic boom led to an influx of residents seeking housing and job opportunities in the expanding industries. In 1922, Dr. Wallace Abbott moved his new company, The Abbott Laboratories, from Ravenswood in Chicago to its present location on Sheridan Road at Audrey Nixon Blvd. By the 1940s, the community's population reached around 15,000, reflecting a rapid growth rate.

The demand for housing prompted urban planners to embark on large-scale urban renewal initiatives during the 1950s and 1960s. Older structures were demolished to make way for modern housing projects and commercial developments. While these efforts brought modernization, they also resulted in the displacement of some low-income residents, raising concerns about gentrification and equitable development.

The community's diversity continued to grow during this period, with African American, Hispanic, and Asian communities making significant contributions to the area's cultural fabric. North Chicago's unique identity as a multicultural community started taking shape, with its residents embracing a sense of shared belonging.

PHASE 4:

Economic Shifts

(LATE 20TH CENTURY - PRESENT)

As the late 20th century unfolded, North Chicago faced economic shifts and changing demographics. The decline of traditional manufacturing industries presented challenges, prompting local leaders and urban planners to focus on diversifying the economy. The community began investing in other sectors such as healthcare, education, and services, which provided stability and new opportunities for residents.

Throughout this phase, North Chicago's population fluctuated, with the 1980 census recording approximately 24,000 residents. However, by the year 2000, the community's population rose to around 32,000, signifying a resurgence in growth and development.

Amidst these changes, North Chicago continued to celebrate its diversity. Immigrant communities and foreign-born residents enriched the cultural landscape, contributing to the community's spirit of inclusivity and multiculturalism. This commitment to embracing diverse backgrounds remains an essential aspect of North Chicago's identity in the present day.

Modern urban planning initiatives have emphasized sustainability, equitable development, and community engagement. Projects focus on enhancing public transportation, creating green spaces, and ensuring affordable housing options for all residents. Community organizations and engagement programs have played a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration among North Chicago's diverse population.

PHASE 5:

Present-Day Urban Planning Initiatives

(LATE 20TH CENTURY - NOW)

As of recently, North Chicago stands as a resilient community that balances its historical roots with future aspirations. The city's population has grown steadily and is a dynamic mix of generations, cultures, and backgrounds. This diversity serves as a wellspring of creativity, innovation, and collaboration, enriching the city's social fabric.

North Chicago's neighborhoods are an exhibition of its architectural evolution, with older homes and some modern infrastructure.

At the heart of North Chicago lies a commitment to unity and harmony. The city's cultural celebrations, festivals, and community gatherings provide platforms for residents to come together, celebrate their differences, and forge lasting bonds.

NORTH CHICAGO ASSET MAPPING

North Chicago boasts a diverse range of assets that make it a unique and resource-rich community. The presence of two Metra train stations enhances connectivity to the broader Chicago Metropolitan area, while Rosalind Franklin University and charter schools contribute to educational diversity. Financial institutions like banks support economic stability.

- 1 **Rosalind Franklin University:** A significant educational asset, this university elevates North Chicago's profile in healthcare and scientific research.
- 2 **Charter Schools:** These educational institutions offer alternative learning opportunities and contribute to the diversity of educational options in the city.
- 3 **The Mosaic Hub:** A multifaceted community center that hosts a variety of activities, including the CHILL lounge focused on learning and lifestyle development.
- 4 **Naval Station Great Lakes & Weekly Navy Graduations:** A military presence that brings both national attention and potential economic benefits to North Chicago. Regular ceremonies attract visitors and add a unique cultural element to North Chicago.
- 5 **Captain James A Lovell Federal Health Care Center (VA Hospital):** Provides healthcare services focused on veterans, adding to North Chicago's healthcare landscape.
- 6 **Veterans Memorial:** A unique landmark that reflects the WWII Black Navy Veterans, honoring the men and women who have served the nation.

WE FIND COMMUNITY IN MANY PLACES AROUND NORTH CHICAGO. SCHOOLS ARE GETTING BETTER BUT THERE IS MORE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.

Stakeholder Summary

- 7 **Museum of National American Sailors:** one of 10 Navy Museums that are operated by the Naval Heritage History & Heritage Command.
- 8 **Military Presence:** Beyond the Navy Installation, the overall military presence adds to the city's national relevance, including military families.
- 9 **North Chicago and Great Lakes Metra Stations:** These transit hubs connect North Chicago to the broader Chicago metropolitan area, facilitating easy commutes and business connections.
- 10 **Old National Bank and Great Lakes Credit Union:** Financial stability and potential partners in community projects are provided by these established banking institutions.
- 11 **Foss Park Golf Course:** This recreational facility adds to the city's leisure activities and could be a venue for local and regional events.
- 12 **Greenbelt Forest Preserve & Cultural Center:** a natural area offering recreational and educational opportunities, surrounded by diverse ecosystems.
- 13 **Water Supply from Lake Michigan:** The capacity to draw up to 40 million gallons a day can be leveraged as an economic development tool.

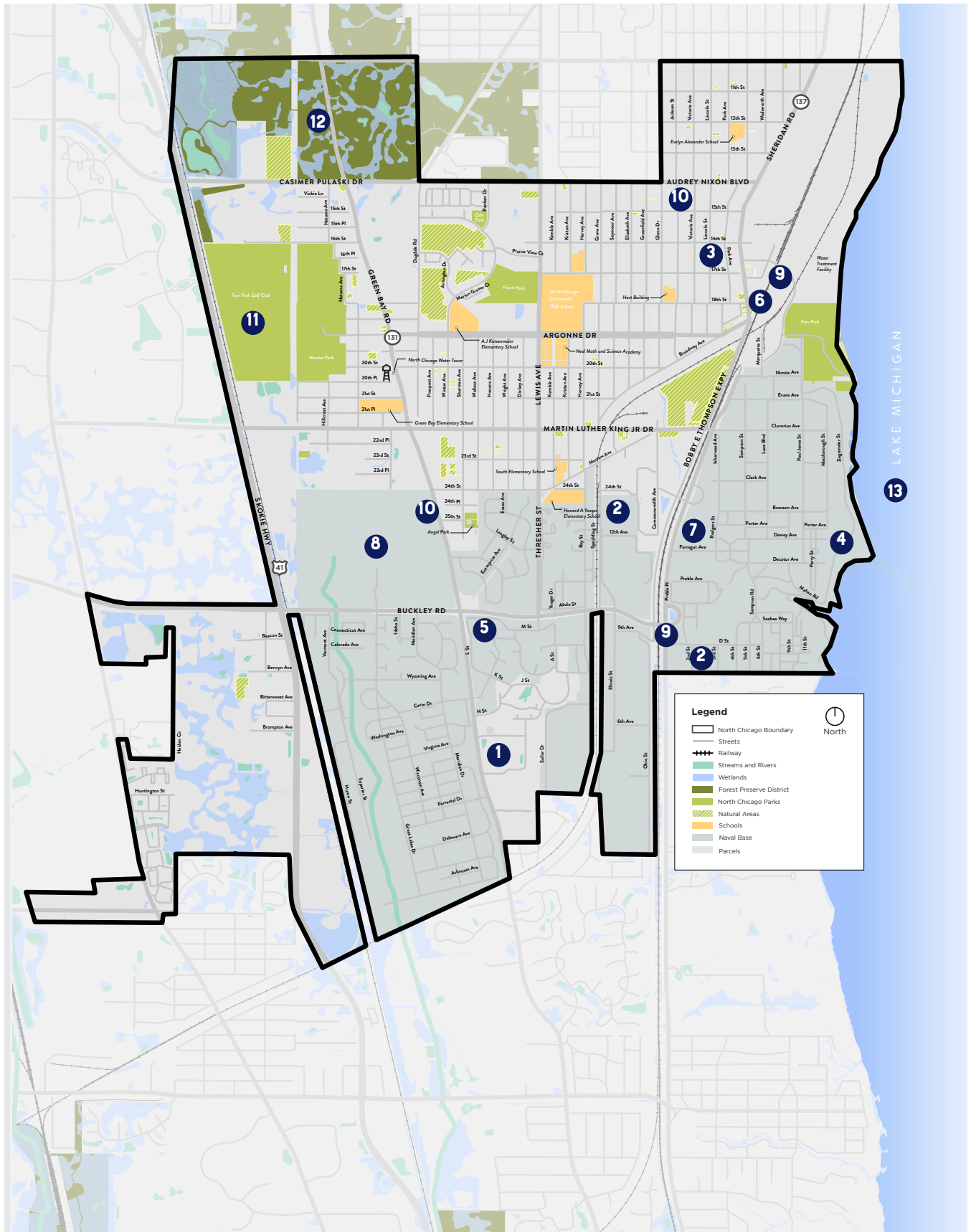


FIGURE 1: ASSET MAPPING

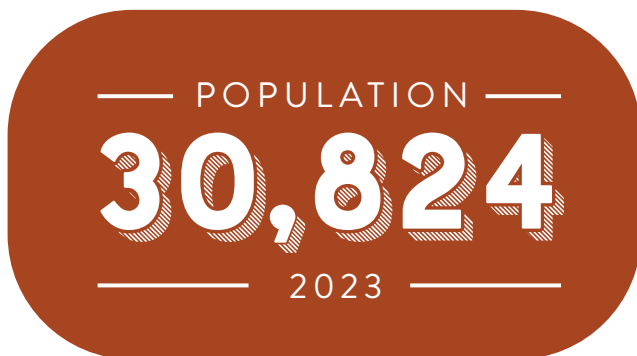
DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Population

North Chicago's population includes those who have made their home in the city as well as the transient residents at Naval Station Great Lakes who are in North Chicago for military training. The Census counts military personnel living in group quarters, such as barracks and dormitories, at the military installation where they are in residence. The inclusion of the Naval Station's trainee population has been a historical advantage for the city, in that population affects the allocation of certain federal benefits, such as Community Development Block Grants.

After decades of gradual decline, North Chicago's population trend appears to be stabilizing. The current estimate for the 2023 population is 30,824, on par with the 2020 Census population and about even with projections for 2028. If Naval Station Great Lakes is not included, North Chicago's population was 15,767 at the time of the 2020 Census, up 1% from 2010.

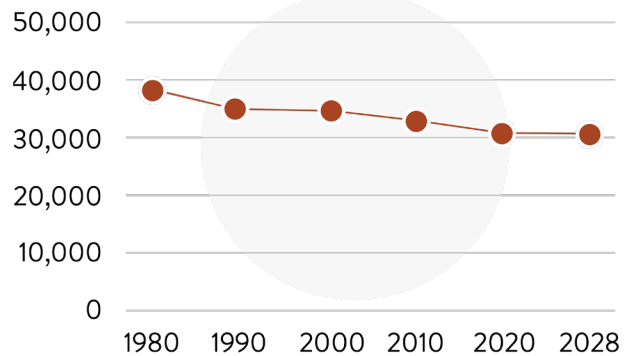
North Chicago's population peaked in 1970 at 47,275. The decades-long population losses experienced by many industrial cities, including North Chicago, reflect long-term shifts in the manufacturing sector and the global movement of jobs.



4,548

FAMILIES

North Chicago Population
1980 to 2020, and 2028 Projection

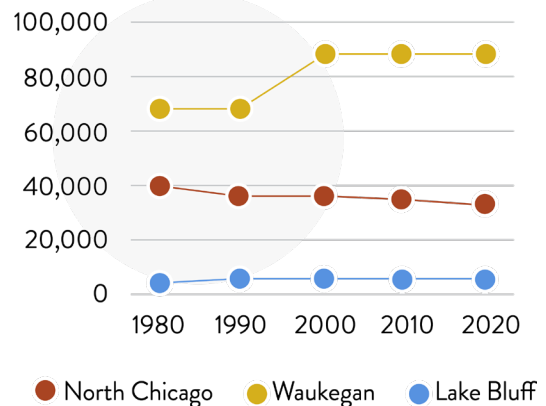


Population in North Chicago has at times fluctuated more dramatically as a result of functional changes at Naval Station Great Lakes and the periodic realignment of military training facilities nationally. Currently, between 36,000 and 40,000 recruits rotate through the Naval Station's 10-week boot camp each year, with each graduating class consisting of 4,700 to 12,000 recruits, depending on time of year.

Any future changes to the size of the Naval Station's training program will also affect North Chicago's total population. This means the city's population growth or loss can happen more quickly than in non-military settings where shifts tend to happen gradually over many years.

The populations of North Chicago's neighbors have trended differently. The population of Lake Bluff, a much smaller village, has remained essentially flat since 1980, while the population of Waukegan has grown by 76% during the same period.

North Chicago and Peer Population
1980 to 2020



Household Size

Average household size in North Chicago, excluding the Naval Station, was 2.99 persons in 2020, larger than the US average of 2.5 persons. North Chicago households may be larger for two primary reasons, including having more children at home, and some households containing extended family or multi-generational family units. Larger household size can have implications for Comprehensive Plan strategies, especially in relation to future housing types, sizes, and configuration.

Naval Station trainees typically live in group quarters while other active members of the military at the Naval Station may rent traditional homes (single-family or apartments) from military housing contractors.

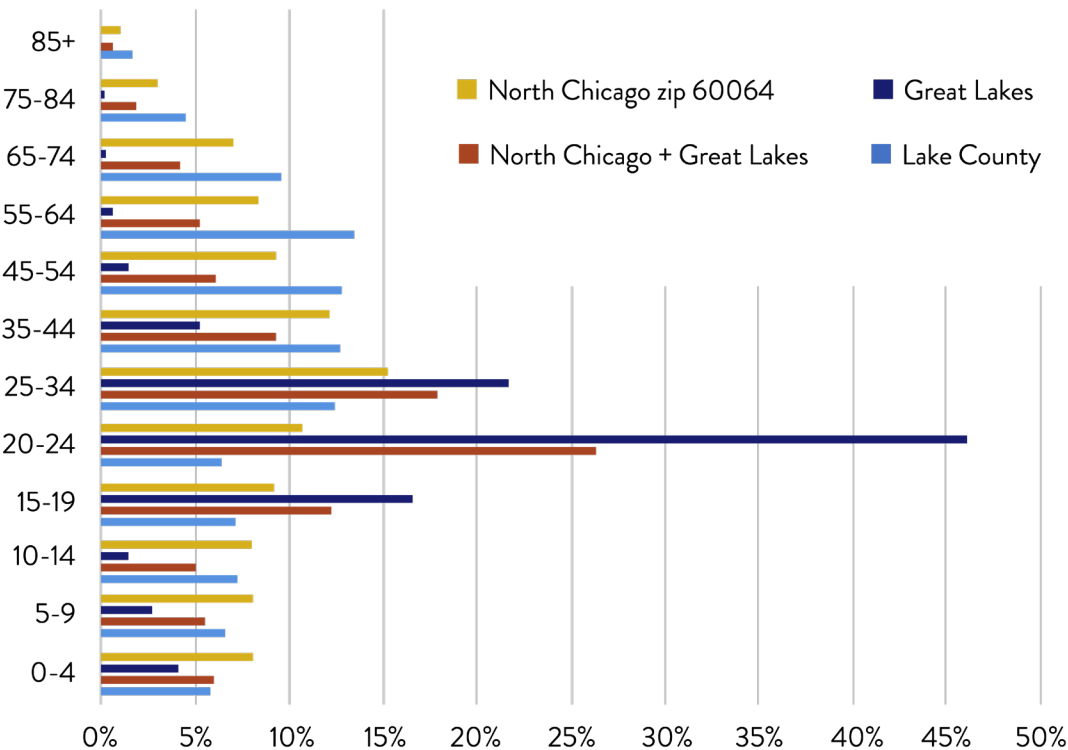
2.99
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Age & Generations

North Chicago’s median age is exceptionally young, currently estimated at 24.1 years old in 2023. Even when the Naval Station population is isolated from the city’s data, the median age for the city is still remarkable, at 28.5 years. The median age for those living at Naval Station Great Lakes is just 22.7 years. This median includes Great Lakes residents living in group quarters on the Naval Station – who are likely 17 to 20 years old – as well as personnel and families living in military housing outside the fence line.

Given the predominance of younger residents, the age bracket distribution for the city’s population is atypical compared to other places. The differences become visible when age comparisons are charted for North Chicago’s two dominant zip codes, to Lake County. Differences in population distribution by age bracket and by geography are illustrated in the following chart. The most dramatic difference can be seen in the 20 to 24 age bracket: Only 11% of residents from the North Chicago zip code 60064 belong to this group. In comparison, this age bracket comprises nearly half (46%) of the population in the Naval Station Great Lakes zip code 60088. Meanwhile, only 6% of Lake County falls in the 20 to 24 age bracket.

Population Percentage by Age Bracket

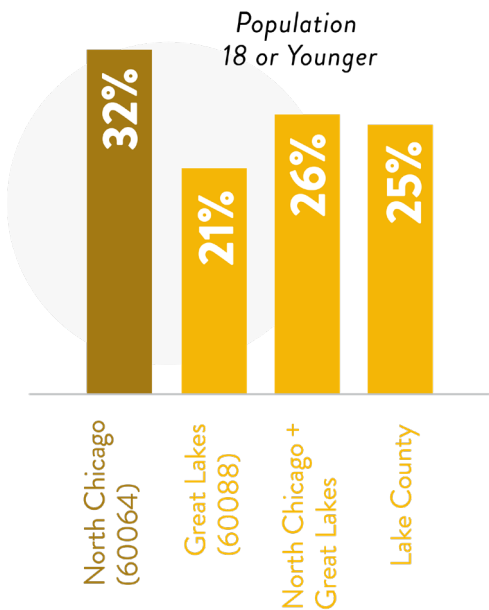


The youthfulness of North Chicago’s population is hard to overstate. It compares to a US median age of 38.1 years, and Lake County’s median age of 38.7 years.

As the US population ages, a different dynamic is playing out in North Chicago. Because the Naval Station Great Lakes population is always in transition and constantly replenished, the age of its residents is likely to stay about the same in coming years, while the median age for the rest of North Chicago is likely to gradually edge older – though it will remain younger than the US median. As North Chicago families move into their late 20s and 30s, they are in their family-formation years, a life stage that has important implications for planning of housing, schools, jobs, and retail.

Children At Home

In addition to the influence of military ages at the Naval Station, households in North Chicago zip code 60064 have far more children living at home (32%) than either Great Lakes zip code 60088 (21%) or Lake County (25%). This results in a greater demand on North Chicago School District 187, which serves the entire city, relative to other parts of Lake County.



Generational Differences

Millennials are the largest living generation in the United States, but not in North Chicago. The largest generational population in the city overall and in each of the two zip code sub areas is Generation Z, though the proportion of Gen Z in Great Lakes 60088 is more than double that of North Chicago (zip code 60064.) The next largest generation in both zip codes is Millennials, who represent a larger portion of North Chicago proper. For Great Lakes, Millennials almost certainly live in military housing communities outside the fence line.

GENERATION	AGE IN 2023	60064	60088
Generation Alpha / Polars (Born 2013 or Later)	Less than 10 years old	18%	7%
Generation Z (Born 1995 to 2012)	11 to 28 years old	32%	73%
Millennials (Born 1980 to 1994)	29 to 48 years old	25%	19%
Generation X (Born 1965 to 1979)	49 to 58 years old	9%	1%
Baby Boomers (Born 1946 to 1964)	59 to 77 years old	13%	1%
Seniors (Born 1946 to 1964)	78 years & older	3%	0%

CHARACTERISTICS OF GEN Z

Gen Z makes up 32% of North Chicago proper’s population (zip code 60064) and a whopping 73% of Great Lakes (zip code 60088). Members of Gen Z, who were all born after 1995, have never known the world without the internet (The first iPhone was released when they were 12 years old.) Everyone in this generation is a digital native, which has affected how they socialize, communicate, and work.

- Gen Z is the most racially and ethnically diverse population in the US that has ever lived, and it is generally considered to be the last generation where one race accounts for a majority.
- Gen Z has pushed norms of class, sexual orientation, and gender identity, adopting a different set of values from their parents.

- At the same time, this is a generation that has struggled with high rates of anxiety and mental health challenges. An awareness of this public health concern may influence some planning goals for the city.
- In a related public health concern, members of Gen Z are less physically active than the generations that preceded them. This is largely attributed to increased screen time, which has taken the place of after-school and after-work outdoor activities like pick-up games. This trend also contributes to social isolation. Addressing such health challenges may also be reflected in Comprehensive Plan recommendations, one example being potential park and recreation enhancements.
- Following in the footsteps of Millennials (below), Gen Z'ers live a "slow-life strategy". They wait longer to reach traditional life markers or rites of passage, including getting their driver's license, drinking alcohol, dating, or working for pay. In general, they have been slower to move into independent roles of adulthood, including getting married and having children.
- Gen Z is more politically active than Millennials, who preceded them, but not necessarily in the ways one might expect of a youthful population. They believe the odds are stacked against them in life and this has led to political polarization within the cohort.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MILLENNIALS

Millennials, who comprise 25% of zip code 60064 and 19% of 60088, will also be important in planning for North Chicago's future, as they are now in their prime adult years, which includes family formation and child-rearing. While not a majority in North Chicago, Millennials are now the largest living cohort in the US and their influence is vast.

- Most Millennials are digital natives, having adopted online tools in childhood. Today, they do much of their shopping online and, for those who are knowledge workers, much of their work online.
- They are mostly the children of Baby Boomers. Their lives were impacted by the Great Recession of 2008, slowing their ability to reach certain life milestones, like living independently or buying a car or a house. While Millennials have largely recovered economically, the Great Recession interrupted their path and influenced their goals.
- Millennials as a generation live a "slow life strategy": They often marry and have children later than preceding generations and tend to have fewer offspring. Although they are currently in their family formation years, the trend for this generation diverges from the past, with a smaller proportion of Millennials choosing to have children compared to their predecessors.
- As a result of smaller families, some Millennials have greater spending discretion than previous generations. They may also need smaller homes with fewer bedrooms.



Income

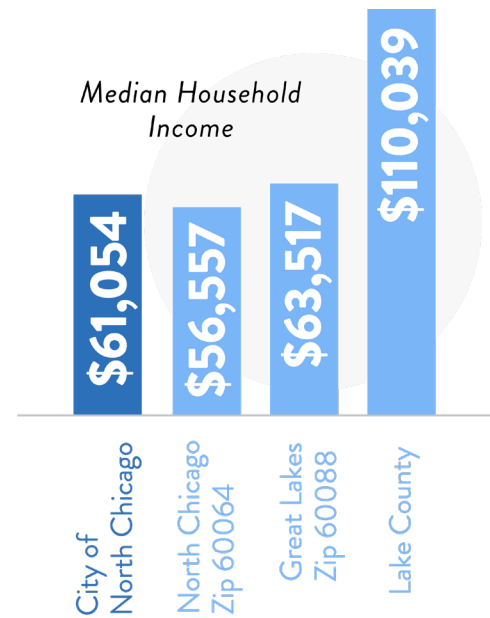
Similar to other demographic characteristics, income in North Chicago is also influenced by the presence of Naval Station Great Lakes – but in non-intuitive ways.

For economic development and urban planning purposes, income is generally considered by household rather than individual incomes because households function as consumer units, regardless of the number of earners.

According to ESRI’s 2022 estimates, the median income for North Chicago households is \$61,054. When incomes are sorted by the two zip code subareas, median income for North Chicago zip code 60064 (\$56,557) is slightly lower than for Great Lakes zip code 60088 (\$63,517). Lake County, which includes some wealthy Chicago suburbs, has a median household income of \$110,039. As a point of reference, the US median is \$74,580.

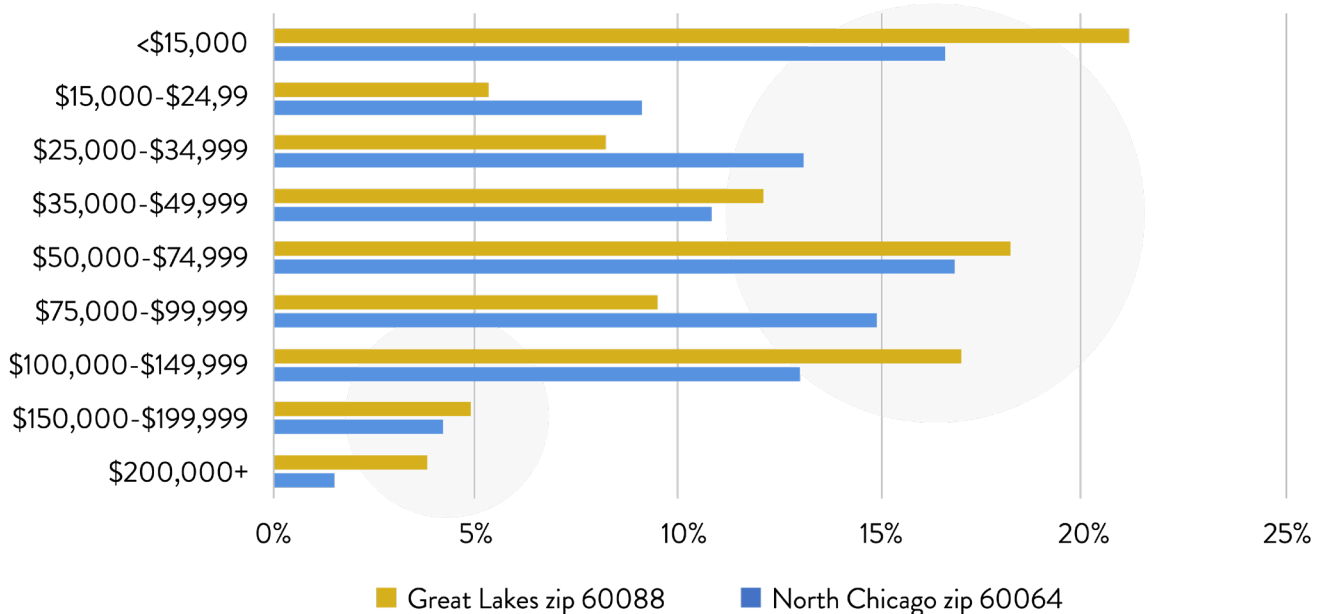
Subtler differences can be observed in the distribution of household incomes across income brackets. These differences are influenced by both the military pay scale and by the significant presence of poverty among North Chicago households.

In Great Lakes zip code 60088, 21% of households earn less than \$15,000. The likelihood is that most of these households are not necessarily living in poverty, but that the low median income reflects the large number of people earning the military E-1 Enlisted salary, currently \$13,929 (2023). Though



their earnings are low, training recruits have many of their daily living needs provided by the Naval Station, including housing and meals. The large number of people who show up at the bottom of the income scale, attributed to the anomaly in pay versus expenses, is contrasted by people at the higher end of the income scale. Great Lakes 60088 has proportionately more upper-income households than the rest of the city: 26% of Great Lakes households earn more than \$100,000, compared to 19% in North Chicago (zip code 60064.) This finding can likely also be attributed to military pay scales and the higher salaries earned by officers and senior personnel, who likely live in military housing outside the fence line.

Household Income Distribution by North Chicago Zip Code Subareas



Poverty, Low, & Moderate Income

“Poverty” is defined by the US Census Bureau and is based on the Consumer Price Index, household income, and family size. Because it is a national standard not adjusted for geography and local conditions, it has limited utility in understanding the challenges facing North Chicago households. According to the federal standard, 22% of North Chicago households are at or below the federal poverty level.

A benchmark that can be more meaningful than the federal poverty rate is the criteria for low and moderate income. The parameters for low and moderate incomes, which vary by family size, reflect local conditions and therefore provide more insight into residents’ circumstances. Low income is defined as a household income less than 50% of the Area Median Income

(AMI), and moderate income is between 50% and 80% of AMI, but these thresholds are narrowed further depending on family size.

North Chicago is part of the Chicago-Joliet-Naperville Metro, the defined area for which the AMI is calculated at \$112,300 in 2023. Because income thresholds vary by family size in addition to AMI, low income for a family of four in the Chicago-Joliet-Naperville Metro is defined as earning less than \$55,150. Moderate income is defined as being between \$55,151 and \$88,250 for a family of four. For a family of three (the approximate average household size in North Chicago), low income is less than \$49,650, and moderate income is between \$49,651 and \$79,450.

The following table shows the proportion of North Chicago households falling below the AMI, those who are considered low income, and those who are considered median income. The table reflects data for the whole city and for zip code 60064, which excludes the military population.

TABLE 2: INCOME PERCENTAGES

NORTH CHICAGO	% BELOW AMI	% BELOW \$55,000	% BELOW \$79,450
North Chicago City	82%	50%	67%
North Chicago 60064	84%	53%	69%

Race & Ethnicity

While North Chicago’s diversity has expanded over the past 20 years, the nature of this diversity has changed. The Black population has remained essentially stable at 28% to 30% over the period, while the white population has declined significantly, from 48% to 34%. At the same time, the Hispanic population has grown, from 27% in 2010 to an estimated 38% today.

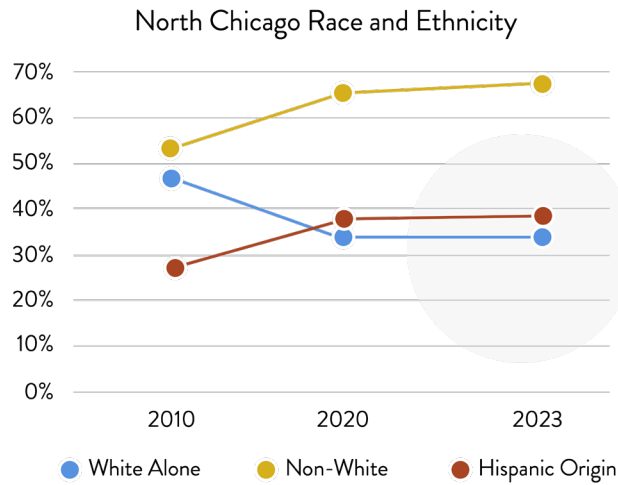
“Hispanic Origin” is considered an ethnicity, not a race. However, in recent years, two reporting trends are likely influencing both the slightly declining Black population and the rapidly declining white population. For those of Hispanic origin, some people who are descendants of indigenous Central Americans consider themselves another race, and therefore may have identified themselves in the Census as “Some Other Race Alone”. In a separate trend, many people who

might previously have self-identified as “Black” may now identify as “Two or More Races”. Regardless of such self-identification trends, North Chicago is increasingly diverse, but that diversity looks different than it did in earlier censuses.

TABLE 1: RACE AND ETHNICITY

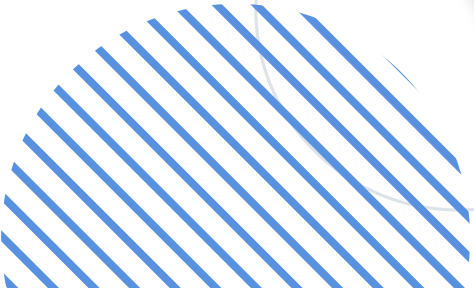
RACE AND ETHNICITY	2010	2020	2023 (EST)
White Alone	48%	35%	34%
Black Alone	30%	28%	28%
American Indian Alone	1%	1%	1%
Asian Alone	4%	5%	5%
Pacific Islander Alone	0%	0%	0%
Some Other Race Alone	13%	20%	21%
Two or More Races	4%	11%	11%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	27%	36%	38%

The chart provides a clearer view of the diversity trendline by grouping together all individuals who identify as a race other than white. (As noted above, some individuals who identify as being of Hispanic ethnicity may identify as white or a race other than white.)



With 38% of North Chicago’s population identifying as Hispanic, addressing this segment is particularly important in this planning effort. Within the Hispanic cohort, 12% were foreign born (in Latin America) and 26% were born in the US.

Based on ESRI’s Tapestry lifestyle segmentation system, the Hispanic population in North Chicago mostly falls into a group called “Fresh Ambitions”. These households, as a group, would be categorized as low income. Most are renters; many are supporting large families with children. At the same time, many are wiring money to assist family in their home country. Most speak English in addition to Spanish, yet only one-third of this population segment has a high school diploma.



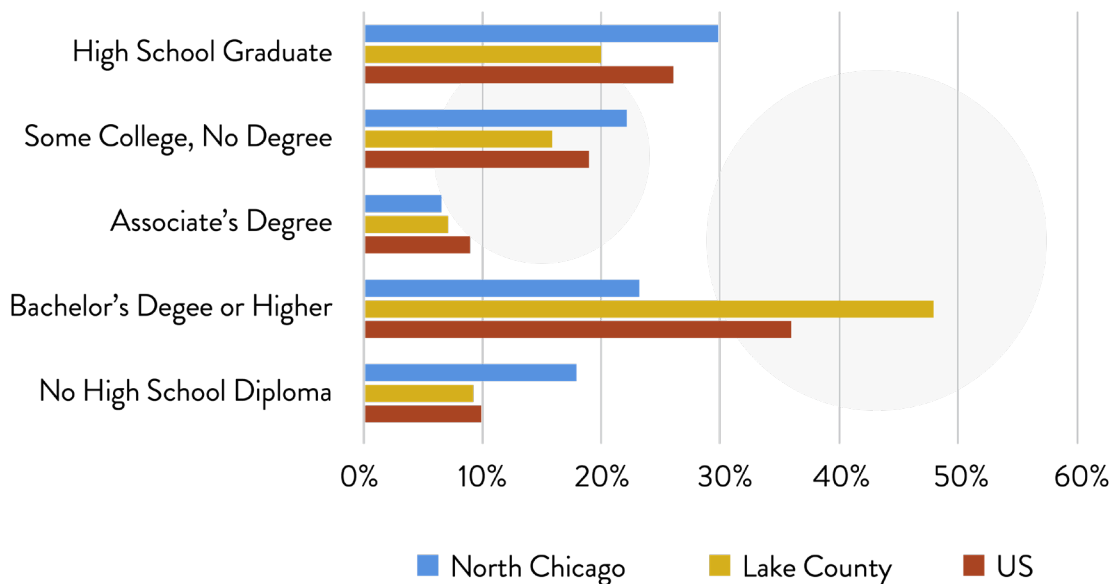
Education

North Chicago residents struggle with educational attainment. Of the population over 25 years old, a high school degree is the highest level of education for 30% of residents. The disparity between North Chicago and neighboring communities becomes clearer at post-high school educational attainment: Only 23% of North Chicago residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. That compares to 48% for Lake County and 36% for the US as a whole. The rate of those North Chicago residents over 25 who lack a high school diploma (18%) is double that for the Lake County (9%), and almost double the national rate (10%).

These educational barriers – a low percentage of the population who has post-secondary education, and the high percentage of residents who have not completed high school – present limitations on the jobs North Chicagoans may be qualified to fill. This is reflected in lower household incomes discussed earlier, and higher rates of unemployment, discussed below.



Comparison of Education Attainment



Employment

Among those in the labor force, 58% are civilian workers and 42% are members of the armed services. The civilian labor force includes 9% who are currently unemployed but actively looking for work.

Among North Chicago residents there is an almost even split between those who work in white collar jobs (48%) and those who work in blue collar or service industry jobs (52%). Sorted by industry sector, civilian employment among North Chicago residents breaks down as follows:

Employment by Industry





NORTH CHICAGO COMMUNITY DAYS
2023

NC
above
Abbott Fund
Allendale
4 Kids

NORTH CHICAGO
NC
above
NCCF
YouthBuild



WE HEARD YA!

NORTH CHICAGO SPEAKS

The engagement process for the North Chicago Comprehensive Plan was meticulously crafted with a strong emphasis on inclusivity and thoroughness. Recognizing the importance of representation at every step, the Steering Committee and Plan Commission took proactive measures to ensure that every community member felt seen and heard. To guarantee this, all branding and collateral materials underwent translation into Spanish. This step wasn't just a procedural one; it was a conscious effort to include the Latino community, recognizing their significant presence and influence in North Chicago. By doing so, it was ensured that critical information wasn't just available but also accessible in the heart language of many residents. To capture diverse viewpoints, the team went beyond traditional public meetings, opting to go where people naturally gather. By joining community popup events, the planning effort was able to tap into a wider range of perspectives, ensuring a more complete and representative input for the Comprehensive Plan.

El proceso de participación para el Plan Integral de North Chicago se diseñó meticulosamente con un fuerte énfasis en la inclusividad. Reconociendo la importancia de representación en cada etapa, el Comité Directivo y la Comisión del Plan tomaron medidas proactivas para que cada miembro de la comunidad se sintiera reconocido. Para asegurar esto, todos los materiales de marca se tradujeron al español, resaltando el compromiso con la comunidad Latino y su influencia en North Chicago. El equipo también optó por ir más allá de las reuniones públicas tradicionales, buscando lugares donde la gente se reúne naturalmente.

STAKEHOLDER
INTERVIEWS

STEERING
COMMITTEE



COMMUNITY
DAYS



& MORE

SOCCER
LEAGUE



COMMUNITY
WORKSHOP

INFORMATIVE
VIDEOS

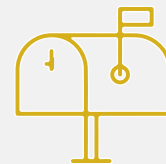


BILINGUAL
ENGAGEMENT

ONLINE
WORKSHOP



PROJECT BRAND
& WEBSITE



MAILERS

3,856 sent

ENGAGE

200+

ENGAGEMENT TOUCH POINTS

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, composed of Plan Commission liaisons and key city staff, has been an integral part of the North Chicago Comprehensive Plan from its inception. Serving as the project's guiding force, the committee has been actively involved in setting the direction, reviewing progress, and engaging at various milestones. This collaborative approach ensures that the plan is aligned with the city's objectives and incorporates a broad spectrum of insights. The Steering Committee is committed to remaining engaged throughout the entire planning process, providing ongoing guidance to adapt strategies as needed and to ensure the plan's successful implementation.

Stakeholder Interviews

Over the course of three days, a comprehensive series of stakeholder interviews was conducted to gather invaluable insights for the North Chicago Comprehensive Plan. Participants represented a diverse cross-section of the community and included civic leaders, planning and zoning officials, local businesses, religious organizations, and advocacy groups. The Mayor and Alderpersons offered governance perspectives, while organizations like CMAP and the Planning and Zoning Commission provided expert views on urban planning and policy. Representatives from Naval Station Great Lakes and the Veterans Administration contributed a military and veteran perspective, and key employers in the area, like AbbVie and Abbott, shed light on economic considerations. Other community stakeholders such as Foss Park District and North Chicago Library brought recreational and educational viewpoints, while various housing agencies focused on affordability and inclusivity. These interviews served to create a multi-faceted understanding of the community's needs, opportunities, and challenges, all of which are crucial for drafting a comprehensive and effective plan.

Community Input

To ensure a diverse range of voices were heard in shaping the North Chicago Comprehensive Plan, several interactive approaches were utilized for gathering resident input. Over two days, the planning team was present at the city's popular annual event, "Community Days," facilitating casual dialogues and listening to community concerns. Additionally, a formal community workshop was hosted at Neal Math & Science Academy to provide a setting for more structured feedback. Over 30 community members shared their thoughts and feedback on topics including housing, transportation, economic vitality, park and recreation, sustainability, and more. A Virtual Open House was made available online, supported by informational videos to walk participants through key elements and topics. All these efforts were bilingual, offered in both English and Spanish, to include the city's Latino population in the dialogue.



WHAT'S TOP OF MIND

Through a series of community consultations, North Chicago residents had the opportunity to provide insights on a wide range of topics such as housing, businesses, downtown revitalization, transportation, and safety. This valuable feedback has been synthesized into a vision framework that outlines the community's challenges as well as potential opportunities. By combining this community input with professional analysis, a strategic approach will be developed to guide change that aligns with current conditions and meets the aspirations of the community for the future character of North Chicago.

WHAT'S TOP OF MIND IS A LOT OF THINGS FOR ME AND MY FAMILY BUT I WOULD SAY SAFETY AND THE NEED FOR BETTER HOUSING OPTIONS STANDS OUT THE MOST!

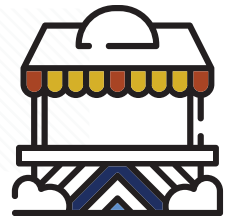
Stakeholder Summary

HOUSING | VIVENDA



On the topic of housing, North Chicago residents have diverse but strongly held views. There is a sentiment that the city needs less low-income housing and more accessibility to different housing options. Some residents see a significant need for downtown development, supporting a much needed increase in business activity. There is concern about the lack of thorough housing inspections, as residents find the costs of necessary repairs to be expensive. Seniors in the community express a desire for independent living options, such as ranch-style housing. Property taxes emerged as a divisive issue; some residents feel that the high rates do not correspond with the level of services received, such as snow removal and school quality, while others don't find the taxes to be excessively high. Nevertheless, concerns were voiced about the city's infrastructure, from potholes to cleanliness, indicating room for improvement. There is also a call for more educational and recreational programs for children, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to community development.

BUSINESSES | NEGOCIO



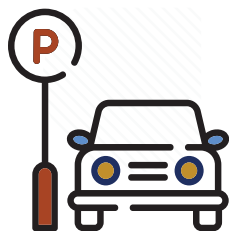
Residents of North Chicago have expressed a desire for a more business-friendly environment, suggesting that the permit and licensing processes should be streamlined and modernized. There's a strong call for diversifying the local commercial landscape with both small and larger businesses, and entertainment venues. The community has noted a pressing need for more accessible, large-scale, franchise grocery options, as some residents currently rely on liquor stores for basic fresh produce. Overall, people believe that an upgraded downtown area with a variety of restaurants and entertainment options could attract more local spending, create jobs, and slow down the traffic that typically rushes through the area.

BIKE & WALK | BICECLETA & CAMINATA



Residents have expressed concerns over the absence or poor condition of sidewalks, especially in areas like 10th/Green Bay. The issue of speed bumps on 10th street was also raised as a matter requiring attention. Residents pointed to nearby communities such as Gurnee and Libertyville as examples of areas with well-maintained public spaces and amenities.

TRANSPORTATION | TRANSPORTE



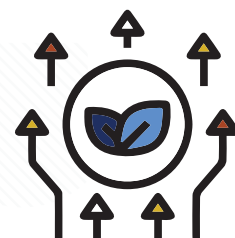
When it comes to transportation, North Chicago residents have identified several areas for improvement. There is a general consensus for increasing the frequency of bus services and enhancing their quality. Specifically, there are calls for more accessible transportation options for seniors who use wheelchairs. Residents also mention the specific bus routes they commonly use, such as 564 Jackson and 568 10th Pace, indicating that these routes could be prime candidates for service enhancements or upgrades. While walking and biking are not commonly used modes of transportation, this may speak to areas where the city could improve infrastructure to encourage more diverse mobility options. Additionally, the affordability of transportation services emerged as an area in need of review.

OPEN SPACE | PARQUES

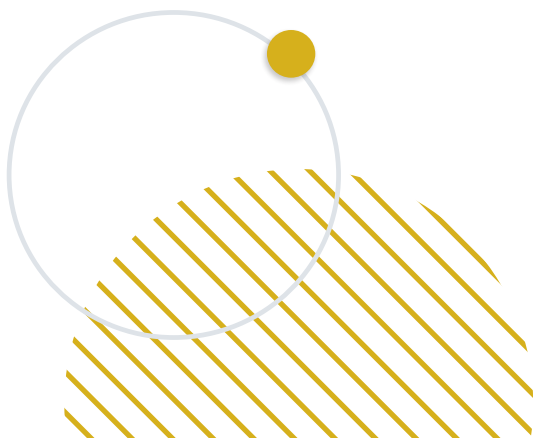


Residents of North Chicago have expressed a strong desire for improved and accessible open spaces. There is interest in creating safe, signature outdoor areas that can act as communal gathering points, potentially funded by donors. The community also calls for making the city more walkable, advocating for the addition of sidewalks and recreational areas suitable for all age groups. Independence Grove in Libertyville was cited as an example of a beautiful outdoor area with forest preserve trails. The feedback indicates that there are opportunities for North Chicago to enhance its own public spaces, which could benefit the community in various ways, including creating safer and more enjoyable options for walking and biking. Overall, the community seeks more attractive and functional parks to enrich local quality of life.

SUSTAINABILITY | SOSTENIBILIDAD



While immediate concerns like public safety, affordable housing, and transportation understandably dominated community discussions, sustainability deserves its place at the table, especially considering the 20 year vision of North Chicago's community plan. In a rapidly changing global climate, the city has the opportunity to invest in long-term resilience and environmental stewardship, acting as a model for other small, diverse communities. Residents may not have voiced it loudly yet, but integrating green solutions into the urban fabric could pay dividends down the line. Investment in sustainability not only safeguards the future but can provide immediate benefits, such as improved public health.

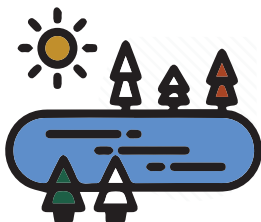


SCHOOLS & KIDS | ESCUELAS & NIÑOS



There's a strong desire for specialized career guidance starting from a young age, allowing students to focus on fields like medicine or business. Parents also seek increased involvement in their children's education and greater collaboration among different schools. The low state ranking of local schools is a significant concern, prompting some families to choose private education. Literacy levels are notably low, emphasized by the absence of minority tutors in existing programs. Residents also call for the reopening of schools and improved transportation options for students. Finally, there is an urge for more challenging academic standards and broader life skills training, such as financial literacy. Overall, the sentiment is that schools in North Chicago need comprehensive improvements to better serve the community's needs.

LAKEFRONT | FRENTE AL LAGO



There's a strong appetite for enhancing the lakefront's appeal to attract more visitors. Residents suggest working with developers to bring fresh, innovative ideas to the area. While the lakefront is considered a nice asset, it's often compared unfavorably to neighboring facilities, with some residents describing it as "basic." There's also a call for increased accessibility to the beach area. On a more detailed note, suggestions include installing charging stations and Wi-Fi, as well as introducing boats and various recreational activities to enrich the lakefront experience. Overall, there's a consensus that while the lakefront has potential, it needs significant upgrades to meet the community's expectations.

SAFETY | SEGURIDAD



When it comes to safety, the community's feedback reveals a mixed experience. While some residents feel protected and find the police attentive, others express concerns about crime and specifically note issues around Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., where some have even lost relatives. There's a call for increased police patrols, especially during school drop-off and pick-up times, as well as improved follow-up and community alerts after incidents. Street conditions also factor into safety concerns, with many advocating for road improvements. Some residents report avoiding going out at night due to safety concerns, and the topic of theft requires attention. Overall, there's a strong desire for a more secure environment, which many see as a foundation for community improvement.

FAMILY FOCUS | LA FAMILIA



In North Chicago, the community has a strong focus on family values, particularly within its diverse African American and Latino populations. Residents highlighted areas where support is needed for families, particularly in ensuring that children have consistent access to meals and suitable attire for school. There's a call to leverage the tight-knit social fabric of these communities as a foundation for development and advancement. Programs before school could provide not only educational enrichment but also address essential needs like food and clothing. The community believes that by focusing on these core family values, there's significant potential for holistic improvement in quality of life.

ARTS & CULTURE | ARTE & CULTURA



North Chicago residents expressed a strong desire for an increased presence of public art and murals throughout the city. They believe that such initiatives not only resonate with the younger population but also serve as a cultural draw that can attract visitors. Participants emphasized the need for programs that engage youth in a positive manner, advocating for partnerships and collaborations across Lake County to enrich the community. While there was enthusiasm for cultural growth, residents also pointed out the necessity for appropriate infrastructure, services, and resources to support such initiatives effectively.



DOWNTOWN | CENTRO URBANO



Downtown North Chicago has been identified as an area ripe for transformation. Residents are keen on revitalizing old buildings, suggesting either demolitions or facelifts to improve safety and overall character. Pedestrian safety is a major concern along Sheridan Rd. with There's a strong interest in creating a more vibrant, artsy, and trendy downtown akin to certain districts in Harlem, Detroit, and Peoria. Residents envision a hub of coffee shops, jazz clubs, and art installations that reflect the city's history and character. On the practical side, there's a clear call for more and better-quality restaurants and grocery stores. The idea of community-focused events like block parties, carnivals, and farmers' markets also emerged as a way to enrich the downtown area and bring people together. Overall, the community wishes to see a downtown that both honors its past and welcomes new, diverse experiences.



FOSS PARK IS SEEN AS A VITAL CONNECTION TO THE LAKE, WITH CONCERNS ABOUT THE GUN RANGE. LAKE ACCESS IS DIFFICULT TO LEVERAGE FOR OTHER BENEFITS TO THE CITY.

Stakeholder Summary



MAYOR ROCKINGHAM STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH CHICAGO, PARTICULARLY AT THE SHERIDAN CROSSING SITE, DESPITE ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES.

Stakeholder Summary



COMMUNITY VALUES

Community values are the core principles that drive the collective aspirations of a city. Such values function as the foundational pillars, shaping the direction and ensuring that the blueprint for North Chicago's future resonates with the heart and soul of its residents. These values go beyond transient trends or immediate issues of the day. Instead, they tap into the deeper aspirations and ideals that have been ingrained in the fabric of the community over generations. They encapsulate the shared hopes, dreams, and standards that are cherished by everyone, from long-standing residents to newcomers. By identifying and prioritizing these values, the city not only acknowledges the essence of what makes North Chicago unique but also create a common ground. Despite their varied backgrounds and perspectives, all community groups can find alignment, fostering an environment of mutual respect and collaboration. This unified approach is essential in navigating the complexities of urban planning and development.

By rooting future strategies and initiatives in these community values, the city ensure that every decision made aligns with the larger vision for North Chicago. It's not just about brick and mortar, roads, or infrastructures; it's about building a city that reflects the desires, needs, and aspirations of its people. This focus on community values also enhances the longevity and relevance of the comprehensive plan.

INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

Beyond a close-knit community, North Chicago emphasizes connections across generations. This manifests in shared public spaces and programs that serve both young and old, fostering lifelong relationships.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN GOVERNANCE:

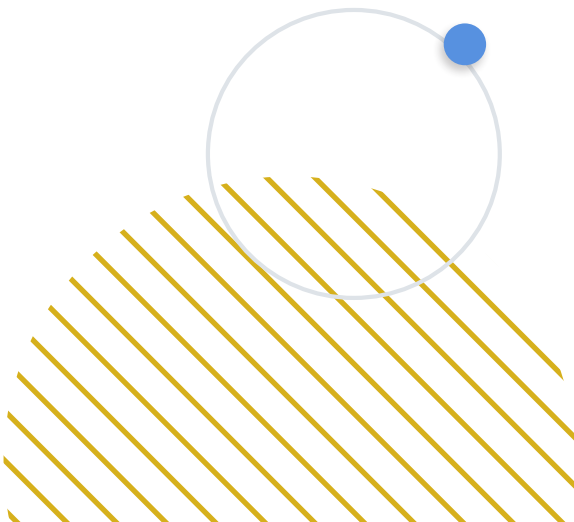
Expanding upon pragmatic governance, the community champions a participatory model where governmental decisions arise from conversations at local venues—be it a coffee shop or a town hall—ensuring that policy is rooted in collective wisdom.

HOLISTIC URBAN PLANNING:

An extension of interconnected development, this principle includes a focus on walkable streets, parks, and public spaces. It acknowledges that thriving communities are designed to be inclusive and accessible, serving a wide array of needs and lifestyles.

UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY:

Amplifying the concept of quality of life, North Chicago values facilities and services designed for all, emphasizing not just quality but also widespread accessibility, whether it's public transit that serves seniors or parks that are accessible to families.



COMMUNITY POLICING AND SAFETY:

Building on shared responsibility, there is an expectation that safety is co-created through law enforcement-community partnerships. Active neighborhood watches and community policing initiatives make safety a collective endeavor.

SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP:

This principle underscores a broader view of environmentalism, where respect for nature is woven into the fabric of urban planning, public spaces, and even local governance. Sustainability isn't a separate policy but an intrinsic community value.

CIVIC EDUCATION AND CULTURAL VITALITY:

Elevating the concept of enrichment, educational and cultural opportunities are seen as conduits for active civic participation. They serve as meeting grounds for diverse groups and generations to engage in constructive dialogues.

EQUITY IN PUBLIC POLICY:

In North Chicago, fairness takes the form of equitable access to opportunities and resources. Whether through targeted social programs or balanced zoning laws, the goal is to level the playing field for all residents.

COLLECTIVE FAMILY WELFARE:

This extends the idea of 'family as the cornerstone' to policy considerations. Social welfare programs, public schools, and healthcare services are crafted with the understanding that they serve a large, interconnected community family.

HARMONIOUS PAST-FUTURE BALANCE:

In harmonizing its rich local heritage with a forward-looking vision, North Chicago values its unique history as the foundation upon which to frame future growth and community development.

SOCIAL HUBS AS ACTIVE SPACES:

North Chicago cherishes its public spaces as more than aesthetic landmarks. These are seen as dynamic platforms for community engagement, cultural expression, and spontaneous social interaction.

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BUILDING:

Economic self-sufficiency takes a communal approach. Local businesses are supported through community programs, and residents are encouraged to shop locally, thus ensuring that economic sustainability is a shared pursuit.



CITYSCAPE

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The cityscape of North Chicago is more than just a visual representation of built structures and natural landscapes; it is a tangible manifestation of our community's character, history, and economic fabric. As we dive into aspects such as land use, zoning, and community design, it's crucial to recognize that these elements are intertwined with the daily experiences of our residents and the economic vitality of our city. Areas that are susceptible to change not only indicate the dynamic nature of urban development but also underscore the need for forward-thinking planning. Balancing the natural environment with built infrastructures defines not only our present-day realities but also charts the path for future growth. By understanding and proactively shaping our cityscape, we ensure that North Chicago evolves in a manner that reflects both its heritage and its aspirations, directly influencing the socio-economic wellbeing of its residents.

El paisaje urbano de North Chicago no es solo una representación visual de estructuras y paisajes naturales; es una manifestación concreta del carácter, historia y tejido económico de nuestra comunidad. Al analizar aspectos como el uso del suelo y el diseño comunitario, es vital reconocer que estos elementos están conectados con las experiencias diarias de nuestros residentes y la vitalidad económica de nuestra ciudad. Las áreas susceptibles a cambios destacan la importancia de una planificación progresiva. Al equilibrar el entorno natural con las infraestructuras construidas, definimos el presente y el futuro de North Chicago, asegurando que evolucione de manera que refleje su herencia y aspiraciones, influyendo directamente en el bienestar socioeconómico de sus habitantes.

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use profile in North Chicago encompasses a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors. A comprehensive assessment of these current land use classifications contributes to an understanding of the city's urban fabric, serving both as a reflection of its present conditions and as a foundation for future planning. Notably, the Navy Station Great Lake significantly influences this landscape, occupying nearly half of the city's southern boundary and serving as a major employment hub along Lake Michigan.

The chart to the right provides a breakdown of existing land uses in North Chicago by category. This calculation includes the area contained within each parcel but excludes land areas associated with local roadways and rights-of-way. North Chicago's total acreage, approximately 5,000 acres, will be the reference total for each category's percentage. It's important to clarify that land use acreage and zoning acreage may not align given that a single zoning category may be inclusive of multiple land use categories. For instance, residential zoning might include parks, whereas existing land use would classify parks as open space.

In light of the local conditions, demographic shifts, and economic potentials, this comprehensive plan is designed to offer a strategic framework for future land use, presented on the following pages, aiming to effectively guide the city's growth and development.

THE CITY'S DECLINING POPULATION RAISED CONCERNS, PROMPTING SUGGESTIONS FOR LAND DEVELOPMENT AND A DEFINED BUSINESS CENTER TO ATTRACT MORE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

Stakeholder Summary

FIGURE 2: LAND USE BREAKDOWN

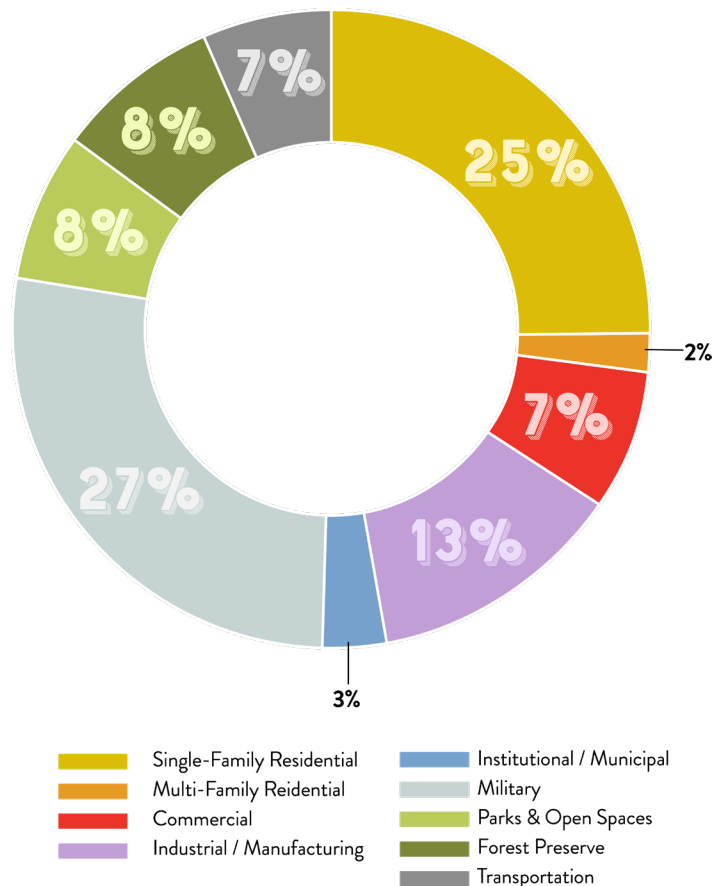
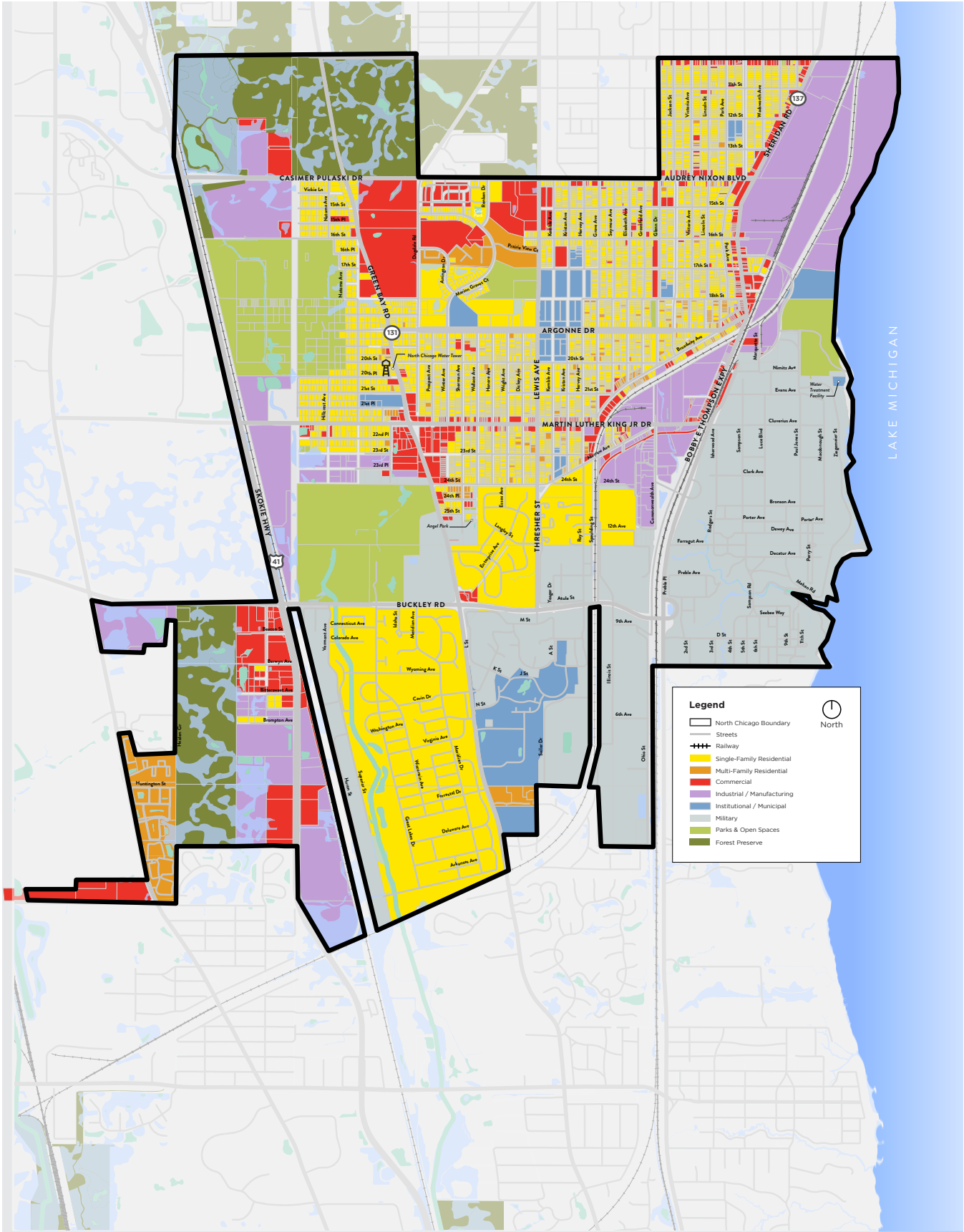


FIGURE 3: EXISTING LAND USE



North Chicago features nine land uses, including:

- **Single-Family Residential (25%):** Concentrated in the northern and central parts of the city, these areas feature predominantly post-war, ranch-style architecture. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity contribute to this sector by developing prefabricated homes, combining aesthetic appeal with functionality.
- **Multi-Family Residential (2%):** Located mainly in the central region, with a significant presence in Manchester Knolls Cooperative. These zones, featuring low to mid-rise buildings with brick facades, cater to a diverse demographic, from young professionals to families.
- **Commercial (7%):** Vital for economic activity, major commercial corridors include Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., downtown, and Green Bay Rd. These areas are characterized by a mix of businesses catering primarily to vehicular traffic.
- **Industrial (13%):** Positioned strategically near major transport corridors, this sector is dominated by major firms like AbbVie and EMCO, contributing significantly to the local economy and employment. The industrial zones are designed for manufacturing and distribution efficiency and include areas along the Lake Michigan shoreline.
- **Institutional (3%):** Includes key facilities like Rosalind Franklin University and the North Chicago water treatment plant, playing essential roles in the community's education and health sectors. Also, controversial sites like the FBI shooting range highlight the balance of land use and community priorities.
- **Military (28%):** Naval Station Great Lakes is a major presence, occupying a significant portion of the city's land. It includes specialized zones like Camp Moffett and provides limited public interaction due to its security measures.
- **Park Sites (8%):** Managed by the Foss Park District, these areas offer diverse recreational opportunities. Notable sites include Foss Park and Vision Park, with amenities like playgrounds and walking paths.
- **Transportation (7%):** Comprises major roads and public rights of way that form the backbone of the city's transport infrastructure.
- **Open Space (8%):** Includes areas like the Green Belt Forest Preserve, offering extensive natural and recreational amenities. Managed by Lake County Forest Preserve, it features hiking trails, a youth farm, and cultural centers, enhancing the city's ecological and recreational landscape.



SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



PARK SITES



FUTURE LAND USE APPROACH

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) for North Chicago is foundational in shaping the community's character and supporting its overall vision for the future. This strategic blueprint supports the existing dynamic urban environment, where thoughtful growth strategies and the enhancement of core residential areas are balanced with the optimization of prime commercial corridors and the utilization of significant community resources. Key aspects of the plan include:

- **Strengthening Downtown:** Acknowledging Sheridan Road's critical role in integrating downtown with the broader commercial landscape, the plan strategically positions a regional commercial area at one end. At the opposite end and in surrounding areas, the plan encourages the development of local mixed-use areas, fostering a lively blend of residential, retail, and community spaces, further enriching the urban fabric.
- **Commercial Corridors:** Capitalizing on major commercial corridors, such as Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Audrey Nixon Blvd, and 10th St., is pivotal for economic revitalization. The plan envisions growing commercial corridors into vibrant economic hubs that attract businesses, shoppers, and tourists, driving the city's economic growth and providing employment opportunities.
- **Boosting Economic Development:** Creating pedestrian-friendly environments that enhance connectivity throughout the city, the plan strategically links multiple commercial areas, making them easily accessible and enjoyable for people to explore. This enhanced connectivity not only elevates the urban experience for both residents and visitors but also bolsters local businesses through increased foot traffic.
- **Sense of Ownership:** Elevating the quality of living spaces in North Chicago, the plan advocates for designing residential neighborhoods with an eye toward enhancing the overall quality of life. This strategic approach ensures that residential areas are thoughtfully planned to enhance livability, maintain property values, and prevent the disarray of non-conforming and unplanned mixed-density developments that detract from the desired community character.
- **Industrial Legacy:** Emphasizing the preservation and growth of North Chicago's industrial legacy, the plan acknowledges this sector as a critical pillar of economic vitality and a historically defining feature of the community's character. This approach highlights the city's commitment to remain a leading industrial and employment center, while simultaneously advancing towards sustainable and green industry practices.

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) for North Chicago is not merely about zoning or rigid land allocation, but about defining and enhancing the character of the community. This plan delineates how land use can shape the physical, social, and economic environment of the city. Each Future Land Use designation described in the following pages captures the desired character of buildings, streets, and public spaces, contributing to a cohesive urban narrative. Moreover, these designations are accompanied by a set of practical implementation steps. These steps are essential to transform these visions into reality, ensuring that each land use contributes positively to the community's fabric.

By outlining character and implementation strategies, the FLUP ensures that future developments maintain the community's identity while promoting sustainable growth and livability. The following sections will detail the Future Land Use designations, providing a clear vision of what North Chicago aims to achieve in its diverse districts, from residential neighborhoods to bustling commercial hubs and serene open spaces.

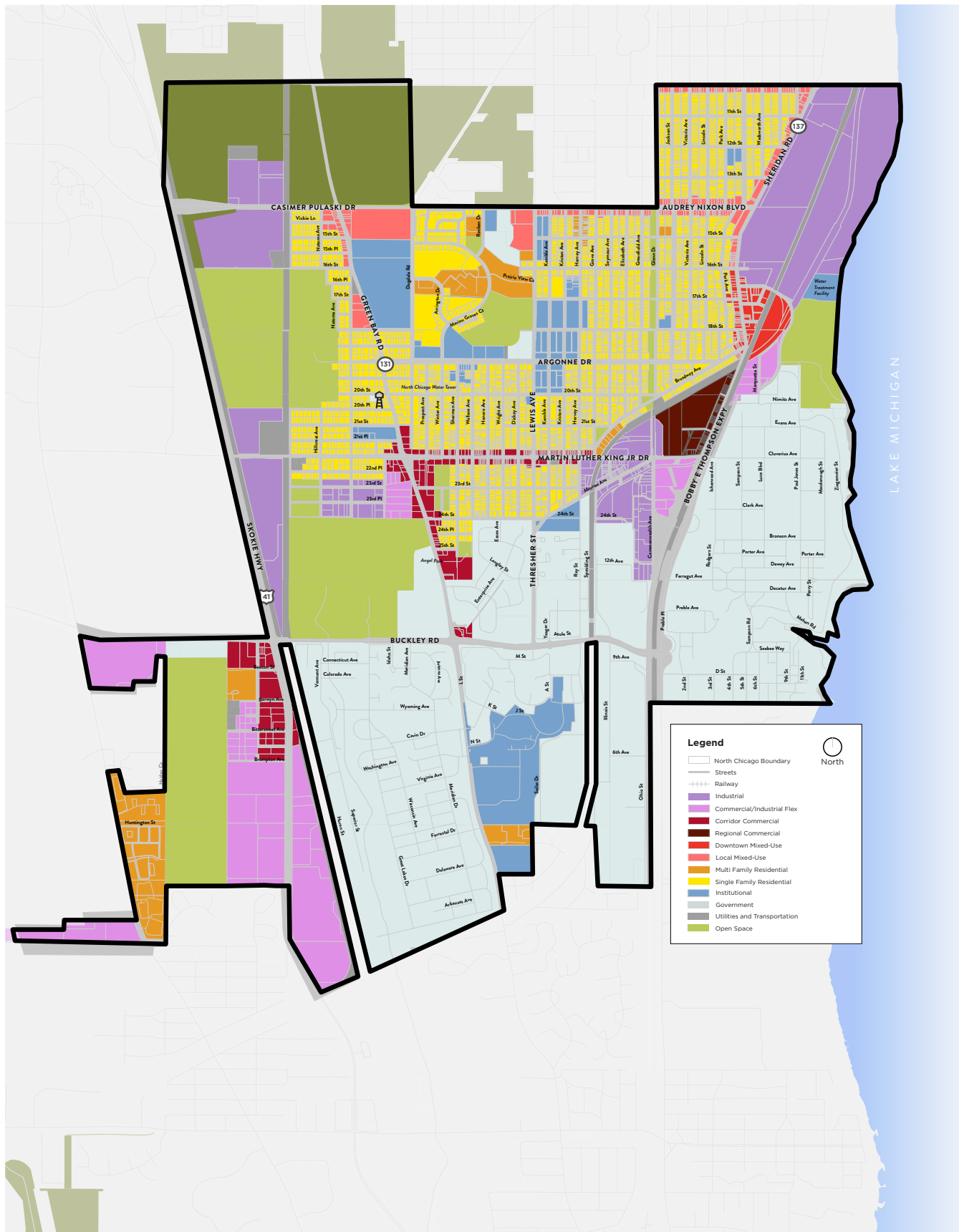
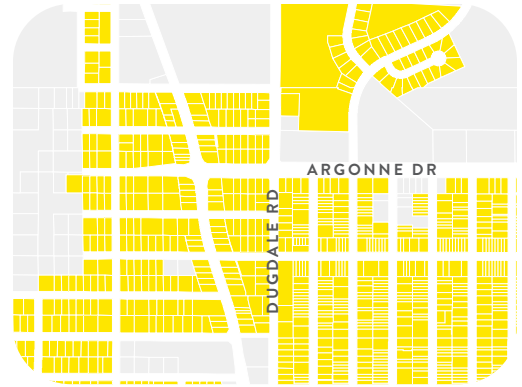


FIGURE 4: FUTURE LAND USE

Single-Family Residential



This category represents the largest land use within North Chicago, focusing on areas predominantly made up of detached homes that form the backbone of the community's residential landscape. It is aimed at preserving the core neighborhoods' character by supporting a variety of housing styles and lot sizes tailored for families desiring a conventional living space. In response to the presence of non-conforming multi-family uses within single-family neighborhoods, there's a strategic push to reaffirm these areas as Single Family Residential. This move is designed to maintain the distinctive character of North Chicago's neighborhoods and contribute to the appreciation of home values.



CHARACTER

Characterized by individual homes with private yards, these areas are designed with a focus on privacy, space, and community. Streets are typically quiet, with low traffic, and often feature greenery, contributing to a serene living environment.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Conduct assessments of neighborhood character to identify areas where non-conforming uses are impacting the community negatively.
- Actively monitor and enforce zoning regulations to discourage the proliferation of non-conforming multi-family developments in single-family neighborhoods, ensuring adherence to designated land use.
- While focusing on single-family homes, allow for a limited mix of low-density housing types, such as duplexes or small-scale multi-family units, where appropriate to meet varying housing needs without exceeding 4 dwelling units per acre.
- Implement measures to enhance the aesthetic appeal and character of single-family residential areas, including street trees, landscaping standards, and architectural diversity.

EXAMPLES

Suburban neighborhoods detached single-family homes, cul-de-sacs.



Phased Compliance Approach

For areas that have already become mixed-use in practice, a gradual transition plan could be developed, recognizing the current state but setting clear goals for future use. This could involve a phased approach to converting nonconforming uses back to single-family homes where feasible or integrating mixed-use in a way that benefits the community.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

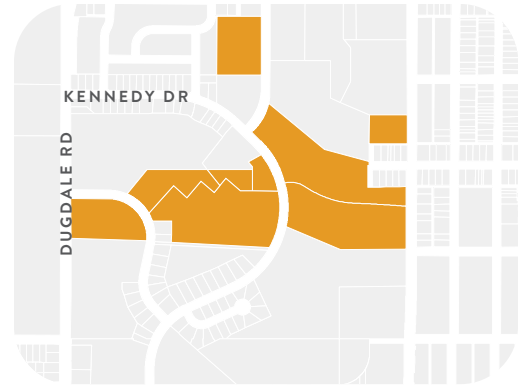
- *Create a long-term plan for gradually phasing out non-conforming uses. This could include grace periods and assistance for property owners to transition their properties back to single-family use or to make multifamily use conform to new regulations.*
- *Implement assistance programs to support property owners in making the transition. This could include financial aid, tax incentives, or technical support for remodeling.*
- *Enforcement can start with the most critical areas or with voluntary compliance before moving to more stringent measures.*
- *Create incentives for early adopters who conform to the new regulations ahead of schedule, such as additional financial benefits or public recognition.*



Multi-Family Residential



This category targets the development of properties that feature multiple housing units, such as apartments, condos, and townhouses, moving beyond the traditional single-family home. It's essential for diversifying the housing stock in North Chicago, making it possible to meet the varied needs and preferences of the community. Encouraging the incorporation of mixed-use elements, including neighborhood serving commercial, the aim is to ensure residents have access to necessary amenities and services. Examples like the Deer Valley Apartments on the southwest corner and Prairie View Apartments near city hall showcase the category's role in providing a range of living options.



CHARACTER

Multi-family residential areas are distinguished by their density and diversity in architectural design, ranging from townhomes and low-rise apartments to condominiums, supporting 5 to 12 dwelling units per acre. These developments often come with communal amenities like courtyards, playgrounds, and pools, promoting a sense of community and efficient space utilization.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

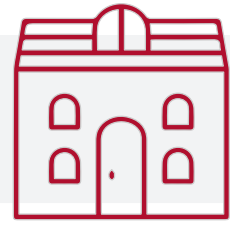
- Implement zoning regulations that encourage the development of diverse housing types while ensuring compatibility with surrounding areas.
- Recommend the preservation and expansion of the tree canopy in multi-family residential areas. Suggest integrating green spaces, parkways, and shared outdoor amenities to enrich the urban landscape and community well-being.
- Consider reducing parking minimums for multi-family developments to allow for more efficient land use.
- Encourage collaboration with public transit authorities to improve access to public transportation for multi-family residential areas.
- Promote designs that enhance community connectivity, including pedestrian and bike paths.

EXAMPLES

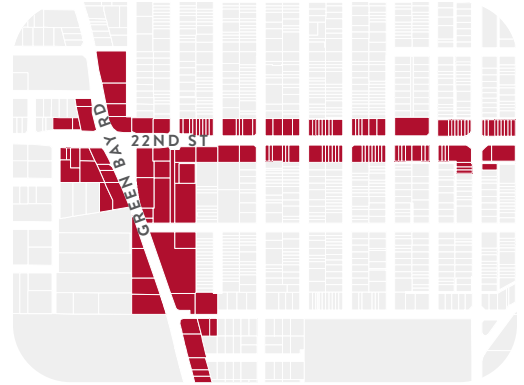
Single-Family Attached, Townhouse Developments, Apartment Complexes, Condominium buildings.



Corridor Commercial



The Corridor Commercial designation is predominantly found along Martin Luther King Blvd and extends west to Green Bay Trail, further extending south to the Naval Base. It represents a commercial intensity greater than the downtown area, aiming for a balance between high-traffic commercial activity and pedestrian accessibility. Additional Corridor Commercial areas are located on the southwest end of North Chicago, near the Commercial Industrial Flex zones. Positioned along major roads, these zones cater to the city's needs for retail, services, and modest dining, focusing on everyday necessities.



CHARACTER

Characterized by a linear development pattern, these corridors and zones are envisioned to have a dense concentration of commercial uses and service businesses with ample parking and improved pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Buildings are typically one to two stories, with storefronts set not far back from the sidewalk to engage pedestrians and create an active street edge.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Partner with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to revamp traffic patterns, ensuring safe and efficient movement for both vehicles and pedestrians.
- Enhance pedestrian access and safety through investments in sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.
- Promote infill development to create a cohesive urban environment and prevent urban sprawl.
- Encourage businesses to update facades and signage, offering grants or incentives to enhance visual appeal and draw in customers.

EXAMPLES

Shopping strips, standalone restaurants, banks, boutiques, and service establishments.



Regional Commercial



The Regional Commercial future land use is designed for expansive developments that transform into regional destinations, with the Sheridan Crossing Rd. site being a prime example. Such areas become magnets for visitors not just from the local vicinity but from across the region. Characterized by the highest intensity and concentration of commercial activities, regional commercial zones resemble a campus-like setting, where shopping, entertainment, and hospitality converge to offer a diverse array of amenities and experiences. Beyond traditional retail and dining options, these zones can also encompass large-scale attractions such as sports stadiums, concert halls, and more, making them comprehensive lifestyle centers.



CHARACTER

Regional commercial areas embrace a cohesive character-based environment, where buildings and spaces are interconnected through walkways and plazas, encouraging exploration and activity. The architecture and landscape are planned to support a vibrant, engaging environment, with ample green spaces, outdoor seating areas, and pedestrian-friendly pathways. These areas prioritize a mix of uses that cater to a wide audience, from local shoppers to regional tourists, and catering to a wide audience.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Develop a comprehensive master plan that outlines the vision for the regional commercial area, including land use, architecture, landscaping, and infrastructure, to ensure a unified and cohesive development.
- Invest in robust infrastructure, including roads, parking, and expanding public transit access, to support high traffic volumes.
- Foster partnerships with private developers to encourage investment in the area, leveraging financial and innovative resources.
- Implement flexible zoning regulations that allow for a mix of commercial, entertainment, and hospitality uses, facilitating the development of multi-use complexes that can adapt to changing market demands.

EXAMPLES

Entertainment complexes, sports complexes, large strip malls, conference centers, and hotels.



Downtown Mixed-Use



Downtown mixed-use zones, especially along Sheridan Rd., near the Metra station, and north of Sheridan Crossing, are designed to be the city's bustling heart. These areas combine commercial, residential, and entertainment elements to amplify urban vibrancy. By integrating living spaces with shops, offices, and public amenities, the aim is to cultivate an area where urban life thrives through increased pedestrian activity and enhanced public transport usage. Transitioning the downtown strip along Sheridan Rd. from its current commercial designation to mixed-use will not only boost foot traffic but also support the ecosystem necessary for businesses to attract, retain, and succeed, thereby revitalizing the area into a dynamic hub.



CHARACTER

Downtown mixed-use areas are dynamic, with buildings that often feature ground-floor retail or dining, with offices or apartments above. The streets are designed to be walkable, with wide sidewalks, street furniture, landscaping, and public art contributing to an engaging urban environment. The architectural and planning emphasis on walkability transforms these areas into hubs of activity and interaction. Building designs in these areas should accommodate diverse yet harmonious densities and heights, tailored to increase flexibility in development standards and encourage a vibrant street life. The goal is to cultivate an environment that buzzes with activity.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Adapt zoning regulations to be more flexible, accommodating a mix of commercial, residential, and entertainment uses. This includes allowing for diverse building types while upholding design standards that enhance community aesthetics and functionality.
- Offer incentives such as tax breaks or expedited permitting processes for projects that align with the mixed-use vision, especially those contributing to the area's vibrancy and offering public amenities.
- Implement regulations to limit excessive gambling establishments and lottery machines, ensuring they do not detract from the area's desired character and use.
- Encourage the development of establishments that serve daily needs, with a particular focus on expanding dining options to enhance the area's appeal as a culinary destination.

EXAMPLES

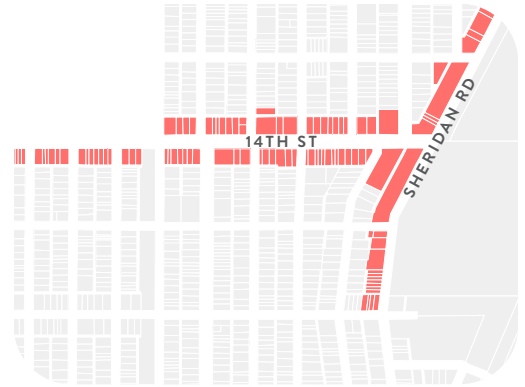
Urban blocks with retail shops, cafes, offices, and apartments.



Local Mixed-Use



Local mixed-use areas are tailored to foster a community-centric lifestyle, blending residential and commercial spaces on a more intimate scale. Situated along key corridors such as Audrey Nixon Blvd., 10th St., and Sheridan Rd. north of downtown extending towards Waukegan, these areas are designed to cater to the daily needs of the local population. Presently, along key corridors such as Audrey Nixon Blvd., the landscape features a side-by-side arrangement of commercial and residential spaces. This proposed land use category envisions Local Mixed-Use areas to better integrate uses and promote a pedestrian-friendly environment, encouraging residents to live, shop, and work within proximity, significantly enhancing the quality of life.



CHARACTER

Local mixed-use areas have a more intimate scale, with smaller buildings and a closer community feel. They feature a mix of independent retailers, service businesses, and residential units, often with public spaces or plazas that serve as community gathering points.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

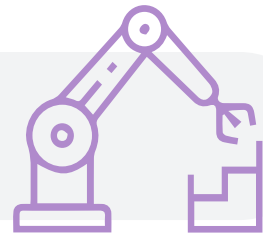
- Recommend, through planning advisories, that new developments adhere to design principles that reflect North Chicago's traditional aesthetic.
- Provide design consultation services or resources to property owners and developers to guide them in creating projects that harmonize with North Chicago's aesthetic and mixed-use goals.
- Target underutilized spaces for infill projects that complement the existing urban fabric, focusing on filling gaps with developments that integrate residential and commercial uses.
- Invest in streetscape enhancements to bolster the pedestrian experience, including landscaping, lighting, and street furniture.
- Streamline the permitting process for projects that align with the vision for local mixed-use development.

EXAMPLES

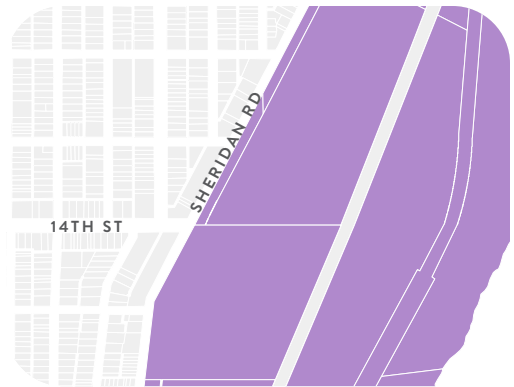
Neighborhood centers with local markets, small offices, cafes, and townhomes or apartments.



Industrial



This category is designated for areas in North Chicago focused on manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and other industrial functions. Industrial zones are known for large plots and buildings like warehouses and factories, extensive outdoor storage, and roads fit for heavy vehicles, featuring entities such as AbbVie Pharmaceutical Contract Manufacturing and Procter & Gamble Chemicals. This designation emphasizes locations that minimize conflicts with residential areas and provide easy access to major transport routes. Close monitoring to environmental measures related to on air, water, noise, and traffic is necessary to limit overall impact. Compared to current land use patterns, many industrial zones in North Chicago are to maintain their character yet select areas in the southwest have the potential to transition to Commercial / Industrial Flex areas.



CHARACTER

Industrial zones are marked by large buildings and open spaces designed for heavy machinery and logistics operations. The architecture is functional, catering to the efficiency of industrial activities with minimal emphasis on aesthetics.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- *Create buffer zones and employ landscaping to reduce industrial impacts. Set up green spaces around industrial areas to soften their appearance and lessen their environmental effects like noise and air pollution.*
- *Ensure infrastructure supports both industry operations and employee access. Improve roads, transit options, and utilities to ensure that industrial areas are easy to reach and well-supported.*
- *Advocate for eco-friendly industrial practices and clean energy technology. Supporting eco-friendly changes helps protect the environment and makes the city a leader in sustainability.*

EXAMPLES

Warehouses, distribution centers, manufacturing plants, logistics hubs.



Commercial / Industrial Flex



Introduced in the 2024 plan and heavily featured in the southwest area of North Chicago, this land use designation creates zones that blend light industrial and commercial activities, ideal for businesses that integrate manufacturing, distribution, and retail or service operations. The concept allows for industrial activities at the rear and commercial enterprises like showrooms or retail outlets to be road facing, enhancing economic viability and visual appeal.

CHARACTER

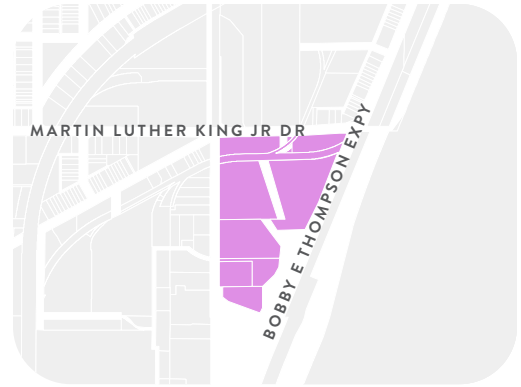
Flex spaces are versatile, with buildings designed to accommodate a range of uses from light manufacturing to consumer-facing businesses. The exteriors may feature commercial aesthetics to attract customers, while interiors are adaptable for various industrial uses. These areas serve as a bridge between purely commercial zones and industrial areas, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

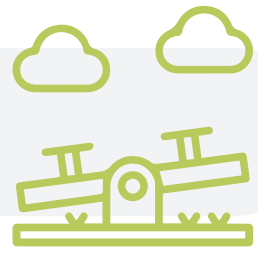
- Implement zoning policies that allow for a fluid mix of light industrial, commercial, and service-oriented activities. This flexibility will enable businesses to adapt and evolve, promoting a dynamic economic landscape.
- Consider guidelines that encourage the integration of commercial frontages with light industrial operations at the rear to balance functionality and curb appeal.

EXAMPLES

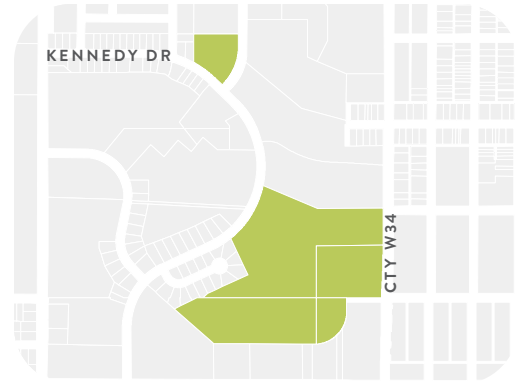
Neighborhood centers with local markets, small offices, cafes, and townhomes or apartments.



Park Sites



Park Sites offer residents both active and passive recreational opportunities. Managed by the Foss Park District, some of these spaces include a range of amenities such as playgrounds, walking paths, and sports facilities. Noteworthy among these are Foss Park and Beach, which offer outdoor leisure activities and water access, and Vision Park, which serves as one of the larger neighborhood parks in North Chicago. In this land use category, the Foss Park Golf Course stands out as a significant recreational asset. A second golf course, Veterans Memorial Golf Course, formerly known as Willow Glen Golf Club, is located on military grounds.



CHARACTER

These spaces are characterized by their accessibility and the variety of recreational options they offer. From playgrounds and sports facilities to walking paths that meander through scenic landscapes, parks and open spaces are designed to cater to all ages and interests.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- *Encourage the improvement of pathways and signage in parks. Advocate for enhanced pathways and clear signage within parks to ensure they are easily accessible and navigable, thus promoting greater utilization by residents.*
- *Support collaborative efforts to update and expand park amenities. Support and promote collaborative efforts with the Park District to regularly review and upgrade park amenities.*
- *Promote sustainable practices in park maintenance and development. Encourage the adoption of sustainable practices in the maintenance and development of park areas to help preserve natural landscapes and biodiversity. Advocate for methods that minimize environmental impact and support ecological health.*

EXAMPLES

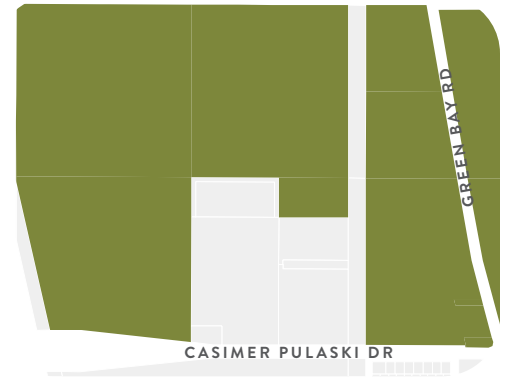
Community and Neighborhood Parks, Foss Park, Vision Park, Foss Beach



Natural Resource Areas



Natural Resource Areas significantly enriches the city's natural and recreational landscape. This land use category is primarily situated on the northwest side of the city and includes the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. Owned and managed by the Lake County Forest Preserve, this area serves as an oasis of natural beauty and outdoor activity within the urban environment. Recreational options within the preserve are diverse, ranging from hiking trails to a youth farm and a cultural center. Additionally, a linear grouping of sites on the southwest side of the city, owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Transportation, contributes significantly to the Natural Resource Areas land use category.



CHARACTER

Natural Resource Areas in North Chicago are defined by their vast open spaces, which serve as sanctuaries of tranquility and natural beauty within the urban environment. These areas are characterized by their commitment to preserving native plantings, offering a diverse array of ecosystems that support local wildlife and biodiversity.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

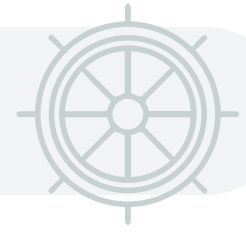
- *Focus on restoring and preserving natural habitats to maintain ecological balance and enhance biodiversity.*
- *Conduct regular ecological assessments to identify restoration needs.*
- *Implement native plant restoration projects to restore and stabilize ecosystem health.*
- *Remove invasive species that threaten local flora and fauna.*

EXAMPLES

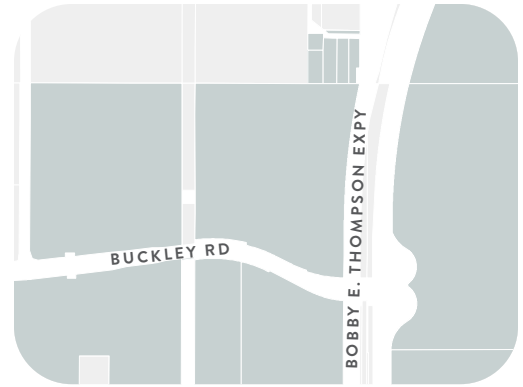
Greenbelt Forest Preserve, Wetland areas, and more.



Naval Station Great Lakes



The naval base in North Chicago represents a unique land use designation, encompassing a diverse mix of uses that extend beyond its primary military purpose. This designation includes various character areas, both within the confines of the base (contained) and in adjacent civilian neighborhoods (non-contained), creating a multifaceted urban tapestry that intertwines military and civilian life. This includes residential accommodations, educational institutions, healthcare services, recreational facilities, and retail outlets, all within the security of the base perimeter. This infrastructure supports the base's operational mission and provides a high quality of life for military personnel and their families.



CHARACTER

The character of areas within the naval base is distinctly military, with a focus on efficiency, security, and self-sufficiency. These areas are meticulously planned to accommodate the specific needs of military operations and family life, resulting in a unique built environment that prioritizes functionality and community support.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- *Create transition zones that seamlessly integrate the naval base with North Chicago's neighborhoods, especially in off-base areas. This approach involves planning mixed-use developments that can serve both military families and civilians, promoting a unified community space.*
- *Work closely with Naval Station Great Lakes to undertake urban design and streetscape improvements. This collaboration aims to ensure that the area surrounding the base harmoniously blends with the broader urban fabric of North Chicago.*
- *Focus on upgrading public infrastructure around the naval base, including roads, sidewalks, and public transportation access.*
- *Develop community facilities that can be used by both base personnel and the wider North Chicago population. Examples include recreational centers, parks, and cultural venues that foster interaction and build stronger ties between military and civilian communities.*

EXAMPLES

Educational Facilities, Healthcare Facilities, Recreational Facilities, Retail and Dining, Off-base Housing, and more.



Institutional



Institutional areas within North Chicago are reserved for buildings and areas that focus on educational, healthcare, religious, and community services. These facilities are cornerstones of the city's social, cultural, and educational framework, enriching the lives of residents and contributing to the overall well-being of the community. Sprinkled throughout the community, these areas provide a diverse range of services that cater to the varied needs of North Chicago's population.

CHARACTER

Institutional areas are often campus-like, with multiple access points, often multiple buildings and green spaces. They are designed to be accessible and welcoming to the public, with facilities that cater to the needs of a diverse community.

EXAMPLES

Schools, universities, hospitals, churches, community centers.



Government



Institutional areas in North Chicago are dedicated to city-owned or managed buildings and complexes, pivotal in offering essential educational, healthcare, religious, and community services. These facilities significantly enhance the quality of life for residents, contributing to the community's overall well-being. Dispersed throughout North Chicago, these institutional areas deliver a broad spectrum of services, addressing the diverse requirements of the city's populace, with a focus on accessibility and community support.

CHARACTER

Government areas can vary widely in character, from utilitarian facilities like water treatment plants to public buildings designed with architectural significance. They are strategically located to be accessible and serve the public interest efficiently.

EXAMPLES

City hall, public safety buildings, utility facilities.





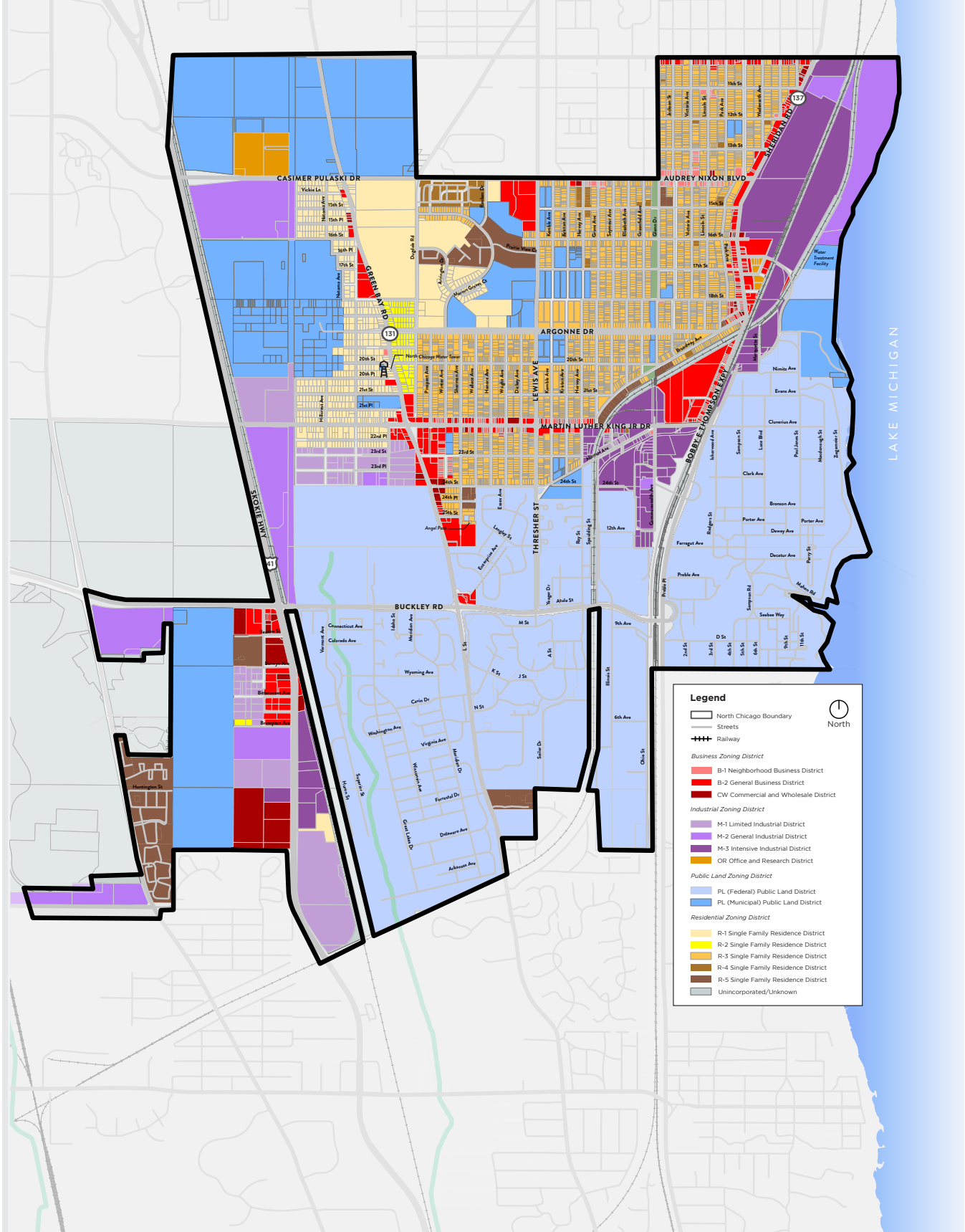


FIGURE 5: EXISTING ZONING

ZONING ORDINANCE

The North Chicago Zoning Ordinance serves as a framework that governs land use in the city. Designed to establish and preserve the character of various districts, it categorizes areas into Residential, Business, Industrial, and Public Use zones. The ordinance also specifies types of uses permitted in each district, including special, temporary, and accessory uses. This zoning system, last updated in August of 2020, aims to facilitate orderly development.

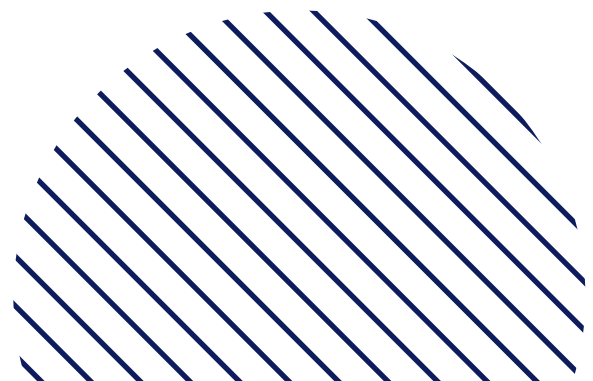
Residential Districts

- **R1 Single-Family Residence District:** Intended for large-lot single-family homes, this is the city's most restrictive residential district. Development prerequisites include community sewer and water utilities. The majority of R1 single-family homes are situated east and west of Green Bay Rd., largely between Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. and Audrey Nixon Blvd.
- **R2 Single-Family Residence District:** Designed for moderate-sized lots with basic utilities, aiming to preserve single-family residential areas throughout the city. R2 Single-Family homes are concentrated between Green Bay Rd. and Douglas Rd. and are considered the smallest zoning category of single-family homes in North Chicago.
- **R3 Single-Family Residence District:** Focused on urban, low-density residential development, it allows for a variety of dwelling types including duplexes and townhouses. The R3 Single-Family zoning category make up the majority of single-family homes in the city and can be found mostly in the core and on the east side of North Chicago.
- **R4 Limited Multi-Family District:** For medium-density residential areas, it accommodates different types of single-family dwellings and apartments. The R4 Limited Multi-Family zoning category currently applies to a multi-family complex between Spruce Dr. and Audrey Nixon Blvd. with a mix of both older and newly constructed units.

- **R5 General Residence District:** Targets high-density urban development in core areas, requiring facilities such as public transportation and urban amenities. The district encompasses a diverse range of multi-family residential properties, with a concentration on the southwest side of the city, particularly in Ward 6.

Business Districts

- **B1 Neighborhood Business District:** Provides land for small retail shops and services that serve local residential areas. The B1 Neighborhood Business District is concentrated along Audrey Nixon Blvd. with a few one- to two-story commercial buildings.
- **B2 General Business District:** Intended for a wide variety of retail and service providers, generally larger than those in B1. This zoning category accounts for the majority of North Chicago's commercial properties, primarily concentrated along key commercial corridors such as Sheridan Road, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and Green Bay Road. Among the few large parcels with this zoning designation, the Sheridan Crossing site stands out due to its significant size.
- **CW Commercial and Wholesale District:** For a wide range of businesses that rely on automotive transportation, including heavier commercial activities. The CW zoning category primarily targets parcels with large acreages, although some smaller parcels are interspersed within commercial areas that mainly fall under the B2 zoning category.



Industrial Districts

- **M1 Limited Industrial District:** Designed for light manufacturing and commercial office uses that have minimum impact on neighbors. The M1 zoning category is the smallest of all industrial districts, typically occupying smaller lots. These parcels are often located near residential neighborhoods, given their minimal truck traffic and overall minimal impact on the community.
- **M2 General Industrial District:** For manufacturing and heavy commercial activities that are incompatible with residential areas. This zoning district is distributed throughout North Chicago and encompasses large lots, including parcels situated along Lake Michigan and Skokie Highway.
- **M3 Intensive Industrial District:** To facilitate the growth of older industrial activities. The M3 Intensive Industrial parcels are situated along freight train tracks such as the AbbVie Pharmaceutical Contract Manufacturing complex and HMT Manufacturing, along with other major industrial uses in North Chicago.
- **OR Office and Research District:** For scientific research and business centers requiring large open sites and high standards. One parcel nestled within the Greenbelt Forest Preserve area, north of Audrey Nixon Blvd. is the only parcel with the OR Office and Research District designation.

Public Use Districts

- **Public Land District (Federal):** Classification of land owned by federal agencies, exempt from certain zoning regulations. While not all public land is required to be in a PL District, no privately-owned land can be classified as such. The Naval Station Great Lakes complex defines the Public Land District (Federal) zoning category.
- **Public Land District (Municipal):** Classification of land owned by municipal agencies, exempt from certain zoning regulations. This zoning classification includes North Chicago School District sites, Foss Park District sites, nature preserves, as well as a linear grouping of parcels on the southwest side in Ward 6.

Overlay Districts

Overlay districts are commonly superimposed upon existing zoning classifications, introducing a supplementary layer of specialized regulations in addition to the underlying zoning provisions. North Chicago features four overlay districts, each catering to specific community interests and needs. Zoning overlays can often be anticipatory in nature, designed to guide future land use and the retail and business environment in a way that aligns with a community's long-term vision or goals. By imposing specialized or stringent regulations, such overlays can promote specific types of development while discouraging others, effectively shaping the character and functionality of an area over time.

URO - URBAN REDEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT

Purpose: This district focuses on rejuvenating older commercial and residential areas, offering design flexibility to encourage growth. This is based on the acknowledgment that certain new development standards might create undue hardship for existing areas.

Allowed Uses: Although not explicitly stated, this provides greater flexibility for a mix of commercial and residential uses, with an emphasis on redevelopment.

MEO - MEDICAL EDUCATIONAL OVERLAY DISTRICT

Purpose: Aimed at educational and medical facilities, this district appears to support a mix of health care, educational, and research operations.

Allowed Uses: Includes university facilities related to health and science, health care facilities like hospitals, research facilities, faculty offices, libraries, and other educational infrastructure. Also allowed are accessory facilities like parking, food services, and housing for employees and students.

CDO - CANNABIS DISPENSARY OVERLAY DISTRICT

Purpose: This district is specifically designated for the establishment of cannabis dispensaries.

Allowed Uses: Restricted to the operation of Cannabis Dispensary Businesses, excluding other forms of cannabis-related establishments.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

In North Chicago, the fabric of community character and design is defined through a mix of built environment and natural assets, including residential districts, neighborhoods, roadways and corridors, and parks and open spaces, among other elements. These elements cohesively work together to shape North Chicago's unique identity and contribute to a unified built environment, enhancing the quality of life, promoting a sense of place, and adding to the city's aesthetic appeal.

Each aspect of the city's character and design, summarized below, will be explored in greater depth. Sections dedicated to land use, housing, commercial corridors, transportation, and open space among others, offer a comprehensive insight into the city's planning and design. Each section contributes to painting a fuller picture of the city's character and the various elements that contribute to its unique identity.

Strategic initiatives, including capital improvements, land use changes, zoning amendments, and a well-coordinated public review process, are the foundations to enhance North Chicago's character and design. Through these efforts, the city continues to position itself as a desirable location for growth, development, and the establishment of a vibrant community life.

Corridors & Districts

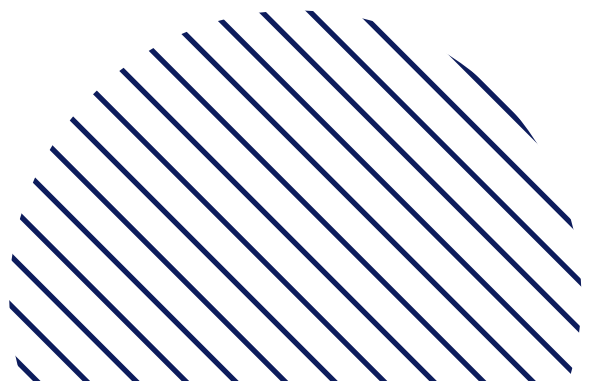
Similar to many Midwestern cities, North Chicago's community character has been significantly influenced by industrial growth. This development spurred the creation of infrastructure to support industry, including wide roads and highways designed for the efficient transportation of goods and services. These broad, auto-oriented streets still shape North Chicago's landscape today.

In North Chicago, significant commercial zones are situated along notable thoroughfares such as Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Green Bay Road, Audrey Nixon Blvd., and Sheridan Road in the downtown area. Each exhibits varied levels of commercial

activity and urban dimensions. These arterial roads, while central to the city's commerce, inadvertently create divisions within North Chicago. This layout forms distinct and separated neighborhoods, creating residential enclaves amidst commercial corridors. The historical emphasis on industry and transportation continues to echo in the city's current design and community character.

This structure is very evident in how downtown North Chicago is perceived, how it functions, and how it feels. The upside is that downtown is close to the train station, Lake Michigan, Great Lakes Naval Base, and AbbVie's campus and well connected by Sheridan Road. However, the challenges are its location on the east side of the city away from the well-traveled roadways and the eyes of motorists and the high speeds of cars moving through downtown instead of to downtown.

Downtown's character is ready for a refresh, as noted by many residents in discussions. The potential and framework of a strong mixed-use district are evident, from the traditional buildings lining the street to the wide sidewalks. However, many of the buildings have ground floor vacancies and/or inactive storefronts and have deferred maintenance. The streetscape has mature trees for stretches but gaps in many locations. Downtown also lacks cohesive elements that contribute to the sense of place and speak to North Chicago's quality of life, such as unified lighting, benches, trash receptacles, planters, landscape, a variety of paving, and public art. Furthermore, it lacks a true community gathering space or plaza that welcomes residents and visitors and invites them to spend time downtown on a regular basis.



Urban Design Elements

Successful community design consists of several essential and interrelated elements — basic physical forms and features that taken together make up a community’s visual identity. Each element cannot stand alone. Efforts to enhance North Chicago’s overall appearance and urban design must follow a consistent, comprehensive approach that creates recognizable and desirable places.

Street Frontage. Street frontage refers to a building’s front lot line or how it adjoins the street. For example, in a residential neighborhood, there may be a frontage of consistent building and lawn setbacks from the sidewalk and street. In a typical shopping center environment, buildings may be significantly set back from the sidewalk to accommodate parking. Street frontage governs the relationship between private development, public sidewalks, and streetscape.

North Chicago’s streets present a varied spectrum. Residential areas showcase a uniformity with houses and lawns consistently set back from the sidewalk. In contrast, many commercial areas, especially in downtown, have buildings set closer to the streets, hinting at a more urban and welcoming vibe.

Building Form. Along with street frontages, a building’s overall shape, height, and proportions —its overall three-dimensional form —play critical roles in creating the streetwalls and spaces of a community. Groups of buildings that share similar forms and shapes can help promote design consistency, compatibility, and a sense of place. Compatible building forms can make for effective transitions between neighborhoods, and from neighborhood areas to commercial areas and employment centers.

Downtown North Chicago presents a mix of traditional structures. However, upon closer inspection, there’s a notable variance in building forms. Streamlining these forms could foster a unified aesthetic, facilitating seamless transitions between the city’s diverse sections.

THERE IS A NEED
TO RENOVATE THE
BUILDINGS ON SHERIDAN
RD. TO IMPROVE THEIR
CONDITION.

—— Stakeholder Summary

Architecture. In contrast to the building form, architecture focuses on a building’s particular features, materials, ornamentation, and door and window openings. Compatible architecture helps to form harmonious neighborhoods and places. Distinctive, individual works of architecture can create visual icons and a sense of prospect and interest in a community.

The cityscape is dominated by one to two-story commercial structures, with patches of historic architectural significance. However, the non-uniform character suggests potential for redevelopment, especially in underutilized areas, to rejuvenate the city’s aesthetic appeal.

Streetscape Realm. The streetscape realm consists of landscaping treatments, trees, lighting, furnishings, crosswalks, and other pedestrian amenities found in the public right-of-way, sometimes referred to as the area between curb and a building or property. Roadway median beds may also be areas for landscape enhancements, particularly in wide streets such as Green Bay Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Streetscaping improvements are a customary means by which a community can build a more unified image, enrich local character, and add spaces for social activities.

Downtown North Chicago possesses expansively wide sidewalks, which though offering potential, currently feel barren and exposed. The lack of buffers like planters leaves pedestrians feeling vulnerable. But the breadth of these sidewalks provides ample opportunities to introduce street furniture, creating vibrant activity zones and safe resting areas.

Public Spaces. In addition to the streetscape realm, plazas, town squares, and parks also serve as key community design elements, especially as they provide the background for community gatherings and special events. Town squares or plazas should incorporate a variety of features, such as ample green space, landscaping, public art, water features, and pavilions to bolster these spaces as compelling destinations for gatherings and community activities.

While the Veterans Memorial Park is one urban public space, there's a noticeable lack of overall vibrant community squares or plazas. Enhancing existing and introducing new open spaces, especially in commercial zones and downtown, can infuse life and activity, making them focal points for residents and visitors alike.

Wayfinding Signage. Sometimes incorporated as part of streetscapes, public wayfinding signage helps to direct those traveling by car to key destinations, such as city hall, parks and recreational facilities, and other places of interest. When well-designed with appropriate sizes, colors, illumination, and graphic design, wayfinding signage can support and enhance a community's brand image.

Currently, North Chicago's streets lack comprehensive wayfinding. Introducing informative and visually appealing signage can better guide residents and visitors, and educate them about the city's history, significant areas, local businesses, and major employment hubs.

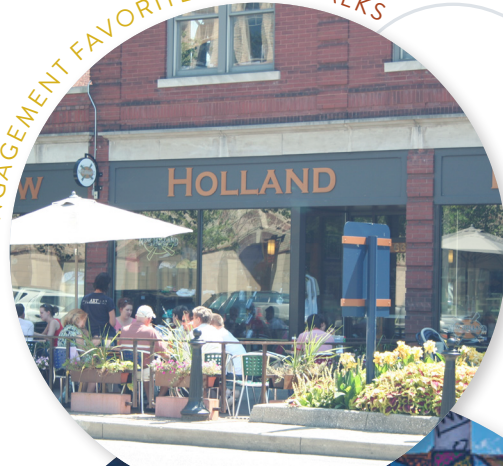
Gateways. Gateways mark transitions from one community to another or from commercial areas to adjoining neighborhoods, for example. Gateway treatments such as signage, landscaping, public art, and even icon buildings can serve as effective gateway elements.

The viaduct, which is perceived as the entrance to downtown, holds untapped potential. Converting it into a distinct gateway using art or branding elements can make powerful first impressions, elevating the city and downtown's image.

Public Art. Public art has the power to create engaging, compelling places and can be integral elements in the architecture and public spaces of a community. Public art also fosters opportunities for involving local artists and the broader community in its creation and installation.

North Chicago has a rich cultural tapestry waiting to be showcased. Beyond the art at the Veterans Memorial Park, the city streets and public spaces are almost devoid of creative installations. Engaging local artists to introduce public art can significantly elevate community spaces, making them more engaging and reflective of the city's cultural richness.

ENGAGEMENT FAVORITES | SIDEWALKS



Neighborhood Design

In North Chicago, the character of neighborhood districts is mainly defined by uniform mid-century modern, bungalows, and ranch-style homes. Despite the general good condition of these residential areas, some signs of deterioration are evident. The neighborhoods primarily feature residential land uses, with a few schools and community facilities interspersed within the areas. The limited variety of land uses underscores a need for more diversified and integrated neighborhoods.

The separation of land uses presents a challenge for the community. The current layout contributes to the isolation of residential zones, creating areas that lack a cohesive neighborhood feel. To enhance the sense of community and integration within these districts, introducing mixed land uses, such as local commercial areas and additional public spaces, is crucial. This strategy would help to foster a more connected and vibrant community atmosphere, improving the overall character and design of North Chicago's neighborhood districts.

Community Spaces

Despite being a lakefront community, access to the lake in North Chicago is limited. The northern sections of Lake Michigan, although not off-limits to pedestrians, exhibit an industrial look and feel reminiscent of original uses. This underutilized prime real estate offers a chance to revitalize and reintroduce the lakefront to the community in new, meaningful ways.

Despite the presence of some parks and open spaces in North Chicago, the amount and distribution do not sufficiently cater to the community's needs. These valuable green spaces are more than just aesthetic enhancements; they provide essential connections to nature, avenues for recreation, relaxation spaces, and contribute significantly to the overall quality of life within the city. Their role in fostering community well-being, promoting health, and offering social interaction platforms cannot be underestimated.

To truly tap into the potential of North Chicago's environmental ecosystem, greenways, tree canopies, parks, wetlands, and environmentally sensitive areas, should be approached comprehensively. Acknowledging and understanding the intricate web of these components allows for a more informed approach towards enhancing and expanding open space opportunities in the future. By doing so, North Chicago can ensure a robust, accessible, and sustainable green infrastructure, further enriching the community's character and vitality.

ENGAGEMENT FAVORITES | NEIGHBORHOODS



ENGAGEMENT FAVORITES | GATHERING SPACES







THE PLAN

PRINCIPLES - ASPIRATIONS - FOCUS AREAS

This is a plan for North Chicago's future. It envisions the city as the people of North Chicago envision the city they want: Vibrant, healthy, well-managed, and full of amenities. It is organized around six chapters or principles: Housing & Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Recreation & Green Infrastructure, Mobility and Transportation, Life & Culture, and Municipal Services & Utilities. Under each principle, it recommends specific solutions, strategies, and tactics to advance the city's goals. Written in accessible language and highly illustrated, the plan can be read, understood, and used by any resident or interested stakeholder who wants to build a new house, open a new business, plant a new community garden, or simply understand better how the city can use its assets and resources most effectively.

Este es un plan para el futuro de North Chicago. Visualiza la ciudad como la gente de North Chicago desea que sea: vibrante, saludable, bien gestionada y llena de comodidades. Está organizado en torno a seis capítulos o principios: Vivienda y Vecindarios, Desarrollo Económico, Recreación e Infraestructura Verde, Movilidad y Transporte, Vida y Cultura, y Servicios Municipales y Utilidades. Bajo cada principio, recomienda soluciones específicas, estrategias y tácticas para avanzar los objetivos de la ciudad. Escrito en un lenguaje accesible y altamente ilustrado, el plan puede ser leído, comprendido y utilizado por cualquier residente o parte interesada que quiera construir una nueva casa, abrir un nuevo negocio, plantar un nuevo jardín comunitario o simplemente entender mejor cómo la ciudad puede usar sus activos y recursos de manera más efectiva.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

P1 | Housing & Neighborhoods

Assesses North Chicago's housing needs in relation to the city's evolving demographics. Solutions support homeownership, home improvement, and the development of new housing products to meet changing needs.

P2 | Economic Development

Assesses the local business and consumer economies, commercial corridors, and opportunity sites. Solutions support industry retention, business attraction, the redevelopment of catalytic sites, and regulatory efficiencies.

P2 | Recreation & Green Infrastructure

Assesses current park and open space amenities and infrastructure, with solutions that address parks access, improved wellness and quality of life, ecological restoration, response to climate change, and better access to and use of the Greenbelt Nature Preserve.

P4 | Mobility & Transportation

Assesses current mobility networks including rail and other transit, sidewalks, roads, bike connections, and trails. Solutions address improving pedestrian and bike networks, making roads safer, and integrating city networks with IDOT and LCDOT systems.

P5 | Life & Culture

Assesses how the city recognizes its authentic and diverse population through culture, community, and events. Solutions support fostering positive images of the city, celebrating local cultures through arts and events, and integrating the city's industrial tradition into a positive identity.

P6 | Municipal Services & Utilities

Assesses safety, city services, and water and energy infrastructure. Solutions include leveraging community belonging for immigrant families, enhancing community safety through community policing, and addressing environmental resilience of infrastructure.

1

2

3

4

5

6

PRINCIPLE

1

Housing & Neighborhoods

Assesses North Chicago's housing needs in relation to the city's evolving demographics. Solutions support homeownership, home improvement, and the development of new housing products to meet changing needs.

ASPIRATION 1.1

Support investment in North Chicago neighborhoods through homeownership and home improvement initiatives.

ASPIRATION 1.2

Support new housing that meets the needs of a changing population.

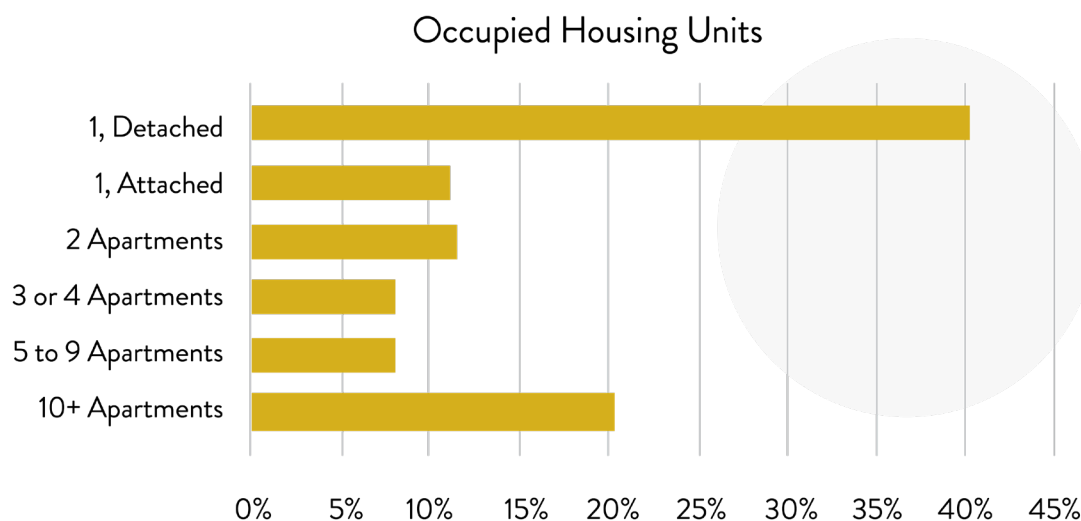
*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 1: Housing and Neighborhoods**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

HOUSING

Total housing units in 2023 are estimated at 7,735, including military-owned housing. Overall, 52% of units are single-family (including detached and attached housing), and 48% of units are in multi-family structures. An unknown number of single-family homes have been divided into two or more apartments as a result of informal conversions.

MAYOR ROCKINGHAM
ACKNOWLEDGED THE
NEED TO ADDRESS
HOUSING SHORTAGES
AND INCREASE
EMPLOYMENT.

Stakeholder Summary



Housing Tenure

Considering all housing units in North Chicago, 33% are owner-occupied, 67% are rented, and 11% are vacant. There are differences between home ownership rates in North Chicago's two zip codes and the underlying reasons are important: In zip code 60064, 41% of homes are owner-occupied, 59% are rented, and 13% are vacant, while in Great Lakes zip code 60088, 100% of housing units are rented because they are all owned by the military. By comparison, Lake County has an unusually high ownership rate of 75%, while the US stands at 66%.

Cross-tabulating homeownership with race and ethnicity reveals several interesting characteristics about housing in zip code 60064, the only zip code where homeownership is possible:

- About 37% of Hispanic households own their home. That is slightly lower than the overall ownership rate of 41% in this zip code.
- Black households are homeowners at the same rate as for zip code 60064, with 41% of Black households owning their home.

Housing Affordability

The median home value in North Chicago is \$172,715. That is lower than the median for Lake County (\$312,800) and the median for Illinois (\$249,507). While North Chicago homes are modestly priced, housing affordability reflects the relationship between what households earn and their housing costs. ESRI publishes a Housing Affordability Index, a scale with a midpoint of 100. North Chicago's index, at 101, is almost exactly in the middle of the scale, meaning that the average home is considered affordable for the median income household. Viewed from a different perspective, a North Chicago household with a home valued at median price, would spend 19% of their monthly income on a mortgage. The generally accepted standard is a household should spend less than 30% of its gross income on housing and utilities.

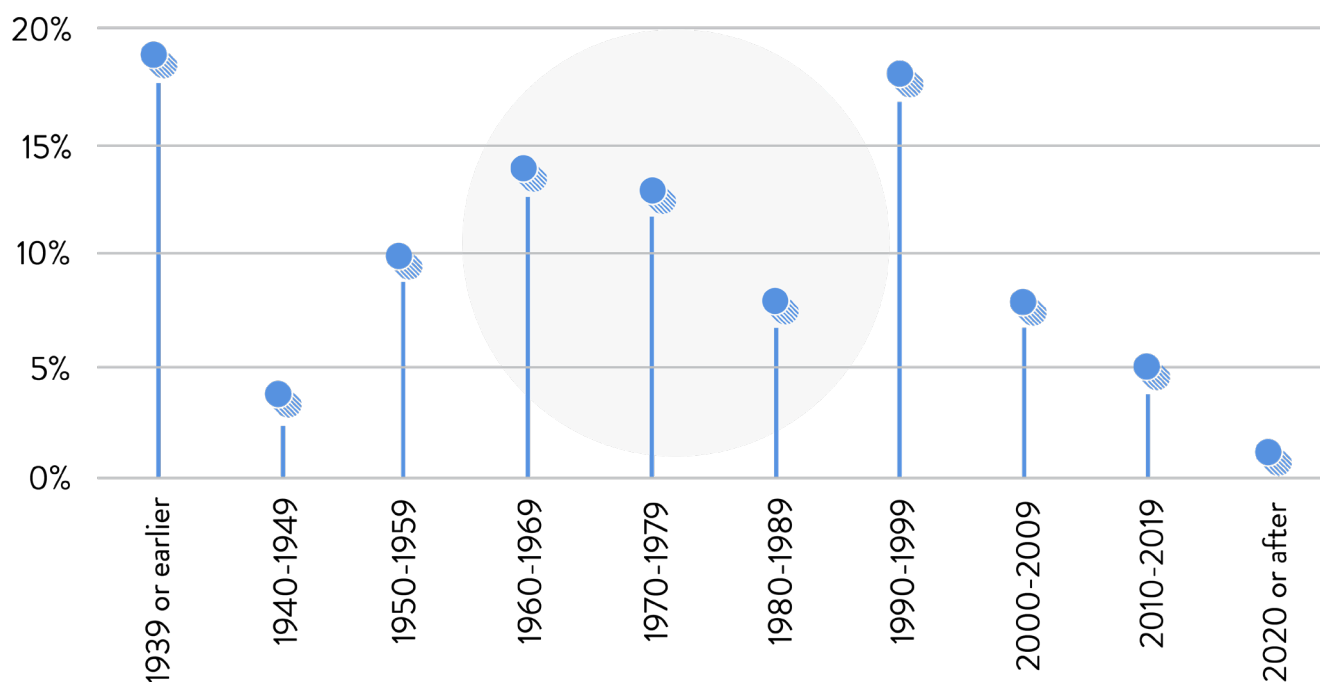
A key aspect of homeownership that is not captured by the Housing Affordability Index is a household's ability to enter the housing market, which requires

savings for a down payment. While the down payment is the largest barrier to increasing the rate of homeownership in North Chicago, the increase in mortgage interest rates has created a second barrier by raising the monthly mortgage payment cost.

Housing Inventory By Year

Construction of North Chicago's housing stock reflects three boom periods, with the first being before 1939. Housing development was depressed during World War II years, ramping up in the 1960s and 1970s. The recession that began in 1980 again depressed housing development and is reflected in the low number of units added during that decade. Housing development recovered in the 1990s, particularly the result of new home construction at the Naval Station. Since the 1990s, the addition of new housing units has slowed considerably, with only 14% of units added in the last 23 years.

North Chicago Homes: Year Built



Nonprofit Housing Development

Several nonprofit developers have pursued an incremental effort to deliver new, quality units with a goal of increasing homeownership rates and thereby strengthening neighborhoods. ReNew Communities, based in North Chicago, has developed 17 homes (new and rehabilitated) since 2016. They provide down payment assistance up to \$25,000 and aim to develop 300 houses overall. Habitat for Lake County has delivered about 30 homes in North Chicago since 1989. Mortgages were self-financed by Habitat at 0% for 30 years, but the organization has now moved to third-party financing. Both organizations target low- and moderate-income families, with household incomes between \$45,000 and \$90,000.

Both of these organizations were able to develop homes more affordably by purchasing vacant lots from the City, sometimes for as little as \$10. Today, the City no longer has excess property for sale and the nonprofit developers purchase lots from private sellers at a higher price. Rising labor and material costs have made developing “affordable” housing challenging, with current costs estimated around \$260,000.



Real Estate Taxes

City leaders recognize that real estate taxes can be an impediment to attracting residents to North Chicago, where taxes are higher than surrounding Lake County communities. The relative lack of retail businesses in North Chicago partially explains the dependence on property-based taxes, though the city has a high concentration of commercial industrial rate payers.

Taking one Lake County community for comparison, Winthrop Harbor also lacks a significant retail presence. It competes directly with Kenosha County, Wisconsin, where the sales tax rate is lower.

The total millage rate for residential property in Winthrop Harbor is 10.943906, while North Chicago has a total millage of 13.900665. The difference

of 2.956759 means that the taxes levied on two properties of the same value are 27% higher in North Chicago than in Winthrop Harbor.

Not including township or county tax rates, the three categories with the largest differences between the two communities are:

- City/Village Pensions
- School District Pensions
- City/Village tax

The difference in pension assessments for the City of North Chicago accounts for more than half the difference in overall tax burden between the two municipalities. The following table shows a comparison of rates for all taxing entities:

TABLE 3: TAX RATE BREAKDOWN COMPARISON

TAXING BODY	WINTHROP HARBOR RATE	NORTH CHICAGO RATE	DIFFERENCE
College of Lake County	0.295800	0.295800	0
County of Lake	0.498428	0.498428	0
County of Lake Pension	0.090300	0.090300	0
School District	7.677258	6.632803	-1.044455
School District Pension	0.190166	0.473402	0.283236
Forest Preserve	0.165653	0.165653	0
Forest Preserve Pension	0.007580	0.007580	0
Public Library District	0.320057	0.307394	-0.012663
Public Library Pension	0.021008	-	-0.021008
City or Village	0.940734	2.397798	1.457064
City or Village Pension	0.390667	2.105474	1.714807
Township	0.135106	0.074051	-0.061055
Township Pension	0.009182	0.000265	-0.008917
North Shore Water Reclamation District	0.159719	0.159719	0
Road and Bridge - Benton	0.042248	-	-0.042248
Park District	-	0.669260	0.669260
Park District Pension	-	0.022738	0.022738
TOTAL	10.943906	13.900665	2.956759

The first comparison in the following table illustrates the total property taxes on two homes of median value in the respective communities. Because homes in North Chicago, on average, are lower in value than in some other Lake County communities, this acts as a mitigating factor for actual taxes paid, despite the rate differences. The second comparison in the table illustrates the difference in tax on two homes of the same value.

TABLE 4: TOTAL PROPERTY TAX COMPARISON

	WINTHROP HARBOR	NORTH CHICAGO
Median value of home	\$229,211	\$172,715
Taxes on median home	\$2,508	\$2,401
Same value home	\$200,000	\$200,000
Taxes on same value home	\$2,189	\$2,780



ASPIRATION 1.1

Support investment in North Chicago neighborhoods through homeownership and home improvement initiatives.

The goals for North Chicago's housing sector aim to create stable neighborhoods with strong social and physical fabric where families can put down roots, feel safe, and build economically secure lives.

While homeownership rates in North Chicago are somewhat skewed by Naval Station-related housing (which is entirely rental), owner-occupied housing is relatively low. Increasing the ownership rate can help bring stability to neighborhoods and additional investment in home maintenance and improvements. Among the many factors affecting homeownership, some (like mortgage interest rates) are external. Still, a set of targeted local initiatives can help to set North Chicago families on a path toward purchasing a home, building wealth, and investing in neighborhoods.

In addition to spurring homeownership, this goal also includes strategies for home repair and neighborhood preservation. Home maintenance can be managed through a balanced of incentives and code enforcement, with the ultimate purpose of creating stable neighborhoods that attract investment.

1.1.1 Expand Homeownership Programs & Incentives

1. *Establish or partner in a downpayment assistance program(s) aimed at helping first-time homebuyers and low-to-moderate-income families afford the initial costs of homeownership.*
2. *Offer training and preparation technical assistance for prospective homeowners. Topics should include financial literacy, budgeting for homeownership, understanding mortgages, and navigating the home buying process.*
3. *Consider partnerships with local banks and financial institutions to maximize the reach and impact of downpayment assistance programs.*
4. *Introduce a property tax homestead exemption for primary residences to reduce the annual property tax burden on homeowners, encouraging long-term residency and investment in the community.*
5. *Collaborate with landlords to create savings plans that enable tenants to allocate a portion of their rent towards a downpayment on a home, building a pathway to homeownership for renters.*

Homeownership Programs

WASHINGTON STATE

Home Advantage and House Key Opportunity programs, implemented by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), provide substantial down payment assistance. These programs offer benefits like low-interest rates and deferred payments, making it easier for buyers to afford a home without the burden of immediate, large out-of-pocket expenses. Specifically, they provide up to \$10,000 in down payment assistance, integrating these funds with the buyer's primary mortgage to simplify payments.

Such comprehensive assistance programs could serve as a valuable model for other regions with similar economic profiles, aiming to enhance homeownership among historically disadvantaged groups. Implementing these programs involves collaboration between state agencies, local governments, and community organizations.

1.1.2 Support Home Improvement and Neighborhood Preservation

1. Support homeowners in maintaining their homes through financial assistance such as a roof repair grant program or repair of substandard or non-code compliant properties.
2. Assist homeowners in maintaining or repairing their homes through shared resources at lower costs, like tool lending libraries or a nonprofit building materials salvage warehouse.
3. Regulate home maintenance through universal code enforcement, pairing enforcement with supportive resources where possible to minimize cost burden on homeowners.
4. Implement policies and incentives to discourage the demolition of older homes, preserving naturally occurring affordable housing. Offer grants, tax incentives, or technical assistance to homeowners and developers willing to restore or repurpose historic properties.
5. Consider a housing preservation or conservation overlay district to protect historically- and architecturally-significant neighborhoods from inappropriate development.
6. Consider a three-year residential tax abatement for owner-occupancy of housing units that have been unoccupied for at least one year.

7. Consider a 10-year residential tax abatement on substantial improvements to owner-occupied residential properties. The abatement would apply to the incremental value of the improvement. Substantial improvements to be defined as improvements that increase the assessed value of the home by at least 10%. The owner must remain in the home for the first three years of the abatement period.

1.1.3 Enhance Partnerships with Lake County

1. Work closely with Lake County officials and agencies to align city housing initiatives with county-wide strategies. This collaboration can enhance access to funding, share best practices, and ensure cohesive approaches to addressing housing challenges. Collaborate on housing projects that benefit both North Chicago and the broader Lake County area, such as affordable housing developments or mixed-use projects.
2. Share resources and funding opportunities to maximize the impact of housing programs, such as downpayment assistance or home repair grants.
3. Share housing market data and needs assessments to better understand regional housing trends and tailor initiatives to meet those needs effectively.



SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES IN NORTH CHICAGO

ASPIRATION 1.2

Support new housing that meets the needs of a changing population.

The strategies supporting this goal are intended to stimulate housing development that meets the needs of current and future North Chicago residents. The plans for several potential residential development sites, such as Halsey Village, should be informed by a deeper understanding of the housing market, its opportunities and barriers.

Stimulating the housing market will also involve increasing the capacity of the development community in North Chicago, both on the nonprofit and for-profit sides. New housing solutions can include smaller homes, attached homes, or accessory dwelling units, and can also serve as models for affordability while meeting the needs of changing demographics.

1.2.1 Assess Housing Needs

1. Commission a housing needs assessment as follow-up to the Comprehensive Plan to quantify any unmet demand or mismatch between existing supply and market opportunities.
2. Evaluate the Halsey Village site for varied housing products and adopt a site redevelopment plan.
3. Consider single-family zoning changes to allow for multi-generational housing, such as in-law suites or accessory dwelling units.

1.2.2 Establish a Housing Coalition

1. Establish a housing coalition comprising local government officials, housing developers, non-profit organizations, and community members. This coalition would work collaboratively to identify and address housing needs, advocate for policy changes, and coordinate housing initiatives across the city.
2. Advocate for local and state policies that support affordable housing development, tenant protections, and homeownership programs.
3. Promote the housing coalition as a central hub for information and resources related to housing assistance, homeownership programs, and home improvement grants.
4. Facilitate community discussions and workshops to gather input on housing needs and develop inclusive housing strategies.

1.2.3 Support Developer Needs

1. Increase capacity of nonprofit housing developers through trades training programs.
2. Generate new small-scale developers by establishing a revolving loan fund and small-scale developer training program.
3. Simplify and expedite the development approval process to encourage more housing projects. Offer pre-application consultations, clear guidelines, and timely reviews to reduce development costs and delays.

1.2.4 Support Infill Development

1. Study the potential for smaller houses or cottages as neighborhood infill on vacant lots to create new, affordable single-family options.
2. Study the potential benefits, barriers, and demand for permitting accessory dwelling units in single-family neighborhoods.
3. Allow attached single-family (e.g., row) homes in single-family neighborhoods.



PRINCIPLE

2

Economic Development

Assesses the local business and consumer economies, commercial corridors, and opportunity sites. Solutions support industry retention, business attraction, the redevelopment of catalytic sites, and regulatory efficiencies.

ASPIRATION 2.1

Cultivate economic growth in North Chicago through industry retention and expansion efforts.

ASPIRATION 2.2

Revitalize Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway through strategic investments to stimulate economic activity and improve urban connectivity.

ASPIRATION 2.3

Revive the downtown area and traditional commercial corridors to attract residents, businesses, and visitors.

ASPIRATION 2.4

Redevelop the Sheridan Crossing site into a vibrant mixed-use destination through innovative design and inclusive planning processes.

ASPIRATION 2.5

Enhance regulatory, permitting, and approval practices through improved systems and customer service, providing clarity and predictability for developers and businesses.

*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 2: Economic Development**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

BUSINESS & THE ECONOMY

Based on publicly available listings, North Chicago is home to about 420 business entities. The table below shows the percentage of business by their two-digit North American Industrial Classification System code. The four categories with the largest numbers of businesses are:

- Other Services (except Public Administration)
- Retail Trade
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance

“Other Services” is a broad category that includes automotive and machinery repair, personal care services, dry cleaning, funeral homes, business and professional organizations, and others.

The number of businesses does not correlate to their size (e.g., by number of employees or total sales). While manufacturing represents 5% of North Chicago businesses, these are generally the largest businesses in the city by employment and sales.

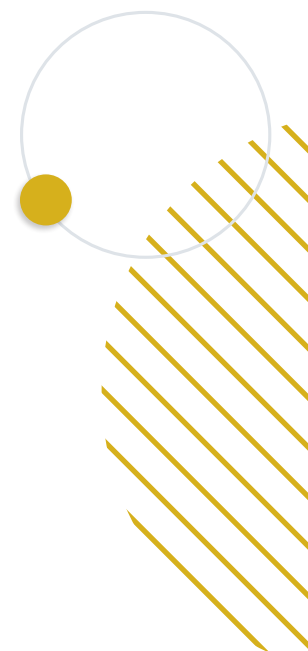
North Chicago’s largest private employers include:

- Abbott Industries
- AbbVie Pharmaceuticals
- Rosalind Franklin University
- Salvation Army

The largest public employer is Naval Station Great Lakes. The facility employs roughly 6,000 civilians at the site.

TABLE 5: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

NAICS CODE	INDUSTRY	PERCENTAGE
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	13.6%
44-45	Retail Trade	12.6%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	11.9%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	9.3%
23	Construction	6.7%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6.2%
92	Public Administration	6.2%
31-33	Manufacturing	5.0%
42	Wholesale Trade	4.5%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management Services	4.5%
61	Educational Services	4.5%
53	Real Estate Rental and Leasing	4.0%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	3.8%



SMALL BUSINESSES & GAMING LICENSES

Small and especially retail businesses in North Chicago face challenges that include competition from larger-format stores outside the city and the quality of available commercial spaces. Many of these businesses are owned by Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs – particularly in the traditional commercial districts of Sheridan Road and Audrey Nixon Blvd. – making them important anchors of the North Chicago community.

A significant portion of North Chicago’s small businesses have availed themselves of gaming licenses, permitted under Municipal Code Chapter 33. Thirty-four licenses have been issued, with many used at hair salons, liquor stores, and food businesses, among others. The revenue from video gaming helps keep these small businesses afloat. At the same time, the growing influence of gaming disrupts local market dynamics. As more small businesses must rely on revenue from video gaming (rather than their primary product or service), those who do not avail themselves of the license are at a disadvantage. The licenses can also disrupt the commercial real estate market as businesses with gaming revenue are able to pay more for retail space than businesses without the license. Experience in North Chicago has also shown that stores with gaming attract more crime and quality-of-life nuisances.



VIDEO GAMING IS A CONCERN BECAUSE OF THE PERCEPTIONS IT CREATES AND IT CAN NEGATIVELY IMPACT NEARBY BUSINESSES.

Stakeholder Summary

SMALL BUSINESSES NEED INCENTIVES, GRANTS, AND SUPPORT TO THRIVE IN NORTH CHICAGO. WE SHOULD THINK OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HOLISTICALLY

Stakeholder Summary



CONSUMER SPENDING

Consumer spending is influenced by household income, household size, and other factors. Given North Chicago's modest household incomes, consumer spending is also similarly modest and concentrated in categories considered essential.

The table below presents estimated household spending for North Chicago households, both on an individual and aggregate level. Included is the Spending Potential Index (SPI), a national benchmark devised by ESRI. The SPI uses a midpoint of 100: scores above 100 indicate spending potential above the national

average, while scores below 100 suggest spending potential below the national average.

Aggregate spending in key consumer categories like Food at Home (\$30 million in aggregate spending), Food Away from Home (\$21 million), and Apparel & Services (\$12 million), suggests that a majority of household spending leaves the city. There are few North Chicago stores in these categories, and, with the exception of fast-food outlets, most are small, independent businesses.

The Spending Potential Index shows that household buying power is roughly 30 points below the median across categories. North Chicago can still support retail uses despite lower spending, as long as those retail uses are appropriate to the needs of residents and at accessible price points.

TABLE 6: CONSUMER SPENDING

RETAIL GOODS AND SERVICES	AVG SPENDING PER HOUSEHOLD (\$)	AGGREGATE SPENDING (\$)	SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX
Apparel & Services	\$1,724	\$11,915,000	72
Computer Hardware for Home Use	\$136	\$940,000	71
Entertainment & Recreation	\$2,406	\$16,632,000	66
Fees & Admissions	\$565	\$3,902,000	67
TV/Video/Audio	\$899	\$6,215,000	67
Pets	\$505	\$3,493,000	61
Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies	\$93	\$642,000	71
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	\$135	\$931,000	66
Food	\$7,426	\$51,326,000	71
Food at Home (Groceries)	\$4,317	\$29,837,000	70
Food Away from Home	\$3,109	\$21,489,000	72
Alcoholic Beverages	\$481	\$3,325,000	68
Furniture	\$490	\$3,389,000	68
Major Appliances	\$273	\$1,884,000	64
Housewares	\$65	\$450,000	65
Lawn & Garden	\$318	\$2,199,000	56
Personal Care Productss	\$394	\$2,726,000	70
School Books & Supplies	\$109	\$751,000	73

Sales Leakage

As in any community, North Chicago seeks to capture as much of the available spending as possible. Historically, spending capture has been measured as “sales leakage” – the amount of available local spending that is not captured by local businesses. Leakage calculations have several systemic challenges:

- **Ecommerce.** With the growth of ecommerce, the concept of sales leakage has become less meaningful as more and more convenience purchases – from groceries to pet supplies – migrate to online sellers located far away. Ecommerce retail sales now account for 15% of all retail sales in the US. In addition, a large portion of entertainment spending, which used to happen at theaters or other in-person venues, has migrated to streaming services.
- **Sales reporting.** While consumer demand data is rigorously collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and is considered reliable, the data for sales at retail stores can be grossly inaccurate. The data generally relies on self-reporting in the Economic Census and, for larger businesses, on credit card transactions, but sales at micro businesses (e.g., small, independent retailers) are not collected by the Economic Census, which leads to actual sales being based on national estimates.

According to sales leakage data from Experian, North Chicago households have an aggregate annual consumer retail demand of \$390 million. The estimated retail gap, not including non-store retailers, is \$90 million. Recognizing the systemic data collection issues noted above, and the small size of most retailers in North Chicago, the gap is likely much higher.

Some spending by North Chicago households is captured by retailers in Waukegan, to the north. Waukegan, rather than having an overall sales gap, shows a retail sales surplus of \$515 million.

Given the right mix of brick-and-mortar businesses, some of these sales could, in theory, be recaptured in North Chicago. It would be most beneficial to concentrate on categories less susceptible to competition from online sales, such as retail services and food businesses.



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway represent auto-oriented roads while portions of Sheridan Road and Audrey Nixon Blvd. exhibit characteristics of historic or traditional business districts.

North Chicago's five main commercial corridors include:

- Skokie Highway / US-41
- Green Bay Road / IL-131
- Sheridan Road / Downtown
- Audrey Nixon Blvd.
- 10th Street

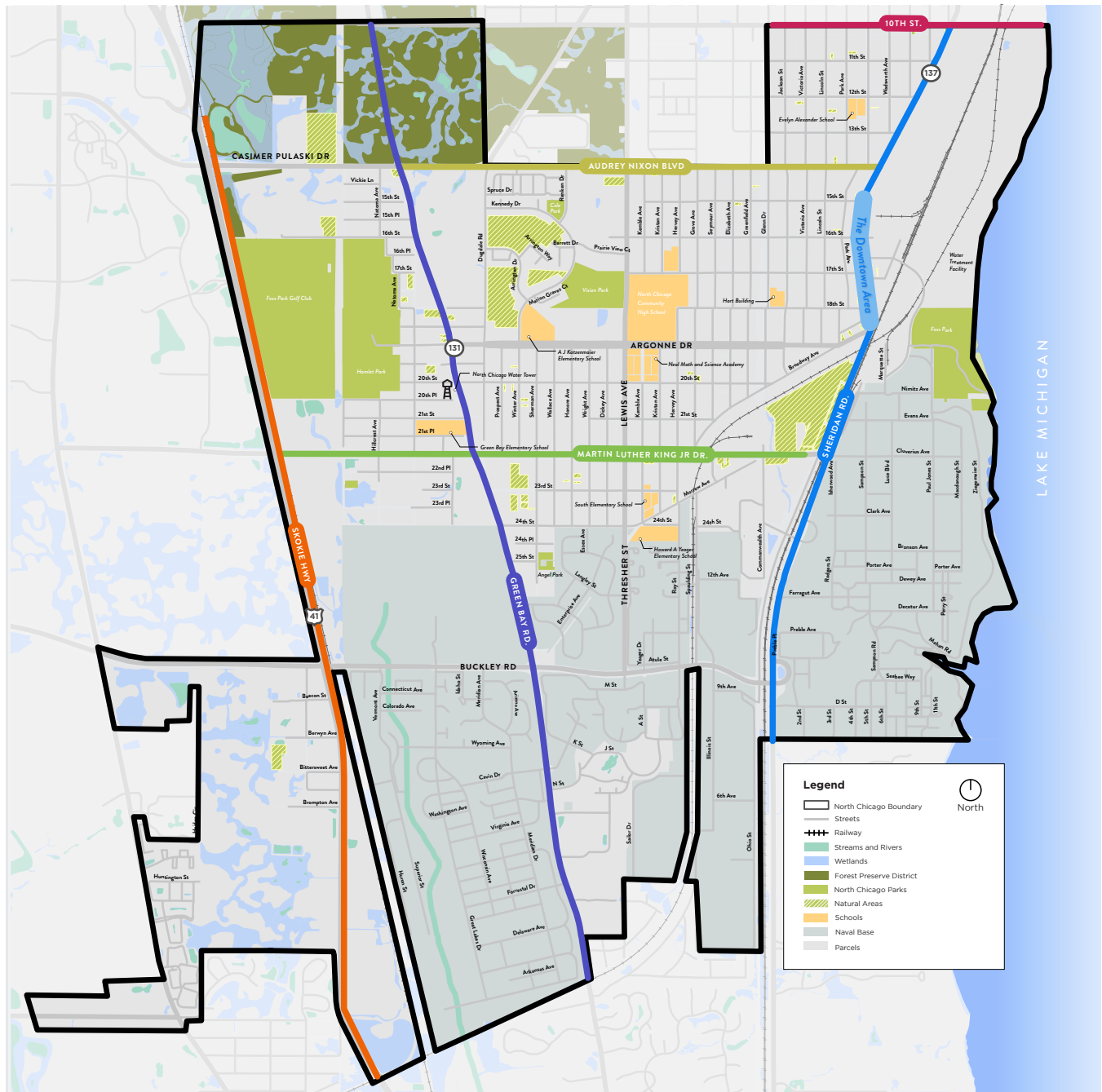


FIGURE 6: NORTH CHICAGO CORRIDORS



SKOKIE HIGHWAY / US-41

Skokie Highway, a divided high-speed road, functions primarily as north-south arterial and as an industrial corridor. Industrial uses include manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, medium and heavy construction, machine repair, and truck repair. At the southern end of Skokie Highway within the city, industrial uses include laundry and other facilities that support the Naval Station.

The road also supports accommodations and some retail uses, particularly around the intersection of Buckley Road/Highway 137. These consumer-facing businesses include skating, martial arts, fuel and convenience shops, fast-food outlets, and a sit-down restaurant. Along much of Skokie Highway, billboard advertising is a dominant part of the visual landscape. At the northern end of the corridor is Foss Park Golf Course and the Greenbelt Forest Preserve.

Economic development on Skokie Highway is primarily driven by land availability and vehicle access for industrial users. Consumer-facing businesses support through-travelers. In future development scenarios, Skokie Highway could potentially support large-format retail, given sufficient spending capture.



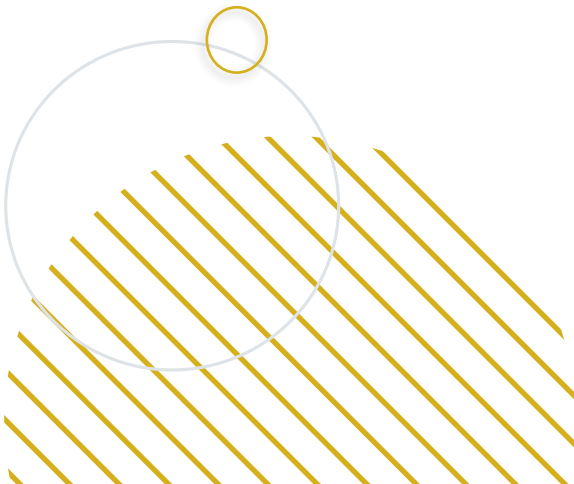
GREEN BAY RD. / IL-31

Green Bay Road is a narrower, slightly slower road than Skokie Highway and traverses a mix of residential and commercial. Its southern end features military housing and multi-family residences. Key institutions like Rosalind Franklin University and the Veterans Administration Hospital are located north of Forrester Drive. Central Green Bay has various retail shops, auto-related services, and fast-food chains, giving it a commercial highway vibe. At the northern end of Green Bay Rd. in North Chicago are a cemetery and the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. Economic development on Green Bay Road will likely continue to be auto-oriented, but traffic calming and control of visual clutter can improve this artery.



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DR.

Martin Luther King Jr Drive is a four-lane road beginning at Sheridan Road on the east, across from the Naval Station Great Lakes and the Sheridan Crossing future development site. EMCO Chemical Distributors is the dominant user up to Grove Avenue, with some single-family and small multifamily residential on the south side of MLK. Continuing west, the street is a mix of retail, light industrial, and residential. The largest concentration of businesses is at Green Bay Road, with primarily auto-oriented chain restaurants and service stations.





SHERIDAN RD. & DOWNTOWN

From the south, Sheridan Road enters North Chicago at the Naval Station and the Great Lakes Metra Station. In this area, Sheridan is fenced on both sides as it bisects the Naval Station.

North of Martin Luther King Jr Drive and the railroad trestle, Sheridan Road takes on a traditional compact development style in North Chicago's historic downtown. The dozen or so downtown tenants include food, liquor, and tobacco stores, personal care services, post office, and laundromat. The backdrop for this portion of Sheridan Road is AbbVie's manufacturing plant on the east side. The AbbVie facilities are gated, limiting interaction between AbbVie employees and downtown businesses. While streetscapes and sidewalks have seen some improvement, the improvements are now showing some age. Of greater concern is that buildings and signage present a low-quality impression. Aesthetics notwithstanding, this portion of Sheridan Road has potential to be a vibrant commercial and civic center, given the right mix of public improvements and business development strategies. North of downtown, AbbVie dominates the east side of the road, with gated and walled facilities.



AUDREY NIXON BLVD.

The Audrey Nixon Blvd. , from Sheridan Road west to Jackson Street, contains a small but vital Hispanic business district. It is both a commercial and cultural district, anchored by several Spanish-language churches. Businesses provide convenience retail and services, including banking, liquor, laundry, and food. Like the downtown portion of Sheridan Road, this neighborhood business district has potential to become a more vibrant anchor for North Chicago's Hispanic community.



10TH ST.

10th Street in North Chicago, is a modest strip, spanning a block or two and characterized by a handful of commercial buildings. While the street has a distinct Hispanic focus, its appearance is unassuming, presenting a straightforward and basic streetscape. The businesses, though functional, lack vibrancy, reflecting the area's challenges. Despite its simplicity, 10th Street remains an essential part of the local fabric, serving the needs of North Chicago's residents.

ASPIRATION 2.1

Cultivate economic growth in North Chicago through industry retention and expansion efforts.

The aspirations for North Chicago's industrial sector aim to retain large and small industries that contribute to the city's tax base and provide good jobs for North Chicago residents.

Companies like AbbVie, Abbott, EMCO, Proctor & Gamble, Jelly Belly, and others are foundational to North Chicago's economy. It is therefore important to continually bring them into conversation with the City to understand their evolving needs and priorities. These anchor industries can also be harnessed to support secondary economic activities by cultivating independent, business-to-business services within the city. These could range from landscaping to fleet maintenance.

Developing new, next-generation industries should also be a component of the city's industrial strategy. Strategies in this category promote the advancement of smart, clean, and green industries where appropriate to adjacent land uses.

2.1.1 Retain Anchor Industries

1. Cultivate open lines of communication with executive-level and community development personnel at North Chicago industries. Nurture these relationships by regularly checking in to understand their needs and concerns.
2. Host regular (e.g., semi-annual) roundtables with North Chicago industry executives to facilitate open dialogue and where the City can present current initiatives.

2.1.2 Encourage Smart, Clean, and Green Industries

1. Pursue clean, water-dependent industries in appropriate locations in the city, taking advantage of Lake Michigan draw capacity. Example industries include bottling plants, micro-breweries, or vertical/controlled-environment agriculture. Placing higher value-chain small industries on less-expensive land will make these enterprises more viable.

2.1.3 Strengthen Business-to-Business Services

1. Strengthen existing North Chicago businesses that serve, or could potentially serve, industries and other large businesses. Existing business-to-business services might include cleaning, landscaping, maintenance, construction, auto repair, and other small North Chicago businesses. These can be facilitated through introductions, listing services, or business expos.
2. Identify and support entrepreneurial opportunities for new business-to-business services. Through dialogue with North Chicago industries, the City and its economic development partners can identify areas for new business-to-business services.



SOUL FOOD IN MEMPHIS, TN

ASPIRATION 2.2

Revitalize Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway through strategic investments to stimulate economic activity and improve urban connectivity.

Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway have special needs appropriate to their highway character and auto-oriented businesses. They roads provide potential locations to fill retail gaps in the city and the potential to capture through-traffic customers to add to the local customer base.

Identifying market opportunities for business development will be important in strengthening the North Chicago economy and providing more shopping options for residents. A full-line grocery store does not currently exist in the city and is highly desired by residents. Several initiatives can directly and indirectly address this retail gap.

While the highway character of the roads cannot be changed, the corridors would benefit from greater consistency in development character. Design interventions and regulations can help establish more visual appeal.

2.2.1 Ensure Business Development

1. Pursue a “neighborhood model” grocery chain. Several major chains are opening smaller-than-standard (approx. 40,000 square feet) stores to provide better access to groceries in underserved geographies.
2. Establish a dollar store mitigation ordinance for North Chicago. Recent research has demonstrated that the proliferation of chain dollar stores in food deserts inhibits the development of full-service grocery stores. This is because dollar stores, in selling packaged and frozen foods, capture potential profits of a traditional grocery store.
3. Consider alternative grocery store models such as a nonprofit or cooperative enterprise. When the market fails to act in filling a retail void like groceries, some communities have taken a self-help approach by organizing a community-owned grocery store.
4. Consider emergency/urgent care medical use(s) for retail commercial area southwest of the intersection of Skokie Highway and Buckley Road.
5. Use mobility data consumer profiles (e.g., available through Placer.ai) to identify business development opportunities that can capture spending by through-commuters on Skokie Highway and Green Bay Road.

2.1.2 Manage Corridor Aesthetics

1. Adopt a form-based code for Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway. This can help bring greater visual cohesion to the corridors.
2. Enhance the public realm by investing in streetscape improvements, such as widened sidewalks, street tree plantings, and decorative paving, to create a pedestrian-friendly environment that prioritizes safety, accessibility, and aesthetics.
3. Establish maintenance standards and enforcement mechanisms to ensure ongoing upkeep and compliance with guidelines, fostering a clean, well-maintained, and visually appealing environment along Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway.



POTENTIAL STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

ASPIRATION 2.3

Revive the downtown area and traditional commercial corridors to attract residents, businesses, and visitors.

This goal aims to reestablish downtown/Sheridan Road as a vibrant, historic commercial center, a walkable anchor for the city, and a gathering place for residents. It also aims to improve the commercial and aesthetic qualities of the city's secondary commercial corridors, including 14th Street, Audrey Nixon Boulevard, and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

These traditional commercial districts and streets serve different needs from Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway. With a scale oriented toward pedestrians and slower-speed traffic, they should fill important roles in offering retail, dining, and entertainment to North Chicago households as well as Naval Station Great Lakes' civilian employees and uniformed personnel. They should contribute to the city's tax revenues and provide local employment opportunities.

Revitalization will involve a range of activities to change people's perceptions, habits, and experiences. Using a toolkit of strategic incentives, the City can help stimulate new retail and restaurant offerings in these areas, strengthening consumer-facing businesses. Central to this effort will be a marketing and events calendar that brings people into the downtown and other commercial areas. Events generate foot traffic, which benefits businesses; events also improve perceptions of safety and bring people to the corridors who might not otherwise come.

2.3.1 Grow Entrepreneurship and Retail Diversity

1. Identify niche market opportunities for business development. These may include ethnic food and retail businesses that are less susceptible to online competition while meeting the needs of North Chicago families.
2. Consider alternative and creative programs to inspire and promote entrepreneurship in North Chicago. Business plan contests, pop-up shops, business incubators, or artist studios are some examples which could revitalize underutilized spaces. These programs could be set up on a pilot program basis with reduced or subsidized rent to inject initial momentum within a focus area. Once established, the temporary uses would make way for market-rate end users.
3. Establish business startup grants targeted to restaurants. Establishing more sit-down restaurants in North Chicago is a priority given the small number of local, non-fast food options. The largest barrier to restaurant development is the buildout of a commercial kitchen. Establishing a restaurant grant program can help to overcome this obstacle to business development.
4. Recruit "grab-and-go" prepared food retailers. Prepared foods cater to a national trend of reduced home cooking but the business type is distinguished from restaurant setups. Off-site preparation lowers startup barriers by eliminating the need for a kitchen.
5. Consider a moratorium on video gaming licenses. In generating non-business-related income, video gaming artificially increases the capacity of businesses with gaming licenses to pay higher rents. This likely increases general rents for all storefront properties, increasing the barrier to new business development. These licensed businesses often also create the perception of unsafe or unattractive conditions for other customers.



GRAB-AND-GO FOOD RETAILERS

2.3.2 Encourage Economic Development in Downtown

1. Move the farmers market from City Hall to a downtown location. The farmers market should be re-established (after closing during the 2023 season) by identifying a paid market manager and moving the market to downtown/Sheridan Road. By locating the market downtown, it will start to develop regular shopper patterns and generate foot traffic for existing businesses.
2. Establish a series of small-scale, regular downtown events. These may include jazz performances, community block party, food trucks, a night market, flea market, or other events. Events like these serve multiple purposes, including getting people comfortable being downtown, creating positive associations and memories, generating foot traffic, and improving downtown's image.
3. Host a Black and Latino business expo in the downtown for regional entrepreneurs and cottage industries. A business expo can generate foot traffic while cultivating leads on regional entrepreneurs who could potentially locate a brick-and-mortar business in North Chicago.
4. Establish a “vanilla box” incentive grant program. One of the key challenges to business development on Sheridan Road is the condition of the retail spaces, which may require a significant up-front investment by a new entrepreneur. A vanilla box program facilitates new business development by creating an occupiable space and thereby lowering the barrier to entry.
5. Establish a façade incentive grant program to improve appearances of downtown buildings.
6. Investigate options to utilize city-owned property or set aside small areas of private developments for the creation of pocket parks or other public space which can be utilized for events and as a gathering space.

Vanilla Box

CLEVELAND, OH

Cleveland implemented its vanilla box program within a broader framework of economic development aimed at revitalizing underutilized urban areas. The city offered financial incentives to property owners to upgrade their spaces to a basic operational level, including safe, modern infrastructures like new lighting, ceilings, and exposed brick interiors where applicable. These spaces were then marketed to potential business owners at reduced rates to encourage occupancy. The program was particularly successful in attracting startups and small businesses looking for lower overheads, which in turn contributed to the economic dynamism of the area. By encouraging the renovation of old or unused buildings, North Chicago can transform these spaces into attractive premises for businesses. This not only helps in filling vacant properties but also boosts local employment as new businesses require staffing. With lower barriers to entry, a more diverse array of business owners, including those from underrepresented groups, might be incentivized to start businesses. This diversity can lead to a richer variety of services and products available in the community, enhancing local culture and consumer choices.



SAUCE THE CITY, CLEVELAND, OH

2.3.3 Improve the Pedestrian Experience on Sheridan Rd.

1. Employ traffic calming strategies to make downtown more walkable and inviting to shoppers.
2. Improve streetscape design to enhance walkability and appearances.
3. Increase code enforcement to improve visual appearances and create a stable environment where businesses can grow.
4. Adopt design guidelines for downtown/Sheridan Road to guide improvements to existing buildings and design of new buildings.
5. Attach incentives, such as façade improvement grants, to design guidelines for additional leverage and aesthetic control.
6. Pursue additional pedestrian and bicycle connections from Downtown to the Sheridan Crossing site, Foss Park, and the Robert McClory Trail. Increased pedestrian activity and facilities will calm vehicular traffic and bring a sense of vitality to these areas.

20 is Plenty

The “20 is Plenty” initiative, which sets a 20 mph speed limit in residential and urban areas, has been successfully implemented in various regions and could be adapted to improve the pedestrian experience on Sheridan Rd as part of North Chicago’s urban revitalization. This initiative aims to enhance safety, reduce traffic noise, and make neighborhoods more livable and inviting for both pedestrians and local businesses.



20 IS PLenty CAMPAIGN



PROPOSED

- A Sheridan Rd. narrowed 9' to provide a wider sidewalk
- B Mid-block crossing with vegetated bump outs
- C Outdoor gathering spaces and seating pockets
- D Public art including secondary facade murals

- E Improved signage incorporating brand expansion and storytelling
- F Day-time businesses such as coffee shops, bodegas, & restaurants
- G Overall beautification improvements, including facades

ASPIRATION 2.4

Redevelop the Sheridan Crossing site into a vibrant mixed-use destination through innovative design and inclusive planning processes.

Sheridan Crossing is the largest opportunity site in the city. With recently funded cleanup, it is well-positioned for redevelopment. Concepts for this key opportunity site envision a range of possibilities that include sports, entertainment, clean industrial, and residential uses.

2.4.1 Redevelop the Sheridan Crossing Site

1. Create a market-based redevelopment master plan for the Sheridan Crossing site.
2. Consider a sports and entertainment concept that includes indoor sports venues, hotel, and restaurants.
3. Consider clean/green industrial uses for less accessible portions of the site, such as server farm, brewery/distillery or vertical agriculture. The proximity of the site to the City's water plant and capacity to pump lake water may provide unique opportunities for water-heavy users.
4. Connect the site with improved pathways and sidewalks to existing assets such as the downtown, Foss Park, Robert McClory Bike Trail, and Naval Station Great Lakes.



Sheridan Crossing | Concept A

Concept A for Sheridan Crossing transforms the site into a bustling mixed-use hub with a sports complex serving as the main entertainment anchor. This stadium aims to host large-scale sporting events, acting as a focal point for the community and drawing visitors through a grand entry plaza that welcomes everyone into the space. Surrounding this entertainment complex are various commercial spaces lining Sheridan R., seamlessly connected by a pedestrian promenade that invites foot traffic deep into the site. To the northeast, the development is enriched with a community anchor—the American Sailor Museum—which adds cultural and educational value. Complementing these features, a small boutique hotel is strategically placed to support the site’s visitors without overshadowing the main attractions.

A Football Stadium

81,000 sf

Parking = 735 cars

B Retail Mall

8 Buildings - Avg. 14,000 sf / each

Total Commercial = 127,400 sf

Parking = 147 total (1.1 cars/1,000 sf)

C Boutique Hotel

3 Stories (GF Parking) = 233 Keys

~99 keys / floor - Avg. 190 sf / room

Parking = 120 total (0.6 cars/key)

D Museum of American Sailor

2 Story Museum

Total sf = 54,000 sf

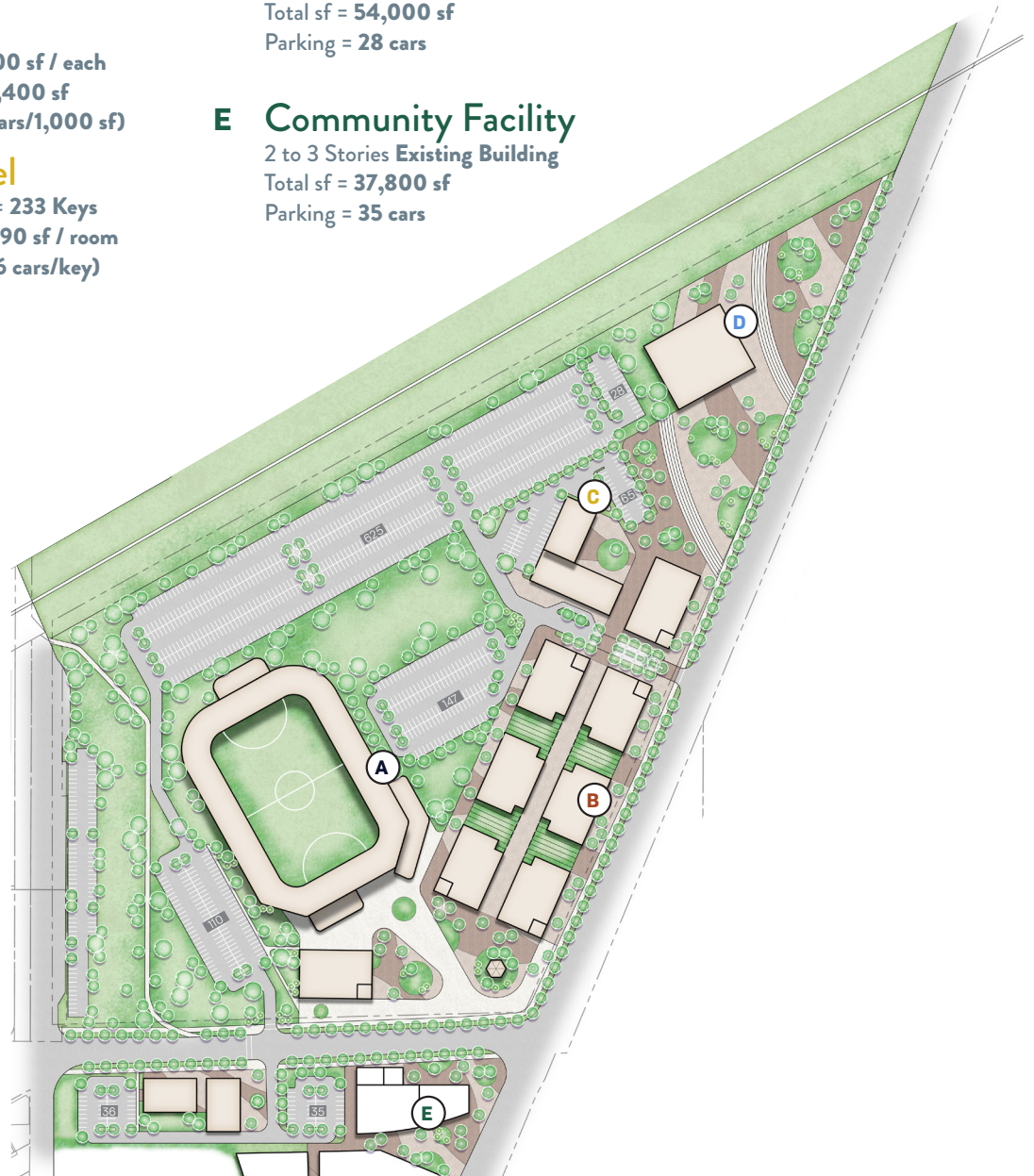
Parking = 28 cars

E Community Facility

2 to 3 Stories Existing Building

Total sf = 37,800 sf

Parking = 35 cars



Sheridan Crossing | Concept B

In contrast to Concept A, **Concept B** shifts the focus primarily towards residential use, featuring a multifamily complex adjacent to the tracks to the north to maximize space and accessibility. The layout emphasizes a major hotel surrounded by commercial spaces and a large plaza to the south, creating a dynamic community hub. Along Sheridan Rd., additional commercial spaces frame the area, enhancing street-level activity. To the northeast, a rowhome cottage rental complex is tailored specifically for visitors to the Naval Station Great Lakes.

Both concepts share a commitment to community engagement with plans to rehabilitate an existing building south of Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. into a community facility.

A Luxury Hotel

7 Stories (GF Parking) = **368 Keys**
70 keys / floor - **Avg. 190 sf / room**
Parking = **120 total (0.3 cars/key)**

B Retail Mall

13 Buildings - **Avg. 10,000 sf / each**
Total Commercial = **132,090 sf**
Parking = 455 total (**3.4cars/1,000 sf**)

C Multi-Family Dev.

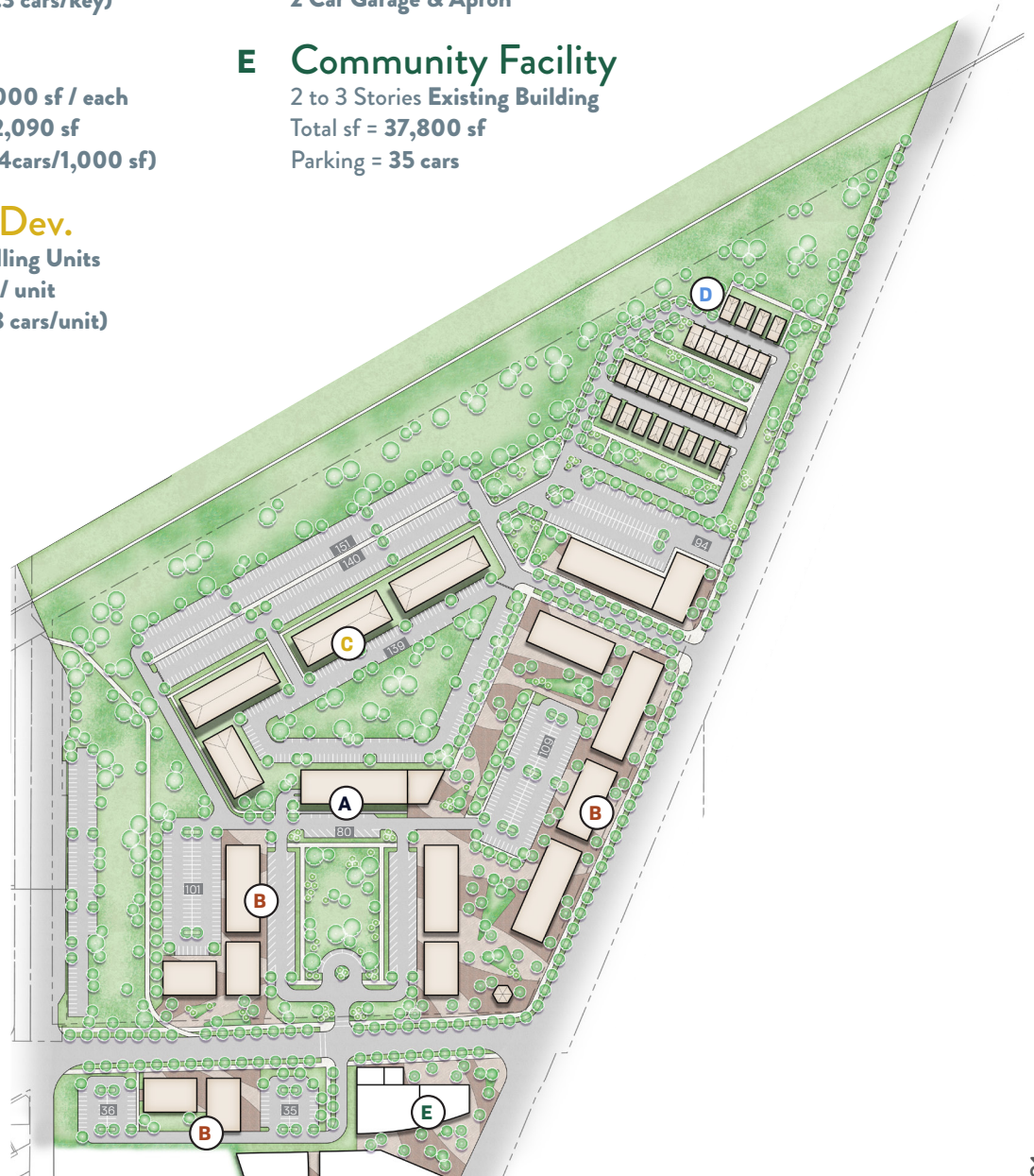
4 Buildings = **148 Dwelling Units**
3 Stories & ~1,000 sf / unit
Parking = 279 total (**1.8 cars/unit**)

D Rental Rowhomes

Rear-loaded Rowhomes **2 to 3 Stories**
30 Units Total & ~2,500 sf / unit
2 Car Garage & Apron

E Community Facility

2 to 3 Stories **Existing Building**
Total sf = **37,800 sf**
Parking = **35 cars**



ASPIRATION 2.5

Enhance regulatory, permitting, and approval practices through improved systems and customer service, providing clarity and predictability for developers and businesses.

Improving the regulatory environment for development includes creating online tools that can be accessed easily and efficiently, creating a fast-track licensing system for small businesses, streamlining regulatory reviews, and offering excellent customer service at the City level.

2.5.1 Improve the Permitting Process

1. Streamline the permitting process by establishing an online City portal to make it easier to facilitate business and residential development.
2. Create a “fast-track” system for small businesses to reduce delays and barriers to opening.
3. Create a more user-friendly, customer-oriented experience within City Hall for permit applicants.
4. Implement a tracking mechanism to allow for regular review of permit processing and review times.
5. Provide online access to all city permit applications, forms, and packets.

THE PERMITTING PROCESS IS OVERLY COMPLICATED, OFTEN TAKING WEEKS. THIS INCLUDES INSURANCE BONDS, SURVEYS, AND OTHER OBSTACLES. EVEN FOR A SIMPLE SIGN, IT TOOK 15 DAYS TO GET A PERMIT.

Streamlining Permitting

GRAND RAPIDS, MI

In Grand Rapids, Michigan, a significant initiative was launched to streamline the permitting process, aimed particularly at enhancing economic development and increasing the efficiency of city services. The city developed a comprehensive online portal that allowed both businesses and residents to apply for permits, submit necessary documents, and track their application status from the convenience of their homes or offices. This digital transformation reduced the need for in-person visits to city hall and expedited the overall process.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by small businesses, Grand Rapids also introduced a fast-track permitting system specifically tailored for small-scale projects. This system prioritized simpler, less complex applications, facilitating quicker startup and expansion for local businesses. To ensure a smoother permitting experience across various departments, the city implemented regular cross-departmental meetings to identify and resolve bottlenecks. These meetings fostered better coordination and streamlined the approval processes across different agencies.



PRINCIPLE

3

Recreation & Green Infrastructure

Assesses current park and open space amenities and infrastructure, with solutions that address parks access, improved wellness and quality of life, ecological restoration, response to climate change, and better access to and use of the Greenbelt Nature Preserve.

ASPIRATION 3.1

Increase and improve access and use of the lakefront, parks, green spaces, and open spaces.

ASPIRATION 3.2

Support Foss Park District in improving North Chicago's parks and open spaces in an effort to elevate overall quality of life.

ASPIRATION 3.3

Focus on ecologically sensitive restoration of natural areas.

ASPIRATION 3.4

Develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change, leveraging Lake Michigan's climate advantages.

ASPIRATION 3.5

Prepare for potential climate-related challenges.

ASPIRATION 3.6

Improve access and better utilize the Greenbelt Nature Preserve and Center as a key educational and recreational resource, expanding its role in community engagement and environmental education.

*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 3: Recreation & Green Infrastructure**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

THE GREEN ENVIRONMENT

In North Chicago, the existing green infrastructure—encompassing parks, recreation areas, and natural systems—is understood to be more than just an amenity. It’s a vital part of the community’s well-being, especially for its vulnerable subcommunities. When looking at the city through an equity lens, it’s critical to inventory and understand existing assets and the segments they serve. Access to open spaces plays a role in public health, offering opportunities for physical and mental health, which has become all the more crucial in the post-Covid-19 context.

The scientific community points to significant environmental challenges that could further limit access to green spaces and contribute to climate change. In North Chicago, the existing green infrastructure faces specific challenges, including climate-induced issues like flooding, the presence of various industrial sites, steep slopes near Lake Michigan, and a potentially declining urban forest.

The objective is not to promise immediate solutions but to continually reassess the community’s green assets and challenges. This allows for a better understanding of both the immediate and long-term planning requirements to meet pressing and foreseen needs.

FOSS PARK DISTRICT

Established in 1907 and named after George Edmund Foss, the visionary behind the Great Lakes Naval Station, Foss Park District serves a community of approximately 50,000 people, spanning all of North Chicago and parts of Lake Bluff and Waukegan. Governed by a five-member elected board, the district operates on a proposed annual budget of \$4,885,450 for the upcoming fiscal year.

Of the district’s nearly 300 acres of land, eight of its ten parks are situated within North Chicago, including the flagship Foss Park, which features a Lake Michigan swimming beach. The remaining seven parks, as well as a community recreation center and an 18-hole golf course, offer a variety of amenities from skate parks and tennis courts to band shells and athletic fields. Tailoring programs to meet community needs, the district provides a wide range of year-round activities like childcare camps, athletics, and special events, many of which are also accessible to individuals with special needs. With over a century of service, the Foss Park District remains committed to enhancing the quality of life for its community members.



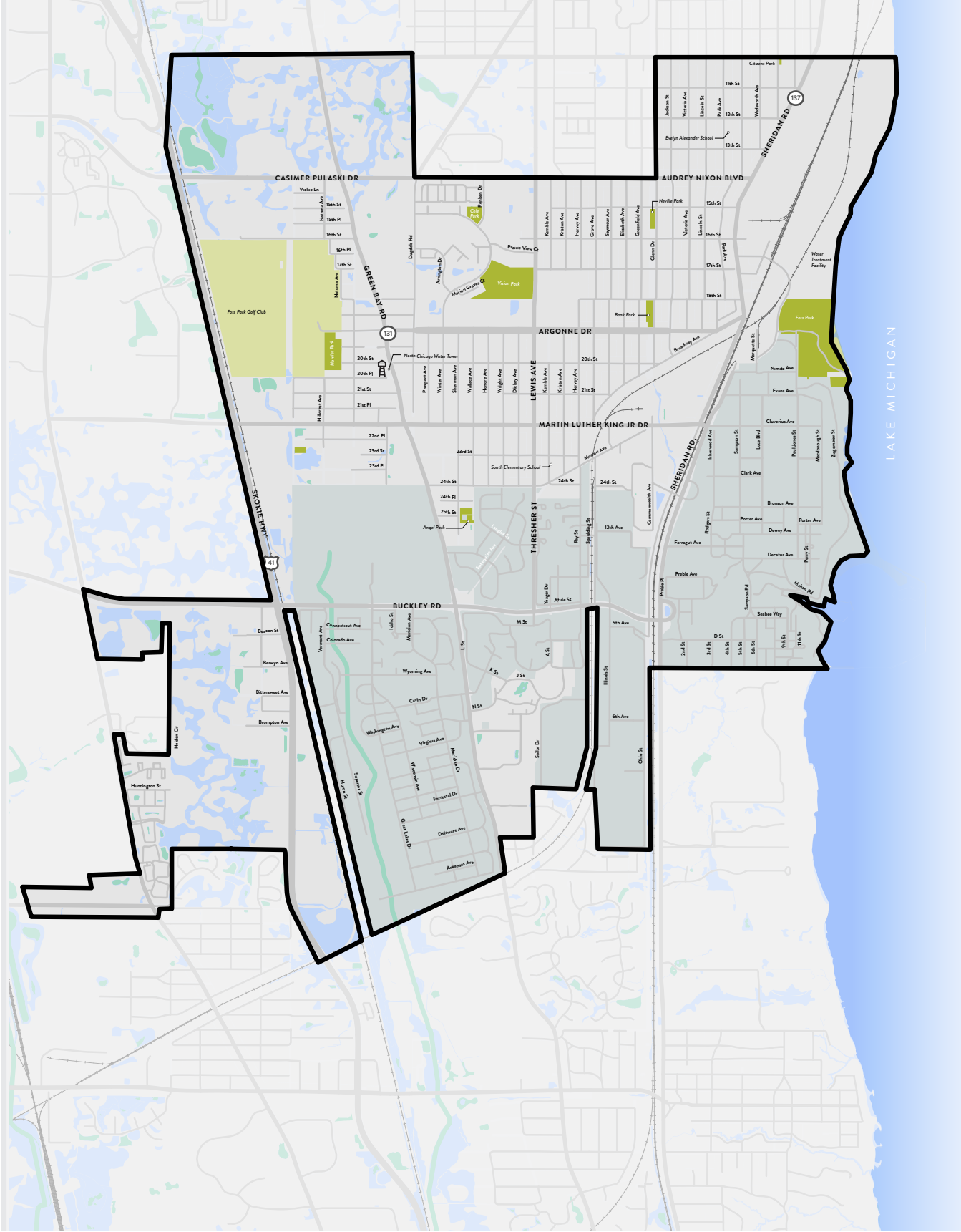


FIGURE 7: PARKS & OPEN SPACES

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE

Public parks and open spaces in North Chicago are managed by multiple agencies, including Foss Park District, Lake County Forest Preserve, the local school district. These agencies offer a variety of recreational opportunities in different capacities. The city of North Chicago is home to a total of 8 open spaces. While some of these spaces span considerable acreage, 6 of the 8 are classified as pocket parks, primarily catering to nearby residents and offering limited recreational activities. Foss Park and Vision Park, the largest of all 8 parks are categorized as Neighborhood Parks and offer a wider array of amenities, including multiple sports fields. In addition, North Chicago School District 187 supplements these offerings with fields and courts located at the high school. Compared to similar-sized Park Districts, North Chicago's portfolio lacks community parks with specialty features and multiple sports courts and fields that are often used by affiliate athletic teams.

LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

The Level of Service (LOS) analysis assesses the effectiveness of North Chicago's parks and amenities by comparing to local, regional, and industry standards. This tool helps city and Foss Park District staff, as well as local officials understand how well the community's needs are being met, focusing especially on equity. Originally developed in the 1980s by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA), these benchmarks are designed to be practical, equitable, and sensitive to local context. While valuable, the LOS analysis is just one of many tools used to inform future planning.

Acreage Level of Service Analysis

The Acreage Level of Service (LOS) analysis is a tool used to determine the minimum land area needed to offer adequate recreational opportunities. This measure often calculates parkland per 1,000 residents as an indicator of equal opportunity, although local needs can vary widely. According to the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review, agencies serving populations between 20,000 and 49,999 should aim to provide 10.4 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Foss Park District manages 404 acres within North Chicago's city boundary, distributed among Pocket Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Specialty Open Spaces (such as the golf course). With a population of 31,000, this leaves the city with a surplus of approximately 82 acres when compared to the recommended 10.4 acres per 1,000 residents. However, deducting the acreage dedicated to Specialty Open Spaces, notably the Foss Park Golf Course, which is not utilized on a daily or even weekly basis—especially given the Midwest climate—reveals a deficiency of 84 acres. This deficit underscores the urgent need for additional active recreational spaces to better meet the community's needs.

— OPEN SPACE —
404
— ACREAGE 2023 —

ACREAGE
82
SURPLUS

Distribution Level of Service Analysis

In North Chicago, the Distribution Level of Service assesses the equitable availability of parks based on NRPA classification standards. The outcome of this evaluation aims to highlight how well specific Pocket or Neighborhood Parks are serving the population. The Overall Park LOS analysis was conducting using the metrics below:

- **Pocket Parks:** Accessible within a 0.25-mile radius or a 5-10-minute walk
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Accessible within a 0.5-mile radius or a 10-15-minute walk
- **Specialty Open Spaces:** Accessible within a 1.0-mile radius or 5-minute drive

The Overall Park Service Area Map displays a red service area radius of 0.25 miles and 0.5 miles around Pocket and Neighborhood Parks, respectively. Specialty Open Spaces, such as golf courses and forest preserve lands, while contributing to the overall recreational offerings, are differentiated with a yellow service area radius. These specialty spaces are less frequently visited for basic recreational amenities, such as playgrounds and open fields. North Chicago lacks Community Parks—drive-to destinations within a one-mile radius. This deficiency could be filled by either upgrading existing Neighborhood Parks with more amenities or by establishing new parks featuring a broad array of facilities.

Overall, 12,138 (39.3%) of North Chicago's residents are within a 0 to 0.5-mile radius of a Pocket or Neighborhood Park. While including Specialty Open Spaces would increase this figure to 61.8% (19,065 residents), these specialty areas should not be factored into service area planning, given they are not typically frequented for active recreation and daily outdoor activities.

PARK AND RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS SHOULD PROVIDE AN OUTLET FOR LEISURE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR NORTH CHICAGO.

Stakeholder Summary

RESIDENTS
39%
SERVED



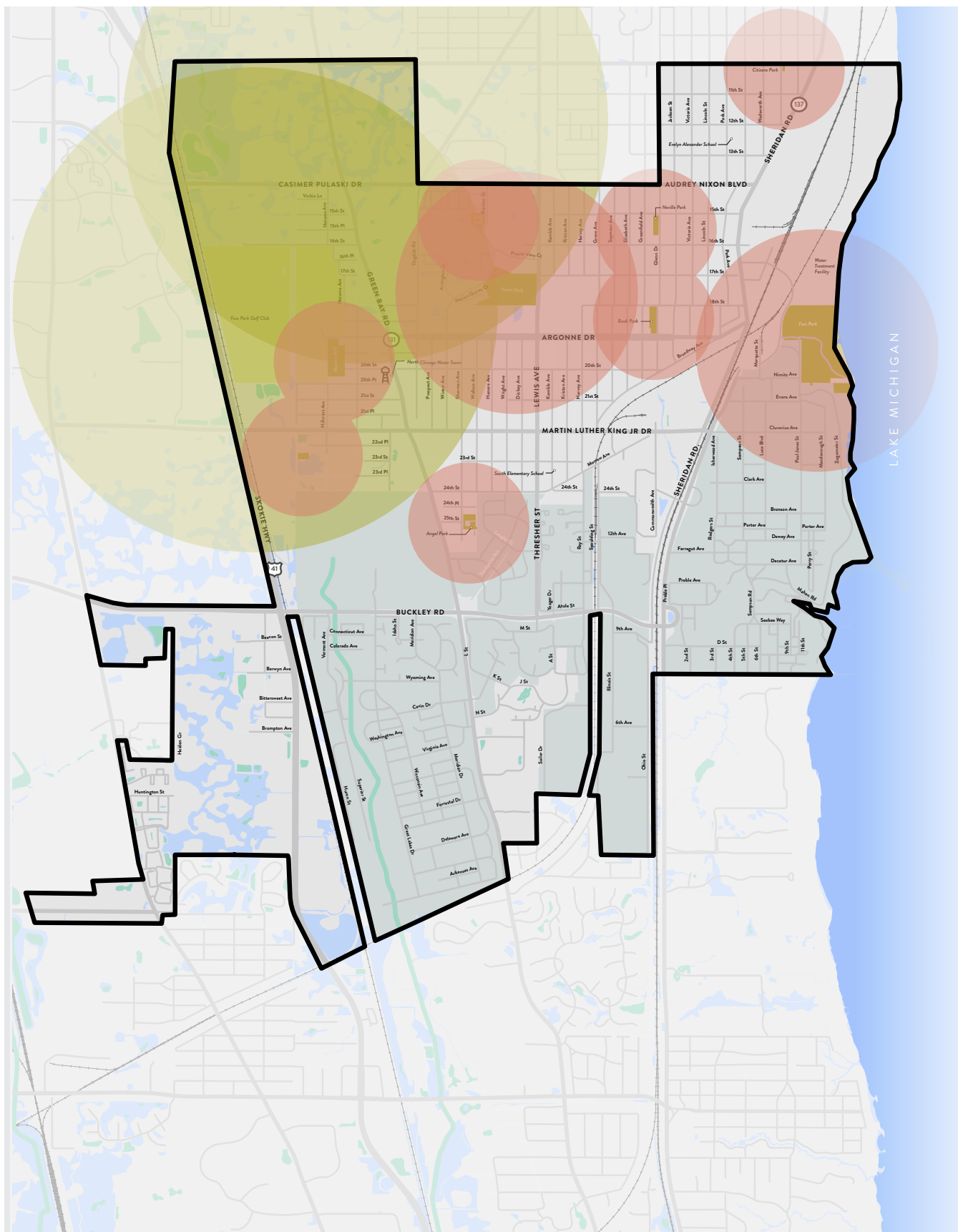


FIGURE 8: PARKS & OPEN SPACES DISTRIBUTION LEVEL OF SERVICE

NATURAL SYSTEMS

While built environments, consisting of structures, roads, and essential utilities, are where human activity mainly occurs, natural systems provide the underlying support framework. Often, there's a misconception that the built and the natural are distinct and operate independently. In reality, these elements are highly interdependent, forming a complex web of interactive systems and subsystems. To cultivate a resilient and sustainable community, it's vital to ensure that these natural elements are harmoniously interwoven with human-made infrastructure. By carefully examining the state of these natural assets, planners can identify zones that are more or less suitable for specific land uses and future development.

Lake Michigan offers North Chicago some climate advantages, like moderating extreme heat and providing a stable supply of freshwater. The lake is also a key asset for local economy and recreation. These factors may help the city be more resilient to certain climate change impacts. Overall, comprehensive, climate adaptation and mitigation strategies would still be necessary to address the array of challenges that climate change is expected to bring.



Land

Effective land management is a core aspect of urban planning, necessitating a multi-faceted approach that considers geology, topography, and soil composition. In North Chicago, particular attention needs to be paid to the bluffs along Lake Michigan, as these are prone to erosion and may require stabilization or restoration. Soil testing could offer critical insights into soil health and fertility.



Water

The hydrological cycle is essential for both natural ecosystems and human activities. North Chicago is bordered by Lake Michigan, a critical source for potable water, irrigation, and industrial use. The city operates its own water infrastructure for residents and provides industrial entities like AbbVie Pharmaceuticals the ability to withdraw significant quantities of lake water, which is treated and returned.

According to FEMA's Flood Hazard information, the majority of the city east and west falls in a minimal flood zone. However, west of Green Bay Rd., primarily categorized as industrial land, falls in a high-risk flood zone (zone AE).



Air

Air quality is primarily impacted by land use patterns and pollutant emissions from human activities. Key factors include industrial emissions, energy production, and notably, transportation. Understanding the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) is vital. Specific areas with concentrated pollution in North Chicago need to be identified for targeted interventions.



Environmentally Sensitive Areas

North Chicago is home to ecologically sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and high-quality natural habitats, primarily found on its west side. These areas offer a host of ecosystem services, from preserving biodiversity to regulating water supply and quality. Notably, two Advanced Identification Wetlands exist: one to the north in forest preserve land known as Green Belt Wetland, and the other situated southwest, tucked behind existing industrial uses.

GREENBELT NATURE PRESERVE

The Greenbelt is situated in the northwest area of the City of North Chicago, within Lake County. Managed by the Lake County Forest Preserve, this sanctuary is seamlessly integrated into the urban fabric, making it easily accessible to the community. It serves as a haven for diverse wildlife, including various birds and wildflowers. The preserve offers well-maintained amenities and features 5 miles of hiking trails and 4 miles of trails for bicycling and cross-country skiing. Additionally, the Greenbelt Cultural Center on-site hosts community and educational programs and is available for private event rentals.

Geographically unique, the Greenbelt sits atop a sub-continental divide. Rain falling on the east side of Green Bay Road heads for the Gulf of St. Lawrence, while rain falling on the west side heads for the Gulf of Mexico. The preserve encompasses oak groves, wetlands, and prairies and is part of ongoing restoration efforts, with success in reviving native wildflowers like shooting stars, blue-eyed grass, and mayapples.

Rich in history, the Greenbelt is bisected by the ancient Green Bay Road, which has been a route for Native Americans, fur traders, soldiers, and mail carriers over the years. One notable early resident was Alfred Bennett, brother to Lake County's first African American settler. The land for this preserve began to be acquired in 1971.

Given its prime location within the City of North Chicago, the Greenbelt serves as an important recreational and educational resource for the urban community. It is not only an ecological oasis but also a living testament to the area's diverse cultural and historical heritage.



ASPIRATION 3.1

Increase and improve access and use of the lakefront, parks, green spaces, and open spaces.

In North Chicago, the access to green spaces and the lakefront presents a distinct challenge that affects community quality of life. While the city enjoys a location along Lake Michigan, much of the lakefront remains out of reach for public use due to private ownership and restricted areas like the naval base. Additionally, Foss Park District owns and manages the existing parks and open spaces, which limits the city's direct control over these areas. This scenario underlines the necessity for proactive efforts to expand and enhance access to these valuable community resources.

Increasing and improving access to open spaces is rooted in the need to ensure that all residents can enjoy the benefits of natural and recreational areas, which are crucial for community well-being and overall health and wellness. To move towards this vision, the city plans to collaborate with local and regional stakeholders including Foss Park District, private property owners, and possibly the Naval Station. This collaborative approach aims to develop more inclusive access strategies and create additional green spaces through innovative urban planning techniques such as encouraging green space factors and requirements on new developments and acquiring land for green initiatives.

3.1.1 Increase Lakefront Access

1. Redesign the road leading to Foss Park to be more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.
2. Develop a comprehensive transportation plan that includes pedestrian paths, bike lanes, and public transit routes to Foss Park.
3. Consider shuttle services from key points in the city, especially on weekends and during special events.
4. Improve signage and wayfinding to make the park more accessible and inviting.
5. Explore opportunities with the Naval Station and private property owners along the lake for shared use agreements or easements that would allow greater public access through their properties to the lakefront.



3.1.2 Develop a Green Patch Initiative

1. Focus on developing micro-parks in urban areas where traditional park development might not be feasible.
2. Implement temporary green spaces in under-utilized areas such as vacant lots, which can be quickly transformed into community gardens or pop-up parks.
3. Use modular and movable green infrastructure like container gardens and mobile tree units.
4. Engage local communities in the design and management of these green spaces to ensure they meet local needs and preferences.
5. Establish community stewardship programs for ongoing maintenance and activities.
6. Consider developing micro-forests to enhance urban biodiversity, utilizing dense planting techniques to create self-sustaining ecosystems that improve air quality and reduce urban heat.

LAKE MICHIGAN AT FOSS PARK BEACH

3.1.3 Develop Green Corridors

1. *Implement initiatives to increase greenery in urban areas, such as planting trees and creating small parks or green spaces along major streets.*
2. *Develop linear parks along unused railways, utility corridors, or riverbanks to create continuous green pathways linking different parts of the city.*
3. *Greenway and Bikeway Expansion: Expand and connect existing greenways and bikeways to facilitate non-motorized transportation and recreational activities, linking urban areas with natural spaces like the Greenbelt.*
4. *Incorporate Native Plant Species: Use native plant species in green corridors to promote biodiversity and create habitats for local wildlife.*
5. *Public-Private Partnerships: Encourage public-private partnerships to fund and develop green corridors, ensuring sustainable and community-supported growth.*

Greenways

JACKSONVILLE, FL

Jackson Heights, a small community with a predominantly African American population, has historically faced challenges typical of many urban areas, including limited green space, fragmented wildlife habitats, and a lack of recreational areas. Recognizing the need for environmental and community rejuvenation, the local government initiated a project to develop green corridors as a strategy to enhance urban life and promote sustainable community practices. The community implemented plans to increase greenery by planting trees along major streets and converting vacant lots into small parks and green spaces. Utilizing unused railways and utility corridors, Jackson Heights developed linear parks to create continuous green pathways. The green corridors were also landscaped using native plant species to promote biodiversity.

3.1.4 Encourage Parks in Pairs

1. *Ensure that each ward has two or more parks and open spaces, including active and passive recreation. Wards with little to no open space, including Wards 1 and 6, should be prioritized.*
2. *Alternatively, concentrate efforts on reducing acreage and distribution deficiencies in all park categories, guided by the level of service analysis.*
3. *Conduct a future needs assessment to project open space and amenities needs in line with anticipated growth patterns in each ward, with a particular focus on areas presently facing notable deficiencies in open space acreage.*
4. *Seamlessly incorporate open space planning into the city's broader development strategies, ensuring alignment with other ongoing urban planning initiatives where practical and beneficial.*
5. *Develop an acquisition policy that establishes evaluation criteria and a process for identifying and prioritizing land acquisition for future parks and open spaces.*

3.1.5 Consider a Green Factor Calculator for Developments

1. *Develop a set of guidelines to calculate the green factor for new projects, quantifying the environmental impact of a development project, particularly its green features.*
2. *Encourage green factors for all new public and private development projects, including green roofs, rain gardens, permeable surfaces, and tree planting.*
3. *Provide incentives for projects that exceed a certain green factor score.*
4. *Regularly update and refine the green factor criteria based on environmental changes.*
5. *Use green factor assessments to revise city zoning and planning decisions.*

ASPIRATION 3.2

Support Foss Park District in improving North Chicago's parks and open spaces in an effort to elevate overall quality of life.

Collaboration between the City and Foss Park District is crucial for enhancing the park and open space system, which currently shows evident room for improvement. Historical coordination challenges have led to missed opportunities, particularly in aligning city infrastructure projects with the enhancement of park accessibility and functionality. With both entities managing separate budgets and resources, strategic collaboration can significantly enhance the scope and quality of projects and ensure that investments are not duplicated but rather used efficiently.

Collaborating allows for a more holistic approach to urban planning and community development. The Park District and the City can align their plans for parks, recreation, and public spaces with broader urban development goals. This integration ensures that public amenities like parks are considered alongside new housing developments, commercial areas, and transportation infrastructure, creating a more cohesive and functional North Chicago.

With both parties bringing their perspectives to the table, planning can be more strategic and forward-thinking. Together, they can better foresee future needs and opportunities that might be overlooked if each operated independently. This leads to improved resiliency and readiness to address community growth and demographic changes, ensuring that the infrastructure evolves in line with residents' needs.

3.2.1 Increase Collaboration with Foss Park District

1. Strengthen communication channels with Foss Park District, considering bi-seasonal meetings to discuss park related projects, issues, and opportunities.
2. Consider creating short-term joint task forces to oversee specific initiatives.
3. Collaborate on annual events, including festivals or sports tournaments to expand park and open space programming, sharing logistical and on-ground programming tasks.
4. Consider developing a shared calendar of events to ensure city-wide promotion and participation.
5. With new developments, pursue options for the dedication of new park facilities to the Foss Park District. Alternatively, new developments may provide opportunities to create city-owned or privately-owned parks to bolster, but not compete with, Park District facilities.

3.2.2 Actively Support City-wide Park Master Plans

1. Assist Foss Park District in conducting a thorough assessment of current parks and facilities to identify needs and opportunities.
2. Encourage the integration innovative and sustainable design elements in park development, such as eco-friendly materials, natural playgrounds, and green infrastructure.
3. Identify and pursue various funding sources, including government grants, private donations, and public-private partnerships.
4. Develop a phased approach to the master plans, allowing for gradual implementation and adjustments as needed.
5. Provide assistance in grant writing and application processes, leveraging city resources and expertise.

3.2.3 Collaborate on Infrastructure & Maintenance

1. Collaborate with the Park District to develop plans for improving roads leading to parks, ensuring they are well-maintained and adequately signposted.
2. Offer city planning resources to enhance park accessibility, pedestrian paths, and public transportation routes to parks.
3. Assist in developing safe and scenic pedestrian and bicycle paths leading to and within parks, promoting green transit options.



OPEN SPACE IN NORTH CHICAGO

ASPIRATION 3.3

Focus on ecologically sensitive restoration of natural areas.

While often appreciated solely for their scenic beauty, the bluff areas along Lake Michigan and the extensive wetlands to the southwest offer far more than picturesque views—they are also ecologically crucial landscapes. These areas serve as vital habitats for wildlife and play critical roles in natural water filtration and flood mitigation. With the growing trend towards eco-friendly recreation, there is a heightened need for intentionality in the restoration and maintenance of these sensitive ecosystems. Proper management starts with understanding their ecological importance and implementing sustainable practices that not only protect but also improve these valuable natural resources for current and future generations.

Focusing on ecologically sensitive restoration highlights the need for North Chicago to adopt a more intentional and scientifically informed approach to managing these critical ecosystems, ensuring they are restored and maintained in a manner that supports ecological health and biodiversity. Management practices that are tailored to the unique conditions and needs of the bluff and wetland areas include erosion control, native plant species restoration, and urban runoff impact mitigation, among other initiatives.

3.3.1 Stabilize and Enhance the Bluff Along Lake Michigan

1. Implement erosion control measures to stabilize the bluff. This could include planting native vegetation, using geotextiles, and creating terraces.
2. Work with environmental experts to restore native ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity and the natural beauty of the area.
3. Create unique recreational spaces on the slope, such as amphitheaters, picnic areas, or art installations.
4. Develop outdoor classrooms or nature observation areas, which can be used for educational programs and community events.
5. Install informative signage about the local flora, fauna, and geology, turning the area into an educational experience.

3.3.2 Develop Wetland Conservation Strategies

1. Collaborate with Illinois Tollway to develop conservation strategies aimed at protecting the wetland's biodiversity and natural resources.
2. Establish a monitoring program to assess water quality, flora, fauna, and overall ecosystem health.
3. Partner with academic institutions, including Rosalind Franklin University for ongoing ecological research and data collection.
4. Actively manage and control invasive species that could threaten the wetland's natural balance.
5. Create buffer zones around wetlands, especially near residential uses, to prevent urban runoff and pollution.



WETLAND IN FOX LAKE, IL



NATIVE MARSH IN ILLINOIS (LIATRIS SPICATA)

3.3.3 Consider Eco-friendly Recreation

1. Construct boardwalks, viewing platforms, and trails in viable wetland areas, ensuring they are designed to have minimal impact on the environment.
2. Consider hosting guided tours and educational programs focused on the significance and preservation of wetlands.
3. Install educational signage along future trails to provide visitors with information about the local wildlife, plants, and general ecological benefits.
4. Create designated areas for birdwatching and nature photography to encourage non-intrusive, wildlife-friendly activities within the wetland.
5. Consider developing and implementing measures to create and maintain suitable habitats for snapping turtles and the endangered Blanding's turtles. This could include enhancing nesting areas, providing safe basking spots, and implementing protective measures to ensure a conducive environment for these species within the wetland.



MEMORIAL PARK CONSERVANCY HOUSTON, TX

ASPIRATION 3.4

Develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change, leveraging Lake Michigan's climate advantages.

In North Chicago, the focus on homegrown sustainability is pivotal, especially given the limited resources typical of less affluent communities. By fostering backyard sustainability, the city is empowering its residents, local organizations, and institutions to launch grassroots environmental initiatives. This approach is crucial for instilling a deeper sense of responsibility and capability in North Chicagoans in managing local resources sustainably.

North Chicago's long legacy of industry and manufacturing, coupled with its proximity to Lake Michigan, underscores the critical need to engage in renewable energy practices and enhance flood risk management. This historical industrial base presents a unique opportunity for the city to set a precedent in sustainability, transitioning from traditional manufacturing to greener, more sustainable practices. Given the area's vulnerability to climate change impacts, such as rising water levels and increased flooding, it is essential for North Chicago to leverage its industrial heritage to pioneer innovative environmental solutions that can serve as a model for similar communities.

3.4.1 Encourage Homegrown Sustainability Initiatives

1. Mobilize local residents to convert underused urban spaces into thriving community gardens, fostering sustainable agriculture and community bonding.
2. Establish neighborhood-based recycling and composting stations to reduce waste and promote environmental responsibility among residents..
3. Coordinate regular community cleanup events within all seven wards for neighborhoods, parks and open spaces, fostering awareness and stewardship.
4. Distribute a variety of native and biodiverse plant seedlings to local residents, encouraging them to cultivate diverse ecosystems in their own backyards, enhancing local biodiversity and ecological resilience.



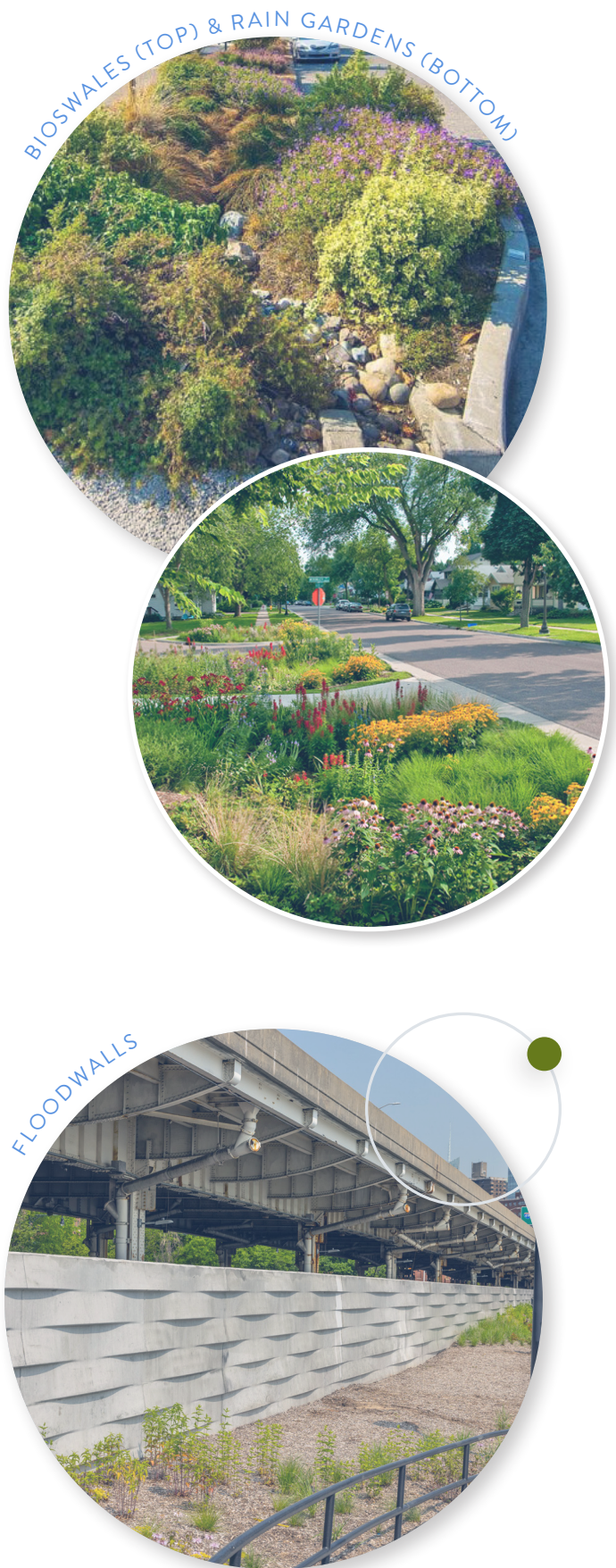
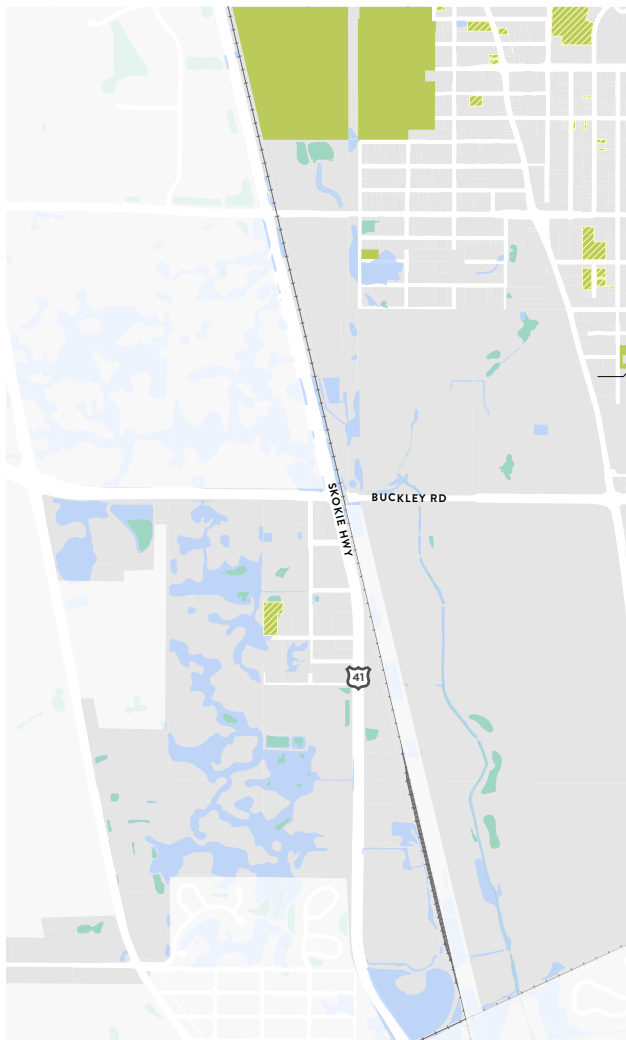
COMPOSTING DROP OFF STATION

3.4.2 Consider Investing in Renewal Energy

1. Explore small-scale, community-owned wind energy projects along the lakefront. These projects can be more accessible and provide direct benefits to the community, such as reduced energy costs or community funds.
1. Lead by example by adopting sustainable practices in city operations, such as energy-efficient lighting and vehicles, and water-saving measures in city facilities.
2. Organize community workshops and outreach programs on energy-saving practices and sustainable living, focusing on cost-saving benefits and practical tips for residents.
3. Explore small-scale, community-owned wind energy projects along the lakefront. These projects can be more accessible and provide direct benefits to the community, such as reduced energy costs or community funds.
4. Lead by example by adopting sustainable practices in city operations, such as energy-efficient lighting and vehicles, and water-saving measures in city facilities.
5. Organize community workshops and outreach programs on energy-saving practices and sustainable living, focusing on cost-saving benefits and practical tips for residents.

3.4.3 Address Flood Risks

1. Address flood risks in high-risk zones, particularly west of Green Bay Rd., implementing preventative measures and promoting flood resilient infrastructure.
2. Implement green infrastructure solutions like bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavements to improve water absorption and reduce runoff.
3. Construct levees, floodwalls, and barriers in strategic locations to protect against flooding that may impact current or future development.
4. Upgrade drainage infrastructure to handle higher volumes of stormwater.



ASPIRATION 3.5

Prepare for potential climate-related challenges, including extreme weather events and changes in water levels.

Similar to other suburban communities, the urgency of climate preparedness and infrastructure adaptation is becoming more paramount in North Chicago. As the effects of climate change become increasingly apparent, the city recognizes the critical need to develop a comprehensive climate plan to address both present and future challenges. This plan encompasses strategies for adaptation and mitigation, aiming to safeguard against potential impacts such as fluctuating lake levels, shoreline erosion, and water quality issues. Conducting assessments to identify areas most vulnerable to climate impacts is essential, guiding the prioritization of infrastructure development. By reinforcing waterfront areas and implementing robust stormwater management systems, North Chicago seeks to enhance its resilience to climate-related challenges.

Furthermore, the city is committed to promoting green building practices and incorporating green spaces into urban planning initiatives to combat the heat effects exacerbated by climate change. Ensuring that zoning and land-use policies align with climate resilience goals is crucial, incentivizing developers to adopt sustainable practices and contribute to the city's overall preparedness efforts. In parallel, infrastructure adaptation efforts focus on strengthening flood defense systems, enhancing stormwater infrastructure, and making the energy grid more resilient against extreme weather events.

3.5.1 Ensure Climate Preparedness

1. Create a climate plan to address the impacts of climate change, including strategies for adaptation and mitigation. Include strategies that address potential changes in lake levels, shoreline erosion, and water quality issues.
2. Conduct assessments to identify areas most vulnerable to climate impacts like flooding, extreme heat, or storms. Aside from the pre-identified flood areas west of Green Bay Rd., this can include storm surges or rising lake levels.
3. Prioritize the development of infrastructure that can withstand climate-related challenges, such as reinforced waterfront areas and stormwater management systems mitigating heavy rain events.
4. Encourage green building practices and the incorporation of green spaces in urban planning to combat heat effects.
5. Ensure zoning and land-use policies align with climate resilience goals, possibly incentivizing developers to adopt sustainable practices.

3.5.2 Ensure Infrastructure Adaptation Overtime

1. Strengthen flood defense systems, especially in low-lying areas near water bodies, to bolster protection against flooding.
2. Enhance stormwater infrastructure by increasing its capacity and integrating green solutions like rain gardens or permeable surfaces.
3. Work towards making the energy grid more resilient against extreme weather, including the potential integration of renewable energy sources.

3.5.3 Prepare the Community

1. Educate and prepare residents for extreme weather events, including how to create evacuation plans and emergency kits.
2. Form and train local response teams to act swiftly and effectively in the event of a climate emergency.
3. Create and distribute specific response plans, in both English and Spanish, to protect vulnerable populations during extreme temperature events like heatwaves and cold snaps.

ASPIRATION 3.6

Improve access and better utilize the Greenbelt Nature Preserve and Center as a key educational and recreational resource, expanding its role in community engagement and environmental education.

The Greenbelt is situated in the northwest area of the City of North Chicago, within Lake County. Managed by the Lake County Forest Preserve, this sanctuary is seamlessly integrated into the urban fabric, making it easily accessible to the community. It serves as a haven for diverse wildlife, including various birds and wildflowers. The preserve offers well-maintained amenities and features 5 miles of hiking trails and 4 miles of trails for bicycling and cross-country skiing. Additionally, the Greenbelt Cultural Center on-site hosts community and educational programs and is available for private event rentals.

Given its prime location within the City of North Chicago, the Greenbelt serves as an important recreational and educational resource for the urban community. It is not only an ecological oasis but also a living testament to the area's diverse cultural and historical heritage.

3.6.1 Engage in Collaborative Programming

1. Partner with the Greenbelt Nature Preserve to host educational workshops focusing on local ecology and environmental stewardship.
2. Collaborate on community events held at the preserve, such as nature festivals, to increase local engagement and awareness.
3. Coordinate with the managing entity to create volunteer opportunities for North Chicago residents in conservation and maintenance projects.

3.6.2 Activate Community Outreach Efforts

1. Collaborate on informational campaigns that highlight the preserve's offerings and its importance to the local ecosystem.
2. Facilitate connections between local schools and the preserve for educational field trips and student projects.



GREENBELT NATURE PRESERVE AND CENTER, NORTH CHICAGO, IL



PRINCIPLE

4

Mobility & Transportation

Assesses current mobility networks including rail and other transit, sidewalks, roads, bike connections, and trails. Solutions address improving pedestrian and bike networks, making roads safer, and integrating city networks with IDOT and LCDOT systems.

ASPIRATION 4.1

Implement and maintain a complete, safe, and accessible pedestrian network that connects all residential areas to Sheridan Road and the business district, both Metra stations, Foss Park, Pace bus service, and other community destinations.

ASPIRATION 4.2

Implement a safe and accessible bicycle network that focuses on new east-west facilities and better connects residents to the Robert McClory Bike Path.

ASPIRATION 4.3

Reduce dangerous driving on North Chicago's streets by implementing traffic calming and other safety measures throughout the roadway network.

ASPIRATION 4.4

Coordinate with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT), and neighboring communities to ensure existing and future pedestrian and bicycle networks seamlessly connect residents to jobs and destinations throughout the region.

*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 4: Mobility & Transportation**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

TELL ME MORE

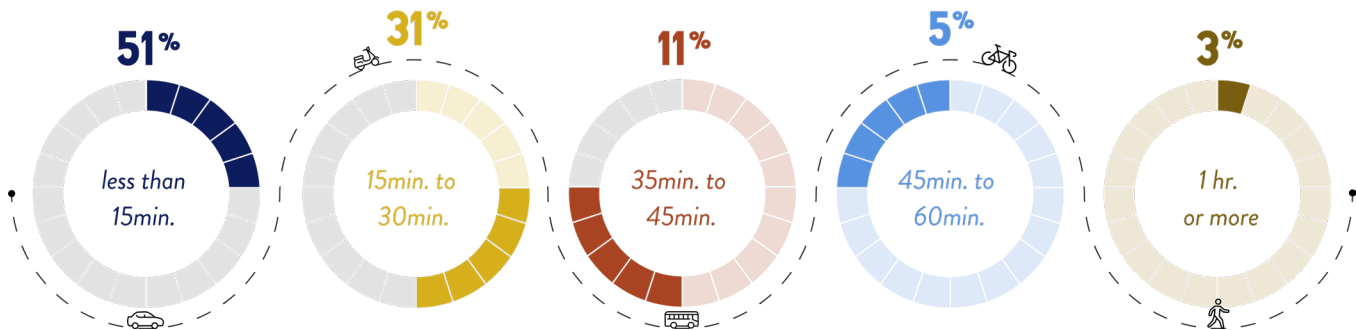
Over half of all workers in North Chicago drove to their place of employment in 2021 (53%), 43% of which drove alone and 10% carpooled. From the remaining 47%, nearly a quarter were walking trips. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, working from home impacted all modes, as 19% of workers in North Chicago did not commute at all in 2021.

Over half of all workers in North Chicago had a commute time that was under 15 minutes, and only 5% commuted for longer than 45 minutes. Significantly lower than the national average of 8%, only 3% of all workers had a commute time longer than an hour. Nearly all North Chicago commuters work in Cook County and nearly two thirds work in North Chicago.

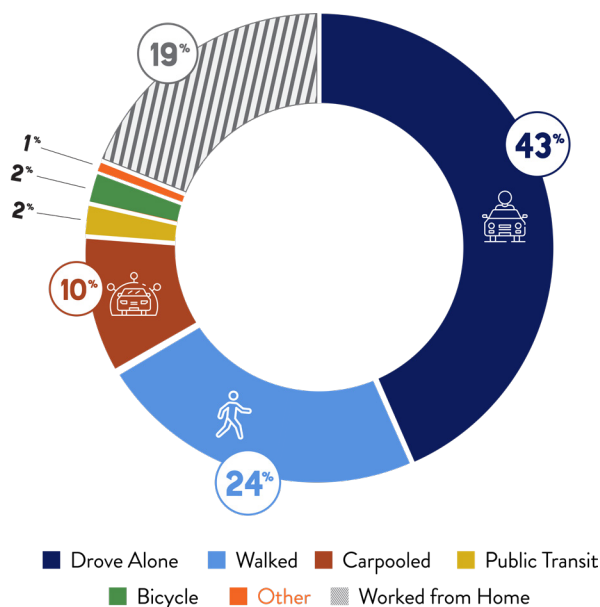
SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION REQUIRE ATTENTION, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF WALKABILITY AND BIKEABILITY. ALSO, BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS NEEDED.

Stakeholder Summary

Travel Time to Work



Mode of Travel to Work



Transit Services

North Chicago is served by the Chicago Metropolitan area's public transit services, Metra commuter rail, and the Pace suburban bus network. Pace operates five local bus routes that connect North Chicago to adjacent cities and suburbs. The Metra UP-N Line connects North Chicago to Kenosha to the north and Union Station to the south.

The average North Chicagoan spends 19%, or about \$14,000, of their annual income on transportation costs and owns 1.8 vehicles per household. Both figures are consistent with Lake County averages of 21% and 1.9 cars, respectively.

Metra Commuter Rail

North Chicago’s Metra stations are significant transportation assets. The Great Lakes station is in the southeastern corner of North Chicago near the Naval Station Great Lakes on the west side of Sheridan Road. The North Chicago station is approximately two miles north in an industrial area just east of Sheridan Road and Downtown.

There are 23 trips to and from both stations every weekday. Inbound trains to Chicago operate every 25 and 30 minutes during the morning peak and decrease to hourly trips after 10:00am. Outbound trains from Chicago operate every 25 and 30 minutes during the afternoon peak and decrease to hourly trips after 7:40pm.

In the fall of 2018, the Great Lakes Station averaged 262 daily boardings (31 fewer than fall 2016) and 221 daily alightings. The North Chicago station averaged 170 daily boardings (same as fall 2016) and 177 daily alightings during the same span. These boardings rank 153rd and 168th, respectively, out of all 233 (non-downtown) Metra stations. And 20th and 23rd,

respectively, out of 25 stations (not including Ogilvie Transportation Station) on the UP-N Line.

The afternoon peak is the busiest time for inbound boardings at both stations, while the morning peak period is the busiest period for alightings at both stations. This suggests that there is a strong reverse commute pattern, with passengers traveling to North Chicago during the morning peak hours, likely for work. The midday and evening periods experienced relatively low boardings and alightings, particularly alightings from inbound trips.

Mode of access to and from both Metra stations varies (see Tables 1 and 2). More people walk to and from the North Chicago Station compared to the Great Lakes Station. Nearly one-third of all trips to both stations involve individuals driving alone, many of whom utilize the designated parking lots. A portion of these driving trips also account for riders being dropped off at the stations. The Great Lakes Station has 84 parking spaces, and the North Chicago Station has 50 parking spaces. As of summer 2023, Metra had improved the exterior of the station building and parking lot at the North Chicago Station.

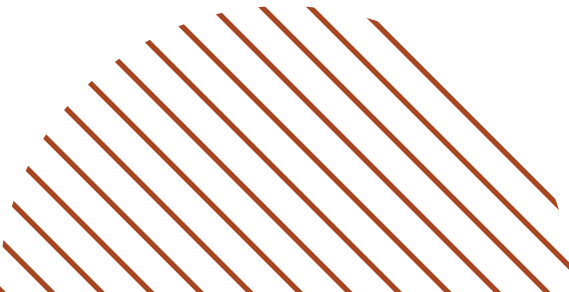
Mode of Access at Metra Stations: **AM Boarding**

STATION	WALK	DRIVE ALONE	CARPOOL	PICK UP	PRIVATE BUS	OTHER METRA	OTHER
Great Lakes	13%	36%	6%	36%	5%	3%	<1%
North Chicago	39%	31%	0%	19%	6%	0%	6%

Mode of Access at Metra Stations: **AM Alighting**

STATION	WALK	DRIVE ALONE	CARPOOL	PICK UP	PRIVATE BUS	OTHER METRA	OTHER
Great Lakes	37%	3%	0%	2%	54%	0%	5%
North Chicago	40%	0%	0%	8%	44%	0%	8%

Data on modes of access reveals that once riders disembark the train, approximately 40% walk or utilize private buses, such as shuttles, vans, or company vehicles, to reach their destination. This percentage of riders who walk from the North Chicago Station underscores the importance of providing safe and accessible pedestrian facilities, particularly for accessing Downtown businesses near the Station.



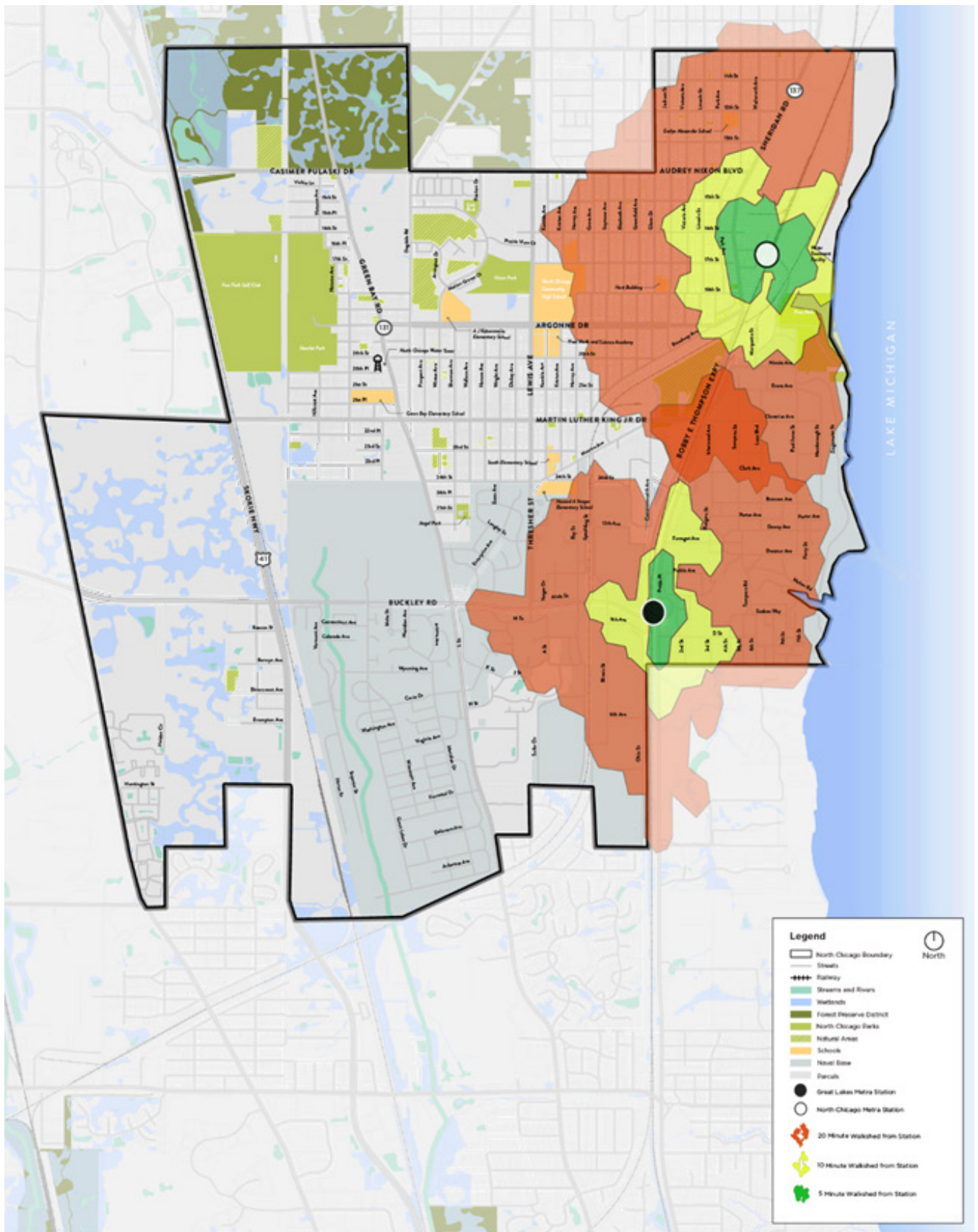


FIGURE 9: METRA STATION ACCESS SHEDS

Pace Bus Service

Five Pace bus routes operate in North Chicago: Routes 563, 564, 568, 569, and 573. These routes provide weekday service, each offering at least hourly frequency during both morning and afternoon peak periods (6:00am–9:00am and 3:00pm–6:00pm), and they all connect North Chicago to Waukegan. Figure X illustrates the areas within 1/4 and 1/2 mile of the 128 Pace bus stops throughout North Chicago. In 2022, Route 568-Belvidere had the highest ridership, representing more than half of all trips across all routes, while Route 573-Green Bay Road was the lowest performing, logging only 18 trips that year.

Since 2022, Pace has also been running “Ride Lake County,” a countywide, ADA-accessible, reservation-based paratransit service. This curb-to-curb, shared ride service charges \$2 for up to 5 miles, \$4 for up to 10 miles, and \$6 for journeys exceeding 10 miles.

As of March 2023, Pace announced plans to transition to a substantial electric bus fleet serving Lake County, which will impact both North Chicago and Waukegan. By 2026, 12 new electric buses will operate out of the Pace North Division garage, with a third of the North Division fleet set to be electric within the next three years. This initiative aligns with Pace’s broader goals of combating climate change, improving regional air quality, and boosting transit ridership.

NORTH CHICAGO BUS SHELTER



ENGAGEMENT FAVORITES | TRANSPORTATION



TRANSPORTATION IN NORTH CHICAGO RELIES HEAVILY ON CARS, WITH SOME TRAIN AND BUS OPTIONS AVAILABLE.

Stakeholder Summary

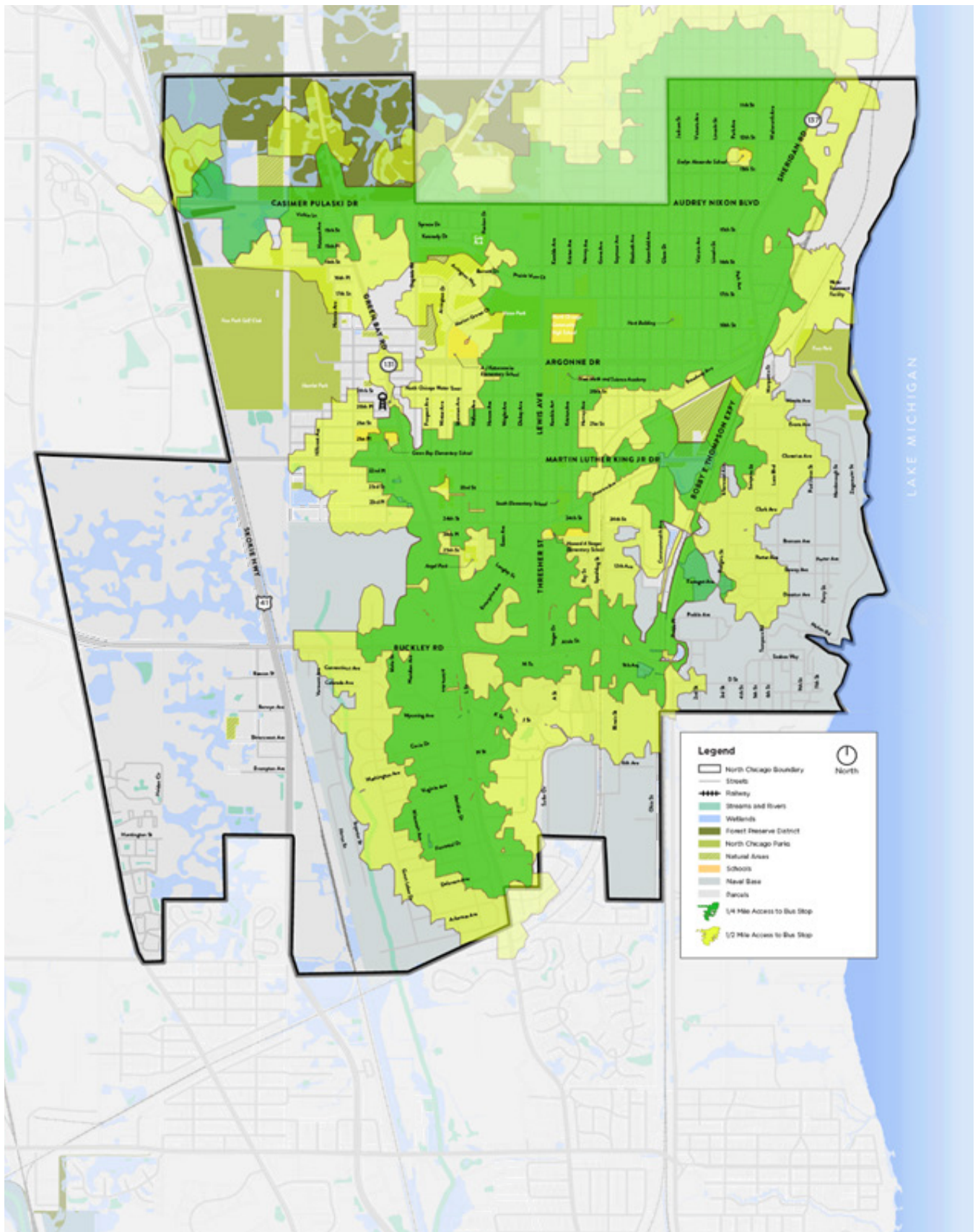


FIGURE 10: PACE BUS ACCESS 1/4 MILE AND 1/2 MILE

Pedestrian Network

Sidewalks are a crucial component of North Chicago's transportation network, influencing residents' likelihood of choosing to walk to various destinations. Despite having 61 miles of streets within the city, nearly 45% lack sidewalks on both sides, while an additional 17% have sidewalks only on one side. Addressing these missing links could dramatically enhance the city's walkability and connectivity, both within North Chicago and to neighboring areas.

A significant absence of sidewalks is noticeable in streets west of Green Bay Road. Several of the city's main thoroughfares, including Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Sheridan Road, Buckley Road, and 20th

Street, lack sidewalks on at least one side. Green Bay Road and many adjacent streets in the west are also devoid of sidewalks on both sides. Of particular concern is Foss Park Avenue, the only access route to Foss Park and the lakefront, which also lacks sidewalks.

Sidewalks alone don't determine whether walking feels comfortable. Traffic speeds, traffic volumes, and the presence of trees or landscape buffers separating people walking from traffic all affect the comfort of walking and play a role in people's decision to walk.

Sidewalk Gaps

22 MILES

Complete on both sides

11 MILES

Missing on one side

28 MILES

Missing on both sides

MISSING SIDEWALKS IN NORTH CHICAGO



IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A PLAN TO ADDRESS THE SIDEWALK GAPS IN NORTH CHICAGO, ESPECIALLY NEAR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND KEY AREAS

Stakeholder Summary

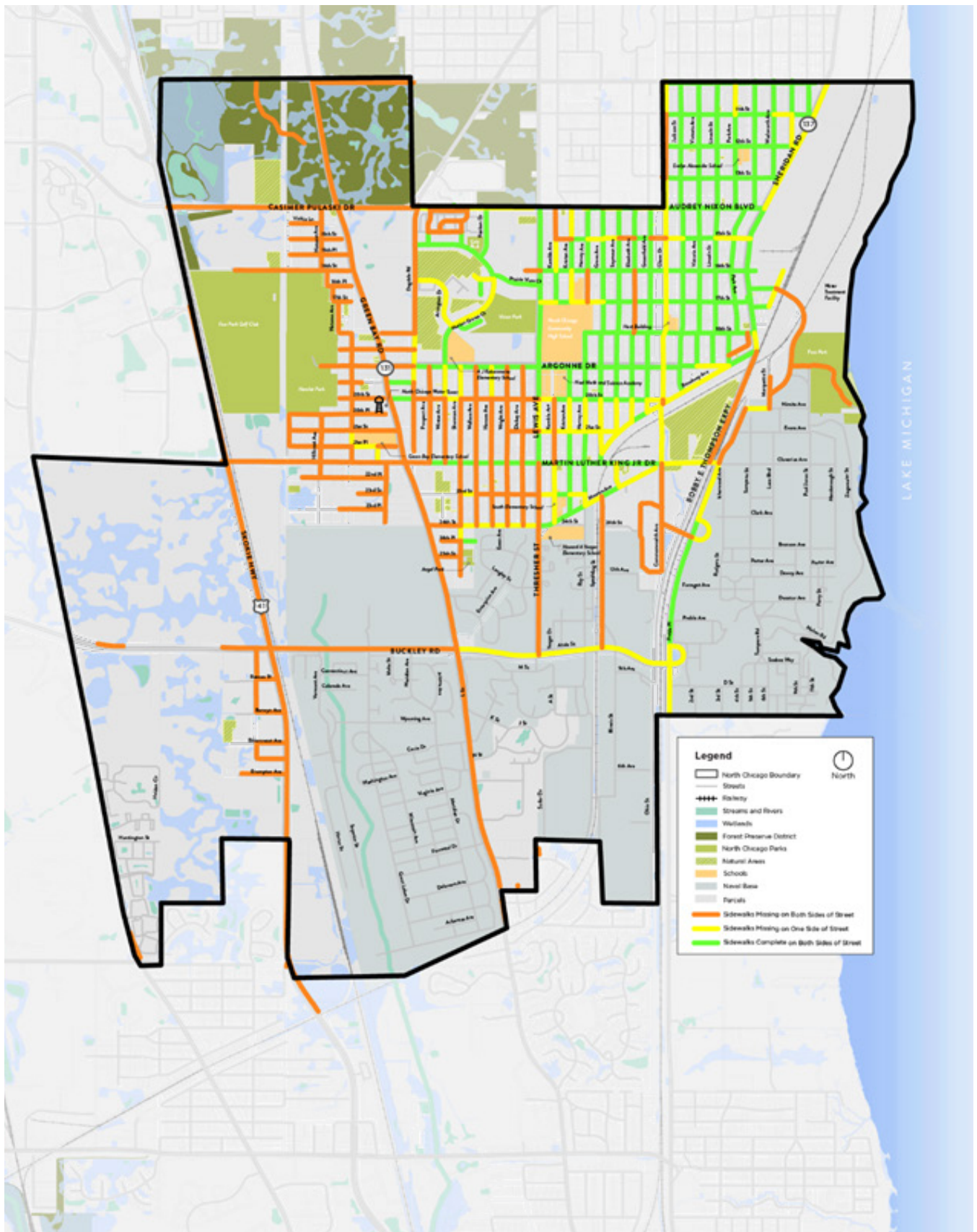


FIGURE 11: SIDEWALK GAPS

Bicycling and Trail Connections

Bicycle and Trail Connectivity in North Chicago currently has limited infrastructure but plans for future bikeway connections are underway. The map below highlights both the existing conditions and the planned expansions aimed to better meet the community's future mobility and recreational needs.

ROBERT MCCLORY BIKE PATH

The Robert McClory Bike Path is a 25-mile route that stretches across Lake County, linking North Chicago to other north shore communities, the Green Bay Trail, and the Kenosha County Bike Trail. Running parallel to Sheridan Rd., the path connects to the Great Lakes Metra Station but hits a 0.3-mile disconnect when it diverts onto local roads at 24th St. and along Commonwealth Ave. It resumes as a designated off-street path at Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, offering multiple access points along the way. While the surface is primarily asphalt and concrete from its Braeside origin to the North Chicago Metra Station, it switches to screened limestone and gravel within North Chicago.

This 0.3-mile disconnect at 24th St. poses navigational challenges for path users, further accentuated by the absence of clear signage along Commonwealth Ave., the grade differential as the path goes below the highway, and the need to cross Sheridan Rd. As the path resumes at Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., alternatives for clearer and more direct routing should be explored to improve the user experience. Overall, the county is currently conducting an early-stage engineering study to pave the gravel sections of the path and identify potential corridor enhancements such as drainage improvements, upgraded street crossings, and aesthetic landscaping.

Lake County is currently executing a federally funded multi-phased project to implement the 5.5-mile Patriot Bike Path along IL Route 137, from the Des Plaines River Trail in Libertyville to the Robert McClory Bike. The project is currently in Phase II design engineering and anticipates construction to begin as early as 2025.

ROBERT MCCLORY BIKE PATH



ENGAGEMENT FAVORITES | TRANSPORTATION



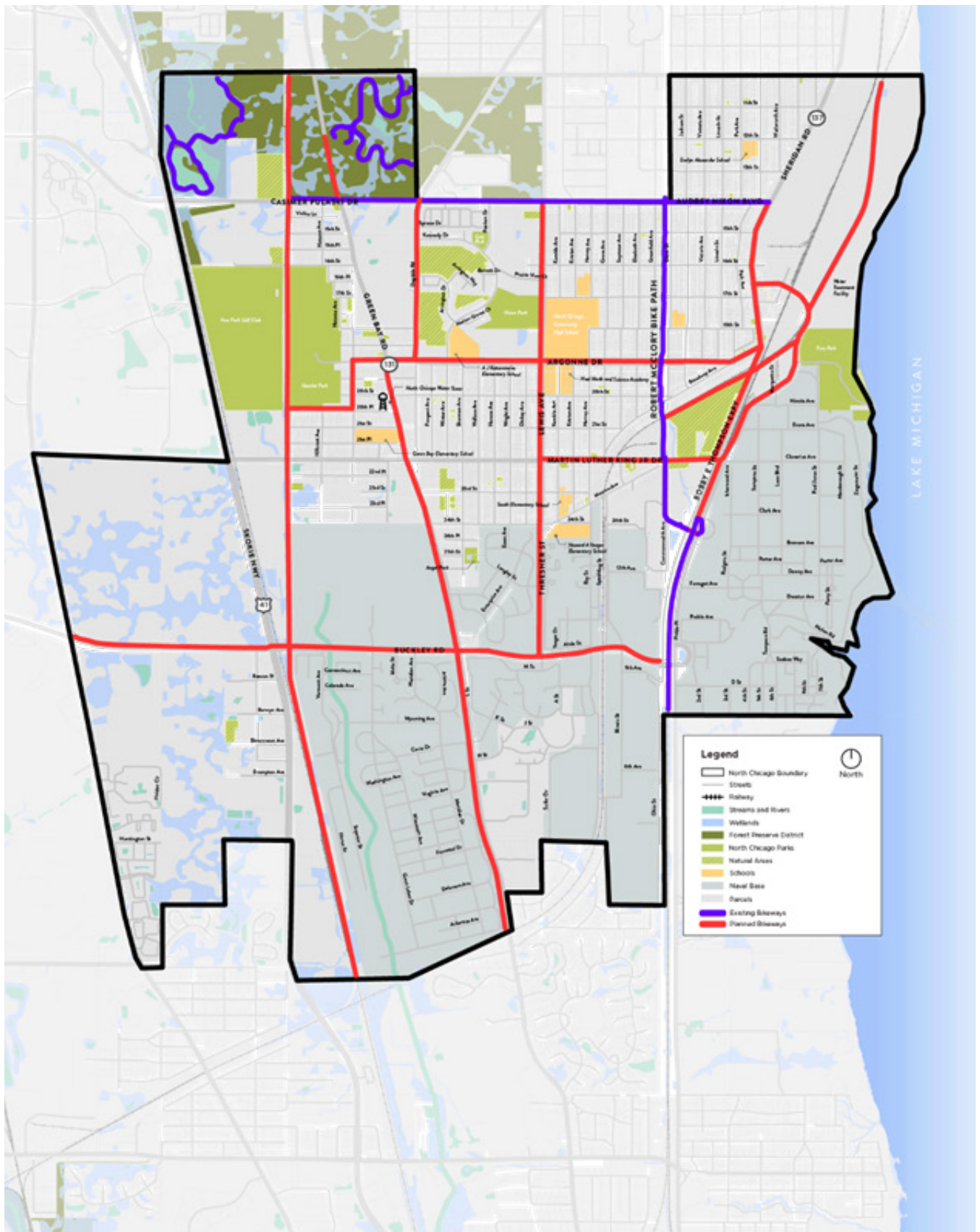


FIGURE 12: EXISTING AND PLANNED BIKEWAYS

ACCESS TO FOSS PARK

Foss Park and the North Chicago Public Beach are an incredible asset for the community, but easy pedestrian and bicycle access to both is a challenge. Despite being half a mile from the North Chicago Metra station, only a fraction of the route to the park entrance has sidewalks. Cyclists must navigate Foss Park Avenue alongside heavy truck traffic from adjacent industrial sites. Proper bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is crucial for fostering a welcoming environment for non-vehicular users. Creating strong connections from the Downtown area on Sheridan Road, other major commercial corridors, and elsewhere to Foss Park and the Public Beach will expand access to these valuable community assets. Figure 13 shows the areas of North Chicago that are within a 5-, 10-, and 20-minute walk of the main entrance on Foss Park Avenue.



NEED

*Restaurants; Food Trucks;
Activity Generators; New
Bathroom Facility; Safety;
and Better Access*

While a fourth (25%) of participants go to Foss Park often, another 25% have never been. Some participants have been but do not frequent the beach that often.

FOSS PARK IS SEEN AS A VITAL CONNECTION TO THE LAKE, WITH CONCERNS ABOUT THE GUN RANGE. LAKE ACCESS IS DIFFICULT TO LEVERAGE FOR OTHER BENEFITS TO THE CITY.

Stakeholder Summary

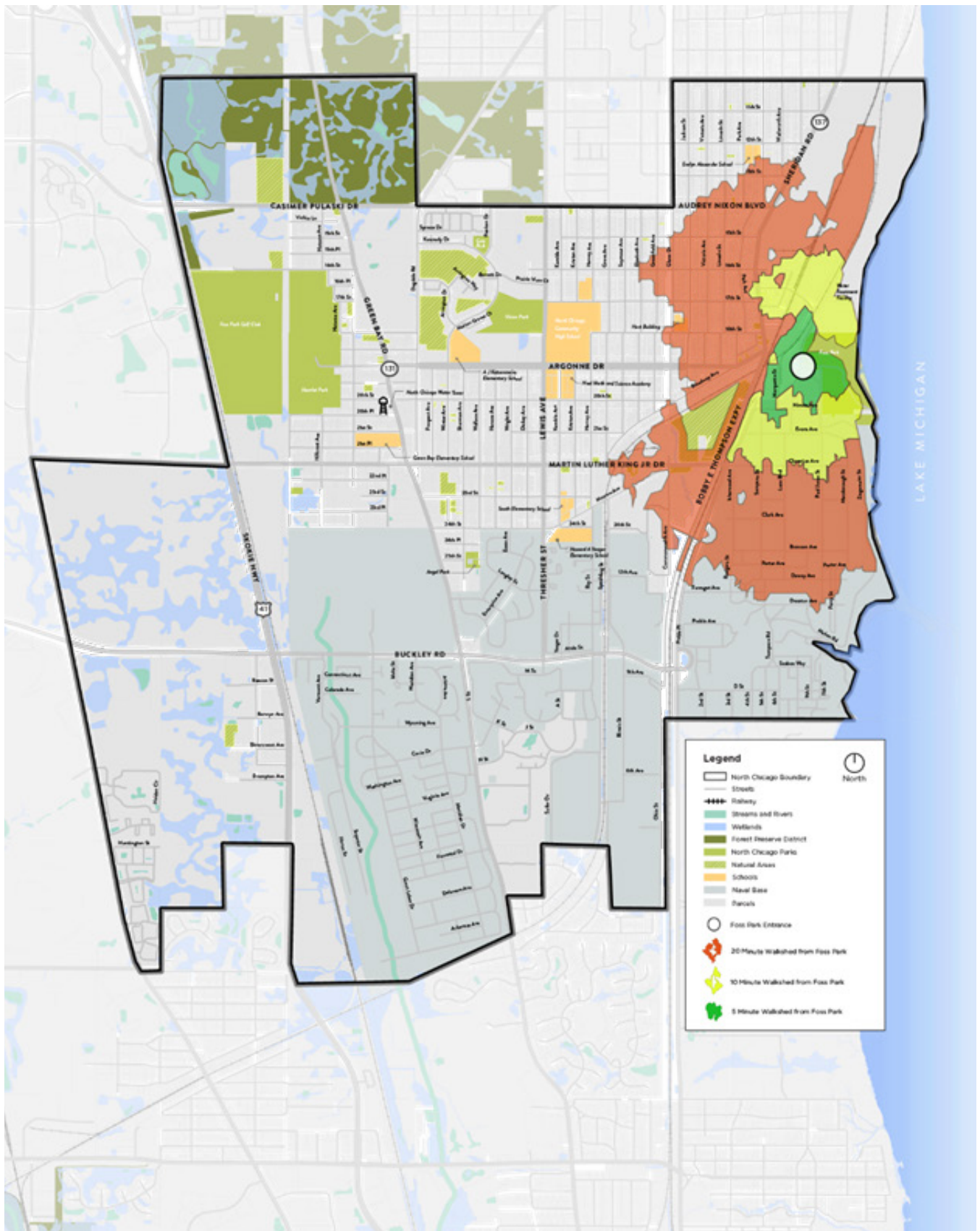


FIGURE 13: ACCESS TO FOSS PARK WALKSHEDS TO THE MAIN ENTRANCE

ROADWAY NETWORK & SAFETY

Skokie Highway, Green Bay Road, Buckley Road, and Waukegan Road experience the highest traffic volumes in North Chicago. The highest volumes occur on two segments of Skokie Highway where the speed limit is 55 miles per hour (mph). Buckley Road and Lewis Avenue are the only streets of the ten highest volume streets with a speed limit below 35mph.

There were 1,636 reported crashes on North Chicago streets from 2017 to 2021. 2017 was the worst year with 451 crashes resulting in 177 injuries and two fatalities. There were six fatalities in the five-year span, three of which were caused by rear-end collisions. Two fatalities involved a pedestrian (2017, 2018) and one of those fatalities was the result of a turning vehicle (2019). The leading crash type in all years was rear-end collisions, accounting for nearly one-third of all collision injuries. Turning vehicles caused 398 crashes, the second-highest collision type in each year.

TABLE 7: ROADWAY COLLISIONS AND INJURIES 2017 TO 2021

YEAR	COLLISIONS	INJURIES	FATALITIES	LEADING COLLISION TYPE	% OF INJURIES FROM FRONT TO REAR COLLISIONS	% ALL COLLISIONS ON IL137	% ALL COLLISIONS ON SKOKIE HWY
2017	451	177	2	Front to Rear	32%	24%	21%
2018	322	150	1	Front to Rear	39%	25%	19%
2019	290	110	1	Front to Rear	28%	8%	13%
2020	197	69	0	Front to Rear	20%	10%	11%
2021	376	156	2	Front to Rear	31%	9%	17%
TOTAL	1,636	662	6	-	31%	16%	17%

One-third of all crashes occurred on either the Bobby E Thompson Expressway (IL137) or Skokie Highway (US41). The intersection at Skokie Highway and Buckley Road is particularly unsafe, seeing over 200 crashes at or approaching the intersection during the five-year span. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Green Bay Road also experience a high portion of all crashes in North Chicago.

TABLE 8: VEHICLE CRASH SUMMARY 2017 TO 2021

CRASH SUMMARY	NUMBER OF CRASHES
Vehicle Crashes Resulting in Injury or Death	668
Pedestrian and Bike Crashes Resulting in Injury or Death	20
FATAL CRASHES	6

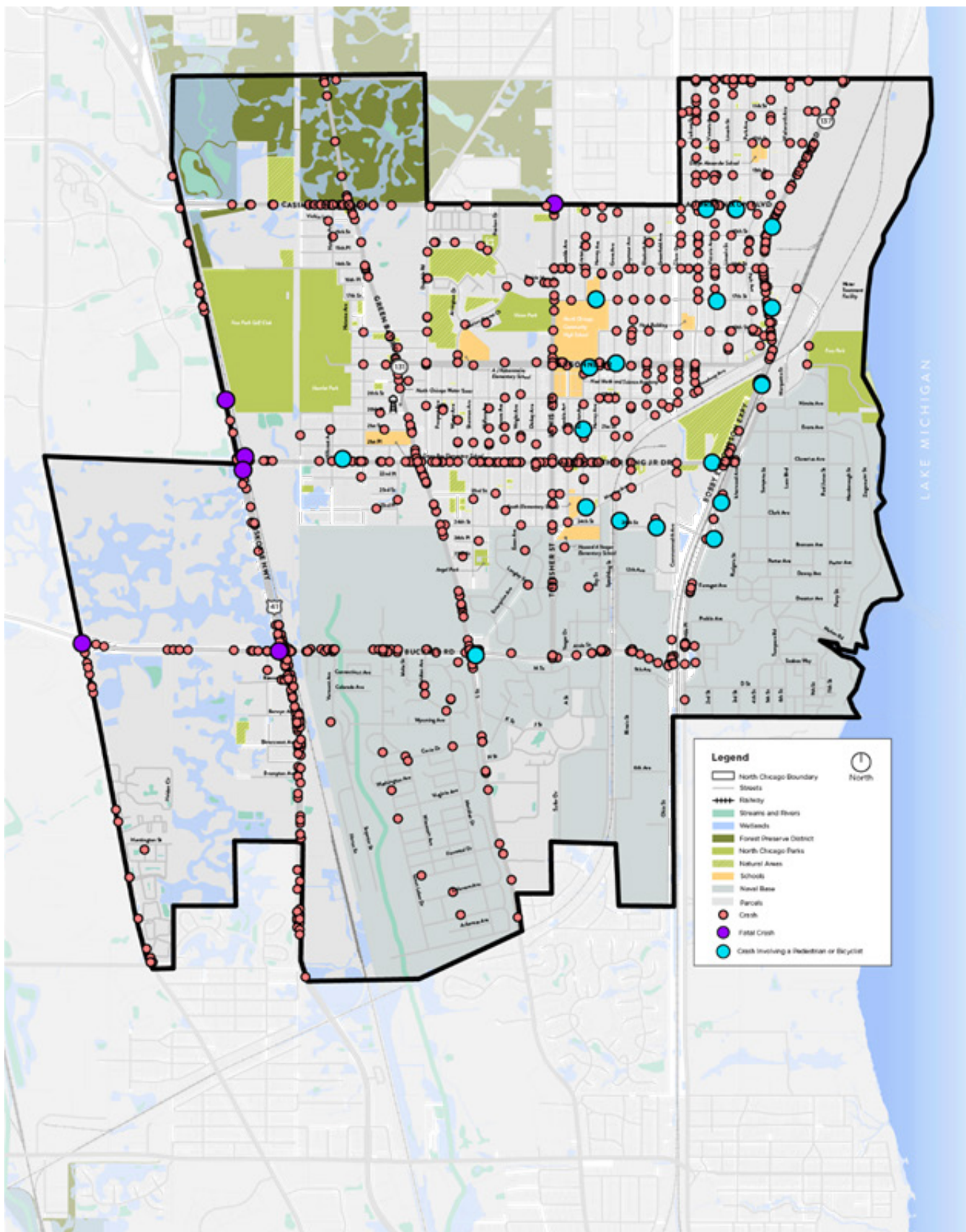


FIGURE 14: CRASHES 2017 TO 2021

ASPIRATION 4.1

Implement and maintain a complete, safe, and accessible pedestrian network that connects all residential areas to Sheridan Road and the business district, both Metra stations, Foss Park, Pace bus service, and other community destinations.

Beyond improving access for individuals, good walkability and a pedestrian-scale environment will improve the vitality of North Chicago's assets like Foss Park and its commercial corridors. While North Chicago enjoys a location on Lake Michigan, Foss Park and the Foss Park Beach are largely inaccessible by foot. A lack of sidewalks, truck traffic, heavy industry, private land ownership, and restricted areas like the naval base make getting to and enjoying this public space difficult without a vehicle. Moreover, strengthening the pedestrian network throughout the downtown and to Metra and Pace transit stops can greatly expand access to community resources and improve quality of life. Walkable neighborhoods often see increased foot traffic, which can benefit local businesses. Pedestrians are more likely to stop and patronize shops and restaurants, leading to economic revitalization in North Chicago's commercial areas. Investing in a complete and safe pedestrian network is a key aspect of creating vibrant, livable communities that prioritize the needs of North Chicago residents and promote sustainable urban development.

4.1.1 Increase Pedestrian Safety

1. Improve pedestrian safety along Foss Park Avenue, Main Avenue, and Sheridan Road in the business district and approaching Foss Park, through systematic use of high-visibility crosswalks, curb extensions and pedestrian crossing signs.
2. At the Foss Park Avenue and Sheridan Road intersection and the 17th Street and Sheridan Road intersection, evaluate removing slip lanes, extend medians to serve as a pedestrian refuge island, install high visibility lane markings, evaluate signal timing.



HIGH VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS

4.1.2 Enhance City-wide Network & Accessibility

1. Construct sidewalks on both sides of Foss Park Avenue from the Metra viaduct to Marquette Street, on Marquette Street, Nimitz Street and Main Avenue to provide access to Foss Park.
2. Enhance connectivity to important community destinations by filling in sidewalk gaps around schools, parks, and other key destinations.
3. Enhance access to Metra service by maintaining sidewalks to the Great Lakes and North Chicago Metra stations. Similarly, construct a new sidewalk on the east side of Lakeside Avenue to 17th Street, leading to the North Chicago Metra station.
4. Mark high-visibility crosswalks at the intersection of Lakeside Avenue and Foss Park Avenue. Ensure sidewalks meet minimum width requirements and have appropriate detectable warning strips at curb ramps. Install clear wayfinding signs for accessing Foss Park, the Robert McClory Bike Path, the Great Lakes and North Chicago Metra stations, and the Sheridan Road business district.
5. Enhance access to Pace bus service by upgrading Pace bus stops to meet ADA standards.

4.1.3 Enact Plans & Policies

1. *Develop an ADA Transition Plan and design standards that adhere to the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). This includes creating an inventory of local sidewalks and crosswalks that are either in need of repair or are missing in critical places.*
2. *Implement the City's Complete Streets Policy, Access Unlimited: A Complete Streets Policy Guide, to direct future improvements to street and transportation systems.*
3. *Implement a sidewalk construction waiver program to provide a mechanism to accept a fee in lieu of sidewalk installations when properties meet certain criteria. Use these funds to install or make repairs to sidewalks in more critical locations or to coordinate the installation at a more appropriate time.*

4.1.4 Improve Coordination & Collaboration

1. *Coordinate with the Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to upgrade pedestrian facilities when they are undertaking a roadway project on their roads.*
2. *Coordinate with Metra and Pace to upgrade pedestrian facilities when they are undertaking improvements to their stations and stops, respectively. The quality of transit stops is an important driver of ridership and customer satisfaction, and impacts safety, particularly for more vulnerable populations. They should be comfortable places to wait, surrounded by safe and accessible walking conditions. Transit stops should be coordinated with alternative modes of transportation as part of a mobility hub, wherever possible.*



BUS STOP SHELTER AND IMPROVED SIGNAGE



BUS STOP AMENITIES

ASPIRATION 4.2

Implement a safe and accessible bicycle network. The network should focus on new east-west facilities that better connects residents to the Robert McClory Bike Path. While some progress is being made to build bikeways, the existing facilities are disjointed. Bike facilities should be designed for people of all ages and abilities to comfortably ride and, where appropriate, may necessitate physically protected bike facilities.

A comprehensive and safe bicycle network can bring about a multitude of benefits to North Chicago. The city benefits from access to the Robert McClory Bike Path, an anchor of the regional bike network and an asset for connecting North Chicagoans to neighboring communities. Implementing a system of neighborhood greenways on low-volume streets would better connect residents to the Robert McClory Bike Path and provide designated routes for cycling safely through the city. Neighborhood greenways are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycle travel priority. Neighborhood greenways use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through trips by motor vehicles and create safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets. Similar to what a strong pedestrian network can bring to the city, a robust bicycle network can positively impact local businesses and improve accessibility to jobs, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities.

4.2.1 Increase Biking Networks and Accessibility

1. Establish new bike facilities appropriate to the level of traffic stress and roadway usage with emphasis on safe intersection crossings at the Bobby Thompson Expressway, Sheridan Road, and other routes to downtown such as on Broadway Avenue, 18th Street and 17th Street.
2. Implement the trail and bike facility recommendations included in the Northern Lakeshore Trail Connectivity Plan.
3. Work with the Lake County Forest Preserve and the City of Waukegan to enhance connectivity through the Greenbelt Forest Preserve.
4. Provide an east-west bicycle connection along Argonne Dr. to the Robert McClory Bike Path.



ARGONNE DR. BICYCLE CONNECTION

4.2.2 Improve Visibility & Accessibility to the Robert McClory Bike Path

1. Add directional wayfinding along streets leading to the Robert McClory Bike Path and along the Path to invite and encourage trail users to access local destinations.
2. Address the Robert McClory Bike Path disconnect at 24th Street and Sheridan Road to make for a seamless path that avoids the overpass and local streets. Explore options for continuing the shared use path along Sheridan Road and using Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to connect to the existing trail. Between 2017 and 2021, there were three crashes involving a bicyclist or pedestrian along this stretch of the Robert McClory Bike Path.
3. Improve the Robert McClory Bike Path and user experience with new lighting and asphalt pavement treatments.
4. Upgrade or install high-visibility crosswalks and trail crossing signs at all intersections where the path crosses local roads: Broadway Avenue, 20th Street, 19th Street, 18th Street, 17th Street, 16th Street, and 15th Street.



TRAIL SIGNAGE

4.2.3 Improve Connections to Foss Park and Beach

1. Create a neighborhood greenway to Foss Park on Foss Park Avenue that creates a connection to the rest of the network.
2. Install bike parking at the Foss Park field house, playground, and at the North Chicago Public Beach. Easy to find and easy to use bike parking at Foss Park can incentive more people to bike to this rich city asset.



FOSS PARK & BEACH

4.2.4 Encourage Bicycle Parking

1. Install bike parking throughout the Sheridan Road business district. Apply high-quality bike rack standards for short-term and long-term parking. Refer to the Association for Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Essentials of Bike Parking Guidelines for details on how to site and recommend rack designs. Easy to find and easy to use bike parking can incentivize bike trips to the Sheridan Road business district, adding mobility options for people living in, working in, and visiting the area.
2. Add zoning requirements that require developments of a certain size to install bike parking/bike racks on property.

ASPIRATION 4.3

Reduce dangerous driving on North Chicago's streets. This can be achieved by implementing traffic calming and other safety measures throughout the roadway network. Creating a safe transportation system for all road users requires prioritizing safety in decisions about where resources are invested. North Chicago should take systematic, coordinated action in identifying and responding to safety issues while proactively designing spaces to mitigate safety risks.

Dangerous driving is pervasive on several streets in North Chicago. Between 2017 and 2021, there were over 1,600 crashes resulting in over 600 injuries and six fatalities. One-third of those crashes occurred on either the Bobby E Thompson Expressway or on the Skokie Highway. It is critical that North Chicago prioritize safety on all of the streets they control and that they coordinate with IDOT and LCDOT to make safety improvements on roads they control. Traffic calming measures such as speed bumps, raised crosswalks, and narrower lanes force drivers to slow down, reducing the number of accidents and fatalities. Moreover, safe streets often include enhancements like crosswalks, sidewalks, and pedestrian islands, making it safer and more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate North Chicago streets.

4.3.1 Implement Traffic Calming Measures

1. Implement new traffic calming measures such as curb extensions, speed feedback signs, raised intersections and mid-block pedestrian crossings on Sheridan Road in the business district, intersections along the Bobby Thompson Expressway, and along main thoroughfares with high crash rates and pedestrian and bicyclist activity: 17th Street between Lewis Avenue and Sheridan Road, 10th Street between Glen Drive and Sheridan Road, Lewis Avenue at the intersections of and 14th Street, Argonne Drive, and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and Morrow Avenue between Lewis Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.
2. Consider lane width reallocation on Sheridan Road to better utilize excess roadway/shoulder between driving lanes and the curb. Excess roadway could be used to expand the existing sidewalks, install landscaping, and shorten crosswalk lengths.
3. Post "Reduced Speed Limit Ahead" signs and speed feedback signals on Sheridan Road before the railroad overpass to slow vehicles approaching downtown.



TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES



Safer Streets for All

PILSEN - CHICAGO, IL

Pilsen, a culturally rich neighborhood in Chicago, faced significant safety concerns due to heavy pedestrian traffic and frequent vehicle incidents. To address these issues and enhance the walkability of the neighborhood, a series of traffic calming measures were implemented. Curb extensions were installed at multiple intersections to shorten crossing distances for pedestrians, while speed humps were placed on residential streets to reduce vehicle speeds. Additionally, mid-block crossings were created to facilitate safer pedestrian movement between major destinations. Lane widths on major roads were adjusted to make room for bike lanes and green buffers, further improving safety for cyclists. These measures led to a noticeable reduction in traffic accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists. The local community actively participated in the planning and implementation process, ensuring the solutions met their needs.

PILSEN NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS

4.3.2 Promote Traffic Safety through Education & Outreach

1. *Commit to a goal-oriented traffic safety program like Vision Zero.*
2. *Create an education and awareness campaign to reduce unsafe driving habits that includes implementing a traffic calming toolbox that identifies major streets where certain speed management tools may be appropriate.*

ASPIRATION 4.4

Coordinate with IDOT, Lake County, and neighboring communities. Improved coordination will ensure existing and future pedestrian and bicycle networks seamlessly connect residents to jobs and destinations throughout the region. The strength of North Chicago's active transportation network will only be as great as their connectivity to important destinations, including those in surrounding communities. This will require strong coordination with municipal and regional partners.

Consistent infrastructure across neighboring communities ensures smooth transitions for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers moving between North Chicago and the region. Much of North Chicago's transportation network could be more seamlessly connected to neighboring communities, but the city cannot address these gaps in a vacuum. Coordinated improvements help address safety concerns that may arise at boundaries between communities, such as dangerous intersections or gaps in pedestrian infrastructure. By working together, North Chicago and the surrounding communities can implement solutions that prioritize safety for all road users.

4.4.1 Ensure Regional Collaboration

1. Establish a standard operating procedure for tracking transportation projects with state, county, and neighboring municipal agencies including LCDOT officials, Waukegan, Green Oaks, Park City, and Lake Bluff.
2. Coordinate with IDOT to discuss the community vision for state roads and determine the feasibility of a streetscape or corridor improvement project.
3. Work with the Lake County Forest Preserves to ensure planned projects consider connectivity to North Chicago.
4. Evaluate existing Pace bus service and work with the transit agencies to ensure schedules and routes accommodate major employer shift times and guarantee accessibility.



PACE BUS

ASPIRATION 4.5

Focus on streetscape improvements along commercial corridors. An improved streetscape can help ensure a comfortable, safe, and more enjoyable pedestrian experience. Addressing problematic barriers and unpleasant streetscapes with improved infrastructure, creative elements, and streetscape interventions such as lighting, landscaping, artistic features, and wayfinding can have an immediate impact on the pedestrian experience.

Streetscape improvements often prioritize pedestrian-friendly design elements such as wider sidewalks, well-marked crosswalks, and accessible curb ramps. Enhancing walkability makes it easier and safer for residents to navigate North Chicago on foot, reducing reliance on cars and promoting active transportation. This is particularly important for strengthening the vibrancy and accessibility of the Sheridan Road business district. Streetscape improvements on Sheridan Road would play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life, economic vitality, and sense of community for residents and visitors alike. These enhancements could include safety features such as improved lighting, a parklet or new gathering space, landscaping, slower speed limits and enhanced visibility at intersections, especially at Foss Park Avenue to improve access to the Metra Station.

4.5.1 Encourage Streetscape Improvements Along Commercial Corridors

1. Concentrate streetscape improvements along corridors leading to/from the Naval Station Great Lakes to encourage students and employees to travel between the Base and businesses in North Chicago. Strengthening the connection between North Chicago and the Great Lakes Naval Base will positively impact both.
2. Ensure all sidewalks are at least five feet if setback from the curb and at least six feet if at the curb face, and, where possible, include a buffer separation from the roadway. Meeting these requirements will ensure pedestrians of all physical abilities will be able to walk safely to and from important and daily destinations.
3. Add landscaping and tree wells throughout the Sheridan Road business district. Landscaping and tree wells can improve the streetscape aesthetic while providing shade and lessening the heat island effect that is common in areas without
4. Ensure pedestrian scale lighting throughout the Sheridan Road business district and on main pedestrian thoroughfares such as Audrey Nixon Boulevard, Argonne Boulevard, 10th Street, and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.
5. Explore opportunities for public art installations such as murals and decorative crosswalks.
6. Construct community branded gateway signage or other creative elements at the southern edge of the Sheridan Road business district.
7. Coordinate with the Union Pacific Railroad to explore painting or enhancing the railroad bridge over Sheridan Road entering the business district.

4.5.2 Encourage Smart Transportation Zoning

1. *Modernize the zoning code to allow for improvements outside of the public right-of-way, such as at large parking facilities, to improve the pedestrian experience.*
2. *Modernize the zoning code to dictate that site plans encourage walking and biking by placing building entrances at the streetfront/sidewalk; placing parking lots to the side or in the back of structures; specify small or no building setbacks; and require bicycle parking, among others.*

4.5.3 Transportation Grants & Funding

1. *Apply for a Department of Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program (DCIP) grant to address infrastructure needs at and around the Naval Station Great Lakes.*
2. *Designate a full-time employee or employees to focus on identifying, applying for, and implementing state and federal grant funds.*





PRINCIPLE

5

Life & Culture

Assesses how the city recognizes its authentic and diverse population through culture, community, and events. Solutions support fostering positive images of the city, celebrating local cultures through arts and events, and integrating the city's industrial tradition into a positive identity.

ASPIRATION 5.1

Cultivate a positive image of North Chicago.

ASPIRATION 5.2

Cultivate North Chicago's identity as a center of diverse cultural life on Chicago's North Shore, to appeal to both residents and visitors.

ASPIRATION 5.3

Celebrate local industry to build the city's image and attract visitors.

*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 5: Life & Culture**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

Efforts to Reshape North Chicago's Identity

North Chicago is undergoing a transformative phase, aiming to redefine its image and narrative to better reflect the rich cultural fabric and dynamism of its community. The city's brand at the time of this planning work is perceived as outdated and does not capture the vibrant diversity and youthful spirit that characterize its residents. Recognizing this disconnect, North Chicago embarked on a comprehensive rebranding initiative designed to update its visual identity and align it more closely with the community's actual makeup and values.

This rebranding effort involves multiple components, starting with extensive community engagement to ensure that the voices of the residents are heard and integrated into the new brand. The city is utilizing workshops, surveys, and public forums to gather input and feedback from a broad cross-section of the community. This collaborative approach ensures that the rebranding process is inclusive and reflective of the collective aspirations and cultural richness of the people it aims to represent.

North Chicago is working with branding experts to redesign its logos, color schemes, and overall visual presentation. This visual transformation is intended to be more than just aesthetic; it's about creating a symbol that residents can identify with and feel proud to represent. The new design elements are being crafted to convey the city's heritage, its forward-looking attitude, and its commitment to inclusivity and progress.

Benefits of Genuine Representation

The benefits of this genuine and thoughtful representation in city branding are many:

First, a brand that accurately reflects the community's identity enhances civic pride. Residents who see their culture, history, and aspirations visually represented in their city's identity are more likely to feel a strong connection to the community.

Second, an authentic and modern brand can enhance North Chicago's appeal to potential residents, investors, and tourists. It positions the city as an attractive destination that values diversity and offers a rich cultural experience. This can stimulate economic growth, attract new businesses, and increase tourism, all of which contribute to the city's overall vitality.

Third, a well-conceived brand promotes a positive external image of North Chicago, helping to counteract negative perceptions and showcasing the city as a vibrant and safe place to live, work, and visit. This improved perception can have far-reaching effects, from increasing property values to attracting new development.



Finding Community

North Chicago is a tapestry of cultures and history, offering a rich community life that is especially vibrant among its residents of color. Family and community gatherings play a crucial role in maintaining this vibrancy, acting as the cornerstone for finding and fostering community connections.

Community life in North Chicago is often centered around local events. From neighborhood block parties to cultural festivals, these events provide a platform for residents to connect and build lasting relationships.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Events like Community Days and Aldermanic Ward Parties are highlights of the city's social calendar. The gatherings foster a sense of belonging and community among residents, providing opportunities to celebrate together. Community Days, for instance, bring together residents from various backgrounds to enjoy entertainment, food, and communal activities. It's a reflection of the city's commitment to fostering a unified North Chicago community spirit.

Initiatives like the North Chicago Community Partners emphasize community engagement through programs that connect education with community building. Events like sports days and educational enrichment activities are tailored to empower young people and integrate valuable life skills with fun and community participation.

COMMUNITY DAYS, NORTH CHICAGO



Culture & Community

The concept of life and culture in a community like North Chicago, particularly when it's enriched by vibrant cultural events and community involvement, extends beyond mere perception—it encapsulates a profound sense of belonging and joy. Strengthening Life and Culture in North Chicago can lead to significant positive impacts on the community:

- **Deepening Perception and Identity:** Cultural events and community activities do more than entertain; they deepen residents' perceptions of their city as a lively, engaging, and supportive place. When people participate in events like Latinx Heritage Month or engage with organizations like CALA Alliance, they are active participants in celebrating and shaping culture.
- **Fostering Joy and Cohesion:** The joy derived from community events often comes from the experience of unity and shared experience. Whether it's through music, dance, art, or food, these events provide a platform for expression and connection that is universally appealing. For many, particularly in young and diverse communities, these gatherings are a source of happiness and pride that reinforce community bonds.
- **Impact on Community Development:** Culturally rich programs and events play a critical role in community development. They attract visitors and investments, which can lead to improvements in local infrastructure and public services. They also offer a platform for local artists and entrepreneurs.
- **Educational and Inspirational Roles:** Cultural celebrations also serve as tools for learning and engagement, offering both young and old residents' insights into their own culture and that of others. This educates and inspires future generations to continue the traditions and perhaps innovate new ones.



ASPIRATION 5.1

Cultivate a positive image of North Chicago.

Establishing a strong brand and identity is paramount for a local community like North Chicago, as it serves as the foundation for shaping perceptions, attracting investment, and fostering civic pride. A well-defined brand communicates the unique personality and character of the community, highlighting its distinctive features, culture, and history. This messaging creates a compelling narrative that sets the community apart and positions it as a desirable destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

North Chicago is in the midst of laying the groundwork for a new brand identity that captures the essence of its vibrant community. This branding initiative is being developed hand in hand with the comprehensive plan, ensuring that the city's planning vision is aligned with its identity and values. Showcasing the vibrancy and diversity that characterizes its community, the city is initiating a series of strategies to enhance its brand identity, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and unique stories of its residents.

5.1.1 Enhance Brand Identity

1. Update the city's branding to better reflect North Chicago's people through an integrated visual brand and narrative storytelling.
2. Implement public art projects to showcase local artists and cultural heritage, reinforcing the city's brand identity. Reflected through a dedicated color scheme or selective patterns, public art will be linked throughout the City.
3. Utilize social media, an improved city website, and other platforms to promote North Chicago's attractions, events, and key assets.
4. Involve residents in brand expansion efforts to foster a sense of ownership and pride, such as hosting design contests for public art or murals.



NORTH CHICAGO AERIAL VIEW

5.1.2 Launch Welcome to North Chicago Program

1. Launch a "Welcome to North Chicago" program aimed at new residents and visitors, providing a comprehensive guide to the city's history, landmarks, and cultural fabric.
2. Feature "Stories of North Chicago" into the welcome program, featuring narratives of the city's assets and the diverse narratives of its community groups.
3. Develop welcome packets that include information on local resources, community engagement opportunities, and upcoming aldermanic and city-wide events.
4. Integrate stories and experiences into North Chicago's existing digital presence, fostering a sense of community and belonging and appealing to younger generations and young families.



NEW HOMEOWNERS IN NORTH CHICAGO

ASPIRATION 5.2

Cultivate North Chicago's identity as a center of diverse cultural life on Chicago's North Shore, to appeal to both residents and visitors.

As a city with a demographic makeup distinct from its peer communities in the North Shore, North Chicago holds a unique position as a hub of multiculturalism and inclusivity. By celebrating and embracing this diversity, the city honors the rich tapestry of its residents' backgrounds and fosters a sense of belonging and pride within the community.

In a region where predominantly white communities are often the norm, North Chicago asserts its place in the broader North Shore community while also celebrating its own distinctiveness. This celebration is not about exploitation or tokenism but rather about authentically embracing who we are as a community and recognizing the value that each individual and culture brings to our collective identity.

Celebrating diversity is not just about cultural expression; it's also about fostering social cohesion and understanding. By providing platforms for cultural exchange and dialogue, North Chicago creates opportunities for residents from different backgrounds to connect, learn from one another, and build bridges of understanding.

5.2.1 Expand Vibrant Cultural Festivals and Events

1. Continue to host street fairs and block parties that feature live salsa, jazz, hip-hop performances, and dance workshops, encouraging community participation and celebration of cultural heritage.
2. Celebrate African American and Latino cultures with festivals that showcase traditional and contemporary music, dance, and arts, and food, such as a Juneteenth Celebration and a vibrant Dia de los Muertos Festival.
3. Organize a "North Chicago's Got Talent" showcase, highlighting local performers from the African American and Latino communities in a fun, community-wide event.



COMMUNITY DAYS IN NORTH CHICAGO

5.1.2 Support Performing Arts & Live Entertainment

1. Support local music and dance groups by providing platforms for performances at schools, parks, and during city events, highlighting genres like R&B, salsa, bachata, and reggaeton.
2. Organize open mic nights and poetry slams with themes celebrating the many cultures of North Chicago, offering a space for expression, storytelling, and community bonding.
3. Host movie nights in the park featuring films and documentaries by African American and Latino filmmakers.



SALSA DANCING

5.2.3 Celebrate Culinary and Food Traditions

1. Launch a “Flavors of North Chicago” food festival that brings together local restaurants, food trucks, and home cooks to celebrate the community’s diverse tastes.
2. Organize neighborhood cook-offs or culinary contests, such as the best taco, empanada, barbecue, or soul food dish, creating a fun, competitive, and delicious way to celebrate cultural pride.
3. Set up community dinners or “supper clubs” where people from different backgrounds come together to share meals and stories, fostering unity and cultural exchange.
4. Leverage the Farmers Market to promote healthy lifestyles by offering health screenings and healthy cooking demonstrations.

BBQ COOKOUT



CELEBRATION OF FOOD CULTURE



MEXICAN STREET FOOD



ASPIRATION 5.3

Celebrate local industry to build the city's image and attract visitors.

North Chicago's local industry plays a vital role in shaping the city's identity and history, making it a compelling aspect to celebrate and showcase to visitors. The city has a rich industrial heritage characterized by significant contributions to various sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, and innovation.

One notable aspect of North Chicago's industrial history, prominent in the early to mid-20th century, is its vibrant manufacturing sector. During this period, the city hosted a multitude of factories and industrial plants, becoming a hub to produce various goods. Among these iconic industries is Jelly Belly, a renowned confectionery brand famous for its delectable jellybeans. Operating its factory in North Chicago, Jelly Belly has contributed to the city's economic vitality. Alongside machinery, automobiles, steel products, and consumer goods, Jelly Belly's presence underscored the city's versatility and innovation in manufacturing, leaving a lasting imprint on its industrial legacy.

North Chicago is also home to thriving life sciences industries, with AbbVie and other companies involved in pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and medical research, making significant contributions to innovation and economic growth. The city's ties to the military further underscore its industrial legacy, with military installations and defense-related industries playing a crucial role in its development. By celebrating its industrial heritage, North Chicago can enhance its image, attract visitors, and showcase its unique contributions to industry and innovation.

5.3.1 Celebrate Local Industry

1. *Host an annual Jelly Bean Festival (or Jelly Belly Festival), celebrating a local product that is nationally loved. The festival might include a parade with jelly bean costumes and floats, baking contests using jelly beans, jelly bean cocktails, jelly bean-inspired menus, jelly bean art such as murals and sculptures, and jelly bean games (such as games of skill or a jelly bean "pit" for kids (like a ball pit)).*
2. *Host an annual Festival of Local Industry, featuring factory tours and interactive exhibits dedicated to the history and innovation behind local industry. Promote the event regionally, beyond North Chicago.*
3. *Partner with schools to offer educational field trips to local manufacturing facilities.*



WHAT THE FLUFF FESTIVAL

What The Fluff Festival

SOMERVILLE, MA

Somerville, Massachusetts, celebrates its quirky claim to fame as the birthplace of Marshmallow Fluff with the annual "What the Fluff?" Festival. Started in 2006, the festival honors Archibald Query's invention right in Union Square where Fluff was first created. This event draws crowds with its Fluff-themed activities, cooking contests, live music, and art, significantly boosting local business and community spirit. There are also Fluff-focused vendors selling everything from traditional Fluffernutter sandwiches to more inventive culinary creations. It not only commemorates a unique piece of Somerville's culinary history but also promotes the area's vibrant culture and inventive spirit, demonstrating how a simple invention can be leveraged to foster community pride and economic growth.

5.3.2 Highlight Life Sciences and Innovation

1. Host an expo in collaboration with Rosalind Franklin University and AbbVie to showcase advancements in health and biomedical sciences, featuring interactive booths, guest speakers, and hands-on demonstrations for all ages.
2. Launch community health initiatives and free clinic days in partnership with Rosalind Franklin University and AbbVie, focusing on wellness, preventive care, and science education.
3. Organize a series of talks and workshops with researchers, alumni, and experts from Rosalind Franklin University and AbbVie to discuss current trends and careers in life sciences.

Community & Health

SONOMA COUNTY, CA

The Hearts of Sonoma County project in California serves as an exemplary model of how community health initiatives, in collaboration with local medical institutions, can effectively address major health issues such as cardiovascular disease. This project was not just about clinical interventions; it strategically utilized community health workers to bridge the gap between medical services and community needs. These workers conducted blood pressure screenings at accessible community locations, which was crucial for early detection and management of cardiovascular risks among the local population.



COMMUNITY SCREENING EVENT

5.3.3 Emphasize Military Presence & Participation

1. Partner with Naval Station Great Lakes on events offering opportunities for tours, military band performances, and exhibitions on naval history, technology, and the daily life of service members.
2. Initiate a Veterans' Stories Project to collect and share experiences from veterans and active-duty personnel at Naval Station Great Lakes or the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Center, presenting them in placemaking opportunities, wayfinding banners, local libraries, schools, and through a digital archive.
3. Host a Navy Tech Showcase event or exhibit focusing on technological advancements and engineering marvels used in the Navy to spark youth interest in STEM fields.
4. Welcome Naval Station Great Lakes and Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Center graduates, clients, and employees into the community with informational packets, invitations, and programming.



NAVAL STATION GREAT LAKES



PRINCIPLE

6

Municipal Services & Utilities

Assesses safety, city services, and water and energy infrastructure. Solutions include leveraging community belonging for immigrant families, enhancing community safety through community policing, and addressing environmental resilience of infrastructure.

ASPIRATION 6.1

Strengthen Community Services to Align with Residents' Aspirations and Lifestyles.

ASPIRATION 6.2

Continue to improve community safety in targeted areas and incorporate a community security lens into all plan initiatives.

ASPIRATION 6.3

Strengthen and Modernize North Chicago's Infrastructure to Enhance Quality of Life and Environmental Resilience.

*North Chicago Comprehensive Plan includes six core Principles. The following section describes North Chicago's vision for **Principle 6: Municipal Services & Utilities**. A summary of the existing conditions analysis is shared in the next few pages. Following that is a list of actionable initiatives for each of the Aspirations listed above.*

North Chicago's Safety Landscape

North Chicago exhibits a complex safety landscape with variances in crime rates across different areas of the city. The overall crime rate in North Chicago is notably higher than the national average, with a person having a 1 in 34 chance of becoming a victim of any crime. Violent crimes in North Chicago are 16% higher than the national average, and the city is safer than only 20% of the cities in the United States.

CRIME STATISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION

The rate of violent crime in North Chicago stands at approximately 8.02 incidents per 1,000 residents, with assault being the most frequent violent crime. Property crimes occur at a rate of about 25.78 per 1,000 residents, predominantly theft and vehicle theft. Notably, different neighborhoods within North Chicago show varied levels of safety, with the northeast parts of the city experiencing higher crime rates compared to the southwest, which is considered relatively safer.

NORTH CHICAGO'S
CRIME RATE IS

16%

HIGHER THAN THE
US NATIONAL AVERAGE

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS AND RELATIONS

Community perceptions of safety in North Chicago vary significantly by neighborhood, reflecting the diverse experiences of its residents. While some areas feel relatively safe, others, particularly in the northeast, report higher levels of concern regarding crime and safety. This variation underscores the need for targeted interventions that consider the unique characteristics of each neighborhood.

LOOKING AHEAD

The existing conditions in North Chicago underscore a critical need for enhanced community services designed to tackle the underlying factors that contribute to crime and safety concerns. The community's commitment to coming together to improve safety is pivotal and begins with each resident's participation and vigilance. By harnessing this inherent community value of unity, North Chicago can develop initiatives that not only enhance public safety but also promote a strong sense of belonging and mutual support among its diverse residents.

These initiatives, while not explicitly named here, would focus on fostering family-oriented services and community engagement efforts that resonate with the needs of North Chicago's population. Such efforts are vital in enhancing the quality of life, reducing crime rates, and strengthening the ties between the community and law enforcement. This community-driven approach ensures a collaborative effort towards building a more cohesive and secure environment.



North Chicago's Utilities

The City of North Chicago is proud to provide its residents and visitors with high-quality infrastructure, from clean drinking water to safe streets, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, parkway trees, and much more. As the infrastructure continues to age, the city is working to sustain and improve the public infrastructure.

The city has approximately 70 miles of roads and alleys, with about 68 miles of watermain, sanitary sewers, and storm sewers to maintain. The bulk of this infrastructure was constructed between 1920 and 1960 and is well beyond its anticipated service life. Fortunately, the original infrastructure was well-engineered and properly built, but some failed, given its age.

The city has implemented a comprehensive capital replacement program and pavement management strategy, which focuses on keeping good pavement in satisfactory condition, extending its useful life, and allowing bad pavement to fail completely until it needs total replacement.

70
MILES OF
ROADS



Capital street reconstruction projects include watermain, storm, and sanitary repair or replacement projects. By bundling the street and capital water main projects, the City can leverage its water enterprise fund and combine water main replacement with street reconstruction.

THE BULK OF NORTH CHICAGO'S INFRASTRUCTURE IS WELL BEYOND ITS ANTICIPATED SERVICE LIFE.

Stakeholder Summary

Water

The North Chicago Water Department provides the City's potable water supply, and the source is Lake Michigan. The City's water distribution system comprises 59 miles of distribution piping and an elevated tank. This system provides potable water to pharmaceutical manufacturers Abbott & AbbVie and large industrial customers (EMCO Chemical, Proctor & Gamble). It also includes a large treatment facility serving North Chicago residents and commercial customers.

In addition, the water system consists of 59 miles of various-sized water distribution mains, appurtenances intrinsic to 540 control valves, 476 fire hydrants, 4,211 water services/metered accounts. Of the City's current residential population of 29,970 (2018), only 16,813 are connected to the City water system. The North Chicago WTP is rated to treat up to a Design Average Flow of 12 million gallons per day (MGD) and a Peak Flow of 16 MGD for potable use.

Current Average Day and Maximum Day water demands within the city service area are approximately 2.5 MGD and 4.2 MGD, respectively. Maintenance activities of water system assets include hydrant flushing and painting, valve exercising, intake cleaning and maintenance, and pump maintenance and repair.

MAJOR WATER SYSTEM PROJECTS CURRENTLY PLANNED ARE:

- **Water Tower No. 1:** A 2-million-gallon elevated water storage tank that will match the pressures of the US Navy system and become a redundant water supply.
- **16th Street and Kemble Ave Transmission Main Improvements:** under construction - further elaborated in the following section.
- **2024 Lead Service and Watermain Replacement Project:** Replacement of lead service lines and replacing existing watermain with new 8-inch DIP. Anticipated spring 2024 construction.
- **WTP Filters 8-11 Rehabilitation:** The filters were installed in 1990 and are scheduled to have the filter beds, piping, valves, and media replaced.
- **WTP Building Envelope Improvements:** replacement of the existing WTP roofing, masonry repairs, new windows, and doors. Anticipated spring 2024 construction.

16TH STREET WATER MAIN PROJECT

The City of North Chicago is planning improvements to its water distribution system. The proposed improvements include approximately 8,360 linear feet of a new 12-inch transmission main, 4,770 linear feet of an 8-inch distribution main, and 280 l.f. of a 6-inch water main. These improvements will complete the looping of existing transmission mains in the northeast sector of the distribution system, improving system performance, reliability, pressures, and flows.

2024 LEAD SERVICE AND WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT

In 2021, the City of North Chicago applied for and received an appropriation request for \$500,000 in construction costs for removing and replacing lead service lines and water mains in North Chicago. The request was submitted to Senator Durbin's office, and funds were allocated in the federal FY22 Omnibus Appropriations Bill signed into law on March 15, 2022.

The project funding is included in the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) appropriations. It requires the City to follow the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) guidelines for the design and construction of the project.

The City staff has worked with Trotter and Associates, Inc. to identify the segments of water main/lead service lines to replace based on the Argonne Reconstruction Project and the street conditions of Victoria. The goal is to complete design/permitting in the summer through winter, bid the project in the spring of 2024, and complete construction in the fall of 2024. The work includes 120 service replacements and just under one mile of water main replacement.

Sanitary Sewer

The city's sanitary sewer collection system consists of approximately 47 miles of sanitary mains of various sizes, including 1,075 manholes. Sanitary sewage is conveyed to the North Shore Water Reclamation District from 4,211 service connections, where it is treated and released.

The Water and Sanitary Division maintenance programs include regular jetting, flushing, and cleaning of sanitary sewer mains and emergency response to sewer line blockages.

Maintenance activities related to the sanitary sewer system, including sewer cleaning & televising, CIPP lining, spot repairs, manhole inspections, and repairs.

The City utilizes an annual allotment from HUD (CDBG funding) to complete the yearly cleaning and CIPP lining project. The City has no capacity issues, major expansion, or repair projects planned.

The City of North Chicago continually plans for upcoming maintenance and upgrades to its sanitary system. The following spreadsheet shows the known funding and upcoming projects for the next five years.



Storm Sewer

The City's storm sewer collection system consists of ditches, swales, detention basins, approximately 46 miles of various storm sewer mains, and 2,589 storm drainage structures (inlets, catch basins). As an older community with outdated and undersized infrastructure, the City has experienced flooding after storm events. Below are some major projects under design.

PETTIBONE CREEK WATERSHED

The City of North Chicago is within the Southwest Pettibone Creek Watershed, drained by an enclosed storm sewer system with intermittent and discontinuous overland flow. The area is predominantly an older single-family residential neighborhood. There are numerous reports of

flooded basements and area streets due to an inadequate storm sewer system and many years of indiscriminate filling of the natural channel.

The City investigated two methods of reducing area flooding problems: relief storm sewers and detention ponds. The availability of storm water detention sites in unbuildable areas along Pettibone Creek and reasonable land costs make this approach a good solution. Storm water detention upstream of the watershed will reduce peak flows in the storm sewer system and thus allow existing pipes to adequately convey the design flow to outlets without flooding.

Although the Southwest Pettibone Creek Watershed is mainly developed, a few existing undeveloped areas within the watershed have space to construct additional depressional storage areas.



The development of storm water detention in these areas would be effective as the natural features act to take water off the storm sewer system and thus reduce peak flows.

The storm water improvements identified in this proposal include upsizing specific storm sewers and constructing a large storm water detention basin within a vacant lot along the route.

The proposed storm water detention site would cover a portion of the block facing Lewis Avenue, directly south of Neal Math & Science Junior High School. Most of the block is vacant, except for one house at the southeast corner. The City has purchased this vacant property, and the “Project is in design engineering and anticipates construction of the improvements commencing in 2024.

US-41 STORM WATER IMPROVEMENTS

The City of North Chicago, in partnership with Lake County SMC, US Navy, and IDOT, completed a drainage study to identify potential local drainage solutions to reduce the risk of future flooding in the area. The study area is located along Skokie Highway (US-41), south of Buckley Road (IL-137). Historically, there has been flooding along US-41 (south of IL-137) and at the Strawberry Condominiums located west of US-41 and south of IL-137.

Lake County SMC is the lead agency for this project and has secured \$8 million in FEMA/DCEO funding. Phase I improvements (green in the attached exhibit) are under design and permitting. Construction work is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2025.

In addition to the major projects, the City has an annual street sweeping program and storm sewer cleaning project to help ensure the inlet structures and pipes are clean and the sewer system is functioning.

As required, the City updates and maintains its Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) in conformance with protocols of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Program. As such, it must develop, implement, and enforce a Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP). Its purpose is to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the municipal separate storm sewer system to the maximum extent practicable to protect water quality and satisfy the appropriate requirements.

This SWMP must include Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) that the City develops as part of its SWMP. The MCMs in the City’s SWMP are as follows:

- Public Education And Outreach On Storm Water Impacts
- Public Involvement/Participation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control
- Post-Construction Storm Water Management in New Development and Redevelopment
- Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operation



Transportation

The City of North Chicago owns and operates a street network that covers 7.9 square miles of area. This network comprises approximately 49 miles of city-owned and maintained roads, 18 miles of alleys, 1,200 streetlights, 36 acres of turf, and 5 miles of roadway median.

The City has access to Interstate I-94 from State Rte. 137 and has the following arterial roadways in the City: Rte. 137 (Buckley Road) and Rte. 41 (Skokie Highway). Minor arterial and major collectors that travel through the City are Rte. 43 (Waukegan Road), Rte. 131 (Green Bay Road), Sheridan Road, ML King Jr. Drive, Lewis Ave, 14th Street (Audrey Nixon Blvd), Argonne Drive, Broadway Ave, Dugdale Road, Jackson Street, 10th Street and McAlister Ave.

IDOT, Lake County, and the City of North Chicago own and maintain minor arterials and major collectors.

In partnership with North Chicago and Waukegan, Lake County completed the \$18 million reconstruction of 14th Street in 2022.

Additionally, the City has an annual local road resurfacing program budgeted at \$1.25 million/year. This allows the City to resurface the roadways every 15-20 years with proper pavement maintenance work (crack sealing, patching, pavement rejuvenators, etc.)

2023 MFT STREET RESURFACING

The 2023 MFT Street project resurfaces approximately 1.27 miles of various streets in North Chicago. The proposed improvements include HMA surface removal (variable depth), Class D patching, installation of HMA binder and surface courses, PCC curb and gutter removal and replacement, PCC sidewalk removal and replacement, structure adjustments, pavement markings, and parkway restoration.

PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT

The city has implemented a comprehensive capital replacement program and pavement management strategy that focuses on keeping good pavement sound, extending its useful life, and letting bad pavement totally fail until it needs a full replacement. Central to this strategy, good pavement is proactively managed using preservative and restorative treatments to best use the limited resources. Capital street reconstruction projects include watermain, storm, and sanitary repair or replacement projects. By bundling the street and capital watermain projects, the City can leverage its water enterprise fund and combine watermain replacement with street reconstruction. The City has several planned projects.

MAJOR PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- A \$20 million reconstruction of Argonne Drive is planned for 2027-2029. This project is funded through the Lake County Council Mayors.
- Realignment of Foss Park/Main Street by Naval Station Great Lakes
- Sheridan Road/Rte. 137 Corridor Feasibility Study

The Sheridan Road/IL 137 Corridor feasibility study is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to lay the groundwork for a transformational investment in the transportation infrastructure of the approximately 5.8-mile (Corridor). Located in the historic cities of Waukegan and North Chicago, Illinois, the Sheridan Road/IL 137 Corridor, as currently configured, creates an inaccessible, development-prohibitive barrier between downtown Waukegan, downtown North Chicago, Lake Michigan, and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Cities of Waukegan and North Chicago are partnering to advance this long-planned Project. They are seeking funding for a Community Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program to obtain funding to complete the second phase of a feasibility study to identify improvements for the Corridor. Completing the feasibility study supports USDOT's goals of improving equity and environmental justice by addressing transportation-related disparities in

an Area of Persistent Poverty and traditionally underserved communities. The feasibility study will develop transportation solutions for the Corridor that promote safety for all road users, develop multimodal transportation options that reduce emissions, support equitable economic development, and create job opportunities for Waukegan and North Chicago residents.

Funding from the RCN Programs (either Reconnecting Communities or Neighborhood Access and Equity) will help the Cities complete Phase II of the Sheridan Road/IL 137 feasibility study. In August 2023, the Cities were notified by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) of an award of \$400,000 in federal planning (PL) funds (plus \$100,000 local match) through IDOT's Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Program.

With this funding, the Cities expect to begin work on Phase I of the feasibility study in late 2023. In Phase I of the study, the Cities will start coordination and data collection, conduct an existing conditions analysis, and identify preliminary alternatives while synthesizing community and stakeholder feedback. As the total feasibility study cost is estimated at \$1,150,000, funding through the RCP or NAE Programs will allow the Cities to complete Phase II of the study. In Phase II of the study, the Cities will refine project alternatives, conduct a traffic and safety analysis, conduct an initial environmental screening, and prepare the project to begin the preliminary engineering and NEPA phase.



ASPIRATION 6.1

Strengthen Community Services to Align with Residents' Aspirations and Lifestyles.

Intentional and focused community services play a crucial role in fostering strong bonds and a sense of togetherness. This is particularly important in communities of color, where cultural support systems often emphasize standing for one another and being there for each other. By embracing these values on a community-wide level, North Chicago can create a more inclusive and supportive environment where residents feel connected and empowered. Such community services should be designed to reflect the unique needs and aspirations of the diverse population, providing resources and support that resonate with different cultural backgrounds. By doing so, North Chicago can cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity among its residents, fostering mutual respect and understanding across cultural lines.

Additionally, community services can serve as a platform for promoting social justice and equity, addressing systemic issues that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. Through intentional programming and outreach efforts, North Chicago can work towards creating a more equitable society where everyone has access to opportunities and resources.

6.1.1 Focus on City-wide Family-Focused Services

1. Develop a comprehensive family-focused vision for community services, ensuring programs and initiatives meet the diverse needs of our families.
2. Develop specialized programs targeting the unique needs and interests of North Chicago's young, diverse demographics to encourage community involvement.
3. Engage in partnerships with local organizations like Mano a Mano, leveraging their experience in serving immigrant families and the youth to provide comprehensive support services and cultural activities that reflect the community's diversity.
4. Collaborate with the School District to implement a family-focused approach in education, enhancing support systems for students and parents alike.
5. Launch a "Stay in North Chicago" campaign aimed at high school and college students, highlighting opportunities for education and employment within the city to encourage them to envision a future in their hometown.
6. In collaboration with area organizations and agencies, develop and promote healthy lifestyle programs and initiatives to increase quality of life and life expectancy within the city.

6.1.2 Activate "Centro Amigo"

1. Develop a network of volunteers, "Amigos," from within the immigrant community, trained to provide information, support, and guidance on accessing city services and resources discreetly and safely.
2. Organize regular Mobile Resource Fairs at schools, community centers, and other accessible venues to offer a dynamic range of services, from health screenings to legal workshops, ensuring families can access resources in familiar and comfortable settings.
3. Launch a grassroots outreach campaign to raise awareness about Centro Amigo and its services. Utilizing social media, community newsletters, and local networks, the campaign will highlight the initiative's role in supporting immigrant families, emphasizing confidentiality and respect for all users.



LATINX BUSINESS AT COMMUNITY DAYS

ASPIRATION 6.2

Continue to improve community safety in targeted areas and incorporate a community security lens into all plan initiatives. .

By incorporating a community security lens into all planning efforts, the city aims to create safe environments where residents feel empowered and protected. This involves fostering trust and cooperation between law enforcement and the community through open communication channels and joint safety initiatives. Additionally, initiatives such as encouraging community vigilance and implementing practical measures like well-lit pedestrian crossings and strategic park design contribute to creating safe urban environments for all residents. By prioritizing community safety as a fundamental aspect of city planning, North Chicago seeks to build a stronger, more secure community where residents can thrive.

6.2.1 Activate the Police Sub-Station on 10th Street

1. Collaboratively implement a police substation on 10th Street, designed to serve as a focal point for both North Chicago and Waukegan.
2. Ensure that this facility is a resident refuge, a hub for safety education, and a crime deterrent.
3. Schedule regular open houses at the substation to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community.
4. Launch joint safety initiatives that leverage the strengths and resources of both North Chicago and Waukegan, such as shared neighborhood patrols, collaborative youth engagement programs, and cross-community safety drills.

6.2.2 Encourage a “See Something Say Something” Approach

1. Develop a campaign to encourage residents to report suspicious activities, emphasizing the importance of community vigilance in maintaining safety.
2. Utilize various media, including social media, local newspapers, and community bulletin boards, to spread the message.

3. Offer workshops and training sessions for residents on how to observe and report suspicious activities safely and effectively.
4. Create a dedicated hotline and online reporting platform for residents to report concerns anonymously, ensuring they feel safe and protected when sharing information.
5. Strengthen the relationship between the community and local law enforcement by ensuring that officers are approachable and responsive to reports from residents, fostering trust and cooperation.

6.2.3 Implement Security in Urban Environments

1. Install well-lit, clearly marked pedestrian crossings and pathways, especially in areas with high foot traffic and around schools, parks, and commercial districts.
2. Consider emergency call boxes at strategic locations throughout the city, providing direct lines to emergency services for immediate assistance.
3. Collaborate with Foss Park District to ensure parks and recreational areas are designed with open sightlines and strategic placement of benches, play equipment, and lighting to ensure safe environments for families and individuals.
4. Organize community volunteer patrols in parks and recreational areas during peak hours, providing an additional layer of security and community oversight.

ASPIRATION 6.3

Strengthen and Modernize North Chicago's Infrastructure to Enhance Quality of Life and Environmental Resilience.

North Chicago's commitment to fortify and modernize its infrastructure transcends mere physical enhancements—it embodies a strategic approach to nurturing community well-being and environmental stewardship. At its core, this approach seeks to cultivate resilience, both in the face of everyday challenges and in preparation for future uncertainties. By optimizing water distribution systems, the city ensures continued access and resource supply, as well as establishes a foundation for sustainable growth and development. Investments to manage stormwater and sanitary sewer networks effectively highlight proactive resilience-building, mitigating the risks of flooding and enhancing the city's capacity to weather adverse conditions. North Chicago's dedication to ongoing infrastructure upgrades and collaborative partnerships reflects a forward-thinking initiative, rooted in data-driven decision-making and community engagement.

6.3.1 Improve the Water Distribution System

1. *Improve water storage and pressure by constructing a modern water tower, ensuring a reliable supply that meets current and future demands.*
2. *Enhance the efficiency and reliability of water distribution through transmission line improvements, specifically along 16th St. and Kemble Ave.*
3. *Incorporate advanced technologies in the rehabilitation of the water treatment plant to increase capacity and ensure the highest quality of water.*

6.3.2 Expand the Sanitary Sewer System

1. *Expand ongoing maintenance programs to include regular inspections, cleanings, and repairs, maintaining optimal system functionality.*
2. *Develop swift and effective emergency response strategies for sewer blockages to minimize public health risks and environmental impact.*
3. *Utilize cutting-edge technology for annual cleaning and inspection initiatives to prevent potential issues.*

6.3.3 Increase Stormwater System Capacity

1. *Control floodwater and reduce flood risks in vulnerable areas, namely west of Green Bay Trail to the south, by constructing stormwater detention facilities strategically.*
2. *Increase the capacity of key storm sewers to effectively manage runoff during heavy rainfalls and mitigate street and property flooding.*
3. *Implement innovative solutions for long-term flood management and resilience through comprehensive maintenance and upgrades.*

6.3.4 Ensure Sustained Infrastructure

1. *Systematically update and replace aging infrastructure with modern, resilient alternatives through continuing to upgrade the city-wide capital replacement program.*
2. *Foster relationships with government agencies, private entities, and community organizations to pool resources through collaborative partnerships.*
3. *Commit to continuous, data-driven planning processes that incorporate community feedback, ensuring infrastructure development aligns with the evolving needs and aspirations of North Chicago.*





ROADMAP

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Achieving the community vision for North Chicago requires a commitment to an ongoing Comprehensive Plan implementation process. Successful implementation depends on the collaboration of key partners, including City departments, key stakeholders, residents, local businesses and institutions, regional government agencies, developers, financial institutions, and other entities and organizations. This Comprehensive Plan is a living, breathing document designed to evolve as the city grows and changes. It is expected to be revised and updated regularly to reflect new opportunities, challenges, and resources that arise during the implementation process. By remaining flexible and adaptable, the Plan can continuously align with the community's needs and aspirations, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness over time.

Lograr la visión comunitaria para North Chicago requiere un compromiso con un proceso continuo de implementación del Plan Integral. La implementación exitosa depende de la colaboración de socios clave, incluidos los departamentos de la ciudad, los principales interesados, los residentes, las empresas e instituciones locales, las agencias gubernamentales regionales, los desarrolladores, las instituciones financieras y otras entidades y organizaciones. Este Plan Integral es un documento vivo y dinámico diseñado para evolucionar a medida que la ciudad crece y cambia. Se espera que sea revisado y actualizado regularmente para reflejar nuevas oportunidades, desafíos y recursos que surjan durante el proceso de implementación. Al mantener la flexibilidad y la adaptabilidad, el Plan puede alinearse continuamente con las necesidades y aspiraciones de la comunidad, asegurando su relevancia y efectividad a lo largo del tiempo.

PLAN OWNERSHIP

Although North Chicago has a planning department, it is modest and may need additional support to effectively oversee the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is essential to establish a dedicated team or committee within the planning department to take ownership of the Comprehensive Plan and oversee its implementation. This team can work in collaboration with the City's Plan Commission, which should include implementation actions identified in the Comprehensive Plan in its annual work plan. Twice-yearly status meetings can update the City Council on progress and ensure alignment with the city's goals. If the Plan Commission does not meet regularly enough to ensure consistent engagement and oversight, a subcommittee of the City Council can serve the same purpose. The implementation matrix included in the Comprehensive Plan serves as a useful reference to identify priorities and action steps the committee can pursue each year.

PRIORITIZATION OF PLAN STRATEGIES

The City of North Chicago should complete zoning code amendments consistent with recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan within one to two years of adoption, making them high priority. Other actions may take longer to initiate or complete. Strategies associated with capital improvements in North Chicago may depend on the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with timelines based on budget cycles. Improvements on county or state roadways could be funded by grants available on pre-determined schedules. All these factors impact the timelines for achieving certain strategies.

As implementation progresses, the Comprehensive Plan should be regularly reviewed and revised to incorporate new data, feedback from the community, and changes in available resources. This iterative process allows the Plan to adapt to evolving circumstances and ensures that implementation efforts remain focused and effective.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following pages organize the North Chicago Comprehensive Plan's Principles, Goals, and Strategies into a user-friendly matrix. Each one of the six planning principles has a set of established aspirations (goals) followed by strategies to achieve the goal. In turn, each strategy has a series of action steps designed to enact it. The Implementation Matrix provides a responsible party, priority level, metric for success, and suggested time frame for the implementation of each strategy. The City and the Planning Commission should review and update the Implementation Matrix annually to ensure the Comprehensive Plan strategies align with the City's yearly budget and priorities. For additional information on action steps for each strategy, please refer to the respective chapters of each principle in the Plan.

- **Priority Level:** Each strategy has a priority level designation, including high, medium, and low priority.
- **Partners:** Potential stakeholders who will be a part of the implementation and suggested partnerships that can support the success of the proposed strategies.
- **Time Frame:** Each strategy outlines a suggested time frame for completion.
 - *Immediate-term is one year or less*
 - *Short-term is one to three years*
 - *Mid-term is three to five years*
 - *Long-term is five to ten years or longer*
 - *Ongoing strategies are implemented over the time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan.*
- **Metrics:** Metrics for success are specific indicators used to measure the effectiveness and progress of a strategy in achieving its intended goals. These metrics can be quantitative, such as increased pedestrian traffic, or could involve qualitative measures such as improved community satisfaction or enhanced aesthetic appeal.

PAIRINGS. SYSTEMS THINKING

Systems Thinking is a methodology that looks beyond one individual topic to understand and leverage the interconnections between the Plan's six principles and subsequent aspirations. By working cross-thematically, this approach identifies and implements strategies that reinforce and complement each other, leading to more robust and sustainable outcomes.

This holistic view of North Chicago ensures that strategies are not only effective in isolation but also synergistic when combined. An integrated approach enhances the overall impact of initiatives, fostering a cohesive and resilient community. By considering the broader system, complex challenges can be better addressed, sustainability promoted, and the quality of life for all residents improved.

The following pairings illustrate the application of systems thinking to North Chicago's comprehensive plan. Each pairing combines strategies from different themes, demonstrating the benefits of a holistic approach to urban planning and development.

Pairing 1 Sustainable Urban Development

- 1.2.4 Support Infill Development
- 2.5.1 Improve the Permitting Process
- 3.1.5 Consider a Green Factor Calculator
- 6.3.4 Ensure Sustained Infrastructure

Supporting infill development in North Chicago requires a comprehensive approach that includes simplifying the permitting process, ensuring sustained infrastructure, and incorporating green space into new projects. By thinking about these strategies together, we create an environment where developers are encouraged to invest, residents enjoy enhanced amenities, and the city remains resilient and sustainable. This holistic approach promotes efficient growth, environmental stewardship, and long-term community benefits.

Pairing 2 North Chicago Industries

- 2.1.1 Retain Anchor Industries
- 4.4.1 Ensure Regional Collaboration
- 5.3.1 Celebrate Local Industry

Retaining and celebrating North Chicago's key industries creates a thriving economic ecosystem. By fostering regional collaboration between nearby communities, North Chicago can develop industrial corridors along main state routes, improving logistics and transportation efficiency. Integrating these strategies strengthens the city's economic foundation, enhances regional connectivity, and boosts local pride through community events. This approach secures the presence of major employers and fosters a sense of community and attracts visitors, contributing to a robust local economy.

Pairing 3 Community Stability & Safety

- 1.1.1 Expand Homeownership Programs
- 5.1.1 Enhance Brand Identity
- 6.1.1 Focus on Family-Focused Services
- 6.2.2 "See Something Say Something" Approach

Enhancing homeownership programs, focusing on family-oriented services, improving the city's brand identity, and promoting safety initiatives together create a stable and welcoming environment. By addressing these areas simultaneously, North Chicago can transform into a community where residents feel secure, invested, and proud to live. This integrated strategy helps reduce transience, encourages long-term residency, and builds a cohesive, family-friendly community.

Pairing 4 A Revitalized Downtown for All

- 2.3.2 Economic Development in Downtown
- 4.1.1 Increase Pedestrian Safety
- 4.3.1 Implement Traffic Calming Measures
- 5.2.3 Celebrate Culinary and Food Traditions
- 5.2.1 Expand Vibrant Cultural Festivals and Events

Revitalizing downtown North Chicago through economic development, pedestrian safety, traffic calming, and cultural events create a vibrant and safe urban core. By considering these elements together, the city can foster a lively downtown that attracts businesses and visitors, promotes pedestrian activity, and celebrates local culture. This comprehensive approach transforms downtown into a dynamic and engaging destination, enhancing economic vitality and community spirit.

Pairing 5 North Chicago Connect

- 5.1.2 Launch Welcome to North Chicago Program
- 6.1.2 Activate “Centro Amigo”

Together, these strategies work synergistically to build a strong, connected community. They encourage residents to actively participate in community life, access important resources, and build relationships with their neighbors. This focus on human capital development enhances the overall quality of life in North Chicago, making it a more attractive place to live for families, professionals, and individuals alike. Moreover, this integrated approach promotes social cohesion and cultural exchange, helping to bridge gaps between different community groups. By fostering a welcoming and supportive environment, North Chicago can leverage its diverse population as a strength, driving economic growth and social progress.

Pairing 6 Enhancing Connectivity & Recreation

- 3.2.2 Actively Support Park Master Plans
- 3.6.1 Engage in Collaborative Programming
- 4.2.1 Increase Biking Networks and Accessibility

Improving park infrastructure, engaging in collaborative programming, and increasing biking networks are essential to enhancing North Chicago’s recreation and connectivity. There is a current deficiency in active green spaces within the community, showing a need to improve and expand green spaces within the community. By focusing on these strategies together, North Chicago can develop vibrant and accessible green spaces that meet the community’s recreational needs. Strengthening connectivity from local green spaces to the Robert McClory Bike Path, which links North Chicago to multiple communities both north and south, creates safer routes to recreation on a local and regional scale. This bike path serves as a crucial corridor for regional connectivity, allowing residents to enjoy seamless access to neighboring communities and recreational opportunities.

Pairing 7 Sustainable & Innovative Future

- 3.4.2 Consider Investing in Renewal Energy
- 3.5.2 Ensure Infrastructure Adaptation Overtime
- 4.5.2 Encourage Smart Transportation Zoning
- 5.3.2 Highlight Life Sciences and Innovation

Investing in renewable energy, ensuring adaptable infrastructure, and promoting smart transportation zoning and life sciences together pave the way for a sustainable and innovative North Chicago. This forward-thinking approach addresses environmental challenges, promotes resilience, and positions the city as a proactive community in sustainability and innovation. By integrating these strategies, North Chicago can achieve long-term sustainability and attract forward-looking industries and residents.

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
1. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS					
Aspiration 1.1: Support investment in North Chicago neighborhoods through homeownership and home improvement initiatives.					
1.1.1	Expand Homeownership Programs & Incentives	HIGH	Short-term	NCHA, IHDA	Increased Home Ownership
1.1.2	Support Home Improvement and Neighborhood Preservation	HIGH	Short-term	NFPP	Improved Home Maintenance
1.1.3	Enhance Partnerships with Lake County	MEDIUM	Short-term	Lake County	Regular & Sustained Collaboration
Aspiration 1.2: Support new housing that meets the needs of a changing population.					
1.2.1	Assess Housing Needs	HIGH	Immediate-term	Metro Mayors Caucus	Improved Strategic Guidance
1.2.2	Establish a Housing Coalition	MEDIUM	Short-term	NCHA; ReNew Communities	Improved Collaboration
1.2.3	Support Developer Needs	MEDIUM	Mid-term	Real Estate Community	Increased Developer Capacity
1.2.4	Support Infill Development	LOW	Mid-term	PO, Developers, NFPP	Diversified Housing Inventory

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

NCHA = North Chicago Housing Coalition

NFPP= Not-for-profit Partners

PO = Property Owners

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
Aspiration 2.1: Cultivate economic growth through industry retention and expansion efforts.					
2.1	Retain Anchor Industries	HIGH	Immediate-term	Abbot, AbbVie, LCP	Increased / Sustained Industrial Revenue
	Encourage Smart, Clean, and Green Industries	MEDIUM	Short-term	Lake County, State Agencies	Increase in Renewable Energy Usage
	Strengthen Business-to-Business Services	MEDIUM	Mid-term	-	Increase in B2B transactions
Aspiration 2.2: Revitalize Green Bay Road and Skokie Highway through strategic investments to stimulate economic activity and improve urban connectivity.					
2.2.1	Ensure Business Development	HIGH	Short-term	NCCC	Increased Business Retention / Attraction
2.2.2	Manage Corridor Aesthetics	HIGH	Short-term	LCDOT, IDOT	Number of Beautification Projects
Aspiration 2.3: Revive the downtown area and traditional commercial corridors to attract residents, businesses, and visitors.					
2.3.1	Grow Entrepreneurship and Retail Diversity	MEDIUM	Short-term	NCCC, PO	Number of Business / Retail Start Ups
2.3.2	Encourage Economic Development in Downtown	HIGH	Short-term	NCCC, PO	Increase in Property Values and Businesses
2.3.3	Improve the Pedestrian Experience on Sheridan Rd.	HIGH	Mid-term	IDOT	Reduced Accidents, Increased Foot Traffic
Aspiration 2.4: Redevelop the Sheridan Crossing site into a vibrant mixed-use destination through innovative design and inclusive planning processes.					
2.4.1	Redevelop the Sheridan Crossing Site	MEDIUM	Mid-term	Real Estate Community	Increased Community Satisfaction
Aspiration 2.5: Enhance regulatory, permitting, and approval practices through improved systems and customer service, providing clarity and predictability for developers and businesses.					
2.4.1	Improve the Permitting Process	MEDIUM	Mid-term	BO, PO	Increased Satisfaction Rating from Applicants

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

LCP = Lake County Partners

LCC = Local Chamber of Commerce

PO = Property Owners

BO = Business Owners

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
3. RECREATION & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE					
Aspiration 3.1: Increase and improve access and use of the lakefront, parks, green spaces, and open spaces.					
3.1.1	Increase Lakefront Access	HIGH	Mid-term	PO, NSGL	Increased footfall at the lakefront
3.1.2	Develop a Green Patch Initiative	HIGH	Mid-term	Community Org., ENGOs	Number of micro-parks and green spaces
3.1.3	Develop Green Corridors	MEDIUM	Long-term	IDNR, Lake County, LCFP, FPD	Improved Connectivity, Enhanced Biodiversity
3.1.4	Encourage Parks in Pairs	MEDIUM	Long-term	FPD	Community Feedback, Usage Rates
3.1.5	Consider a Green Factor Calculator for Developments	HIGH	Ongoing	Development Community, PO	Improved Sustainability in Future Developments
Aspiration 3.2: Support Foss Park District in improving North Chicago’s parks and open spaces in an effort to elevate overall quality of life.					
3.2.1	Increase Collaboration with Foss Park District	HIGH	Short-term	FPD, Community Org.	Number and Success of Joint Projects
3.2.2	Actively Support City-wide Park Master Plans	MEDIUM	Mid-term	FPD, IDNR	Improvements in Park Facilities
3.2.3	Collaborate on Infrastructure & Maintenance	LOW	Long-term	FPD	Infrastructure Updates, Improved Accessibility
Aspiration 3.3: Focus on ecologically sensitive restoration of natural areas.					
3.3.1	Stabilize and Enhance the Bluff Along Lake Michigan	HIGH	Long-term	FPD, IEPA, Local Universities	Erosion Control Effectiveness
3.3.2	Develop Wetland Conservation Strategies	MEDIUM	Long-term	IEPA, IDNR, LCFP	Improved Water Quality, Biodiversity
3.3.3	Consider Eco-friendly Recreation	MEDIUM	Short-term	FPD, LCFP	Increased Passive Recreation

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

PO = Property Owners FPD = Foss Park District ENGOs = Environmental Non-Gov. Org.
 IDNR = Illinois Department of Natural Resources LCFP = Lake County Forest Preserve

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
3. RECREATION & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE					
Aspiration 3.4: Develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change, leveraging Lake Michigan’s climate advantages.					
3.4.1	Encourage Homegrown Sustainability Initiatives	HIGH	Short-term	Local Residents, ENGOs	Increased Recycling and Composting
3.4.2	Consider Investing in Renewal Energy	LOW	Long-term	Local Universities	Reduction in Municipal Energy Costs
3.4.3	Address Flood Risks	LOW	Mid-term	IEPA, IDNR	Enhanced Flood Resilience
Aspiration 3.5: Prepare for potential climate-related challenges.					
3.5.1	Ensure Climate Preparedness	MEDIUM	Mid-term	Environmental Consultants	Developing a Climate Adaptation Plan
3.5.2	Ensure Infrastructure Adaptation Overtime	LOW	Long-term	-	Enhanced Flood Defense Systems
3.5.3	Prepare the Community	MEDIUM	Mid-term	Local School, Local Universities	Increased Community Awareness Levels
Aspiration 3.6: Improve access and better utilize the Greenbelt Nature Preserve and Center as a key educational and recreational resource, expanding its role in community engagement and environmental education.					
3.6.1	Engage in Collaborative Programming	MEDIUM	Short-term	LCFP	Increase in Visits and Programming
3.6.2	Activate Community Outreach Efforts	MEDIUM	Short-term	LCFP	Increased Community Participation

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

PO = Property Owners FPD = Foss Park District IDNR = Illinois Department of Natural Resources
LCFP = Lake County Forest Preserve

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
4. MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION					
Aspiration 4.1: Implement and maintain a complete, safe, and accessible pedestrian network that connects all residential areas to Sheridan Road and the business district, both Metra stations, Foss Park, Pace bus service, and other community destinations.					
4.1.1	Increase Pedestrian Safety	MEDIUM	Mid-term	IDOT, LCDOT	ADA Transition Plan, Complete Streets Policy, Sidewalk Construction Program
4.1.2	Enhance City-wide Network & Accessibility	HIGH	Mid-term	Metra, Pace, IDOT, LCDOT, LCFP	Miles of New Sidewalks, Bus Stops in ADA Compliance
4.1.3	Enact Plans & Policies	HIGH	Short-term	IDOT, LCDOT	-
4.1.4	Improve Coordination & Collaboration	MEDIUM	Immediate-term	Metra, Pace, IDOT, LCDOT, LCFP, Safe Routes to School	Number and Success of Joint Projects
Aspiration 4.2: Implement a safe and accessible bicycle network that focuses on new east-west facilities and better connects residents to the Robert McClory Bike Path.					
4.2.1	Increase Biking Networks & Accessibility	MEDIUM	Mid-term	CMAP, IDOT, LCDOT, LCFP, Safe Routes to School	Miles of New Bike Facilities, Miles Built in the Northern Lakeshore Trail Connectivity Plan
4.2.2	Improve Visibility & Accessibility to the Robert McClory Bike Path	MEDIUM	Short-term	Lake Bluff, Waukegan, LCDOT, IDOT	New Wayfinding Signage Installed, Increase in Path Users
4.1.3	Improve Connections to Foss Park & Beach	MEDIUM	Mid-term	FPD	Miles of New Bike Facilities on Foss Park Avenue, Number of Bike Racks on Roads
4.1.4	Encourage Bicycle Parking	LOW	Mid-term	Developers, Real Estate Community, FPD	Number of Bike Racks in Downtown, New Developments with Bike Racks

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

IDOT = Illinois Department of Transportation
 LCFP = Lake County Forest Preserve

LCDOT = Lake County Department of Transportation
 FPD = Foss Park District

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
4. MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION					
Aspiration 4.3: Reduce dangerous driving on North Chicago’s streets. This can be achieved by implementing traffic calming and other safety measures throughout the roadway network.					
4.3.1	Implement Traffic Calming Measures	HIGH	Short-term	IDOT, LCDOT	Reduction in Collisions on Local Roads, Percentage Investment in Safety Infrastructure
4.3.2	Promote Traffic Safety through Education & Outreach	MEDIUM	Immediate-term	Local Schools, DMV, IDOT, LCDOT	Increased Awareness and Education
Aspiration 4.4: Coordinate with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT), and neighboring communities to ensure existing and future pedestrian and bicycle networks seamlessly connect residents to jobs and destinations throughout the region.					
4.4.1	Ensure Regional Collaboration	MEDIUM	Short-term	IDOT, LCDOT, Waukegan, Lake Bluff, Green Oaks, Park City, LCFP, Metra, Pace	Percentage Mobility Investments Tailored at Regional Connectivity
Aspiration 4.5: Enhance regulatory, permitting, and approval practices through improved systems and customer service, providing clarity and predictability for developers and businesses.					
4.5.1	Encourage Streetscape Improvements Along Commercial Corridors	HIGH	Immediate-term	IDOT, LCDOT	Increase in Property Value, Increase in Retail Sales, Amounts Invested in Streetscape Improvements
4.5.2	Encourage Smart Transportation Zoning	LOW	Long-term	Developers	Changes to Zoning Code that Encourages Walking and Biking
4.5.3	Transportation Grants & Funding	HIGH	Short-term	-	Annual Grants Awarded

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

IDOT = Illinois Department of Transportation
LCFP = Lake County Forest Preserve

LCDOT = Lake County Department of Transportation
FPD = Foss Park District

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
5. LIFE & CULTURE					
Aspiration 5.1: Cultivate a positive image of North Chicago.					
5.1.1	Enhance Brand Identity	HIGH	Ongoing	Local School, Local Universities, Local Artists, Marketing Agencies, BO	Increased Engagement, Community Feedback, Enhanced Visibility and Recognition
5.1.2	Launch Welcome to North Chicago Program	MEDIUM	Short-term	Local School, Local Universities, Real Estate Community	Welcome Packets Distributed, Participation
Aspiration 5.2: Cultivate North Chicago’s identity as a center of diverse cultural life on Chicago’s North Shore, to appeal to both residents and visitors.					
5.2.1	Expand Vibrant Cultural Festivals and Events	MEDIUM	Short-term	Cultural Org., Local School, Local Universities, Community Org., FPD	Attendance Number at Events, Community Feedback on Event Variety
5.2.2	Support Performing Arts & Live Entertainment	MEDIUM	Short-term	Local School, Local Universities, Regional Performing Arts Org., FPD	Performances Hosted, Audience Numbers, Participation Diversity
5.2.3	Celebrate Culinary & Food Traditions	HIGH	Immediate-term	Local Restaurants, BO, PO	Participation Levels, Community Feedback
Aspiration 5.3: Celebrate local industry to build the city’s image and attract visitors.					
5.3.1	Celebrate Local Industry	HIGH	Immediate-term	BO, Local Industries	New Events & Participation
5.3.2	Highlight Life Sciences and Innovation	MEDIUM	Short-term	Local School, Local Universities, Healthcare Inst.	Number of Community Health Initiatives Launched
5.3.3	Emphasize Military Presence & Participation	HIGH	Short-term	Naval Station Great Lakes, Veterans’ Org.	Participation in Military Appreciation Events, Veterans’ Stories Events

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

BO = Business Owners

PO = Property Owners

PRINCIPLE		PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS	METRICS
6. MUNICIPAL SERVICES & UTILITIES					
Aspiration 6.1: Strengthen Community Services to Align with Residents’ Aspirations and Lifestyles.					
6.1.1	Focus on City-wide Family-focused Services	MEDIUM	Ongoing	Cultural Org., Local School, Local Universities, Community Org.	Measurable Improvements in Educational and Healthcare Outcomes
6.1.2	Activate “Centro Amigo”	MEDIUM	Short-term	Immigrant Advocacy Groups	High Volunteer Engagement, Increased Awareness
Aspiration 6.2: Continue to improve community safety in targeted areas and incorporate a community security lens into all plan initiatives.					
6.2.1	Fund a Police Substation on 10th Street	HIGH	Immediate-term	Waukegan, NCPD,	Operation of the Police Station, Decrease in Local Crime
6.2.2	Encourage a “See Something Say Something” Approach	HIGH	Immediate-term	Residents, NCPD. Community Watch Groups	Increased Reports of Suspicious Activity, Safety Trainings
6.2.3	Implement Security in Urban Environments	LOW	Ongoing	Urban Planners, CMAP	Positive Public Perception of Safety in Public Areas (Parks)
Aspiration 6.3: Strengthen and Modernize North Chicago’s Infrastructure to Enhance Quality of Life and Environmental Resilience.					
6.3.1	Improve the Water Distribution System	LOW	Ongoing	IAHH	Completion of New Water Tower, Improved Pressure, Reduction in Efficiencies
6.3.2	Expand the Sanitary Sewer System	LOW	Ongoing	IEPA, Local Universities, Healthcare Inst.	Decrease in Emergency Calls Related to Sewer Blockages, Regular Positive Reports
6.3.3	Increase Stormwater System Capacity	LOW	Ongoing	IEPA	Reduction in Flood Incidents, Stormwater Detentions Created
6.3.4	Ensure Sustained Infrastructure	LOW	Ongoing	Infrastructure Programs, Private Investments	Systematic Improvements, Increased Funding

TIME FRAME

Immediate-term 0-1 Yr.

Short-term 1-3 Yrs.

Mid-term 3-5 Yrs.

Long-term 5-10 Yrs.

PARTNERS

NCPD = North Chicago Police Department

CMAP = Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

PLAN COMPRENSIVO

NORTH CHICAGO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN