Logan Square
Corridor Development Initiative
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More information and online appendix: metroplanning.org/logansquare

Letter from Ald. Rey Colón (35th Ward)

Dear Neighbor,

The 35th Ward has earned its place in the world. Named among the 10 hottest neighborhoods in the country, Logan Square has all the hallmarks of a strong urban community: an economically and ethnically diverse population; a vibrant creative scene; coffee shops, restaurants and bars; and excellent public transportation that serves locals and brings residents from across the city to enjoy our local businesses, cultural opportunities, institutions and parks.

This report is a culmination of work by residents in Logan Square and the surrounding communities. With all of these assets, it’s no wonder that Logan Square is attracting a number of new development opportunities, including along the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue Line corridor spanning Milwaukee Avenue. Longtime residents and recent arrivals alike have come to the table to discuss and debate ways of improving the city and the community—a tribute to the participatory community development practices we have established over time.

In 2009, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) facilitated a series of local participatory planning meetings called the Corridor Development Initiative (CDI), which proactively engages residents in creating livable, community-led options for redeveloping underused sites. It was such a well-received process that I asked MPC to return once again and host another CDI series focused on the Emmett Street Parking lot and adjacent Logan Square CTA Blue Line station. The large number of people who actively participated in this planning process is reflective of previous community-led efforts to plan neighborhood amenities such as the designation of the Historic Boulevards, the Milwaukee, Diversey, Kimball Landmark District, Woodard Plaza, Bloomingdale Trail, Harper Irish Arts Center, Logan Square Skate Park, Logan Square Dog Park, Palmer Square and the Logan Square Plaza & Orchard.

In 2013, the Chicago City Council renegotiated its 75-year parking meter deal with Chicago Parking Meters, LLC, which returned the management of the neighborhood parking lots back to the City. At my request, the Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development, Transportation, and Revenue and the CTA examined the use of the Emmett Street Parking lot located at 2620 N. Emmett St. and the adjacent Logan Square CTA Blue Line Plaza. It was determined that the land is underutilized, and the overwhelming consensus was that, as one parcel, there is great potential for a high-impact development near this transit station.

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By the end of the process, 16 different hypothetical development scenarios were created. A panel of development and finance experts examined four of the most representative proposals and gave recommendations to ensure their viability.

This publication documents the community’s efforts, new partnerships and future look ahead for the public record and to provide to potential developers of these sites. When a Request for Proposals (RFP) occurs, the report and the community’s input will inform the parameters, and it is my goal to come back to the community with dynamic competing proposals.

I’m grateful for all those who participated in this effort. It is an honor to serve a community where the neighborhood parking lots back to the City. At my request, the Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development, Transportation, and Revenue and the CTA examined the use of the Emmett Street Parking lot located at 2620 N. Emmett St. and the adjacent Logan Square CTA Blue Line Plaza. It was determined that the land is underutilized, and the overwhelming consensus was that, as one parcel, there is great potential for a high-impact development near this transit station.

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I’m grateful for all those who participated in this effort. It is an honor to serve a community where

Respectfully,

Ald. Rey Colón
City of Chicago, 35th Ward

Letter from Ald. Rey Colón (35th Ward)

More information and online appendix: metroplanning.org/logansquare

Letter from Ald. Rey Colón (35th Ward)
Executive summary and recommendations

The Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has long emphasized the importance of supporting quality development near transit. Transit-oriented development (TOD) supports thriving neighborhoods by improving access to jobs and amenities across the city and suburbs, decreasing cost of living and reducing traffic congestion and air pollution. Working with government, community and business leaders across metropolitan Chicago, MPC is pushing for equitable TOD on three fronts:

1. Revising local land use policies, such as the City of Chicago’s 2013 TOD ordinance, to encourage development clustered near transit.
2. Researching new financing tools to encourage TOD that is accessible to people across the income spectrum; and
3. Engaging communities in shaping their local vision for TOD through our Corridor Development Initiative (CDI).

When Ald. Rey Colon (35th) asked MPC to lead a community planning process for the site, a turnaround and parking lot above the Logan Square Blue Line station, we jumped at the opportunity. The site is both directly adjacent to transit and in a community undergoing rapid change. As the Milwaukee Avenue corridor has exploded with new restaurants, shops and bars, median residential rents have risen by more than 15 percent since 2000 and the community experienced a 30 percent decrease in its Latino population. This report details the results of this rich engagement process and points the way toward securing equitable, well-planned, transit-oriented development in greater Logan Square and regions across the country.

How this report will be used

Ald. Colon, CDOT and the Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development (DPD) have committed to using the results of the CDI to help determine the most appropriate development proposals for the site and parking lot. For these sites, DPD is charged with the disposition of development rights and incentives, rather than east as it currently does. Construction could begin in 2018, depending on the study’s outcome and the identification of funding.

MPC will distribute this report widely and continue development processes moving forward, with DPD and Ald. Colón, CDOT, CTA, DPD and the local advisory board ready to inform the development of Logan Square’s CDI experience and outcomes should be a model for how productive planning can produce development near transit and increase the quality of local businesses and services, connects people to jobs and amenities, increases transit ridership, and reduces the cost of living. MPC will use lessons learned from this experience to inform our broader advocacy for policies that support well-planned, equitable transit-oriented development in greater Logan Square and regions across the country.

Learn more about MPC’s transit-oriented development initiative at metropiaisonline.org/tod.

General recommendations

1. The station plaza and parking lot should be developed, but should not rise higher than six stories.

The majority (more than 59 percent) of people surveyed at the workshop and online agreed it is preferable to build on the station plaza and parking lot. For these sites, DPD is charged with the disposition of development rights and incentives, rather than east as it currently does. Construction could begin in 2018, depending on the study’s outcome and the identification of funding. For the community’s vision for these sites to be fulfilled, zoning on the parking lot must be changed to B3-2 or B3-5; zoning on the Emmett Street parking lot. These views were reflected in the results of the second workshop, at which 59 percent of development proposals created by the community preferred development at that point. The CDI recommendations will be integrated into both planning and development processes moving forward, with DPD and Ald. Colon’s office, CDOT, CTA, DPD and the local advisory board ready to inform the community’s recommendations.

When asked for their top priority for the use of land, the majority (more than 90 percent) favored building on the Emmett Street parking lot. These views were reflected in the results of the second workshop, at which 59 percent of development proposals created by the community preferred development at that point. The CDI recommendations will be integrated into both planning and development processes moving forward, with DPD and Ald. Colon’s office, CDOT, CTA, DPD and the local advisory board ready to inform the community’s recommendations.

In terms of building height, participants felt that development should reflect the surroundings. The average proposal from the second workshop was 4.3 stories tall, and the largest share of people surveyed at the workshop and online agreed it is preferable to build on the station plaza, and the vast majority (more than 90 percent) favored building upper transit station entrances, refurbish two elevators and improve safety and options for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. In mid-2015, the study will identify challenges along the corridor and potential project-level alternatives. (Also, at the urging of the independent Biennial Investment Improvement Project group, CDOT is currently considering the possibility of realigning Kedzie Avenue so that it runs west of the Blue Line station entrance, rather than east as it currently does.) Construction could begin in 2018, depending on the study’s outcomes and the identification of funding.

To help align all of these efforts and to engage the community in creating viable, market-based development proposals for the Logan Square sites, MPC brought the Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) to Logan Square. Along with volunteer experts in development and urban design, the project provided information to help residents understand what the market can support and what government incentives are available. Through three public CDI workshops, an online survey and 55 people, many of whom are not community members, gained a better understanding of the community’s needs and what might be developed.

This report outlines a vision for these sites that is feasible and that balances the many ideas expressed by participants.

Reserved zoning updates

For the community’s vision for these sites to be fulfilled, zoning on the parking lot must be changed to B3-2 or B3-5 to allow the construction of housing at the densities envisioned by community members. The zoning on the station plaza must be changed to B3-3 or B3-5 to allow the approving mix of uses desired by the community for the site.

New recommendations

When asked for their top priority for the use of land, the majority of people surveyed at the workshop and online agreed it is preferable to build on the station plaza, and the vast majority (more than 90 percent) favored building in greater Chicagoland and regions across the country.

Learn more about MPC’s transit-oriented development initiative at metropiaisonline.org/tod.

Logan Square’s CDI experience and outcomes should serve as a model for how productive planning can produce development near transit and increase the quality of local businesses and services, connects people to jobs and amenities, increases transit ridership, and reduces the cost of living. MPC will use lessons learned from this experience to inform our broader advocacy for policies that support well-planned, equitable transit-oriented development in greater Logan Square and regions across the country. The majority (more than 59 percent) of people surveyed at the workshop and online agreed it is preferable to build on the station plaza and parking lot. For these sites, DPD is charged with the disposition of development rights and incentives, rather than east as it currently does. Construction could begin in 2018, depending on the study’s outcome and the identification of funding.
The Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) is a participatory planning process that engages communities in proactively planning for real-world development scenarios. Through three public meetings, participants gain a deeper understanding of issues such as density, transit-oriented development, affordable housing and the true cost of development, and create a set of priorities to guide community leaders as they plan for future development in their neighborhoods. Developers can use this CDI report to understand local opportunities and values. Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) partners with communities across Chicago to use CDI to encourage quality, equitable development near transit.

Throughout an exercise using wooden blocks and aerial maps of the proposed sites, participants have the opportunity to “build” what they would like to see and test whether their projects are financially feasible. Participants then work together to consider development options and explore how their ideas would pan out on the ground. The CDI is not a master planning process but can be integrated with such processes.

Meeting 1
Existing conditions and goals
The first meeting provides an overview of current land use policies and demographic and commercial changes in the community. Participants discuss development opportunities and challenges and set concrete goals.

Meeting 2
Block exercise
Next, community members explore design and financing options for their ideas through a hands-on block exercise. Participants create hypothetical developments using various wooden blocks that represent different building uses. As community members build their proposals, they are sketched by design advisor, while a real estate advisor calculates development costs, revenues and any financing gaps.

Meeting 3
Development recommendations
The final meeting features a panel of real estate experts and developers who respond to the outcomes of the block exercise in light of current market trends. These recommendations are then compiled into a report that community leaders can present to potential developers to provide them with a community-led, feasibility-tested vision.
Community demographics
The Logan Square CTA Blue line station is located in Chicago’s Logan Square community area, just north of the site is Chicago’s Avondale community area, with a combined population of 110,000. These Northwest Side communities remain some of the city’s most vibrant neighborhoods thanks to a diverse group of residents, including a majority-Latino population, an active local culture with a burgeoning restaurant and arts scene, excellent transit and roadway access to Chicago’s Loop and O’Hare International Airport, and unique public spaces and historic structures. Incomes in both neighborhoods have been rising quickly over the past decade, and developers have responded with several planned market-rate apartment developments.

Logan Square and Avondale by the numbers

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Logan Square</th>
<th>Avondale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>73,487</td>
<td>39,262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>-17.2%</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median monthly owner costs</td>
<td>$2,452</td>
<td>$2,248</td>
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<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>-28.7%</td>
<td>-29.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median monthly gross rent</td>
<td>$949</td>
<td>$885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share earning less than $25,000</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>-28.7%</td>
<td>-29.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share of rental households that are housing cost burdened1</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change since 2000</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average daily boardings at Logan Square CTA station (2013)</td>
<td>6,984</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| All data 2010 unless otherwise noted. Source: Chicago Rehab Network, Affordable Housing Factbook.

1 Adjusted for inflation.

2 Those that pay more than 30 percent of monthly income toward housing costs.

Logan Square and the Milwaukee Avenue corridor

Logan Square is one of the most active local culture with a burgeoning restaurant and arts scene; excellent transit and roadway access to Chicago’s Loop and O’Hare International Airport; and unique public spaces and historic structures. The goal of the Logan Square CDI was to determine how the community could take best advantage of these sites to respond to current and future needs while planning for transit-oriented development.

The station plaza and parking lot sites

Logan Square’s original station opened in 1895, and the current subway station opened in 1970. The stop serves CTA Blue Line trains, with about 14,000 daily users. Ridership at the station has grown by about 60 percent over the past 10 years. The station will be modernized over the next four years thanks to CTA’s investment in the O’Hare branch of the Blue Line, which will speed travel, improve reliability and increase rider comfort and convenience.

The Blue Line station plaza and bus turnaround, owned by the City of Chicago and used by the CTA, is frequented by thousands of pedestrians each day who live, work, shop and simply enjoy the surrounding neighborhoods. The plaza, however, is used more as a pass-through than anything else, has no seating and is not well maintained. The adjacent parking lot, which fronts on Emmett Street, is also owned by the City of Chicago. It has a total of 124 parking spaces available for public use, but according to local officials, only about one-third of spaces are used most of the time.

The station plaza and parking lot are located at a transit junction in the heart of the community and adjacent to a thriving commercial district. The goal of the Logan Square CDI was to determine how the community could take best advantage of these sites to respond to current and future needs while planning for transit-oriented development.

Access to the Blue Line station below the plaza must be preserved, likely through the use of the existing elevator and escalator. Turnaround sites for buses and protected waiting areas must be provided for bus riders through the station plaza.

In the Fullerton/Milwaukee TIF district

- Logan Square CTA station plaza
  - Approximately 29,000 sq. ft. (depending on outcome of CDOT's Milwaukee Avenue study)
  - 450 feet of frontage on Milwaukee and Kedzie avenues

- Emmett Street parking lot
  - Approximately 38,000 sq. ft.
  - 420 feet of frontage on Emmett Street
  - Zoned B1-1

Owned by the City of Chicago
Community participation

Outreach strategy

MPC worked closely with Ald. Colón to develop a community outreach strategy. Initial meetings took place with key city governmental partners, including the DPD, CDOT and CTA. To ensure the outreach strategy resulted in significant attendance and community participation, MPC assembled an advisory committee of local stakeholders. This group promoted the meetings, advised on local outreach opportunities and best practices, including to engage the Latino community, and provided information on Logan Square’s sociopolitical landscape. MPC also consulted these advisors for feedback on the draft version of this report. The committee consisted of representatives from many local organizations—an indicator of a highly engaged community.

- Bicentennial Improvements Project
- Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation
- Hispanic Housing Development Corporation
- JGMA Architects
- Land & Sea Dept.
- Logan Square Chamber of Commerce
- Logan Square Chamber of Arts
- Logan Square Preservation
- Norwegian Church
- South Logan Arts Coalition
- Logan Square Neighborhood Association
- Logan Square Boys and Girls Club
- Logan Square Farmer’s Market
- Logan Square Chamber of Arts
- Logan Square Preservation
- Logan Square Neighborhood Association
- Logan Square Boys and Girls Club
- Logan Square Farmer’s Market
- Logan Square Chamber of Arts
- Logan Square Preservation
- Norwegian Church
- South Logan Arts Coalition
- Topic Construction

Outreach methods

With the help of this advisory committee, MPC conducted robust outreach, including the methods detailed below. The primary objective was to invite area residents and stakeholders to participate in the three September 2014 public meetings.

Bilingual outreach

One of MPC’s goals was to engage Logan Square’s large Spanish-speaking population. MPC translated the flyer, poster, agendas and presentations into Spanish for each of the three meetings. MPC also provided a Spanish interpreter who could be heard through headsets at all three meetings.

Emails

MPC sent promotional emails to key organizations and individuals, and shared these emails with the advisory committee for wider distribution through their networks.

Online announcements

MPC used social media, including Twitter, Facebook and Everyblock, to promote the meetings.

News outlets

MPC invited journalists from DNAinfo, Streetsblog Chicago, Logan Square, Curbed, Our Urban Times and La Raza to attend and promote the meetings. These outlets followed up with several articles throughout the CDI process.

Mobile text polling

MPC used Textizen mobile polling, a tool that provides an interactive platform for users to share their thoughts. To gather this input, MPC included a prompt for text polling on the flyers and postcards widely distributed throughout the community.

Survey participation

To gather input on the process from the Logan Square community, MPC designed an online survey that was shared with all meeting attendees, project stakeholders and the advisory committee, and was distributed to others who had not had the opportunity to attend the meetings. Between Oct. 1 and 25, 333 individuals completed the survey. Feedback from the survey is also incorporated into the recommendations. Full survey results can be found in the online appendix at metroplanning.org/logansquare.
Logan Square residents expressed pride in Logan Square’s social and economic diversity, noting that this balance contributes to the neighborhood’s unique character and strong sense of community. Some noted that a combination of upzoning and gentrification is threatening this balance. In the online survey, 53 percent of participants specifically pointed to the area’s socioeconomic, racial and cultural diversity as a high point, by far the most-cited strength of the neighborhood, and many of those surveyed pointed to the strong “sense of community” and high levels of community engagement in Logan Square.

Participants and demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measured by</th>
<th>Meeting 1</th>
<th>Meeting 2</th>
<th>Online Community</th>
<th>Responded to online survey residences (333)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total individual (unique) attendees</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>371</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attended all three meetings</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>Attended two meetings</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
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<td>Own</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>333 Meeting 2</td>
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<tr>
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Logan Square Blue Line station plaza and the adjacent parking lot. However, the community expressed a number of concerns about development. The primary aim of the CDI was to engage community members in creating development plans for the Logan Square Blue Line station plaza and the adjacent parking lot. While many participants expressed a need for more affordable housing, there is concern that those options are becoming more limited as land values rise and the neighborhood continues to transition. At the first meeting, 43 percent of participants—by far the largest share—identified affordable housing as their top priority for the parking lot, the second most popular option for the land. In the online survey, 21 percent of the participants identified open space as their top goal for the community, making this the second-highest priority after affordable housing. There was an open space as an opportunity for the CDI to improve Logan Square’s aesthetics and as a place to offer community activities. Some specific suggestions included playgrounds, outdoor concert venues, public art, and farmers markets—safe and entertaining places for residents to gather outdoors. Should development occur on the station plaza, 52 percent of workshop participants wanted to see recreation or park space there, and 77 percent of online respondents noted that they used the plaza to provide at least some open space. Should development occur on the parking lot, 42 percent of participants wanted to see recreation or park space there.
Meeting 2: Scenario development

In the second workshop, meeting attendees gathered around tables in facilitated groups to develop concepts for the Blue Line station plaza, bus turnaround and adjacent parking lot on Emmett Street. Using large maps and scaled wooden blocks that represented different building uses (such as retail, office, community or residential spaces), each group discussed how they would like to see the sites developed. Volunteer facilitators and architects at each table helped attendees with technical assistance and encouraged them to be willing to compromise on their concepts to create visions that could actually be implemented.

Analysis and development panel

The meeting’s facilitators—MPC, staff and volunteers—analyzed each proposed development plan and offered insight into feasibility, both in terms of site constraints and financing. Facilitators mocked up the ideas digitally and inputted them into a real estate pro-forma developed by MPC with assistance from CBRE U.S. Equities Realty, LLC. The pro forma reflected estimated construction costs, occupancy rates, maintenance costs, affordable housing and other financial details specific to the current Logan Square market.

For each project, MPC produced an information sheet comparing the proposal’s characteristics with the costs and subsidies needed to fill the funding gap. Of the 28 scenarios initially developed at the second workshop, two were feasible from a financial and development perspective, and the rest required compromises.

MPC identified four proposals to analyze in-depth, because they were representative of most of the ideas developed by all of the groups (see the appendix for the remaining scenarios).

After further analysis, MPC staff presented the four representative proposals to the community at the third meeting. Attendees were asked to comment on the proposals, including what adjustments they would be willing to make for the projects to be more financially feasible. Together with the responses from earlier workshops and the online survey, MPC used this feedback to develop the recommendations for site development.

Characteristics of all 28 proposals are presented on the following pages.

vacancy as an opportunity to provide retail and restaurant options that are affordable for local ownership, employment and patronage. Participants recognized business attraction as a source of creating jobs, especially for the neighborhood’s youth. Should development occur on the station plaza, 32 percent of workshop participants wanted to see new retail or food options and 23 percent of respondents claimed the plaza was the top priority for the space. Should development occur on the adjacent parking lot, 29 percent of participants wanted to see new retail or food options, while only 13 percent of online respondents recommended retail or food as the top priority for the parking lot.

Improved design

Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the current design of the Logan Square Blue Line station plaza and said improvements need to be made to the aesthetic appeal of the plaza, but also its functionality. Some participants included a lack of lighting, seating and greenery, causing the public space to be uninviting. Participants voiced the sense that the station plaza has too much concrete and that the parking lot is underused, both adding to the sense of vacancy. Regardless of whether participants were for or against new development, many agreed that finding ways to better activate the station plaza and parking lot would benefit the community as a whole. The participants saw this location as a focal point of Logan Square. Online respondents pointed to the aesthetic appeal of the station plaza, but also its lack of lighting, seating and greenery, causing the public space to be uninviting.

While new retail and food options were not the top priority for most participants, many noted that more aggressive business attraction could take place within the Logan Square Blue Line station plaza. While Milwaukee Avenue does host a variety of retail and restaurant choices, participants wanted to see the corridor as a more vibrant place for shopping and entertainment. Vacant lots and storefronts along the corridor were a concern to many participants, who felt that the Logan Square Blue Line station plaza could have better design elements that welcome walking and biking. Online survey-takers repeated the phrase “standard, boxy” construction.

Logan Square. Online respondents pointed to the importance of making sure new buildings complement the neighborhood’s unique aesthetic and avoid “standard, boxy” construction.

Participants agreed that Logan Square has many transportation assets, including the Blue Line station and the boulevards, bus routes and a strong culture of walking and biking. Online survey-takers repeatedly mentioned the easy commute downtown as a community strength. However, participants expressed a need to improve the efficiency and safety of these options. While the boulevards and corridors provide options. While the boulevards and corridors provide transportation assets, including the Blue Line station, the adjacent parking lot, 29 percent of participants wanted to see new retail or food options, while only 13 percent of online respondents recommended retail or food as the top priority for the parking lot.

Characteristics of all 28 proposals are presented on the following pages.
### Proposal characteristics

#### Development location
- **93% of proposals** included buildings on the Emmett St. parking lot.
- **79% of proposals** included buildings on the Logan Sq. station plaza.
- Darker shades of blue indicate where community members were most likely to propose development in the block exercise. This diagram demonstrates that participants were most likely to propose new construction in the Emmett Street parking lot and on Milwaukee Avenue, roughly at the center of the existing station plaza site.

#### Building height
- **38 percent of proposals** had heights of more than 4 stories, up to 9.
- **45 percent of proposals** had heights of fewer than 4 stories.
- **4.3 stories** average maximum height of projects proposed.

#### Green space and parking
- **22,000 sq. ft. (33 percent)** The average area devoted to open space.
- **40 spaces** The average number of parking spaces included. Proposals provided between 0 and 120 spaces.

#### Housing units
- **34 proposals** supported the inclusion of affordable housing.
- **62% of proposals** included a community space.
- **41% of proposals** included an indoor farmers market.
- **63 percent of proposals** included some affordable units.
- **37 percent of proposals** included no affordable units.

#### Affordable housing
- **33 percent of proposals** included affordable units.
- **10 percent of proposals** included 100 affordable units.
- **101 to 121** affordable units.

#### Other elements
- **79% of proposals** included retail.
- **26 percent** had 10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft. retail.
- **35 percent** had 5,000 to 10,000 sq. ft. retail.

#### Retail and office space
- **22 percent** had < 5,000 sq. ft. office space.
- **17 percent** had > 20,000 sq. ft. office space.

#### Housing units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area (sq. ft.)</th>
<th>Proposals</th>
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<tr>
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<td>76 to 100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 121</td>
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</table>

The average proposal included 54 housing units.
Scenario 1

This development would provide new retail shops facing Milwaukee Avenue and affordable rental housing on the plaza and parking lot, and host an indoors farmers market. The residential component would provide more than 100 affordable apartments to households making less than 60 percent of area median income (four-person household earning less than $44,000). The proposal includes 70 parking spots, although only 40 spots are required by zoning. The project would cover 67 percent of its operating and construction costs and has a $9.2 million financing gap.

Project financials

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<tr>
<th>Construction and acquisition costs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Development and operations costs covered by project revenues</td>
<td>67 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financing gap</td>
<td>$9.2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-income housing tax credit (4 percent) equity</td>
<td>$11.3 million</td>
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</table>

Modifications to increase financial feasibility

One alternative development scenario, which would require pursuing highly competitive affordable housing financing through the City of Chicago or Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), would reduce the financing gap to $1.5 million (development finance aims to secure 120 percent of total development costs to buffer against unexpected costs). Another alternative that would reduce the percentage of affordable apartments from 100 percent to 75 percent of the development would reduce the financing gap to $7.5 million. This second option was supported by 51 percent of meeting attendees (excluding those who were unsure) and 47 percent of online respondents. A significant portion of participants—49 percent at the meeting and 53 percent online—were not willing to reduce the number of affordable apartments, which aligns with the participants’ stated priority for the site: affordable housing development.

Scenario 2

This development would provide low-rise affordable rental housing for families, a significant amount of green space and nonprofit office spaces for arts organizations. The green space would be located on the plaza and a four-story residential building would be located on Emmett Street. This project would cover about 40 percent of its operating costs and debt service through rent revenues, and has a $6.9 million gap in financing. This gap could be minimized by reducing the scope of components that produce little or no income.

Project financials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction and acquisition costs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Development and operations costs covered by project revenues</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
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<td>Financing gap</td>
<td>$6.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income housing tax credit (4 percent) equity</td>
<td>$6.4 million</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Modifications to increase financial feasibility

An alternative development scenario that would reduce the amount of green space from 42,400 sq. ft. to 22,000 sq. ft. and add 33 market-rate residential units would make the project feasible with no subsidies. The total number of apartments would increase from 37 to 70 apartments, which would add two stories to building heights. While this proposal reduces the green space by nearly half, it still provides the 20,000 sq. ft. of green space preferred by a majority of the block exercise participants. Community support for these changes was split: 54 percent of meeting participants (excluding those who were unsure) were willing to reduce the green space on the site, while 46 percent were not interested in reducing the green space. Fifty-three percent of those surveyed online were willing to reduce the green space. A large majority of meeting attendees (62 percent) were not willing to add market-rate housing to the site and wanted it to remain 100 percent affordable. On the other hand, 50 percent of those surveyed online said they would be willing to add market-rate housing.
This development would contain 110 mixed-income apartments in a nine-story tower. While 50 percent of the building would be affordable, the other half would provide market-rate and even luxury apartments. Over 15,000 sq. ft. of the site would be dedicated to green space, with retail and nonprofit uses surrounding the Blue Line station entrance. The project faces a $9 million financing gap, which could be reduced if some of those units were converted to market-rate or if competitive housing subsidies were pursued. The nine-story building height was unfavorable to 71 percent of meeting attendees and 60 percent of online survey participants.

Project financials

Construction and acquisition costs $36.3 million
Development and operations costs covered by project revenues 83 percent
Financing gap $9 million
Low-income housing tax credit (4 percent) equity $16.3 million

Scenario 3

Modifications to increase financial feasibility

An alternative development proposal would require pursuing highly competitive affordable housing financing through the City of Chicago or Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). While this would completely eliminate the financing gap, the City and IHDA only support a limited number of developments each year. For example, in 2014 IHDA funded just 27 multifamily and senior housing developments statewide despite the growing need for affordable rental housing. An alternative possibility is to reduce the number of affordable housing units from 55 to 28 apartments while still keeping 110 total apartments. The added market rate apartments would provide greater cash flow to the development and eliminate the financing gap. A large majority of meeting attendees (71 percent) were unwilling to reduce the affordable apartments from 55 to 28, as were 71 percent of those surveyed online. A third proposal is to change the structured parking to surface parking and replace 80 percent of the nonprofit uses with retail. This development proposal would reduce the gap from $9 million to $6.5 million.

Scenario 4

This development would include 47 market-rate apartments in multiple buildings. A small amount of retail and a large amount of green space would be developed on the plaza and parking lot. The project has a $5.6 million financing gap, with only 108 percent of its operating and development costs covered through rents. Replacing a portion of the open space with retail improves the project’s feasibility.

Project financials

Construction and acquisition costs $18.2 million
Development and operations costs covered by project revenues 108 percent
Financing gap $5.6 million

Modifications to increase financial feasibility

An alternative development proposal that would eliminate the financing gap requires replacing 13,200 sq. ft. of green space with retail or residential. While this alternative reduces the amount of green space, the site would still have 39,600 sq. ft. of green space—double the average amount proposed by block exercise participants. Meeting attendees were split evenly on whether they would be willing to reduce the green space by 25 percent (47 percent online were willing to reduce the space) but a larger percentage than normal, 13 percent at the meeting and 11 percent online, were unsure of their opinion on this matter.
Acknowledgments

The Logan Square CDI would have been impossible without considerable support from the volunteers who gave their time, expertise and skills, including the community advisory committee listed on page 8. MPC also thanks its funders who generously support this work.

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Jason Pugh
Amelia Tabeling
Gareth Tucker

Expert developer panel

Radio Developer panel

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