Dear Community Residents and Stakeholders,

It is with great pride, we the members of the Steering Pilsen Planning Committee, present our new Pilsen Quality of Life Plan for the next five years. Although this plan was driven by the Pilsen Planning Committee (PPC), it was created by the participation of over 1000 people representing local residents, community based organizations, and stakeholders. The plan outlines our history, our struggles and our successes. The plan describes Pilsen’s current state: a continued struggle for social justice, a celebration of culture, and a rapidly changing diversity. Most importantly it outlines a vision created by our community with specific actions and strategies to accomplish the stated goals. 

Pilsen: My Neighborhood celebrates our accomplishments and improvements in our beloved community, however it states and clarifies the work still needed in our community, such as, but not limited to: accessing affordable housing, creating a community driven economy, ensuring an excellent education for every student in Pilsen, preserving and expanding arts and culture, and maintaining a safe and healthy community. All of this, while maintaining the social fabric of our community.

Let us be clear, this plan does not belong to a selected few, or only to those who participated in its development. Nevertheless, we want to thank the more than 1000 people, the community based organizations and the stake holders who participated in this process. The countless hours that each individual invested to meet and engage in discussion and develop strategies and specific actions. Thank you also to those who believed in us and have provided financial contributions. Once again, we are grateful for the time, passion and commitment to our Barrio of Pilsen.

Today, October 21st, we proudly unveil our Pilsen Quality of Life Plan. This marks the beginning of our next phase—implementation. We hope and expect the same level of participation for the implementation as we had for the development of our plan. Whether you are a resident, community based organization, business owner, or a stakeholder, we invite and welcome you to learn about our plan and find an area of interest you may want to work with.

Once again thank you and we look forward to your participation as we begin the implementation process of collective plan.

Sincerely,

Theresa Fraga
Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
PPC Co-Chair

Raul Raymundo
The Resurrection Project
PPC Co-Chair

Esther Corpuz
Alivio Medical Center

Juan Soto
Pilsen Neighbors Community Council

Alex Esparza
18th Street Development

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**Letter from the Alderman**

Dear Community Residents and Stakeholders,

For over 21 years I have proudly represented the 25th Ward and all of its residents. It is my great honor to proudly endorse the 2017 Pilsen Quality of Life Plan entitled “Pilsen-Mi Barrio.”

This plan serves as a guide that will take our community and its residents into a better future by bringing residents, community organizations, stakeholders, businesses, and elected officials together to address key issues, such as: housing, jobs and economic development, health, education and youth, arts and culture, public safety and immigrations and others.

I am witness of the many hours of hard labor that it took to develop this plan. I am also witness of the large number of people and stakeholders that where involved in the creation of this plan, as my staff and I were active participants of this process.

Still, a comprehensive plan like this will be futile without implementation and execution moving forward. As committed as I was to the creation of Pilsen Quality of Life Plan, I will be committed and involved in its implementation. I ask you to do the same by find areas of interest, find out the date to the next meetings and become actively involved in “Pilsen-Mi Barrio.”

Once again, it is with pride and honor that I support Pilsen’s 2017 Quality of Life Plan “Pilsen-Mi Barrio.”

Sincerely,

Daniel S. Solis

Alderman 25th Ward

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**Letter from the PPC Steering Committee**

October 13, 2017
 Participating Organizations

AARP
Access Living
Accion Chicago
+ Alderman Danny Solis, 25th Ward
+ Alivio Medical Center
+ Arturo Velasquez Institute
+ Blue1647
Casa Juan Diego
Central States–SER
Center for Economic Progress
CESAP
+ Chicago Commons
+ Chicago Día de los Niños
+ Chicago Mariachi Project
Chicago Nowruz Program
+ Chicago Police Department, 12th District
+ Chicago Park District, Dvorak Park
+ Chicago Public Schools, Network 7
+ Cook County State’s Attorney Office
+ Cooper Elementary Dual Language Academy
+ Eighteenth Street Development Corporation
+ ElevArte Community Studio
+ Finkl Elementary
+ Frida Kahlo Community Organization
+ Gads Hill Center
+ Greater Pilsen Economic Development Association
Healthcare Alternative Systems
Healthy Hood
+ El Hogar del Niño
Illinois Single-Payer Coalition Chicago
+ Instituto del Progreso Latino
+ Juarez Community Academy
+ Jungman Elementary School
The Law Project
Lincoln Methodist Church/Centro Sin Fronteras
+ LISC Chicago
+ LULAC
+ Manuel Perez Elementary School
Metro Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force
Mt. Sinai Hospital
+ Mujeres Latinas en Acción
+ myowndoctor
+ National Able Network
+ National Museum of Mexican Art
+ Openlands
+ Orozco Community Academy
+ El Paseo Community Garden
+ Pachanka
+ Perez Elementary School
+ Persepolitan Networks
+ Pilarte
+ Pickard Elementary School
+ Pilsen Academy
+ Pilsen Arts and Culture Committee
+ Pilsen Economic Development Task Force
+ Pilsen Education Task Force
+ Pilsen Family Task Force
+ Pilsen Health Task Force
+ Pilsen Housing Task Force
+ Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
+ Pilsen Public Safety and Immigration Task Force
+ Pilsen Wellness Center
Raunfer Family YMCA
+ The Resurrection Project
+ Ruiz Elementary School
Rush University Medical Center
St. Ann Church
St. Ann School
+ St. Anthony Hospital
+ St. Pius Church
St. Pius V School
+ St. Procopius Church
St. Procopius School
+ San Jose Obrero Mission
+ SGA Youth & Family Services
+ Small Business Majority
Spanish Coalition for Housing
Taller de José
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System
University of Illinois at Chicago, Latino Cultural Center
University of Illinois, School of Public Health
Union League Boys and Girls Club
+ United Neighborhood Organization
El Valor Corporation
+ Walsh Elementary School
+ Whittier Dual Language School
+ Women’s Business Development Center
* Financial contributor to the plan
+ Pilsen Planning Committee (PPC) Member
~ PPC Steering Committee Members
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Executive Summary

This 2017 Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan builds on over a decade of work by the Pilsen Planning Committee (PPC) and its partnering organizations to put forth a vision to preserve Mexican and Latino culture in the Pilsen neighborhood by building on existing strengths and addressing pressing needs. This plan contains strategies and actions to develop affordable housing, create community-driven economic stability, ensure educational excellence, preserve and expand arts and culture, and create a safe and healthy community for all.

The Pilsen Quality-of-Life planning process was participatory and community-led as a means to capture the hopes, dreams, concerns, and ideas of Pilsen residents and community stakeholders. The planning process had three main phases: information collection, strategy and action development, and final plan development. Information collection took place from December 2015 through July 2016 and included participation of over 1,000 residents, community leaders, school teachers and administrators, students, business owners, and staff from community organizations and local nonprofits. Those 1,000 individuals contributed to the plan through interviews, surveys, and a variety of planning meetings that were open to public participation.

Participants in this process prioritized seven key areas that have an impact on the quality of life in Pilsen. Those areas include housing, jobs and the economy, health, education and youth, arts and culture, community coordination, and public safety and immigration. The plan includes strategies and actions or recommendations for each plan area that were developed by over 80 organizations that have committed to executing the plan.

Upon completion of this plan, implementation of strategies was already under way. Some projects that emerged from the planning process and have already been implemented include the establishment of a local business council, and the opening of a new community education center at the repurposed Perez Annex that includes early childhood education and a parent university. This plan is meant to be a living document that is adaptable to fit the changing conditions and needs of the neighborhood. As communities change, plans—and the strategies and recommendations presented here—are meant to be updated to respond to new opportunities and challenges as they arise.

Plan Strategies

Housing

**STRATEGY 1: Increase the development of affordable housing**

**STRATEGY 2: Accelerate the preservation of affordable housing**

**STRATEGY 3: Assist property owners in preserving affordable housing stock**

**STRATEGY 4: Provide outreach to property owners and renters about available housing resources**

Jobs and the Economy

**STRATEGY 1: Develop a strong business council or alliance**

**STRATEGY 2: Support and grow local businesses**

**STRATEGY 3: Beautify and improve the 18th Street commercial corridor**

**STRATEGY 4: Enhance workforce development opportunities**

**STRATEGY 5: Expand business and employment opportunities in the Pilsen Industrial Corridor**

**STRATEGY 6: Promote entrepreneurship**
Executive Summary

**Health**
- STRATEGY 1: Promote healthy lifestyles and wellness
- STRATEGY 2: Increase access to health care services
- STRATEGY 3: Expand access to behavioral health (including mental health and substance abuse) and address all levels of social-emotional wellness
- STRATEGY 4: Advocate for health policy issues
- STRATEGY 5: Expand access to and maintain green spaces throughout the community

**Education and Youth**
- STRATEGY 1: Increase enrollment at Pilsen schools
- STRATEGY 2: Build an educational pipeline from cradle to career
- STRATEGY 3: Develop parent education and leadership opportunities
- STRATEGY 4: Expand after-school opportunities for youth and families

**Arts and Culture**
- STRATEGY 1: Develop sustainable funding mechanisms for the arts and artists
- STRATEGY 2: Promote and preserve cultural traditions

**Community Resources**
- STRATEGY 1: Develop a comprehensive community resource guide

**Public Safety and Immigration**
- RECOMMENDATION 1: Rebrand the Family Task Force as the Public Safety Task Force
- RECOMMENDATION 2: Create and build on safe spaces that promote peace and nonviolence
- RECOMMENDATION 3: Provide community education on immigration and public safety issues
- RECOMMENDATION 4: Provide individual legal and care services
Introduction

Pilsen (Lower West Side) is located just three miles southwest of downtown Chicago. The neighborhood is bounded by 16th Street to the north, the Chicago River and I-55 to the east and south, and railroad tracks just west of Western Avenue to the west.

Since the mid-20th century, Pilsen has been focal point of Mexican life and culture in Chicago. Over the past several decades, residents and strong local organizations have worked to build a thriving community.

The neighborhood has numerous assets to be proud of, including its vibrant arts and culture community, strong local schools, a robust commercial corridor, strong housing stock, close proximity to local job centers, interstate highways, and local colleges and universities, as well as various community-based organizations and activists working to better the lives of residents.

In 2000, Pilsen began to change as a result of increasing housing prices and stagnant wages, two factors contributing to the threat of gentrification. Community organizations and residents formed the Pilsen Planning Committee in 2005 to develop a plan and execute their vision for a neighborhood that would serve as a center of Mexican life in Chicago. Together, they developed the first Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan in 2006.

The 2017 Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan builds on over a decade of work and puts forth a vision to preserve Mexican and Latino culture by building on the neighborhood’s existing strengths, shoring up weaknesses, developing affordable housing, creating community-driven economic stability, ensuring educational excellence, and striving for a safe and healthy community for all.
More than 1,000 residents attended and participated in at least one planning meeting and contributed ideas to the Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan.
Planning Process

The process for the Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan was participatory and community-led, and facilitated by the Great Cities Institute (GCI) so as to capture and include in the plan the hopes, dreams, concerns, and ideas of residents and community stakeholders. The planning process primarily focused on encouraging deep community participation, building on existing community assets, and developing new capacity and networks to strengthen the community fabric.

The planning process had three main phases: information collection, strategy and action development, and final plan development. Information collection took place from December 2015 through July 2016 and included 26 one-on-one interviews with Pilsen Planning Committee (PPC) members; the dissemination of a community survey to over 170 individuals who live and/or work in Pilsen; a community visioning meeting with over 135 residents, community leaders, school teachers and employees, students, business owners, and nonprofit staff; and two youth-organized open houses where over 225 residents and community stakeholders prioritized and shared additional ideas for the plan. Nearly all of the 32 organizations that participated in the 2006 plan participated in the 2017 plan along with 56 additional organizations and task forces.

The community-based task force and committee structure supported the engagement of residents and community stakeholders over the following nine months. Seven task forces and committees were involved in the planning process, and these community-based entities. Some of them, such as the Pilsen Education Task Force, resulted from the 2006 quality-of-life planning process, but others were newly formed. The task forces and committees were composed of residents, staff from local nonprofits, business owners, health and mental health practitioners, local artists and musicians, teachers and principals, public safety officials, and other community stakeholders. The information and ideas collected from the community were categorized into 12 overarching issue areas, which were then divided among the seven task forces and committees.

From August 2016 to April 2017, the strategy and action development and final plan development phases took place. In the strategy and action development phase, task force and committee members discussed their concerns for the neighborhood and used the original ideas from the community visioning and open-house meetings to develop vision statements. Next, they developed overarching strategies and actions that would help them achieve their vision. Great Cities Institute (GCI) planners served as facilitators. Members also shared the development of their strategies and actions with one another at monthly PPC meetings to foster additional collaboration on issue areas. Over 500 additional participants contributed and provided feedback to the plan during these phases.

In the final plan development phase, performance measures were developed. GCI planners worked with community members to set achievable benchmarks and a corresponding timeline for each action. Performance measures were determined on the basis of how best to measure the success of each action, including what the community wanted to achieve and ways to continue to build community capacity. When appropriate, baseline data from existing conditions were used as a guide to determine the performance measure for an action.
History

In the mid-19th century, German, Czech, and Irish immigrants first settled in the area that later became known as the Pilsen neighborhood. After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, an abundance of new jobs in the area attracted thousands of Bohemian immigrants to the neighborhood. One such resident opened a restaurant, At the City of Plzen — named for the city in the modern-day Czech Republic — from which the neighborhood derives its name. The area became a major manufacturing hub with the presence of key railroad lines and the Chicago River, which passes through the community. Many local industrial workers participated in a series of local and national strikes leading up to the Haymarket Riot in 1886.

By the 1920s, there were large numbers of Mexicans in several Chicago neighborhoods including the Near West Side, South Chicago and Back of the Yards. The 1940 Census shows 114 Mexicans living in the Pilsen neighborhood. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, recent arrivals from Mexico and those displaced from the development of the interstate highway system and the creation of the University of Illinois Circle Campus — later the University of Illinois at Chicago — displaced many Mexican families from the Near West Side into the Pilsen neighborhood. Since that time, Pilsen has remained a predominantly Latino community.

With historical churches and settlement houses, Pilsen is home to a strong culture of civic engagement and activism that dates to the 19th century. Since the late 1960s, Latino and Latina activists and community leaders have organized to create new community organizations, schools, and community clinics, as well as to develop affordable housing, to provide bilingual training and education, and to encourage new generations of leaders.

Since 2000, Pilsen has lost roughly 10,000 residents, the majority of whom are Mexican or of Mexican descent. Today Latino residents account for about 80 percent of the population, a number that has fallen by 9 percentage points since that time. Despite the changing neighborhood demographic profile, Pilsen continues as a center of Mexican cultural life in Chicago.

Over the decades, Mexican artists have created dozens of public art pieces that are located throughout the community. Fiesta del Sol — the largest Latino festival in the Midwest — began in 1973 and continues to this day. Today, Pilsen is home to numerous cultural centers, annual parades, food and arts festivals, the National Museum of Mexican Art, and other institutions that highlight the neighborhood’s vibrant Mexican cultural identity.

Intersection of Blue Island Avenue and 18th Street, looking south on 18th Street, 1923. DN-0075694, Chicago Daily News negatives collection, Chicago History Museum. © Chicago Historical Society, published on or before 2015, all rights reserved.
### Historical Timeline

1837 | City of Chicago Incorporated
1840s | German, Irish, & Czech Immigrants settle into Pilsen
1875 | St. Procopius Parish Established
1879 | Gads Hill Center Founded
1886 | Haymarket Riot
1889 | 1st Fiesta del Sol Celebration and Mujeres Latinas En Acción Founded
1890s | Mexicans are displaced into Pilsen from Near West Side
1954 | Pilsen Neighbors Community Council Founded
1970 | 18th St. Development Corporation Founded
1973 | Casa Aztlán is Established
1976 | Benito Juárez Community Academy Opens
1979 | Annual Día de los Muertos Procession Begins
1987 | Rudy Lozano Library and Alivio Medical Center Opens
1989 | National Museum of Mexican Art opens
1990 | The Resurrection Project is Founded
2006 | Annual Pilsen Education Summit Begins

Data sources available on page 56.
Community Profile

Pilsen has been a port of entry for immigrants since the City of Chicago incorporated. As such, it is a community that has experienced changing population demographics over time. Today, Pilsen continues to experience demographic changes for a variety of reasons, including overall population loss, changes in household type, and pressures on the existing population related to increasing housing costs and other factors.

In 1980, the population in Pilsen was 44,951, and by 1990, it had increased to 45,654. The population then declined in the following two decades, to 44,031 in 2000 and 35,769 in 2010. The largest population decrease, of 20.4 percent, occurred between 2000 and 2010. The 2011–2015 population was 34,410.

The Hispanic or Latino population increased from 34,867 in 1980 to 40,227 in 1990, before decreasing to 39,144 in 2000 and 27,693 in 2011–2015. The White alone (non-Hispanic or Latino) population was highest in 1980 at 9,223 and decreased to 4,806 in 1990 and 3,486 in 2000 before increasing to 4,617 in 2015. The Black or African American Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino) population increased from 403 in 1980 to 1,117 in 2011–2015.

Today, 80.5 percent of the Pilsen population identifies as Latino. Of the Latino population in Pilsen, 91.9 percent are of Mexican descent and Puerto Rican residents constitute 4.8 percent of the population. No other ethnicity or national origin accounts for more than 1 percent of the neighborhood’s Latino population.
Community Profile

Household type has been steadily changing in Pilsen since 1970, with the proportion of nonfamily households increasing. In 1970, 77 percent of the households were family households. By 2000, that percentage had dropped by 4 percentage points to 73 percent. From 2000 until 2011–2015, the percentage of households that were families dropped by 26 percentage points to 57 percent.

In 1990, 67.7 percent of the population had less than a high school diploma, while just 5.3 percent of the population had a bachelor’s degree or more. As higher levels of educational attainment increased, lower levels of educational attainment decreased. In 2011–2015, 35.1 percent of Pilsen residents had less than a high school degree and 21.4 percent had a bachelor’s degree.

The median household income saw little change between 1980 ($37,800) and 1990 ($37,892), increasing by just $92. However, from 1990 to 2000, the median household income increased by $1,614, to $39,506. The median household income decreased in the period following 2000.

The 5-year estimate between 2011 and 2015 was $35,103, which is $3,510 less than in 2000. From 2000 to 2011–2015, the proportion of the population earning less than $25,000 increased by 4.6 percentage points, while the population earning between $25,000 and $50,000 decreased by 1.8 percentage points. The proportion of residents earning over $100,000 fell by 2.1 percentage points.

The poverty rate grew from 14.2 percent in 1970 to 23.5 percent in 1980, then to 26.0 percent in 1990. By 2000 the rate had dipped to 24.6 percent, but it rose slightly to 24.9 percent for 2011–2015. Additional demographic data and information are also available in each section of the plan.
Community Profile


- Less than high school: 67.7% (1990), 35.1% (2011-2015)
- High school graduate (includes equivalency): 17.1% (1990), 23.4% (2011-2015)
- Some college: 9.9% (1990), 18.4% (2011-2015)
- Bachelor’s degree or more: 5.4% (1990), 23.1% (2011-2015)


- 1980: $37,800
- 1990: $37,892
- 2000: $39,506
- 2011-2015: $35,996

Dollar values in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars.


- $45K-$75K: 32.5% (2000), 30.7% (2011-2015)
- $75K-$100K: 18.3% (2000), 17.5% (2011-2015)
- $100K-$150K: 8.2% (2000), 8.5% (2011-2015)
- <$25K: 3.8% (2000), 2.9% (2011-2015)


Poverty Rate in Pilsen, 1970 to 2011-2015

- 1970: 34.3%
- 1980: 30.7%
- 1990: 17.5%
- 2000: 8.5%
- 2011-2015: 2.9%

Community Profile

Pilsen Land Use, 2010

Legend
- Pilsen
- Mixed Use
- Office
- Cultural/Entertainment
- Hotel/Motel
- Medical Facilities
- Educational Facilities
- Government Administration and Services
- Prison and Correctional Facilities
- Religious Facilities
- Other Institutional
- Industrial
- Storage
- Transportation
- Parking

Data Source: CMAP 2010 Land Use Inventory. Map created by Great Cities Institute.
Note to Readers

This most recent plan is the result of hundreds of hours of work over two years by Pilsen individuals, families, and organizations. It includes the ideas and proposals of both individuals who live in the neighborhood or work there and the community organizations that are striving to provide Pilsen residents and families with education, social services, health care, cultural programming, and more.

The strategies and recommendations that follow were developed and elaborated on by various working groups and committees made up of residents and representatives from many organizations. Those groups focused on housing, jobs and the economy, health, education and youth, arts and culture, and public safety and immigration. Those groups and task forces are listed at the beginning of this document.

Upon completion of this plan, implementation of strategies was already under way. Some projects that emerged from the planning process and have already been implemented include the establishment of a local business council, and the opening of a new community education center at the repurposed Perez Annex that includes early childhood education and a parent university.

This plan is meant to be a living document that is adaptable to fit the changing conditions and needs of the neighborhood. As communities change, plans—and the strategies and recommendations presented here—are meant to be updated to respond to new opportunities and challenges as they arise.

Lead and Potential Organizations

The organizations that have been identified throughout the quality-of-life planning process as lead, partnering, and potential organizations to include in implementing the strategies of the plan include the following:

12th District: 12th District, Chicago Police Department
AARP: AARP
Able: National Able Network
AC: Accion Chicago
Access Living: Access Living
Ad hoc CCC: Ad hoc Community Coordinating Committee
Alderman’s Office: Office of 25th Ward Alderman Danny Solis
Alivio: Alivio Medical Center
AMDM: Academy of Mexican Dance & Music
AVI: Arturo Velasquez Institute
Blue1647: Blue1647
CCC: City Colleges of Chicago
Cooper: Cooper Elementary Dual Language Academy
CCCMHB: City of Chicago Mental Health Board
CCommons: Chicago Commons
CCSAO: Cook County State’s Attorney Office
CCT: Chicago Community Trust
CDDLN: Chicago Día de los Niños
CDP: Chicago Department of Planning and Development
CDPH: Chicago Department of Public Health
CEP: Center for Economic Progress
CHA: Chicago Housing Authority
CJD: Casa Juan Diego
CSS: Central States–SER
CESAP: CESAP
CHICAT: Chicago Center for Arts & Technology
CHIP: CHIP
CHS: Chicago Historical Society
Lead and Potential Organizations

CMP: Chicago Mariachi Project
CNP&F: Chicago Nowruz Parade & Festival
CPS: Chicago Public Schools CPS Network 7: Chicago Public Schools Network 7
Cristo Rey: Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
CUP: Comerciantes Unidor de Pilsen
DCASE: Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events
EI: Erikson Institute
ElevArte: ElevArte Community Studio
El Valor: El Valor Corporation
Encuentro de Jaraneros: Encuentro de Jaraneros
EPCG: El Paseo Community Garden
ESDC: Eighteenth Street Development Corporation
FKCO: Frida Kahlo Community Organization
Forefront: Forefront
GHC: Gads Hill Center
GPEDA: Greater Pilsen Economic Development Association
HAS: Healthcare Alternative Systems
Healthy Schools Campaign: Healthy Schools Campaign
HH: Healthy Hood
HMPRG: Health & Medicine Policy Research Group
El Hogar: El Hogar del Niño
IDPL: Instituto del Progreso Latino
IHSCA: Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy
ILAC: Illinois Arts Council
Ingenuity: Ingenuity
ISPCC: Illinois Single-Payer Coalition Chicago
Juarez: Juarez Community Academy
Jungman: Jungman Elementary School
KK: Kennedy-King College
Local Business Council: Local Business Council
LULAC: League of United Latin American Citizens
MCBTCF: Metro Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force
MFS: Metropoitan Family Services
Mt. Sinai: Mount Sinai Hospital
Mujeres: Mujeres Latinas en Acción (Latin Women in Action)
MOD: myowndoctor
NLU: National Louis University
NMMA: National Museum of Mexican Art
NYBDC: NYBDC
Openlands: Openlands
Orozco: Orozco Community Academy
Pachanka: Pachanka
PACC: Pilsen Arts and Culture Committee
Park District: Dvorak Park, Chicago Park District
Perez: Perez Elementary School
PETF: Pilsen Education Task Force
PF: Pilsen Fest
PHTF: Pilsen Health Task Force
Pilarte: Pilarte
Pilsen Academy: Pilsen Academy
Pickard: Pickard Elementary School
PLUC: Pilsen Land Use Committee
PN: Persepolitan Networks
PNCC: Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
PNCC/URT: Pilsen Neighbors Community Council /University Round Table
POS: Pilsen Open Studios
PPC: Pilsen Planning Committee
PWC: Pilsen Wellness Center
Ruíz: Ruiz Elementary School
Rush: Rush University Medical Center
SAH: St. Anthony Hospital
SJOM: San Jose Obrero Mission
SGA: SGA Youth & Family Services
SBM: Small Business Majority
SCH: Spanish Coalition for Housing
St. Ann: St. Ann School
St. Pius: St. Pius V School
St. Procopius: St. Procopius Elementary School
TRP: The Resurrection Project
UIC: University of Illinois at Chicago
UIC LCC: University of Illinois at Chicago, Latino Cultural Center
UIC SPH: University of Illinois, School of Public Health
UIH: University of Illinois Health
BGC: Union League Boys and Girls Club
VEDC: VEDC
Walsh: Walsh Elementary School
Whittier: Whittier Dual Language School
WBDC: Women's Business Development Center
YMCA: Rauner Family YMCA
Yolocalli: Yolocalli
Housing

Housing Vision

We envision affordable housing as a major strategy for maintaining the Latino character of the community.
**Housing**

Rising housing costs for Pilsen owners and renters combined with stagnant wages and incomes have left the neighborhood with a housing affordability issue that threatens to shift property ownership away from longtime community residents.

Since 2000, Pilsen’s housing stock has been transformed as many older properties have been demolished and replaced with higher-priced multiunit developments. This trend is gaining momentum, and without intervention and affordable housing strategies, it threatens the Latino identity of Pilsen.

Local community organizations and parallel planning processes such as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s Land Use Plan have made great strides to provide resources for property owners and to develop housing units to maintain affordability. In addition, the Pilsen Land Use Committee (PLUC), with support from the Alderman, has created local policy to ensure that new developments include either 21 percent affordable housing or an equal community benefit. The strategies in this section represent the continued commitment to housing affordability in the neighborhood.

The strategies that follow focus on both preserving and increasing the development of affordable housing, acquiring properties to keep prices affordable, and assisting homeowners in maintaining their property through direct assistance and the marketing of programs that will stabilize and sustain property ownership for current residents.
Housing – Existing Conditions

Percentage of Owner and Renter Households in Pilsen and Chicago

- Pilsen has a lower percentage of home owners than the City of Chicago by 48 percent.

Median House Value for Owner-Occupied Housing in Pilsen

- Median house values for owner occupied units have increased from $64,871 in 1980 to $198,006 in 2011–2015.
- Median house prices increased 205% from 1980 to 2011–2015.


Note: Calculations by Great Cities Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago. Dollar values in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars.
Housing - Existing Conditions

Median Rent for Renter-Occupied Housing in Pilsen, 1980 to 2011–2015

- Median rent increased 43% from $569 in 1980 to $814 in 2011–2015.

Pilsen

49% of Renters and 50% of Owners with a Mortgage pay more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs

Percentage of Households Paying More Than 30% of Income on Housing Costs in Pilsen

- Nearly half of renters (49%) and half of homeowners (50%) in Pilsen were cost burdened, or paid more than 30% of income on housing costs.

Data Source: 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Note: Dollar values in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars.
Housing – Strategies

STRATEGY 1
Increase the development of affordable housing
In Pilsen nearly half of renters and half of owners pay more than 30% of their income toward housing costs. The direct development of affordable housing units and enforcement of zoning to include 21 percent affordable housing units will increase the number of affordable housing units in Pilsen. In addition to the current tools available to and used by organizations in Pilsen, researching and implementing new tools will ensure that the best methods for supporting and creating affordable housing are accessible to the community.

STRATEGY 2
Accelerate the preservation of affordable housing
This strategy addresses affordable housing through actions including acquisition, owner education, and utilization of existing and new affordable housing programs and models. Specifically, acquiring housing and keeping units at affordable prices prevents market-rate units from becoming unaffordable as housing values increase. Educating residents about real estate practices and how to sell their property at fair market value will protect homeowners and allow time for more offers from current community members. Many Pilsen residents are eligible but do not take advantage of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) voucher program that can assist with housing costs. A new campaign for landlords and residents will raise awareness of the program and assist residents with the application process. Finally, providing an alternative affordable ownership model through a limited-equity scattered site cooperative model will give residents another affordable route to homeownership.

STRATEGY 3
Assist property owners in preserving affordable housing stock
Assisting owners of hard-to-maintain properties of between two and seven units will keep them from having to sell their multiunit buildings because of an inability to maintain them. Tracking harassment and working with the Alderman’s Office to oversee building inspections will protect owners from being coerced into selling their property.

STRATEGY 4
Provide outreach to homeowners and renters about available housing resources
Providing outreach and education to homeowners about resources such as tax incentives, foreclosure prevention, and rehab and down-payment assistance programs enables residents to maintain their homes and keep costs affordable.
Jobs and the Economy

Jobs and the Economy Vision

We strive for community-driven economic stability.
Jobs and the Economy

Job-intensive local institutions, the Pilsen Industrial Corridor, and opportunities to own and operate a small business present Pilsen residents with numerous work opportunities—if adequate connections to jobs, job training, and small business resources are made available to residents.

Pilsen’s vibrant local economy is evident in the numerous locally owned Mexican and Mexican American businesses along 18th Street. As population demographics have shifted and Pilsen becomes more attractive to investors, stabilizing businesses along 18th Street and providing them with resources to grow and flourish is a priority in retaining the street’s Mexican identity.

The Pilsen Industrial Corridor, Illinois Medical District (IMD), and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) are major employers located in or near Pilsen. Providing employment training and connecting qualified individuals to these employers can promote neighborhood stability by improving the economic circumstances of Pilsen residents.

The strategies that follow focus on reinforcing partnerships between existing organizations and associations that serve local businesses, supporting local businesses and promoting entrepreneurship, beautifying 18th Street, developing the local workforce, and strengthening the industrial corridor.
### Jobs and the Economy – Existing Conditions

#### Median Household Income in Pilsen, 1980 to 2011–2015

- Median household income in Pilsen decreased by $3,437, or 9%, from 2000 to 2011–2015.

#### Top 5 Job Sectors in Pilsen, 2014

- The top 5 job sectors located in Pilsen account for nearly 70% of the jobs in Pilsen.

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Note: Dollar values in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

(Starting of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2014)
Jobs and the Economy – Existing Conditions

Pilsen Inflow and Outflow of Workers, 2014

- 794 people work and live in Pilsen.
- 15,710 work in Pilsen and live outside the community.
- 11,850 Pilsen residents leave the community to work.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2014)

Pilsen’s Business Mix on 18th Street between Halsted and Damen

- Food Stores
- Home Goods & Hardware
- Apparel & Accessories
- Books, Music & Hobbies
- Personal Services
- Full Service Restaurants
- Cafés & Take Out
- Automotive
- Professional & Financial
- Other

Data Source: Great Cities Institute Walking Survey, 2016
Jobs and the Economy – Strategies

STRATEGY 1
Develop a strong business council or alliance
Strengthening the relationship between organizations and associations that serve local businesses to develop a strong business council or alliance will improve service delivery to businesses and strengthen the 18th Street commercial corridor.

STRATEGY 2
Support and grow local businesses
Local businesses will be strengthened through being showcased at festivals, marketed to the community, and highlighted through “shop local” programs.

STRATEGY 3
Beautify and improve 18th Street commercial corridor
Filling vacant storefronts, improving building facades, and making the corridor more accessible and attractive will enhance the pedestrian experience and patronage of businesses and service providers on 18th Street.

STRATEGY 4
Enhance workforce development opportunities
Linking Pilsen residents with local jobs and providing training for jobs in both Pilsen and in growing industries across the city will increase the number of Pilsen residents who work locally and in well-paying jobs outside of the community.

STRATEGY 5
Expand business and employment opportunities in the Pilsen Industrial Corridor
Preserving and expanding the Pilsen Industrial Corridor, including by enhancing the riverfront, will lead to more economic opportunity in the neighborhood for community residents.

STRATEGY 6
Promote entrepreneurship
Promoting entrepreneurship will assist Pilsen residents in starting their own businesses, filling storefront vacancies, and improving the neighborhood economy.
Health

Health Vision

We strive to create a healthy community with access to quality care and effective educational programs that prevent disease and injury and improve residents’ health and well-being. We envision Pilsen as an active community with a network of parks and green space that creates centers for healthy community and civic life.
Health

Pilsen has several health institutions located within the community or in close proximity. More than eight local hospitals, medical clinics, and a wide array of local community-based organizations provide disease prevention, nutrition and fitness education, and behavioral health services (which include but are not limited to education and treatment around mental health disorders, trauma, domestic violence, sexual assault, and substance abuse).

However, many residents may not be aware of services that are available in the community. In the Quality-of-Life Survey that informs this plan, only 34 percent of respondents indicated that they believed health care was available or very available in their community. In the area of mental health, 50 percent of respondents remarked that there was little or no availability of services.

According to the Chicago Department of Health, the top three causes of death in Pilsen are coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. In community outreach work, maintaining a healthy lifestyle that includes access to healthy foods and regular health-care services and also increasing exercise are critical to improving the health and well-being of all residents.

The strategies that follow focus on illness prevention and increasing awareness of health services and healthy living, as well as greater access to health, community education, and wellness services throughout the community. They also promote healthy lifestyles, advocate for critical health policy issues, and expand access to green spaces throughout the community.
Health – Existing Conditions

Open Space in Pilsen

- Pilsen has roughly 1 acre of land per 1,000 residents, but the City of Chicago suggests 2 acres of open space per 1,000 residents.
- Existing open space in Pilsen is located primarily in Harrison Park (17.4 acres) and Dvorak Park (5.6 acres).

Pilsen Residents Who Have Health Insurance Coverage

- Pilsen adults between the ages of 18 and 64 have significantly less insurance coverage than Chicago residents overall.

Data Source: 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Health – Existing Conditions

**Obesity Rate for Pilsen Youth**

- 47% to 53% of Pilsen’s kindergarteners and 6th and 9th graders were obese in 2010–2011.

**Pilsen Quality-of-Life Survey**

**Availability of Neighborhood Health Care**
- 34% of respondents rated health care as available or very available.
- 25% rated health-care quality as good or very good.
- 32% rated the quality of health care as poor or very poor.

**Mental Health Services Availability**
- 50% of survey respondents indicated little or no availability of services.

**Healthy Food**
- 36% of respondents rated the availability of healthy foods as available or very available.

*Data Source: Overweight and Obesity among Chicago Public Schools Students, 2010–2011, City of Chicago, February 2013*
Health – Strategies

**STRATEGY 1**
*Promote healthy lifestyles and wellness*
This strategy focuses on improving community health and well-being by systematically identifying and assessing available resources and services and working collaboratively across organizations to connect residents more effectively to the programs they need. In addition, creating a healthy food campaign with local restaurants will help residents make more informed meal choices for their families.

**STRATEGY 2**
*Increase access to health-care services*
By aligning efforts and developing partnerships, Pilsen will be better able to ensure that residents have access to all of the health-care services that are available. Providing accessible information to residents will increase awareness of the availability of resources in the community. Utilizing new technology tools will also increase access to information or doctors, and increasing enrollment in health insurance programs for 18- to 64-year-olds will improve access for a population that is currently underinsured.

**STRATEGY 3**
*Expand access to behavioral health (includes both mental health and substance abuse) and address all levels of socioemotional wellness*
Improving access to behavioral health is critical for the overall health and well-being of Pilsen residents. By increasing awareness of and education about behavioral health disorders, we can reduce stigma and increase treatment opportunities. Providing trauma-informed services will give residents who have experienced abuse, violence, racism, discrimination, poverty, and/or oppression needed resources to reduce its harmful effects. Fostering coordination and collaboration between health institutions and local schools is a key component to success.

**STRATEGY 4**
*Advocate for health policy issues*
Advocating for comprehensive health policy that supports the strategies and actions that health institutions and organizations can implement on the ground will maximize their impact—specifically, providing support to community health workers, expanding access to health insurance, and increasing the availability of green space in the community.

**STRATEGY 5**
*Expand access to and maintain green spaces throughout the community.*
Expanding access to green spaces will allow for increased opportunities for community gatherings, health and wellness education, and group and individual recreation activities. Programs held in green spaces can teach about healthy eating, exercise, and gardening, and can also provide opportunities for intergenerational activities. Properly maintaining green spaces will ensure that these valuable areas can be utilized to their fullest potential and will last into the future.
Education and Youth

Education Vision

The Pilsen community will provide academic and socioemotional learning through schools and educational programs to ensure that people of all races, ethnicities, cultures, legal statuses, and abilities are strategic thinkers and holistic leaders.
Education and Youth

Pilsen has an abundance of educational institutions and youth- and family-serving organizations with a strong collaborative foundation. The Pilsen Education Task Force (PETF) was formed in 2006 and consists of more than 45 community organizations, public schools, colleges and universities, and parents.

According to the U.S. Census, Pilsen was home to 14,197 children and youth age 24 and younger in 2010. From 2000 to 2010, the youth population age 24 and younger decreased by 6,791 individuals.

Changes in the population have led to a decline in enrollment at local schools, and eight of the ten public elementary schools were listed as “underutilized” on the 2015 Chicago Public Schools Space Utilization report. Additionally, according to the PETF, approximately 1,500 school-age children who live in Pilsen attend schools outside of the neighborhood.

The strategies that follow focus on increasing enrollment at Pilsen schools through coordinating a marketing strategy to highlight the quality of education provided in the community, building a seamless educational pipeline from cradle to career with supports for children and families in order to increase educational attainment and success, providing educational opportunities for parents and developing their leadership skills, and expanding after-school opportunities for youth and families throughout the community.
Education and Youth – Existing Conditions

Total Yearly Enrollment for Pilsen Public Schools

- Enrollment at Pilsen schools has declined steadily over the past decade. Elementary school enrollment declined 29% between 2005 and 2016.

Graduation Rate for Juarez Community Academy and Chicago, 2011–2016

- Between 2011 and 2016 Juarez Community Academy, the largest high school in the neighborhood, saw its graduation rates increase at a faster rate than the City of Chicago overall – graduation rates increased 25 percentage points during that period.
Education and Youth – Existing Conditions

Pilsen CPS Public Schools
1. Walsh Elementary
2. Jungman Elementary
3. Perez Elementary
4. Pilsen Elementary
5. Juarez Community Academy
6. Cooper Dual Language Academy
7. Whittier Elementary
8. Orozco Fine Arts + Sciences Elementary
9. Ruiz Elementary
10. Pickard Elementary
11. Finkl Elementary

Pilsen Charter Schools
12. St. Procopius Elementary
13. St. Pius V School
14. Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
15. St. Ann School
16. Jane Addams High School
17. Acero - Bartolomé de Las Casas
18. Instituto Justice + Leadership Academy
19. Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy

Catholic Schools
12. St. Procopius Elementary
13. St. Pius V School
14. Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
15. St. Ann School

Pilsen parks

Water

Pilsen
Education and Youth – Existing Conditions
Education and Youth – Strategies

STRATEGY 1
Increase enrollment at Pilsen schools
Prior to the quality-of-life planning process, the Pilsen Education Task Force (PETF) launched a school specialization initiative to expand the number of educational opportunities for Pilsen students, to reengage students attending schools outside of Pilsen to drive enrollment within Pilsen, and to attract new families to Pilsen schools. This initiative focuses on developing an innovative marketing strategy that highlights the new school specializations, the quality of education in Pilsen, and the collaborative partnerships and supportive programming available at local schools.

STRATEGY 2
Build an educational pipeline from cradle to career
This strategy harnesses the collaborative power of the PETF to build an educational pipeline from cradle to career with the goal of improving educational outcomes overall. A full analysis of the community’s educational ecosystem will identify gaps and strengthen transition points in the pipeline. In addition, the development of communication systems, peer mentoring programs, and college readiness programs will help prepare and support students and parents for each step in the educational system.

STRATEGY 3
Develop parent education and leadership opportunities
The role of parents in their child’s education is critical for children’s success. This strategy focuses on providing support, education, and leadership opportunities for parents in the community and in schools. Multiple parent education and engagement centers will be developed, including the Child Parent Center, a Parent University, and three Parent Engagement Centers. Workshops and educational offerings will be determined through a needs assessment and coordinated to ensure that they meet community need and support parents.

STRATEGY 4
Expand after-school opportunities for youth and families
In the Quality-of-Life Survey that informs this plan, 49 percent of respondents indicated that they did not think there were adequate after-school programs available in Pilsen. This strategy focuses on strengthening partnerships, providing additional academic and nonacademic programs for youth and families, expanding training for youth organizing, and civic engagement opportunities and family activities.
Arts and Culture

We envision Pilsen as a center for arts education, preservation, and public display, including the honoring and celebration of Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, and immigrant culture; the integration of arts into all schools; a sense of public art permeating Pilsen; and the preservation and teaching of mariachi and traditional music.
Arts and Culture

Pilsen’s vibrant Mexican cultural identity is apparent throughout the neighborhood. The many stories of the community, its artists, and its history are painted on countless murals throughout the neighborhood on the walls of institutions, businesses, schools, churches, CTA stations, viaducts, and homes.

Pilsen is rich in artistic and cultural assets. Numerous musicians, dancers, chefs, artists, cultural centers, annual parades, food and arts festivals, the National Museum of Mexican Art, and other institutions and nonprofits that work to enrich, perform, educate, and celebrate the neighborhood’s many cultural traditions and artistic forms all call Pilsen home.

The arts have many benefits for youth and for the local economy. Research compiled by the Americans for the Arts documents that students involved in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores and lower dropout rates. Research also demonstrates that the arts strengthen the local economy by driving tourism and attendance at cultural events and patronage of local businesses. However, despite these benefits to the overall community, many individual artists struggle economically with fair wages and support for their work, and arts programming is often the first to be cut at schools during budget negotiations and cuts.

The strategies that follow focus on developing sustainable and community controlled funding mechanisms for the arts and for artists; promoting and preserving the existing cultural traditions in the community; expanding youth arts programming and opportunities in partnership with local artists, musicians, photographers, and local schools; and preserving, creating, and expanding public art in Pilsen.
Arts and Culture – Existing Conditions

Arts and Culture as an Asset

In an open-ended question about what works well in Pilsen and what the neighborhood’s greatest assets are, respondents said:

- Culture (51)
- Community (26)
- Food/restaurants (25)
- Transportation (25)
- Art (19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you value about Pilsen and what are the neighborhood’s greatest assets (what’s working well)?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/restaurants</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 172$

Arts and Culture Key Research Facts

- “63 percent of the (American) population believe the arts lift me up beyond everyday experiences.”
- “64 percent of the (American) population feel the arts give them pleasure to experience and participate in and 73 percent say the arts are a positive experience in a troubled world.”
- Students involved in the arts have higher GPAs and lower dropout rates.
- Arts drive local tourism, strengthen the economy, and are good for local businesses.
- Arts improve health and well-being: “Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients – shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.”

Data Source: Quotations and information from Americans for the Arts, February 2017
Arts and Culture – Existing Conditions

Pilsen Art Institutions
1. Chicago Public Art Group
2. NYCH Gallery
3. Rootwork Gallery
4. Chicago Arts District
5. Chicago Art Department
6. Simantikos Dance
7. Cultura in Pilsen
8. La Catrina Café
9. Gabriel Project
10. Gozamos
11. ElevArte Community Studio
12. Honky Tonk
13. Prospectus Art Gallery
14. Mana Contempory Chicago
15. ACRE Projects
16. Mestizarte
17. Chicago Mariachi Project
18. Citlalin Gallery and Theater
19. Antena
20. Café Monsivais/Reciclarte
22. Cobalt Studio
23. Pilsen Outpost
24. Hoofprint Workshop

Pilsen Open Studios
25. Rudy Lozano Library
26. Juan Carlos Torres Studio
27. Paige Landesberg Studio
28. Carlos & Dominguez Fine Arts Gallery
29. Skeemer Chorne - Rockstar Barber Shop & Ink
30. Colby Gallery
31. Cynthia Marris Studio
32. Art-O-Parts
33. JPWeber Studio
34. Mah Tinauakhalli
35. Victims of Art Tattoo Gallery
36. Jesus Acuna
37. Hector Duarte Studio
38. Olin Studio Chicago
39. Colibri Studio and Gallary
40. Surreal Rabbit
41. 21 PL Place
42. Revolutionary Lemonade Stand
43. Gerry Lang Studio
44. Gringolandia Studio
45. Pilsen Art and Design Center
Arts and Culture – Strategies

**STRATEGY 1**  
*Develop sustainable funding mechanisms for the arts and artists*  
This strategy focuses on creating community-controlled funding mechanisms for artists and the arts. This is achieved by establishing a community arts fund with a legal framework to fundraise and solicit proposals from local artists to commission art in the community; by developing an artist cooperative business with local artists, architects, and interior designers; and providing professional development training for artists.

**STRATEGY 2**  
*Promote and preserve cultural traditions*  
Culture reflects and shapes people’s values, beliefs, and aspirations, thereby defining the identity of the community. This strategy focuses on promoting and preserving cultural traditions including music and dance as the cultural heritage of the community and expanding an artist exchange program with Mexican artists to share knowledge.

**STRATEGY 3**  
*Expand youth arts programs and opportunities*  
According to the report *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, researchers found that students who participate in the arts outperform their peers on nearly every measure, and the greatest benefits are seen in students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Given the important role that the arts play in leveling the playing field for youth and in helping them achieve excellence, this strategy focuses on expanding youth arts programming and opportunities in the community, including cooking classes of traditional dishes, photography projects to learn and document culture in Pilsen, expansion of mariachi programs in public schools, expansion of school arts programs, and gallery-sponsored showcases of student art work.

**STRATEGY 4**  
*Preserve, expand, and create public art*  
Pilsen has a long history of public art and murals that have been created throughout the community. This strategy focuses on creating new forms of public art, expanding places where public art can be created, and preserving the public art that currently exists in the community.
Public Safety and Immigration

We imagine a safe and peaceful community with positive and productive interaction, communication, and collaboration between law enforcement entities and neighbors.
Public Safety and Immigration

Crime rates in Pilsen have dropped significantly from 2007 to 2015. In fact, in 2016, crime rates in Pilsen were below the City of Chicago average. The combined and concerted efforts of the numerous community-based organizations, faith-based institutions, social service providers, schools, police department, government institutions, activists, elected officials, and residents all contributed to this increased level of community safety and well-being.

Despite the drop in crime rates, some residents’ perception of the community is that it is still unsafe. In the Pilsen Quality-of-Life Survey done for this plan, 52.2 percent of respondents who live in Pilsen indicated that they feel either “a little safe” or “not at all safe” when walking alone after dark. Similarly, 53 percent of respondents indicated that the level of crime in Pilsen was “high” or “very high.” In addition, recent changes in national public discourse and policy around immigration have led to heightened and very real concerns for people’s safety in a community that historically has been a port of entry for immigrants arriving in Chicago.

The recommendations that follow build on the strong networks of collaboration that are interwoven throughout this plan, existing assets in the community, and the breadth of services and resources that Pilsen has to offer. Rebranding the existing Family Task Force to focus directly on providing public safety, creating and building safe spaces to promote peace and nonviolence for all members of the community, delivering education on immigration and public safety issues to increase awareness, and offering individual legal and care services so individuals and families have the support and resources they need to thrive will maintain and strengthen public safety in the community.
Public Safety and Immigration – Existing Conditions

Pilsen Crime

- Pilsen has lower rates of violent, property, and quality-of-life crimes than Chicago overall.

- Among Chicago’s 77 Community Areas, Pilsen has the 36th highest violent crime rate, the 44th highest property crime rate, and the 34th highest quality-of-life crime rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Rates per 1,000 residents in Pilsen and Chicago in 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent Crime Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower West Side/Pilsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pilsen Crime


In Pilsen, from 2007 to 2015:

- Violent crime decreased by 28%.
- Property crime decreased by 43%.
- Quality-of-life crime decreased by 52%.

Data Source: Crime in Chicagoland. Chicago Tribune.
Public Safety and Immigration – Existing Conditions

Perceptions of Safety

- In the Pilsen Quality-of-Life Community Survey, 19.7% of respondents living in Pilsen said the level of crime in Pilsen was very high, 33.3% said high, 34.2% said moderate, 12% said low, and .9% said very low.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Great Cities Institute Quality-of-Life Survey

How safe do you feel walking alone after dark in your neighborhood? (respondents living in Pilsen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very safe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat safe</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little safe</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all safe</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Great Cities Institute Quality-of-Life Survey

Perceptions of Safety

- In the Pilsen Quality-of-Life Survey, 2.6% of respondents living in Pilsen stated they felt very safe walking alone after dark, 12% felt safe, 33.3% felt somewhat safe, 30.8% felt a little safe, and 21.4% felt not at all safe.
**RECOMMENDATION 1:**
**Rebrand the Pilsen Family Task Force as the Public Safety Task Force**
For over 10 years, the Pilsen Family Task Force (PFTF) has provided a variety of quality services, programs, and community coordination to young people and families in Pilsen. Through analyzing the PFTF and other Pilsen task forces, this plan recommends that the PFTF rebrand itself as a new Pilsen Public Safety Task Force.

The work done by the PFTF has evolved over time to center predominantly on promoting public safety through after-school and summer programming, and providing services such as drug counseling, gang intervention, and education and job-training enrollment. Rebranding the task force brings an increased focus to the work previously undertaken by the PFTF and highlights the importance of promoting safety in the community.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:**
**Create and build on safe spaces that promote peace and nonviolence**
Since 1999, the Resurrection Basketball League (RBL) continues to provide safe spaces and activities for youth. Taking place on blocks that are known to have gang activity or have had recent instances of violence, RBL promotes active use of these areas with sports and other youth-centered activities and gives neighbors a feeling that the block belongs in the hands of the community while also connecting neighbors. Additionally, these events are a great opportunity for community-based organizations and service providers to engage with youth and families.

As part of TRP’s Increase the Peace initiative, additional events such as peace marches on blocks that have recently been the location of violence have engaged young people, united neighbors and spread a collective message to stop violence. Expanding RBL, Increase the Peace, and other similar types of successful events, and bringing additional partners and task forces on board the projects and out to events in order to engage with youth and their families, will increase the accomplishments of these already successful programs and events.
Public Safety and Immigration – Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 3:
Provide community education on immigration and public safety issues

Recent community concerns around immigration have created a need for community education on individuals’ rights, updates about policy and immigration enforcement, and connections to specific services that can help individuals and families in need. Close monitoring of the national and local immigration policy landscape is needed to determine the level of services required in the community.

The PFTF identified a need for additional community education around sexual assault, domestic violence, gang awareness, and nonviolence trainings that build on the work already being done in the community through expanded outreach and program capacity. Although service providers have been able to increase awareness and knowledge around these issues, ongoing and continued education is necessary so that all individuals and families who need support are able to access these essential resources. Close collaboration and partnership with the Pilsen Health Task Force and the Pilsen Education Task Force will expand outreach potential and access to behavioral health services in the community.

RECOMMENDATION 4:
Provide individual legal and care services

In addition to education about public safety issues, direct services are needed to assist the individuals and families with immigration legal-service needs, survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, gang-involved individuals, and individuals with substance use disorders. A variety of organizations provide such services, but the community need as identified by the PFTF exceeds the current service levels and many community members are not aware of all the services that do exist.

Providing targeted outreach to vulnerable and hard-to-reach individuals will increase the effectiveness and reach of valuable community services. Information sharing through the collaborative efforts of the new Public Safety Task Force can increase the ability to identify and reach the most vulnerable populations in need of services. Similar to the recommendation above, close collaboration with other task forces will expand outreach potential and access to additional services in the community.
Community Coordination

We envision a community where Pilsen residents’ social and emotional needs are met through culturally sensitive, ample, and coordinated community resources.
Community Coordination

Pilsen is a community with more than 79 community organizations that provide valuable resources in the areas of arts, education, schools, faith, children and youth services, housing, immigrant services, health, community development, public safety, sports, and more. With so many programs offered in the community, it is a challenge for residents to navigate all the organizations and the numerous programs they provide.

During the quality-of-life planning process, residents and community-based organization representatives and each quality-of-life planning working group (Housing, Jobs and the Economy, Health, Education and Youth, Arts and Culture, and Public Safety and Immigration) expressed the need for more coordinated resources. Often parents would mention that they did not have a place to send their child after school only to learn that there was an after-school program with open slots looking for children. The coordination of community resources will allow for higher utilization of available programs and services in the community that provide the supports many individuals and families need to maintain a high quality of life.

At the time of the plan’s creation, the Chicago Voz (formerly Pilsen Portal) website provided valuable information about Pilsen, including news stories, highlights of community businesses and individuals, photos and videos of the community, an events page, documentation of murals, a catalog of services in the community, and listing of community stores. Building on the valuable information that Chicago Voz provided to create a comprehensive community resource guide will enhance the ability of community residents to access businesses and services and will also assist service providers and businesses in accessing their customers.
Community Coordination – Existing Conditions

**Former Community Resource Guides**

- Chicago Voz (formerly Pilsen Portal) was an extensive community resource guide for Pilsen.

- The Pilsen Portal was created as a result of the 2006 Pilsen Quality-of-Life Plan

**Coordination of Services**

- The need for increased coordination of services was mentioned as a priority during the public community visioning meeting.

- Each quality-of-life planning working group (Housing, Jobs and the Economy, Health, Education and Youth, Arts and Culture, and Public Safety and Immigration) expressed the need for more coordinated services in their respective areas.
Community Coordination – Existing Conditions

Community Service Providers Located in Pilsen

Data Source: 2015 Non-Profit Registration
Community Coordination – Strategy

STRATEGY 1
Develop a comprehensive community resource guide
The creation of a comprehensive community resource guide will require the establishment of a new committee to guide the process with representation across community planning areas. Utilizing the valuable resources and content already available and other community resource guides and directories, and identifying all the existing and available community resources, will be a large task requiring the cooperation of numerous community-based organizations over a long period of time to maintain and update information.

The resource guide may take many forms, including an online format, a paper format that can be distributed by service providers, and the use of innovative technology such as phone apps. The various forms, each with different audiences, will allow for the most widespread distribution of community resource information. Advertising the various forms of the guide with a marketing campaign around it will encourage its use by residents, and will also encourage businesses and service providers to include their most current information in the guide.
Data Sources

History Section and Timeline Sources:


“History of the University,” History, President’s Office, University of Illinois, https://www.uiuc.edu/president/history/history_of_the_university/.


Data Sources

Community Profiles Sources:
Chicago Public Schools; 2011–2016 Graduation Rates.
CMAP Pilsen and Little Village Existing Conditions Report.
Crime in Chicagoland. Chicago Tribune.
LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2014), U.S. Census Bureau.
Non-Profit Registration, 2015.
U.S. Census Bureau; 1980 Census.
U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 Census.
U.S. Census Bureau; 2000 Census.

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Appendix A: Ideas from Community Visioning Meeting

**Community Resources**
- Regular resource fairs
- Community centers for all ages
- Directory of services in Pilsen
- Athletic facility
- LGBTQIA center
- Community center
- More information for community residents
- Save the St. Adalbert church towers
- Parks, schools, and community/social service organizations have adequate funding so that they are stabilized
- Metered parking (many people take two spaces)
- A learning center for the community
- LGBT center/program
- Destigmatization to seeking social services
- Social Services coordination
- A new library with a second floor
- More coordination of social services
- That community organizations be more responsible to what is relevant to the community
- Community accessible centers
- Accessible community center - job skill and artisanal
- Gyms
- Community center
- Community center

**Economic Development**
- Vocational training - building trades for youth in carpentry, plumbing, electricity, and health sciences
- Benefit Agreement for the community. Be part of the development of our community
- No to large businesses
- For there to be more Job resources
- Legal advice for small business owners
- No displacement of small businesses for luxury ones
- One strong chamber of commerce
- Industrial corridor employs mostly Pilsen residents
- Employ people of the community - build with people from our community
- No to a power plant
- Raise the minimum wage

**Arts/Culture Entertainment**
- More mariachi programs in our schools - Programs like the Chicago Mariachi project
- Expand historic preservation
- Historic Districts
- Pilsen is the cultural center for the Mexican community
- Arts programming
- Systemic support for Pilsen’s creative citizens - their art is our story
- Cultural zocalo on Blue Island/18th landmark
- Pilsen youth mariachis are national champions
- Continuation of cultural art programs
- Art and Culture as point of public gathering (not entertainment).
- Culture the way Dia De los Muertos was at the museum in 2015.
- Cultural center that involves the community with activities, such as art, dance
- Culturally competent artistically focused restaurant district
- Art murals
- Preserving art within our community
- Pilsen Artist should collaborate to create an artistic Center
- Art in restaurants
- Mural Art
- More art and music offered

**Public Safety**
- Better community policing
- Community/Police interaction
- Police building trust with those in the community (workshops, etc.)
- Safe communities
- Police cameras in problem blocks
- Pilsen is one of the safest neighborhoods in Chicago
- Police presence especially around school
- Police present at schools and parks
- Better, faster police response
- No gang violence in the community - safe neighborhood
- Community involvement in public safety
- Peace
- More safety and vigilance
- I believe most of the CPD is honest but it seems their hands are tied. Profiling can be a double-edged sword
- More community policing
- Better interaction with the police
- Violence reduction
- Stop violence and more security
- Security Cameras
- Police outside of our schools and parks
- I believe that the majority of the police officers are honest, but their hands are tight. Racial Profiling is a double edge sword
- Police presence
- More police

**Beautification**
- Green planters on street corners where cars don’t park
- More trees
- Bridge community involvement to citizens - change with beautification of community
- Sidewalk benches
Appendix A: Ideas from Community Visioning Meeting

** Beautification cont.**  
I see much concrete being poured, dead sidewalks, how about more trees  
More greenery/Plants on the corners of the streets  
Green areas in Pilsen  
I see more concrete than trees  
More plants on the corners and streets  

** Parks/Recreation**  
Repurpose coal factory properties into park community center  
Parks  
Additional links or connectivity to the proposed “Paseo Trail”  
Better maintenance for existing community buildings and spaces (Dvorak, Casa Aztlan)  
More green space (community garden)  
Parks Improvements  
Parks - Quality of facilities and quality programs  
Designated dog park  
Park district coordination and services  
Repair and maintain existing parks  
More of a connection with “El Paseo”  
Harrison Park - renovated parks  
Water taxi - river walk  
More green spaces  
Open the water front to river in Pilsen  
Clear the empty lots for a small park with a fountain  
A second community garden for planting vegetables and fruit trees  
Update our park and new parks  
cleaning after dogs  
Emphasis on community gardens/green space  
Bicycle lanes  
parks and school funding  
Prepare and maintain community parks  
More greenspace  

** Community Building**  
Family friendly community  
Elected officials are responsive to community  
Politically active/voting community  
Politicians responsive to needs of Pilsen  
Community involved in Policy - % money for art, % affordable housing  
Community Power decision making  
Hold organizations to be accountable to what is relevant to the community  
Intentional collaboration between arts and non-arts organizations and institutions to utilize the arts to address systemic barriers/issues  
Keep public officials and leaders accountable  
Healthy communities of faith  
New community council  
high voter turnout in primaries/general elections  
Healthy church communities  
Keep Pilsen Mexican - Why is Pilsen gerrymandered  
Diverse community ethnically, racially, income, socially  
See results from this meeting - follow up on goals  
Residents reclaiming Pilsen  
That community organizations be more responsible to what is relevant to the community  
Why is this plan different from the plan in 2016?  
The Quality of life plan has been a failure. Pilsen is becoming too expensive, the school have not improved. Today the same organizations are making a new plan. Why are there only 4 organizations?  
Make homeowners aware about the importance of conserving our culture  

** Education**  
Schools that receive equal funding and opportunities for all of our students  
All schools are at capacity  
True community schools (no charters) with resources, diverse staff, implementation of culturally relevant classes  
Teachers are not parents  
Develop schools with high quality dual language programs  
Quality schools - academically, physical plants  
More arts and culture offered in the schools  
All Pilsen residents enroll their children in Pilsen schools! Get involved in your neighborhood schools  
Schools with equitable resources and appropriate infrastructure  
Sustainable community programs for pre-k - 12 students around the arts, health and nutrition, athletics, and job training  
Non-violence education  
That all of the school have full time music and arts staff  
Graduation (High school and college) rates are at all time high  
Language programs at all schools so our students are bilingual/trilingual  
Juarez is a top 10 school in Illinois  
Elected officials advocate for resources and programs for Pilsen schools  
Early childhood education  
Quality, affordable child care  
Every school has full-time music and arts teachers on staff  
More art and music offered at schools preservation and activation of Mexican culture through the arts (murals, cultural celebrations, etc.)  
Sustainable community schools  
More funding for public schools  
Better our schools in many aspects  
parks and school funding  
funding for after school programs  

** Health**  
Quality health facilities - Diverse income access  
Community mental health clinic  
Breastfeeding friendly community  
Public mental health clinic or at least community funded  
More locations where we are taught to lead healthy lifestyles  
More resources for diabetes and obesity classes for children  
More resources to fight infant obesity and places where they teach children what they should eat to be healthy  

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Appendix A: Ideas from Community Visioning Meeting

Education cont.
True community schools, resources, diversity, the implementation of an inclusive curriculum
More after-school programs
That our children have the right to an education without reservations
That the schools, especially Cooper, are able to have, or have again, their art, computer, and library classes
More afterschool programs about photography, developing, graffiti that are free or low cost.
Afterschool programs for youth - sports
Civic education

Housing
Affordable housing
Stop predatory landlords or real-estate
More affordable housing that is based on the Pilsen median income
Subsidized local home ownership
Renovate unused buildings for business/housing
Affordable housing
Rent control
Education on housing co-ops
Stop rent and property taxes from continuing to increase
Pilsen is diverse and affordable
Community benefits agreement to be implanted with every developer interested in Pilsen and/or Little Village
More housing that accommodates multi-member families
Stick to the mixed income housing percentage or raise the percentage for low-income residents in apartment buildings
Affordable housing
Housing that is accessible
Affordable housing - homes not apartments for families
New tax on zoning changes
Keep the property taxes at level that is reasonable
Rent caps
Solution to slow gentrification so that displacement is stopped/minimized
Lower taxes - stop increasing taxes for housing. Do not over assess property taxes or freeze
Property tax freeze
Hold alderman accountable, what ordinances need to be developed, rent control, balancing development and community
Help me finance fixing my roof
Affordable housing renting vs. home ownership - barriers of entry
Can CHA invest in more affordable housing for Pilsen? There is a shortage of affordable housing in our community
Regarding Pilsen paseo, are there going to be provisions to freeze taxes around their path so homeowners don’t lose their homes?
Community research on gentrification, rent levels, affordability and building quality
Educate the community on how to lower their taxes
Lower property taxes for low income people
Someone help me lower my taxes
Help with fixing my roof stop gentrification
Stop property taxes now
Affordable housing
An affordable cost of living for the residents
Reduce taxes
If taxes go much higher then that is the last nail in the coffin for me; someone help me
Commit 75% of apartments to be affordable
More assistance with affordable housing based on the median income of the residents of Pilsen
That the properties of Pilsen not be overvalued because afterwards many people lose out for not having the proper value
Stop the increase in taxes and housing prices that have already increased
Offer opportunities to get houses with low or reasonable prices to prevent families from moving out, with them their children and with them the money for our schools
The apartments offered by the Resurrection Project are still very expensive
Affordable housing and more homeownership

Youth Programs
Creative youth development in-school and out of school
More after school programs
More investment on youth programs
Youth paid internships to address gang violence
Engagement of community youth in beautification projects, including green space
Youth employment/paid internships geared towards addressing gang violence. Also, geared towards youth involved in gangs, felons and those released from juvenile detention
I must believe most young people are good, rowdy but good
Summer jobs for youth
Youth and parent programming
Enhance after school activities for our Pilsen CPS
Funding (consistent, increasing) for youth programs
Funding for after-school programs, especially in the arts, to help youth gain skills and confidence and have alternatives to gangs and criminal activity
At risk youth rehabilitation center
Activities for our youth
Vocational training for our youth
Sustainable community programs for youth job training
More art programs for the youth
I believe that the majority of the youth are good
Job training for youth
Community programs that support academic, creative and cultural development of our youth
Appendix A: Ideas from Community Visioning Meeting

Government Services/Maintenance/Transportation
Defined parking spaces
Dog waste pickup
Increased garbage pickup
Recycle services and better city services
Too many pay car meters
Return CTA 24 hours on 18th street
Put benches at all bus stops
Get rid of no parking signs - there's way too many.
Snow removal and street cleaning
Keeping Pilsen clean
No meters on streets
Rat abatement
Less residential parking
More bike lanes
More street cleaning
Pick up dog poop
Clean alleys, parks, school, sidewalks, etc.
City garbage pick-up
Green renewable energy
Maintain Pilsen clean
cleaning of snow and streets
rats
Check to make sure handicapped parking is needed
Less lighting pollution - LED lights
Clean neighborhoods and repaired streets, alleys, and sidewalks
Clean streets
Cleaning the street in the winter
Alderman services need to service the public
Clean alleys, parks,
Better trash collection
Clean up after dogs
Less garbage and contamination
More shelters at bus stops
More bike lanes
Attention of the politicians
Have public officials and leaders responsible for their actions