

# South Chicago's Commercial Avenue Revitalization Plan

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**Great Cities Institute  
University of Illinois at Chicago**

### **UIC Great Cities Institute**

Teresa Córdova, *Director*

### **Staff**

Tim Imeokparia, *Director of Research and Planning*

Thea Crum, *Director of Neighborhoods Initiative*

Matt Wilson, *Economic Development Planner*

Ryan Wilson, *Research Assistant*

### **Project Managers**

Jackson Morsey, *Urban Planner*

Jack Rocha, *Research Specialist*

### **South Chicago Chamber of Commerce**

Dan Lira, *Executive Director*

Adrian Cardoso, *Board President, A Metal Scrap*

Jackie Samuel, *Admin. Vice President, Claretian Associates*

Sam Gomez, *Vice President, Our Neighborhood Times*

Yessenia Carreon, *Secretary, Resident*

Tom Schell, *Treasurer, South Chicago Parents & Friends*

### **Planning Committee**

Arnold Bradford, *Crossroads Collaborative Chicago*

Timothy Brown, *EnterLuck*

Kimberly Clark, *Waddell & Reed*

Bonnie Dinell-Diamond, *Steel City Furniture*

Amalia Nieto Gomez, *Alliance of the Southeast*

Ana Guajardo, *Centro De Trabajadores Unidos*

Alessandra Halliburton, *KW Commercial*

Angela Hurlock, *Claretian Associates*

Eric January, *Resident*

Kenneth Litzsey, *Bowen High School Alumni Association*

Robert Loncar, *Loncar Law*

Antonio Macias Jr., *Business Owner*

James McMillian, *Resident*

Kevin Murphy, *Resident*

Sylvia Ortega, *Bush Homeowners & Tenants Association*

Jorge Perez, *HACIA*

Joann Podkul, *Southeast Chicago Historical Society*

Laurentino Ramirez, *Spanish Coalition for Housing*

Father Wolf Werling, *The Lights of Honor International*

Xia Xiang, *GRACE Restorative Justice*

Christian Zamarron, *Centro De Trabajadores Unidos*

### **10th Ward Aldermanic Office**

Susan Sadlowski Garza, *Alderman*

Ismael Cuevas, *Chief of Staff*

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# Introduction



Streetscape of intersection of 92nd and Commercial Avenue, heart of South Chicago shopping district, c1950. View looks north down Commercial Avenue.  
(Source: Industrial Heritage Archives, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)

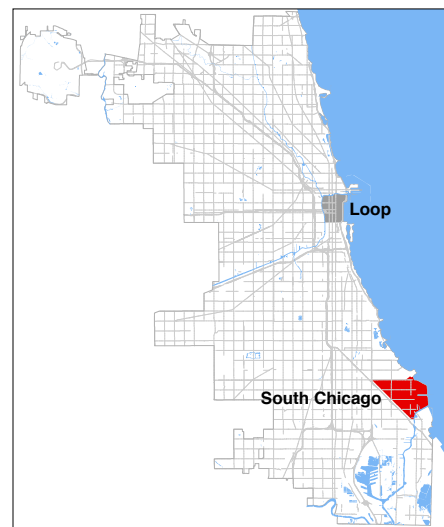
## Context and Need for Revitalization

The last mill at the South Works site of the United States Steel Corporation (US Steel) closed in 1992. The loss of this major employer has taken a significant toll on South Chicago particularly its economic activity. Once one of the most vibrant neighborhood commercial corridors in the city of Chicago, Commercial Avenue lost its major department stores, movie theaters, and many neighborhood businesses.

UIC's Great Cities Institute (GCI) produced this plan in collaboration with the South Chicago Chamber of Commerce (SCCC) and Special Service Area #5 (SSA) as part of the chamber's long time efforts to harness resources to help maintain and revitalize the corridor.

## Project Corridor

The Commercial Avenue corridor is located within the South Chicago community area on the southeast side of the City of Chicago. For the purpose of this plan, its focus is on Commercial Avenue from 83rd Street to the north and 93rd Street to the south.



**Figures 1-2:** Left: South Chicago's location in the city of Chicago. Above: The Commercial Avenue corridor with Special Service Area #5 boundaries (Source: ESRI, City of Chicago data portal, maps generated by GCI)

## Planning Process

To produce a plan that reflected community values and priorities, Great Cities Institute and the South Chicago Chamber of Commerce engaged in a collaborative planning process involving residents, businesses, community organizations and other key stakeholders to develop a vision for the future of the Commercial Avenue corridor.

The process was a “bottom-up” approach based on the input of many stakeholders over twelve months and reflects their ideas and desires. A planning committee composed of residents, business owners, community organizations, and SCCC and SSA board members formed to provide guidance during the planning process, as well as to carry out implementation after the plan is completed. In addition to regular meetings of the planning committee, to ensure a broad stakeholder input, the planning process involved a public engagement strategy that included:

- Identifying and involving stakeholders
- Organizing visioning and charrette workshops to develop a plan for the future of the Commercial Avenue corridor.
- Obtaining feedback on drafts of the plan

The specific tasks of this planning process included:

- Define the target area and assess the current conditions of the Commercial Avenue corridor environment.
- Research the market environment to assess mix of retail and the quality of goods and services offered in order to identify concentrations and gaps
- Identify physical improvements for streets and sidewalks
- Develop recommendations to help turn Commercial Avenue into a vibrant commercial and cultural corridor
- Recommend implementation strategies & timelines

## Community Outreach

In order for the planning process to be as open and participatory for as many stakeholders as possible, the planning committee conducted extensive outreach to the community. The committee distributed flyers, posted on social media, and made personal invitations to residents, businesses, property owners, community leaders, and organizations and other key stakeholders.

The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce has an extensive following on Facebook and Twitter. This is notable because many people who have moved away from South Chicago are still connected to the community through the use of social media and their opinions were considered valuable in the planning process as an important goal is to attract former residents and businesses back to the area.

In order to gather input for the plan, the GCI team facilitated two community meetings. Approximately 50-60 people attended each meeting. The first was a visioning process on November 5, 2015 at South Chicago Parents & Friends. The visioning process involved community members expressing their concerns about certain hopes for the future of Commercial Avenue. Participants then collectively sorted ideas into categories based on common themes. From these categories, a vision statement for the corridor was developed, and from this statement goals were then established.



**Figure 3:** Visioning process meeting held on November 5, 2015 at South Chicago Parents & Friends.  
(Source: GCI photo)



The second meeting was a planning workshop held on November 17, 2015. GCI staff placed maps of the corridor on tables in five categories derived from the community visioning process: Urban Design, Built Environment, Infrastructure, & Transportation; Arts, Culture, Tourism, & Capture Markets; Policy, Services, Safety, & Amenities for Youth; Entertainment Destination, Retail, Food and Restaurants, & Diverse Business Niches; and Workforce and Business Development. Community members moved between the five tables and placed their ideas on the maps with post-it notes. As ideas were posted on maps, attendees voted on ideas with which they agreed by placing a dot sticker on ideas. This process identified ideas that were seen as most important by the community, and gave a foundation to build the recommendations of this plan.

A two-question open-ended survey distributed throughout the community provided additional ideas for the community vision. The first question was “In 10 years, what is your vision for an improved Commercial Avenue corridor between 83rd and 93rd Street?”. The second question was “What specific improvements or ideas would you like to see in the corridor?”. Over a hundred responses to the survey were received, and incorporated into the vision, goals, and recommendations of the plan.

Planning committee members met on a weekly basis throughout the formation of the plan to work on their strategy for implementation. GCI staff joined the committee members monthly to give updates on progress and gather input on plan development.

10th Ward Alderman Susan Sadlowski Garza and her staff attended multiple committee meetings, as well as the two community meetings.

The GCI team presented a first draft of the plan to the community on April 12, 2016 for further feedback. The team then exhibited the final draft plan at an open house held on June 14, 2016. Comments received were incorporated into the final plan.

## Corridor Vision Statement

The following vision statement developed from community input and shaped the focus of the plan:

*“In 10 years, Commercial Avenue will recapture the economic vitality of the past by supporting the small business sector, encouraging ground-up economic development, and working towards becoming an entertainment destination for the southeast side. We will tell our stories and enrich our history through the celebration of our cultural diversity along the corridor. Commercial Avenue will become a thriving pedestrian corridor, where residents can showcase their community to the wider region.”*

## Plan Goals

The community established twelve overarching ideas during the visioning meeting to guide the development of the corridor. The planning committee distilled the twelve overarching ideas into nine main goals within three broad categories of economic, built environment, and culture. These nine goals are:

### Economic

- Recapture the economic vitality and services of the Commercial Avenue corridor
- Promote economic development from within and for the community
- Promote a strong small business sector
- Establish Commercial Avenue as an entertainment destination for the southeast side

### Built Environment

- Develop community spaces that are beneficial to everyone
- Create a pedestrian-friendly corridor that encourages walking
- Beautify and improve the built environment of the corridor

### Culture

- Tell the story of South Chicago and enrich the history of the area
- Celebrate the cultural diversity of South Chicago



# Community Profile



Streetscape of west side of 9100 block of Commercial Avenue, c1950. View looks southwest toward 92nd Street.  
(Source: Industrial Heritage Archives, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)

## History and Current State

### South Chicago

Despite its prime location on the mouth of the Calumet River, it took a while for development to take permanent hold in South Chicago. However, the devastation of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 brought changes to industrial development trends in the Chicagoland Area. Growing industries seeking cheap land, combined with changing interest by Chicago developers to establish open waterfronts, brought new development to the Calumet River area.

One of the largest landowners at the time was the Calumet & Chicago Canal and Dock Company which owned 6,000 acres of land as well as controlled rights to develop the mouth of the Calumet River. An important development occurred in 1880, when the North Chicago Rolling-Mill Company purchased 70 acres of land along Lake Michigan and the north bank of the river, naming their new location, South Works.

The establishment of South Works was followed by many others in search of cheap land and accessibility to the local waterways. Shipping and rail expanded around Lake Michigan and Lake Calumet as well as well as the Calumet River. By 1906, the Calumet River was equal in volume of commerce to the Chicago River and by 1916 the Calumet was five times larger.

As industries and jobs grew, the residential population grew as well. In 1880, the region of South Chicago, including Hegewisch and Pullman, had less than 2,000 residents, however by 1883, as result of the location of new industries, the population had grown to 16,000. South Chicago became a port of entry for new immigrants who provided the labor for the burgeoning industrial activity. The community formed into one of the most diverse in Chicago, with many ethnic groups brought together by their jobs at the steel mills. Population peaked in the 1950s with over 55,000 residents. However with the loss of industry and jobs the population declined to just over 30,000 residents.



**Figure 4:** South Chicago aerial photo, 1938. Commercial Avenue outlined in red, with South Works to the east on the lakefront.  
(Source: USGS)

The community began to decline with changes in corporation dynamics and a diminished demand for steel. Among many factors for South Chicago's decline, one can be traced to 1900 when South Works was purchased by United States Steel Corporation (US Steel), becoming one of the largest steel companies in the world. In an effort to maintain competitive advantage, the company decided against modernizing the South Works site and instead opted for a new site across the border in the development-friendly state of Indiana. The new site, Gary Steel Works, was established in 1906, along with a whole new city to support its large workforce, setting the stage for South Chicago's eventual decline.



**Figure 5:** Statue of Columbus at South Chicago Ave. and 92nd Street, with automobiles driving nearby, 1929.

(Source: *Chicago History Museum*)

After World War II, the American steel industry was affected by competition from an increasingly global market and corporate decisions to export manufacturing activity. The steel industry was also affected by mechanization and the eventual growth of cheaper alternative materials such as plastics. The late 1970s through the 1980s, saw a steady decline in jobs, and labor issues resulting in industry wide domestic strikes. As an obsolete site, the loss of jobs hit hard at South Works, and in 1992 its last mill closed, 110 years after it first opened, ending the era of big steel in South Chicago.

### The Commercial Avenue Corridor

The history of the Commercial Avenue corridor parallels the history of steel in South Chicago. In 1890, ten years after the opening of the South Works site, commercial activity formed around Commercial Avenue and 92nd street. An 1891 inventory of businesses along the corridor included 45 saloons, 40 clothing stores, 24 food stores, 9 hardware stores, 5 druggists, and numerous other businesses. Commercial and 92nd also became a transfer point for trolleys followed by the bus system that replaced them, drawing customers from throughout the southeast side.

By 1920, the corridor had developed into one of the most vibrant commercial areas in the region. Commercial Avenue was a diverse shopping district with neighborhood shops as well as large department stores. The largest was Goldblatt's department store, which had a large three story building on 91st and Commercial. Any product could be purchased or necessity met on Commercial Avenue, often drawing shoppers from neighboring communities that lacked the diversity of businesses found on Commercial Avenue. The corridor also had financial institutions that played an important role in the development of the community. One of the largest was the South Chicago Savings Bank, established in 1902, and moved to 92nd Street and Commercial Avenue in 1926.

At one time South Chicago had multiple hotels, newspaper outlets, and theaters, with the last theater closing in the 1980's. Over the years, institutions changed or left the corridor following population decline as people followed jobs to other neighborhoods and suburbs surrounding Chicago. However, in spite of the decline, the corridor still contains many long lasting institutions and businesses, some of which have been around for over 100 years.

### Civic Life and Organizations

South Chicago was home to many social and civic groups including Lions Clubs, Masons, Civic Leagues, and Kiwanis Clubs all dedicated to promoting and growing the community. William Kornblum in his 1974 book *Blue Collar Community* describes the many formal and informal work, political and neighborhood-based relationships in South Chicago among and within a multitude of ethnic groups. One of the longest lasting institutions is the South Chicago Chamber of Commerce. Started in 1924, the Chamber has witnessed the many changes along the corridor.

(Sources: *Chicago's Southeast Side*, *Chicago Southeast Side Revisited*, *One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago*)

## Demographics

South Chicago is an official Chicago community area bounded by 79th Street to the north, South Chicago Avenue diagonally on the west, 95th Street on the south, and the lakefront to the east.

The population of South Chicago, like many southeast side neighborhoods, has slowly declined since the 1950s with the loss of the steel industry and the movement of populations to post-World-War II suburbs. The population of South Chicago peaked at 55,715 residents in 1950. The 2015 population estimate was 30,823 residents, a slight decrease from the 2010 Census number of 31,198 residents.

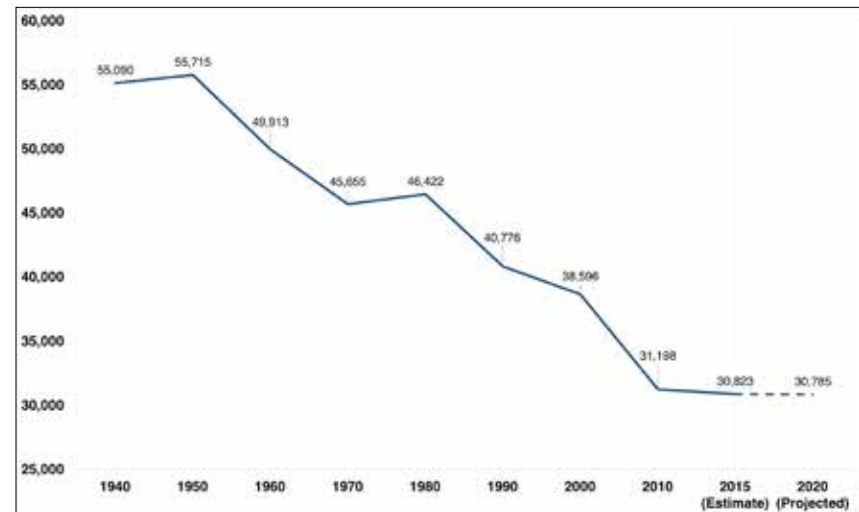
In 2014, data shows South Chicago is a diverse community with Black or African Americans accounting for 73.3% of the population and Hispanic or Latinos accounting for 22.6% of the population. Hispanic or Latinos of Mexican descent make up the largest ethnic community, with 18.2% of residents identifying as Mexican.

8.7% of the residents of South Chicago have a Bachelor's degree (Compared to 20.9% Chicago). 5.2% have a Master's degree or more (14.0% Chicago), and 74.6% of residents have completed high school (81.6% Chicago).

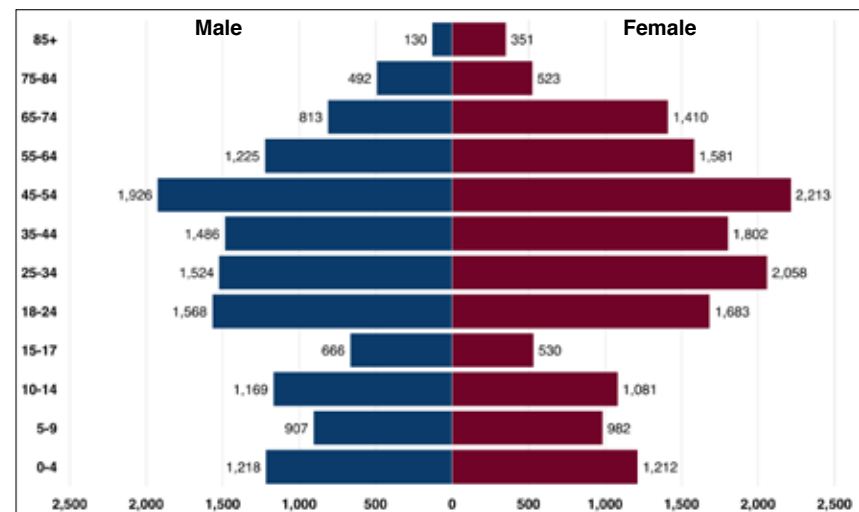
Median household income in South Chicago is \$29,453 (\$47,831 Chicago). There are 10,176 households within the community area with a median age of 34.1 years old (33.4 Chicago). Tenure breakdown of housing includes: owner occupied 27.6% (38.6% Chicago), renter occupied 44.7% (47.8% Chicago), and vacant 27.7% (13.6% Chicago).

(For full American Community Survey data, see Appendix A)

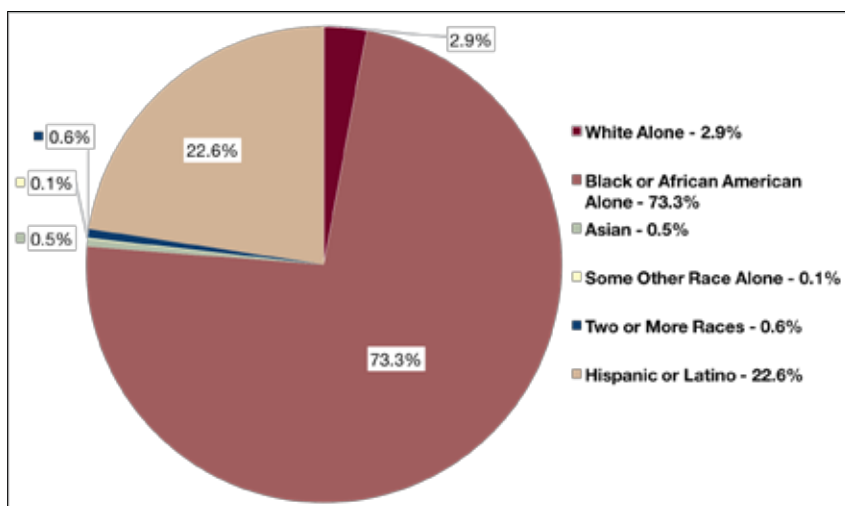
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau and 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and ESRI Business Analyst)



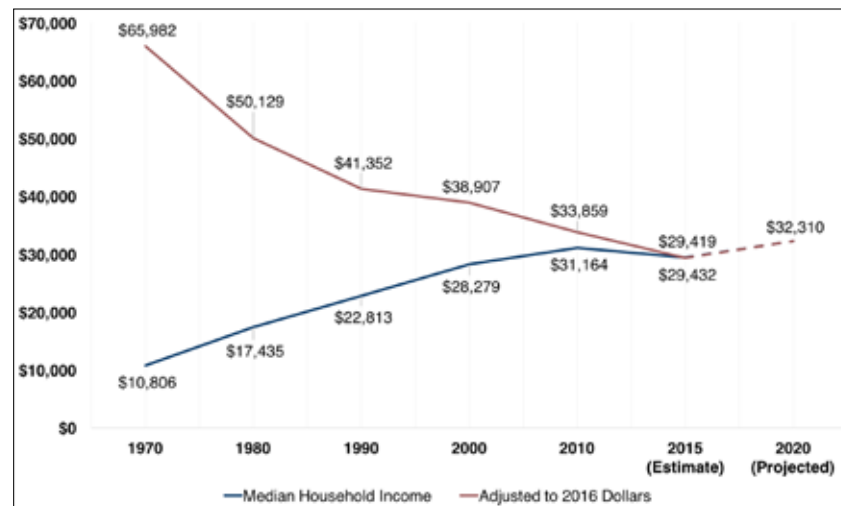
**Figure 6:** South Chicago population 1940 – 2010 with 2015 estimate, and 2020 projection  
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri Business Analyst)



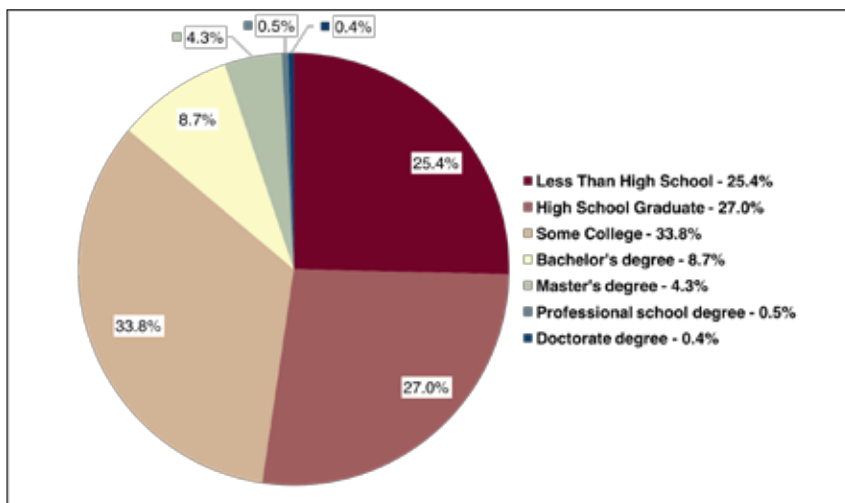
**Figure 7:** South Chicago population by gender and age cohorts  
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



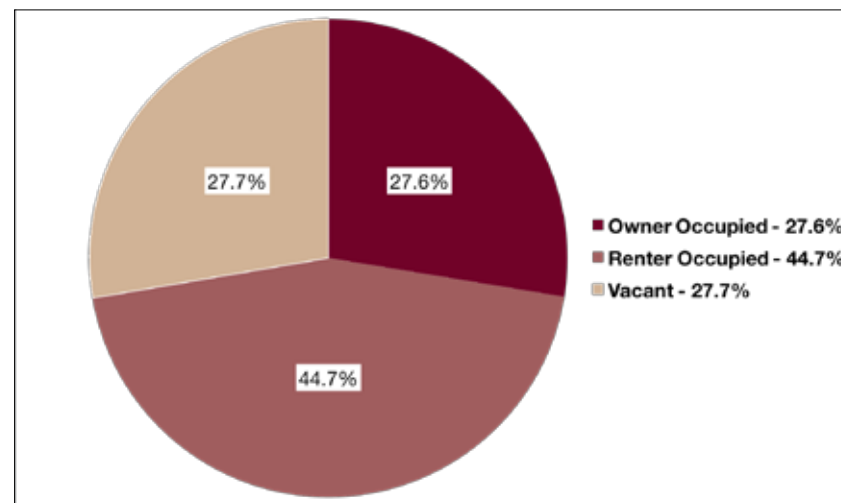
**Figure 8:** South Chicago race and ethnicity  
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



**Figure 10:** South Chicago median household income adjusted for inflation to 2016 dollar value, 1970 – 2010 with 2015 estimate, and 2020 projection  
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, projection from Esri Business Analyst)



**Figure 9:** South Chicago educational attainment  
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



**Figure 11:** South Chicago housing unit tenure  
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



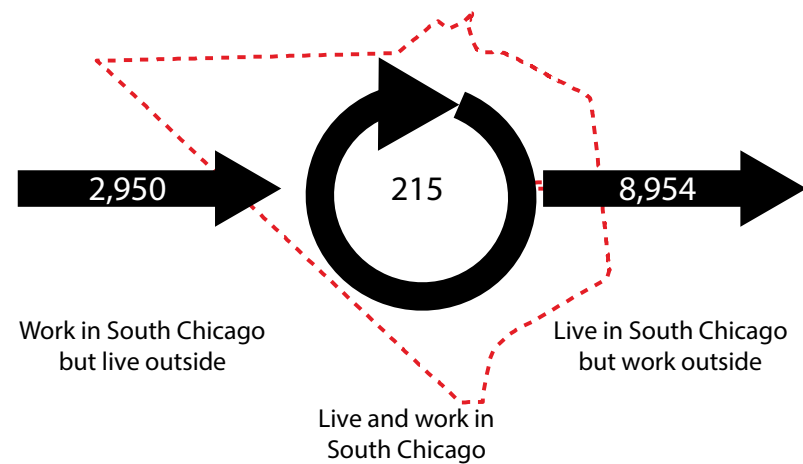
## Employment Conditions

The unemployment rate in South Chicago is 12.2% for residents over the age of 16, compared to Chicago at 8.7%. 2,172 persons are employed within South Chicago who live outside of the community, while 7,545 residents work outside of the community. 237 residents both live and work within South Chicago (See Figure 12).

The top two employment sectors for South Chicago residents are office & administrative support occupations 15.4% and professional occupations 12.3%. Sales occupations; transportation occupations; and construction, extraction, & maintenance occupations round out the top five employment sectors. The largest cohort of residents make between \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month.

The majority of people who live in South Chicago tend to work in areas between 25 to 50 miles away, with most commuting to downtown Chicago for work. People who work within South Chicago come from communities between 10 to 24 miles away, while a sizable amount of employees come from the East Side community area, just to the south of South Chicago (See Figure 14).

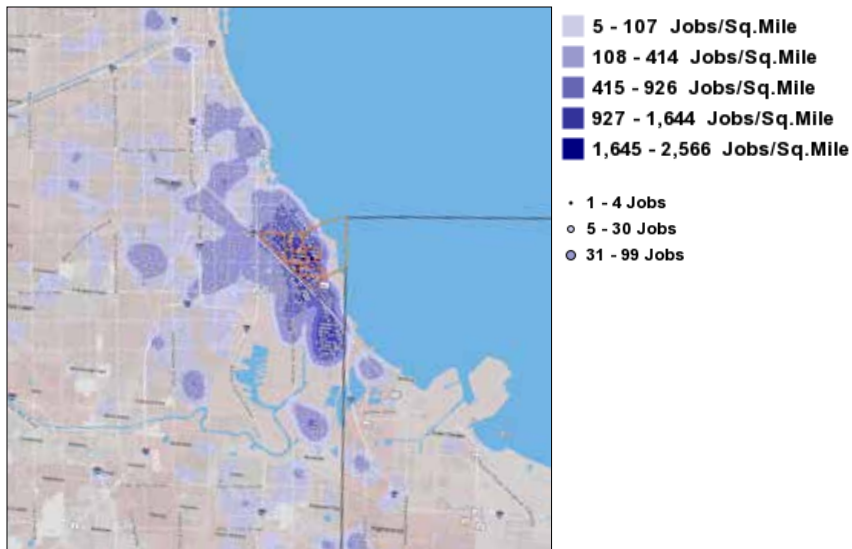
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, and Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau)



**Figure 12:** Inflow and outflow of employees in South Chicago  
(Source: Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014)

Occupation for Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	% of Workforce
Office and administrative support occupations	15.4%
Professional and related occupations	12.3%
Sales and related occupations	9.7%
Transportation and material moving occupations	9.3%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	8.7%
Personal care and service occupations	8.3%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	7.3%
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	6.8%
Production occupations	6.6%
Protective service occupations	5.8%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	5.8%
Healthcare support occupations	4.1%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.1%

**Figure 13:** Occupations of South Chicago residents.  
(Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

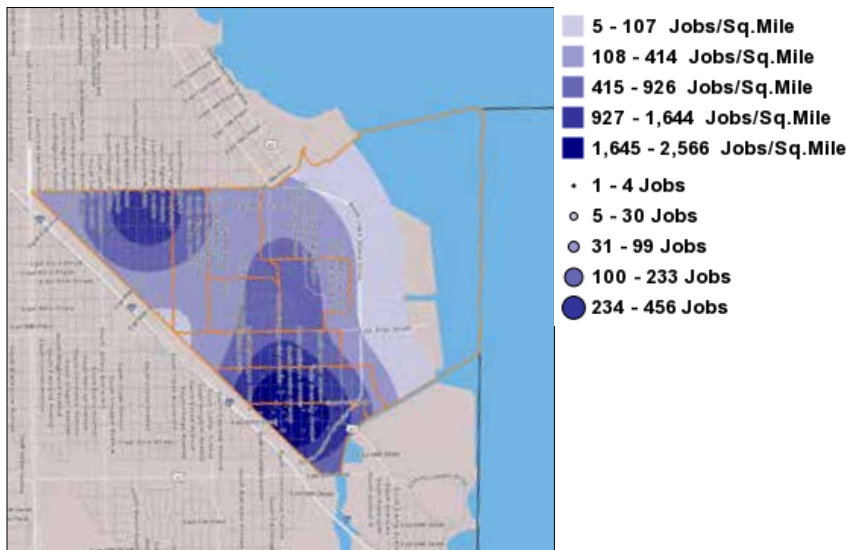


**Figure 14:** Where individuals live who work in South Chicago.  
(Source: Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau)

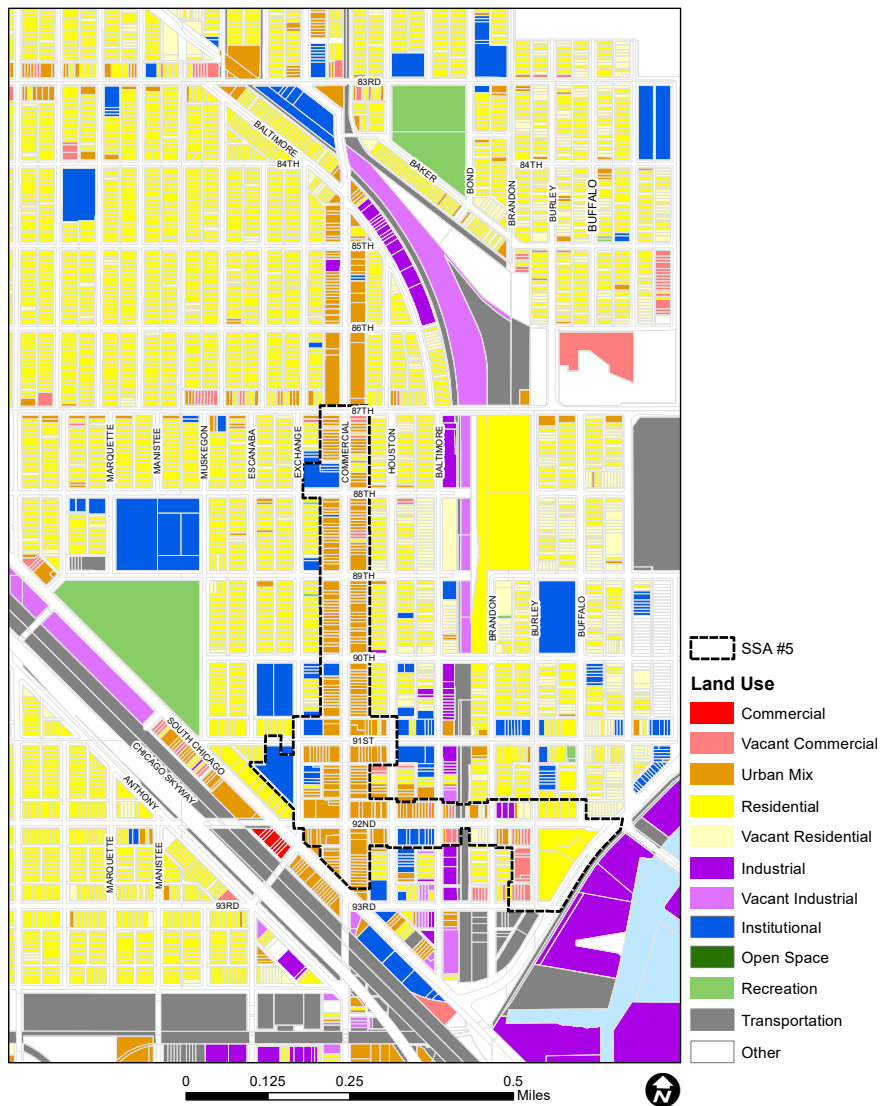
## Land Use and Zoning

Land use along the Commercial Avenue corridor consists primarily of mixed-use urban, with retail or office space on the first floor, and residential apartments and offices on the upper floors. Several institutional uses are also along the corridor, consisting mainly of religious and educational uses (See Figure 16).

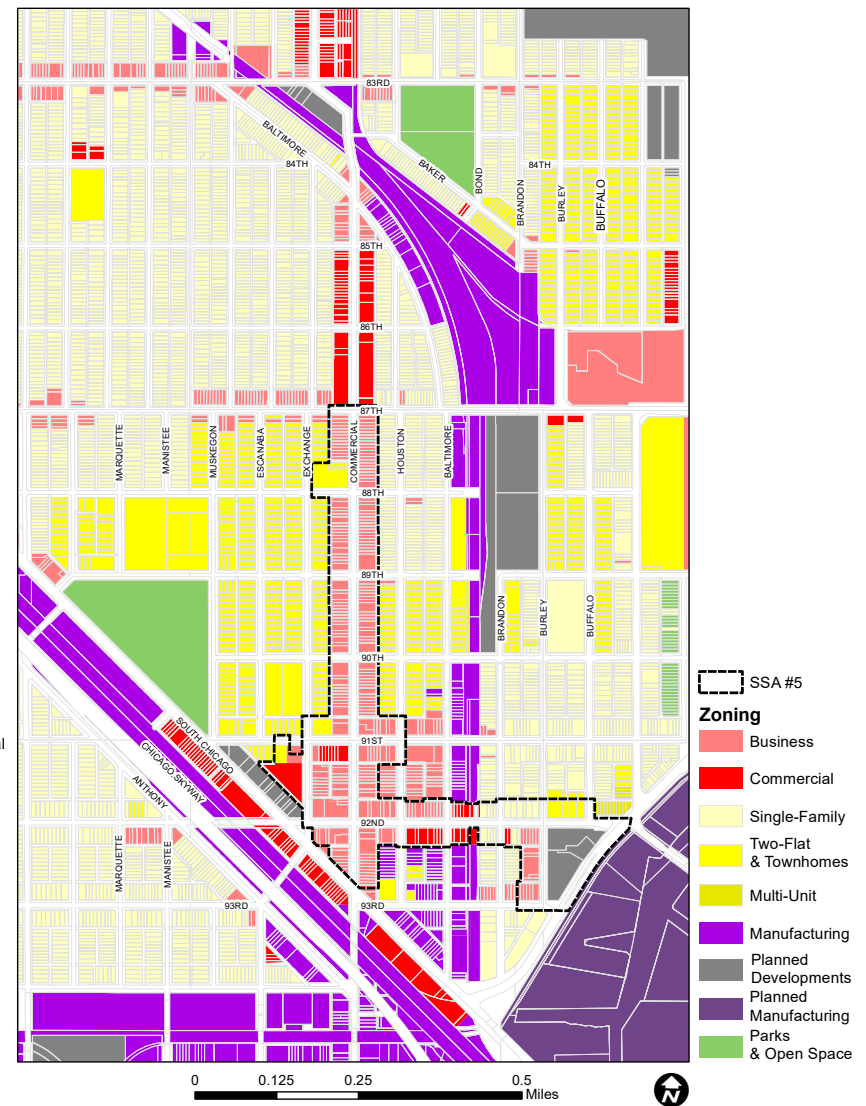
Zoning along the Commercial Avenue corridor falls into two main categories, commercial and business. Commercial zoning in the Chicago Zoning Ordinance is targeted towards larger scale businesses and big box stores. Business zoning is ideal for small businesses and walkable shopping districts (See Figure 17).



**Figure 15:** Where jobs are located in South Chicago.  
(Source: Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau)



**Figure 16: Commercial Avenue land use map**  
(Source: City of Chicago data portal, map generated by GCI)



**Figure 17: Commercial Avenue zoning map**  
(Source: City of Chicago data portal, map generated by GCI)

## Transportation and Connectivity

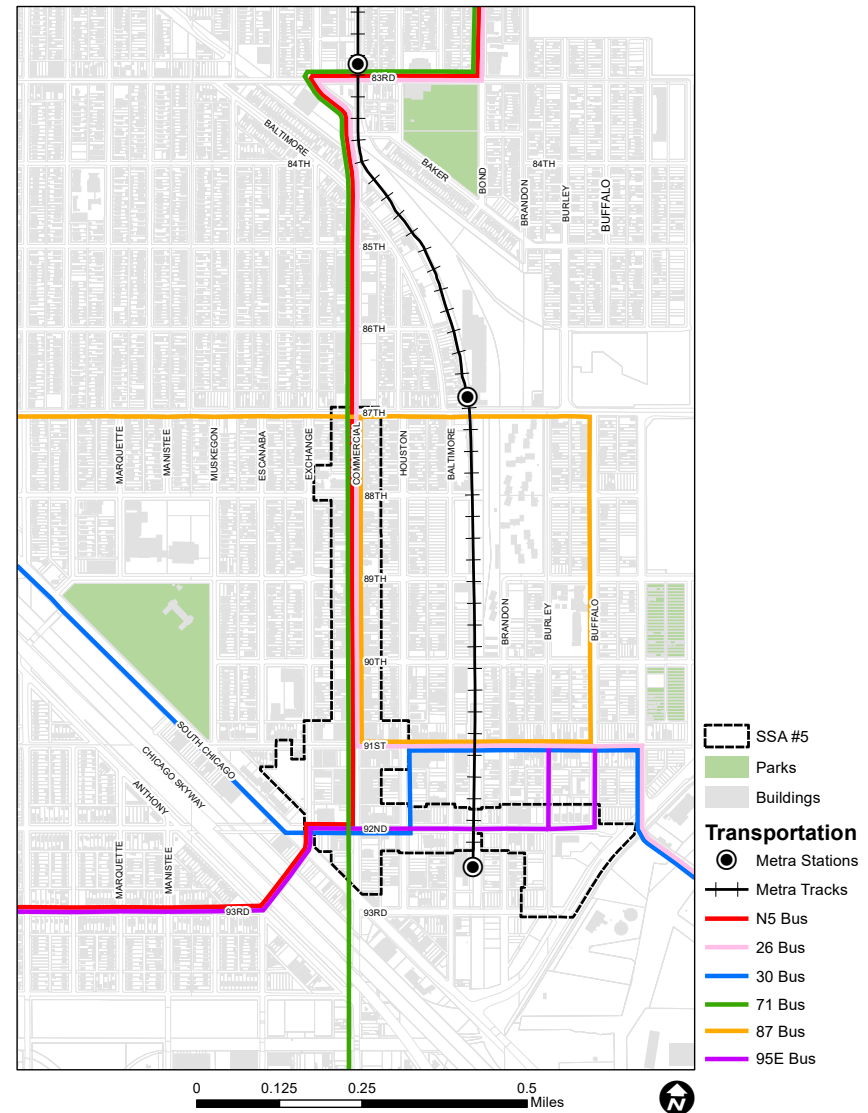
As shown in Figure 18, Commercial Avenue is well positioned in terms of accessibility by different modes of public transportation. A Metra Electric line runs parallel to the corridor two blocks to the east with stations located at 83rd, 87th, and 93rd Streets. The 93rd Street station is the end of the train line and has a park and ride lot with 702 parking spots for commuters. Trains run every 60 minutes with additional peak hour service. Travel time from the 93rd Street station to Millennium Station in downtown Chicago is 37-46 minutes. (Source: Metra, [metrarail.com](http://metrarail.com))

Several bus lines also run through and near the corridor:

- The 71st/South Shore bus runs the entire length of Commercial Avenue, connecting from the 69th Red Line east to Exchange Avenue where it turns south through the South Shore community area before turning onto Commercial Avenue, and continuing southward to 112th Street.
- The 87th bus runs east/west along 87th Street and connects from Cicero Avenue on the west, to the 87th Red Line, and continuing east past Commercial Avenue, making a turnaround on Buffalo Avenue to 91st Street, and back to Commercial Avenue before turning back westward at 87th Street.
- The 30 South Chicago bus runs from the 69th Red Line southeast along South Chicago Avenue turning on 92nd Street to pass Commercial Avenue, before heading southward into the East Side and Hegewisch community areas, where it terminates at 130th Street.
- The 93rd-95th bus runs east/west from the 95th Red Line terminal along 95th Street and 93rd Street passing Commercial Avenue at 92nd Street before turning around between Burley and Buffalo Avenues.

(Source: CTA, [transitchicago.com](http://transitchicago.com))

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) designated Commercial Avenue a neighborhood bike route in the *Streets for Cycling Plan 2020*, which means it will have bicycle infrastructure installed by the year 2020 (Source: CDOT *Streets for Cycling Plan 2020*).



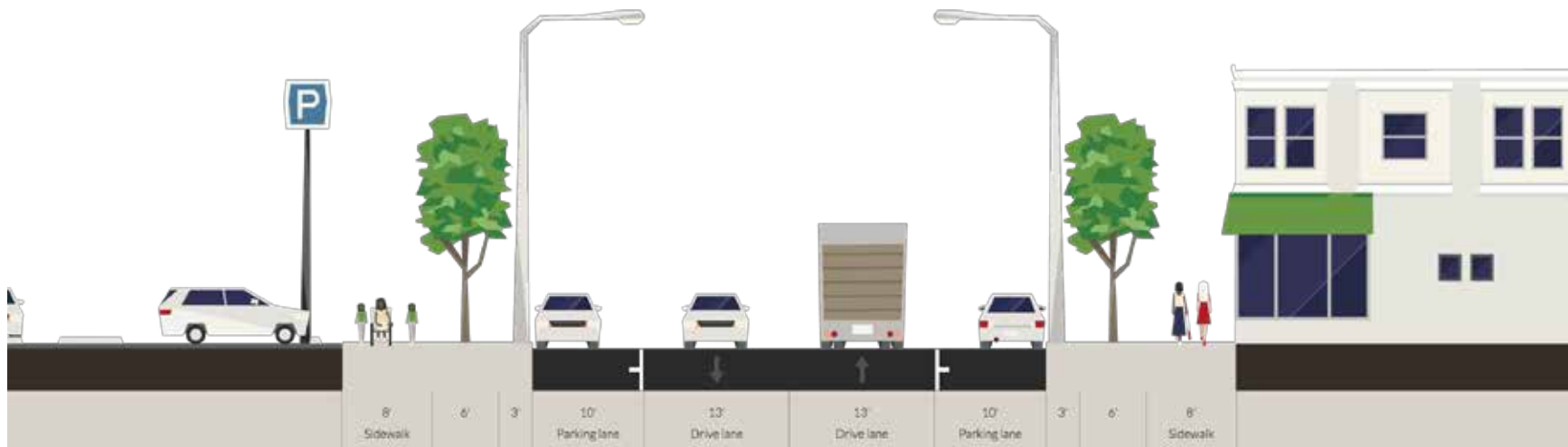
**Figure 18: Transportation Map**  
(Source: City of Chicago data portal, map generated by GCI)

## Streetscape Conditions

The Commercial Avenue commercial corridor has an 80' right-of-way with wide 17' sidewalks on either side of the 46' street. (See Figure 19) On-street parking is continuous on both sides of the street, with CTA bus stops at every intersection. Existing street lamps are standard CDOT cobra style lights with double-arms south of 90th, and single arms to the north. They do not include pedestrian level lighting. Tree cut-outs are located in the sidewalk right-of-way approximately every 20 feet throughout the majority of the corridor. Street furniture is sparse, but does include bus shelters, basic trash cans, flower planters, and bicycle racks along the corridor south of 87th Street. North of 87th Street is notably lacking in the same street furniture and maintenance as the southern half of the corridor. There are less frequent streetlights and a lack of regular maintenance.



**Figure 20:** Commercial Avenue between 92nd and 91st Streets, looking north.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 19:** Existing Corridor Configuration  
(Source: GCI measurements, image created by GCI using StreetMix.net)





**Figure 21:** Sidewalk cafe in front of 8550 South Commercial Avenue.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 23:** Commercial Avenue looking south from Baltimore Avenue.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 22:** Sidewalk in front of businesses between 89th and 90th Streets.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 24:** Commercial Avenue looking south from 87th Street.  
(Source: GCI photo)

# Commercial Profile



**Streetscape of intersection of 91st and Commercial Avenue, c1950. View looks southwest toward the former Goldblatts Department Store.**  
*(Source: Industrial Heritage Archives, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)*



## Trade Area

An outcome of the community outreach process was a vision of the South Chicago business district as a regional commercial corridor that also serves local needs. To assess the current economic conditions for these different scales, two trade areas were identified to capture local and regional markets:

- The local market area was defined as the community area boundaries of South Chicago, from 79th Street to the north, South Chicago Avenue to the west, 95th Street and the Calumet River to the south, and Lake Michigan to the east.
- The large market area was selected to include surrounding communities most likely to be attracted to a revitalized Commercial Avenue corridor. This encompasses roughly the area from 71st Street to the north, the Dan Ryan Expressway and Bishop Ford Freeway to the west, Little Calumet River and Grand Calumet River to the south, and Indiana State Road 912 and Lake Michigan to the east.



**Figure 25:** The local market area includes the South Chicago community area. The large market area extends to surrounding neighborhoods, and parts of northwest Indiana.  
(Source: Connect to Cook data portal, map generated by GCI)

## Disposable Income

Disposable income is total income minus total taxes, and can indicate how much money a household has to spend on goods and services. While it is important for businesses to cater to the whole community, the median disposable income for target demographics can indicate which businesses may be most successful. The disposable income for both the local and large market areas can indicate what range of businesses may be more successful locally as compared to a regional scale.

## Local Market Highlights

The median disposable income for the local market area for all ages is \$24,439, compared to the median for Chicago of \$36,433. While South Chicagoans have a lower median income than Chicago, as a whole they still have a sizable amount of disposable income, indicating a threshold for more goods and services to be available within the community. The largest local income groups are between the ages of 35 to 54, with around \$30,000 in median disposable income.

2015 Disposable Income by Age of Householder	Number of Households						
	<25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Total	374	1,630	1,806	1,972	2,285	1,672	1,325
<\$15,000	172	453	451	526	793	659	562
\$15,000-\$24,999	74	258	225	279	398	325	433
\$25,000-\$34,999	58	262	351	323	313	245	80
\$35,000-\$49,999	34	231	290	292	302	204	107
\$50,000-\$74,999	27	283	330	343	258	145	91
\$75,000-\$99,999	6	84	92	110	127	52	36
\$100,000-\$149,999	3	47	57	93	83	37	16
\$150,000-\$199,999	0	10	6	5	11	3	0
\$200,000+	0	2	4	1	0	2	0
Median Disposable Income	\$16,353	\$28,199	\$30,622	\$29,781	\$23,277	\$19,329	\$16,348
Average Disposable Income	\$22,843	\$36,410	\$37,936	\$38,276	\$33,170	\$28,048	\$23,246

**Figure 26: 2015 Local Market Disposable Income**  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst)

## Large Market Highlights

Median disposable income for the large market area is higher at \$27,799, indicating that businesses with a regional focus will draw a larger market. In the large market area, 35 to 54 year olds also have the highest median disposable income with over \$35,000, nearly matching the citywide median, \$36,433.

2015 Disposable Income by Age of Householder	Number of Households						
	<25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Total	2,881	12,910	15,332	17,680	20,053	14,339	12,059
<\$15,000	1,213	3,490	3,359	4,008	6,064	4,499	4,304
\$15,000-\$24,999	555	1,669	1,448	2,061	3,085	2,793	4,117
\$25,000-\$34,999	433	2,066	2,590	2,689	2,940	2,368	1,093
\$35,000-\$49,999	334	2,276	3,191	2,809	3,166	2,134	1,163
\$50,000-\$74,999	252	2,197	3,044	3,526	2,707	1,440	743
\$75,000-\$99,999	70	692	1,003	1,279	1,158	520	349
\$100,000-\$149,999	22	451	573	1,173	781	484	266
\$150,000-\$199,999	0	56	84	91	103	61	16
\$200,000+	2	13	40	44	49	40	8
Median Disposable Income	\$18,051	\$30,492	\$35,847	\$35,306	\$27,350	\$24,349	\$17,777
Average Disposable Income	\$25,197	\$37,631	\$41,846	\$43,975	\$36,416	\$32,762	\$25,999

**Figure 27: 2015 Large Market Disposable Income**  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst)

## **Tapestry Segmentation**

A tapestry segmentation analysis shows the consumption patterns of different demographic groups in the local market area. Major tapestry segments indicate which business types will be most successful in the local market. The three largest household groups in South Chicago consist of people who grew up in and are dedicated to the community, millennials who have moved out of the family home and are establishing their own lives, and hardworking immigrant families. Businesses that cater to these groups will be most successful.

### **Hometown - 44.2% of Households**

- Growing up and staying close to home; single householders
- Close knit urban communities of young singles (many with children)
- Owners of old, single-family houses, or renters in small multi-unit buildings
- Religion is the cornerstone of many of these communities
- Visit discount stores and clip coupons, frequently play the lottery at convenience stores
- Canned, packaged and frozen foods help to make ends meet
- Purchase used vehicles to get them to and from nearby jobs

### **Midtown Singles - 25.9% of Households**

- Millennials on the move—single, diverse, urban
- Millennials seeking affordable rents in apartment buildings
- Work in service and unskilled positions, usually close to home or public transportation
- Single parents depend on their paycheck to buy supplies for their very young children
- Midtown Singles embrace the Internet, for social networking and downloading content
- From music and movies to soaps and sports, radio and television fill their lives
- Brand savvy shoppers select budget friendly stores

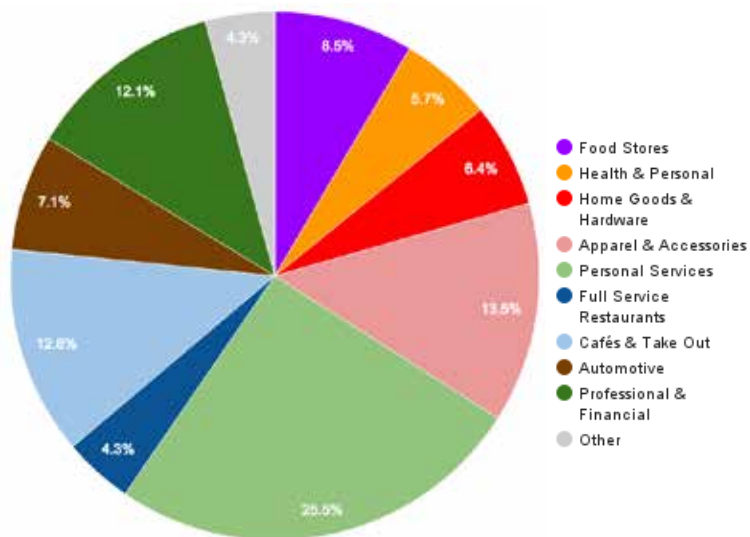
### **Next Wave - 16.0% of Households**

- Urban denizens, young, diverse, hard-working families
- Extremely diverse with a Hispanic majority
- A large share are foreign born and speak only their native language
- Young, or multigenerational, families with children are typical
- Most are renters in older multi-unit structures, built in the 1960s or earlier
- Hard-working with long commutes to jobs, often utilizing public transit to commute to work
- Spending reflects the youth of these consumers, focus on children (top market for children's apparel) and personal appearance
- Also a top market for movie goers (second only to college students) and fast food
- Partial to soccer and basketball

*(Source: Esri Business Analyst Tapestry Segmentation)*

## Business Mix

Currently, the corridor has a diverse mix of businesses. The community expressed a need for a more diverse mix, so keeping this mix is essential. It is important to note that the business inventory does not reflect businesses on stories above street level, where professional services tend to be located. Professional services are fundamental to commercial corridors, and often attract much of the daytime business along corridors. The business mix chart shows a lack of full service restaurants, something that was recognized by the community in the surveys as well as the visioning process.



**Figure 28:** Business mix in South Chicago  
(Source: GCI corridor walking survey)



**Figure 29:** Retail businesses along the Commercial Avenue Corridor  
(Source: GCI photos)

## Business Surplus and Leakage

In analyzing the local and regional markets, this section focuses on who is spending what and where. The local market focuses on what is being bought inside and outside of the South Chicago community area, while the large market area does the same for the larger defined region. (For detailed numbers, see Appendix B).

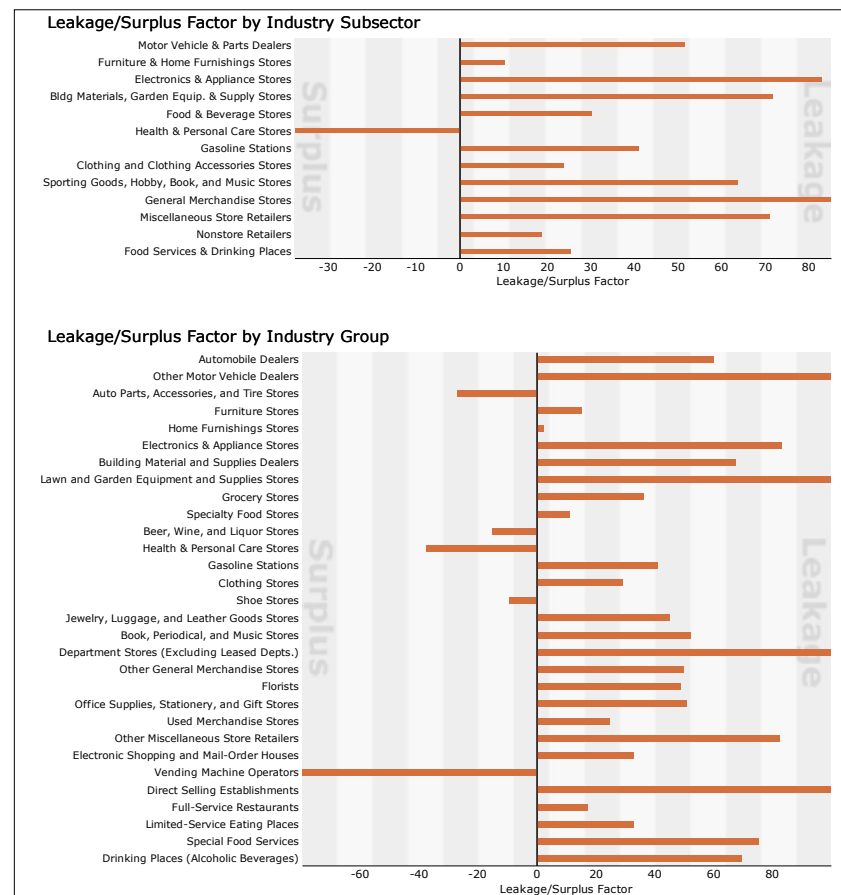
## Local Market Highlights

A review of existing businesses along the corridor reveals a surplus of the following business types. Opening these types of businesses within the corridor would more than likely compete with other businesses already in the community:

- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Shops
- Beer, Wine, Liquor Stores
- Shoe Stores
- Home Furnishing Stores

Local market data provides insight into business types that have the most potential in the community based on what people in the community are spending. The business types below have been identified through market data that analyzes what goods are being purchased outside of the community area:

- Electronic & Appliance Stores
- Sporting Goods Stores
- Book, Periodical & Music Stores
- Florists
- Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores
- Catering Businesses
- Full Service Restaurants
- Bars
- Large Department Stores that could combine some of the business types above i.e. Kohl's, Target



**Figure 30: Local Market Area Leakage/Surplus Factors**  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst and Infogroup)

*Note:* A Leakage/Surplus Factor indicates the degree of leakage or surplus spending in the community. A positive factor of 100.0 means 100% of resident dollars for that category are spent (leaked) outside of the market area. Conversely, a negative factor indicates a surplus of spending within the market area (i.e. outside dollars being spent within the area). A zero would indicate adequate availability within the market area for residents, but that the category is not attracting outside dollars.

## Large Market Highlights

The business types below have been identified using the same process as above, but with a focus on categories that have a surplus in the large market area.

Opening these types of businesses within the corridor would likely compete with other businesses already in the region:

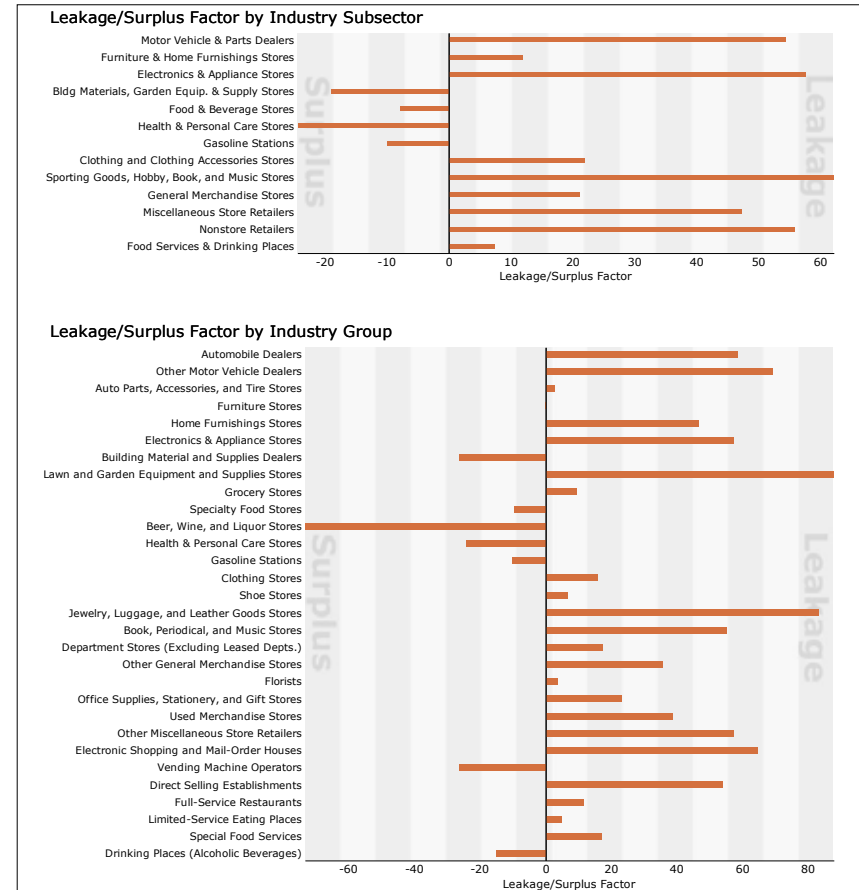
- Beer, Wine, & Liquor Stores
- Building Material & Supply Stores
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Furniture Stores
- Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores

The business types listed below are based on market data analysis of goods being purchased outside of the large market area. Opening of these business types within the Commercial Avenue corridor would attract customers from the large market area:

- Electronic & Appliance Stores
- Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores
- Sporting Goods Stores
- Book, Periodical & Music Stores

Other potential business opportunities identified by the market data include:

- Full service restaurants
- Pet supplies store
- Movie theater
- Toy store
- Art supplies store
- Mid-range restaurants i.e. Applebee's, Red Lobster



**Figure 31: Large Market Area Leakage/Surplus Factors**  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst and Infogroup)

*Note:* A *Leakage/Surplus Factor* indicates the degree of leakage or surplus spending in the community. A positive factor of 100.0 means 100% of resident dollars for that category are spent (leaked) outside of the market area. Conversely, a negative factor indicates a surplus of spending within the market area (i.e. outside dollars being spent within the area). A zero would indicate adequate availability within the market area for residents, but that the category is not attracting outside dollars.



# Recommendations



Streetscape of Commercial Avenue in South Chicago business district, c1950.  
(Source: Industrial Heritage Archives, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)



This section outlines goals and strategies for revitalizing the Commercial Avenue corridor. Goals are the big-picture vision of what the plan should strive to achieve. Strategies and sub-strategies are specific interventions to reach these goals and may address one or more goals. Each sub-strategy has multiple action steps for implementation.

## **Economic Goals**

The economic goals that emerged from the visioning meeting was the desire to see Commercial Avenue recapture the economic vitality and services of the past, while growing economic development from within the community. Community members want to promote a strong small business sector and establish the corridor as a destination for the Southeast side.

### **Economic Strategy 1: Promote Commercial Avenue as a “Main Street” and gateway to South Chicago and the southeast side**

#### **a. Brand the corridor with a unique logo and theme that reflects South Chicago**

Branding communicates the uniqueness of the corridor and community to visitors while creating an identity that makes residents feel invested and involved in their community. Distinguishing Commercial Avenue and South Chicago from surrounding areas provides increased awareness and visibility for the area and works to maximize the number of visitors to the area. It also allows for a marketing strategy that focuses on this unique identity.

A logo should be present on pedestrian features such as bus stops and bike racks and decorative elements such as street banners, wayfinding signs, and gateways into the corridor.

#### **Action Steps**

1. Identify historical and neighborhood elements to incorporate in logo
2. Work with a design firm to develop a logo design and marketing scheme (see *This Is Lakeview* case study)
3. Maintain use of consistent logo on corridor and in print/web materials to establish brand recognition of Commercial Avenue

#### **b. Create a neighborhood guide to promote and highlight businesses, events, institutions and neighborhood resources**

A comprehensive neighborhood guide can be a tool for visitors to learn about the neighborhood's history while identifying places of interest. The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce could produce the guide on an annual basis.

The guide could include sections:

- Neighborhood maps
- History of the community
- Community institutions, parks
- Public art
- Business directory
- Advertisements for local businesses and restaurants

#### **Action Steps**

1. Identify SSA budget for guide and reach out to potential sponsors
2. Develop content for guide. (e.g. welcome letter, business directory, overview of public art, parks, schools, services, etc.)
3. Work with graphic designer to layout guide and print
4. Distribute to businesses and residents within the large market area
5. Build upon previous guide and update annually

### c. Attract a healthy mix of businesses to serve regional needs

There are many goods and services that require South Chicago residents to leave the community to consume. Analyzing purchasing power and consumption patterns within Commercial Avenue's market area can guide the types and quantity of businesses to attract to the corridor. Offering select goods and services in the community that are not currently offered will increase activity on the corridor.

The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce can provide market analysis data in marketing efforts to attract new businesses to the corridor. This analysis should include identifying potential markets and competition as well as business needs.

Recommended businesses to provide a diverse mix (Numbers are expected customers within large market area):

- Theater (102,952 individuals attended a movie in the last 6 months)
- Cafe
- Bakery
- Butcher
- Ice Cream Shop
- Candy Store
- Toy Store (55,679 adults who purchased any toy/games in the last 12 months)
- Youth oriented businesses
- Arcades (24,045 individuals played a video/electronic game in the last 12 months)
- Convenience stores
- Comic shops
- Teen clothing stores
- Indoor mini golf
- Lazer tag

- Internet Cafe
- Bicycle Shop (17,493 individuals bicycled in the last 12 months)
- Pet Store (36,729 Households have bought pet food in the last 12 months)
- Book Store (78,467 individuals bought books in the last 12 months)
- Electronic Store
- Art/Craft Supply Store
- Office Supply Store

(Source: ESRI Business Analyst)

#### Action Steps

1. Maintain market data for the corridor
2. Research past businesses that have failed in the region and assess why
3. Identify and support potential business opportunities through business recruitment
4. Develop capacity of local residents to open businesses (*see Business Incubator recommendation*)

## Economic Strategy 2: Encourage small businesses to locate and develop within the Commercial Avenue corridor

### a. Develop a small business incubator to assist community residents in starting new businesses

A business incubator is an organization designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial businesses through an array of business support resources and services (Source: *Small Business Encyclopedia, entrepreneur.com*). Coupling these services with amenities such as a commercial kitchen and co-working space can provide local residents the space and equipment they need to launch a small business without high startup costs.

A small business incubator in South Chicago could include some or all of the following services:

- Commercial kitchen
- Co-working space
- Business plan review, assessment, and refinement
- Competitive analysis
- Brand development and customer value proposition
- Marketing and web presence
- Product planning, positioning, and pricing
- Coaching for investor or corporate presentations
- Licensing and financing assistance
- Networking assistance
- Assistance locating available storefronts or commercial office space
- Commercial lease negotiation assistance
- Applying for Minority-Owned, Veteran-Owned, and HUBZone certification
- Assistance with government contracting and vendor certification

### Action Steps

1. Assess organizational capacity to support business incubator
2. Develop programming and mission
3. Identify funding sources
4. Locate space for business incubator
5. Develop advertising campaign for offered services, targeting local residents

### Case Study

#### South Valley Economic Development Center, Albuquerque, NM

**Objective:** “The mission of the South Valley Economic Development Center is to provide facilities, resources, and training to support the development of new and expanding small businesses that will create jobs and foster economic revitalization of the South Valley community, while preserving the heritage and culture of the community.”

**Partnerships:** Bernalillo County and Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, with technical assistance from Resource Center for Raza Planning at the University of New Mexico

**Programing:** Flexible leases on office space, a commercial kitchen, and other support for small businesses

**History:** The Rio Grande Community Development Corporation (RGCDC) was the driving force behind the Bridge Isleta Boulevard Revitalization Plan, which called for a small business incubator to address economic development issues in the South Valley by building opportunities for self employment to build household and community wealth while providing access to local goods and services. With the assistance of the University of New Mexico’s Resource Center for Raza Planning, RGCDC, in partnership with Bernalillo County, built the South Valley Economic Development Center. The SVEDC includes a commercial kitchen for value added processing opportunities including for those residents involved in local food production. The Center also provides offices to rent at below market rates as well as assistance for small business start ups, including help with business plans. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in 2003 and the doors opened in 2005.

**Relevance:** Over the past seven years, the SVEDC has incubated over 100 businesses, created over 350 jobs, returned \$8.2 million in payroll back to the local economy, and assists over 250 potential entrepreneurs every year. A similar business incubator in South Chicago could bring some of these same opportunities to the community.

(For more information see: *South Valley Economic Development Center, svedc.org*)

## **b. Utilize existing federal, state, and local programs for business development and growth**

Programs exist at the federal, state, and local levels to provide assistance, training and growth opportunities to small and medium sized businesses. The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce in the short term can be a resource to direct potential business owners to these programs and in the long term develop some of these programs to serve businesses locally (see *Small Business Incubator* recommendation).

Some of these programs include:

- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) – The SBA provides a variety of programs and services targeted towards small business owners. These include general small business loans, microloans, real estate & equipment loans, government contracting support, HUBZone program, SCORE Association, among other small business programs.
- Illinois Small Business Development Center at Chicago State University (SBDC) – SBDC provides a variety of training, counseling and resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs to help them start and grow their businesses.
- City of Chicago Neighborhood Business Development Centers (NBDC) – NBDC's assist with getting a new small business started, troubleshooting city-related issues, connecting businesses to financial resources, networking, employment and workforce development assistance, consumer marketing assistance, and connecting businesses to the local community.

### **Action Steps**

1. Research programs and identify aspects most beneficial to Commercial Avenue businesses
2. Advertise program services to businesses and potential business owners

## **c. Assist small business property owners in applying for building improvement grants**

Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) grants from the Commercial Avenue Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district can provide financial assistance for building improvement costs. Eligible program participants can receive reimbursement grants for qualified permanent building improvements to small business properties.

Grants may be used for the following permanent buildings improvement costs:

- HVAC, electrical, and plumbing
- Tuckpointing and masonry repairs; facade repair projects
- Sign removal
- Structural components of new signage
- Roof repair and replacement
- Storefront renovations including frames, windows, and doors; exterior lighting
- Improvements to accommodate disabled patrons or workers
- Interior remodeling such as framing, drywall, flooring, and ceilings (cosmetic upgrades alone are not eligible)
- Purchase of adjacent property for purposes of business expansion or parking
- Rehabilitation of vacant buildings, reimbursed upon occupation by an eligible small business tenant or tenants

Residential property, residential components of a mixed-use building, exterior private property improvements (landscaping, parking lot work, etc.), and property leased to certain businesses are not eligible for the program.

### **Action Steps**

1. Identify businesses that can benefit from SBIF and SSA funding
2. Assist businesses with applying for grants
3. Follow through with businesses to ensure compliance with grant requirements

### Economic Strategy 3: Incorporate mixed-use residential development along the corridor to grow the permanent population and increase the customer base

#### a. Develop a program to encourage the rehabilitation of existing multi-story buildings to include residential and office uses

Currently, along the corridor many buildings are not being used to their full capacity. In some cases the buildings have the original facade covered on the upper stories where residential apartments and office space used to exist. Investing in the rehab of the facades along Commercial Avenue can help to re-open space along the corridor for residential units and office space above retail.

Mixed-use and rehabbed buildings could offer:

- Support for population growth and activity along the corridor
- Housing options for seniors
- Housing options for students and young adults
- Space for artist studios
- Space for small businesses
- Office space for professional services such as lawyers and doctors

#### Action Steps

1. Identify recurring loan/grant funding sources for mixed-use rehabs
2. Develop program requirements and allocation process
3. Identify existing buildings that can support mixed-use redevelopment
4. Target building owners to apply for program
5. Follow through with building owners to ensure compliance with loan/grant requirements

#### Case Study



Rehabilitated mixed-use buildings in the Short North neighborhood.  
(Source: Wikipedia)

#### Short North, Columbus, Ohio (High Street)

**Objective:** A place where artists, as well as multi-income residents of the city and the suburbs come to mix and to find an eclectic groove that can be found nowhere else in Ohio.

**Partnerships:** Short North Alliance, the neighborhood, the City, and developers (Wood Companies)

**Programing:** Special Improvement District (known as SSAs in Chicago). Short North Alliance. Events: Gallery Hop (Monthly) and DooDah Parade (annually)

**History:** The Short North community lies just north of downtown Columbus near the campus of Ohio State university. Once apart of the vibrant downtown area, Short North by the 1980's had become a less than desirable neighborhood rife with crime. Short North is the name given to the High Street commercial district made up of a mile-long stretch of shops, art galleries, restaurants, clubs, pubs and entertainment. Changes can be dated back to the 1970's with developers looking to invest in the community. In 1986 Rigsby's Kitchen opened a restaurant that was fundamental in the revitalization of the community. It was around this time that art galleries started to appear and with this events like the monthly Gallery Hop which currently attracts between 10,000 to 20,000 people each month.

**Relevance:** This case study was chosen due to the makeup of the buildings in the community. These Victorian era buildings are similar to the buildings found in South Chicago along the Commercial Avenue corridor. The redevelopment of the buildings in Short North, are examples of what could be done to the similar styled South Chicago buildings.



## b. Encourage mixed-use development north of 87th Street

Redevelopment of old car dealerships and lots into mixed-use buildings with commercial and retail on first floors, and housing and office space above. These mixed-use buildings should be developed under design standards that allow for growth in line with the community's desired visual character. For example, buildings with no set backs from the sidewalk and heights equal to existing buildings along the corridor.

Mixed-use developments offer:

- Support for population growth and activity along the corridor
- Housing options for seniors
- Housing options for students and young adults
- Space for artist studios
- Space for small businesses
- Office space for professional services such as lawyers and doctors

New populations and businesses could be drawn to this area due to 87th Street's accessibility to U.S. 41 and Interstate 94. The area is also well connected to public transportation including the Metra Electric train with a station at 87th Street, two blocks east of Commercial Avenue.

### Action Steps

1. Extend pedestrian street zoning to 83rd Street (see *Pedestrian Street Zoning Ordinance* recommendation)
2. Identify potential vacant and underutilized parcels for redevelopment
3. Identify TIF funding and other incentives to attract development
4. Work with developers and alderman on project requirements
5. Assist developers with community outreach and feedback



**Figure 32:** Examples of mixed-use development that match the scale of Commercial Avenue.  
(Source: h+uo architects)



**Figure 33:** New construction mixed-use development in Hillsboro, Oregon with historic details.  
(Source: orencostation.com)

## Economic Strategy 4: Attract and develop anchors to draw people to the corridor and create destination points

### a. Attract a brewery to serve as an anchor for the south end of the corridor

The growth of population could help to support a potential brewery along Commercial Avenue. In addition to local residents, a brewery can attract patrons from other neighborhoods, the suburbs, and Indiana. At the south end of the corridor, a brewery would serve to draw people from the 93rd Street Metra terminal to Commercial Avenue, and becomes a destination for the southeast side.

A brewery should preferably be developed as a locally-owned small business, further enhancing its value to the community by recirculating money into the community and allowing it to become a local gathering space.

A brewery could include:

- A tap room
- Restaurant
- Live entertainment
- Music venue
- Community space

#### Action Steps

1. Identify potential sites
2. Identify potential brewery owners or developers
3. Identify TIF funding and other incentives to attract brewery
4. Work with potential owner/developer to create business and development plans
5. Provide assistance with navigating city processes including obtaining liquor and amusement licences

#### Case Study



Flossmoor Station brewery.  
(Source: NWI Times)

#### The Flossmoor Station Brewing Company, Flossmoor, Illinois

**Objective:** Building community through providing a great atmosphere with great beer.

**Partnerships:** Owners

**Programing:** Brewery, Tap room, Pub, Event programing

**History:** The owners were able to reuse the dilapidated historic train station, converting it into a microbrewery. Over the years developing programing, great food, and beer, that acts as a draw to the community of Flossmoor, bringing people from throughout the region.

**Relevance:** The Flossmoor Station Brewing Company's reuse of a dilapidated building worked as an economic draw for downtown Flossmoor. By turning an under used building into a community asset, more customers were drawn to the area, improving the bottom-line of surrounding businesses.

## b. Entice an entertainment venue/community event center to anchor the north end of the corridor

There are no large indoor venues in the region, including Indiana. A venue in South Chicago could be a regional draw. The development of an entertainment venue has the potential to make a strong anchor to attract patrons to the corridor. A venue that can be used for a variety of events could draw visitors nightly. A multi-use venue near 87th and Commercial would spur business development in the area.

Potential types of events (Numbers are expected customers within large market area):

- Music venue: (i.e. The Metro, Lincoln Hall) (Rock Music (10,675 individuals in the last 12 months) Country Music (8,360 individuals in the last 12 months))
- Live theater (15,271 individuals attended a live theater performance the last 12 months)
- Dance hall (i.e. Aragon Ballroom) (14,969 individuals went dancing in the last 12 months)
- Bowling alley (13,241 individuals bowled in the last 12 months)
- Movie theater (102,952 individuals attended a movie in the last 6 months)
- Performance arts (i.e. Harold Washington Cultural Center)
- Reception hall (i.e. weddings, parties, bingo)
- Community event space (i.e. meetings, winter farmer's market, and other special events)

(Source: ESRI Business Analyst)

### Action Steps

1. Identify potential sites
2. Identify potential venue owners or developers
3. Identify TIF funding and other incentives to attract entertainment venue
4. Work with potential owner/developer to create business and development plans
5. Provide assistance with navigating city processes including obtaining amusement license, and liquor license if needed.

## Case Studies

### Harold Washington Cultural Center

**Objectives:** To preserve and protect the rich, diverse culture, and history of African Americans through the education and professional development of Chicago's youth.

**Partnerships:** Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy, Motown the Musical, After School Matters, Actors Equity Association

**Programming:** EDURE Productions, Broadway in Bronzeville Productions, M.A.D.D. Rhythms

**History:** The Harold Washington Cultural Center was created by Dorothy Tillman and the Board of Directors of Tobacco Road Inc. The 42,000 square foot center owned by the Tobacco Road nonprofit was created to anchor and maintain Martin Luther King Drive and 47th Street as an African American cultural corridor. The center focuses on bringing performance related arts while helping to revitalize the corridor.

**Relevance:** Building on the cultural history of Bronzeville the Harold Washington Cultural Center anchors the once vibrant intersection of Martin Luther King Drive and 47th Street. The programming works to redevelop the culture of the surrounding community.

### Thalia Hall

**Objectives:** To restore Thalia to its original charm and character, to breathe life into this community treasure, and to bring an array of music, community, and artistic events to the neighborhood it serves.

**Owners:** Bruce Finkelman and Craig Golden

**Programming:** Beer inspired restaurant, cocktail bar, public hall (all types of events)

**History:** Thalia Hall was initially built in 1892, with the goal to bring arts and entertainment to the working class neighborhood of Pilsen. The hall was successful, but as populations changed programming declined and the hall eventually closed to the public in the 1960's. In September 2013, new owners of the hall launched a three concept model for the reuse of the building: a public event hall, restaurant, and bar. As the hall developed into a community activity site, owners rented out additional retail space to other businesses.

**Relevance:** The development of a hall in South Chicago could provide space for local entertainment such as live performance and concerts for the community.



## Built Environment Goals

The built environment goals, as expressed by the community, should be to develop community spaces that are beneficial to everyone and promote a pedestrian-friendly corridor that encourages walking. Community members would like to see the corridor beautified with improvements to the built environment of the corridor.

## Built Environment Strategy 1: Encourage diverse transportation options to increase accessibility for all customers

### a. Work with CDOT to develop bicycle lanes

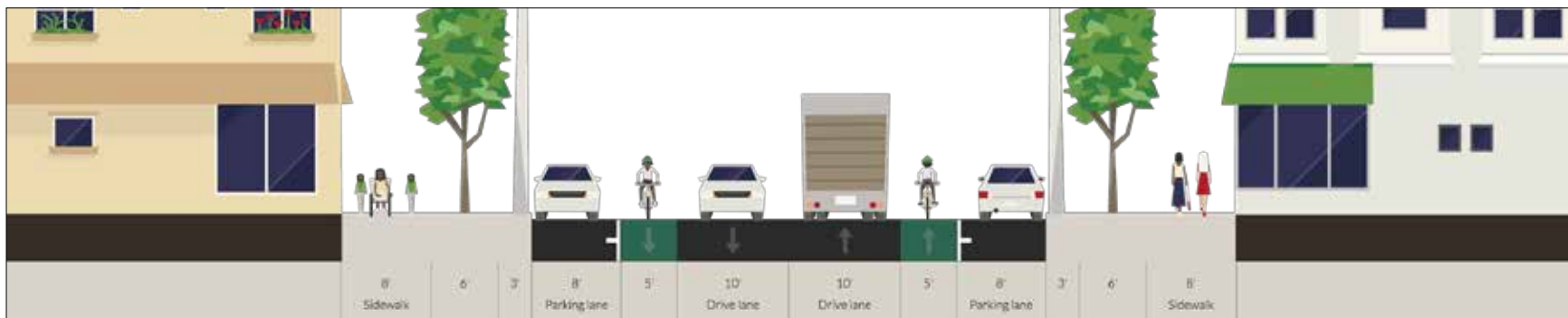
The CDOT *Streets for Cycling Plan 2020* identifies Commercial Avenue as a neighborhood bike route, which suggests that it would be an appropriate corridor for bicycle lanes, based on the road width and current traffic flow of the street (Source: CDOT *Streets for Cycling Plan 2020*). At present, average daily traffic counts for automobiles on Commercial Avenue are 14,500 (7,500 northbound, 7,000 southbound) between 92nd and 93rd Streets, 10,500 (4,900 northbound, 5,600 southbound) between 89th and 90th Streets, 13,000 (6,900 northbound, 6,100 southbound) between 86th and 87th, and 10,000 (5,000 both northbound and southbound) between 85th and 86th Streets. These traffic

counts are consistent with or lower than similar 2-lane commercial streets in Chicago that were re-designed to include standard 5' bicycle lanes. (Source: *City of Chicago data portal*)

Working within the current 46' wide street, the lanes can easily be restriped to include two 10' traffic lanes, two 5' bicycle lanes, and two 8' parking lanes. This proposed configuration lies within the existing right-of-way so development cost is minimal in comparison to other alternatives that might involve modification of the street geometry. With clearly marked traffic, bicycle, and parking lanes, traffic will flow better and provide a safer environment for both cyclists and pedestrians.

### Action Steps

1. Review Streets for Cycling 2020 Plan
2. Build support along the corridor by having businesses and owners sign on
3. Launch campaign to support bicycle lanes as a way to increase business
4. Reach out to CDOT, expressing support for the neighborhood bike route
5. Work with CDOT to manage implementation of bicycle lanes
6. Monitor impacts on businesses in the corridor
7. Promote bicycling as a way for customers to access the corridor (e.g. with Slow Roll Chicago, other bicycle organizations)



**Figure 34:** Alternative Corridor Configuration  
(Source: GCI measurements, image created by GCI using StreetMix.net)



**Map 35:** Planned Southeast side bicycle network.  
(Source: CDOT Streets for Cycling Plan 2020)

## b. Encourage bicycle education at local events and institutions

To provide for a safer community for bicycling, education focused around bicycle etiquette should be addressed. The community expressed concerns with bicyclist and driver behaviors, to address these concerns, educational booths at community events and other venues are important.

Bicycle education could include:

- Bicyclist rules of the road
- Driver etiquette around bicyclist
- Booths (sidewalk sales, farmers markets)
- Educational programs (schools, park district, libraries)
- Booths and programs could include giveaways (lights, reflectors, and other safety items)

### Action Steps

1. Identify existing organizations and programs that offer bicycle safety education
2. Work with police and safety patrols to enforce rules of the road

### c. Highlight and install more bike racks to attract a new customer base to the corridor

To develop a more pedestrian friendly corridor it is important to have sufficient bike racks to attract bicyclists as customers to the corridor. Currently, south of 87th street has a fair number of the standard black U-shaped bike racks. To enhance existing bike racks and contribute to the brand of the corridor they should be painted a unique brand-conforming color. Additional bike racks should be added where missing, and north of 87th street to ensure at least two racks are available per block on either side of the street.

Bike racks should also be branded with custom neighborhood name signs or artwork, similar to Pilsen, Andersonville, and Lakeview East

#### Action Steps

1. Assess current condition of bike racks along corridor and identify gaps
2. Work with the branding theme to select color for bike racks and/or add logo ornamentation to racks
3. Allocate SSA funds to paint existing bike racks and/or add logo ornamentation
4. Work with CDOT to install new bike racks in gaps with logo ornamentation, if desired
5. Advertise availability of racks for bicyclists (e.g. with Slow Roll Chicago, other bicycle organizations)



**Figure 36:** Example of branded bicycle rack in Lakeview East  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 37:** Example of branded on-street bicycle corral in Pilsen  
(Source: GCI photo)

#### d. Push for Divvy stations along Commercial Avenue

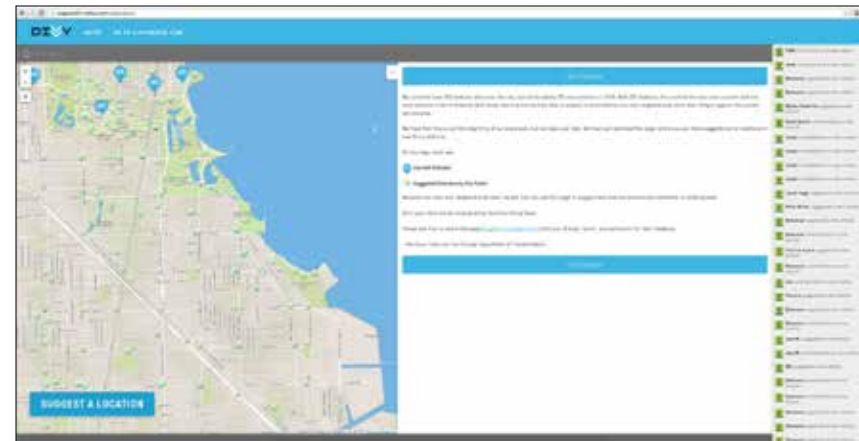
Divvy bicycle stations serve as the first and last transportation link for many commuters in Chicago. They are typically situated around transit centers and destinations, in order to link underserved areas with public transit stations. In South Chicago, Divvy stations would be advantageous as a link between Metra stations and the commercial corridor for both residents and visitors.

Divvy stations are currently slated to be installed just north of the Commercial Avenue corridor in the South Shore community area. While Divvy stations will eventually be installed along Commercial Avenue as the program is expanded, a coordinated campaign can help to speed up this process. Stations should be installed in appropriate locations at high traffic cross streets such as 92nd and 87th Streets, as well as Metra stations.

On the Divvy website stations can be suggested on a map, along with short explanations to explain why it would be a good location. Others can then support this location by adding their own comments or suggesting alternative locations.

#### Action Steps

1. Promote benefits of Divvy to businesses and residents
2. Campaign for Divvy to be expanded to South Chicago
3. Have business owners and residents suggest station locations on the Divvy website
4. Promote use of Divvy to get from Metra and bus lines to the corridor



**Figure 38:** Divvy station suggestion website.  
(Source: [suggest.divvybikes.com](http://suggest.divvybikes.com))



**Figure 39:** Example of Divvy station with neighborhood map.  
(Source: GCI photo)



### e. Support the campaign for more frequent service on the Metra Electric line

The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations should continue to campaign for expansion of Metra Electric service to the neighborhood. More frequent service would make the community more attractive to development and location of businesses, as well as increase access to jobs and higher education for current and future residents.

Since 1982, service on the Metra Electric South Chicago branch has been one train in either direction per hour with 2-3 trains during peak hours. Many train runs end at the 63rd Street station, requiring a transfer to get to the downtown Millennium Station. Ridership for the 93rd Street terminus averages 652 weekday boardings at the present service frequency. If service frequency were increased to every 10-15 minutes, ridership may increase to 4,000-7,000 daily riders based on comparable CTA train stations with similar population counts within ½ and 1 mile radii. (Source: RTA Mapping and Statistics)

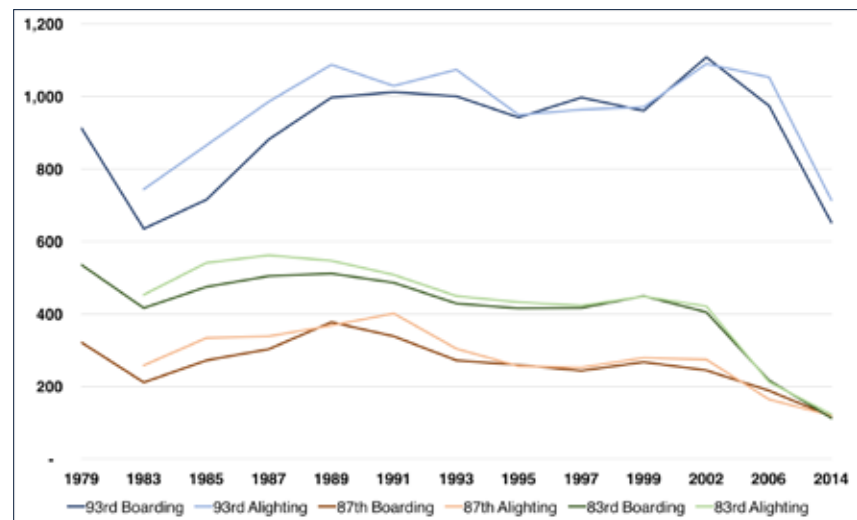
Additionally, three fare increases since 2002 have correlated with a significant decrease in ridership at all three South Chicago stations. If fare levels were restored to levels comparable to a CTA fare on the Metra Electric line, ridership may also see an increase.

#### Action Steps

1. Promote benefits of increased Metra Electric service to businesses and residents
2. Organize businesses and residents to join the campaign for increased Metra Electric service
3. Support campaign for increased Metra Electric service in an official capacity

Station	Walked	Drove	Dropped Off	Carpool	Bus
93rd	15%	56%	20%	6%	2%
87th	48%	38%	12%	0%	0%
83rd	70%	22%	7%	0%	0%

**Figure 40:** Mode of access to station, 2014.  
(Source: RTA Mapping and Statistics)



**Figure 41:** Metra ridership at 93rd, 87th, and 83rd Street stations, 1979-2014.  
(Source: RTA Mapping and Statistics)

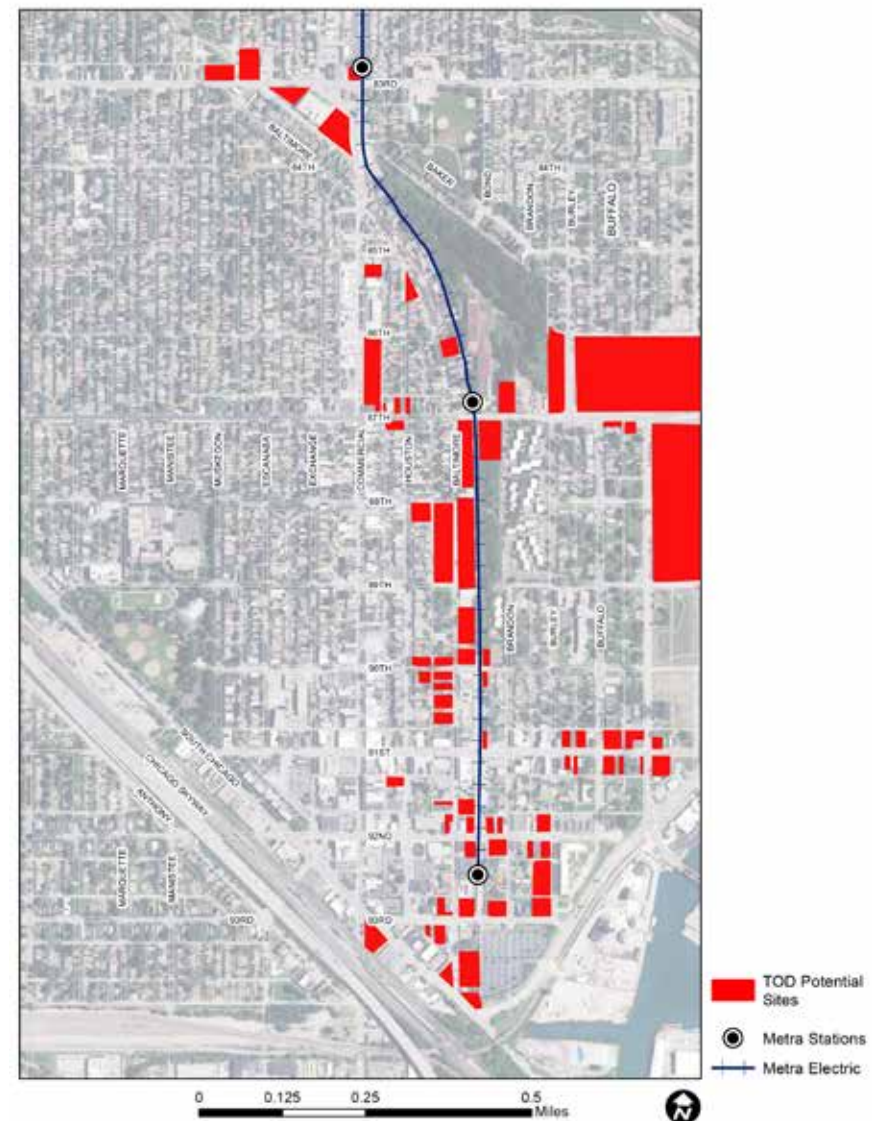
### f. Develop housing around Metra stations to increase ridership base

South Chicago's rail infrastructure is a great asset for future residential and commercial development. Currently, the vacancies that hinder South Chicago as well as other South and West side communities has discouraged transit expansion. Reports like the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force report, *Transit For The 21st Century*, state the importance of building in areas of high vacancy near transit.

As the population grows, so will ridership numbers, and with it further justification for service frequency increases for Metra. The report also states that trends show more people want to live near transit, "Between 2006 and 2011 the average sales price for a property within one half mile of a CTA or Metra station outperformed the regional average by 29.7%." Supporting development of housing and commercial around Metra stations will go hand-in-hand with strengthening the argument for more frequent Metra service. (Source: *Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force Report: Transit For The 21st Century*)

#### Action Steps

1. Identify potential sites for development near Metra stations
2. Identify potential developers
3. Identify TIF funding and other incentives to attract development
4. Work with potential developer to ensure design is pedestrian-oriented to encourage connection between Metra and corridor
5. Provide assistance with navigating city processes
6. Provide assistance identifying potential tenants



## Built Environment Strategy 2: Create a cohesive design scheme to establish the corridor with a unique brand identity

### a. Build curb extensions with ADA crosswalks and landscaping

The installation of curb extensions with ADA-compliant crosswalks at intersections, will work to enhance the corridor's pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

Curb extensions, also known as bulb-outs, can bring several benefits to the Commercial Avenue corridor including improvements to safety for all road users, and corridor beautification. Building bulb-outs can preserve the existing enhanced brick crosswalks cutting down on construction costs. The bulbouts create:

- A shorter and safer street crossing for pedestrians
- Protected parking lanes which can reduce the instances of sideswipes by speeding cars
- The perception of a narrower street, thus slowing down drivers especially at intersections
- An area for enhancing the beauty of the corridor and add to the brand of the corridor with landscaped bioswales and permeable pavement

#### Action Steps

1. Identify funding sources (e.g. CDOT, menu money, TIF or SSA)
2. Work with CDOT to identify intersections and design treatment
3. Work with CDOT to manage construction impacts on businesses
4. Identify ongoing landscape maintenance responsibilities, if needed (e.g. Department of Streets and Sanitation, SSA vendor)



**Figure 43:** Existing intersection of Commercial Avenue and 92nd Street looking south.  
(Source: Google Streetview)



**Figure 44:** Example of intersection with curb extensions, bicycle lanes, and other improvements.  
(Source: Google Streetview with GCI rendering superimposed)



### **b. Plant a tree in each sidewalk cut-out to ensure a healthy canopy for the future of the corridor**

Trees can play an important part in the beautification of Commercial Avenue, and contribute to its 'brand' as a pedestrian corridor. While the SSA has done a good job of maintaining trees in sidewalk cut-outs on the south end, north of the SSA boundary at 87th street is different. Planting and maintaining the trees in sidewalk cut-outs north of 87th street should be next on the agenda to establish the tree canopy as more businesses move to this section.

Tree grates should also be added to existing sidewalk cut-outs to expand the safe walking surface of the sidewalk, as well as protecting the soil at the base of trees from compaction and root damage. A decorative style grate should be chosen that complements the brand of the corridor.

The addition of electrical outlets near the base of the trees could allow for seasonal decoration and power for maintenance equipment. Outlets could also serve as a potential power source for vendors of commercial sidewalk sales and other events

Tree specie selection is important to ensure the proper size tree for the corridor at full-growth, and diverse specimens to resist disease. *(See Appendix E for full list of tree species approved by the city for sidewalk cut-outs.)*

#### **Action Steps**

1. Identify 4-5 tree species for diversity and consistent corridor identity *(see Appendix E for full list of City-approved species)*
2. Request trees to be planted in gaps with the Bureau of Forestry
3. Work with CDOT to select and install tree grates that cohere with the design scheme of the corridor
4. Work with the Bureau of Forestry to maintain and replant trees, as needed



**Figure 45:** A healthy tree canopy can attract visitors to the corridor, and has been shown to increase sales in commercial areas such as this one on North Broadway. *(Source: GCI photo)*

### c. Install more trash cans along the corridor and make sure they are well maintained

The condition of the trash cans currently along the corridor is poor. Along the corridor, there are few trash cans except for south of 87th. Most of the trash cans along the corridor seem to be frequently overflowing. At 91st and 92nd Streets there are two Big Belly Solar Powered Trash Cans which are not adequate as they are rusting and always full as well. To contribute to the brand of the corridor, trashcans should be painted in colors that fit the overall scheme.

#### Action Steps

1. Assess need for more trash cans and pickup service in the corridor
2. Allocate SSA funding or work with the Department of Streets and Sanitation for increased pickup service
3. Install trash cans that adhere to corridor design scheme in locations, as needed



**Figure 46:** Unique trashcans can be another branding opportunity.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 47:** Existing east side of the 8700 block of Commercial Avenue with former storefronts no longer used for retail.  
(Source: Google Streetview)



**Figure 48:** Example of rehabilitation of existing storefronts with sidewalk cafe and other improvements.  
(Source: Google Streetview with GCI rendering superimposed)

#### d. Establish outdoor seating areas and promote sidewalk cafes to encourage pedestrian activity on the corridor

Benches along the corridor should match other street furniture such as trash cans and bike racks to contribute to the overall ‘brand’ of the corridor.

The SSA should actively promote the establishment of sidewalk cafes along Commercial Avenue to create areas for outdoor activity. These areas should include places to relax, sit, talk, and eat, while maintaining a 6’ walkway path as required by city permit standards.

##### Action Steps

1. Identify businesses that could benefit from a sidewalk cafe (e.g. cafes, bakeries, restaurants, bookstores, etc.)
2. Assist businesses in the permit process for a sidewalk cafe, including aldermanic approval on an annual basis
3. Identify areas that could benefit from seating in the public right-of-way
4. Work with CDOT to install street furniture that adheres to corridor design scheme
5. Promote outdoor seating areas and sidewalk cafes to attract patrons to the corridor



**Figure 49:** Outdoor seating areas can attract more patrons to the corridor and encourage them to stay longer.  
(Source: GCI photo)

#### e. Replace street lights to a unique historic design and enhance with seasonally updated banners

The installation of pedestrian-oriented streetlights will help promote a more lively street in the evening and contribute to the brand of the corridor. To address concerns of energy efficiency, light pollution, and glares that cause night blindness certain standards should be addressed.

To contribute to branding:

- A historic style of lighting should be chosen to reflect the corridor’s history
- Banners on light poles should reflect the colors of the branding scheme, and be updated regularly to highlight neighborhood events and seasons.

##### Action Steps

1. Identify funding source for streetlight replacement (e.g. CDOT, menu money, TIF, or SSA)
2. Work with CDOT to select streetlight style and specifications
3. Work with CDOT to manage installation impacts on businesses
4. Change branded banners on light poles seasonally



**Figure 50:** Historic-styled streetlights used throughout other neighborhoods in Chicago.  
(Source: GCI photo)



## f. Design and install community information kiosks to promote the corridor and surrounding points of interest

Branded kiosks between 83rd and 93rd Streets would contain a map and information to orient visitors. This should include “You are here” locators along the corridor. The map should show South Chicago centered around Commercial Avenue.

Kiosks should highlight:

- Culturally significant sites (Points of interest, art installations)
- Parks (Bessemer Park, Russell Square Park, People’s Park, Steelworkers Park)
- Metra stations and bus lines
- Major businesses

### Action Steps

1. Identify information that should be provided on kiosks
2. Work with a design firm to develop kiosk designs (see *This Is Lakeview* case study)
3. Work with CDOT to install kiosks in appropriate locations along the corridor
4. Update information on kiosks, as needed

### Case Study



Example of branded neighborhood information kiosk in Lakeview.  
(Source: Z Factory)

### This Is Lakeview Kiosks

**Objective:** To provide information and a map to visitors to highlight neighborhood history and points of interest

**Partnerships:** Lakeview Chamber of Commerce, Z Factory creative studio

**History:** In the spring of 2010, Z Factory designed information graphics for an initial series of 10 kiosks along the main business arteries of Southport, Lincoln and Belmont Avenues in the Lakeview neighborhood. The process began with preliminary studies of things as simple as the hierarchy of information and how an average-height person might interact with it, all the way to color studies that accounted for how a color-blind user might still be able to collect the information they need successfully. A library of fonts, shapes and colors were established along with assessing the positioning of information as it relates to the average viewer. Every kiosk maintains the same masthead in order to build a strong brand for the neighborhood and to provide a visual cue to users that more information is available to them. Additionally, each kiosk contains unique information about a neighborhood highlight that exists close by, in order to further educate and entertain visitors.

**Relevance:** A similar series of kiosks for Commercial Avenue could not only provide information and history to visitors, but also establish a neighborhood brand in the minds of visitors. Lakeview, being a neighborhood in Chicago, knew it needed to set itself apart from surrounding neighborhoods in order to attract new customers and residents to its commercial corridors.

## g. Encourage restoration and preservation of historic buildings including facade improvements

Tax credits and incentives exist to encourage restoration of buildings designated as historic landmarks, as well as for all buildings constructed before 1936 and/or for storefront facade improvements (*see Appendix D for full list*). The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce should actively promote these incentives to building owners and businesses in the Commercial Avenue corridor.

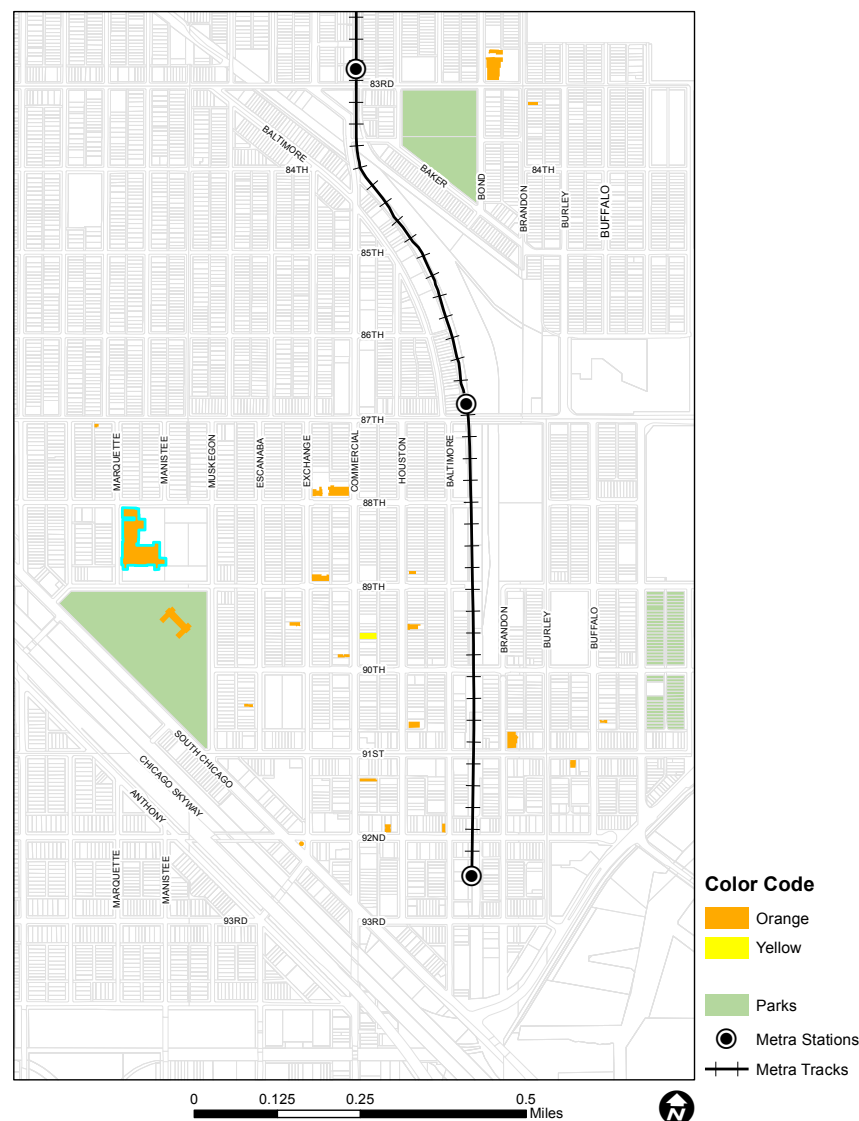
In addition, the planning committee could explore the pros and cons of designating Commercial Avenue as a Chicago Landmark District to allow access to more historic preservation programs and credits for contributing properties.

### Action Steps

1. Identify buildings eligible for existing historic tax credit and incentive programs
2. Assist building and business owners in applying for programs
3. Assess need for historic district overlay to open access to programs for more building owners and businesses



**Figure 51:** Calumet National Bank building has been designated by the city as historically significant.  
(Source: GCI photo)



**Figure 52:** Orange indicates a building of historic significance to the surrounding community. Yellow indicates properties that are unmodified and are part of a consideration of historic buildings. (*See Appendix C for full code ranking system*).  
(Source: Chicago Landmarks Historic Resource Survey, City of Chicago data portal, map generated by GCI)

## Built Environment Strategy 3: Orient community spaces to enhance the pedestrian environment

### a. Examine potential spots/streets/plazas along the corridor for pedestrian and street vendor use

CDOT has an initiative called *Make Way for People* to help promote places for public use in SSA corridors. Once the SSA identifies potential locations and programming around a particular location it can apply to the CDOT program.

CDOT's Make Way for People program includes:

- **People Spots:** Platforms built in the parking lane next to the sidewalk in areas of high pedestrian volumes. People spots can be sponsored by a business or group of businesses, but they must remain public and usable by everybody.
- **People Streets:** Convert excess asphalt into hard-scape public spaces in areas with open space deficits. If there is a side street with little to no traffic, it can be converted into a temporary pedestrian street. This may be useful as a location for a potential farmer's market.
- **People Plazas:** Creating plazas with introduction of new programming and retail/marketing opportunities with private partners. A people plaza can take an underused street section and turn it into a permanent or semi-permanent plaza. The plaza can have vendor and event opportunities, as well as programming to activate the space. For instance, a people plaza could be created at South Chicago and Exchange Avenues where the Columbus Statue welcomes people to South Chicago. The street between the statue plaza and the bank parking lot could be turned into a pedestrian plaza, allowing a gathering spot for people and street vendors.

(Source: CDOT Make Way for People program)

#### Action Steps

1. Identify potential locations for People Plazas and temporary People Streets
2. Develop programming for spaces (e.g. weekly farmer's market, street performers, etc.)
3. Identify businesses to sponsor People Spots (People Spots must remain public-use, they cannot be used for private sidewalk cafes)
4. Gather aldermanic and adjacent businesses support letters
5. Apply with the CDOT Make Way for People program
6. Allocate SSA and sponsorship funds to projects



**Figure 53:** Example of people spot.  
(Source: Green Matterz)



**Figure 54:** Example of temporary people street.  
(Source: National Association of City Transportation Officials)



**Figure 55:** Example of people plaza in underutilized portion of street.  
(Source: People St Program, City of Los Angeles DOT)

### **b. Enforce the pedestrian street zoning ordinance from 88th to 92nd Streets and expand to 83rd and 93rd Streets**

Currently, Commercial Avenue from 88th Street to 92nd Street is designated as a pedestrian street under city zoning ordinance § 17-3-0500. This ordinance lays out requirements for the design of buildings on adjacent parcels that front the designated pedestrian street. These requirements are aimed at creating a more attractive pedestrian environment to enhance the economic potential of these corridors.

Some, but not all, of the requirements are:

- The entire building façade that faces a designated pedestrian street must abut the sidewalk or be located within 5 feet of the sidewalk.
- A minimum of 60% of the street-facing building façade between 4 feet and 10 feet in height must be comprised of clear, non-reflective windows that allow views of indoor commercial space or product display areas.
- The bottom of any window or product display window used to satisfy this requirement may not be more than 4.5 feet above the adjacent sidewalk.
- Product display windows used to satisfy these requirements must have a minimum height of 4 feet and be internally lighted.
- On lots abutting pedestrian streets, buildings must have a primary entrance door facing the pedestrian street. Entrances at building corners facing a pedestrian street may be used to satisfy this requirement.
- Off-Street Parking Requirements. No off-street parking is required for nonresidential uses on lots abutting pedestrian streets unless such uses exceed 10,000 square feet of gross floor area, in which case off-street parking must be provided for the floor area in excess of 10,000 square feet.
- Parking Location. All off-street parking spaces must be enclosed or located to the rear of the principal building and not be visible from the right-of-way of a pedestrian street.
- Driveways and Vehicle Access. Vehicle access to lots located along pedestrian streets must come from an alley. No curb cuts or driveways are allowed from a pedestrian street.

The following uses are expressly prohibited on lots abutting pedestrian streets:

- Strip centers
- Drive-through facilities
- Vehicle sales and service uses involving any outdoor storage of vehicles or goods
- Gas stations
- Car washes
- Residential storage warehouses

The following uses are encouraged on lots abutting pedestrian streets:

- Sidewalk cafes and outdoor eating areas
- Outdoor display of produce, flowers and plants

The planning committee should consider expanding the pedestrian street designation north to 83rd Street and south to 93rd Street, to encourage pedestrian uses along the full corridor. The “pedestrian street” designation may be established or removed only in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance Text and Zoning Map Amendment procedures of Sec. 17-13-0200 and Sec. 17-13-0300 of the city zoning ordinance. (*Source: City of Chicago Zoning Ordinance*)

#### **Action Steps**

1. Educate existing businesses and property owners on ordinance requirements
2. Ensure new development proposals meet pedestrian zoning requirements
3. Expand pedestrian street designation from 83rd to 93rd Streets



### c. Build a gateway park at the north end of the corridor

In the short term, a sculpture or pop-up pocket park near the intersection of Baltimore Avenue and Commercial Avenue can serve to establish an identity for the north end of the corridor. In the long term, the site could be turned into a permanent pocket park to further define the northern entrance of the Commercial Avenue corridor. The park can serve as a welcoming point while creating a spot for local residents to enjoy.

A gateway park could include:

- Welcome sign or sculpture
- Open space for community gathering
- Community garden
- Dog park
- A starting point for history walks and tours

#### Action Steps

1. Identify vacant lot(s) that can be used as a park
2. Identify funding sources (e.g. Park District, menu money, TIF)
3. Locate owner and obtain permission to use lot for pop-up park, or purchase lot for permanent park
4. Utilize local design program students and resident input to develop uses and design for park
5. Utilize local artists for art or sculpture to welcome visitors to the corridor



**Figure 56:** Existing vacant lot at Commercial Avenue and Baltimore Avenue.  
(Source: Google Streetview)



**Figure 57:** Example of transformation into gateway park with mural and sculpture features.  
(Source: Google Streetview with GCI rendering superimposed)

## Culture Goals

Culture was stressed as highly important by community members. They want the Commercial Avenue corridor to tell the story of South Chicago and enrich the history of the area. The diverse cultures of South Chicago should be celebrated in a meaningful way.

## Culture Strategy 1: Celebrate the steel mill history and diverse culture of South Chicago

### a. Create a history walk along the corridor with plaques highlighting points of interest

A walk highlighting the history of the South Chicago community can draw people to the corridor and encourage them to stay longer in the area. Plaques highlighting points of interest along the corridor can be temporary at first with something as simple as a laminated sign. As funding becomes available, the plaques can be replaced with permanent theft-resistant material. Barcode scans or a mobile app for an audio tour and/or website can be included to enhance the walk for visitors.

The Southeast Chicago Historical Society could be a partner on this project to develop the plaques and support the project with tours and promotion.

### Action Steps

1. Determine historical topics to highlight
2. Identify locations along corridor for plaques
3. Determine funding source (e.g. SSA, donations, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)
4. Contract with vendors to design, produce, and install signs
5. Develop programming and tours on an ongoing basis

## Case Study



Bronze history plaques from The Legacy Walk.  
(Source: Chicago Tribune)

### Legacy Walk, Boystown, Chicago

**Objectives:** Outdoor public display which celebrates LGBT history and people along the North Halsted corridor in Lakeview.

**Partnerships:** Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, The Legacy Project, and the City of Chicago

**Programing:** Youth education programs, guided tours, and dedication of new plaques on an annual basis.

**History:** The Legacy Walk is a dynamic outdoor LGBT history exhibit in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago. Presently, along the half mile of the North Halsted Street Corridor, between Belmont Avenue and Grace Street, ten pairs of 25'-tall decorative pylons define the nexus of Chicago's LGBT community. Affixed to the pylons are a series of bronze memorial plaques commemorating the life and work of notable lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals whose achievements have helped shape the world - but whose contributions, sexual orientation or gender identity have been overlooked, minimized or redacted entirely from most historic texts. Mounted below each 18" x 24" bronze memorial is a 4" x 18" dedication plate recognizing the donor(s) whose generosity made that plaque possible. Every year new plaques are added. Presently there are thirty-five bronze markers on the Legacy Walk - the largest collection of detailed bronze biographical memorials in the world. In all, thirty-seven slots are available for commemoration on the streetscape. Once capacity is reached the oldest plaques will begin to rotate off the Legacy Walk into a visitors center which is expected to open in 2017. Collectively the Legacy Walk serves as an "outdoor classroom" for students who participate in the Legacy Project Education Initiative (LPEI).

**Relevance:** A history walk in South Chicago similar to this could define the community's legacy and identity. A history-focused walk can help develop future capacity for the Southeast Chicago Historical Society, much like the development of the Legacy Project's programming into a permanent presence on the corridor.

## **b. Develop programming to celebrate events and history important to community residents**

The South Chicago Chamber of Commerce events committee can bolster and support existing community events to market them and draw visitors to the corridor. To be effective, events should be programed throughout the year and consistently.

The committee could build upon existing community event capacity to encourage street activity, as well as create complementary business activities around existing events, these events include:

- Mexican Independence Parade
- Chamber Events e.g. Murder Mystery Theater
- Sidewalk Sales/Taste of South Chicago
- Park District Events e.g. Shakespeare in the Park
- Green Summit
- Snackfest
- Community events e.g. church festivals

Other programming ideas should be explored for feasibility and implementation on an annual or more frequent basis. Potential events as expressed by members of the community include:

- Saint Joseph's Day Festival (March 19th)
- Polish Constitution Celebration (May 3rd)
- Historical tours with history and folklore of the area
- Blues Brothers festival
- A "Cows on Parade" type of contest, with public sculpture and events
- Artists' parade
- Summerfest
- Live music
- Spoken word
- Mural painting
- Farmers' market

### **Actions Steps**

1. Develop committee to plan, organize, and implement programming
2. Identify funding sources for programming (e.g. SSA, sponsorships, booth rentals, etc.)
3. Determine capacity for programming on an annual, monthly, or weekly basis
4. Plan recurring programming to consistently attract patrons to the corridor and build an audience



**Figure 58:** Building off of historic events like the Mexican Independence Parade can help to promote the Commercial Avenue corridor.  
(Source: [southchicagoan.blogspot.com](http://southchicagoan.blogspot.com))

### c. Highlight the ethnic diversity of South Chicago by building on their strengths

Serving as an entry point, South Chicago has been home to just about every ethnic group to come through Chicago. Highlighting institutions and businesses are fundamental for building and retaining this diversity. Developing tours and events around cultural institutions as well as supporting ethnic businesses both existing and future.

For example, but not limited to:

- Immaculate Conception Church
- Our Lady of Guadalupe/National Shrine to Saint Jude
- Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church
- Ethnic businesses e.g. Cecy's, La Fruteria, Panaderia Marzeya
- Ethnic artists' work

#### Action Steps

1. Incorporate cultural and historic landmarks into neighborhood guide, kiosk maps, and historical plaques
2. Plan and incorporate programming within and around cultural and historic landmarks
3. Ensure programming such as street festivals and parades reflect and highlight all ethnic and social groups within South Chicago



**Figure 59-60:** Ethnic diversity in businesses along the Commercial Avenue corridor.  
(Source: GCI photos)



#### **d. Develop an arts district on 91st Street to attract visitors as well as permanent residents and arts-serving businesses**

An arts district could serve to attract permanent residents to open and support local businesses and events along the corridor. An arts focused district centered around existing assets such as the 93rd Metra Station, SkyArts, YMCA, public library, and potential sites (2938 and 2941 E 91st Street, among others) for the development of artist's live/work housing would attract institutions, businesses, and services that cater to artists.

An arts district on 91st Street and Commercial Avenue could include:

- The redevelopment of large unused spaces such as unused office buildings or churches into housing.
- Artist lofts
- Artist workspaces
- Performance venues
- Art galleries
- Collaborative consumption oriented businesses (e.g. technical equipment rental for rehearsals and performances.)

An arts district would also draw visitors to Commercial Avenue, further bolstering the customer base for area businesses.

#### **Action Steps**

1. Identify existing assets and potential partners (e.g. SkyArt, Claretian Associates)
2. Identify potential catalyst projects to establish arts district (e.g. public art, programming, gallery, etc.)
3. Identify funding sources for projects (e.g. SSA, grants, Chicago Public Art Program, etc.)
4. Identify potential buildings for live/work spaces and work with developers on rehabilitation

#### **Case Studies**

##### **Broad Street Arts & Cultural District Richmond, Virginia**

**Objectives:** The vibrant center of artistic, cultural, civic, and commercial activity; a place people live-work, frequently visit and loyally patronize.

**Partnerships:** Artists, the neighborhood, the City, and Developers

**Programing:** Entertainment Venue Hub, Art Gallery Hub, Restaurants, Events: First Friday Art Walk (Monthly) Broad Appetite (Annual)

**History:** As an arts and cultural district Broad Street is anchored by entertainment venues and artist galleries. The tobacco industry had a strong role in the economy of Richmond, Broad street was near a tobacco warehouses hub. By the end of the 20th century many of the warehouses in the community closed to be replaced with crime and disinvestment. Overtime artist and other organizations would eventually come in and redevelop the warehouses into different uses such as apartment/Lofts and artist work shops. The 1708 Gallery was started by a group of artist from Virginia Commonwealth University, in 1978. After moving a few times the gallery's current home is on Broad Street about a block away from other important cultural landmark the National Theater. The National Theater is currently home to the Theater IV Theater Company. Building on work of artist and organizations like Theater IV and the 1708 Gallery, the Arts District was established in 2012. The city has since helped to support the growth of artists spaces through: facade improvement rebates, expedited permit reviews, building permit fee rebates, sidewalk cafe permitting, micro enterprise loan funds, marketing and branding of the corridor.

**Relevance:** The area around Broad Street has history as a cultural center, much like South Chicago. Broad Street has similar era buildings and conditions that have been reused and developed into artist live/work housing, galleries, and cafes.

##### **Downtown St. Louis, MO: ArtLoft**

**Objective:** to redevelop old office buildings into artist live/work spaces

**Development:** Artist Live/Work Lofts with ground floor commercial space

**History:** In the late 20th century, many of the buildings in the Downtown West neighborhood of St Louis were abandoned. Overtime, the abandoned buildings were converted into lofts or other uses. One of the first projects was started in 1993 by City Property Company. After buying the Frances Building, the company created a performance art theater at the street level and began work to create lofts geared to artists for live/work spaces. At the main level there is a 5,600-square-foot commercial/retail space with 18-foot high ceilings. There are a total of 63 live/work units ranging from small 1,200-square-foot to larger 1,800 and 2,100-square-foot lofts and ceilings ranging from 12 to 16 feet tall, all renting under \$1,000.

**Relevance:** The Downtown West community was once a district of office locations of many companies. The communities location near the downtown core and large building infrastructure made it an ideal location for residential redevelopment. South Chicago has similar building conditions that can be utilized as artists lofts.





# Implementation

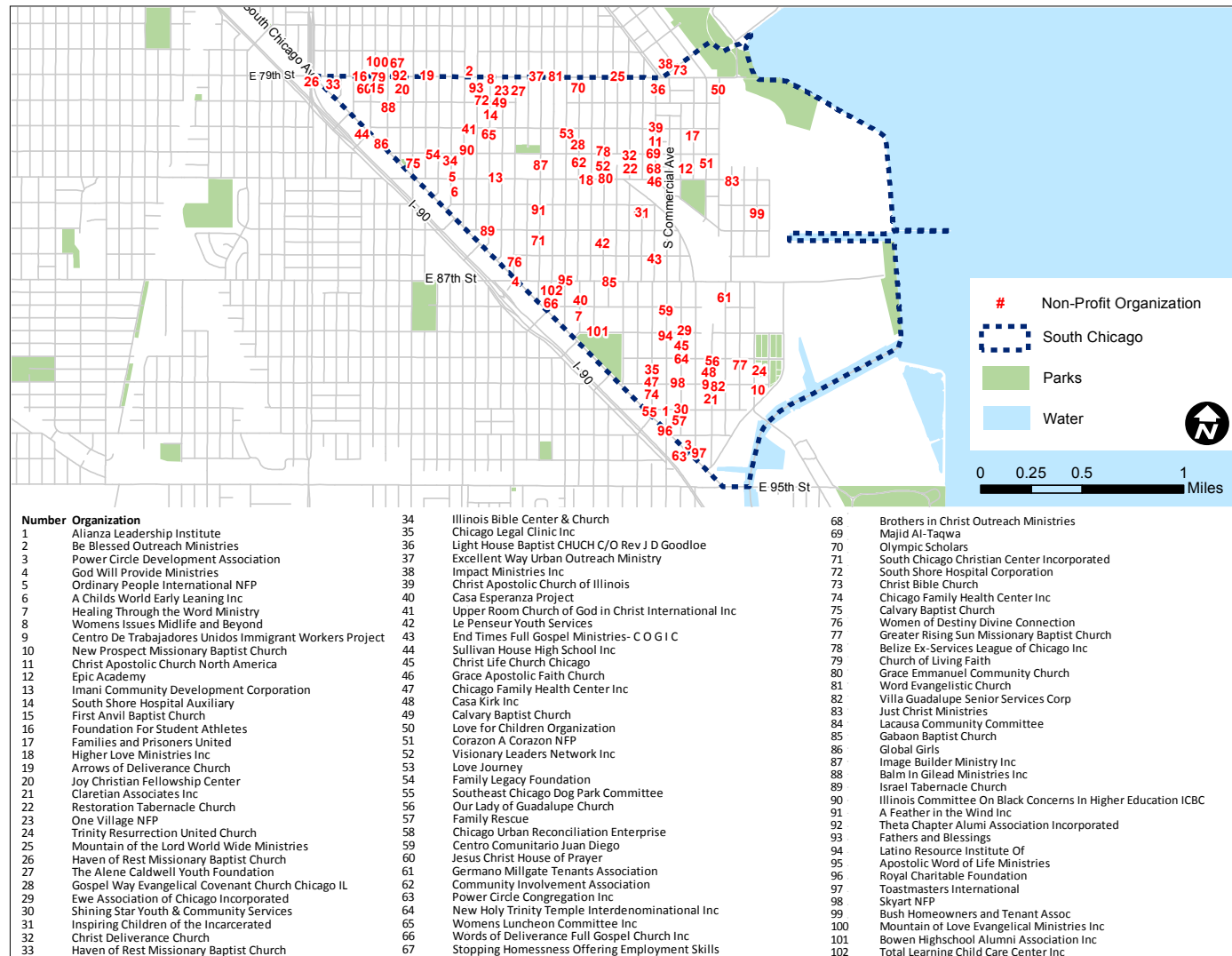


Goldblatt's was located on Commercial Avenue at 91st Street. When first opened, the store was three stories but almost immediately was determined to be too small, and two additional stories were added.

*(Source: Industrial Heritage Archives, Southeast Chicago Historical Society)*

## Community Organizations

In addition to the South Chicago Chamber of Commerce and Special Service Area #5, many community organizations in South Chicago may be able to assist with implementation of the corridor revitalization plan. This map shows 102 non-profit community organizations with locations in South Chicago.



(Source: Non-profit registrations with the Internal Revenue Service, map generated by GCI)

## Economic Implementation Matrix

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe (Years)			Actors	
		1 – 3	3 – 7	7 – 10	Primary Actor(s)	Supporting Actor(s)
Economic	<b>Promote Commercial Avenue as a “Main Street” and gateway to South Chicago and the Southeast side</b>					
	Brand the corridor with a unique logo and theme that reflects South Chicago				SSA	SCCC
	Create a neighborhood guide to promote and highlight businesses, events, institutions and neighborhood resources				SSA	SCCC
	Attract a healthy mix of businesses to serve regional needs				SSA	SCCC
	<b>Encourage small businesses to locate and develop within the Commercial Avenue corridor</b>					
	Develop a small business incubator to assist community residents in starting new businesses				SCCC	SSA
	Utilize existing federal, state, and local programs for business development and growth				SCCC	SSA
	Assist small business property owners in applying for building improvement grants				SCCC	SSA
	<b>Incorporate mixed-use residential development along the corridor to grow the permanent population and increase the customer base</b>					
	Develop a program to encourage the rehabilitation of existing multi-story buildings to include residential and office uses				City of Chicago	Alderman, SSA, TIF, SCCC
	Encourage mixed-use development north of 87th Street				Alderman	Planning Committee
	<b>Attract and develop catalyst projects to draw people to the corridor and create destination points</b>					
	Attract a brewery to serve as an anchor for the south end of the corridor				SCCC	SSA, Planning Committee
	Entice an entertainment venue/community event center to anchor the north end of the corridor				SCCC	SSA, Planning Committee

### Note:

An implementation matrix is an approximate timeline and actors necessary to implement a strategy. The *Timeframe* column indicates when a strategy should be pursued and the duration. The *Actors* column indicates primary and supporting organizations, committees, or people to achieve implementation. Action steps are listed in the recommendation section for each strategy for further guidance on implementation.

## Built Environment Implementation Matrix

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe (Years)			Actors	
		1 – 3	3 – 7	7 – 10	Primary Actor(s)	Supporting Actor(s)
<b>Built Environment</b>	<b>Encourage diverse transportation options to increase accessibility for all customers</b>					
	Work with CDOT to develop bicycle lanes				Planning Committee	CDOT
	Encourage bicycle education at local events and institutions				Active Transportation Alliance, Slow Roll	CPS, SCCC, CDOT
	Highlight and install more bike racks to attract a new customer base to the corridor				SSA	CDOT
	Push for Divvy stations along Commercial Avenue				Planning Committee	CDOT
	Support the campaign for more frequent service on the Metra Electric line				SSA, SCCC	Planning Committee
	Develop housing around Metra stations to increase ridership base				Planning Committee	Claretians Associates
	<b>Create a cohesive design scheme to establish the corridor with a unique brand identity</b>					
	Build curb extensions with ADA crosswalks and landscaping				CDOT	Alderman
	Plant a tree in each sidewalk cut-out to ensure a healthy canopy for the future of the corridor				SSA	Bureau of Forestry
	Install more trash cans along the corridor and make sure they are well maintained				SSA	Department of Streets and Sanitation
	Establish outdoor seating areas and promote sidewalk cafes to encourage pedestrian activity on the corridor				SSA, SCCC	Alderman
	Replace street lights to a unique historic design and enhance with seasonally updated banners				CDOT	Alderman, SSA
	Design and install community information kiosks to promote the corridor and surrounding points of interest				SSA	SCCC, Planning Committee
	Encourage restoration and preservation of historic buildings including facade improvements				City of Chicago	Alderman, SSA, Planning Committee
	<b>Orient community spaces to enhance the pedestrian environment</b>					
	Examine potential spots/streets/plazas along the corridor for pedestrian and street vendor use				CDOT, Alderman	SSA, Planning Committee
	Enforce the pedestrian street zoning ordinance from 88th to 92nd Streets and expand to 83rd and 93rd Streets				Alderman	SSA
	Build a gateway park at the north end of the corridor				SSA	Alderman, Planning Committee

## Culture Implementation Matrix

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe (Years)			Actors	
		1 – 3	3 – 7	7 – 10	Primary Actor(s)	Supporting Actor(s)
<b>Culture</b>	<b>Celebrate the steel mill history and diverse culture of South Chicago</b>					
	Create a history walk along the corridor with plaques highlighting points of interest				SSA	Southeast Chicago Historical Society
	Develop programming to celebrate events and history important to community residents				SSA, SCCC	Planning Committee
	Highlight the ethnic diversity of South Chicago by building on their strengths				SSA, SCCC	Planning Committee
	Develop an arts district on 91st Street to attract visitors as well as permanent residents and arts-serving businesses				SSA, SCCC	SkyART



# Appendix



View looking south along South Commercial Avenue from north of the intersection with East 88th Street, c1972.  
(Source: *Photographic Images of Change*, University of Illinois at Chicago)

## Appendix A: American Community Survey 2014 Data (5-Year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau

Total Population	
Total Population	28,550

Population Density (per sq. mile)	
Total Population	28,550
Population Density (per sq. mile)	8,641.0
Area (Land)	3.30

Sex		
Total Population:	28,550	
Male	13,124	46.0%
Female	15,426	54.0%

Age		
Total Population:	28,550	
Under 5 Years	2,430	8.5%
5 to 9 Years	1,889	6.6%
10 to 14 Years	2,250	7.9%
15 to 17 Years	1,196	4.2%
18 to 24 Years	3,251	11.4%
25 to 34 Years	3,582	12.6%
35 to 44 Years	3,288	11.5%
45 to 54 Years	4,139	14.5%
55 to 64 Years	2,806	9.8%
65 to 74 Years	2,223	7.8%
75 to 84 Years	1,015	3.6%
85 Years and over	481	1.7%

Race		
Total Population:	28,550	
White Alone	5,444	19.1%
Black or African American Alone	21,190	74.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	17	0.1%
Asian Alone	106	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	8	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	1,323	4.6%
Two or More races	462	1.6%

Households By Household Type		
Households:	10,176	
Family Households:	6,368	62.6%
Married-couple Family	2,544	25.0%
Other Family:	3,824	37.6%
Male Householder, no wife present	705	6.9%
Female Householder, no husband present	3,119	30.7%
Nonfamily Households:	3,808	37.4%
Male Householder	1,633	16.1%
Female Householder	2,175	21.4%

School Dropout Rate for Population 16 To 19 Years		
Civilian Population 16 to 19 Years:	1,738	
Not high school graduate, not enrolled (dropped out)	155	8.9%
High school graduate, or enrolled (in school)	1,583	91.1%

Median Household Income (In 2014 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)	
Median household income (In 2014 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)	\$29,453

Housing Units	
Housing units	14,072

Tenure		
Occupied Housing Units:	10,176	
Owner Occupied	3,884	38.2%
Renter Occupied	6,292	61.8%

Occupancy Status		
Housing units:	14,072	
Occupied	10,176	72.3%
Vacant	3,896	27.7%

Vacancy Status By Type of Vacancy		
Vacant Housing Units:	3,896	
For rent	527	13.5%
For sale only	219	5.6%
Other vacant	3,150	80.9%

Housing Units In Structure		
Housing Units:	14,072	
1 Unit:	4,412	31.4%
1, detached	4,021	28.6%
1, attached	391	2.8%
2	3,527	25.1%
3 or 4	3,231	23.0%
5 to 9	1,469	10.4%
10 to 19	389	2.8%
20 to 49	213	1.5%
50 or More	786	5.6%
Mobile home	16	0.1%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	29	0.2%

Median Year Structure Built	
Median year structure built	1940

House Heating Fuel		
Occupied Housing Units:	10,176	
Gas (Utility, Bottled, tank, or LP gas)	9,303	91.4%
Electricity	725	7.1%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	0	0.0%
Coal, coke or Wood	0	0.0%
Solar energy	0	0.0%
Other fuel	92	0.9%
No fuel used	56	0.6%

Median House Value for All Owner-Occupied Housing Units	
Median value	\$118,317

Median Gross Rent	
Median Gross Rent	\$788

Median Gross Rent As A Percentage of Household Income In 2014	
Median Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income In 2013	35.6%

Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs As A Percentage of Household Income In 2014 and Mortgage Status	
Median selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income:	
Housing units with a mortgage	30.2%
Housing units without a mortgage	17.3%

Poverty Status In 2014 of Families By Family Type By Presence of Children Under 18 Years		
Families:	6,368	
Income in 2013 below poverty level:	1,756	27.6%
Married Couple Family: With Related Child Living Bellow Poverty Level	154	2.4%
Married Couple Family: No related children under 18 Years	101	1.6%
Male Householder, no wife present:	176	2.8%
With related children under 18 Years	149	2.3%
No related children under 18 Years	27	0.4%
Female Householder, no husband present:	1,325	20.8%
With related children under 18 Years	1,067	16.8%
No related children under 18 Years	258	4.1%
Income in 2013 at or above poverty level	4,612	72.4%

Nativity By Citizenship Status		
Total Population:	28,550	
Native Born	25,384	88.9%
Foreign Born:	3,166	11.1%
Naturalized Citizen	1,253	4.4%
Not a Citizen	1,913	6.7%

## Appendix B: Market Area Demand/Supply/Gap Profile

Summary Demographics						
2015 Population						30,581
2015 Households						10,933
2015 Median Disposable Income						\$24,410
2015 Per Capita Income						\$14,782
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$240,240,496	\$109,001,313	\$131,239,183	37.6	127
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$216,196,653	\$94,724,835	\$121,471,818	39.1	87
Total Food & Drink	722	\$24,043,844	\$14,276,478	\$9,767,366	25.5	40
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$47,555,089	\$15,197,691	\$32,357,398	51.6	6
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$40,700,830	\$10,079,835	\$30,620,995	60.3	2
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$3,919,669	\$0	\$3,919,669	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$2,934,589	\$5,117,856	-\$2,183,267	-27.1	4
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$6,366,323	\$5,160,410	\$1,205,913	10.5	7
Furniture Stores	4421	\$4,144,646	\$3,050,699	\$1,093,947	15.2	5
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$2,221,677	\$2,109,711	\$111,966	2.6	2
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$10,820,674	\$994,550	\$9,826,124	83.2	2
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$9,094,122	\$1,489,127	\$7,604,995	71.9	4
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$7,696,449	\$1,489,127	\$6,207,322	67.6	4
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$1,397,672	\$0	\$1,397,672	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$43,070,670	\$23,024,676	\$20,045,994	30.3	21
Grocery Stores	4451	\$38,255,168	\$17,786,946	\$20,468,222	36.5	12
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$2,334,443	\$1,866,309	\$468,134	11.1	3
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$2,481,058	\$3,371,421	-\$890,363	-15.2	6
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$11,027,825	\$24,439,118	-\$13,411,293	-37.8	6
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$15,445,972	\$6,463,290	\$8,982,682	41.0	2
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$12,018,563	\$7,364,357	\$4,654,206	24.0	18
Clothing Stores	4481	\$8,486,504	\$4,652,681	\$3,833,823	29.2	11
Shoe Stores	4482	\$1,669,112	\$2,010,536	-\$341,424	-9.3	5
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$1,862,947	\$701,141	\$1,161,806	45.3	3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$5,887,630	\$1,294,677	\$4,592,953	63.9	5
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$4,763,028	\$943,697	\$3,819,331	66.9	4
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$1,124,602	\$350,980	\$773,622	52.4	1
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$40,488,339	\$3,229,868	\$37,258,471	85.2	3
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$30,762,652	\$0	\$30,762,652	100.0	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$9,725,688	\$3,229,868	\$6,495,820	50.1	3
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$7,343,030	\$1,235,239	\$6,107,791	71.2	8
Florists	4531	\$352,598	\$121,220	\$231,378	48.8	2
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$693,133	\$225,028	\$468,105	51.0	2
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$590,021	\$353,310	\$236,711	25.1	3
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$5,707,277	\$535,682	\$5,171,595	82.8	1
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$7,078,416	\$4,831,830	\$2,246,586	18.9	4
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$5,588,953	\$2,808,092	\$2,780,861	33.1	3
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$229,019	\$2,023,738	-\$1,794,719	-79.7	1
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$1,260,444	\$0	\$1,260,444	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$24,043,844	\$14,276,478	\$9,767,366	25.5	40
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$13,260,757	\$9,364,923	\$3,895,834	17.2	32
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$9,278,297	\$4,662,763	\$4,615,534	33.1	6
Special Food Services	7223	\$526,321	\$73,905	\$452,416	75.4	1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$978,468	\$174,887	\$803,581	69.7	1

Local Market Area Demand/Supply/Gap Profile  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst and Infogroup)



Summary Demographics						
2015 Population						247,411
2015 Households						95,273
2015 Median Disposable Income						\$27,795
2015 Per Capita Income						\$17,633
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$2,349,813,068	\$1,799,750,424	\$550,062,644	13.3	1,339
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$2,121,742,563	\$1,603,142,714	\$518,599,849	13.9	855
Total Food & Drink	722	\$228,070,505	\$196,607,710	\$31,462,795	7.4	484
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$473,677,413	\$140,001,695	\$333,675,718	54.4	77
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$401,055,747	\$104,918,488	\$296,137,259	58.5	30
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$43,680,805	\$7,908,626	\$35,772,179	69.3	3
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$28,940,860	\$27,174,581	\$1,766,279	3.1	44
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$60,595,886	\$47,653,244	\$12,942,642	12.0	35
Furniture Stores	4421	\$39,720,283	\$40,052,498	-\$332,215	-0.4	25
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$20,875,602	\$7,600,747	\$13,274,855	46.6	10
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$106,421,773	\$28,639,986	\$77,781,787	57.6	30
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$93,234,227	\$137,620,294	-\$44,386,067	-19.2	47
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$79,233,516	\$136,716,547	-\$57,483,031	-26.6	44
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$14,000,711	\$903,747	\$13,096,964	87.9	3
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$410,385,863	\$481,622,826	-\$71,236,963	-8.0	205
Grocery Stores	4451	\$366,177,506	\$302,464,037	\$63,713,469	9.5	143
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$20,450,660	\$24,889,325	-\$4,438,665	-9.8	25
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$23,757,697	\$154,269,464	-\$130,511,767	-73.3	37
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$115,397,288	\$190,230,185	-\$74,832,897	-24.5	71
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$153,145,839	\$187,862,752	-\$34,716,913	-10.2	74
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$108,986,046	\$69,731,061	\$39,254,985	22.0	117
Clothing Stores	4481	\$75,097,613	\$54,396,610	\$20,701,003	16.0	92
Shoe Stores	4482	\$15,621,548	\$13,659,919	\$1,961,629	6.7	19
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$18,266,885	\$1,674,533	\$16,592,352	83.2	6
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$59,451,290	\$13,849,849	\$45,601,441	62.2	33
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$47,726,308	\$10,483,713	\$37,242,595	64.0	22
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$11,724,982	\$3,366,136	\$8,358,846	55.4	11
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$400,540,206	\$260,379,232	\$140,160,974	21.2	70
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$306,512,373	\$215,723,033	\$90,789,340	17.4	22
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$94,027,833	\$44,656,199	\$49,371,634	35.6	48
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$79,383,470	\$28,423,408	\$50,960,062	47.3	77
Florists	4531	\$3,510,076	\$3,249,808	\$260,268	3.9	20
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$9,864,793	\$6,135,390	\$3,729,403	23.3	17
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$6,854,654	\$3,020,788	\$3,833,866	38.8	17
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$59,153,946	\$16,017,423	\$43,136,523	57.4	23
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$60,523,263	\$17,128,183	\$43,395,080	55.9	19
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$47,556,364	\$10,159,053	\$37,397,311	64.8	11
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$2,171,656	\$3,743,393	-\$1,571,737	-26.6	3
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$10,795,243	\$3,225,736	\$7,569,507	54.0	5
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$228,070,505	\$196,607,710	\$31,462,795	7.4	484
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$121,907,140	\$96,623,392	\$25,283,748	11.6	303
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$90,416,684	\$81,906,899	\$8,509,785	4.9	100
Special Food Services	7223	\$5,100,303	\$3,601,415	\$1,498,888	17.2	18
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$10,646,379	\$14,476,004	-\$3,829,625	-15.2	63

Large Market Area Demand/Supply/Gap Profile  
(Source: Esri Business Analyst and Infogroup)

Note:

In the *Retail Gap* column, positive dollar numbers (green) indicate how much is spent outside of the market area by residents. Negative dollar numbers (red) indicate a saturated market for that category within the market area.

The *Leakage/Surplus Factor* column indicates the degree of leakage/surplus in the community. A positive (green) factor of 100.0 means 100% of resident dollars for that category are spent outside of the market area. Conversely, a negative (red) factor indicates a surplus of spending within the market area (i.e. outside dollars being spent within the area). A zero would indicate adequate availability within the market area for residents, but that the category is not attracting outside dollars.

## Appendix C: Chicago Historic Resources Survey

An inventory of architecturally and historically significant structures The Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS), completed in 1995, was a decade-long research effort by the City of Chicago to analyze the historic and architectural importance of all buildings constructed in the city prior to 1940. During 12 years of field work and follow-up research that started in 1983, CHRS surveyors identified 17,371 properties which were considered to have some historic or architectural importance. The CHRS database identifies each property's date of construction, architect, building style and type, Chicago Landmark status (LM), inclusion in the Illinois Historic Structures Survey (ISS), and property identification numbers (PIN). A color-coded ranking system was used to identify historic and architectural significance relative to age, degree of external physical integrity, and level of possible significance.

**RED (RD)** properties possess some architectural feature or historical association that made them potentially significant in the broader context of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States of America. About 300 properties are categorized as “Red” in the CHRS.

**ORANGE (OR)** properties possess some architectural feature or historical association that made them potentially significant in the context of the surrounding community. About 9,600 properties are categorized as “Orange” in the CHRS.

**YELLOW (YL)** properties are relatively unaltered, pre-1940s that are part of a concentration of significant buildings. Properties with this color ranking that are included in the ISS or located within designated or potential Chicago Landmark districts were included in the CHRS.

**YELLOW-GREEN (YG)** properties are pre-1940s whose exteriors—at the time of the survey—were covered with artificial siding, but which are part of a concentration of significant buildings. Properties with this color ranking that are included in the ISS or located within designated or potential Chicago Landmark districts were included in the CHRS.

**GREEN (GN)** properties are pre-1940s whose exteriors have been slightly altered from their original condition. Properties with this color ranking that are included in the ISS or located within designated or potential Chicago Landmark districts were included in the CHRS.

**PURPLE (PL)** properties are pre-1940s whose exteriors have been extensively altered from their original condition. Properties with this color ranking that are included in the ISS or located within designated or potential Chicago Landmark districts were included in the CHRS.

**BLUE (BL)** properties are those constructed after 1940. These properties are considered too recent to be properly evaluated for architectural and historical significance and were generally not included in the CHRS database. However, properties already considered for individual Chicago Landmark designation and properties located within designated Chicago Landmark districts are included in the CHRS.

## Appendix D: Historic Tax Credits

Economic Incentives for the Repair and Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings				
Program	Chicago Landmark	Chicago Landmark District (Contributing Buildings)	National Register of Historic Places (Contributing Buildings)	Other Buildings
<b>Commercial and Industrial Buildings, Offices, and Hotels</b>				
<b>Class-L Property Tax Incentive</b>				
What it does: Reduces the property tax rate for 12 years for rehabilitation a landmark building in a commercial or industrial use. Minimum investment: 50% of the building's assessed value, as determined by the County Assessor.	✓	✓		
<b>20% Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit</b>				
What it does: Dollar-for-dollar Federal income tax credit equal to 20% of the construction costs for rehabilitating an income-producing building; the credit may be used by the building owner or sold to a tax credit investor. Minimum investment: 100% of the building's "adjusted basis"; that is, the purchase price minus the land cost and depreciation, plus prior improvements.		✓	✓	
<b>10% Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit</b>				
What it does: Dollar-for-dollar Federal income tax credit equal to 10% of the construction costs for rehabilitating an income-producing building, non-residential building constructed prior to 1936 (contributing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places or in a Chicago Landmark District are ineligible). Minimum investment: 100% of the building's "adjusted basis"; that is, the purchase price minus the land cost and depreciation, plus prior improvements.	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Facade Easement Donation</b>				
What it does: A one-time, charitable, Federal income tax deduction equal to the appraised value of the preservation easement; a preservation easement is a legal agreement which assigns the rights to review and approve alterations to a qualified non-profit organization for the purpose of preserving the property.		✓	✓	
<b>Facade Rebate Program</b>				
What it does: For certain qualifying industrial and commercial buildings, a 30% or 50% rebate (depending on the use and type of project) of approved costs for facade renovations of up to \$5,000 per storefront or \$10,000 per industrial unit.	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Permit Fee Waiver</b>				
What it does: Waives all building permit fees (requires prior application).	✓	✓		

Program	Chicago Landmark	Chicago Landmark District (Contributing Buildings)	National Register of Historic Places (Contributing Buildings)	Other Buildings
<b>Residential Buildings - Rental Only</b>				
<b>20% Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit</b>				
What it does: Dollar-for-dollar Federal income tax credit equal to 20% of the construction costs for rehabilitating an income-producing building; the credit may be used by the building owner or sold to a tax credit investor. Minimum investment: 100% of the building's "adjusted basis"; that is, the purchase price minus the land cost and depreciation, plus prior improvements.		✓	✓	
<b>Residential Buildings Owner-Occupied Only</b>				
<b>Property Tax Freeze for Historic Residences</b>				
What it does: Freezes property taxes over a 12-year period for rehabilitating an owner-occupied single-family home, condominium, cooperative unit, or a multi-family building of up to 6 units (where one of the units is owner-occupied). Minimum investment: 25% of the property's market value, as determined by the Cook County Assessor.	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Facade Easement Donation</b>				
What it does: A one-time, charitable, Federal income tax deduction equal to the appraised value of the preservation easement; a preservation easement is a legal agreement which assigns the rights to review and approve alterations to a qualified non-profit organization for the purpose of preserving the property.		✓	✓	
<b>Permit Fee Waiver</b>				
What it does: Waives all building permit fees (requires prior application).	✓	✓		
<b>Other Incentives</b>				
In addition to these financial incentives specifically for historic buildings, some historic properties may be eligible for other economic development and assistance programs, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Enterprise Zone Programs, the Vintage Homes Program, and Retail Chicago Business Assistance programs. Chicago Landmarks are eligible for special allowances from certain building code requirements and for side-yard exceptions from the zoning ordinance. Unused development densities can be transferred in certain instances from landmarks to adjacent properties. Owners of historic buildings also have free access to experienced rehabilitation professionals who provide assistance with technical issues.				

(Source: City of Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development)

## Appendix E: Tree Species Approved for Sidewalk Cut-Outs

- Sycamore Maple
- Ohio Buckeye
- Baumann Horsechestnut
- Northern Catalpa
- Chicagoland Hackberry
- Hackberry
- Windy City Hackberry
- Ginkgo, Male only
- Magyar Ginkgo
- Princeton Sentry Ginkgo
- Imperial honeylocust
- Shademaster honeylocust
- Skyline honeylocust
- Kentucky Coffeetree
- Dawn Redwood
- Exclamation! London Planetree
- Ovation London Planetree
- Sargent Cherry
- Canada Red Choke Cherry
- Chanticleer pear
- Fauriei pear
- Redspire pear
- Crimson Spire Oak
- Swamp White Oak
- Shingle Oak
- English Oak
- Regal Prince English Oak
- Skymaster English Oak
- Heritage Macdaniel's Oak
- Chicago Blues Black Locust
- Japanese pagodatree
- Ivory Silk Japanese Tree Lilac
- Summer Snow Japanese Tree Lilac
- Baldcypress
- Shawnee Brave Baldcypress
- Valley forge Elm
- Princeton Elm
- Discovery Elm
- Accolade Elm
- Patriot Elm
- Prospector Wilson's Elm
- Commendation Elm
- Regal Elm
- Triumph Elm
- Village Green Japanese Zelkova

## Appendix F: Pedestrian Street Ordinance

### 17-3-0500 Pedestrian streets.

17-3-0501 Purpose. The regulations of this section are intended to preserve and enhance the character of streets and intersections that are widely recognized as Chicago's best examples of pedestrian-oriented shopping districts. The regulations are intended to promote transit, economic vitality and pedestrian safety and comfort.

17-3-0502 Description and Criteria for Designation. Pedestrian streets exhibit most or all of the following characteristics:

17-3-0502-A have a high concentration of existing stores and restaurants;

17-3-0502-B abut a street with a right-of-way of 80 feet or less;

17-3-0502-C have a continuous or mostly continuous pattern of buildings that are built abutting or very close to the sidewalk;

17-3-0502-D have doors and entrances abutting the sidewalk;

17-3-0502-E have many storefront windows abutting the sidewalk; and

17-3-0502-F have very few vacant stores.

17-3-0503 Designation and Boundaries.

17-3-0503-A Pedestrian streets must be identified in the text of this Zoning Ordinance and shown on the Official Zoning Atlas.

17-3-0503-B The "pedestrian street" designation may be established or removed only in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance Text and Zoning Map Amendment procedures of Sec. 17-13-0200 and Sec. 17-13-0300. Both a text and map amendment is required.

17-3-0503-C The "pedestrian street" designation applies to all zoning lots that abut the right-of-way of a pedestrian street.

17-3-0504 Standards.

17-3-0504-A Applicability. The standards of this section apply to all development on lots that abut the right-of-way of designated pedestrian streets unless otherwise expressly stated. For purposes of Title 17, the criteria, standards and regulations that apply to pedestrian streets shall apply to pedestrian retail streets, except as more specifically regulated herein.

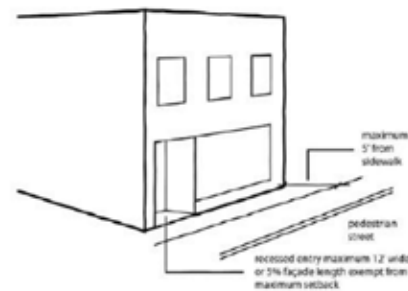
17-3-0504-B Building Location.

1. The entire building façade that faces a designated pedestrian street must abut the sidewalk or be located within 5 feet of the sidewalk.
2. These building location standards do not apply to permitted arcades, public plazas or parks, entries to through-block connections, or recessed entries. Recessed entries are subject to the

following standards:

- (a) The entrance width may not exceed 12 feet or 5% of the building's street-facing façade width;
- (b) The entrance depth may not exceed the entrance width; and
- (c) The entrance may not exceed 2 stories in height.

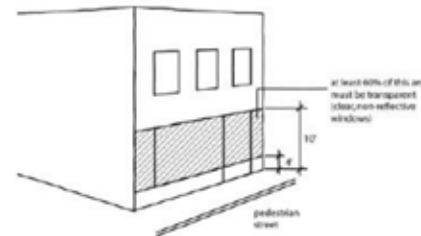
Figure 17-3-0504-B



17-3-0504-C Transparency.

1. A minimum of 60% of the street-facing building façade between 4 feet and 10 feet in height must be comprised of clear, non-reflective windows that allow views of indoor commercial space or product display areas. This standard applies to building façades that face pedestrian streets.
2. The bottom of any window or product display window used to satisfy this requirement may not be more than 4.5 feet above the adjacent sidewalk.
3. Product display windows used to satisfy these requirements must have a minimum height of 4 feet and be internally lighted.

Figure 17-3-0504-C



17-3-0504-D Doors and Entrances.

1. On lots abutting pedestrian streets, buildings must have a primary entrance door facing the pedestrian street. Entrances at building corners facing a pedestrian street may be used to satisfy this requirement.
2. Building entrances may include doors to individual shops or businesses, lobby entrances, entrances to pedestrian-oriented plazas or courtyard entrances to a cluster of shops or businesses.



Figure 17-3-0504-D



17-3-0504-E Off-Street Parking Requirements. No off-street parking is required for nonresidential uses on lots abutting pedestrian streets unless such uses exceed 10,000 square feet of gross floor area, in which case off-street parking must be provided for the floor area in excess of 10,000 square feet. (See Sec. 17-10-0200 for off-street parking ratios)

17-3-0504-F Parking Location. All off-street parking spaces must be enclosed or located to the rear of the principal building and not be visible from the right-of-way of a pedestrian street.

17-3-0504-G Driveways and Vehicle Access. Vehicle access to lots located along pedestrian streets must come from an alley. No curb cuts or driveways are allowed from a pedestrian street. (See Sec. 17-13-1003-S).

17-3-0504-H Prohibited Uses. The following uses are expressly prohibited on lots abutting pedestrian streets:

1. strip centers;
2. drive-through facilities;
3. vehicle sales and service uses involving any outdoor storage of vehicles or goods;
4. gas stations;
5. car washes; and
6. residential storage warehouses.

17-3-0504-I Special Uses.

1. Non-accessory parking facilities are allowed on lots abutting pedestrian streets only if reviewed and approved in accordance with the special use procedures of Sec. 17-13-0900.
2. A bank, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union, currency exchange, or automated teller machine facility is permitted on lots abutting pedestrian retail streets: provided that a proposed bank, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union, currency exchange, or automated teller machine facility that will be located within 600 feet of a bank, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union, currency exchange, or automated teller machine facility that already exists on the pedestrian retail street is allowed only if reviewed and approved in accordance with the special use procedures of Sec. 17-13-0900; provided further that the review and approval for such special use shall not be required if:
  - (i) the bank, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union, currency exchange, or automated teller machine facility is located above or below curb level of a building with permitted or special uses on the curb level;
  - (ii) the bank, savings bank, savings and loans association, credit union, currency exchange, or automated teller machine facility is accessory to a retail or commercial use; or
  - (iii) the bank, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or currency exchange,

automated teller machine facility is located: (1) in the rear of the building that abuts the pedestrian retail street; and (2) 50 feet or more from the sidewalk that abuts the building façade that faces the pedestrian retail street; and (3) in a building in which a retail or commercial use faces the pedestrian retail street.

17-3-0504-J Encouraged Uses. The following uses are encouraged on lots abutting pedestrian streets:

1. Sidewalk cafes and outdoor eating areas; and
2. Outdoor display of produce, flowers and plants.



