

LOGAN SQUARE: A Place to Stay, a Place to Grow



PLANNING TASK FORCE

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Mario Caballero *Ames Middle School*
Lisette Castaneda *St. Sylvester's Church*
Ald. Rey Colon *35th Ward Alderman*
Lorraine Cruz *Ames Middle School*
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Catherine Delgado *Monroe Elementary School*
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Logan Square



Participants at community meeting

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Blanca Garcia	Cristina Salgado
Carmen Garcia	Elisa Salgado
Lidia Garcia	Julia Salinas
Olga Garcia	Gipsie Santiago
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Brigida Godinez	Adela Torres
Imelda Gondono	Marisol Torres
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This list was compiled from sign-in sheets for planning meetings and related activities and may not include all participants. Our apologies for any misspellings or omissions.

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Residents Seek Path to a Diverse Future



Working families pursuing the American Dream are the focus of our plan.

Logan Square is on the move. But for many working families of this historic North Side neighborhood, the nagging question is whether they, too, must inevitably move. Or might it be possible to harness the mighty-but-mindless market forces moving west from the lakefront's condo belt, and use those forces to weave a new type of community?

If so, what kind of community? This quality-of-life plan envisions one that Chicago has produced all too rarely. It would be both stable and diverse, neither Gold Coast nor barrio—a place where families of all kinds, colors and classes would not simply coexist, but support one another as they pursue their own versions of the American dream.

Such a community would not be that different from historic Logan Square. This is a neighborhood born in the scramble for affordable housing that followed the Great Fire of 1871. Located beyond the city's brick-only fireproof zone, early Logan Square's wooden two- and three-flats were an affordable godsend to displaced German and Scandinavian mill workers. After the city annexed the neighborhood and enhanced it with broad boulevards and public squares, merchants, managers and professionals built dignified greystones and Queen Annes along Kedzie, Logan and Humboldt boulevards. This legacy of diversity, this mix of rich and not-so-rich, of English-speakers and those who speak another tongue, has endured for more than a century. The accents heard along Milwaukee Avenue were first Yiddish, then Polish, and most recently, Spanish. All the while, a diverse yet stable Logan Square has remained one of Chicago's best examples of what an urban neighborhood can be and do.

The next wave may not be so benign. The gentrification of Lincoln Park has jumped the Kennedy Expressway, first colonizing Bucktown, now bidding up real estate and rents as far west as Kedzie Avenue and beyond. The median price of all homes sold last year in Logan Square was more than \$300,000, though Chicago magazine notes that single-family detached homes averaged \$442,766. The last

property tax reassessment, in 2003, imposed an average increase of 76 percent. This in a neighborhood where, as of Census 2000, fully one-third of renters devoted too much of their income to rent.

The scale of the consequent displacement, if not the pain, is apparent in census tract 2216, which covers the 20 blocks east of Western Avenue between Armitage and Fullerton. During the 1990s, rents there doubled, home values tripled and 44 new units were added. Yet the tract's population fell by 15 percent, and the number of Latinos and children dropped by half. As gentrification rolls west, the implications are clear.

No plan can stop this tide. Then again, no thoughtful planner would try. Fresh investment can be life's blood to a healthy neighborhood. But there are ways to meld the old and the new, to make the tapestry more interesting rather than tear it apart, or worse, bleach it to monochrome.

This is a plan to preserve diversity in Logan Square. More than 200 community representatives, working through a task force led by the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, were involved in its preparation. Our vision for Logan Square is that it be a place to stay, and a place to grow.



Elaborate mansions were built along the boulevards starting in the late 1800s.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS

STRATEGY 1 Preserve and expand affordable housing.

We will help organize tenants so that subsidized buildings stay subsidized after federal contracts expire. We will continue to organize for a citywide set-aside ordinance and expansion of Chicago's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Working with experienced community development corporations, we will create affordable housing for those ready to own, including limited-equity co-ops, and supportive housing for those with mental or physical impairments. Rental units will be affordable for area residents and large enough to accommodate families. We will establish a housing center to help families rent or buy, and a Legacy Project through which longtime owners can sell their property with the assurance that working families can continue to live there.

STRATEGY 2 Expand and improve parks and recreational programs, and create new community spaces.

We will work with the Chicago Park District, park advisory councils and the Trust for Public Land to make expansion of Haas Park on Fullerton Avenue a replicable model for park expansion and improvement. Kosciuszko Park, our neighborhood's largest, needs redesign and reinvestment to become an active recreational asset rather than a hangout. We will advocate for these and other elements of the city's 2004 Open Space Plan for Logan Square. We will pursue opportunities such as new campus parks near schools, and development of a plaza and farmers' market on CTA property at Logan Boulevard and Milwaukee Avenue. Also promising is a proposed linear park and bikeway atop the dormant Bloomingdale rail embankment, which forms the border between Logan Square and our sister community, Humboldt Park.

STRATEGY 3 Improve and expand model community school programs, and foster educational opportunities for residents of all ages.

Building on a 12-year track record of school-community partnerships, we will bring new cohorts into *Nueva Generación*, a model program that trains parent mentors as bi-lingual teachers. We will push to increase the community's pre-school capacity. At the high school level, we will strengthen school-community relationships by involving students in local service projects and strengthening college preparatory curricula and college counseling services. To combat a very high student turnover rate at all our schools, we will support research, policies and programs to break the links among housing displacement, student mobility and poor academic performance.

STRATEGY 4 Revitalize key commercial corridors by working with elected officials, businesses and property owners.

Although our three major commercial avenues have different problems and possibilities, all need coordinated planning and redevelopment. We propose a model redevelopment for portions of the Armitage corridor between Mozart Street and Hamlin Avenue, featuring new family-sized affordable rental housing above lively storefronts. To create thriving commercial corridors, while maintaining the scale and flavor of the community, we will study potential zoning changes, recruit new businesses and support streetscape and façade improvements along Fullerton, Armitage and Milwaukee avenues.

STRATEGY 5 Support industrial retention and business development, and provide coordinated job training, job placement and financial education to community residents.

We support efforts by local industrial groups to protect nearby factory and distribution jobs from displacement by residential lofts and other non-business uses. We will work with private and non-profit partners to create new jobs in burgeoning service industries such as health care, childcare and information services. We will collaborate with partners to create job training and placement services and develop entrepreneurial skills and opportunities. Equally important is the need for coordinated job placement services that link working families with income-support programs and financial education.

STRATEGY 6 Improve the health, safety and well being of Logan Square residents and families.

Healthier lifestyles will be pursued in several ways with several partners, including Parent Mentor teams in the schools, *Ayuda Mutua* (Mutual Help) activities among block clubs, a swimming pool for the McCormick-Tribune YMCA, health-promotion efforts by employer groups and partnerships with the Chicago Park District. We will build on the work of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association Health Outreach Team to connect people to health insurance and services, improve access to local health care providers, and monitor patient billings as part of the region-wide Hospital Accountability Project. To reduce violence and high homicide rates in Chicago Police Districts 14 and 25, we will work with those districts on crime prevention and promote initiatives such as Safe Passage, in which residents and business owners watch out for children on their way to and from school.

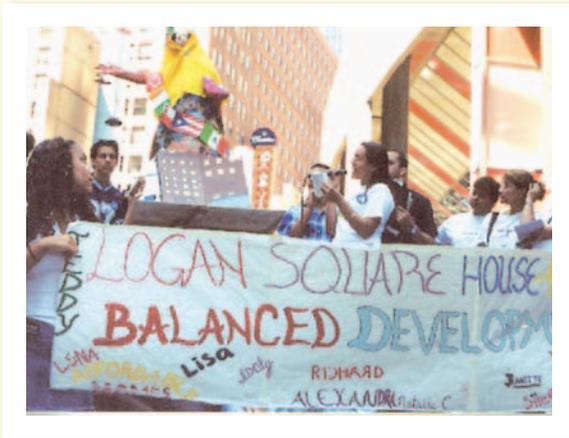
STRATEGY 7 Support local arts organizations, promote art activities and expand arts programming and cultural events.

An expanded Logan Square Arts Coalition will help artists—both performing and visual—obtain more training, adequate workspaces and venues to reach the public. Other projects will include an on-line arts calendar and periodic art fairs at the new CTA plaza at Milwaukee and Kedzie avenues.

STRATEGY 8 Build community leadership and enable all residents, young and old, citizen and non-citizen, to participate effectively in decisions affecting their lives.

We will continue to cultivate and expand our circle of leadership, reaching out to young and old alike. On housing issues and projects, resident-led steering committees will set policy so that people, not profits, drive development. Immigrants, especially, will be asked to lead. No human being shall be considered “illegal,” and no resident of Logan Square shall be persecuted or denied basic human rights for lack of citizenship papers. We will organize the undocumented and pursue their access to education and employment, shelter and health care, and will work with the Consulate of Mexico to obtain passports and *matriculas*.

Neighborhood Faces Rapid Economic Change



Balanced housing development means ensuring that working families are not priced out of Logan Square.

Summary totals from Census 2000 barely hint at the powerful changes taking place in Logan Square, a densely populated neighborhood at the inland heart of Chicago's thriving North Side. The community's reported population—82,715—grew hardly at all during the 1990s. Nor did its racial and ethnic makeup change much: roughly two-thirds Hispanic, one-quarter non-Hispanic white, and just over 5 percent African-American.

Behind these numbers is a dynamic story of change—of a community challenged to preserve a rich legacy of tolerance and diversity or be overtaken by a market-driven monoculture that is open only to the affluent. Parents who were forced out of Lincoln Park as children now fear that their own children will feel that same pain as the market, once again, drives them out of their community.

Viewed as a whole, Logan Square is still very diverse. Internally, however, an uneasy, east-to-west stratification has evolved. During the 1980s and '90s, developers who were priced out of Lincoln Park first turned to Bucktown—the easternmost wedge of Logan Square, between the Kennedy Expressway and Western Avenue—and converted the old German working-class neighborhood into an upscale colony.

At the other end, in the forest of densely packed brick two-flats and walk-ups west of Kedzie Avenue, large Latino families, many newly arrived in the U.S. or newly displaced from neighborhoods like Bucktown, are moving in,

often doubling up with relatives, almost always stretching their paychecks. As of 2000, more than 12,000 of Logan Square's 28,855 households were considered low-income, earning less than 80 percent of the city median, \$38,625. Our community is home to more limited-income households than either Pilsen or Little Village, two neighborhoods often associated with the working poor.

Logan Square's Spanish-speakers have aspirations not so different from those of the European immigrants who preceded them. They want job opportunities at living wages, a solid education for their children, and decent and affordable places to live.

While church and community groups, especially the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, have worked wonders with schools, block clubs and daycare networks, housing displacement continues to undermine community aspirations. How are teachers, even teachers reinforced by parent mentors and home literacy visits, supposed to raise achievement levels when half their students move every year? How should resources be allocated effectively between, say, Darwin School on the east side of the neighborhood, where enrollment is plummeting as Latinos are priced out, and Monroe School in west Logan Square, where displaced families are crowding in and enrollments are soaring?

Answers will not be found easily, but a place to start looking is Logan Square's unique past.

A history of diversity

The land above North Avenue west of the Chicago River was farm country before the Civil War, though the plank road that would become Milwaukee Avenue anticipated the area’s potential as a close-in residential location. A good supply of manufacturing jobs was assured by the hard-working river and by the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, which laid tracks along the west bank during the 1850s.

The Great Fire of 1871 sparked the area’s trajectory as one of Chicago’s most intensively developed bedroom communities. Back then, most of what would become Logan Square lay just beyond the reach of a safety-first building code that required all-brick construction. Lower home prices and rents for its new wooden buildings, along with the new Milwaukee Avenue streetcars, and later, elevated train, were magnets for working families, many newly arrived from central Europe and Scandinavia.

Full annexation in 1889 was followed by installation of a grandiose park and boulevard system across Chicago’s North and West Sides. This section of the city’s famed “emerald necklace” was designed by architect William Le Baron Jenney, better known for inventing the steel framing system that holds up skyscrapers.

Jenney did not bless the neighborhood with a major park, but he did create a set of magnificent boulevards that connect to Lincoln and Humboldt Parks. Each is 250 feet

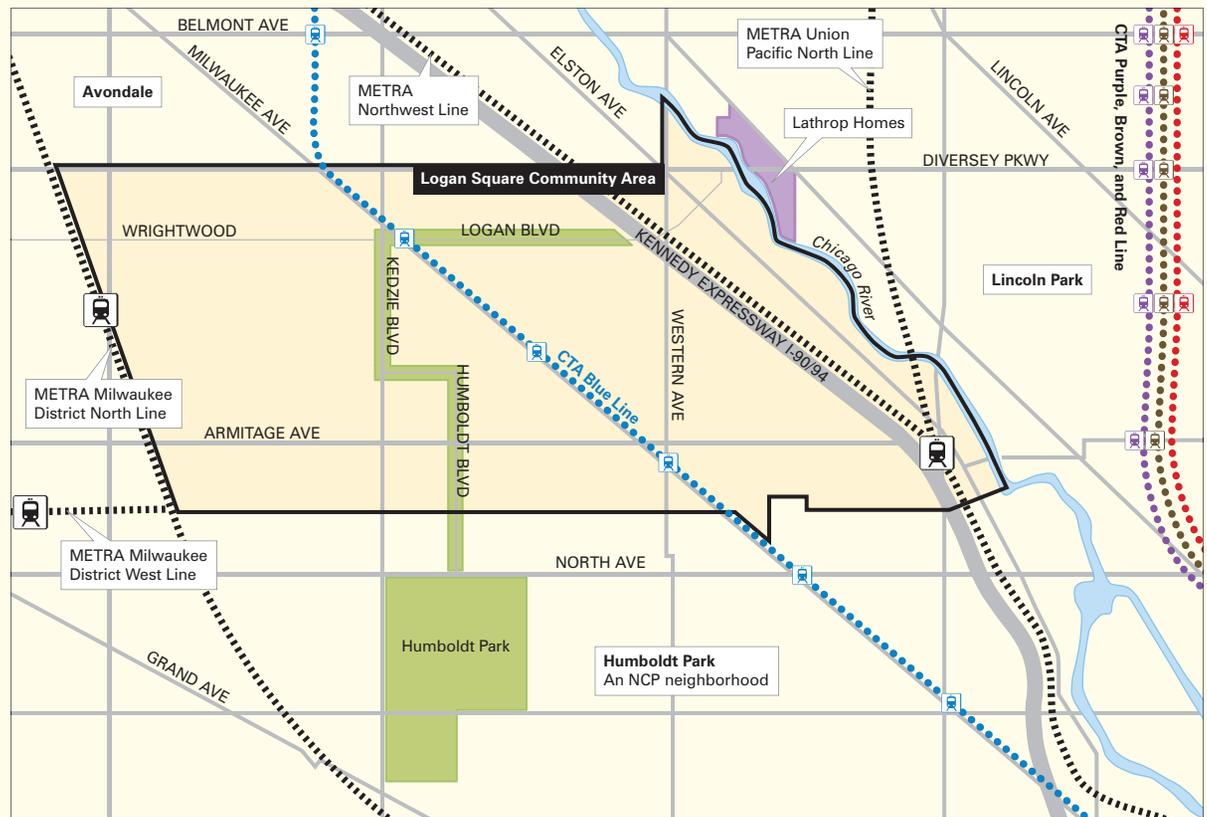


Figure 1 Northwest location near transportation

Logan Square’s Northwest Side location is well served by transportation resources including the I-94 Kennedy Expressway and the CTA Blue Line train serving the Loop and O’Hare International Airport. Metra stations are located on the eastern and western borders of Logan Square.

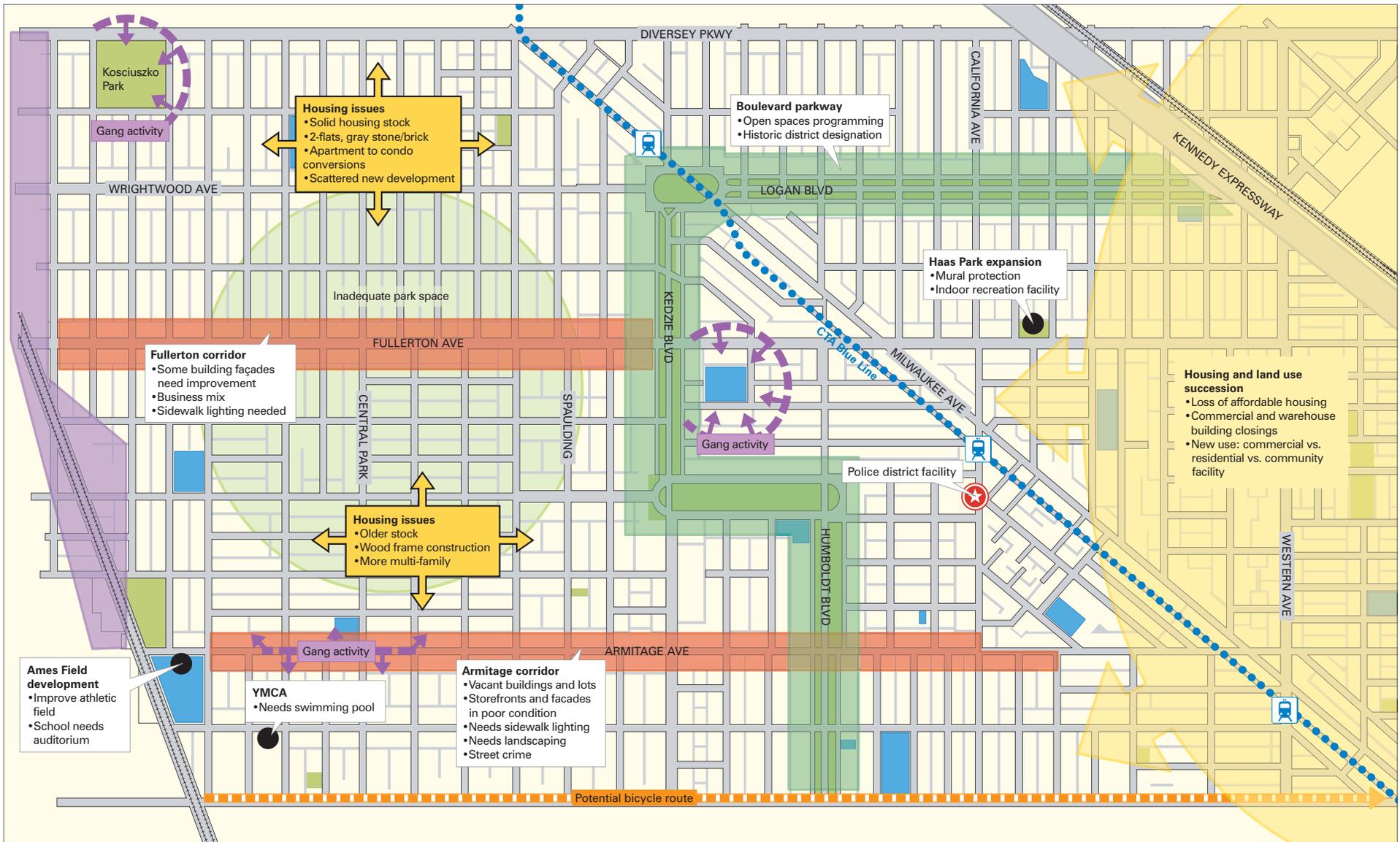


Figure 2 Neighborhood issues

An early step in the planning process was an analysis of neighborhood issues.

- Parks
- Schools

wide, with space enough for three roadways (two service lanes and a generous center carriage drive), each separated by grassy medians and framed by stately elms and catalpas. The boulevards meet at a ceremonial square at Milwaukee and Kedzie—a Parisian-style traffic circle dominated by a towering monument to Civil War General John A. Logan.

The boulevards spurred another wave of development, this time by well-off immigrants, including flush Milwaukee Avenue storekeepers, who ordered up elegant greystone mansions and brick two- and three-flats styled to look like single-family homes. In this interweaving of economic and ethnic backgrounds, a local tradition was born.

New immigrants, new challenges

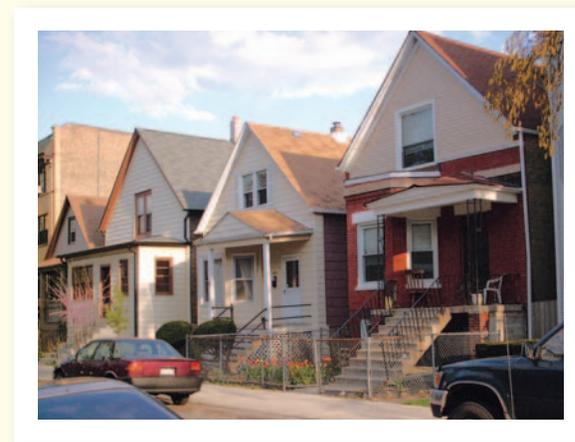
Logan Square kept growing following World War I and by 1925 was built up border-to-border. Poles and Russian Jews moved in as many Germans and Scandinavians moved up and out. By 1930 the population reached a teeming 114,174, with many Depression-era families doubling up or moving into makeshift basement and attic apartments.

Cramped conditions set the stage for the next great migration, after World War II, when young families throughout the city bolted for the burgeoning suburbs. Their places were taken, at first, by Puerto Rican families who moved into south Logan Square; and later, by immigrants from Mexico, Cuba and Central America who spread throughout the community. By 1980 Logan Square was half Hispanic; by 1990, two-thirds.

There was never any mass abandonment of housing in Logan Square, no widespread epidemic of fires or foreclosures. To the contrary, flower gardens and wrought-iron fences are far more evident than graffiti or broken glass, even on the poorest blocks. The absence of blight is remarkable, given the age of the housing stock, the persistent overcrowding, the large numbers of low-income renters, and the fact that renters still outnumber owners by 2 to 1.

Strong church, block and community groups, working with Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA), have made a difference. From 1962, when residents and business owners formed LSNA to stop the Kennedy Expressway from cutting through the heart of Logan Square, through the 1970s, when LSNA fought redlining and slum-lording, the neighborhood stuck together. In the last two decades, victories have ranged from the creation of the Unity play lot to two new middle schools and four elementary-school annex buildings.

But the larger story remains the enduring commitment of immigrants—then and now—to hard work, family, religion and the American Dream. Can they continue to pursue that dream in Logan Square? The goal of this plan—and of Logan Square Neighborhood Association—is to ensure that the answer is yes.



Well maintained housing is one of Logan Square's major assets.

LEAD AGENCY

Logan Square Neighborhood Association

“The New Communities Program is a natural fit. The partnership broadens our struggle to build a thriving, ethnically and economically diverse community.”

Nancy Aardema, *LSNA Executive Director*

One of Chicago’s oldest and most successful community organizations, Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) has been at the center of community life since the organization began, in 1962. In at least one respect the association provides a model for the New Communities Program (NCP): LSNA’s day-to-day work is guided by a holistic plan, not unlike an NCP quality-of-life plan, which is updated annually. The eleventh, most recent, holistic plan aims to build and protect “an excellent place to live, work, play, raise children, run a business and worship.”

At the center of LSNA’s work are programs that build a stronger community through stronger schools:

- The Parent Mentor program each year trains more than 100 parents as tutors in seven public schools.
- Community Learning Centers at five schools provide English as a Second Language and GED instruction for adults, along with childcare, tutoring and recreation for children.
- Literacy Ambassadors sends teams of teachers and parents on home visits to counsel parents on reading strategies and to build home-to-school bridges.
- *Nueva Generación*, in partnership with Chicago State University, trains parent mentors to become professional bi-lingual teachers and has become the model for a new statewide initiative.

These programs have opened new worlds of opportunity for hundreds of immigrant mothers, helping many develop the confidence and leadership skills needed to launch careers outside the home. This multi-purpose approach is typical of LSNA’s initiatives, from job training and retention to child care, from engaging youth to organizing seniors, from promoting local artists to securing more affordable housing.

The housing effort is especially crucial, because residential displacement undermines progress elsewhere. LSNA has partnered with Hispanic Housing Development Corporation and Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation to produce hundreds of affordable units for Logan Square. With the help of supportive aldermen, several for-profit developers have been persuaded to set aside affordable units in upscale developments. LSNA is a leader in the citywide Balanced Development Coalition, which seeks to make affordable set-asides a matter of law.

The association succeeds by pitching a big tent for all stakeholders—a tent in which Spanish is spoken along with English. Its 50-person Members Action Council draws from schools, churches, block clubs, community agencies and businesses. Hundreds attend its annual membership Congress, at which issues are debated and voted upon.

PLANNING PROCESS

Building a Consensus for Action



Citizen-planners identified existing conditions and pinpointed problems and opportunities to begin the planning process.

From the outset in early 2003, leadership at both LISC/Chicago and the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) agreed that the New Communities Program (NCP) in Logan Square would reflect the spirit, mission and methods contained in LSNA's holistic plan. NCP offered an opportunity to broaden both the scope of the holistic plan and the coalition behind it.

An NCP orientation meeting was held November 18, 2003, at Funston School. Nearly all the 30 community representatives who attended the meeting committed to serving on the core committee of the Planning Task Force. They also heard Rev. Michael Herman of St. Sylvester Catholic Church, chair of the task force, explain how the quality-of-life plan and LSNA'S holistic plan “would work together in a complementary way.”

On a cold Saturday in January 2004, more than 35 leaders embarked on a bus tour and mapping exercise to assess neighborhood conditions and pinpoint problems and opportunities. The core committee split into teams. Each marked the neighborhood map with colored dots

showing places they avoid because of gangs or traffic hazards, and positive places—the schools, parks, churches and stores—that enrich our lives. Citizen-planners also listed their priorities on index cards. Like all planning sessions, the meeting was conducted in both Spanish and English.

The following month the core committee met again, and planning consultants from Camiros Ltd. summarized the results of the earlier work. The committee then divided into five focus areas: affordable housing; commercial corridors; community facilities and open space; education and job training; and family services. In March 2004, these subcommittees, meeting at Armitage Baptist Church, discussed and developed a vision for their respective issue areas.

During the spring and summer of 2004, the subcommittees finalized their vision and began listing strategies and programs necessary to achieve it. Meanwhile, two Early Action Projects were begun. Taking advantage of a one-time opportunity to expand Haas Park, LISC provided a pair of grants worth \$55,000 to help the Trust for Public

Land fund a purchase option on a warehouse adjacent to the park. The Haas Park Advisory Council, LSNA and other local groups helped raise matching funds. Residents contributed amounts ranging from five dollars to \$500. Liberty Bank for Savings gave \$5,000, and the 1st Ward Alderman's Office contributed \$10,000.

LSNA also obtained \$20,000 from LISC to work with Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation on a health and health insurance awareness campaign, promoting programs such as KidCare and FamilyCare to employees in that industrial corridor.

The core committee held a workshop on strategies and programs at Funston School in September, drafting what would become eight strategies and related programs, projects and organizing efforts. These were fine-tuned at a

planning charrette on November 4, 2004, at Ames School. At meeting's end, 40 attendees were given 21 sticky dots and asked to "invest" them among scores of proposals listed on oversized flip charts. Low- and no-scoring proposals were eliminated, and heavily dotted proposals were highlighted.

About 100 parents from Logan Square schools participated in the same investment process at a December meeting.

After eighteen months of thoughtful, collaborative work, our task force is proud to present this vision for a new Logan Square, along with strategies, programs and projects for achieving our vision.



Task force members worked as a large group and on five sub-committees.

A Place to Stay, a Place to Grow



Our community has strong programs to involve parents in school improvement.

Logan Square is a place to stay and to grow. It is, above all, a place to grow healthy families—families secure that their homes are, and will continue to be, decent and affordable; families confident that their children are both physically safe and intellectually challenged in quality schools and pre-schools; families sustained by access to meaningful work at livable wages; families proud of their ethnic and cultural heritage, yet welcoming of the energy and diversity that newcomers bring to the mix.

While Logan Square is a place to grow, ours will be a balanced and holistic growth that fosters true, rooted community for young and old, new immigrants and long-time residents alike.

Eight Steps to Achieve Our Vision

Figure 3 Key projects of the plan

The plan includes social, economic and physical projects to achieve the community's vision.

The task force developed eight ambitious but achievable strategies. They will preserve our legacy of diversity, expand our opportunities for personal growth and advance Logan Square as a community where all can pursue their version of the American Dream. We pledge that the energy and thoughtfulness that went into envisioning these strategies will carry forward to the more challenging work of making them a reality.

Our Strategies:

- 1. Preserve** and expand affordable housing.
- 2. Expand** and improve parks and recreational programs, and create new community spaces.
- 3. Improve** and expand model community school programs, and foster educational opportunities for residents of all ages.
- 4. Revitalize** key commercial corridors by working with elected officials, businesses and property owners.
- 5. Support** industrial retention and business development, and provide coordinated job training, job placement and financial education to community residents.
- 6. Improve** the health, safety and well being of Logan Square residents and families.
- 7. Support** local arts organizations, promote art activities and expand arts programming and cultural events.
- 8. Build** community leadership and enable all residents, young and old, citizen and non-citizen, to participate effectively in decisions affecting their lives.

STRATEGY 1

Preserve and expand affordable housing.

No amount of neighborhood improvement will benefit people who can no longer afford to live in Logan Square. Our success at turning neighborhood schools into centers of community life, for instance, will be greatly undermined if families who currently use and support those schools are forced by rising rents to move elsewhere.

The shortage of affordable and decent housing is a crisis throughout Chicago, but nowhere is the situation more acute than in Logan Square. Census 2000 found that 30 percent of renters here are cost-burdened, paying more than 35 percent of income in rent. Seventeen percent were categorized as extremely burdened, paying more than half their income for housing.

Across the entire community area, rents increased by 38 percent during the 1990s, and median home values by 81 percent (see Figure 4, Median home value/median monthly rent). East of Milwaukee Avenue, along the knife's edge of displacement, demand for new condominiums and fancy rehabs is driving real estate prices out of sight. On these blocks, the median value of single-family homes more than tripled between 1993 and 2002, and soaring real estate taxes are forcing long-time homeowners to move. Rents more than doubled, forcing thousands of working families to move west, some to still-affordable rentals in west Logan Square, others to more distant neighborhoods, such as Belmont-Cragin, or to Des Plaines and other inner-ring suburbs.

More recent data and local knowledge tell us that in the last five years alone, home prices in Logan Square have increased by 75 percent.

A recent analysis of home-loan data by the Woodstock Institute shows dramatic change in both the volume of loans and the profile of families buying homes in Logan Square.

In 1990 there were 848 home loans reported. By 2002 the number had risen to 3,706. As loan activity increased, the typical buyer profile shifted from moderate-income to upper-income families. In 1990, two-thirds of borrowers ranked in the lowest or second-lowest income categories. By 2002, moderate-income buyers represented only 31 percent of loan recipients. Buyers in the highest income category jumped from less than 13 percent to more than 42 percent.

In a related study, "Who's Buying Where," dated February 2002, the Woodstock Institute found that 19 of Logan Square's 29 census tracts were in rapid transition from a diverse mix of homebuyers to essentially upscale white owners.

While we welcome the new residents who have been drawn to our beautiful homes and diverse community, we will dedicate ourselves to making sure our low- and moderate-income families can continue to call Logan Square their home. This will require policies and programs that are strong and multi-faceted.

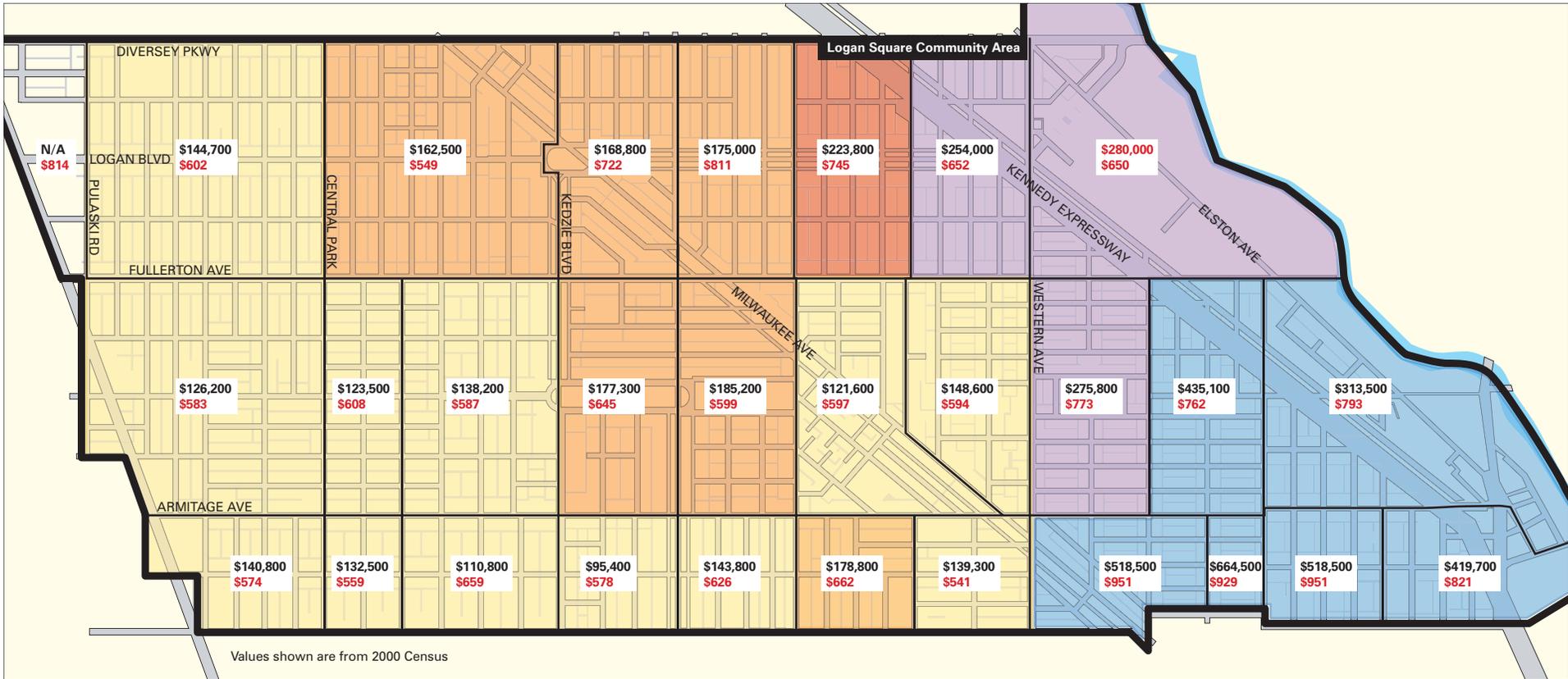


Figure 4 Median home values and monthly rents

Data from the 2000 Census show that housing is becoming less affordable for both owners and renters. Since the census, home values in Logan Square have increased another 75 percent.

- N/A Not applicable
- Under \$150,000
- \$150,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000-\$249,999
- \$250,000-\$299,999
- \$300,000 and up
- \$00 Median home value
- \$00 Median monthly rent



Figure 5 Project-based Section 8 sites

Logan Square contains 730 apartments in project-based Section 8 buildings. The Section 8 contracts are beginning to expire, threatening to displace low- and moderate-income residents.

- Parks
- Schools
- ★ Police district facility
- Section 8 housing

1.1 Work to preserve affordable rental housing.

Logan Square is home to hundreds of subsidized housing units. We will organize tenants so that subsidized buildings stay subsidized—and rents remain within reach of low- and moderate-income families—as federal contracts expire. The city lists 730 apartments in project-based Section 8 buildings in Logan Square (see Figure 5, Project-based Section 8 sites), including the Lorington Apartments on Spaulding Avenue, where, with Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, we are trying to negotiate purchase to maintain affordability. We will continue to research the status of other Section 8 sites, identify owners and organize tenants.

The Lathrop Homes, a Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) public housing project, are across the Chicago River from Logan Square. LSNA has built strong institutional relationships with the Lathrop community and embraces its families as part of Logan Square. Under the CHA Plan for Transformation, Lathrop will undergo dramatic changes. We will work with residents and the CHA to ensure that transformation at Lathrop meets residents’ needs. Their goal, and ours, will be to minimize displacement and ensure that families who wish to stay at a redeveloped Lathrop will be encouraged, and helped, to do so.

1.2 Establish a Logan Square housing center.

We will establish a housing center to help working families rent or buy housing they can afford. This one-stop office will help both apartment-seekers and landlords. For instance, renters might get help obtaining housing subsidies through the city’s Low-Income Housing Trust Fund or the federal rent voucher program. Center counselors also will help senior-citizen property owners rent out empty units; connect homebuyers to affordable mortgages and educate

them about borrowing scams that can lead to foreclosure; and help to market new rental units that have been set aside by private developers for working families.

1.3 Partner with community development corporations to build housing.

LSNA has not, by itself, built housing. But the association has decades of experience with the low- and moderate-income families who constitute the potential market for affordable housing. LSNA has a track record of successful collaboration with not-for profit developers such as Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, Neighborhood Housing Services and Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation. The worsening crisis requires LSNA to take a more active role, such as partnering with Bickerdike on redevelopment of the run-down sections of Armitage Avenue around Funston School (see Strategy 4).

1.4 Advocate for affordable set-aside units in new and substantially rehabbed market-rate housing developments.

As active participants in the citywide Balanced Development Coalition, we will continue to mobilize support for the Affordable Housing Set-Aside Ordinance. This mandates that 15 percent of units be set aside for affordable homeownership in all new or substantially renovated buildings of more than 10 units, or that a compensating fee of \$100,000 for every required affordable unit be paid into the city's Low-Income Housing Trust Fund. Until mandatory set-asides are enacted, we will urge our aldermen to seek voluntary set-asides from private developers.

We will advocate for new policies, such as a condominium conversion policy, which could require a fee for conversion of rental units and possibly cap the number of conversions in a particular year in a particular neighborhood.

1.5 Start limited-equity housing cooperative projects.

In partnership with a community development corporation (see Project 1.3), we will develop new housing co-ops through the purchase of a large rental building or buildings. We will perform moderate rehab, then sell ownership shares to working families. Co-op residents will preserve equity and receive tax advantages; their shares would appreciate over time at a controlled rate, as opposed to a market rate, to maintain affordability at resale.

1.6 Develop supportive housing in Logan Square.

Logan Square has a limited number of shelter facilities for the homeless, and almost none with supportive services that can deal with such problems as addiction, AIDS and mental illness. In partnership with experienced providers, such as Humboldt Park Social Services and Lakefront Supportive Housing, we will explore development of supportive housing, where residents can receive appropriate services and prepare for employment and independent living.

1.7 Establish the Logan Square Legacy Project.

Knowledge is power. Yet we often don't know that an apartment building has been sold until a condo converter announces he or she has a contract to purchase. A Legacy Project would canvass building owners in advance, giving them the option to sell or lease to a not-for-profit that would, in turn, rent to working families. Several recent sellers have said they would have viewed such an offer favorably. A periodic canvass would also alert advocates to impending sales so they can track zoning changes and displacement issues.



Maintaining affordability of the area's housing stock is a priority.

STRATEGY 2

Expand and improve parks and recreational programs, and create new community spaces.

With slightly more than 0.6 acres of public parks for every thousand residents, Logan Square ranks among city communities with the least open space. According to the 1998 CitySpace report, some 99 new acres of parks would be needed just to reach the recommended minimum of two acres per thousand residents. These numbers prompted the city and the Chicago Park District to produce an ambitious Logan Square Open Space Plan in July 2004. It proposes several improvements that LSNA and its allies have long supported, such as expansion of Haas Park, and some new ideas, such as development of public spaces alongside and under the Kennedy Expressway. In general, we support the city's plan and urge its timely implementation.

Physical park improvements, however, won't be enough to keep young people away from the call of gangs and drug use. Nor will new trees and field houses, by themselves, end the isolation of seniors who are too afraid or infirm to use the parks. That will require thoughtful programming, aggressive outreach and better coordination among the parks, police and schools.

2.1 Expand and improve Haas Park.

We will continue to work with the Chicago Park District, park advisory councils, the 1st Ward alderman and the Trust for Public Land to make expansion of Haas Park, at Fullerton and California avenues, a replicable model for park expansion and improvement across the city. The trust's recent purchase of an adjacent warehouse makes it imperative that the Chicago Park District follow through with funding for additional land, closure of Fairfield Avenue and construction of a new field house and other improvements.

2.2 Support construction of the Bloomingdale Bike Trail and Greenway.

The city's proposed linear park and bikeway atop the dormant freight rail embankment at Bloomingdale Avenue (1800 North) offers an opportunity to enhance the aesthetics and exercise opportunities along south Logan Square. Crucial will be the look and location of on- and off-ramps for bikers and hikers, and the placement of pocket parks. This is a chance, also, to work with our sister community, Humboldt Park, which supports the trail in its own quality-of-life plan.

2.3 Work with park advisory councils to improve park facilities and programming.

Beginning with Kosciuszko Park, our largest, we will undertake a systematic review of park conditions and programming, comparing what's available with our community's recreational needs. We will help advisory councils recruit additional members and develop fresh ideas for each of our 13 parks—from tiny Neighbor's Garden Park to Mozart Park to nine-acre Kosciuszko—so that all are monitored by a group of citizens steeped in park issues and governance.

2.4 Construct small playgrounds and gardens on vacant parcels.

Logan Square has but a handful of vacant city-owned lots, but here and there are opportunities to chip away at our open-space deficit by developing gardens and play lots. One possibility is an underutilized lot at St. Sylvester's School, across from Palmer Square, where parish leaders are working with the national KaBOOM! organization to raise funds and recruit volunteers for a day-long park-raising.

2.5 Support creation of a multi-use plaza on Chicago Transit Authority property off Logan Square.

Just south of the Logan Square monument, alongside Milwaukee Avenue where the Blue Line descends into a subway tunnel, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) owns a half-acre that could be much, much more than the existing parking lot and open railway cut. We will work with the city, CTA and groups such as Logan Square Walks, Logan Square Preservation and the aurorARTS alliance to obtain funding for a landscaped, half-acre public plaza that in summertime could double as a farmers' market and Latino-themed art fair, or *feria*.

2.6 Rethink and reconfigure the Ames School athletic field.

One of the public open spaces in southwest Logan Square is the expansive athletic field in front of Ames Middle School, at Armitage and Hamlin Avenues. Despite the best efforts of Ames School leadership, this space is underutilized due to a lack of maintenance funding. We will engage school, park and police leadership in rethinking, and possibly reprogramming, this space. The Chicago Park District's Campus Park program will be reviewed as a funding alternative.

2.7 Support renovation of the West Park Commission Comfort Station on Logan Square.

With 600 square feet of interior space, this building on the east side of the square at Milwaukee and Logan can be converted from equipment storage to an information center, historical display and small meeting space for neighborhood groups. Logan Square Preservation is leading the effort to return this historic gem to more constructive public use.



Figure 6 Bloomingdale bike trail

Conversion of the abandoned Bloomingdale rail line would create a major greenway and recreational facility for residents of Logan Square and Humboldt Park. The trail would also help address the neighborhood's documented need for more open space.

STRATEGY 3

Improve and expand model community school programs, and foster educational opportunities for residents of all ages.

The Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) is a national leader in the sophisticated work of building community schools—schools that are intimately tied to their communities and are centers of community. LSNA’s pioneering initiatives—including the Parent Mentor and Literacy Ambassadors programs and the school-based Community Learning Centers—have not only raised student achievement levels but also opened new worlds of opportunity for immigrant and other low-income mothers, helping them develop the confidence and leadership skills to pursue their dreams of education and work. Parents are everywhere in LSNA schools, sharing their language and culture, their social and tutoring skills and, of course, their love for children. We will work to educate others, locally and nationally, about the value of the LSNA community-school model for student achievement, community development and family success.

Much remains to be done. While our grade-school achievement scores are steadily improving, in 2004 fewer than one-third of seventh graders at Ames Middle School met state achievement standards on the ISAT test. At Kelvyn Park High School just west of our community, where a majority of Logan Square students attend high school, one in five students drops out every year. Only 15 percent of juniors meet state standards for reading, and less than 5 percent for math.

Most immediately, we must better understand the problem of student turnover, or mobility, in the K-12 years, and develop a plan to attack it. If high student turnover is not addressed, it will undermine progress on other educational issues.

3.1 Expand the Parent Mentor program.

Since 1995 this program has hired and trained more than 1,000 parents, mostly immigrant mothers, to tutor students for two hours a day in several Logan Square public grade schools. Most tutors go on to further schooling or full-time

jobs. We will expand beyond the eight current programs to at least two more Logan Square schools, and recommend expansion statewide—wherever low-income schools and their communities could benefit from greater parent involvement.

3.2 Build upon school-based Community Learning Centers.

Starting in 1996, Community Learning Centers (CLC) have proven their worth in five of our schools—Funston, Monroe, Mozart, Schneider and Ames. For adults, the centers offer evening GED classes and English as a Second Language instruction; childcare, tutoring and activities for children are also available. More than 1,000 adults attend in an average week, 600 of them for English-language classes. LSNA partners with institutions within Logan Square, such as the aurorARTS alliance, and outside the community, such as Malcolm X College, the Chicago Children’s Museum and the Family Institute at Northwestern University. In this way, families can attend programs that would not otherwise be easily accessible. The Community Learning Centers will be expanded to provide advanced instruction for literacy tutors and parent mentors, comprehensive summer programming, new arts activities and citizenship classes. We will also expand the centers’ scope to include job training and financial literacy programs to increase the economic resiliency of our families (see Strategy 5).

3.3 Enhance the Literacy Ambassadors program.

Beginning in 2003, some 35 teams of teachers and parents in five schools have been holding house meetings on literacy. They help parents devise reading strategies and build bridges from school to home. We hope to expand Literacy Ambassadors to two more schools and strengthen the program’s innovative lending libraries for parents.

3.4 Develop the Parents as Tutors program.

LSNA's newest parent initiative, a federally funded Americorps pilot program, places experienced parent mentors in schools to tutor children intensively. Now in three schools, this program will expand to five in 2005-06. The impact of these skilled and trained parents is being tracked, in hopes that their success will inspire a national program.

3.5 Expand high school service learning opportunities.

LSNA will expand its partnership with Kelvyn Park High School, whose students do their service learning as tutors in our Community Learning Centers, and where we are collaborating on an innovative freshman social justice curriculum. We will also seek funding to re-start a successful attendance program in which parents work with truant students.

3.6 Continue the Grow Our Own Teachers program.

We will start a second cohort of students in our *Nueva Generación* (New Generation) program, which has 30 parents in the fifth year of studying to be bilingual teachers. As part of the Chicago Learning Campaign, we will continue to advocate for a statewide Grow Our Own program based on this highly successful collaboration with Chicago State University.

3.7 Expand pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs, and develop a new pre-school.

Pre-school programs are crucial to academic success, yet there are too few slots at our pre-school centers—waiting lists of 80 to 100 families are common—and providers are poorly coordinated. We will work with our schools, Christopher House, the YMCA and YWCA, along with allies such as State Senator Miguel del Valle, to improve the adequacy and efficiency of these vital programs.

Meanwhile, our Community Learning Centers will continue to train childcare workers to offer age-appropriate activities in a literacy-rich environment. These centers currently offer the only pre-school opportunities available to many children.

With our partners, we also will research the need for, and feasibility of, a new pre-school program, perhaps located at the old library branch building on Altgeld Street.

3.8 Improve access to computers at local schools, the new public library and other public spaces.

Digital literacy is a key to future employability. Yet our schools are under-equipped, and many of our families cannot afford the latest computers, much less broadband technology, in their homes. We will survey needs and create a plan to ensure adequate computer equipment and space at our schools, at the new public library at Sacramento and Fullerton avenues and at other locations.

3.9 Improve opportunities for high school students to advance to college.

Too few of our high school graduates are prepared for, aware of or motivated to pursue college opportunities. In a world where education increasingly predicts success, this must change. We will work with local high schools to strengthen college preparatory curricula and to improve college counseling. We also will utilize the new state law that allows undocumented students to pay lower in-state tuition at Illinois colleges.

3.10 Commission research on school mobility in Logan Square.

The debilitating problem of student mobility, or high student turnover rates, threatens to undermine all the projects outlined above. At several schools, more than half



Pre-school programs are crucial to future academic success, but more are needed to meet the demand in Logan Square.

the students leave or arrive during any given school year. Mobility affects everyone, from teachers who have to spend valuable time helping newly arrived students catch up, to students who must adjust to a new school environment. It affects school-improvement efforts—teachers cannot build upon each others' work because so few students remain from year to year. The community suffers when active families move away and no longer participate in creating safe, family-friendly and culturally sensitive schools.

Housing displacement may be the root cause, yet we know too little about the phenomenon to propose strategies and programs to address it. A broad but detailed survey is needed to provide comparative data on the causes and effects of student mobility. Armed with accurate data, we will advocate for solutions, which may include the liberalization of school attendance boundaries.

STRATEGY 4

Revitalize and redevelop key commercial corridors by working with elected officials, businesses and property owners.

Our three major commercial avenues have different problems and possibilities, yet all need coordinated planning and redevelopment, plus a more thoughtful and proactive use of tax increment financing. Also, each of these streets could take fuller advantage of the pedestrian traffic generated by the nearby Blue Line el stations.

Milwaukee Avenue is Logan Square's bustling downtown, with an eclectic mix of stores, professional offices and entertainment venues. Future investments in this commercial district should reflect its current streetwall of two- to four-story buildings with active retail and other nonresidential uses on the ground floor and residential uses above.

Fullerton, with its generous street and sidewalk widths, continues to have retail opportunity, but it is not a continuous retail pedestrian street. Areas of pedestrian-type commercial use are interspersed with drive-through banking and purely institutional buildings. New development should concentrate retail uses at major intersections.

Armitage, with its narrow width and hodgepodge of uses – from used car lots to liquor and tobacco stores – is a tougher case. There, an ambitious redevelopment plan is warranted. Over time, the street's underutilized land and buildings could recycle into housing that is in scale with other neighborhood residential uses.

Logan Square stores capture a lion's share (90 percent) of the community's \$868 million total retail spending, according to the market research firm MetroEdge. But we must be prepared to compete with big-box discounters, such as the Wal-Mart recently proposed for a neighborhood to the west.

4.1 Pursue school-to-school housing and retail redevelopment on Armitage Avenue.

In cooperation with local aldermen, we will partner with Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation to revitalize one or more blocks in the Armitage Avenue corridor, from Ames Middle School at Hamlin Avenue on the west, past Funston School to Mozart Street on the east. Envisioned for Phase One are 70 units of affordable family rental housing above a lively ensemble of stores and restaurants. The commercial tenants would include, but not be limited to, smaller,

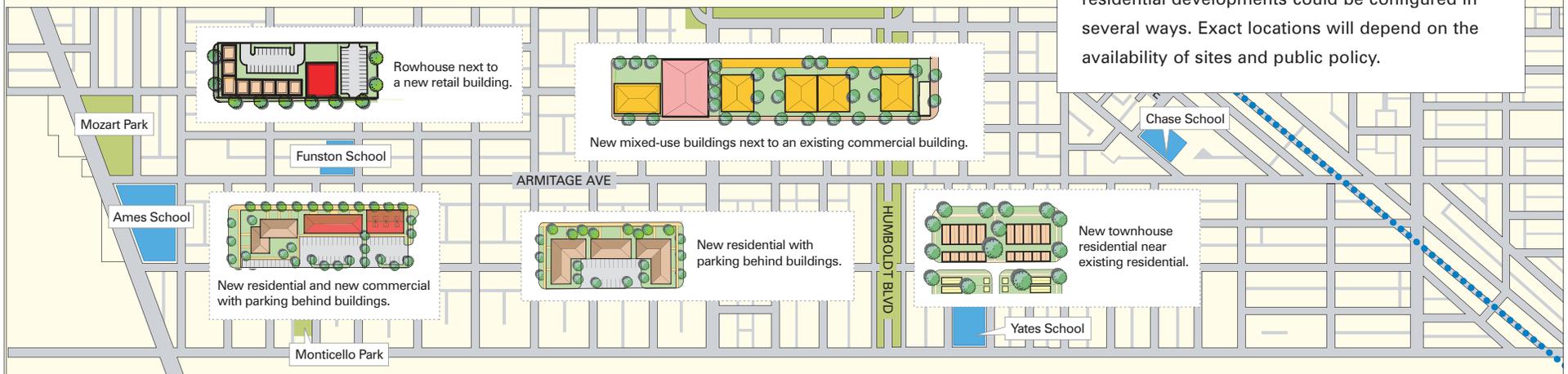


Figure 7 Armitage Avenue “school to school” housing initiative

Armitage Avenue offers a number of opportunities to develop new housing. Depending on the size of the site and adjacent land-use mix, new residential developments could be configured in several ways. Exact locations will depend on the availability of sites and public policy.

locally owned businesses. Special assistance will be available for any owner who would otherwise be displaced.

4.2 Study potential zoning changes to encourage mixed-use projects.

Developers chasing the booming market for luxury condos are taking advantage of permissive zoning along commercial streets, installing enormous condo buildings that are out of scale with the neighborhood and are changing the character of our shopping districts. We will work with our aldermen, and the committee now redrawing zoning throughout the city, to protect commercial zoning along key streets and intersections. Everywhere our efforts should encourage small, locally owned stores and inviting, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.

4.3 Recruit badly needed businesses and services.

Our commercial districts are long on cell-phone stores and resale shops, but short on other products and services needed by a revitalizing community. We will work with the Economic Development Commission to conduct surveys and focus groups with residents to learn what other businesses they would like to see in Logan Square and then recruit these businesses. Some early favorites: a business-service store, such as Fed Ex Kinko's, and a full-service bank in western Logan Square. We could also use more quality daycare and pre-school providers.

4.4 Support streetscape and façade improvements along Fullerton, Armitage and Milwaukee avenues.

If our commercial corridors are going to better serve our community and attract new investment, they must look attractive. Public investment in streetscape and building façade improvements can spur commercial investment and draw more residents and visitors. We will work with local aldermen, chambers of commerce and business owners to encourage such improvements.



Figure 8 Armitage Avenue infill development

Infill development along Armitage could improve the look and pedestrian quality of the street and provide opportunities for new affordable housing. This drawing is for illustrative purposes only. No specific plans for this corner have been discussed.

STRATEGY 5

Support industrial retention and business development, and provide coordinated job training, job placement and financial education for community residents.

Logan Square is predominantly residential, yet it is flanked east and west by two extensive manufacturing and warehouse districts. Centered on Elston and Pulaski avenues, these provide thousands of living-wage jobs to breadwinners across the North Side. Both the North Branch (Elston) and Pulaski industrial corridors are threatened by encroaching residential development and the conversion of viable industrial buildings to loft-style condos.

Even as we move to protect what industry remains, it is evident that most new job opportunities will be in services, from foodservice and hospitality to media services and information management. Data collected by the Illinois Department of Employment Security show that our largest job category is administration and support, accounting for one-fifth of the 15,034 jobs reported in 2003 within ZIP code 60647. It is imperative to help our workforce develop the skills to compete in a global, twenty-first century economy.

Equally important is the need for coordinated job placement services that link working families with income-support programs and financial education. LSNA's Parent Mentor program and its Community Learning Centers are already providing job preparation and placement services, from ESL classes to job fairs. LEED Council and Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation also provide job training and placement services. We will combine and redouble our efforts to prepare our workforce.



The Cooper Lamp building has the potential to anchor the business and industrial corridor on the community's east end.

5.1 Expand Community Learning Centers to provide coordinated employment services and financial education.

LSNA's five Community Learning Centers serve hundreds of adults each day. We will build on this success by coordinating new partnerships to provide job training, job placement and financial literacy services. We will look to the Centers for Working Families model developed by LISC/Chicago and the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a framework for building the financial strength and resiliency of our working residents. Potential partners include the Chicago Interfaith Committee on Workers Issues, Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation (GNPDC), and the Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Council.

5.2 Assist local entrepreneurs with training and business development.

Small businesses produce the vast majority of new jobs, and our post-industrial economy rewards innovative ideas. With partners such as GNPDC, LEED Council, the Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education and Park National Bank, we will connect entrepreneurs to training, technical assistance and loan programs.

5.3 Work with local industrial councils and others to protect manufacturing jobs.

Along with GNPDC, LEED Council, the Island Block Club and workers themselves, we will organize and advocate for industrial retention. To the west, we will support a Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) along the Pulaski Corridor to prevent other uses from encroaching on local industrial companies. To the east, where residential loft conversions are hottest, we will urge that business tenants be recruited for anchor buildings such as Cooper Lamp at 2533 W. Diversey Avenue. We will seek out manufacturers isolated in newly residential areas and help them relocate, if desired, to industrial corridors on Elston Avenue or Pulaski Road.

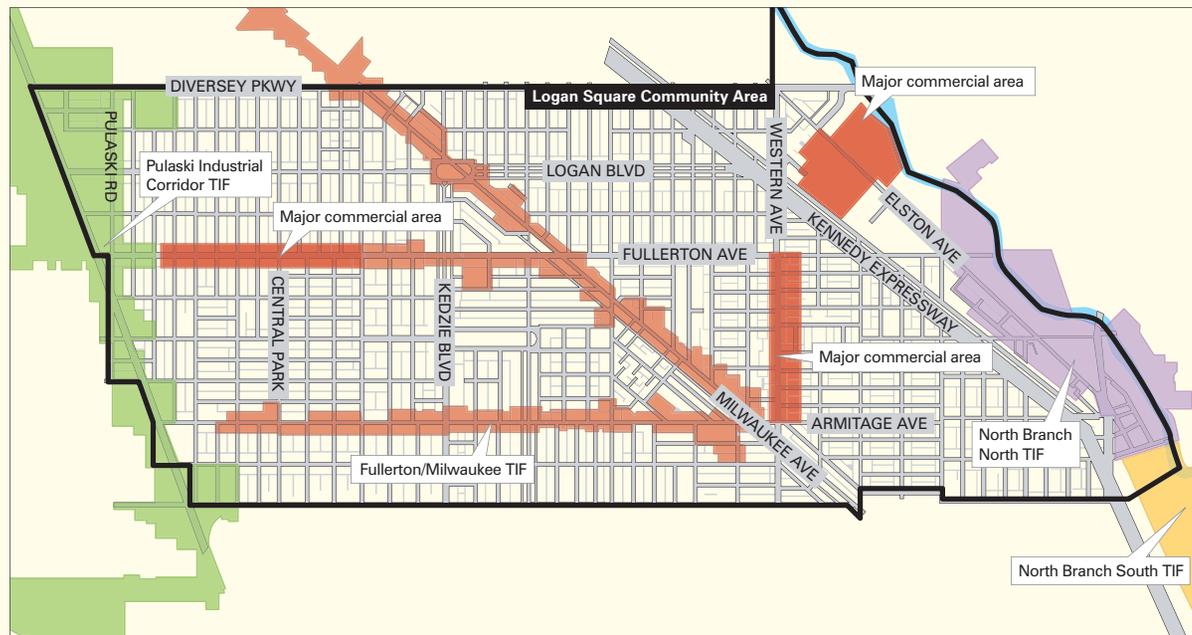


Figure 9 TIF districts and commercial corridors

Logan Square is served by active commercial and industrial corridors that provide jobs and retail goods and services. Tax increment financing districts that are already in place or proposed can provide funding to support economic development and job training initiatives.

STRATEGY 6

Improve the health, safety and well being of Logan Square residents and families.

Our community ranks in the middle range of Chicago neighborhoods on most health indicators, but death rates from heart disease, cirrhosis, respiratory diseases and HIV are well above citywide averages. We need more exercise, smarter diets and fewer bad habits.

Beyond personal health strategies, Logan Square needs better access to quality health services. Since 2001, LSNA's Health Outreach Team has connected more than 2,500 people per year to health insurance and services, yet large numbers of uninsured mothers still have difficulty obtaining the pre-natal, obstetric and pediatric care needed to raise healthy children. Ours ranks among the bottom third of Chicago's 77 communities for high rates of teenage births and insufficient prenatal care.

Access to quality health care requires that hospitals treat patients with respect and fairness. We will help monitor patient billings as part of the region-wide Hospital Accountability Project initiated in 2003 by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU.) If hospitals are discovered to be gouging our uninsured and under-insured residents, we will join efforts to improve billing practices or eliminate hospitals' non-profit tax status.

Violence is also a health issue in Logan Square. We are outraged by the 46 homicides—most gang-related—that occurred during 2004 in Chicago Police Districts 14 and 25. When in February 2004 the *Chicago Tribune* labeled one of our patrol areas, 1413, the city's deadliest police beat, we became determined to do something about it.

6.1 Initiate a Healthier People/Healthier Workforce program.

With the Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation, we have launched a Healthier People/Healthier Workforce program as an Early Action Project to educate employers and employees on health issues, including how to obtain KidCare, FamilyCare and other public benefits.

6.2 Continue to expand health and nutrition programs.

With partners such as the North Central District Health Council, the Gilead Project and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrants and Refugee Rights, we will continue and expand health and nutrition programs such as Health Promoters; cooking and nutrition classes at LSNA's Community Learning Centers; and *Ayuda Mutua* (Mutual Help), which works with block clubs to promote gardening, walking, biking and dancing.

6.3 Expand PrimeCare, a full-service health clinic in Logan Square.

PrimeCare Community Health Center provides quality medical services on a sliding-fee scale to the working families of Logan Square. More could be offered, and more served, if its building at 3924 W. Fullerton Avenue could be expanded or replaced with a larger one at another location. We will work with PrimeCare and other allies to make this happen.

6.4 Expand physical fitness and sports programs at schools, facilities and parks.

Needed most are after-school programs and leagues to engage adolescents and teenagers, especially those with working parents and time on their hands after 3 P.M. We will work with our school and park networks to increase and promote healthful activities. We will also work with the McCormick Tribune YMCA in Logan Square to add a badly needed indoor swimming pool at the Y at 1834 N. Lawndale Avenue. There is potential there, too, for an outdoor amenity, perhaps in conjunction with the proposed Bloomingdale bikeway.

6.5 Improve access to mental health services, addiction counseling and dental care.

Our residents, especially Spanish-speaking immigrants, have limited access to mental health services and to counseling for addiction to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Working with Humboldt Park Social Services and other partners, we will foster creation of an addiction recovery center and a family counseling service capable of dealing with domestic abuse.

Working with PrimeCare and the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago, we will seek funding for, and work to establish, a low-cost, community-based dental clinic or referral service.

6.6 Help young people make healthy lifestyle choices through a community-wide effort.

The area around Ames, Funston and Mozart schools offers many temptations that lead young people to drugs and alcohol. It is the goal of the community to stop drug dealing and gang recruiting in the area around the schools, especially at dismissal time. Parents want to ensure that local businesses do not sell tobacco or alcohol to minors. We will also provide training in alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention to students at Ames Middle School.

6.7 Make Logan Square a safe place to bike and walk.

Young people, especially, need to get off their couches, put down their video games and start walking and biking. Yet Logan Square is a dense, traffic-intensive community. Several initiatives to improve this situation are in the works, including more dedicated bike lanes near parks and schools; a Walk-to-School campaign; and a traffic-calming initiative around the Logan Square monument, led by Logan Square Walks. With the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation and Afterschool Matters, Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) has helped start a bicycle repair and safety program at Ames Middle School. Some 25 young people will learn how to repair, and safely ride, bicycles through this 16-week program. Graduates will get their own bikes and a chance to work as Junior Bike Ambassadors during the summer months.

6.8 Form new block clubs to take on health and safety issues.

LSNA's experience has proved that strong block clubs increase the safety and cohesiveness of a neighborhood—and even of a single apartment building. Block clubs could also promote healthier lifestyles—for example, with help from the Active Living by Design (*Ayuda Mutua*) program.

6.9 Increase participation in crime prevention strategies.

The rash of gang violence over the past two years underscores the need to redouble efforts to make Logan Square a safer community. We will partner with Chicago Police Districts 14 and 25 on crime prevention, participating actively in the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) community policing initiative, and supporting the Safe Passage initiative, in which residents and business owners watch out for children on their way to and from school. To check progress and rally public support, we will co-sponsor an annual School Safety Summit.



Logan Square can be a safer place to walk and bike with the addition of more dedicated bike lanes near parks and schools.

STRATEGY 7

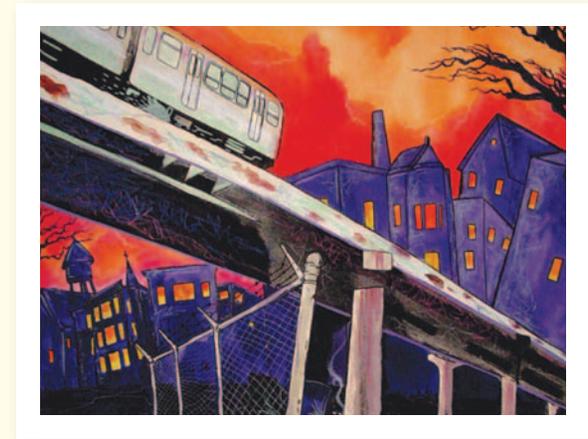
Support local arts organizations, promote art activities and expand arts programming and cultural events.

Art helps define a community. It expresses our collective identity and can be a powerful tool for community building. Art can draw attention to the diversity of Logan Square and at the same time provide the psychological benefits of self-expression and self-esteem. Throughout the New Communities Program planning process, Logan Square residents consistently conveyed their love of the arts and their desire for more arts activities and experiences.

While Logan Square has a strong history of support for community art, from Redmoon Theater to graffiti artists, local arts organizations face several challenges. There is a need for greater coordination and promotion of art activities. Finding space has been a challenge. Though some organizations thrive through partnerships with under-utilized facilities such as churches, planning is needed to integrate the arts into our public spaces and provide permanent homes for arts groups. The community has expressed a desire for more arts education for all ages, and support for a vision: to transform urban landscapes with public art.

7.1 Identify suitable workspace and buildings for lease or purchase by artists and arts organizations.

With partners such as aurorARTS alliance and Logan Square Preservation, we will identify under-used spaces throughout the community—in churches or other facilities—and connect them with artists and arts organizations that need space. To attract larger arts organizations and to keep growing arts organizations in the community, we will identify buildings that can be leased or bought by mid- to large-sized arts organizations.



Art helps the community express our collective identity and is a powerful tool for community building.

7.2 Expand arts programming in our Community Learning Centers.

The arts allow people of all ages to tell their individual and community stories. By partnering with Redmoon Theater and other organizations to offer more arts education in our Community Learning Centers, we will strengthen educational opportunities and generate art that mirrors our neighborhood.

7.3 Strengthen the Logan Square Arts Council.

The council will step up as our primary arts networking and advertising mechanism, developing an arts calendar and possibly a web site to promote cultural events and venues in Logan Square, and creating internal communication channels to promote current and new arts initiatives.

7.4 Undertake public art projects.

The proposed half-acre plaza southeast of the Logan monument at Milwaukee and Logan (see Project 2.5) will have space for periodic art fairs, or *ferias*, that will celebrate the arts in Logan Square. On the northwestern side of the square at Milwaukee and Kedzie, a mural project led by archi-treasures will celebrate the diverse Logan Square community and our vision for the future. Other public art projects will occur throughout the community, with help from the organization Public Allies.

7.5 Establish a cultural center to serve as the hub of arts activities.

Many members of the community expressed the desire for a cultural arts center in Logan Square. It would provide a hub for arts activities and experiences, supporting smaller arts activities while also offering a high-profile exhibition and performance venue. Logan Square Preservation, aurorARTS alliance and other arts organizations will examine potential sites and take the lead on creating this new center.



Figure 10 Plaza for farmers market, art festivals

A festival plaza along Milwaukee Avenue near Logan Boulevard, next to the CTA tunnel entrance, could be used by vendors selling produce, art, ethnic goods and other products.

STRATEGY 8

Build community leadership and enable all residents, young and old, citizen and non-citizen, to participate effectively in decisions affecting their lives.

The best of plans will have little impact unless we build the power to implement them. New leaders must step up to mobilize community support and forge the partnerships (financial and political) to make change happen. We will continue to cultivate and expand our circle of leadership, reaching out to the young and the old, whose energy and wisdom are so vital to our plan's success. In a community where nearly 30 percent are foreign born, we will continue to guard and advance the rights of immigrants.

8.1 Strengthen institutional ties, and build new relationships to advance the plan.

We will reach out to institutions and leaders who have not yet been involved in this planning effort, engaging the unaware, the disinterested and the disaffected. We will encourage all to add their perspective—their colorful stitches—to our tapestry.

8.2 Organize to protect and advance the rights of immigrants.

Immigrants, especially, will be summoned to lead. No human being shall be considered “illegal,” and no resident of Logan Square shall be persecuted or denied basic human rights for lack of citizenship papers. In partnership with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, we will organize the undocumented and pursue their access to employment, decent and affordable housing and the same human rights afforded all by the U.S. Constitution.



English as a Second Language and citizenship classes in our Community Learning Centers can help immigrants better understand the rights and duties of citizenship.

8.3 Help immigrants obtain services and certifications needed for citizenship.

The continued presence and success of immigrants is essential to preserving the legacy of diversity in Logan Square. We will work with the Consulate of Mexico and others to obtain passports and *matriculas* needed by immigrants to establish credit and participate fully in the economy. In the long term, we will continue English as a Second Language instruction in the Community Learning Centers and help immigrants come to a fuller understanding of the rights and duties of citizenship and to navigate the naturalization process. We will hold citizenship classes at Community Learning Centers and other locations to educate residents on the importance of becoming active citizens.

8.4 Organize young people to have a voice in their future.

The Logan Square Youth Council develops young leaders and steers teens away from drugs, alcohol and tobacco. These efforts will be strengthened, as will youth leadership on other issues that affect the community—from affordable housing to the preponderance of military recruiters over college recruiters in our high schools. Our youth will be enabled to see a positive future for themselves and to reject the way of street gangs—a way that leads, for too many, to prison or the morgue.

8.5 Connect young and old, organize seniors and help them get needed services.

We will ensure that seniors have the support and services they need to live full, safe and healthy lives. We will involve seniors in the leadership programs of LSNA; advocate for a pedestrian-friendly community through Logan Square Walks; and foster intergenerational activities, including oral histories, arts, block clubs, safety efforts and civic projects such as the mural at Milwaukee and Kedzie (see Strategy 7.5).

8.6 Expand voter registration efforts.

We registered more than 600 new voters in the Logan Square area and helped turn out more than 4,000 “unlikely” voters in the November 2004 presidential election. Still, our 26th and 35th wards cast fewer than 15,000 votes each, compared to 25,000 or more cast by better-organized city wards. We need to do more. Non-participation in the political process will deprive our neighborhood of badly needed government resources, from city jobs to pothole repairs. We will help get out the vote. *!Registrese y vote!*



Our youth will be enabled to see a positive future for themselves and encouraged to become community leaders.

Key to Participating Organizations

Many organizations have pledged to implement the projects in our quality-of-life plan. They include but are not limited to:

1st Ward Aldermanic Office

ACORN

Advancement Via Individual Determination **AVID**

Americorps

Ames Middle School **Ames**

Ames Middle School GEAR-UP program **Ames GEAR-UP**

archi-treasures

Armitage Avenue Chamber of Commerce **AACC**

aurorARTS alliance **AAA**

Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation **BRC**

Brentano Math and Science Academy

Casa Ruth **CR**

Centro San Bonifacio **CSB**

Chicago Children's Museum **CCM**

Chicago Community Development Corporation **CCDC**

Chicago Interfaith Committee on Workers' Issues **CICWI**

Chicago Mutual Housing Network **CMHN**

Chicago Park District **CPD**

Chicago Park District Advisory Councils **CPD councils**

Chicago Police Department District 14 **Dist. 14**

Chicago Police Department District 25 **Dist. 25**

Chicago Public Schools **CPS**

Chicago Public Schools Office of Postsecondary Options **CPS-OPO**

Chicago State University **CSU**

Chicagoland Bicycle Federation **CBF**

Christopher House **CH**

Church of the Good News **CGN**

College Summit **CS**

Community Learning Centers **CLC**

Darwin School

Economic Development Commission of Greater Logan Square **EDC**

Episcopal Church of the Advent **ECA**

Erie Neighborhood House **ENH**

Family Institute at Northwestern University **FINU**

Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail **FBT**

Fullerton Avenue Chamber of Commerce **FACC**

Funston Annex

Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation **GNPDC**

Haas Park Advisory Council **HPAC**

Health Alternative Systems **HAS**

Hispanic Housing Development Corporation **HHDC**

Humboldt Park Social Services **HPSS**

Humboldt Park Vocational Center **HPVC**

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant & Refugee Rights **ICIRR**

Illinois Institute for Entrepreneur Education **IIEE**

Island Block Club **IBC**

Kelvyn Park High School

Lathrop Homes Local Advisory Council Lathrop **LAC**

Local Economic and Employment Development Council **LEED Council**

Logan-Sacramento-Richmond-Altgeld Block Club **LSRA**

Logan Square Arts Council **LSAC**

Logan Square Branch Library **LSBL**

Logan Square Neighborhood Association **LSNA**

Logan Square Neighborhood Association Reinvestment Coalition **LSNARC**

Logan Square Parks Alliance **LSPA**

Logan Square Preservation **LSP**

Logan Square Walks **LSW**

Logan Square Youth Council **LSYC**

Malcolm X College **MXC**

McAuliffe School

Monroe Elementary School

Mozart School

New Communities Covenant Church **NCCC**

Nixon School

North Central District Health Council **NCDHC**

North Grand High School

Nuestra Señora de las Americas Church **NSAC**

Old Town School of Folk Music **OTS**

One Economy Corporation **OEC**

Park National Bank **PNB**

Political advisory committees

PrimeCare

Public Allies **PA**

redmoon theater

Schneider School

St. Sylvester Church and School **SSCS**

Target Community Organization **TCO**

Trust for Public Land **TPL**

University of Illinois at Chicago **UIC**

Westtown Concerned Citizens **WCC**

YMCA

YWCA

Zoning advisory committees

Schedule and Priorities

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME (YEARS)			ORGANIZATIONS
	1	2-3	4-5	LEAD ORGANIZATION
1. PRESERVE AND EXPAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.				
1.1 Work to preserve affordable rental housing.	■	■	■	LSNA, HHDC, BRC, CCDC, CMHN, CGN, Lathrop LAC, Schneider
1.2 Establish a Logan Square housing center.		■		LSNA
1.3 Partner with community development organizations to build housing.	■	■	■	LSNA, BRC, HHDC
1.4 Advocate for affordable set-aside units in new and substantially rehabbed market-rate housing developments.	■	■	■	LSNA, BRC
1.5 Start limited-equity housing cooperative projects.		■	■	LSNA, BRC, CMHN
1.6 Develop supportive housing in Logan Square.		■	■	HPSS
1.7 Establish the Logan Square Legacy Project.		■	■	LSNA
2. EXPAND AND IMPROVE PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS, AND CREATE NEW COMMUNITY SPACES.				
2.1 Expand and improve Haas Park.	■	■		TPL, CPD, HPAC, LSRA, 1st Ward, AAA, FACC, LSNA
2.2 Support construction of the Bloomingdale Bike Trail and Greenway.	■	■	■	CPD, FBT, LSNA, BRC
2.3 Work with park advisory councils to improve park facilities and programming.	■	■	■	CPD, CPD advisory councils, LSPA, SNA
2.4 Construct small playgrounds and gardens on vacant parcels.	■	■	■	SSCS, LSNA, CSB, Ames GEAR-UP
2.5 Support creation of a multi-use plaza on Chicago Transit Authority property off Logan Square.	■	■	■	LSNA, archi-treasures, LSP, LSW, AAA
2.6 Rethink and reconfigure the Ames School athletic field.		■	■	Ames, CPS, CPD
2.7 Support renovation of the West Park Commission Comfort Station on Logan Square.		■	■	LSP, LSW

STRATEGY

TIMEFRAME (YEARS)

ORGANIZATIONS

1 2-3 4-5

LEAD ORGANIZATION

3. IMPROVE AND EXPAND MODEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROGRAMS, AND FOSTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES.

3.1	Expand the Parent Mentor program.		■	■	LSNA, Funston, Brentano, Mozart, Monroe, Schneider, Ames, Darwin, McAuliffe
3.2	Build upon school-based Community Learning Centers.	■	■	■	LSNA, Funston, Monroe, Mozart, Schneider, Ames, AAA, MXC, CCM, FINU, Kelvyn Park HS
3.3	Enhance the Literacy Ambassadors program.	■	■	■	LSNA, Funston, Brentano, Mozart, Monroe, Schneider, Ames, Darwin, McAuliffe
3.4	Develop the Parents as Tutors program.	■	■	■	LSNA, Americorps, Funston, Monroe, Mozart
3.5	Expand high school service learning opportunities.	■	■	■	LSNA, Kelvyn Park HS
3.6	Grow Our Own Teachers program.	■	■	■	LSNA, CSU, ACORN, TCO
3.7	Expand pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs, and develop a new pre-school.		■	■	LSNA, YWCA, CH, YMCA, Brentano, Monroe, Mozart, Funston, Darwin
3.8	Improve access to computers at local schools, the new public library and other public spaces.		■		OEC, LSNA, LSBL, Ames, CPS
3.9	Improve opportunities for high school students to advance to college.		■	■	LSNA, Kelvyn Park HS, CS, AVID, CPS-OPO, LSYC, ICIRR
3.10	Commission research on school mobility in Logan Square.		■		LSNA

4. REVITALIZE AND REDEVELOP KEY COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS BY WORKING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS, BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS.

4.1	Pursue school-to-school housing and retail redevelopment on Armitage Avenue.	■	■	■	LSNA, BRC, WCC
4.2	Study potential zoning changes to encourage mixed-use projects.	■	■	■	EDC
4.3	Recruit badly needed businesses and services.	■	■	■	EDC
4.4	Support streetscape and building façade improvements along Fullerton, Armitage and Milwaukee avenues.	■	■	■	City of Chicago, EDC, FACC, AACC

5. SUPPORT INDUSTRIAL RETENTION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, AND PROVIDE COORDINATED JOB TRAINING, JOB PLACEMENT AND FINANCIAL EDUCATION TO COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.

5.1	Expand Community Learning Centers to provide coordinated employment services and financial education.		■	■	LSNA, LEED Council, GNPDC, HPSS, CICWI, CLC
5.2	Assist local entrepreneurs with training and business development.		■	■	IIEE, LSNA, PNB, LEED Council, GNPDC, HPVC
5.3	Work with local industrial councils and others to protect manufacturing jobs.	■	■	■	GNPDC, LEED Council, LSNA, IBC, workers, SSSC, ECA, NSAC, NCCC

STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME (YEARS)			ORGANIZATIONS
	1	2-3	4-5	LEAD ORGANIZATION
6. IMPROVE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF LOGAN SQUARE RESIDENTS AND FAMILIES.				
6.1 Initiate a Healthier People/Healthier Workforce program.	■	■	■	LSNA, GNPDC
6.2 Continue to expand health and nutrition programs.	■	■	■	LSNA, CSB, NCDHC, PrimeCare, ICIRR
6.3 Expand PrimeCare, a full-service health clinic in Logan Square.		■	■	PrimeCare
6.4 Expand physical fitness and sports programs at schools, facilities and parks.		■	■	CPD, YMCA, CLC
6.5 Improve access to mental health services, addiction counseling and dental care.		■	■	HPSS, HAS, CR
6.6 Help young people make healthy lifestyle choices through a community-wide effort.	■	■	■	LSNA, CPD, Dist. 14, Dist. 25, CBF, Mozart, McAuliffe, Nixon, Funston, Ames
6.7 Make Logan Square a safe place to bike and walk.	■	■	■	LSNA, CPS, Dist. 14, Dist. 25, CBF, Mozart, McAuliffe, Nixon, Funston, Ames, Kelvyn Park HS, North Grand HS, YMCA, LSW, LSP
6.8 Form new block clubs to take on health and safety issues.		■	■	LSNA, UIC
6.9 Increase participation in crime prevention strategies.	■	■	■	LSNA, CPS, Dist. 14, Dist. 25, CBF, Mozart, McAuliffe, Nixon, Funston, Ames, Kelvyn Park HS, North Grand HS, YMCA, LSW
7. SUPPORT LOCAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS, PROMOTE ART ACTIVITIES AND EXPAND ARTS PROGRAMMING AND CULTURAL EVENTS.				
7.1 Identify suitable workspace and buildings for lease or purchase by artists and arts organizations.	■	■	■	AAA, LSP
7.2 Expand arts programming in our Community Learning Centers.	■	■	■	LSNA, Redmoon, AAA, OTS, CCM
7.3 Strengthen the Logan Square Arts Council.		■	■	LSAC
7.4 Undertake public arts projects.	■	■	■	archi-treasures, AAA, PA
7.5 Establish a cultural center to serve as the hub of arts activities.			■	LSP, AAA

STRATEGY

TIMEFRAME (YEARS)

ORGANIZATIONS

1 2-3 4-5

LEAD ORGANIZATION

8. BUILD COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND ENABLE ALL RESIDENTS, YOUNG AND OLD, CITIZEN AND NON-CITIZEN, TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THEIR LIVES.

8.1 Strengthen institutional ties, and build new relationships to advance the plan.

■ ■ ■

LSNA

8.2 Organize to protect and advance the rights of immigrants.

■ ■ ■

LSNA, ICIRR, LSYC

8.3 Help immigrants obtain services and certifications needed for citizenship.

■ ■ ■

LSNA, ICIRR, ENH

8.4 Organize young people to have a voice in their future.

■ ■ ■

LSYC, LSNA

8.5 Connect young and old, organize seniors and help them get needed services.

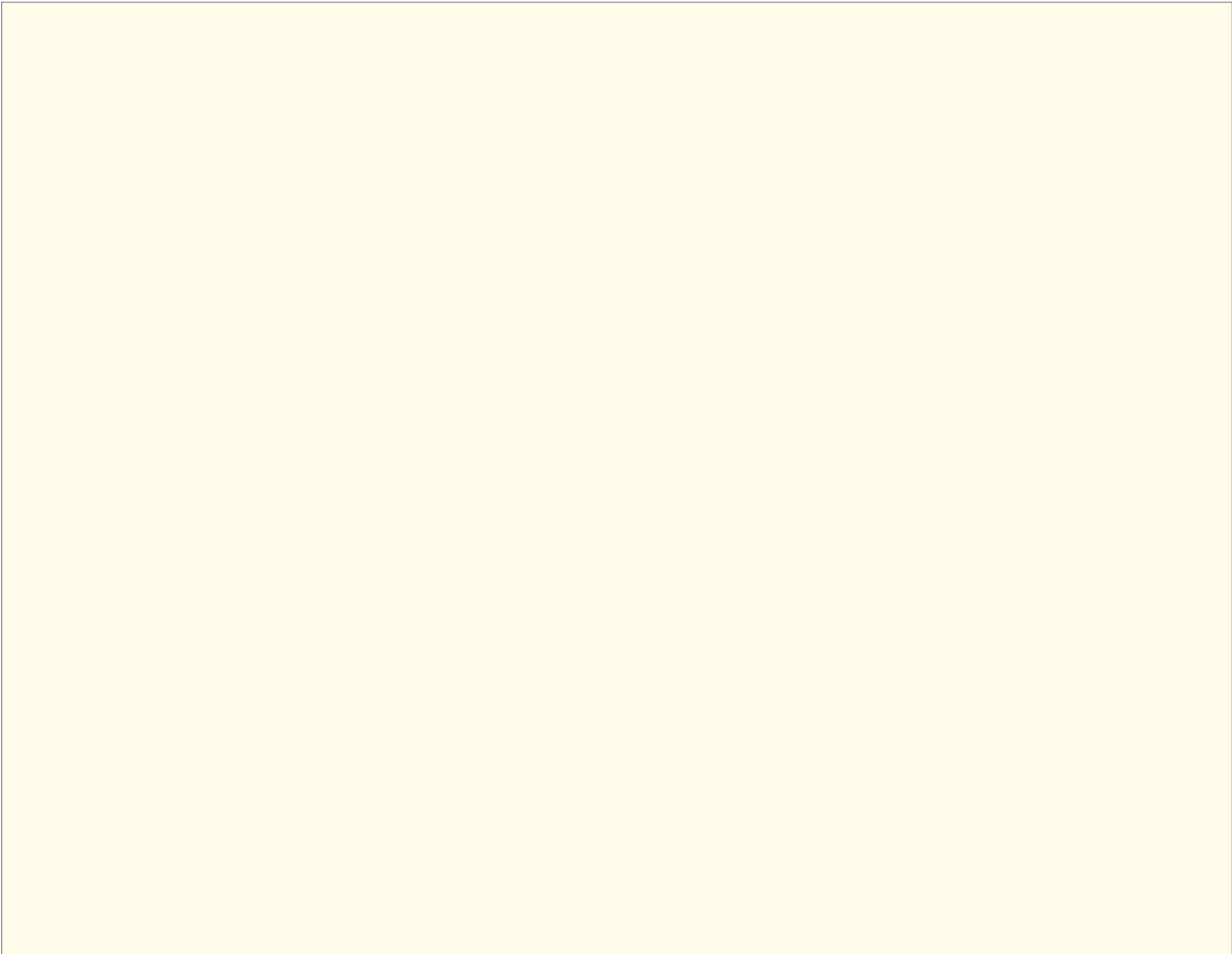
■ ■ ■

LSNA, HHDC, LSW

8.6 Expand voter registration efforts.

■ ■ ■

LSNA, ICIRR



New Communities Program

NCP is a long-term initiative of Local Initiatives Support Corporation/Chicago to support comprehensive community development in Chicago neighborhoods. It seeks to rejuvenate challenged communities, bolster those in danger of losing ground and preserve the diversity of areas in the path of gentrification. Each effort is led by a neighborhood-based lead agency that coordinates programs among other local organizations and citywide support groups.

The program gives each of the lead agencies several resources: two full-time staff positions (an NCP director and organizer), technical support for planning and documenting the planning process, a pool of loan and grant funds distributed on a competitive basis for project seed money, and opportunities for learning from both peers and subject-area experts.

All NCP neighborhoods spend their first year undertaking a structured community planning process that leads to the quality-of-life plan, then move on to implementation. They are encouraged to be “doing while planning,” undertaking short-term “Early Action Projects” such as launching a youth program, opening an employment center, creating public art or sponsoring local health fairs.

NCP is designed to strengthen communities from within – through planning, organizing and human development. The comprehensive approach is designed to help broaden opportunities for local residents through better education, broader housing choices, safer streets, stronger personal finances and new economic opportunities. The strengthened community is better equipped to take advantage of larger market forces, attract new investment and enhance the overall quality of life.

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Logan Square Neighborhood Association, cover (far left, middle right), pages 6, 12, 13, 19, 23, 32, 33
Michael Stanek, cover (middle left, far right), pages 9, 30

The New Communities Program (NCP) is supported by a major grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Additional funding has been provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, Living Cities, Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, Nationwide Insurance, Partnership for New Communities, Polk Bros. Foundation and Surdna Foundation.

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