

7.30 Implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Western Avenue.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with the Aldermen, CDOT, and the CTA for a land use, transportation, and economic master plan of Western Avenue based upon the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit.

ACTION > Advocate

Work with the Aldermen, CDOT, and the CTA for the funding and implementation of Bus Rapid Transit on Western Avenue, if feasible.

ACTION > Review

Work with the Aldermen to review all development plans for their potential impact on a Western Avenue BRT system.

Examine opportunities for station locations that support the system and for the elimination of vehicular access locations.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a roadway based rapid transit system that has the operational potential of fixed rail systems, without the high infrastructure cost of tracks or other support systems. A passenger using BRT will “walk to a comfortable station, enter with a pre-paid fare, walk to the platform, board through multiple doors, and quickly move to their destination. Service is so frequent that schedules are not necessary. Vehicles are low emission hybrid electric or CNG and in the future may be powered by zero-emission fuel cells.”⁴² A BRT system on Western Avenue can be built in phases, providing immediate travel time gains and future system expansion options.



Western Avenue Existing Conditions.



*Bus Rapid Transit in Oregon.
Source: www.greenwheels.org*

⁴² Go BRT, A Policy Primer on Bus Rapid Transit, Breakthrough Technologies Institute – Washington D.C.

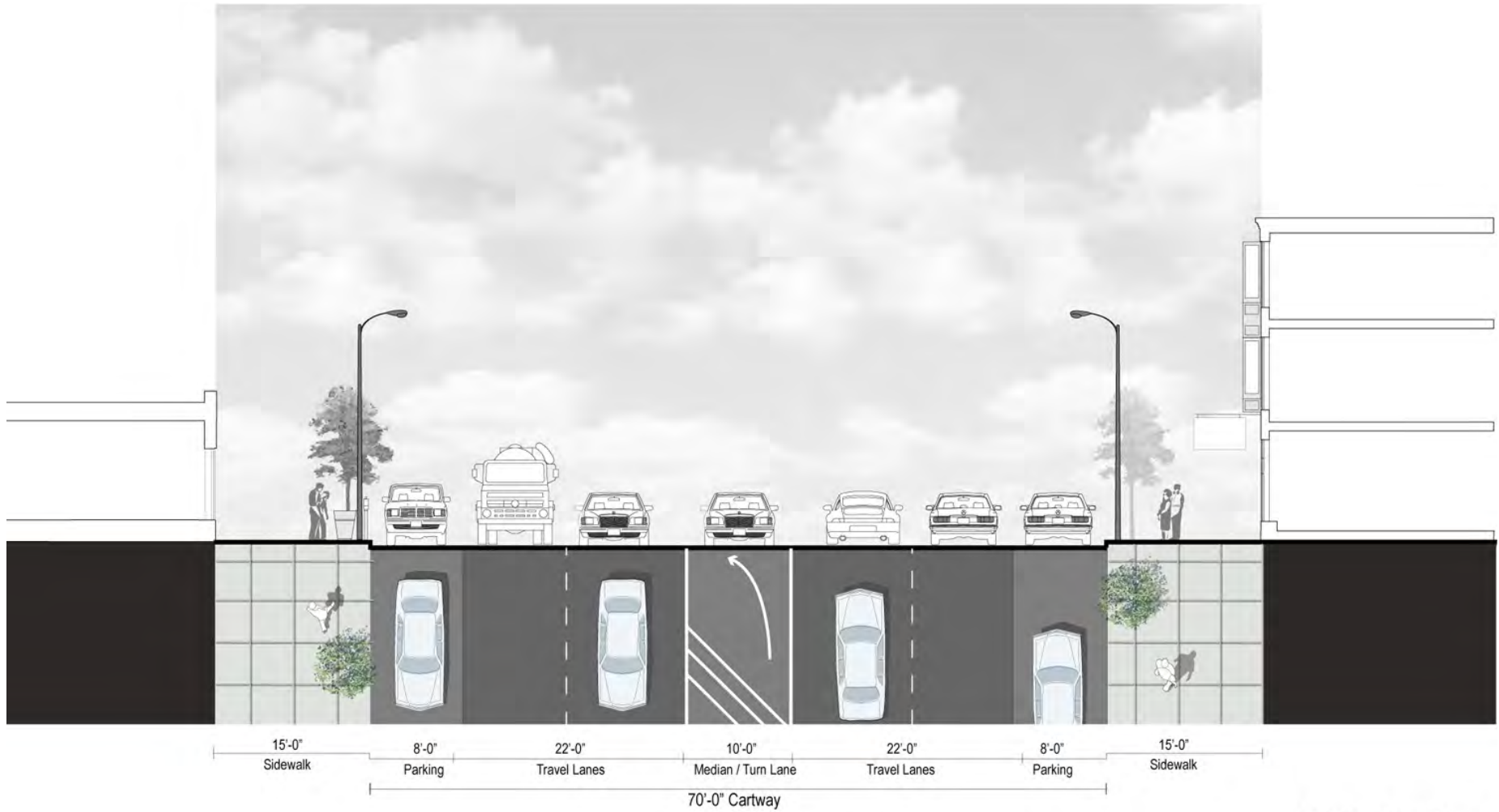


Figure 111. Section of Western Avenue's Existing Conditions.

Existing Conditions

Step I – Narrow the cartway and encourage density.

Narrowing the cartway from its current width of 70 feet to 60 feet allows the sidewalk on both sides of the street to widen from 15 to 20 feet. Transit use increases as the number of pedestrians increase and additional land use density can be approved and supported by high-quality transit service. On-street parking will be removed and replaced with a bike lane to support transit. The on-street parking lanes are poorly utilized and converting them to sidewalks and bike lanes will create a new identity for Western Avenue focused on walking and street front retail use. The pedestrian environment is enhanced with larger areas for protected bus stops, street furniture, street trees, public art, café seating, and pedestrian lighting.



Step 1: Narrow the Cartway & Encourage Density

Figure 112. Section of Proposed Step 1 Improvements for Western Avenue



Step 2 – Introduce Bus Rapid Transit and remove a vehicular travel lane.
 Within the 60-foot cartway, we can now remove a lane that was dedicated for automobile travel and replace it with a BRT lane.



Step 2: Introduce Bus Rapid Transit & Remove a Travel Lane

Figure 113. Section of Proposed Step 2 Improvements for Western Avenue



["The street has been transformed, and car traffic has really slowed down. There are bike lanes and a beautiful median that collects and filters stormwater. There's actually some shopping, too! You should check it out next time you're in town."]



["Western Avenue now has a bus rapid transit system! The BRT makes it a cinch to get to the north side of Chicago now. Now that Western is meant predominantly for public transit, small businesses are booming and it has become the place to be. Old spaces have been reclaimed, galleries and theaters are popping up everywhere!"]



Figures 114a. and b. Renderings of Proposed Step 1 and Step 2 Improvements for Western Avenue

7.31 Develop a graphic identity and character for each station.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with the CTA, the local community, and artists to establish and implement a graphic identity and character for each station.

ACTION > Advocate

Coincide and leverage the CTA Adopt-a-Station program with the station identity program.

Each of the three train stations in the SSA are different in character and the way they meet their neighborhood. The Ashland stop is a subway. Above it are the Polish Triangle, the Chopin Theater, and transitioning commercial land uses. There is a gritty juxtaposition to the Damen stop, where the heart of the Wicker Park Bucktown neighborhood is a marriage of artists, young professionals, and tourists. On the western edge is the Western Avenue train station. This new station is a nexus for the communities of Wicker Park, Bucktown, Humboldt Park, and Logan Square.

7.32 Promote stations as places.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with the Chamber of Commerce to support new transit oriented businesses located at and near the stations.

Work with CDOT to construct protected bike shelters at the train stations.

Work with CDOT to improve all sidewalks and pedestrian crossings at and near the train stations.

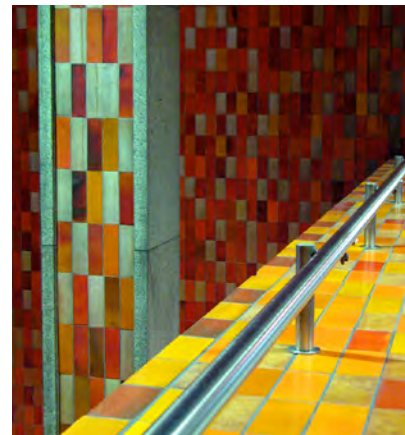
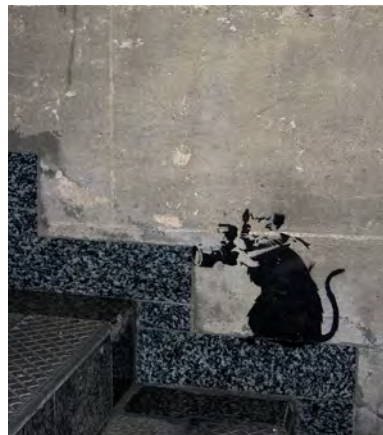
ACTION > Advocate

Work with the Alderman to support land use decisions that will support transit oriented development and discourage automobile oriented development near the train stations.

ACTION > Review

Work with the Alderman to review all development plans for their potential impact on transit oriented development near the train stations.

The train stations will experience increased ridership when new and varied residential, retail, and work choices are located within walking distance of the stations. To support this development and the transit-oriented development concept, new bike shelters, improved sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are needed to ensure safe and attractive movement to the station.



Subway art in New York, London, Paris, and Prague. Source: www.flickr.com

7.33 Improve the Clybourn Metra Station area.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with CDOT to provide wayfinding signage.

Work with CDOT to construct protected bike shelters at the Metra station.

Work with CDOT to improve all sidewalks and pedestrian crossings at and near the Metra station.

ACTION > Advocate

Work with the Aldermen to support land use decisions that will encourage transit oriented development and discourage automobile oriented development near the Metra station.

Work with the local community and property owners to create a transit oriented land use, transportation and economic plan for the area surrounding the Metra station.

Coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation regarding the use of property under the Kennedy Expressway for parking or other land use purposes.

Coordinate with the CTA on creation of a bus terminal in the area.

Coordinate with Metra to work on renaming the station.

ACTION > Review

Work with the Aldermen to review all development plans for their potential impact on transit oriented development near the Metra train station.

The Metra rail station provides a unique opportunity to leverage a regional transportation asset for the benefit of Wicker Park Bucktown and the surrounding neighborhoods. It is uniquely located at the crossroads of two major commuter train lines, CTA bus routes, the Kennedy Expressway, and potentially underutilized surrounding land uses. A full reconstruction of the Clybourn Metra Station is in Metra's 5-year station plan. The reconstruction will involve improvements to the railroad bridges, platforms and passenger access, including making the station ADA-accessible. This provides a great opportunity for the SSA and the local community to work with Metra, secure additional funds, and potentially provide in-kind artist or other services to make other improvements the community would like.

- **Phase 1** – Pursue several immediate station area improvements.
 - Introduce wayfinding signage to create a predictable travel experience.
 - Make physical repairs such that the station becomes more inviting.
 - Add public art, landscaping improvements, sheltered bicycle racks, and small businesses to improve the travelers' experience and induce ridership.
 - Change the station name to something descriptive and marketable for the area. This idea requires direct communication with the Executive Director of Metra.
 - Provide bike and car rental/sharing opportunities nearby.
- **Phase 2** – Transition the station into a transit hub.
 - Create parking opportunities to support the station and neighborhood.
 - Support larger retail opportunities.
 - Create a bus terminal.
 - Introduce station area transit support with retail/transit terminal, parking, and car sharing.
- **Phase 3** – Construct a multi-modal train station.
 - Consolidate surrounding land uses to create a station area that includes retail, office, and residential land uses.

7.34 Purchase transit passes.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with the CTA and the TMA to purchase or assist in the purchase of transit passes for employees and students.

To encourage the use of transit, the SSA should create a local program to purchase transit passes for employees and students. This solution will not only support transit and the CTA operational costs, but reduce the impact on local parking and congestions problems. The cities of Ann Arbor Michigan and Santa Cruz California provide free transit passes for their downtown workers.

7.35 Launch a shopper benefit program.

ACTION > *Spend the Budget*

Work with the Chambers of Commerce, local merchants, and the CTA to create a gift card program that rewards transit usage.

Transit users should be rewarded for their commitment to reduce congestion and improve the environment. The SSA and the Chambers of Commerce should coordinate to create a gift card program. The program would allow local merchants to add value to the gift card if certain transit usage requirements are met. The Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce and SSA #8 have created a gift card program in the City of Chicago. A more complex system would allow users of the CTA's Smart Card to get automatic credits to their local shopper's account when they use the Smart Card on the CTA system.

7.36 Encourage transit pass provision and car sharing for new developments.

ACTION > *Spend the Budget*

Contribute to a fund that will support transit pass and car sharing opportunities for new condo owners.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Work with the Alderman to create and insure that all developments are aware of and participate in the transit pass and car sharing requirements.

Providing the initial incentive to use transit or car-share can be the impetus some people need to make a mode shift to transit and hopefully defer the purchase of a car. PhillyCarShare in Philadelphia is free to join and as of June 10, 2008 had 50,000 members. In Chicago, car sharing is provided by I-Go and Zip Car. As new condominium developments are approved in Wicker Park and Bucktown, the developers should provide either the initial member fee to I-Go or Zip Car and/or initial purchase of the CTA Smart Card.

Manage Parking, Valet, and Loading

The Existing Conditions section of the report describes the current issues in the SSA with respect to the operations of parking, valets, and loading. The Aldermen will be the ones to implement the proposed changes to improve these operations, but the SSA can be a strong advocate to push for these changes.

7.37 Increase turnover of on-street parking spaces.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Advocate for the installation of new (pay and display) parking meters.

Make the pricing of parking correctly one of the highest priorities in the SSA with respect to transportation.

ACTION > *Spend the Budget*

Once the price of parking in the area has been raised and the additional parking meters have been installed, conduct parking surveys in the neighborhood to monitor and adjust the price of parking on a weekday and a Saturday. The surveys should measure the parking demand and the turnover of the on-street parking spaces.

On-street parking in Wicker Park Bucktown, whether it is metered or not, is significantly under priced. In order to fix this problem, there are two necessary improvements needed: additional parking meters and an increase of the existing on-street parking rates.

New parking meters should be installed at the following locations:

- **Damen Avenue** – between Wabansia Avenue and Webster Avenue.
- **Damen Avenue** – between LeMoyne Avenue and North Avenue.
- **North Avenue** – between Western Avenue and Ashland Avenue (with the exception of the south side of North Avenue, between Elk Grove Avenue and Wood Street where meters are already present).
- **Milwaukee Avenue** – between Western Avenue and Leavitt Street.
- **Milwaukee Avenue** – south side of the street between Leavitt Street and Wabansia Avenue.
- **Division Street** – between Hoyne Street and Wood Street, with the exception of the area in front of the school.
- **Ashland Avenue** – between Division Street and Wabansia Avenue.
- At **side streets** approximately 30 feet to 100 feet off of Damen Avenue at: Webster Avenue, Shakespeare Avenue, Charleston Street, Dickens Avenue, McLean Avenue, Homer Street, Cortland Street, Moffat Street, and Wabansia Avenue.
- At **side streets** approximately 30 feet to 100 feet off of Division Street at: Leavitt Street, Hoyne Avenue, Winchester Avenue, Wolcott Avenue, Honore Street, Wood Street, Hermitage Avenue, Paulina Avenue, and Marshfield Avenue.



Figure 115. Map of Proposed Locations for New Meters



Pay and display meters are a relatively new type of parking meter that allows drivers to pay for parking at the meter and display a receipt in their car. This significantly reduces the amount of parking meters that are necessary in an area, allows that space to be used by other uses, and increases the number of overall parking spaces, as drivers can park closer together. Pay and display should be installed at both the new locations proposed above and also replace the existing parking meters in the neighborhood.

The price of on-street parking should also be increased. The following are the recommended pricing zones in the SSA:

- **Zone 1** (\$3.00 per hour):
 - Milwaukee Avenue – between Wabansia Avenue and Wolcott Avenue/Wood Street.
 - North Avenue – between Damen Avenue and Wood Street.
 - Damen Avenue – between Bloomingdale Avenue and Wicker Park Avenue.
- **Zone 2** (\$1.50 per hour)
 - Milwaukee Avenue – between Wolcott Avenue/Wood Street and Division Street.
 - Division Street – between Leavitt Street and Milwaukee Avenue.
 - Damen Avenue – between Bloomingdale Avenue and Webster Avenue.
- **Zone 3** (\$1.00 per hour)
 - Milwaukee Avenue – between Western Avenue and Wabansia Avenue.
 - North Avenue – between Western Avenue and Damen Avenue.
 - North Avenue – between Wood Street and Ashland Avenue.
 - Side Streets

San Francisco is currently conducting a pilot project with on-street parking to ensure that the price of parking reflects the current demand. In order to create parking demand that meets the on-street supply, the price of parking will be raised during peak times and reduced during off-peak parking times. The prices and demand will be continually monitored to maximize efficiency. If the City of Chicago were to experiment with a similar program, the Wicker Park Bucktown neighborhood would be an ideal location to start with.

Installing new parking meters and raising the price of parking in the SSA will significantly increase the revenue the City of Chicago collects in the area from on-street parking. To provide a comparison of the current and proposed parking conditions, LSI conducted a rough estimate of the revenue collected in the area of the Six Corners intersection, bounded by Wabansia Avenue/Milwaukee Avenue to the North, the Blue Line to the west and south, and Wood Street to the southeast and east. LSI adopted the assumption that all of the parking meters in this area would be occupied for 80 percent of the day and that there would not be any maintenance issues. Table 2 on the following page shows the existing revenue and the projected revenue if the parking meter rates are raised to \$3.00 per hour in the area of the Six Corners intersection.



Figure 116. Map of Proposed Zones for Meter Re-Pricing

Table 2
Parking Revenue Comparison

Time Period	Number of Parking Meters	Rate	Hours of Operation	Days of Operations	Revenue per Week assuming 80% capacity	Estimated Revenue per Year
Existing Conditions	211	\$0.25 per hour	9 AM to 9 PM on All Days	6 Days a Week	\$ 3,038.40	\$ 157,996.80
Proposed Conditions	294	\$3.00 per hour	9 AM to 10 PM on Mondays through Thursday, 9 AM to 12 AM on Friday and Saturday, 9 AM to 8 PM on Sunday	7 Days a Week	\$ 65,620.80	\$ 3,412,281.60
					Revenue Increase	\$ 3,254,284.80
					Revenue % Increase	2060%

As can be seen in Table 2, there is the possibility that the revenue collected just from the on-street parking in the area of the Six Corners could add over **\$3.25 million** per year to the City of Chicago's Department of Revenue. Even if the price of parking is only initially raised to \$1.50 hour, the increase in revenue will be significant in the neighborhood.

The SSA or the future TMA (Recommendation 7.45) should take the lead on monitoring the on-street parking to determine if future changes to prices or new meters are necessary. A parking survey should be conducted in the neighborhood on a weekday and a Saturday once the price of parking in the area has been raised and the additional parking meters have been installed. The surveys should measure the parking demand and the turnover of the on-street parking spaces.

7.38 Remove the rush hour parking restrictions from North Avenue.

ACTION > Advocate

Petition the Aldermen, CDOT, and IDOT to remove the existing rush hour parking restrictions from North Avenue.

The existing rush hour parking restrictions on North Avenue should be removed and on-street parking should be allowed during all hours of the day. The intent of the rush hour parking restrictions is to create an additional driving lane, but in reality the additional space actually just creates one large travel lane that allows for higher speeds of travel. Restoring parking during all hours of the day will slow down traffic, create more parking for retail uses, and make the area more bike and pedestrian friendly.

7.39 Create new remote access parking at the WPB's fringe.

ACTION > Review

Review plans for new parking lots in the neighborhood and determine if they meet the below listed criteria for new parking lot locations.

Ensure that all new parking lots are priced less than the future price of on-street parking, and also provide a significant amount of bicycle parking. Be creative when it comes to funding sources for off-street parking lots.

It is impossible to determine if there is a parking supply problem in the SSA without first fixing the parking turnover problem. Once the issue of parking turnover issue has been addressed, it will be much easier to determine if the demand for parking in the SSA exceeds the on-street supply and if there is a need for an off-street parking lot. If there is a need for additional parking resources, preferred parking lot locations include the following areas:

First Options:

- Armitage Avenue – in the area of the Metra station, which would service not only the proposed SSA shuttle (Recommendation 7.46), but also provide needed parking resources for Metra, the CTA, and the Bloomingdale Trail.
- North Avenue – east of Ashland Avenue.
- Division Street – east of Milwaukee Avenue.

Second Options:

- Milwaukee Avenue – east of Western Avenue.
- Milwaukee Avenue – across from the Aldi site.

Third Options:

- Western Avenue – north of North Avenue.
- Milwaukee Avenue – at Wolcott Street.

The primary intent of any future off-street parking would be for employee parking, valet use, overnight parking for residents, and parking during peak times on Saturdays, or during the holiday time. Because of the high value of land in the neighborhood, it is assumed that future off-street parking will be provided in parking structures. Land Strategies looked for locations with easy access to Interstate 90/94, locations that could support one or two floors of retail, and locations that would benefit from the additional vehicular and foot traffic that a parking lot would bring. We attempted to avoid areas

that are heavily congested, have a lot of pedestrian traffic, or would have difficulty providing safe access. It should be noted that the above sites are suggested locations and should be used as a starting point if parking supply is still an issue after the price of on-street parking has been corrected.



Figure 117. Potential locations for new structured (or surface) parking.

In identifying locations for possible future parking lots, we concluded that the one location that is not appropriate is in the area of the Six Corners intersection. There are a few reasons for this conclusion:

- The on-street parking rates in the future will be highest in this immediate area, which should provide enough turnover so that if a vehicle wants to park in the area, it will be able to.
- Because the Six Corners intersection is the “heart” of the neighborhood, we would rather see more people park away from the intersection and walk through a portion of the corridor to reach the Six Corners than park their car, go to their destination, and then get back in their car and leave. The more pedestrian activity, the better.
- It is the most congested intersection in the study area, and a parking lot is guaranteed to add additional traffic during all hours of operation.
- The land in this area should be utilized at a much higher use.

7.40 Better tailor side street permit parking restrictions.

ACTION > Advocate

Continue to lobby for modifying 24-hour permit parking restrictions to restrictions that allow for business parking during the day and prevent people from parking and riding the Blue Line into the Loop, such as 6 PM to 9 AM restrictions.

Both Alderman Flores and Alderman Waguespack have begun to modify the 24-Hour parking restrictions on side streets in Wicker Park Bucktown to allow employees and patrons of the area to use these streets to park during the day. This is a good practice and should be continued in the future.

7.41 Better utilize off-street parking during non-peak times.

ACTION > Advocate

The SSA should coordinate with valet operators and parking lot owners for shared use of parking spaces.

Many off-street parking spaces in the neighborhood remain vacant during the peak operating times of restaurants and bars. These spaces could be used by valet operators if the owners of the parking lots agree. The SSA should coordinate with valet operators and parking lot owners to discuss how the valets can park their vehicles in the parking lots when they are not being used, as opposed to using on-street parking spaces. Potential lots that could be used for shared parking arrangements include:

- The Jewel / Kmart lot;
- The Saints Mary and Elizabeth Hospital lot;
- School parking lots where possible;
- Mid America Bank lots on Western Ave;
- Parking lot at Western/Cortland;
- Pizza Hut parking lot at Western/North; and
- The Aldi parking lot.

7.42 Educate business owners and delivery service providers about loading zone rules.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

Produce a flyer or brochure on the rules of loading zones.

ACTION > Advocate

Work with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss loading zones at large meetings with businesses.

ACTION > Review

Review plans for new developments and minimize the number of new loading zones in the neighborhood.

In WPB, there is a need to educate businesses on loading zone regulations and how they impact the traffic and parking situation in the neighborhood. It is recommended that this information be distributed in a variety of ways.

7.43 Consolidate and share loading zones.

ACTION > Advocate

Work with the Chamber of Commerce and the Aldermen to discuss the advantages of shared loading zones at large meetings with businesses.

ACTION > Review

Remove existing loading zones with the re-development of existing properties if it is possible for them to share loading zones with adjacent properties.

The primary advantage of sharing loading zones is that it provides more space for patrons in the area to park. Convincing businesses to remove the loading zone in front of their facility and share one further away will be difficult initially. The SSA should work with the Chamber of Commerce to stress the importance of using the space for loading zones most effectively.

7.44 Investigate charging for using loading zones.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Work with the Aldermen to support charging for loading zones

Charging a fee for using loading zones will increase turnover of loading zones and minimize the incorrect usage of this space. This is expected to be a recommendation in the City of Chicago's Downtown Freight Loading Plan and is also done in Seattle.

Reduce Congestion

Congestion in some parts of the SSA limits the quality of life for residents and the functioning of the business environment for SSA commercial uses. Improving this situation will entail a multi-faceted team effort by different parties in the neighborhood. Efforts will include policy programs and physical improvements.

Establish Transportation Demand Management (TDM) solutions.

7.45 Create a Transportation Management Agency (TMA).

ACTION > *Advocate*

Work with the Alderman, local business, local developers, and neighborhood organizations to create a TMA which can then work on physical improvements and TDM strategies in the SSA.

Transportation strategies to move people and goods in an area are typically complex and involve varying interests in the community. Establishing a legally constituted Transportation Management Agency (TMA) as an organizing agent charged with applying sound transportation approaches for the SSA is recommended to involve both the public and private sectors. The TMA can work on all types of transportation issues and create programs that include both physical improvements and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. These strategies "encourage residents and employees to drive less in favor of transit, carpooling, walking, bicycling, and teleworking. It encompasses financial incentives such as parking charges, parking cash-out or subsidized parking passes, and guaranteed ride home programs to give employees the security to carpool or ride transit; and information and marketing efforts."⁴³ The TMA may need to include areas outside of the SSA and even expand outside of the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods to work at an optimal level.

7.46 Introduce a local shuttle bus service.

ACTION > *Spend the Budget*

Finalize the locations and the times of service of a Wicker Park and Bucktown shuttle bus.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Work with the CTA and the Aldermen to establish the financial and service feasibility of a shuttle bus system for the SSA.

A local shuttle service has the potential to directly serve many destinations within the SSA and the surrounding community. Depending on funding and demand, it could run hourly or at larger evenly spaced intervals. A consistent service time will be key to its success. Destinations can be transit facilities such as the Metra Clybourn Station, the three CTA train stations as well as the CTA Red Line station at North/Clybourn, bus junctions on the arterials, shopping corridors, high density residential/commercial nodes, St. Mary's and St. Elizabeth's Hospitals, and Roberto Clemente High School. Currently, the University of Chicago and the CTA have collaborated to provide a successful shuttle bus system for students, professors and staff. The CTA will work with the SSA once it has established locations to be served and the desired times of service. The CTA has different contract and cost structures for different organizations in the City.

⁴³ *Traffic Reduction Strategies Study*, Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, November 2006

7.47 Create a parking cash out program.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Work with local major employers to create a parking cash out program.

Parking spaces are costly for an employer to build and provide. Parking spaces cost on average about \$5,000 in surface lots and \$15,000 in structures to construct plus additional yearly maintenance fees. If these requirements are reduced, developers and existing major employers can put some potential savings into non-automobile related amenities such as car sharing, bike racks, bus shelters, landscaping, pedestrian lighting and a parking cash out program for employees. A parking cash out program is where employees are paid – either in cash or cash equivalents – for not driving their cars. The amount can be an equivalent or a fraction of the equivalent amount of what it costs to provide the construction and maintenance of actual parking spaces.

7.48 Identify additional car sharing locations.

ACTION > *Advocate*

Support the use of on-street parking spaces for car sharing.

ACTION > *Review*

Review plans for new developments in the area, and suggest that car sharing spaces be included with new parking structures.

One of the major costs of car sharing operations is finding and obtaining parking spots for their vehicles. The SSA should support opportunities to reduce these costs and get more car sharing vehicles in the neighborhood. These opportunities include storing car sharing vehicles at on-street parking locations and requiring new development to include space for car sharing.

7.49 Advocate for additional cab stand location(s).

ACTION > *Advocate*

Relocate the existing cab stand on Milwaukee Avenue to Division Street east of Milwaukee Avenue.

Look for new cab stand area opportunities at retail areas and transit stations.

As part of the Polish Triangle's improvement, the cab stand on Milwaukee Avenue would require relocation. This stand could move to Division Street, east of Milwaukee Avenue. As gas prices continue to rise, more people will be taking cabs. New cab stand areas could be located near retail areas, transit stations, and other high volume pedestrian destinations.

7.50 Sponsor a Car-Free Festival.

ACTION > *Advocate & Spend the Budget*

As a part of "Mobility Week", sponsor a car-free day in parts of WPB during Earth Day.

A simple and effective way to declare that WPB is (un)paving the way toward greater transportation choice, the SSA should consider closing parts of WPB to car traffic for one day during Earth Day and using the event as an opportunity to market bicycling, transit use and walking.

7.51 Improve the intersection of North Avenue / Milwaukee Avenue / Damen Avenue.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

In the short term, re-stripe the crosswalks at the intersection and install audible pedestrian countdown signals to improve the pedestrian operations.

ACTION > Advocate

Prohibit left-turns on North Avenue and Damen Avenue and eliminate the left-turn lanes.

Use the left turn elimination to provide dedicated bicycle lanes on Damen Avenue at the intersection and reduce the pedestrian crossing distances.

Install a new, modern traffic signal.

Stripe bike boxes on Damen Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue (See Recommendation 7.24).

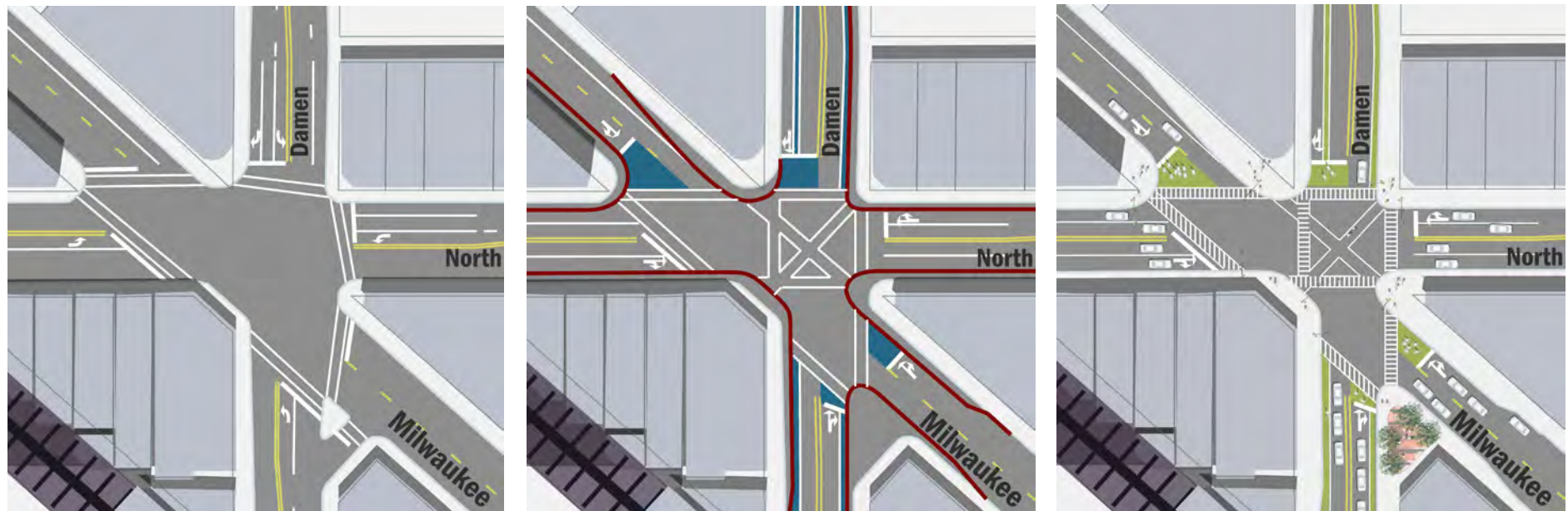
Stripe and allow for a pedestrian scramble at the intersection.

Work with the Aldermen and CDOT to complete the long-term improvements at the intersection.

ACTION > Review

Review plans for new developments in the area and determine their impact on the intersection. Set up development recapture agreements for short term intersection improvements.

The Six Corners intersection of North Avenue, Milwaukee Avenue, and Damen Avenue serves a large volume of vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. Improvements can be made to better serve all users of the intersection. Short term improvements can be made to the pedestrian operations by re-striping of the intersection and adding visible and audible pedestrian countdown traffic signals. Long term improvements will address existing vehicular operational and safety issues at the intersection as well as restoring space for bicyclists and pedestrians at the intersection. Prohibiting the left-turns from North Avenue and Damen Avenue will most likely force these vehicles to turn on to adjacent streets, but the existing turning volumes are not very high during the peak hours. This restriction should have a minimal impact on the area roadway system. Because North Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), their approval will also be necessary for any modification. Both the short term and long term plans should be provided to IDOT for their comments.



Figures 118a. - c. Plan View of Six-Point Intersection Existing Conditions and Proposed Improvements

7.52 Set the stage for a renewed Polish Triangle: improve the intersection of Division Street / Milwaukee Avenue / Ashland Avenue.

ACTION > Advocate

In the short term, work with the CTA to determine if it is possible to move the bus stops away from the Polish Triangle to create more space in that area for improving the Triangle. Relocating the bus stops should only be done if changes are going to be made to the space. If not, the bus stops should remain so that Blue Line riders do not have to cross the street.

In the long term, work with Alderman Flores and CDOT to reduce the size of the lanes on Division, Milwaukee, and Ashland and close Milwaukee Avenue to vehicles between Ashland Avenue and Division Street, allowing only bicycles and foot traffic.

Build the necessary community and intergovernmental support in order to move this idea forward through CDOT, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD).

There are many physical challenges facing the Polish Triangle. The three roadways surrounding it are heavily traveled by motorized vehicles, and the roadways themselves have been overbuilt making crossing the roads daunting for pedestrians. Therefore, big change is necessary in order to create a significant and viable social space at the Triangle, provide the necessary access to transit, and improve the pedestrian friendly retail environment that the area is missing. The following are the steps necessary (see Recommendation 6.10 for intersection diagrams):

- Reduce the roadway width on Division Street, Ashland Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue down to lane widths between 10 and 12 feet. This will make necessary improve the safety of pedestrian crossings and make it easier to reach the Triangle.
- Close Milwaukee Avenue to automobiles between Division Street and Ashland Avenue to create a social and retail destination that is much more pedestrian friendly. The challenge will be traffic diversion. It is expected that most drivers will quickly change their travel patterns affected by this closure, but a transportation study will be needed to fully determine the impact on local and area traffic.

7.53 Improve the intersection of Division Street / Honore Street / Marion Court.

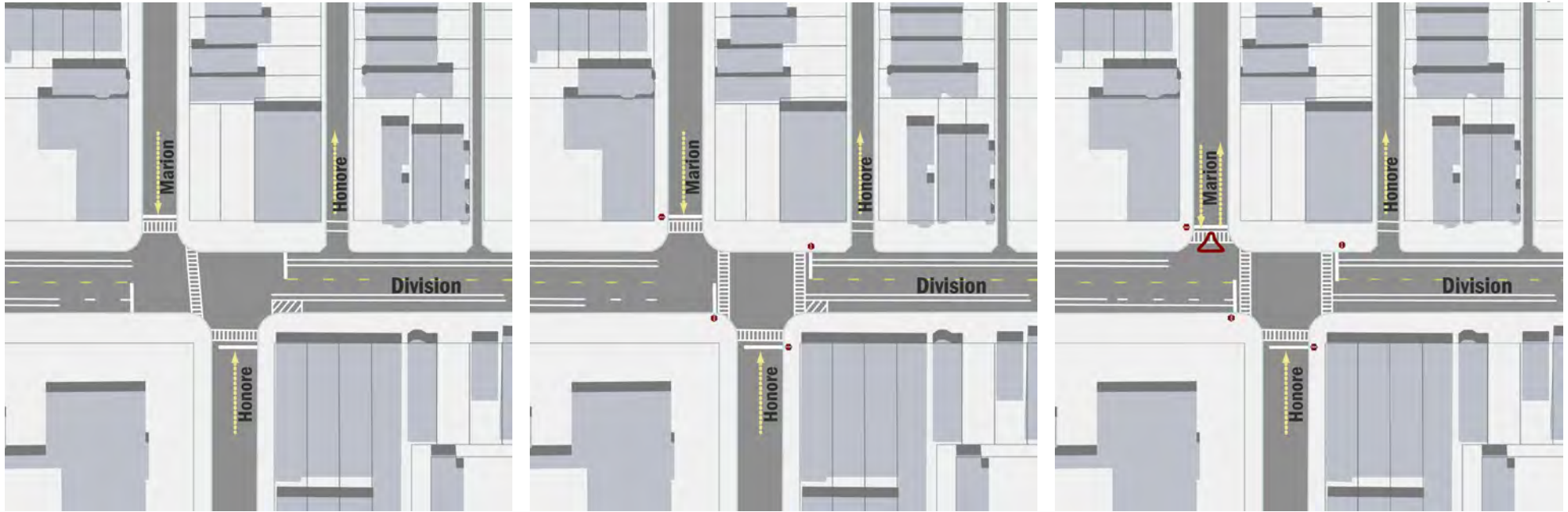
ACTION > Advocate

Work with CDOT to modify the intersection of Division Street / Honore Street / Marion Court to greatly improve its pedestrian safety.

The intersection of Division Street / Honore Street / Marion Court has pedestrian safety issues that must be addressed. The south leg of Honore Street is offset from the north legs of Honore Street and Marion Court, and the pedestrian crossing is located in the middle of the intersection, making the crossing unsafe. There are two options for the improvement of the intersections that will solve the critical safety issue:

- Move the stop bar for eastbound traffic on Division Street to the south leg of Honore Street (where the pedestrian crossing is now), and stripe an additional pedestrian crossing on just east of the Honore / Division intersection.
- Make Marion Court a two-way street, restrict the movements at Division Street to right-in/right-out, move the pedestrian crosswalk west of Honore back to the stop bar for eastbound traffic on Division Street, and stripe an additional pedestrian crossing just east of the Honore / Division intersection.

Either alternative will significantly improve the safety at the intersection and should be able to be implemented quickly.



Figures 119a. - c. Plan View of Division / Marion / Honore Intersection Existing Conditions and Proposed Improvements

7.54 Improve pedestrian, bike, and vehicular safety at the intersection of Milwaukee Avenue / Wolcott Avenue / Wood Street.

ACTION > Spend the Budget

In the short term, provide channelization striping for the southbound left-turn from Milwaukee Avenue to Wood Street and for bicycles on Milwaukee Avenue.

Signage should also be installed for southbound traffic on Wood to alert vehicles that the lane geometry is a left-turn lane and a combination through / right-turn lane.

ACTION > Advocate

Work with Alderman Flores and CDOT to restrict Wood Street to northbound only between Milwaukee Avenue and Beach Street.

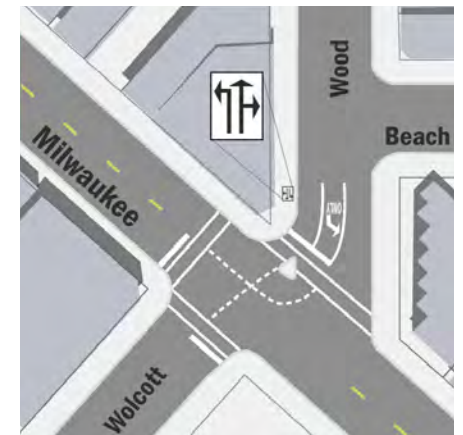
Southbound vehicles on Wood Street would then only turn left at Beach Street and utilize the signal at Milwaukee Avenue and Paulina Street.

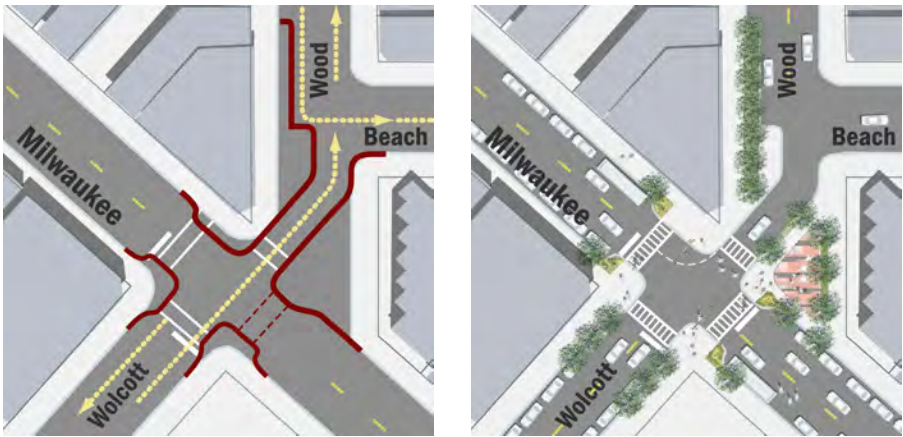
ACTION > Review

Review plans for the redevelopment of the existing Walgreen's site at the southwest corner, and require the developer to contribute for improvements at the intersection.

The issue at the intersection of Milwaukee Avenue / Wolcott Avenue / Wood Street is that Wolcott and Wood intersect at Milwaukee at significantly different angles. Striping and signing the intersection in the short term will help to make it less confusing to users, but restricting Wood Street to northbound only will provide tremendous benefits:

- Wolcott Avenue and Wood Street will then align at the same angle, making it easy for drivers traveling north from Wolcott to Wood, across Milwaukee Avenue.
- Vehicles turning left from Milwaukee Avenue to Wood Street will have a clear, understandable path to follow.
- The distance for pedestrians to cross Wood Street on the north side of Milwaukee Avenue will be reduced significantly.
- Additional space on the southeast corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Wood Street will be gained, which can be used as pedestrian plaza.





Figures 120a. - d. Plan View of Milwaukee / Wolcott / Wood Intersection Existing Conditions and Proposed Improvements