

South West Loop

The South West Loop is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by 16th Street, on the east by the South Branch of the Chicago River and on the west by the Dan Ryan Expressway.

The South West Loop contains light industrial and back office/service operation uses, with significant new retail development along the Roosevelt Road corridor. Zoning in the subdistrict is committed to protecting the existing non-residential uses, and as of 2007 fewer than 1,200 people lived in the South West Loop, making it the least populated subdistrict in the Central Area.

SOUTH WEST LOOP



Image SW-1: The new Cook County Family Justice Courthouse.



Image SW-2: Roosevelt west of the River has attracted retailers serving the Central Area's growing residential population.



Image SW-3: The Maxwell Street Market will be moving to a new site along Des Plaines Street in the South West Loop.

Trends, 2000-2007

Consistent with the 2003 Central Area Plan, Roosevelt Road has joined Michigan Avenue and State Street as a major retail corridor in the Central Area. Whole Foods, DSW, Home Depot, Best Buy, Panera Bread, and Starbucks are among the new offerings along Roosevelt Road.

These projects have followed in the example of South Loop Marketplace, anchored by a Dominick's grocery store, which opened in 1998 and provided the first new shopping south of Congress Boulevard.

The new Cook County Family Justice Courthouse is an important institutional development located in the South West Loop at Clinton and Harrison Streets.

Forecast, 2008-2020

As of 2008, 550,000 SF of retail is under construction for the South West Loop, with additional projects being planned.

The Maxwell Street market is scheduled to move within the district from Canal Street to DesPlaines Street.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The Roosevelt Road corridor will offer contemporary urban retail serving the residents of surrounding districts, as well as a broader Chicago market.
- Back-office, light industrial and distribution uses will remain as compatible neighbors to the new retailers and as providers of critical services to the Downtown business district.
- While active rail yards along the River will continue to be a predominant land use, rail-adjacent parcels are likely to be part of new development projects.
- The South West Loop will be better connected to the Central Loop, River South and Near South by street and pedestrian connections that cross the South Branch of the River at several locations.
- Public transportation in the South West Loop will be improved to include new rail station(s) along

Clinton Street that provide direct service into the West Loop.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Jefferson/Roosevelt TIF and Roosevelt/Canal TIF funds should continue to make a priority of additional River crossings and extension of the grid system.

Regulatory

- Current zoning in South West Loop does not allow residential developments and permits greater density than typical uses require. Up-zoning could be incorrectly perceived as future willingness to allow office and residential uses that are not permitted and would not be desirable.

Urban Design

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of market rate residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway is transforming from a predominantly auto-oriented function to one that must accommodate high levels of pedestrian mobility. Development proposals for areas immediately south of Congress along the Chicago River will further increase pedestrian traffic.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SW-1 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and wayfinding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago’s South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, as well as new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop, have resulted in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is appealing as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SW-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new commercial development along Roosevelt, as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

SOUTH WEST LOOP



Image SW-4: Congress Parkway provides western access into the Central Area through the Old Post Office, which is proposed for mixed-use redevelopment as pictured.



Image SW-5: The cluster of retail along Roosevelt is expected to grow, and sites should be developed to accommodate safe pedestrian access and circulation.

Figure SW-1: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations

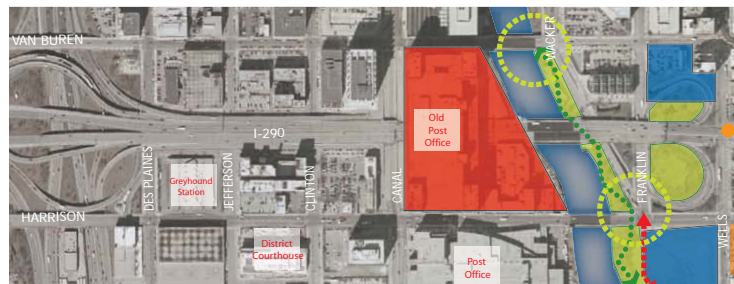
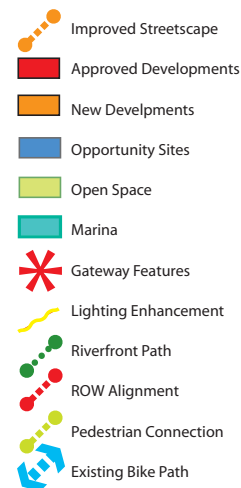
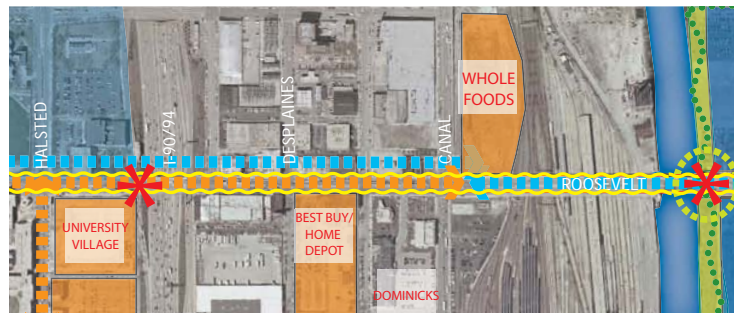


Figure SW-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations



SOUTH WEST LOOP



Image SW-6: The rail tracks and yards that cover much of the South West Loop and feed into Chicago Union Station.

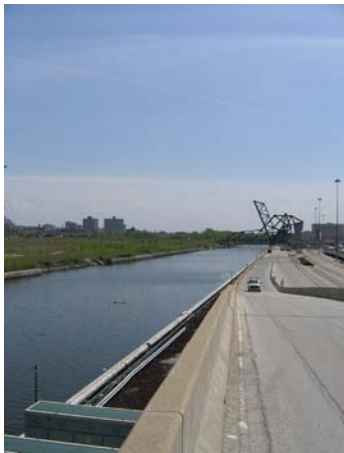


Image SW-7: The River edge through the South West Loop will be improved aesthetically, but pedestrian access will be discouraged.

South West Loop Projects

(see project map below)

1. South Branch Bridges

Along the River on the south side of the Central Area, the street grid is interrupted. As development continues in River South and the South West Loop, east-west connections at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Street may be needed. Initial progress has been made on the Taylor Street Bridge in the form of a bridge approach east of Canal Street. **Goal: Complete Taylor by 2016, with additional bridges at Polk or 16th completed by 2020.**

2. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A new bicycle lane is planned for Taylor Street, with extensions of existing bicycle lanes along Clinton and Canal. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

3. Clinton Subway

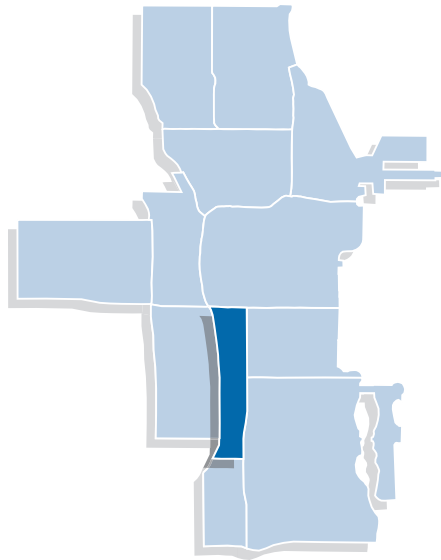
In the South West Loop, the Clinton subway line would generally be located beneath Clinton Street, with a potential station located on Roosevelt. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

4. South Branch Riverfront

In the South West Loop, the western riverbank should be enhanced visually, though pedestrian access will not be encouraged. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

Figure SW-3: South West Loop Project Map





River South

River South is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by 18th Street, on the east by Clark Street and on the west by the South Branch of the Chicago River.

This area was formerly a freight railroad corridor, and currently contains large tracts of vacant land targeted for residential and mixed-use redevelopment. River South contains three major planned developments (PDs): 62-acre Riverside Park, 22-acre LaSalle Park and 8-acre Franklin Point. The Roosevelt Road retail corridor runs through the district.

RIVER SOUTH



Image RS-1: River South contains the largest collection of large undeveloped parcels in the Central Area, including some near the south edge of the Loop.



Image RS-2: The new Target store at Clark is part of the developing Roosevelt Road retail corridor.



Image RS-3: The major existing residential concentration in River South is contained within River City, along the South Branch.

Trends, 2000-2007

The first phase of the LaSalle Park planned development (PD) was the Target store at Roosevelt and Clark, which opened in 2005. This 130,000-SF store is an anchor to the emerging Roosevelt Road retail corridor.

No residential developments have been completed since 2000, keeping the population of River South at nearly 2,000 residents. New developments included the 233-unit Vetro located on South Wells and Amlie 900 with 440 rental apartments.

Forecast, 2008-2020

The Roosevelt Collection, a mixed-use development within the LaSalle Park planned development, is under construction and will include 420,000 SF of retail, 600 condominiums, a 4,200-seat cinema and a three-acre park.

With a change in ownership of the Riverside Park property, plans for 3,500 residential units and 650,000 SF of retail and commercial space are on hold. Franklin Point also changed ownership and awaits a new plan.

Development of the existing PDs, which require major infrastructure improvements, is likely to continue through 2020. While large PDs cover most of River South, some additional sites remain.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The area along the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River will undergo a dramatic transformation, as residential and retail developments replace former rail yards.
- River South will become a transportation, recreational and open space amenity for the Central Area, providing a Riverfront link between the Central Loop and Chinatown.
- River South will play an important role in the continued development of Roosevelt Road as a major retail corridor.

- The street grid network will be introduced to River South, including roadway connections west across the River and south to the Expressway.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The River South TIF has already funded major infrastructure work, providing a good example of directed infrastructure investments.
- TIF revenues should continue to be used toward the other capital projects that are in planning or design stages.

Regulatory

- Existing zoning in River South is appropriate.

Urban Design

Franklin Point

Franklin Point is the area immediately south of Congress Parkway along the east bank of the Chicago River. This area will likely undergo significant change in the near future linked to the CBOT/CME merger, and the plan to office at the current Board of Trade location just north of Congress Parkway. Large development sites exist that are suitable for mixed-use, residential development.

The Wells-Wentworth Connector will link Wells Street north of Polk Street to the Dan Ryan Expressway south of Cermak Road, providing an alternative route into and out of Downtown. This road, in addition to opportunities to bridge the Chicago River at Taylor and Polk Streets, subdivides large parcels into an orderly set of development parcels and provides a grid system to enhance mobility in this area.

RIVER SOUTH

Urban design recommendations for this area include the following (see Figure RS-1 at right):

- New development with river frontage must be designed to establish a visually interesting and pedestrian-friendly environment along the Chicago River.
- In addition to the 30-foot minimum setback requirement, development should incorporate larger areas of open space with passive recreational uses and destination development such as restaurants and taverns.
- Public access to the riverfront should be guaranteed and new development should include pedestrian connections to riverfront features on adjacent properties.

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway needs to be upgraded to accommodate pedestrian mobility while maintaining its role as a key east-west vehicle arterial.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure RS-2 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and wayfinding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago's South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, and new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is appealing as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure RS-1 at right):

- New commercial development along Roosevelt should feature a pedestrian orientation, and pedestrian access should be considered from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Figure RS-1: Franklin Point and Roosevelt Road Recommendations

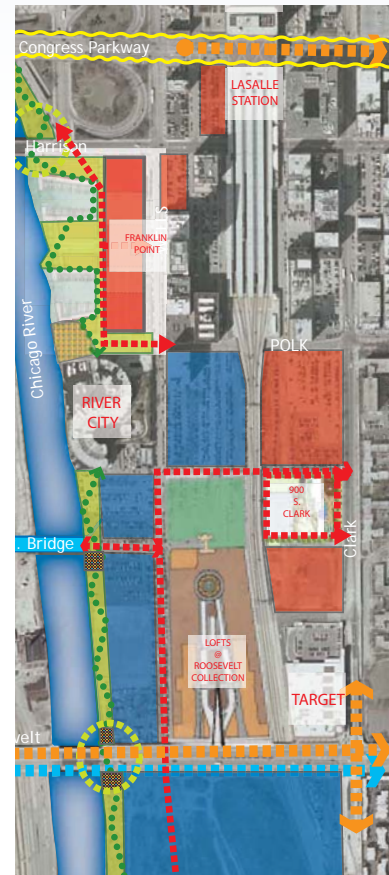
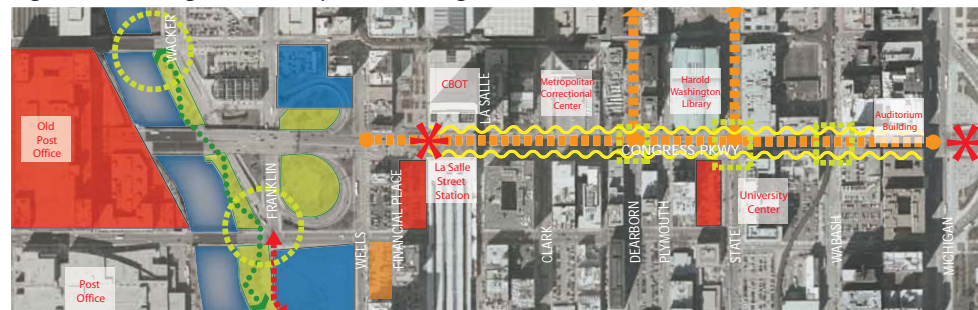


Figure RS-2: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations



RIVER SOUTH

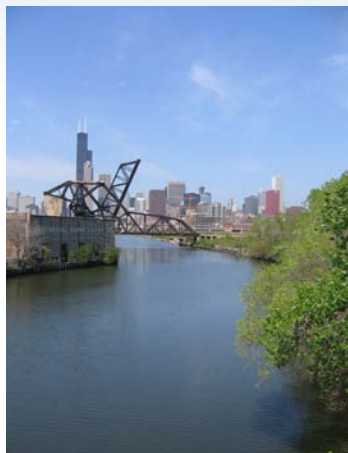
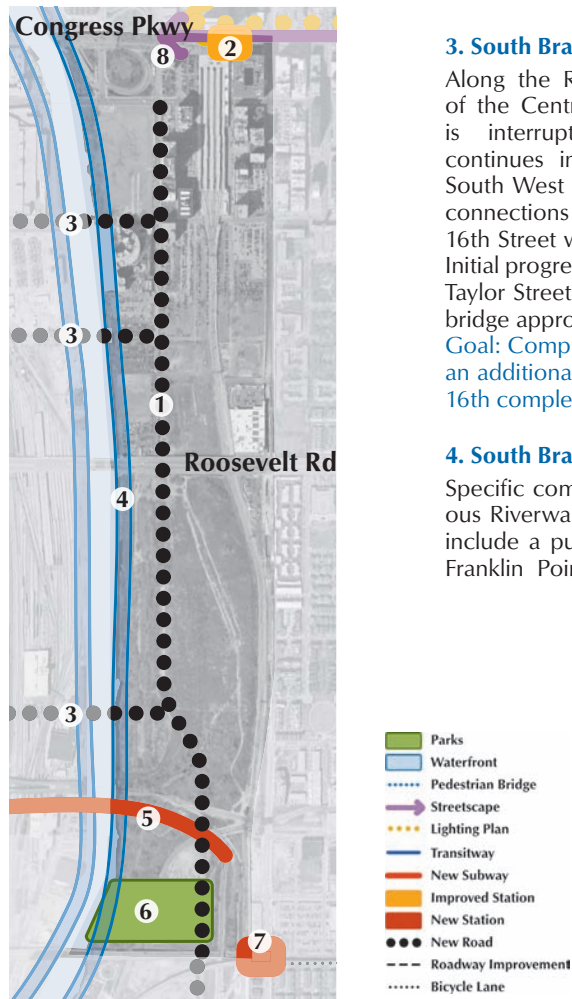


Image RS-4: The River edge through River South offers numerous opportunities to extend the Riverfront open space system.

Figure RS-3: River South Project Map



River South Projects

(see project map below left)

1. Wells-Wentworth Connector

The Wells-Wentworth connector creates a north-south arterial through River South and Chinatown to connect the areas along the South Branch of the River to the Central Loop. In Chinatown, the southern end of this new arterial will provide access to the Dan Ryan Expressway. **Goal: Complete first phase (Harrison to 18th Street) by 2012, with continuation south to Cermak by 2016.**

2. CTA Station Modernization (LaSalle/Congress - Blue)

The LaSalle/Congress (Blue Line) Station located at the northern edge of River South is scheduled for upgrades. **Goal: Complete LaSalle/Congress modernization by 2020.**

3. South Branch Bridges

Along the River on the south side of the Central Area, the street grid is interrupted. As development continues in River South and the South West Loop, creating east-west connections at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Street will improve accessibility. Initial progress has been made on the Taylor Street Bridge, in the form of a bridge approach east of Canal Street. **Goal: Complete Taylor by 2016, with an additional bridge at either Polk or 16th completed by 2020.**

4. South Branch Riverfront

Specific components of the continuous Riverwalk system in River South include a public park as part of the Franklin Point development, pedes-

trian crossings at Taylor and Polk Streets and visual enhancement of the western riverbank. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

5. Clinton Subway

The Clinton Street Subway would join the Red Line north of the current Chinatown-Cermak Station. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

6. Ping Tom Park Phase II

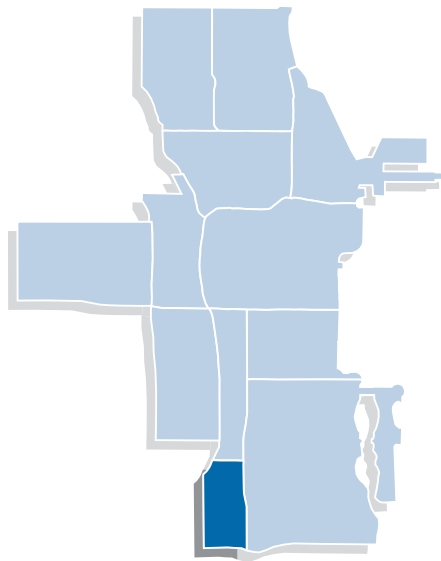
Ping Tom Park is located at 19th Street and the Chicago River. As one of the largest neighborhood parks in the City of Chicago, Ping Tom Park may also be an ideal location for cultural, educational and other public facilities. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

7. CTA Infill Station Clark/18th - Orange

An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted. This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

8. Congress Parkway Streetscape

The streetscape project on Congress will improve the pedestrian environment in the important east-west thoroughfare along the north edge of River South. A streetscaping project (currently under design) would include trees, planted medians, new lighting fixtures, improved crosswalks and bicycle signage extending from Michigan Avenue to Wells Street. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**



Chinatown

Chinatown is bounded on the north by 18th Street, on the south by the Stevenson Expressway, on the east by Clark Street and on the west by the South Branch of the Chicago River and Stewart Avenue.

This area is a stable mix of residential, retail, and some light industrial uses. The residential population in this subdistrict is almost exclusively Chinese-American, and the accompanying collection of authentic Chinese stores and restaurants has become a major tourist attraction in the Central Area and destination for Chicago residents.

CHINATOWN



Image CT-1: The Chinese-American Service League building is a new landmark in the neighborhood.



Image CT-2: New residential development in Chinatown has typically been in the form of townhomes or low-rise condominiums.



Image CT-3: Chinatown is a unique cultural and tourism resource in the Central Area.

Trends, 2000-2007

Chinatown residents represented about 3.2% of Central Area households in 2007. Between 2000 and 2007, the population grew from 4,434 residents to an estimated 5,305 residents. With the subdistrict largely built out, the Chinese-American community has expanded into neighboring communities to the south and west.

The first phase of Ping Tom Park added an important open space and recreational amenity for Chinatown residents and visitors. The Chinese-American Service League building and Chinese-American Museum are development highlights of recent years.

Forecast, 2008-2020

A new hotel announced for a site at Clark and Archer will support commercial and tourism development.

However, with limited infill development sites and lower allowable densities, small-scale residential redevelopment will continue to be the primary development activity in Chinatown.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Chinatown will thrive as a distinct residential community and visitor destination.
- The developing Cermak corridor will connect Chinatown residents with the Lakefront and link visitors from McCormick Place and Motor Row to Chinatown to patronize its shops and restaurants.
- Development will include mid-density housing, hotels and ground-floor retail.
- The district will continue to accommodate small-scale industrial and commercial uses.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentives

- The Chinatown Basin and Archer Courts TIFs, as well as portions of the River South and 24th/Michigan TIFs, fall within Chinatown and may provide funding for development projects, streetscapes, and park improvements.
- The City should promote Small Business Improvement Funds (SBIF) in the Chinatown Basin TIF District, in support of the district's many small-business entrepreneurs.

CHINATOWN

Urban Design

Signature Street – Cermak Road

Cermak is an important street that anchors McCormick Place and Motor Row within the Near South and also provides the primary east-west connection between Chinatown and the Lakefront.

Recent streetscape enhancements have improved the visual appeal of this corridor, but additional urban design recommendations include (see Figure CT-1 below):

- New buildings should be oriented towards Cermak in order to establish a pleasant streetwall for pedestrians.
- Cermak should tie into the charming scale of development and mix of entertainment uses concentrated in Motor Row and Chinatown, as well as areas immediately north along Wabash.



Image CT-4: Ping Tom Park is the focal point of the Riverfront in Chinatown, and improved access to this park should be provided from the neighborhood and along the River.

- Existing Bike Path
- Improved Streetscape
- Approved Developments
- New Developments
- Opportunity Sites
- Open Space
- Intersection improvements
- Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian Connections
- Gateway Intersections
- CTA Stops

Figure CT-1: Cermak Road Urban Design Recommendations



CHINATOWN



Image CT-5: Cermak Road is a busy pedestrian street and the streetscape should provide a safe and walkable environment.



Image CT-6: Access to Chinatown by auto will be improved by the Wells-Wentworth Connector.



Image CT-7: Pedestrian and bicycle safety need to be prioritized in this popular tourism district.

Chinatown Projects

(see project map below)

1. Wells-Wentworth Connector

The Wells-Wentworth connector creates a north-south arterial through River South and Chinatown to connect the areas along the South Branch of the River to the Central Loop. In Chinatown, the southern end of this new arterial would provide access to the Dan Ryan Expressway entrance and exit ramps. Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. CTA Infill Station Clark/18th - Orange)

An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted.

This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. Goal: Complete by 2020.

3. South Branch Riverfront

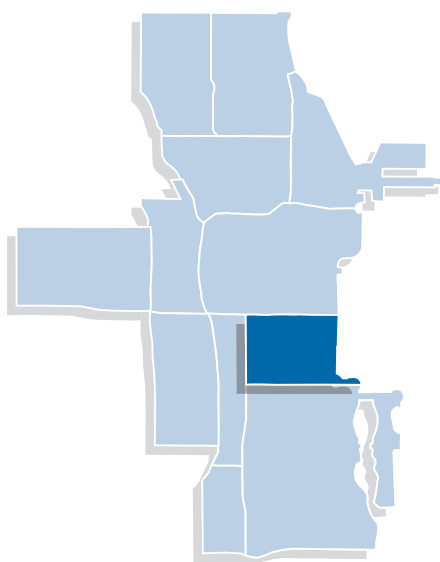
Ping Tom Park has created a destination for the southern end of the Riverwalk. Plans include Ping Tom Park Phase II and visual enhancement of the western riverbank. Goal: Complete by 2020.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bicycle lanes are planned for Archer Avenue. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure CT-2: Chinatown Project Map





South Loop

The South Loop planning district is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by Roosevelt Road, on the east by Lake Michigan and on the west by Clark Street.

South Loop has a diverse mix of land uses, including retail, institutional and educational developments, residential and parks. Several universities and colleges, with enrollment of 52,000 full- and part-time students, are located just north of the South Loop subdistrict and are now purchasing and developing sites in the South Loop for expansion.

SOUTH LOOP



Image SL-1: University Center provides 1,700 dormitory beds for Columbia College, DePaul University and Roosevelt University.



Image SL-2: The Michigan Avenue Corridor facing Grant Park has seen significant institutional and residential redevelopment.



Image SL-3: Access to the Lakefront has been improved with a Lake Shore Drive underpass at Roosevelt.

Trends, 2000-2007

The population of the subdistrict expanded from 6,219 in 2000 to an estimated 10,067 by 2007.

Educational institutions continued to expand, and new student housing contributed to the distinct character of the South Loop. University Center, completed in 2004, provides 1,700 dormitory beds for Columbia College, DePaul University and Roosevelt University.

A 10-story home for Spertus Institute on Michigan Avenue was completed in 2007. Reopened after a full renovation, the Blackstone Hotel helps meet demand from tourists and McCormick Place visitors.

State Place, a mixed-use project with 243 housing units and 70,000 SF of retail space, was completed at State and Roosevelt.

Larger new-construction residential development projects included the 170-unit Wells Street Tower at 701 South Wells, the 247-unit 1111 South Wabash and the 220-unit Colombian at Roosevelt Road and Michigan Avenue.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Surface parking lots provide most of the opportunities for current and future infill development. Redevelopment sites include 901 South State, 1001 South State, 1140 South Wabash and 830 South Michigan.

Columbia College's expansion plans include adaptive-reuse and new-construction buildings in the South Loop.

Tall residential buildings along and behind Michigan Avenue, such as and 46-story Colombian, will enjoy views of Grant Park and the Lakefront. Smaller infill projects such as the 88-unit Printers Corner on West Polk, are oriented to historic Printers Row.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The South Loop will continue its role as an expansion area for the concentration of high learning institutions in the southwest loop.
- Residential projects, which may include ground-level retail, will take advantage of the diminishing supply of infill opportunity sites.
- Situated between Millennium Park and McCormick Place, South Loop will expand its hotel segment, which is currently anchored by the Chicago Hilton & Towers.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentives

- Portions of the River South TIF and Near South TIF fall within the South Loop and can help fund infrastructure and transportation investments.

Development

- As the South Loop builds out, site assembly may be necessary to assist institutional expansion needs.

Regulatory

- The parking policy in the South Loop merits review as surface lots give way to new development. Minimum parking ratios may not be creating enough spaces for visitors and business customers and, therefore, contributing to localized parking shortages and circulation problems.

Urban Design

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway needs to be upgraded to accommodate high levels of pedestrian mobility while also maintaining its role as a key east/west vehicle arterial. Develop-

SOUTH LOOP

ment proposals for areas immediately south of Congress along the Chicago River will further increase pedestrian traffic.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SL-1 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and way-finding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago’s South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, and high levels of new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop, are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is good as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SL-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new commercial development along Roosevelt as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

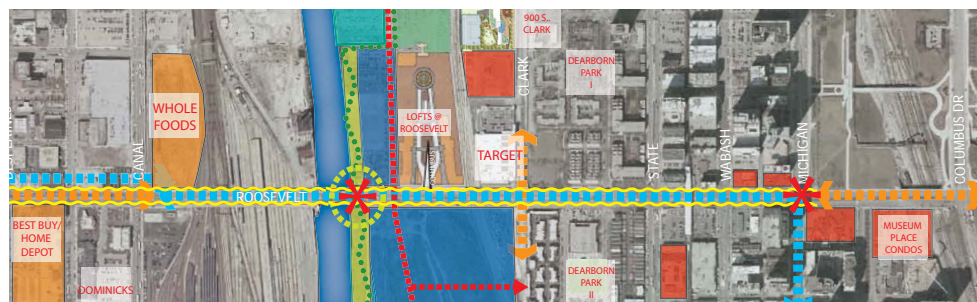















Image SL-4: Roosevelt Road has recently seen streetscape investments.

Figure SL-1: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations



Figure SL-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations



-  Gateway Features
-  Existing Bike Path
-  Improved Streetscape
-  Lighting Enhancements
-  Approved Developments
-  New Developments
-  Opportunity Sites
-  Open Space
-  Urbanized Plaza Space
-  Riverfront Path
-  ROW Alignment
-  Pedestrian Connections
-  New Bridge

SOUTH LOOP



Image SL-5: An existing busway through Grant Park will be utilized for express transit service along the Lakefront.



Image SL-6: The railscape through Grant Park will be enhanced visually.

South Loop Projects

(see project map below)

1. Grant Park and Central Station Railscape

Railscape improvements beginning in Grant Park going south to Museum Park should be implemented to improve the visual character of the area and create more green space. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way traveling north-south through Grant Park, this transit service would provide a connection between McCormick Place and the Carroll Avenue Transitway in Streeterville. It would also connect at Monroe Street with the East-West Transitway. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

3. CTA Station Modernization (Harrison - Red)

The station modernization program has improved numerous key stations in the Central Area. In the South Loop, station upgrades are scheduled for the Harrison Station (Red Line). **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A new bicycle lane is planned along Wabash to connect into an existing lane along Roosevelt. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

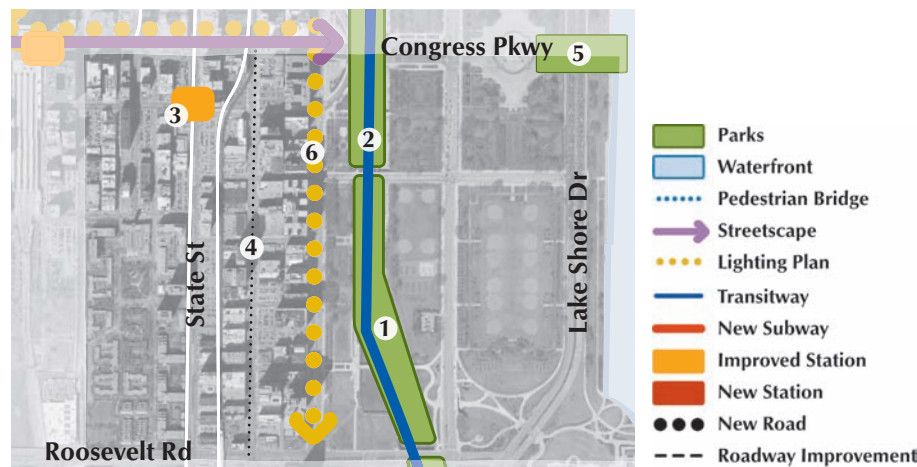
5. Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing

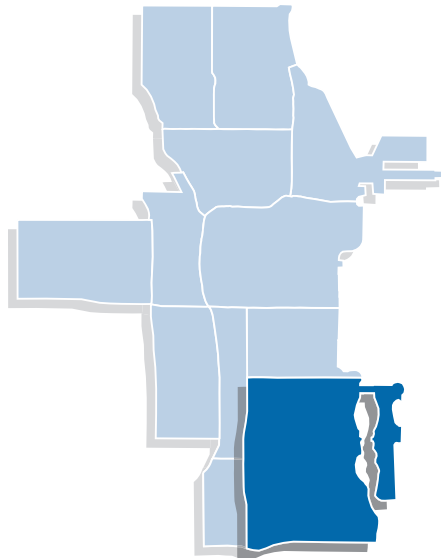
Pedestrian mobility between Buckingham Fountain and the Lake will be restored. An at-grade street crossing is preferred, although a more expensive alternative could be the construction of a grade separated underpass at this location. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

6. Lighting Enhancement Projects

Michigan Avenue should receive top priority for streetscape and lighting enhancement funds and serve as the location for a pilot lighting enhancement project. Additional lighting enhancement projects should follow for Congress and LaSalle. **Goal: Complete all by 2016**

Figure SL-3: South Loop Project Map





Near South

Located at the south end of the Central Area, the Near South planning district is bounded on the north by Roosevelt Road, on the south by the Stevenson Expressway, on the east by Lake Michigan and on the west by Clark Street.

This area is characterized by residential, tourism/hospitality, cultural and open space uses. The eastern portion of the district contains Northerly Island, Soldier Field and the Museum Campus, including the Field Museum of Natural History, the Shedd Aquarium, and the Adler Planetarium. McCormick Place, one of the nation's largest and busiest convention centers is located in the southeast portion of the district.

NEAR SOUTH



Image NS-1: Perspectives Charter school has joined a number of new public and private school options for Central Area residents.



Image NS-2: Residential tower construction has been focused along Michigan Avenue east toward the Lakefront.



Image NS-3: The expansion of McCormick Place has substantially increased Chicago's convention and meeting capacity.

Trends, 2000-2007

Between 2000 and 2007 the Near South district experienced the largest residential growth of any Central Area district with the addition of over 7,300 households. As a result, the Near South currently contains the second largest concentration of households in the Central Area at 12.6%, after Near North. From a 2000 Census population of 8,030, Near South grew to an estimated population of 20,915 in 2007.

Development continued in Central Station, which encompasses 80 acres and reaches south almost to McCormick Place. New infill residential development occurred along Wabash, State, Michigan and Prairie. Helping to maintain diversity in the Near South, CHA's Hilliard Homes has been completely renovated.

A new Jewel grocery store opened in 2001, but, despite retail growth further west on Roosevelt Road, other new retail offerings have been limited to neighborhood-oriented restaurants and shops in new buildings.

The latest expansion of McCormick Place, McCormick Place West, opened in 2007 and substantially increases Chicago's convention and meeting capacity.

Forecast, 2008-2020

With many residential projects in the pipeline, the recent strong growth will continue. Lexington Park on Cermak will add 333 condominium units to the area. Ickes Homes (522 units) is currently providing apartments for residents who have moved from other CHA developments. Plans for this property's future are under consideration.

Columbia Collage will complete its Media Production Center located at 16th and State. New hotels, in addition to the McCormick Place Hyatt expansion and Imperial Hotel at 20th and Clark are also in planning.

Renovation of historic Motor Row supports a new entertainment district in the Near South. A large parcel at 16th and Clark is among the sites that could accommodate much needed neighborhood retail space.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Near South will continue to develop as a mixed-use urban neighborhood containing a diverse blend of residential, retail, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses.
- The Michigan-Wabash-State corridor will continue development of uses that include street-level retail.
- The Museum Campus will provide a regional residential amenity and tourist destination.
- As Motor Row becomes a distinctive retail and entertainment district, it can benefit from improved linkages to McCormick Place and Chinatown.
- The Cermak corridor will emerge as an important east-west connection anchored on the east by McCormick Place and hotels, and on the west by Chinatown and the Chicago River. Mid-density housing and mixed-use developments with ground-floor retail will locate along the corridor.
- New park space will be added to keep pace with the needs of a growing population.
- Transit access will be expanded with a new Green Line station and other transit service upgrades.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Michigan/Cermak TIF, Calumet/Cermak TIF and portions of the River South, Near South and 24th/Michigan TIFs should help fund infrastructure improvements.
- Continued support by the City is needed for the fledgling entertainment district in Motor Row.

Development

- Consider a new public school to serve growing number of households.

Regulation

- The accessory parking policy in this district merits review; minimum residential parking ratios are not creating enough spaces. The loss of surface parking lots is also contributing to parking shortages or circulation problems.

NEAR SOUTH

Urban Design

McCormick Place/Central Station

Near South is being transformed with the development of large residential projects, conversion of warehouse buildings into condominiums, and opportunities associated with the recent opening of McCormick Place West. The future will include a new generation of development over the railroad air-rights facing the Lake, and new hospitality and commercial development along Cermak Road and in Motor Row.

New development should be oriented toward Cermak as opposed to the traditional development pattern that fronted buildings onto north-south streets. To the extent possible, new developments should incorporate adjacent lots to create larger sites suitable for taller buildings (see Figure NS-1).

Signature Street – Roosevelt Road

Roosevelt Road has changed as a regional shopping anchor. High levels of nearby residential and retail development are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is strong as the result of significant investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for

this corridor include the following (see Figure NS-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new development as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Signature Street – Cermak Road

Cermak exemplifies the important but identity-challenged east-west streets in the Central Area. It connects the lakefront, McCormick Place, Motor Row, and Chinatown.

Recent streetscape enhancements have improved the visual appeal of this corridor, but additional urban design recommendations include (see Figure NS-3 below):

- New buildings should be oriented is towards Cermak in order to establish a pleasant streetwall for pedestrians.
- Cermak should tie into the charming scale of development and mix of entertainment uses concentrated in Motor Row and Chinatown, as well as areas immediately north along Wabash.

Figure NS-1: McCormick Place

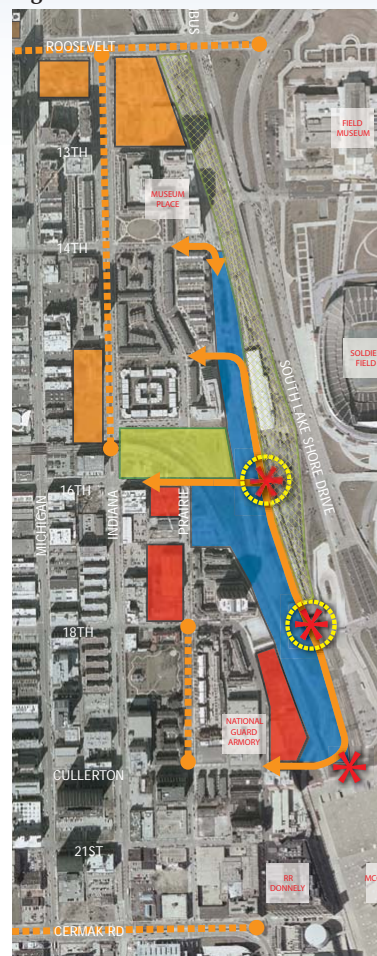


Figure NS-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations

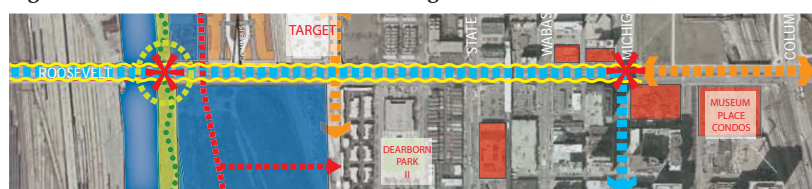


Figure NS-3: Cermak Road Urban Design Recommendations



- Existing Bike Path
- Improved Streetscape
- Approved Developments
- New Developments
- Opportunity Sites
- Open Space
- Greenscape Trellis
- Vehicular Access Needs
- Street View Corridors
- Grade Separated Crossing
- Intersection improvements
- Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian Connections
- Gateway Intersections
- CTA Stops

NEAR SOUTH



Image NS-4: The existing railscape south of Roosevelt will be improved visually.



Image NS-5: Northerly Island will be improved as an "outdoor museum" for conservation.



Image NS-6: An existing busway through Grant Park will be utilized for express transit service along the Lakefront.

Near South Projects

(see project map below)

1. Central Station Railscape

Railscape improvements that begin in Grant Park and extend south to the Museum Campus should be implemented to improve the visual character of the area and create more green space. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way that travels north-south through Grant Park, this transit service would provide a connection between McCormick Place and the Carroll Avenue Transitway in Streeterville. It would also connect at Monroe Street with the East-West Transitway. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

3. Northerly Island Park Improvements

The design and construction of Northerly Island will be completed. This amenity will serve residents of the Near South area, which is in need

of open space, as well as visitors from the City and Region. Design and construction plans, which have not been finalized, envision the park as an "outdoor museum" for environmental conservation and sustainable design. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

4. CTA Infill Station (Clark/18th - Orange Line)

An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted. This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

5. CTA Infill Station (Cermak or 18th - Green Line)

An infill Green Line station is needed at Cermak. Currently, Green Line stations are located nearly three miles apart at Roosevelt and again at 35th Street-IIT. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

Figure NS-3: Near South Project Map

