



Land Use and Transportation Access Recommendations

### Conclusions

- The site has redevelopment potential, but the economic climate, along with the site’s history and isolation present significant challenges.
- The economic climate is beyond the control of CMAP and CHA, but mitigating the site’s history and isolation should be achievable.
- Balance must be maintained between maximizing the commercial potential of the Cicero Avenue frontage and developing a cohesive, livable community overall.
- Developing a phased mixed-use retail, medical, and institutional complex on the site appears to be the more reasonable commercial redevelopment program.
- The site redevelopment should facilitate already-programmed transit enhancements and the potential use of flexible transportation services.
- Adhering to the Development-Oriented Transportation Guidelines will enhance livability and transit-friendliness.
- CHA should promote the implementation of the preferred site redevelopment program and land uses: commercial and institutional along Cicero Avenue, institutional within the site, and housing at the site’s southwest corner.

### Tasks and Responsibilities

Implementation Task	Primary Party	Other Involved Parties
<b>Site Planning &amp; Redevelopment</b>		
Select Master Developer through RFQ/RFP Process	CHA	City, Consultants
Develop Master Redevelopment Site Plan	CHA	Alderman, City, Community, CMAP, Consultants
Incorporate high level of site development standards	CHA	Alderman, City, Community, CMAP, Consultants
Develop specific site plans	CHA	Developer(s), Consultants
Re-parcelize sites as needed	CHA	City, County, Developer(s), Consultants
<b>Transit/Transportation</b>		
Relocate traffic signal from West 43rd to 44th Street and remove cul-de-sac on West 44th Street	CHA	City, IDOT, Alderman, Community
Restore city street grid	CHA	City, Alderman, Community
Extend walkability improvements to neighborhood	CHA	City, Alderman, Community
Improve existing bus service & infrastructure	CHA	City, CTA, Alderman, Community
Provide enhanced transit services	CHA	City, service providers, Alderman, Community

### Implementation and Next Steps

CHA will need to play the lead implementation role, with support from numerous other entities, as identified in the table.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Study Goals

This study is meant to further the GO TO 2040 regional plan goals, particularly those of creating livable communities that are healthy, safe and walkable, offer choices for timely transportation to schools, jobs, services and basic needs, and provide an alluring “sense of place.”

CHA seeks to gain realistic guidance for a balanced, market-oriented strategy to develop a progressive working class neighborhood as part of the overall community.

CHA intends to serve as the master developer of the property and develop and implement a redevelopment program consistent with the recommendations of this study.



Site and Study Area

### Existing Conditions

- The LeClaire Courts buildings were demolished in 2011 and site now stands vacant and wooded.
- The site is immediately south of I-55 and there are high traffic counts on Cicero Avenue (40,800-61,600 ADT), which borders the site to the east.
- Although Midway Airport is one mile to the south, there is much land and vacant commercial space along Cicero Avenue.
- The surrounding neighborhood is made up of middle class single-family or small multi-family homes. The demographics are shifting to increasingly Hispanic, some black.
- The Cicero Avenue streetscape is in poor condition, the neighborhood street grid is disconnected, and there is little to no non-vehicular transportation infrastructure.
- No recent city plans include the study area.

### Strengths

- The site is large (44 acres), vacant and controlled by a single owner
- The site has 1,800 feet of street frontage on Cicero Avenue
- There are three access points to the site from Cicero Avenue (one is signalized)
- There are many large, established trees

### Opportunities

- Improvements to the site would bolster Cicero Avenue’s image as a gateway to the City
- Site is well located to attract a diverse range of users (retail, institutional, industrial, and residential)
- The site is largest development opportunity between I-55 and Midway Airport
- Cicero Avenue may be considered for Bus Rapid Transit

### Weaknesses

- The site is isolated from adjacent neighborhoods
- The site’s street network is inconsistent with adjacent neighborhoods
- West 43rd Street traffic light is too close to the underpass
- The CN Railroad and I-55 on the north boundary of the site are elevated
- Pedestrian amenities along Cicero Avenue are lacking

### Threats

- There are multiple commercial vacancies along Cicero Avenue
- Cicero Avenue is busy and wide; pedestrian crossings can be difficult



### Transit / Transportation Options

- I-55, the railroad embankment, and the Illinois-Michigan Canal present formidable barriers to the existing street network to the north and creates a small enclave around the proposed redevelopment site. This isolation decreases the market shed of potential transit riders.
- Although Metra trains (Heritage Corridor) run along I-55, the addition of a new station is unlikely. Similarly, there are no plans to expand nearby Pace routes to serve the site.
- Four CTA bus routes serve the study area, connecting to CTA Pink and Orange lines. Improved service levels on CTA bus route #54B South Cicero may be warranted with a commercial and residential development of substantial size. An increase in the number of riders on the route may justify more frequent service than the current 15 minutes during the rush hours and 20 minutes during midday and evenings. Cicero Avenue may be included in a later stage of the City's BRT plans.
- This study proposes that West 44th Street be designated as a future bicycle and pedestrian route (or path/lane). As the street grid is restored through the site, West 44th Street would provide a main east-west connection for all traffic modes. The multimodal nature of the street would be reinforced by the proposed traffic signal at West 44th Street and Cicero Avenue.

### Development-Oriented Transportation Guidelines

The guidelines seek to enhance the transit-friendliness and walkability of the redevelopment by focusing on five areas:

- Setting a high bar for redevelopment** - Foster positive neighborhood change by showcasing best development practices and elevating the existing site assets.
- Enhancing the site** - Maximize the development potential by relocating the traffic light to West 44th Street, addressing awkward parcel configurations, and projecting a new image along Cicero Avenue.
- Restoring the street grid** - Integrate the site into the surrounding neighborhood and diminish isolation by extending existing streets into the site's interior.
- Serving as a neighborhood catalyst** - Demonstrate commitment to livable communities by maintaining mature trees, physically/visually tying the site to adjacent neighborhoods, and developing infrastructure and "complete streets" that are friendly to pedestrians and transit users.
- Accommodating future transportation improvements** - If Cicero Avenue is identified for future BRT implementation, modify right-of-way design elements to support the new service. Additionally, include enhanced transit and flexible services (carsharing, vanpooling, shuttles, etc.) in site development planning.



Neighborhood Commercial Corridors and Land Use



Neighborhood Access Analysis

### Market Analysis

- The large development-ready site (44 gross acres) is a scarce commodity in the City of Chicago; the site size and shape provides good flexibility to accommodate one or more uses in varying layouts. The site benefits from 1,800 feet of frontage along the preferred (west) side of Cicero Avenue.
- The analysis focused on commercial and institutional uses, not on housing. Commercial uses studied included: convenience retail, big box retail, and medical clinics. Institutional uses were a library and an educational use.
- The analysis found that the potential big box retail user pool is very limited and that a hotel use is unlikely due to the existing hotel cluster south of Midway Airport.
- If the current traffic signal at West 43rd Street were relocated to the middle of the site at West 44th Street (with a protected left turn signal), retail uses on the site would have a competitive advantage over other centers along Cicero Avenue. Types of supportable tenants include: casual sit down restaurants, service uses, pharmacy, and/or a cell phone store.
- The study concluded commercial development would likely be phased and that the preferred development program would be a mixed-use retail, medical, and institutional complex covering 9-15 acres.

Preferred Site Program

Site Program Options	Building Square Footage	Site Acreage
<b>Mixed-Use Retail, Medical, and Institutional Complex</b>		
Convenience Retail	20,000-25,000	1.5-2
Federally Qualified Health Center	15,000-25,000	1-2
Institutional - Branch Library	8,000-10,000	0.5-1
Institutional - Charter School	60,000-110,000	6-10
<b>Total SF Range</b>	<b>103,000-170,000</b>	<b>9-15</b>