



# NORTH LAWNSDALE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

## VISIONING WORKSHOP

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

June 3, 2017

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**NLCCC**



North Lawnsdale Community  
Coordinating Council





# TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE & TECHNOLOGY

## Assets & Opportunities

- **North Lawndale's central location in Cook County and access to expressways (I-290, I-55) and freight rail lines supports businesses and development.** Neighborhood location and transportation access are attracting new industrial and warehouse development and they help to retain businesses and jobs already in the neighborhood.
- **Ogden Avenue has emerged as a priority corridor to study** in terms of roadway alignment and safety, transit access, and land use and development.
- **Midway International Airport** is located just 4.5 miles south of North Lawndale.
- **The neighborhood is fairly well connected by public transportation to downtown Chicago and other job centers,** and a greater share of its residents commute by transit than the City overall. However, bus service cuts and Blue line station closures in previous years have made many public transit trips less convenient.
- **For many residents, changes to bus service has led to longer walk distances and wait times, with fewer buses overall.** Bus service in the Ogden Avenue area began changing in 2008, with re-routes creating more service on 16th Street. In 2016, NLCCC and Active Transportation Alliance began an effort to convince CTA to restore service.

## Community Input

- **Bus service cuts and re-routing from Ogden Avenue to 16th Street have made it less convenient** to reach Mt. Sinai Hospital, Douglas Park, and downtown Chicago. These have a negative effect on job and medical-service access.
- **Ogden's physical alignment is a barrier in multiple ways:** pedestrian access and safety, transit access, economic development and placemaking. The roadway (former U.S. Route 66) was built to accommodate much more traffic than currently exists.
- **CTA bus shelters and 'L' stations struggle to have maintained, clean, and safe appearances.**
- **Residents have identified a need for greater access to information technology** (Wi-Fi) as well as adult computer education and training.
- **Closed Blue line stations and ramps over the past decades have made getting to and from the train less convenient.** Closed stations are at Kostner and California, and the Keeler bridge ramp to the Pulaski station platform was also closed.
- **Street parking in the neighborhood is generally abundant, but it is difficult to find in some places.** The area most needing parking management is in K-Town near the Kostner Pink Line station, where riders use neighborhood streets to park because no park-and-ride lot is available.
- **Bike lanes have been installed in recent years, but are not popular.** Pavement conditions and feeling unsafe are key reasons for this. Residents are interested in Divvy but believe membership is too costly.

## Research & Data

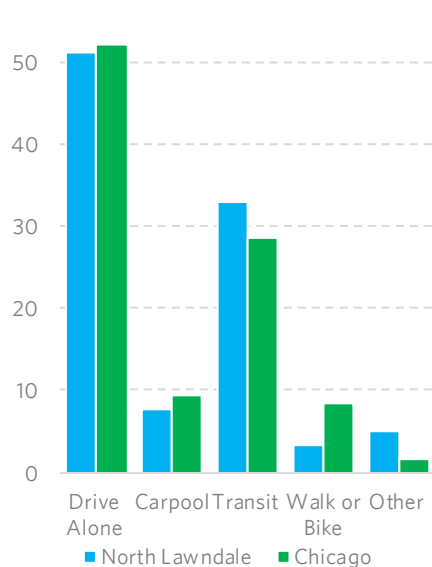
### Commuting

- Less than 5% of North Lawndale's 12,346 employed residents work within North Lawndale. More than half (56%) work elsewhere in the City of Chicago and 9% work in suburban Cook County.
- Nearly one third of North Lawndale residents commute by transit, which is more than the City, the County, and the region.
- Nearly 19% of all jobs held by North Lawndale residents are located in census tracts directly served by the No. 157-Streetsville bus, which does not run on weekends and is the least used route in North Lawndale.

### Roadways

- The area surrounding the intersection of Ogden, Pulaski, and Cermak has the neighborhoods highest concentration of automobile accidents.

### Mode Share



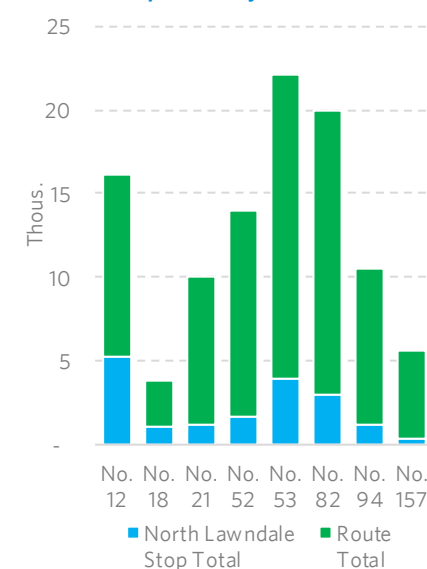
Source: 2014 American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

- Roosevelt Road is North Lawndale's busiest street with 14,000 to 26,000 vehicles per day. The highest concentration of pedestrian-car crashes also occurs on Roosevelt Road between Independence Boulevard and Pulaski Road.
- Cermak Road, Ogden Avenue, and Pulaski Road range from 15,500 to 19,000 daily vehicles. As the beginning of historic Route 66, Ogden's 6 to 8 lanes were built to accommodate much greater traffic volume.

### CTA 'L'

- Ridership has increased at Pink and nearby Blue line stations since 2010. The most popular Pink line station, Central Park, is up 27% and serves more than 425,000 riders per year.
- Blue line stations (Western, Kedzie-Homan, Pulaski) have greater ridership than the Pink line, and ridership is growing. Kedzie-Homan is up 29%.

### Bus Ridership Share by Route



Source: Weekday Ridership - Annual Boarding Totals, CTA

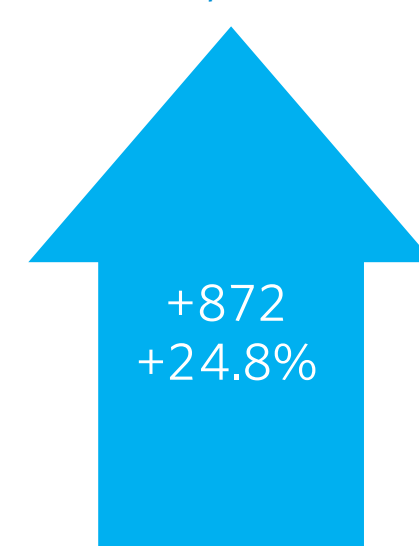
### Bus

- Bus ridership is relatively steady despite service cuts. Though overall CTA network ridership is down 10% since 2010, ridership on routes serving North Lawndale has decreased by only 3%.
- There are 195 bus stops in North Lawndale and more than 18,000 riders per month board buses in the neighborhood.
- The Pulaski-Roosevelt intersection is the most popular area for riders to board buses (approx. 1,750 riders per day according to Oct. 2012 data).

### Bike and Pedestrian

- There are five Divvy bike share stations in the neighborhood and four more directly adjacent.
- Recent Safe Routes to School projects have improved sidewalks and crossings around eight nearby schools.

### Pink Line Ridership



Source: Weekday Ridership - Annual Boarding Totals, CTA

## Potential Strategies

1. **Reconfigure Ogden Avenue** for better walkability, transit service, and development potential. Discuss repurposing the frontage streets and other modifications to the physical environment.
2. **Expand Blue Line service** to improve access, especially for workers of future warehouse/industrial and retail nearby.
3. **Better leverage Pink Line station areas** for economic development including transit-oriented development and parking management.
4. **Prioritize bus stops for shelter enhancements.** CTA has installed several upgraded bus shelters throughout its system in recent years with real-time arrival information and warming stations.
5. **Enhance education and outreach around biking.** Commit to addressing public safety concerns that have prevented residents from biking and ensure Divvy is accessible to all residents, including the low-income.
6. **Establish a free Wi-Fi network and computer training and education center** within the neighborhood.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- **Cycle Night and other bicycling social events**
- **Neighborhood Wi-Fi Initiative**



# HOUSING



## Assets & Opportunities

- **North Lawndale's historic architecture presents both a challenge and an opportunity in the community.** Most structures in North Lawndale were built in the 19th century and many require significant investment to bring up to modern health and safety standards. Nonetheless, North Lawndale's large share of historic greystones has the potential to make the community attractive for redevelopment given the right conditions.
- **Vacancy rates in North Lawndale are very high, interrupting neighborhood fabric and limiting redevelopment potential.** Addressing vacant and distressed buildings will be key to improving property values for existing owners and attracting new resources to North Lawndale.
- **Existing homeowners are established and aging.** Planning for older adults—particularly the 37% of North Lawndale homeowners who

are over the age of 65—will help the community meet future need for housing options appropriate across the lifecycle.

- **Although declining, foreclosure is still an issue in North Lawndale.** Foreclosure distress is contributing to continuing issues with vacancy and abandonment while also opening the door for cash investors who may or may not have a connection to the community.
- **Many households in North Lawndale receive some form of federal housing subsidy and are therefore vulnerable to changes in national housing policy.** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has reworked the formula for Housing Choice Voucher subsidies, which may result in lower rent payments for existing landlords or the displacement of voucher families.

## Community Input

- **Vacant buildings and lots are a major quality of life issue. Too many vacant buildings attract crime and cause trash to pile up.** This damages the streetscape and makes certain blocks feel unsafe and run down.
- **North Lawndale's historic architecture, proximity to downtown Chicago, and high level of transit access expose the community to the potential for rapid higher-end redevelopment and loss of community control.** Concerns about future affordability for existing residents were often cited alongside the need to build on North Lawndale's many assets.
- **Limited options for residents to purchase homes are frustrating in light of all the unoccupied houses in North Lawndale.** Community members want affordable pathways to home ownership, and feel that adequate options are not available. At the same time, the visible presence of cash investors with unknown connections to the community buying up foreclosed properties is a significant cause of community concern.
- **Residents want more affordable housing resources.** Safe, decent, affordable housing for vulnerable people like seniors and homeless youth is especially important.

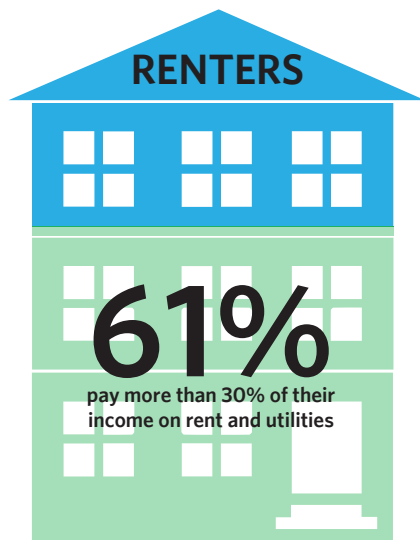


## Research & Data

### Housing Stock

- The North Lawndale population peaked at 124,937 in 1960 and has been declining since to the approximately 35,000 people who live in the community today. This is about a quarter of the peak population.
- Between vacant units and lots where homes and apartments have been demolished, at least 1 out of every 3 homes that once was occupied in North Lawndale has been torn down or stands empty today.
- In 2016, North Lawndale had a high rate of building violations (51.7 per 100 structures), more than across the Westside (28.5 per 100 structures) and much more than citywide (16.3 per 100 structures) during the same period. The highest concentration of violations occurred west of Douglas Park near Douglas Boulevard.

### Cost Burdened Rental Households



Source: 2014 American Community Survey, five-year estimates

### Owners

- Only 24% of residences (2,534 homes) are owner-occupied in North Lawndale. Of these owners, nearly a quarter have been in their homes since 1969 or before, and 37% are 65 or older.
- Housing values are generally low: the average value according to the Cook County Assessor is \$116,500. However, these limited costs have allowed middle and lower-income residents to afford to own a home in the community. The median income among North Lawndale homeowners is \$47,746.
- Foreclosure filings have declined, but the majority of post-foreclosure properties are now bank-owned. Out of all the homes sold in North Lawndale in 2014, 40% were short sales or out of bank-owned inventories. Also, 20% to 40% of all home sales in North Lawndale in post-housing crisis years have been to business buyers.

### Cost Burdened Owner Households



Source: Weekday Ridership - Annual Boarding Totals, CTA

### Renters

- Three out of four households in North Lawndale rent; 50% of these renters have income less than \$19,000 per year. This median income among rental households is less than both the Westside (\$25,567) and Chicago as a whole (\$32,743).
- Most renters (59%) in North Lawndale live in small (2-4 flat) apartment buildings.
- It is estimated that 30% of renters use federal Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) in North Lawndale (2,546 households). In addition, more than 35 buildings with income-limited apartments exist in the community.
- High rates of HCV utilization expose North Lawndale to changes in federal housing policy. Recent changes by HUD adjusting how much housing choice vouchers are worth by neighborhood may further increase need for affordable housing.

### Vacant or Demolished Homes - 1 in 3



## Potential Strategies

1. **Expand strategies to combat blighted properties.** In addition to supporting community-based initiatives like block clubs, stakeholders should seek investments in lighting, sanitation, and high-quality board ups that can improve the attractiveness and safety of high-vacancy blocks.
2. **Increase resources for housing counseling, financial empowerment, and first-time homebuyers.** Working with local lenders to establish flexible underwriting criteria and create attainable and affordable mortgage loan products can help make homeownership possible.
3. **Explore options for geographically targeted homeownership and rehab programs.** Focused efforts should be made to determine North Lawndale's strongest existing assets and target grants, low-cost loans, and rehab programs to build out from these areas.
4. **Prepare for redevelopment by creating avenues for community control,** like placing homes into the Chicago Community Land Trust or establishing a local land use and zoning committee.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- Housing Survey
- U Can Own A Home in North Lawndale Event
- First-time Home Buyers Classes



# PUBLIC SAFETY

## Assets & Opportunities

- **The total number of crimes in North Lawndale has decreased the past several years;** however, the community grows increasingly and disproportionately impacted by violent crimes.
- **There is a desire to see changes made in policing efforts throughout the community,** including how officers handle crime across North Lawndale's two Police Districts and how police facilities interact and connect with the surrounding community.
- **There is a great deal of community involvement regarding the neighborhood's youth and their well-being,** including work done through the Lawndale Christian Legal Center (LCLC), the Cook County Restorative Justice Community Court, and UCAN.
- **There are several groups focused on the successful reintegration of ex-offenders into the community post-incarceration,** in part accomplished through Safer Foundation, A Safe Haven, and the North Lawndale Employment Network's U-Turn Permitted program.

## Community Input

- **"Public Safety" (including violence and gangs) was identified among the top three challenges facing North Lawndale** at the Community Planning Conference in 2016.
- **Although the police force presence is high throughout North Lawndale, community members worry it is not efficient.** Some outreach participants have noted that delays in real-time communication and information sharing between the adjacent districts may create the potential for criminals to escape pursuit by simply crossing district boundaries.
- **North Lawndale has a number of transitional programs and organizations dedicated to breaking the cycle of incarceration** by connecting community ex-offenders with education and employment services.
- High school **students identified neighborhood violence as a critical issue impacting their ability to succeed** inside and outside of school.
- **1-in-5 online map survey responses dealt with concerns for public safety,** primarily regarding issues with poor lighting and increased gang activity.



## Research & Data

### Crime Trends

- Total crime in North Lawndale peaked most recently between August 2010 and July 2011 with 6,793 crimes committed throughout this 12-month period. The total number of crimes annually has decreased steadily since 2011.
- Violent crimes reported in North Lawndale increased by 18.5 percent between July 2011 and July 2016 despite a general decline in total crime over this same time period. The community had a violent crime rate of 31.3 per 1,000 residents (based on 2014 population), which is 2.4 times the rate reported for the City of Chicago as a whole.
- Over the same time period, quality-of-life crimes in North Lawndale (59.1 per 1,000 residents) also occurred at a rate 2.4 times higher than the City as a whole (17.2 per 1,000 residents).

### Policing

- Approximately 10.6 percent of the 8,347 police officers within the Chicago Police Department served North Lawndale throughout 2016.
- These 886 officers are split between the two Police Districts that share jurisdiction over North Lawndale: District 10 and District 11.

### Physical Environment

- In 2015, Studio Gang showcased North Lawndale in its vision for a modern, community-centered police station, known as the "Polis Station." This proposal outlined the development of a complex of shared facilities and amenities where local officers and community members may interact naturally and neutrally, including cafes, community gardens, urban nurseries, basketball courts, and more. A shared basketball court on an underutilized police parking lot has been constructed to match this vision.

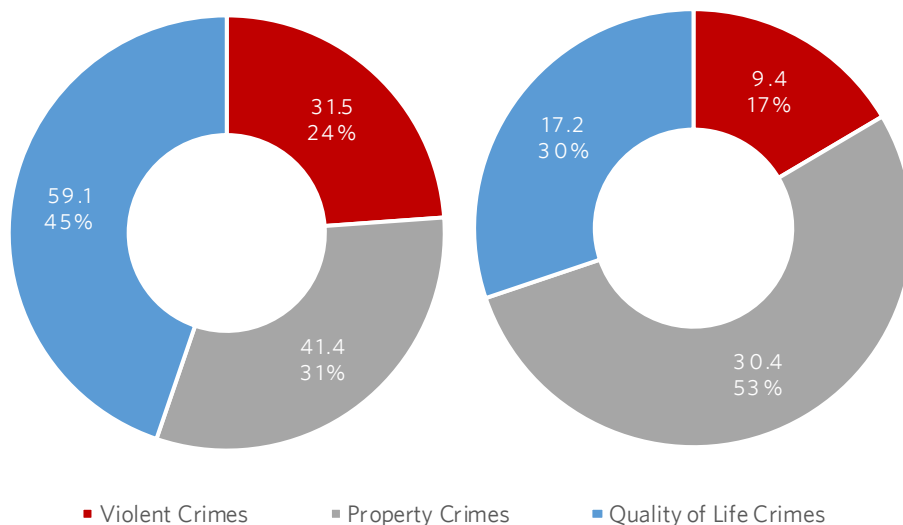
### Ex-offenders

- A 2002 report commissioned by the North Lawndale Employment Network estimated that as much as 57 percent of the community's adult residents were involved in the criminal justice system in 2001. As such, the reintegration of ex-offenders into the neighborhood is a significant issue for the community.
- According to a study conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, nearly 68 percent of released prisoners face rearrest within the first three years or release. Within five years of their release, nearly 77 percent face rearrest.

## Potential Strategies

1. **Partner with the City of Chicago to enhance code enforcement and property maintenance** to limit blight in disinvested areas of the community.
2. **Build awareness of resources like the North Lawndale Community Restorative Justice Hub** to increase community involvement in the court system and improve outcomes for youth in the justice system.
3. **Partner with Chicago Police Department to develop community programming**, particularly programming focused on youth and restorative justice, and improve community relations.
4. **Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles** within design of future development.
5. Coordinate discussion between landlords and reentry advocates to **identify and promote housing options for ex-offenders**.

Crime Rate per 1,000 residents in North Lawndale, August 2010-July 2016



### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- Community engagement events
- Intergenerational dialogues between youth and seniors
- Forums to promote stronger relations between youth and law enforcement



# YOUTH, EDUCATION & RECREATION

## Assets & Opportunities

- ***The children of North Lawndale are disproportionately impacted by diet- and exercise-related health issues***, so greater recreational opportunities could provide large benefits to the community.
- ***Franklin and Douglas Park contain the greatest number and variety of recreational opportunities*** throughout North Lawndale, so new recreational spaces should be focused elsewhere in the community.
- ***North Lawndale has many groups that pursue funding for athletics and recreation*** and potential exists for collective marketing and fundraising.
- ***Local high school graduation rates are on the rise***, and future efforts should be put towards encouraging the community's youth and young adults to take an active role in their education.
- ***A large portion of the community's adult population did not graduate from high school***, indicating an opportunity for greater programming involving GED acquisition.

## Community Input

- Douglas Park is a focal point for recreational activities, but ***community members want to see greater programming in parks and open space with recreational amenities*** throughout the rest of the neighborhood.
- ***The successful education of youth was cited as a critical issue facing the community*** during a series of key stakeholder interviews. Some participants noted that the closure of local schools further exaggerated a loss in sense of community.
- Key stakeholder interview participants also highlighted the ***need for youth job placement and training in North Lawndale***.
- ***Over 100 letters received from neighborhood high school students identified key community issues*** facing the neighborhood's youth, and potential strategies to alleviate these issues, including: neighborhood violence; the excessive number of liquor and convenience stores in conjunction with the lack of grocery stores; the need for adult and continuing education opportunities; and more.



## Research & Data

### Community Recreational Programs

- The Lawndale Christian Development Corporation manages multiple programs that encourage recreational activity, including B-Ball on the Block, a regular event held in part by LISC and the City of Chicago's Hoops in the Hood program. B-Ball on the Block provides a means for community members to play basketball together on designated blocks throughout the neighborhood.

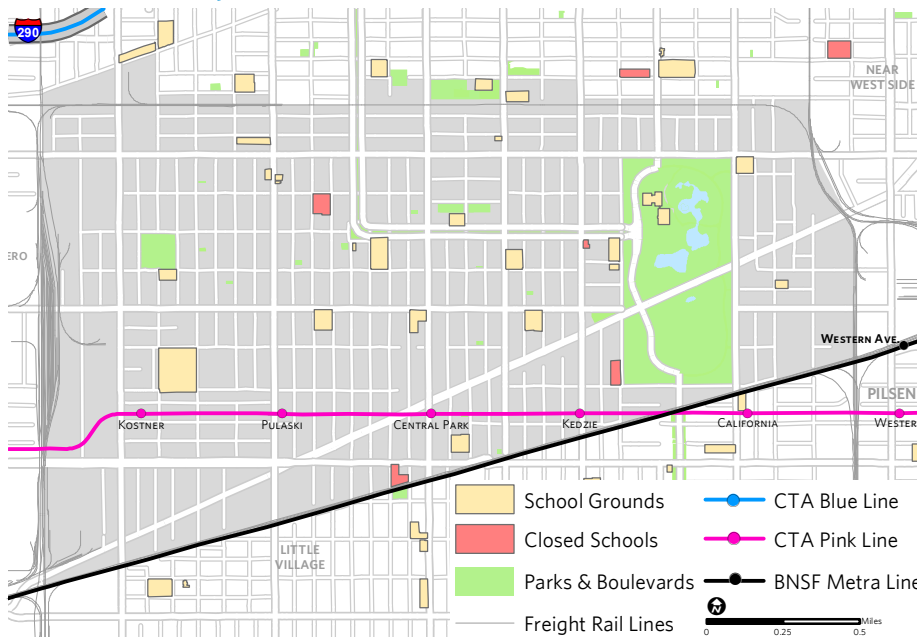
### Education

- As of 2016, 16.7 percent of the community's population aged 25 and older had received a high diploma as their highest level of education; 3.5 percent had earned an Associate's degree, and 10.6 percent had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher.

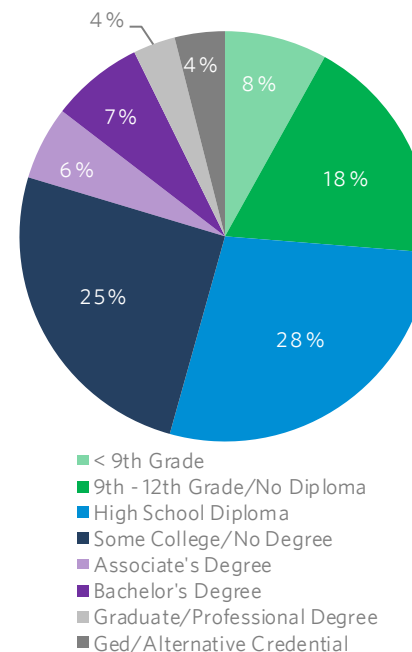
- 18.2 percent of North Lawndale's adults attended high school but did not obtain a diploma, more than twice the percentage for the City of Chicago and triple that of the region as a whole.
- North Lawndale students take part in special education programming at levels similar to the Chicago Public Schools district as a whole.
- 90.7 percent of North Lawndale's elementary school students, and 94.8 percent of North Lawndale's high school students qualified for free or reduced lunch rates during the 2016 school year. 81 percent of all Chicago Public Schools students qualified during this time period.

- Both elementary and high school attendance rates within the community during the 2015 – 2016 school year were on par with attendance levels across the City as a whole.
- The community's schools continue to struggle to match City and national averages in both MAP and ACT scores; however, high school ACT participation levels and graduation rates have been steadily increasing within North Lawndale since 2010.
- 3 schools in North Lawndale were closed in 2013 (Paderewski, Henson and Pope), and support has grown to reuse these empty buildings for community- and youth-focused development and programming.

School Facilities (Open and Closed) in North Lawndale



Educational Attainment Levels, 2016



## Potential Strategies

- Identify areas of opportunity for increased recreational opportunities through public engagement, with an emphasis on youth-focused recreational programming and opportunities.
- Explore additional recreational opportunities through LISC, and expand upon the community recreational programs already hosted by the organization.
- Identify community organizations with the capacity to create or expand existing programming for GED acquisition, and work to connect interested individuals with these local resources.
- Expand outreach activities to all local high school students to gain further insight into the major issues facing the community's youth. This information can then be used in future planning efforts.
- Coordinate a local high school job fair including community-based businesses and employment organizations, such as the North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN), to connect prospective graduates with local opportunities for employment, job training, etc.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- Neighborhood Recreation Needs Assessment**
- North Lawndale Athletics Association**
- Community Resource Mapping Kiosks**
- History of Lawndale Project**

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Assets & Opportunities

- **The health of North Lawndale residents is impacted by socioeconomic status and the community's struggle with violent crime.** Although community health is calculated using data on illness and disease, quality of life factors—including potential ties to the neighborhood's life expectancy and child success—have a significant impact on health in North Lawndale.
- **Many North Lawndale residents struggle with health issues including diabetes, stroke, heart disease and others that could be addressed through healthier lifestyles,** but barriers exist such as a lack of access to healthy foods and safety concerns about physical activity outside.
- **North Lawndale's youth face specific health concerns,** experiencing asthma, teen births, and low birth weights at rates higher than those of Chicago children overall.
- **North Lawndale is home to several active core partners working to address health issues,** which include the Mt. Sinai Hospital and Sinai Health System, St. Anthony's Hospital, and the Lawndale Christian Health Center. These health institutions and care providers tailor many of their services towards the needs of the North Lawndale community, including the Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital, the Sinai Community Institute, the Ogden Campus Health and Fitness Center, the Young Doctors Club, and the SUHI Lawndale Diabetes Project.

## Community Input

- **Violent crime is a barrier to engaging in physical activity outside the home.** Many North Lawndale residents stated that they are afraid to spend time outside playing, walking, jogging, and biking because of a fear of violence in the community. Community members were particularly concerned about the lack of safe recreation spaces for children, and underscored the importance of creating more programming for youth well into the afternoon and early evening.
- **Lack of access to fresh, healthy foods within the North Lawndale neighborhood is a barrier to eating healthier.** Various community engagement activities highlighted a strong desire among residents for more local grocery stores and access to healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Asthma and lead poisoning are big health concerns for the North Lawndale community,** caused in part by the poor physical condition of many older residential buildings as well as neglect from rental property owners.
- **Community members reported that the cumulative trauma from repeated exposure to violence undermines their mental health** and keeps people in survival mode. However, many community members also reported that there are social stigmas around mental health issues that prevent people from seeking out services.



## Research & Data

### General Health

- North Lawndale had a life expectancy of 72.1 years in 2010, the third lowest life expectancy value of Chicago's 77 community areas at this time.
- In 2013, the infant mortality rate in North Lawndale was 14.1 infant deaths per 1,000 births. This is nearly double the City's rate of 7.8.
- In 2014 Chicago's rate of firearm-related homicides was 10.8 deaths per 100,000 persons. North Lawndale's firearm-related homicide rate was nearly four times this value with 37.6 deaths per 100,000 persons.

### Chronic Disease

- North Lawndale has the second highest stroke mortality rate of the 13 communities served by Mt. Sinai Hospital at 66 deaths per 100,000 persons.
- North Lawndale has the highest heart disease mortality rate (136 deaths per 100,000 persons) of the

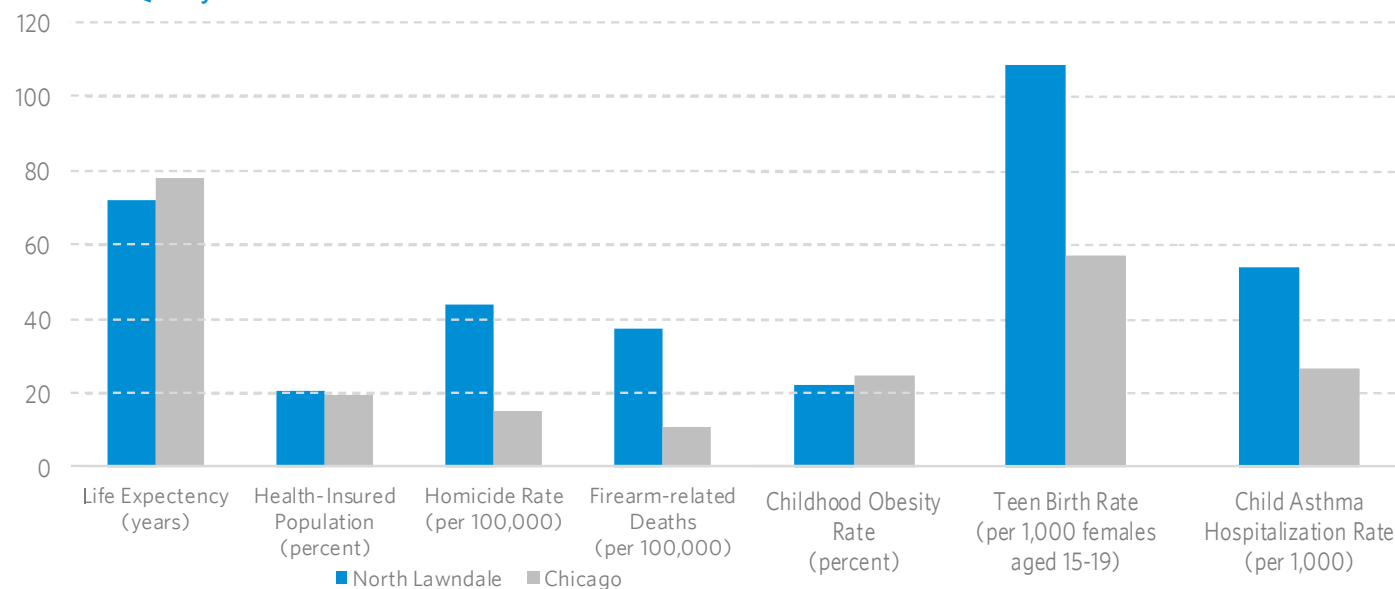
13 communities served by Mt. Sinai Hospital.

- ZIP code 60624 has a diabetes hospitalization rate of 69 persons per 1,000 residents, and a diabetes Emergency Department admissions rate of 136 persons per 1,000 residents. This high rate of emergency visits indicates that many people experience uncontrolled diabetes, which puts them at higher risk for other serious conditions including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and disability.
- ZIP code 60624 has the highest rate of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) hospitalizations of the 13 communities served by Mt. Sinai Hospital (53 cases per 1,000 residents).

### Youth-specific Health Concerns

- The children of North Lawndale are disproportionately impacted by asthma, with between 246.5 and 349.0 asthma-related youth Emergency Room visits annually per 10,000 persons compared to the City's rate of 147 youth asthma-related Emergency Room visits.
- North Lawndale's teen birth rate of 108.9 births per 1,000 females aged 15 – 19 years-old is markedly higher than both the United States and the City of Chicago.
- During the 2012 to 2013 school year, North Lawndale recorded a childhood obesity rate between 22 and 24 percent. While North Lawndale is not among the communities with the highest childhood obesity rates, during this same period 19 percent of all CPS children were classified as obese.

### Health and Quality of Life Statistics



Source: Sinai Health System Community Health Needs Assessment, 2016; St. Anthony Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, 2015; Healthy Chicago 2.0, 2016

## Potential Strategies

- Identify areas of opportunity for increased, safe recreational opportunities in North Lawndale** that build upon existing recreational activities in the neighborhood
- Identify partnerships with the Chicago Police Department** to increase the safety and well-being of the North Lawndale community, particularly in areas of recreation such as schools, public parks, and key bicycle and pedestrian routes.
- Build upon the success of the North Lawndale health institution's programs that provide direct health services in the neighborhood** to address diabetes, asthma, behavioral health issues, birth outcomes, stroke, and heart disease.
- Explore economic development opportunities to bring more grocery stores to North Lawndale, enact policies that limit the availability of fast food restaurants and convenience stores, and better leverage community gardens** to increase access to healthy foods in the North Lawndale neighborhood.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- Block Leader Health Workers (T.R.I.M. Project)**
- Healthy Family Challenge Pilot Project**

A vibrant community garden scene. In the foreground, a large wooden planter box filled with purple and pink flowers sits on a wooden bench. Several people are in the garden: a man in a white shirt and dark pants is looking at his phone, a woman in a black tank top and shorts is also looking at her phone, and another person is partially visible in the background. The garden is lush with green plants and flowers. In the background, there's a chain-link fence, a red car, and a building with a stop sign. The overall atmosphere is bright and sunny.

# GREENING, OPEN SPACE, ARTS & CULTURE

## Assets & Opportunities

- **Douglas Park acts as North Lawndale's primary community and cultural center** and has, in recent years, hosted popular, large-scale events attracting crowds from both a local and national audience.
- **Several community stakeholders are focused on expanding green space in North Lawndale's residential areas** where access to parks is particularly limited.
- **The neighborhood's beauty and aesthetic remains a priority amongst neighborhood residents**, and could be used to boost the community's sense of pride by transforming vacant lots into community gardens.
- **North Lawndale's historic building stock is a unique asset** that could be leveraged to encourage future reinvestment.
- **North Lawndale's 150th anniversary is coming up in 2019** and there will be many opportunities to bring awareness to the area.

## Community Input

- **North Lawndale's parks would benefit from improved maintenance.** Community members consider Douglas Park a community gem; however, upkeep of park infrastructure, including walking and bike paths, and the park's historic Field House, requires greater attention.
- **Responses to the Sustainability and Open Space Priorities Online Survey indicate a strong community desire to strengthen these areas as a source of neighborhood pride.** Furthermore, park access, quantity, and recreational opportunities were prioritized below neighborhood pride, but were ranked more highly than flooding issues.
- **Park safety remains a point of concern.** Although the options for improving park safety are vast, community members have specifically cited improved lighting as a desirable strategy for combatting crime and violence in the neighborhood's open spaces.
- **Members of the community have expressed concern over the environmental impacts of large-scale events held in Douglas Park.** Although these popular events draw crowds and positive attention to the neighborhood, their sometimes destructive results leave some community members unhappy with the quality of their open spaces.
- **There is a sizable interest in installing community gardens on the community's vacant lots.** The community has an established history in converting North Lawndale's vacancies to community gardens for a variety of reasons, and attendees of NLCCC's Planning Conference identified this practice as one of the three most popular actions for addressing these vacancies.
- **Vacant lots were identified as potential assets by the community**, with an emphasis on the ownership and reuse of vacant lots as sites for new housing, community gardens, playlots, and clean yards for nearby residents. Nearly 18 percent of North Lawndale's land is vacant and productive landscapes.



## Research & Data

### Arts and Culture

- There is a growing number of programs throughout the community that seek to connect residents with cultural experiences and arts education.
- The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) opened a permanent classroom outside of its downtown campus in North Lawndale in 2016, which offers arts education workshops for local residents.
- North Lawndale was the original location of Cobra Records, the iconic independent record store George's Music Room, and numerous musicians have called North Lawndale home.
- In the summer of 2016 Douglas Park hosted its 2nd annual Westside Music Festival as well as the first annual North Lawndale Arts Festival.

### Historic Preservation

- North Lawndale is home to numerous historic assets including, among others, portions of the original Sears, Roebuck & Co. headquarters, Central Park Theatre, and the K-Town Historic District.
- Known as "the buckle in the greystone belt," North Lawndale has a rich architectural history. A 2005 survey found that the majority of residential structures in North Lawndale are greystone (27%) or brick (63%).

### Gardening and Urban Agriculture

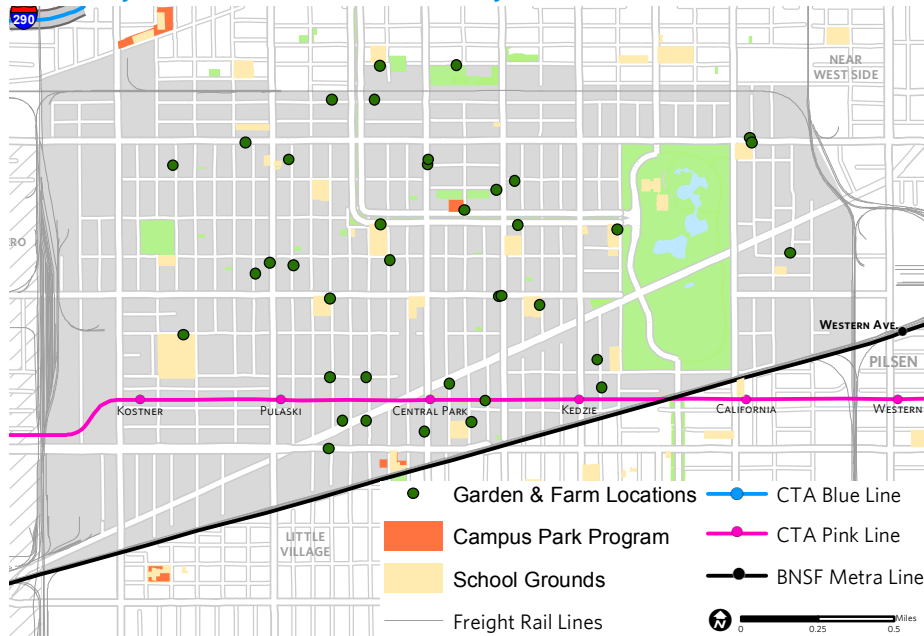
- There are over 40 documented garden and agricultural spaces in North Lawndale including two operational urban farms and two apiaries.

- The North Lawndale Greening Committee maintains 12 of the 14 community gardens protected by NeighborSpace.
- Several groups are working to create productive landscapes on vacant land including The Hive, Gardeneers and Christy Webber Farm & Garden, CCA Academy, and Homan Grown.

### Parks and Open Space

- Residents of North Lawndale have access to 220 acres of open space with Douglas Park constituting 174 acres (nearly 80% of the total acreage).
- Lack of local parks limits access to open space for residents in the southern and western portions of the community have.

### Community Garden and Urban Farm Inventory



### 2016 First Annual Arts Festival



## Potential Strategies

1. **Continue to coordinate with the Chicago Park District to better maintain and make improvements to Douglas Park**, particularly regarding the park's lighting and safety and capacity to host regular community events in addition to larger regional and national events.
2. **Encourage local artists to participate in the greening process of vacant lots** as a means to increase community involvement and neighborhood pride through these spaces.
3. **Concentrate community garden and urban agriculture assets in target areas** to foster related economic opportunities and promote new restaurant and retail development.
4. **Increase awareness of historic preservation programs and grants.** Initiatives like the NHS' Chicago Greystone & Vintage Home Program have the potential to maintain and enhance the community's historic character while promoting home ownership.
5. **Increase awareness, participation and expansion of the annual Arts Festival and Creative Careers Summit** and continue to identify opportunities to expand neighborhood art and cultural activities.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- 16th Street Stormwater Improvements
- Youth Career Arts Summit
- 2nd Annual Arts Festival
- Gateway Railroad Murals
- North Lawndale 150th Anniversary Celebration

# ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



## Assets & Opportunities

- **Economic Development in North Lawndale presents numerous opportunities.** While the community has numerous economic development challenges, new uses like Lagunitas Brewing Company and Cinespace represent growing economic opportunities.
- **There are opportunities for development along main corridors** like Ogden Avenue, Pulaski Road, and Roosevelt Road.
- **The majority of North Lawndale's existing non-residential real estate properties are industrial and there is a strong demand for industrial space in the community.** The demand for industrial space can anchor other development activity and make North Lawndale an employment destination along the eastern, southern and western edges of the community.
- **The retail market in North Lawndale needs considerable improvement.** The community has a small commercial base and a number of residents have to travel outside of the community to meet daily shopping needs causing a high amount of economic leakage or surplus occurring across various retail categories.
- **Industrial businesses seem disconnected from the community.** While there are many large employers in North Lawndale's two industrial corridors, there is a perceived lack of employment opportunities available to local residents.

## Community Input

- **Lack of jobs is of primary concern to residents of North Lawndale.** The neighborhood needs opportunities for people to get access to upwardly mobile jobs in addition to providing good local jobs within the community. North Lawndale's unemployment rate is almost double that of the City of Chicago and over half of residents are not in the labor force.
- **Job training programs should be encouraged and expanded for youth and adults in the community.** North Lawndale residents need to be prepared to be involved in the changing economy. Job training and readiness programs need to be created and encouraged, included those focused on members of the community that have been involved in the criminal justice system. Incubators for small business development and entrepreneurial skills training should also be encouraged.
- **Food deserts and a lack of high quality retail is a challenge in North Lawndale.** The community currently has a surplus of small general merchandise convenience stores, liquor stores and gas stations, but not the kind of high quality healthy options that residents would like to see. Opportunities to promote high quality grocery and other retail opportunities are desirable.
- **Reactivate vacant properties.** North Lawndale has a high proportion of residential and commercial vacant lots that the community would like to see reactivated or repurposed. Vacant lots negatively impact the community as a whole and depress viable corridors like Roosevelt Road.



## Research & Data

### Jobs and Employment

- North Lawndale has an unemployment rate of more than 26 percent. This is nearly double that of the City of Chicago (13.1 percent). Unemployment is particularly high among North Lawndale residents aged 20 to 24.
- North Lawndale lost 22 percent of the total number of primary jobs between 2004 and 2014.
- North Lawndale maintains a significant number of industrial manufacturing, education and health care jobs but few people who live in North Lawndale work in the community.

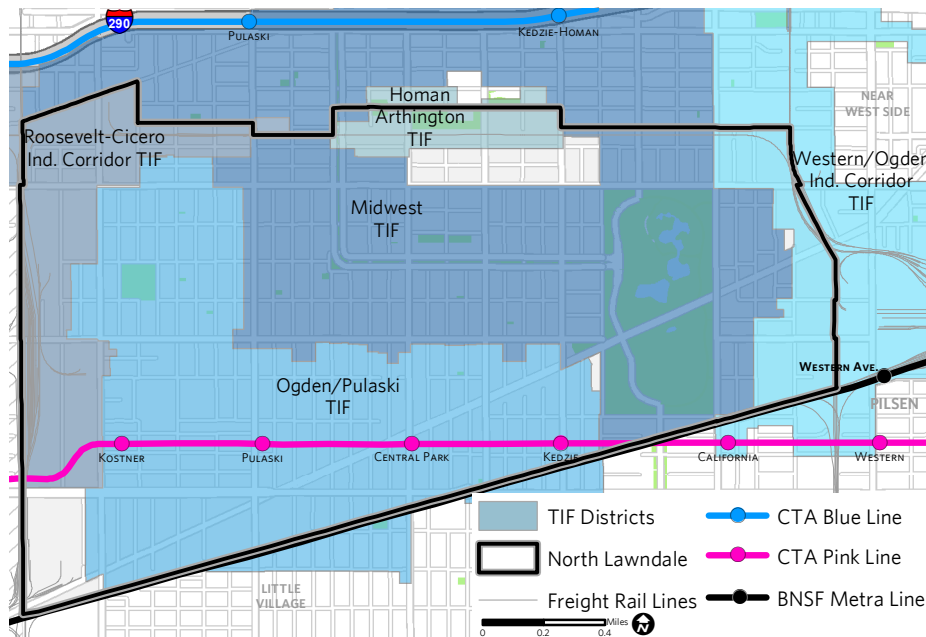
### Retail

- North Lawndale's existing retail inventory is small compared to elsewhere in Chicago.
- Nearly forty percent of the land area zoned for retail in North Lawndale is vacant. A significant number of commercial parcels have been cleared, resulting in 60.3 acres of vacant commercial land.
- North Lawndale suffers from significant retail leakage as residents have to spend on goods outside of the community for lack of supply. This indicates the potential for new retail opportunities.
- North Lawndale is home to 32 smaller grocery and convenience stores, but only 2 supermarkets. In comparison to nearby Cicero, North Lawndale has more than twice as many convenience stores, but only half as many grocery stores per household.

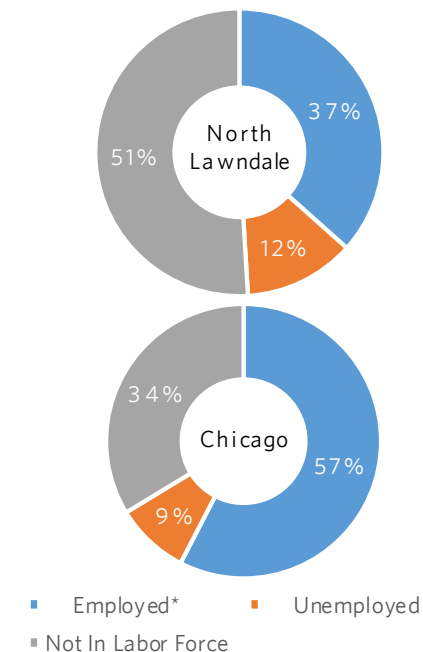
### Corridor Development

- There are opportunities to revitalize historic retail corridors including Ogden Avenue, Pulaski Road and Roosevelt Road.
- The attraction of a high quality supermarket in addition to full service restaurants may be viable and could anchor other development.
- North Lawndale is located within designated industrial corridors, including the Roosevelt/Cicero Industrial Corridor and the Western/Ogden Industrial Corridor.
- The revitalization of Roosevelt Road is especially significant considering its historical significance and commercial viability.

### North Lawndale TIF Districts



### Employment Status



Source: 2014 American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

\*Does not include employed population in the Armed Forces.

## Potential Strategies

- Create tax incentives for development and to hire and train local residents.** Continue to utilize the benefits of existing Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts in the community including TIFWorks to fund workforce development and job training programs.
- Create incentives for businesses to locate in North Lawndale including creative ways to encourage high-quality retail.** This includes continuing to strengthen programs like the City of Chicago's Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.
- Activate vacant lots.** Incentivize the purchase of lots for new housing; encourage home buying and lending programs; expand Chicago's Large Lot Program; and repurpose vacant lots for community gardens.
- Encourage Transit Oriented Development around the Pink and Blue Lines.** Many properties surrounding the CTA stations qualify for reduced parking under the City of Chicago Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Ordinance.
- Strengthen connections between the North Lawndale workforce and the community's significant base of industrial businesses.** Foster partnerships with groups such as LBRA and NLEN to connect local residents to nearby jobs.

### NLCCC PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

- Teen Entrepreneurship Workshop
- Small Business Education

## A Message from NLCCC

*We would like to thank each of you for participating in the NLCCC Planning Conference. It is your ideas and participation that will restore North Lawndale to its full potential. If you are not already a member of NLCCC or one of its subcommittees, please be sure to sign up today. Again thanks from all of us at the North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council.*

## Visioning Workshop Agenda

- 10:00 a.m. ....Community Resource Fair
- 11:00 a.m.....Opening Remarks & NLCCC Overview
- 11:45 a.m.....Quality of Life Discussion Groups
- 1:00 p.m. ....Comfort Break: Lunch Served
- 1:15 p.m.....Map Your Vision for  
North Lawndale Workshop
- 2:45 p.m.....Wrap-up



Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning

233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60606

312-454-0400  
[info@cmaphillinois.gov](mailto:info@cmaphillinois.gov)

[www.cmap.illinois.gov](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov)

**NLCCC**



North Lawndale Community  
Coordinating Council

**LISC**  
Chicago

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- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago
- New Covenant CDC
- North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN)
- North Lawndale Kinship Initiative
- Old St. Patrick's Church
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