

The contents of this report are available in an interactive format:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/72dafa85fedd41928b682fc87f0abe30?item=1>

## Contents

About this Project .....	4
Background .....	4
Study Area.....	5
An Overview of Washington Park.....	5
Demographics and characteristics.....	5
Past Plans and Studies .....	6
South Side Housing Data Initiative: Washington Park Project (2020) .....	6
CMAP Community Data Snapshot (2020).....	6
UChicago Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment (2019) .....	7
Healthy Chicago 2.0 (2016).....	7
Arts & Public Life Arts Block Concept Master Plan (2016).....	7
Green Healthy Neighborhoods (2013).....	8
LISC Quality of Life Plan (2009).....	8
South Lakefront Corridor Transit Study (2009).....	9
Quad Communities: Connecting Past, Present and Future (2005).....	10
Community Economic Development Overview.....	10
Key Findings .....	10
Neighborhood Assets.....	10
Cultural Heritage and Solidarity.....	16
20 <sup>th</sup> Century Cultural Assets Profiles.....	18
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Cultural Assets Profiles .....	19
Economic Conditions and Opportunities.....	21
Residential Economic History Overview .....	21
Employment Sector.....	23
Land Stewardship Opportunities .....	25
Transportation Overview .....	27
Key findings.....	27
Census transportation data .....	27
Commute time .....	29
Roadway Network.....	30

Crashes.....	33
Transit .....	34
Rail transit .....	34
Bus transit .....	35
Walking and biking.....	37
Walking .....	37
Biking.....	37
Bike culture .....	39
Housing Overview .....	39
Key findings.....	39
History of housing in Washington Park.....	39
Housing today .....	41
Review of Housing and Affordability Goals in Past Plans and Studies.....	42
Housing characteristics .....	42
Housing types.....	43
Occupied Rental Units.....	43
Affordable Housing .....	44
Existing Land Use and Zoning.....	45
Future opportunities.....	45
Education and Schools .....	46
Key findings.....	46
Chicago Public Schools History .....	46
Washington Park Schools Today.....	49
Safety .....	52
Key findings.....	52
Crime trends in Chicago and Washington Park .....	52
Policing in Chicago .....	58
Policing in Washington Park .....	60
Health and Wellness.....	61
Key Findings.....	61
Analysis of Washington Park Health Characteristics .....	62
Clinical Care .....	62
Health Behaviors .....	62

Mortality.....	63
Social Determinants of Health.....	63
Social and Economic Conditions.....	63
Physical Environment .....	65
Existing Health and Wellness Assets in Washington Park.....	66
Green infrastructure .....	66
Stormwater .....	67
Conclusion.....	68
Appendix .....	69
A history of planning and transportation in Washington Park.....	69
Early transportation in Chicago and Washington Park .....	69
Railroads, development, and Reconstruction.....	71
Segregation, White violence, and a shift away from transit (1900 – 1920s).....	73
Mid-century: highways, planning and urban renewal .....	75
Failures of urban renewal and the War on Drugs.....	79
African-American Exodus.....	83

## About this Project

The Garfield Green Line Station Action Plan is envisioned as an equitable transit-oriented development plan, whose process was initiated by Elevated Chicago. Elevated Chicago is a collaboration of 17 public, private and nonprofit organizations, including CMAP, that have come together to build equity into transit-oriented development in Chicago by improving health, safety, climate resilience, and cultural vitality indicators of people of color living and working near transit.

For the Garfield Green Line South Station Action Plan, CMAP is seeking collaboration with community groups and coordinating with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to update Elevated's 2019 [Community Work Plan](#) to identify actionable steps that can be taken to implement past plan recommendations. Rather than initiate another planning process for the area, this process seeks to move past recommendations forward to the benefit of existing residents to prevent displacement and address legacy institutional harms.

The project seeks to understand the impact that decades of disinvestment have had and work to change the narrative around a community with strong, positive amenities. The team will develop and emphasize collaborative, community-led solutions to neighborhood displacement and inequities.

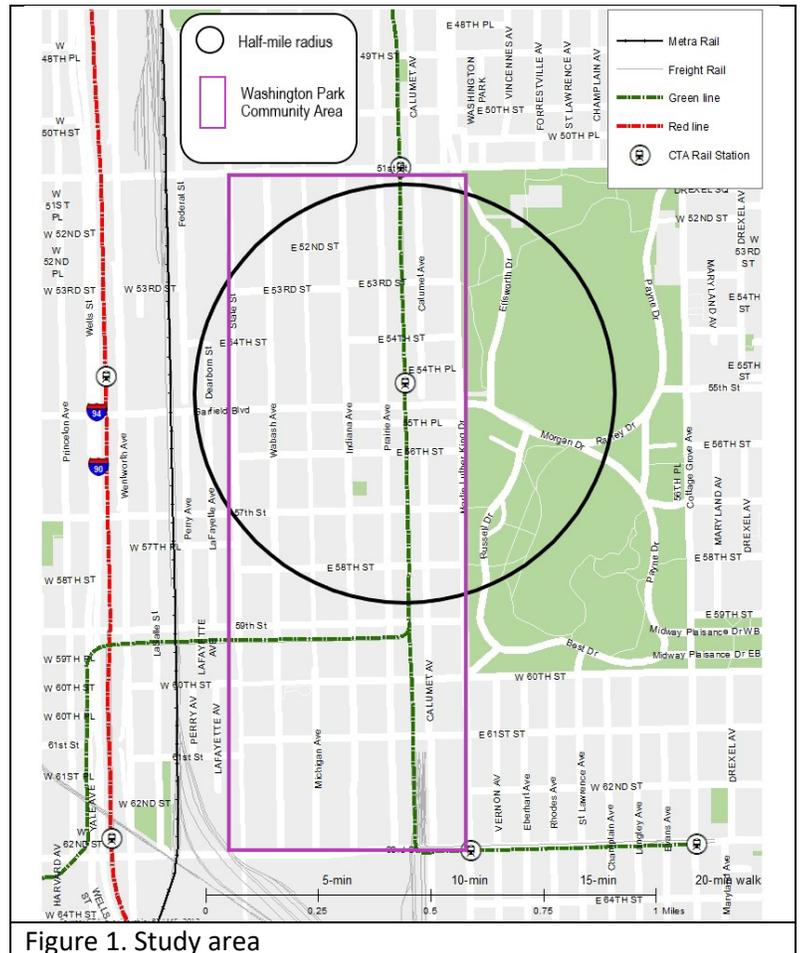


Figure 1. Study area

## Background

Elevated Chicago requested assistance with eTOD plans for all 12 stations across 4 transit hubs. CMAP agreed to assist with completion of two station area plans – one in an area experiencing disinvestment and one in an area experiencing displacement. The representatives from the four hubs met to decide which stations to focus on. The Capital Programs Working Group selected the Green Line South for disinvestment and the California Pink Line for displacement. There are three stations in the Green Line South focus area: 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Garfield, and Cottage Grove/63<sup>rd</sup>. Representatives from the Green Line South community table thought that the Garfield station was preferable for several reasons: it has the highest amount of vacant land—much of it city-owned vacant, it is most likely to see development in coming years, and there has been the most recent activity as the University of Chicago has bought and developed properties near the station. There is some local distrust of the University's role in neighborhood development and CMAP's role is to elevate the residents' voice in decision-making.

## Study Area

The study area includes the half-mile area around the Garfield station, which roughly aligns with the Washington Park Community area. For ease of data collection and analysis, the Community Area is used as the study area (Figure 1).

## An Overview of Washington Park

A separate document covers the history of planning and transportation in the Washington Park neighborhood to better understand how important historic decisions and policies helped to shape and create the neighborhood that currently exists.

In addition to being cut out of the decision-making process, planning has been implemented to keep people in historically oppressed groups on the other side of the tracks. This has resulted in some people being left without access to reliable transit, using their communities as dumping grounds for undesirable and toxic land uses, and literally tearing their communities apart with highways. This reality is proof that the foundation of racism many transportation and transit systems were built on, stays firmly in place today. -Tamika Butler<sup>1</sup>

The history document traces the influx of new residents following development of the railroads and growth of the meat-packing industry, through unequal and oppressive education and housing policies, into urban renewal and its failures, to the War on Drugs and African American exodus from many Chicago neighborhoods. Through it all, the Washington Park community has remained resilient, celebrating local culture and history with the annual Bud Billiken parade, with community-led initiatives around the 51<sup>st</sup> Street station and new development by the Garfield station, which itself has been recently renovated.

This document provides an overview of past plans and studies as well as an assessment of current conditions relating to economic development, transportation, housing, education, safety, health and wellness, and green infrastructure. The appendix has additional historical background, specifically related to transportation.

## Demographics and characteristics

Between 2000 and 2010, there was a significant population drop (-17.2%), which slowed between 2010 and 2018 (-3.1%). Compared to the City of Chicago and the region, the Washington Park Community Area has a higher percentage of younger residents, with about 60 percent under the age of 34 and it also has a slightly higher percentage of elderly residents (2.1 percent). Within one-half mile radius of the Garfield CTA station, there are 37 acres of vacant land – more than four of every ten parcels are vacant, and of those vacant parcels more than 60 percent are city-owned. As the neighborhood population stabilizes, the large number of vacant properties provides an opportunity to build back the community fabric with new homes.



The median household income has been rising since 2000 but is still comparatively low to the City and the region. Median rents in the area have increased over 77 percent since 2000, from \$499 to \$887.<sup>2</sup>

## Past Plans and Studies

Washington Park and surrounding areas have had many plans and reports completed for the area. This section reviews past plans, highlighting key findings. They are presented in reverse chronological order. A [separate document](#) outlines the recommendations pulled from these plans with indications as to progress for each item.

### South Side Housing Data Initiative: Washington Park Project (2020)

The aim of the South Side Housing Data Initiative is to provide community-based organizations with parcel-level data to inform policy and program strategies to help low- and moderate-income residents maintain their housing in real estate markets experiencing or anticipating rapid change. In August 2020, the organization published a report on Washington Park with five key findings based on parcel-level data collected by surveyors in summer 2019. They found that Washington Park had financially vulnerable renters, very low homeownership rates, lack of private development despite South Side growth, an unhealthy built environment, and neighborhood hypervacancy. The report makes recommendations that build upon the existing strengths of Washington Park, harness the growth coming to adjacent neighborhoods, reimagine what is possible, and rebuild an equitable future for the Washington Park community.

### CMAP Community Data Snapshot (2020)

Using data from the American Community Survey (ACS), CMAP summarizes demographics, housing, employment, transportation habits, retail sales, property values, and land use data. The data snapshot for the Washington Park Community Area shows a high score for mobility and community because of access to transit and features that potentially make it more walkable. It has a high environmental score due to its proximity to the park. However, the community area had low scores for prosperity because of economic factors including education and workforce participation. Additionally, while the data shows an area with high scores for walkability and open space, residents have expressed that the area is not walkable because many people do not feel safe walking. The park, for some, is connected to memories

---

<sup>2</sup> Elevated Chicago Garfield Station area profile: <http://www.elevatedchicago.org/garfield-south-station-cta-green-line-1-2-mile-area/>

of more violent times, and is not seen as the natural asset as it may be for others, showing that the data does not always align with lived experience.

### UChicago Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment (2019)

The University of Chicago School of Medicine conducted a health assessment in 2018-2019 to determine the health needs in the service area of the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC), including Washington Park. The plan identified three health priorities:

1. To prevent and manage chronic diseases
  - Area of Focus: Asthma, Diabetes
2. To build trauma resiliency
  - Area of Focus: Violence Recovery, Mental Health
3. To reduce inequities caused by social determinants of health
  - Area of Focus: Access to care, food insecurities, employment



The complete community profile outlines characteristics of the neighborhood, social determinants of health, and community resources. The profile shows a community that is young, mostly Black, with half the median income of the average Chicagoan, many vacant housing units, and a life expectancy 13 years shorter than people in neighboring Hyde Park.<sup>3</sup>

### Healthy Chicago 2.0 (2016)

In 2011, The Chicago Department of Public Health created a 4-year public health agenda known as Healthy Chicago aimed at improving health and addressing disparities. The agenda focused on 12 key priorities, including tobacco use, obesity prevention, access to care, healthy mothers and babies, and violence prevention. In 2016, the city published Healthy Chicago 2.0 which aimed to address remaining disparities and build greater health equity within vulnerable populations and communities including Washington Park. The study found that Washington Park residents faced high economic hardship based on six indicators including crowded housing, poverty, unemployment, education, dependency, and income. These hardships have led to lower life expectancies, higher rates of Chlamydia, fewer opportunities for children, and higher rates of gun-related violent crimes.

### Arts & Public Life Arts Block Concept Master Plan (2016)

In 2016, the University of Chicago hired the firm Solomon Cordwell Buenz to engage the community in a planning process for building the “Arts Block” – the area around the Garfield CTA station where the University of Chicago is the largest landowner of adjacent parcels. In March of 2013, the Arts Incubator opened on the corner of Garfield Boulevard and Prairie Avenue run by Theaster Gates, Professor, Department of Visual Arts, and Director of the Arts + Public Life Initiative (APL) at University of Chicago.

After the University of Chicago purchased the Art Deco building across from the CTA station, they converted the former grocer into an art space. The renovated building now contains a storefront gallery, artist-in-residence program, community space, and many arts activities. The Arts Block plan was a step to initiate conversation around the surrounding vacant lots and now-built Green Line Performing Arts Center.

<sup>3</sup> Community Profile: <https://www.uchicagomedicine.org/-/media/pdfs/adult-pdfs/community/chna-community-profiles/washington-park-community-profile.pdf>

Public engagement highlighted concerns with unsafe pedestrian crossings on Garfield. The community expressed desire for outdoor cafes and restaurants, more low-cost and free cultural events and programming. They stressed the importance of small businesses run by local residents.

### Green Healthy Neighborhoods (2013)

In 2014, the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, in partnership with CMAP, LISC, South East Chicago Commission, Teamwork Englewood, and the Washington Park Consortium, undertook development of the Green Healthy Neighborhoods (GHN) strategy.

Green Healthy Neighborhoods (GHN) is a 10- to 20-year planning strategy to maximize the use of vacant land and other neighborhood resources within Chicago's Englewood, West Englewood, Washington Park and Woodlawn community areas as well as parts of the New City, Fuller Park and Greater Grand Crossing community areas. The plan outlines goals and strategies for key topics including housing, retail, productive landscapes, manufacturing, open space, green infrastructure, and historic preservation. The plan highlights the Garfield CTA station as a place for transit-friendly development, retail opportunities, and streetscape improvements. The GHN housing section stressed the importance of prioritizing the preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing structures throughout the study area.

### LISC Quality of Life Plan (2009)

In 2007, Alderman Willie B. Cochran convened a quality-of-life planning process to begin creating a strategy towards a stronger future in Washington Park. Monthly meetings and workshops were held over the following year in which more than 200 people were engaged. The workgroups established a vision for Washington Park that respected its history while also responding to new opportunities.

The plan outlined ten strategies in the path to a "stronger future":

1. Build community capacity to ensure Washington Park benefits from future development plans including the 2016 Olympic bid.

*Although the Olympic bid was unsuccessful, the recommendations to build community capacity remain relevant and important: supporting block clubs, data collection, support for organizations, development of community advisory groups, and regular forums.*

2. Proclaim and celebrate Washington Park's proud past.

*The recommendations in this strategy include: collect stories of elders, preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings, become a part of the Historic Black Metropolis National Heritage Area, celebrate history of the park, and preserve housing on King Drive.*

3. Create an environment where people are safe and accountable.

*Safety and accountability are addressed through beautification and clean-up efforts, partnerships between community and police, youth involvement in beautification efforts, a focus on personal accountability, and parent participation in various activities.*

4. Provide a range of housing choices that support existing residents and attract new residents.

*The plan specifically outlines six goals surrounding housing in Washington Park: Combat*

*foreclosure to improve neighborhood stability, expand homeownership opportunities, preserve and rehabilitate quality rental housing, invite community participation on all housing development proposals, develop or link to housing education and assistance programs, embrace supportive housing as a tool to alleviate homelessness and dependency.*

5. Support development of businesses and retail stores.

*To support business development, the plan recommends: identification and promotion of locations for small businesses, assembly of large parcels for large-scale commercial development, TOD near stations, support for local businesses, Community Benefits Agreement, increased access to Midway airport and other destinations through BRT and Metra, and a trolley service.*

6. Build partnerships to improve employment options.

*Recommendations to help residents find jobs and build up their skills to open up more opportunities for better paying work include: Create an entrepreneur center, enhance training and certification programs, partner with trade unions, attract a major employer, prepare people for seasonal and temporary job opportunities, and create a Center for Working Families.*

7. Support healthy lifestyles and better health care.

*The plan seeks to support healthier lifestyles and better healthcare through educational programs focused on wellness, expanding access to fresh food and produce, expanding open space in the neighborhood, and increasing the utilization of existing health-related resources and services.*

8. Provide supervised activities to engage young people.

*Activities to engage youth include open mic nights, organized sports, the creation of a Peace Festival. Additional recommendations include support for kids going to school, evening programs for life skills, and a residential school for at-risk youth.*

9. Support youth and adults in and outside of schools.

*A range of proposed recommendations are listed to support youth and young adults, including: programs to incentivize attendance in schools, computer centers, a College Resource Center, GED programming, a military-style school program, as well as entrepreneurial and vocational training.*

10. Provide solid services and promote active participation in the golden years.

*Provision of services for senior residents address important needs in the community, including social and well-being advocacy, financial counseling, housing and foreclosure assistance, shuttle services, and youth-senior relationship development.*

### [South Lakefront Corridor Transit Study \(2009\)](#)

In a study for 13 Community Areas along the South Lakefront, the assessment of transit around the Garfield station identifies several factors that may lead to redevelopment around the station—an

abundance of vacant land, good transportation service consisting of vehicular access to I-94, CTA Red and Green Line stations, and a Metra Electric station. The study notes that the park functions as a physical barrier between the communities of Hyde Park and Washington Park.

Garfield Boulevard was one of four corridors evaluated for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). It concluded that BRT would be beneficial for the corridor between Hyde Park and Midway Airport but limited-stop service would not be as beneficial to the area, and the 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor could see greater overall benefit from BRT. Concerns about loss to parking supply on Garfield Boulevard were also noted.

### [Quad Communities: Connecting Past, Present and Future \(2005\)](#)

In this plan, the team identified nine strategies to pursue for building upon development momentum and creating a great place to live and work. Strategies highlight the importance of improving schools and creating recreational and social outlays for kids; others focus on housing variety, financial and workforce initiatives; and others address infrastructure, local businesses, arts and culture, safety and health.

## Community Economic Development Overview

Community economic development research explores the ways communities empower themselves to improve their living and economic conditions, and the assets the community stewards and creates. This chapter highlights the Washington Park community's neighborhood assets, cultural heritage and solidarity, and economic conditions and opportunities.

### Key Findings

- Washington Park is a neighborhood with a legacy as a proud, Black historic district and the park itself is a centerpiece of culture and Black life in Chicago
- The community and economic resistance that took place in Washington Park in the 1900s helped solidify the neighborhood's position in the Black Metropolis
- Racialized residents including Black migrants and refugees fleeing oppressive Jim Crow segregation in the south contributed to Washington Park's dramatic population growth in the 1940s and 1950s
- While the process of redlining had well-known impacts on housing, a lesser-known impact of redlining was to impede local business potential because the area was deemed too risky for investments, with exceptions for liquor stores and bars
- Washington Park's population experienced a 74% decline between 1930 and 2018 and was estimated at 11,355 residents in 2018
- Since 2012 poverty rates have declined, suggesting that Washington Park is slowly recovering
- A high percentage of properties in the Washington Park Community Area are vacant (43%)

### Neighborhood Assets

The Washington Park neighborhood is a proud, historic Black district filled with thousands of residents who have many talents, skills, and assets. Countless times, the people of the community have shown that they are indeed the strongest assets of the neighborhood. In 2009, 200 of these community members identified dozens of additional community resources that strengthen and advance the collective well-being of neighborhood residents in the Washington Park's Quality of Life Plan (QLP).

### **2009 Washington Park Community Asset Map**

Figure 2 depicts the geographic distribution of 56 assets the community selected as shaping and impacting the quality of life in the 2009 QLP. Assets featured in this map include twenty (20) community development organizations that specialized in a range of services, seven (7) public schools (See the section on Education and Schools), the University of Chicago, and nineteen (19) churches. The map also highlighted four (4) historic landmarks, the [George] Washington Park, the Museum of Science and Industry, and three (3) cultural centers including the Dusable Museum of African American History.

**Figure 2.** Map of Neighborhood Assets in Washington Park (2009)



Source: Washington Park Quality of Life Plan

Out of the 56 total assets mapped, six (6) of the Washington Park community resources were located beyond the neighborhood’s official boundaries. These resources include the Midway Plaisance park, the University of Chicago, the Statue of the Republic, Museum of Science and Industry, South Shore Cultural Center, and the 20<sup>th</sup> Ward office. These assets are in surrounding neighborhoods like Hyde Park and Woodlawn; and their inclusion into the community’s 2009 asset map highlights the community’s connection to immediate surrounding areas.

There were at least five transit assets that contributed to the community’s relationship with surrounding neighborhoods and the region more broadly in 2009. These include the 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and Garfield Boulevard CTA Red Line Stations on the east side of the neighborhood. To the west of the neighborhood, three Green Line CTA stations that lies within a ½ radius of Washington Park were identified as assets. ***For the purposes of the Garfield Green Line Station Action Plan, this section updates the 2009 Washington Park Community Asset Map and analyzes community assets that exist within a ½ mile radius of the Garfield Green Line Station.***

## 2020 Washington Park Community Asset Inventory

Building on the 2009 Washington Park Community Asset Map, the Garfield Green Line Station Action Plan team used 2019 Chicago MapsCorps data and 2017 National Center for Charitable Statistics Data (NCCS) to identify and map potential assets in the Washington Park neighborhood. The team found that Chicago youth identified 136 active assets in Washington Park. These assets consist of some of the original 56 assets mapped in the 2009 Washington Park Community Asset Map that are still active. They also include some of the non-profits that were featured in the 2017 NCCS dataset. After incorporating stakeholder feedback and completing more research using Google Maps, the team included 39 additional assets in Washington Park's inventory. This community asset inventory can be found in Figure 3.

**Figure 3.** 2020 Washington Park Community Asset Inventory



Figure 3 depicts 175 of Washington Park's Community Assets by eight asset category types. It shows that Washington Park's community resources range from physical places that support the development of affinity groups like youth and beauticians to community organizations that support and empower residents like the Washington Park Consortium and the Chicago Fire Department on West 59<sup>th</sup> Street. Resources highlighted in Figure 3 also include businesses, financial institutions, joy-centers, community institutions, stewarded land, and shared public spaces.

This asset inventory showcases the rich investments that exist within the neighborhood, and the large number of assets the community plays a role in shaping and stewarding. A closer look into the diagram shows that Washington Park’s largest number of assets are in the areas of businesses, community institutions, and shared public spaces. Financial institutions, joy-centers, and stewarded-land are among the smallest number of assets in the neighborhood.

### Green Line South eHub Asset Map

In 2019, the Green Line South Community Table created a work plan for equitable transit-oriented development near the community’s Green Line South transit asset stations. This work plan emphasized the importance of acknowledging and building upon the equitable transit hubs (eHubs) that already exist in Washington Park using Elevated Chicago’s priorities of people, place, and process. These eHubs are made up of assets that advance racial equity in health, climate and culture within a ½ mile radius of Washington Park’s Green Line South Stations. They are mapped in Figure 4.

**Figure 4.** Green Line South eHub Asset Map



**Source:** Elevated Chicago Green Line South Workplan

Figure 4 shows that the Green Line South Community Table selected over a dozen assets contributing to racial equity near Washington Park Green Line South stations. Each station included assets that were identified in the 2009 Washington Park Community Asset Map and 2020 Community Asset inventory. However, they were organized by the following categories: *Community Arts & Culture, Health, Green Space and Climate Resilient Infrastructure, Education, Economic Development and Workforce, Affordable*

and Social Housing, and Elevated Chicago Capital Projects. Table 1 provides a summary of the Green Line South eHub Asset Map.

**Table 1.** Summary of Total Assets within ½ Mile Radius of Green Line South Train Stations

<b>Asset Category</b>	<b>51<sup>st</sup>Street*</b>	<b>Garfield*</b>	<b>63<sup>rd</sup> Street</b>
Community Arts & Culture	5	5	3
Health	2	1	0
Green Space/Climate Resilient Infrastructure	1	1	1
Education	5	4	3
Economic Development & Workforce	1	1	0
Affordable and Social Housing	0	1	2
Elevated Chicago Capital Projects	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>

*\*Shares asset with another Green Line South station*

This table shows that Garfield Green Line station had 14 assets within a ½ mile radius in 2019. Assets representing the *Community Arts and Culture* and *Education* categories made up the largest percentage of the eHub. This suggests that the Garfield Green Line Station eHub can serve as a strong asset for affinity-groups like youth and artists.

Table 1 also shows that the Garfield Green Line Station is the only train station that has assets in each of the seven (7) asset types listed. This suggests that Garfield Greenline Stations all have the potential to aid equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) around all three Green Line Stations if eTOD efforts are intentional about neighborhood wellness. *Health* and *Elevated Chicago Capital Projects* were the only two asset types that the Garfield Green Line Station had less of when compared to 51<sup>st</sup> Street’s and 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Green Line Stations. These two asset types may be areas for growth in the Garfield Green Line Station eHub. However, further analysis will be required for more context, given recent developments and the assets that exist beyond the eHub’s radius. CMAP will conduct additional analysis after updating Elevated Chicago’s 2019 Green Line South eHub Asset Map with community engagement and the 2020 Community Asset Inventory.

### **Garfield Green Line Station’s eHub Economic Profile**

Garfield Green Line Train Station eHub is home to one of the oldest historic landmarks of South Side Chicago – Garfield Station. Serving as one of Washington Park’s many community-owned investments, it recently received over \$40 million dollars’ worth of public investment. It was built in 1892 to facilitate access to Chicago’s World Fair in Jackson Park. With the exception of a multi-year closure in the mid-1990s, the station has been connecting the neighborhood to the Chicago region and contributing to neighborhood social and economic outcomes.

Based on ESRI retail market data, there are approximately 57,500 Chicago residents that can access the Garfield Green Line Station in 5 minutes by car. These residents make up 23,256 households within this 5-minute drive radius. ERSI predicts that half of these households have a median disposable income of \$27,849; while most have a per capita income of \$24,864. There were 215 retail trade, and food and drink businesses that covered the station’s 5-minute drive radius in 2017. An analysis of these

businesses supply and demand volumes were performed to identify business opportunities that exist within the Garfield Station eHub.

## Garfield Green Line Station eHub Retail Market Analysis

### Methodology

CMAAP staff conducted a retail gap analysis to identify retail market opportunities within 5-minutes of the Garfield Green Line Station eHub by car (Garfield eHub). This analysis was conducted using ESRI Retail MarketPlace 2017 retail sales (**Supply**) and consumer spending (**Demand**) estimates. It subtracted business supply and demand for North American Industry Classification System (**NAICS**) industries to generate the total amount of dollars each industry saw added to or left the economy (**Retail Gap**).

This gap was used to then create a **Surplus** (Supply > Demand) and **Leakage** (Demand > Supply) **Factors**. **Surplus Factors** indicate that a NAICS industry is thriving in an area due to shoppers (consumers) who live in and outside of the 5-minute drive market area. **Leakage Factors** suggest that a NAICS Industry within the market area is facing a higher degree of competition from businesses outside of the market area. This means that industries with leakage factors are seeing consumers in the in the Garfield eHub spending outside of the eHub.

### Results

In 2017, the Garfield eHub retail trade, and food & drink establishments experienced an estimated amount of \$227,694,886 in retail sales. Over 80% of these sales were made by the eHub’s 136 retail trade industries, which is the largest industry type in the market when compared to the market’s 78 food and drink industries. Although the eHub’s industries generated \$228 million in estimated sales, they experienced a leakage after accounting for consumer demand for both retail trade and food and drink businesses. This means that residents in the eHub generally shop outside of the eHub. However, a relatively low leakage factor for food and drink businesses suggest that residents are more likely to shop at food and drinks businesses than retail trade businesses in the eHub (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Food and drink business face a relative advantage in attracting eHub consumers with the development of existing and new establishments especially those with dining options and flexible hours

<b>2017 Industry Summary</b>	Demand (Estimated Spending)	Supply (Estimated Sales)	Retail Gap*	Leakage/ Surplus Factor*
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$582,324,711	227,694,886	\$354,629,825	43.8
Total Retail Trade	\$522,959,854	\$189,684,203	\$333,275,651	46.8
Total Food & Drink	\$59,364,857	\$38,010,683	\$21,354,174	21.9

\***GREEN** values represent retail categories experiencing leakage (Demand > Supply). There’s a positive relationship between the retail gap and leakage and surplus factor. *Source: ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile*

Table 3 provides a more detailed overview of the Garfield eHub’s retail market by retail trade and food & drink industry sub-type. It shows the 13-sub retail trade and food & drink industries’ number of businesses, retail gaps, and leakage/ surplus factors. It reveals that food & beverage, and food services and drinking places are the two largest industries in the Garfield eHub 5-minute driving radius. This may contribute to the food & drink industry relative advantage over the retail trade industry (Table 2).

**Table 3.** Spending in sporting goods, hobby, book, music stores, health and personal care stores and gas stations is relatively higher than most industries

2017 Industry Group	Number of Businesses	Retail Gap*	Leakage/Surplus Factor*
<b>Motor Vehicle &amp; Parts Dealers</b>	2	\$103,296,601	96.1
<b>General Merchandise Stores</b>	5	\$89,518,446	93.3
<b>Building Materials, Garden Equip. &amp; Supply Stores</b>	7	\$27,508,682	82.6
<b>Food &amp; Beverage Stores</b>	34	\$27,488,550	17.7
<b>Food Services &amp; Drinking Places</b>	78	\$21,354,174	21.9
<b>Electronics &amp; Appliance Stores</b>	2	\$18,543,234	89.9
<b>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</b>	14	\$14,695,148	63.7
<b>Non-store Retailers</b>	0	\$14,279,873	100
<b>Clothing &amp; Clothing Accessories Stores</b>	29	\$11,589,722	24.4
<b>Furniture &amp; Home Furnishings Stores</b>	9	\$10,325,717	44.6
<b>Health &amp; Personal Care Stores</b>	11	\$8,845,016	63.7
<b>Food Services &amp; Drinking Places</b>	78	\$21,354,174	21.9

\*GREEN values represent retail categories experiencing leakage (Demand > Supply). There's a positive relationship between the retail gap and leakage and surplus factor. *Source: ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile*

Table 3 also shows the advantages of the eHub's retail trade industry. There are three (3) sub-industries experiencing leakages lower than the overall food & trade industry's leakage of 21.9. These include sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; gas stations; and health and personal care stores. This suggest that equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) can target these industries in addition to the food & drink industry in order to attract more internal and external consumer-spenders.

Non-store retailers, general merchandise, and motor vehicle and parts dealers are the only industries with leakage factors greater than 90. This means that non-retailers, general merchandise, and motor vehicle and parts dealers in the eHub's 5-minute driving radius are losing customers to neighboring stores. However, there is a chance that these sub-industries can see more customer traffic if they locate near retail stores that are faring well in the eHub. Based on positive surplus factors, sub-industries that did well in the eHub are book, periodical, music, beer, liquor, wine, and shoe stores.

### Cultural Heritage and Solidarity

The rich assets that exist in the Washington Park community are of no coincidence. Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, Washington Park community members have been at the forefront of shaping and building their own assets and neighborhood economy more broadly. The community's long heritage in grassroots self-determinism and community uplift must be recognized and understood to engage in for equitable development around the station.

In 1936, Black sociologist Horace Cayton Jr. began his research for one of the most renowned books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, in Washington Park His research symbolizes the community's self-determinism heritage, and it was conducted in one of the oldest and currently existing assets – in the basement of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Image of Horace Cayton Jr. at the Parkway Community House at 5120 S. Parkway Drive in 1941.



Source: Chicago Public Library

*Black Metropolis* is a book that is crucial to Washington Park's origin story as a historic Black community. This book details the ways that Black migrants and Jim Crow refugees made their own city in response to the white supremacy, racism, segregation, and violence of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>[1]</sup> This city was declared Bronzeville—a city that centered, valued, and appreciated Black life, experiences, and perspective on Black communities' terms in the City of Chicago. Cayton and St. Claire Drake (Co-Author of the *Black Metropolis*) included Washington Park as one of the five original sub-communities that served as an extension of Bronzeville and the Black Metropolis. Cayton's decision to start researching the *Black Metropolis* in one of Washington Park's very own community assets represents the area's strong ties to the legacy of solidarity, determinism, and freedom. This section highlights the ways the community worked together across time to control their destiny and improve their living and work conditions near and beyond the Garfield Green Line Station.

#### **Empowerment Timeline (1920-1970)**

- 1927: Washington Park's Improvement Association critiqued the poor placement of a tribute to the first Black settler and "founder of Chicago," Jean Baptiste Point DuSable. It was on a street that was rarely frequented and wasn't approved by them. They urged the City of Chicago create a more visible public commemoration of DuSable.
- 1930: In September 1930, the City of Chicago gave a streetcar company the right to expand its streetcar line in the Black community. After learning that the company wouldn't hire Black workers, hundreds of Black workers set off the 'streetcar riots' when they marched from Washington Park to the City's transportation office to claim their jobs.
- 1931: The Unemployed Council joined Black militants who would regularly use Washington Park, as a site for anti-eviction organizing. They began organizing groups of people in the park and led

them to evicted families who needed support moving their furniture and belongings back into their homes.<sup>4</sup>

- 1937 - 1939: Beginning in 1937, Fourth Ward Community Club's president waged a two-year battle for a fieldhouse and recreational program in Washington Park. In 1939, the club's work along with the work of other community groups resulted in the Chicago Park Commission appropriating \$775,000 for their demands.
- 1959: The Chicago Defender published a newspaper article highlighting the personalized health programs Washington Park YMCA offered residents such as massages, facials, and swimming. It also showcased residents' participation in its programs and encouraged residents to join two clubs: the Portrait and Triangle clubs.
- 1967: The Congress for Racial Equality were among several civil rights groups that organized a ceremony to rename Washington Park to Malcolm X Shabazz Park. This involved tearing down signs with Washington Park to make space for signs for Malcolm X Shabazz Park. A riot ensued following police interference. Twelve people were arrested for disturbing the peace. Two hundred protested their arrest outside of the City's police station.
- 1969: City Council approved of the construction of a \$3.5 million middle school on 4-acres of Washington Park, which was set to destroy 51 housing units. Council was met with push back from the Black Liberation Alliance on the basis that the City wasn't addressing the larger issue of overcrowding in Washington Park and were intimidating Washington Park parents.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Cultural Assets Profiles

**Bud Billiken Parade.** The Bud Billiken parade is an annual celebration of the legacy of Chicago's historic South Side community's heritage and culture. It was created by Chicago Defender founder, Robert Sengstacke Abbot, in 1929 in honor of Black youth and their progress. It has since become the largest African American parade in the United States with thousands coming from across the City of Chicago and the nation to unite in music, dance, food and laughter to kick off the school year. The parade begins in the Bronzeville neighborhood on King drive and ends in the Washington Park neighborhood. Since the founding of the parade, Washington Park's park has served as the primary post-celebration site in the parade's heritage and tradition.

**DuSable Museum of African American History.** This museum is dedicated to the study and conservation of African American history, culture, and art and is affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution. In 2006, Mayor Daley announced that Washington Park would be home to several Olympic venues including a stadium and pool as part of Chicago's bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics. However, the City faced opposition from the community because of its place on the National Register of Historic Places and the bid eventually went to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Today, Washington Park hosts the Bud Billiken Parade and Picnic (the nation's largest and oldest Black parade), cricket matches, softball games, and a number of different festivals in the summer months.

---

<sup>4</sup> Storch, R. (2009). Pp. 99, 112; Red Chicago: American Communism at its Grassroots, 1928-35. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

**Washington Park's Faith Community.** Figure 3 shows that one of Washington Park's strongest assets is its faith community. There are currently 41 churches within the study area including some of the more prominent congregations such as St. Edmond's Episcopal Church, Coppin Memorial A.M.E., and Church of the Good Shepherd. These churches offer a spiritual home in addition to a variety of social services. For example, Coppin Memorial offers a food pantry distribution every Monday from 4-6pm and Greater Harvest Missionary Baptist Church provides outreach services to those in need of grocery, clothing and toiletries through their Mission of Love program.

**Provident Hospital of Cook County.** Located at Dearborn and E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Provident Hospital was the first African American owned and operated hospital in America. The three-story building was established in 1891 and was originally conceived as a place to provide medical training to Black nurses and doctors. The hospital was open to all patients regardless of their race, creed, or ability to pay. In 1987, the hospital was forced to close due to financial difficulties. However, it reopened in 1998 as part of Cook County Hospital System to provide services to residents of Chicago's South Side, including residents in Washington Park.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cultural Assets Profiles

**Arts Incubator in Washington Park.** In 2013, the Arts Incubator opened to the public. The incubator was originally envisioned by Theaster Gates, an internationally recognized artists and place strategist. The 10,000 square foot studio space was designed for artist residencies, arts education, community-based arts projects, as well as exhibitions, performances, and talks. The incubator is part of The University of Chicago's Arts and Public Life initiative which provides platforms for artists and access to arts programming through artist residencies, arts education, creative entrepreneurship, and artist-led programs and exhibitions. In addition to arts programming, the incubator also offers free community yoga classes.

**The Commonwealth.** In 2014, Sweet Water Foundation designed and built The Commonwealth, a dynamic 4-block campus in Washington Park that focuses on urban agriculture. The Foundation is a nonprofit that practices regenerative neighborhood development, a creative social justice method, that creates safe and inspiring spaces by establishing healthy, intergenerational communities that transform the ecology of once-"blighted" neighborhoods. According to the Sweet Water Foundation website, "The Commonwealth has successfully reintroduced and redefined agriculture within the city limits as a practice central to the revitalization of the neighborhood, transformed formerly foreclosed and abandoned houses into community schools and live-work residences, introduced new agricultural building typologies into the urban fabric, and remixed programming into a 21st-century context through the practice of Regenerative Neighborhood Development

**KLEO Art Residences and Family Life Center (KLEO).** KLEO Art Residences is a uniquely designed affordable housing development featuring a mix of spacious studio, one bedroom and two bedroom units, and an art and community center, in an energy-efficient green community. Built in 2019, it is located along Garfield Boulevard and was identified as one of the dozens of assets advancing racial equity within the ½ radius of the Garfield Green Line Station. Torrey Barrett, Founder of the KLEO Center, sees the development as an opportunity to grows the arts in Washington Park and turn the area into an arts district.

**Garfield Gateway Project.** The Garfield Green Line station recently underwent a series of upgrades to benefit transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians, while supporting and promoting the ongoing

restoration of the neighborhood. The \$43 million Garfield Gateway Project restored the original stationhouse and improved the current, in-service stationhouse with elevator and escalator enhancements, extensions of the platform canopies, as well as visually enhanced architectural features embellished with new work by Chicago artist Nick Cave.

### **Survey of Grassroot Initiatives**

As revealed in the Empowerment Timeline and Cultural Assets profiles, Washington Park has historically had a strong grassroots presence. This continues today and will serve an important and fundamental role in achieving equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) around the station area. There are several important grassroots initiatives that have and continue to bolster the local economy and strengthen the community that future efforts should build on:

- The **Washington Park Consortium** was formed in 2009 to bring together the neighborhood's many groups and stakeholders and coordinate the work of implementing the Local Initiatives Support Coordination (LISC) Quality of Life Plan for Washington Park. With financial support from LISC and the MacArthur Foundation, the Consortium is committed to building community and institutional capacity.
- Another big initiative in the area is the **Chicago Youth Program** whose mission is to improve the health and life opportunities of at-risk youth using a comprehensive approach aimed at developing their capabilities. They serve the high-need communities of Washington Park, Englewood, and surrounding areas. The Washington Park program was founded in 1995 and is the largest CYP community program. Completed in 2003, the Community Center has a tutoring room, library, pre-school area, gym, computer lab, garden, and outdoor playground.
- **Assata's Daughters** was first formed in 2015 as a response to the killing of Eric Garner by police in New York City. It is a volunteer-based collective of Black women, femmes, and gender non-conforming people, to address a shortage of programming and community for women-identified, femme, and gender non-conforming young Black people in Chicago. The building headquarters was demolished in 2019 after a series of fires left the building uninhabitable.
- The **Respect Life Campaign** is among the more recent initiatives in the neighborhood. Launched in partnership with the Washington Park Residents' Advocacy Council and the Washington Park Advisory Council in 2016, the campaign was intended to build connectedness and increase peace through "Respect Life" signage posted throughout the neighborhood. The campaign serves as a visual reminder for residents to have respect for themselves, their families, friends, neighbors, and their community.
- **Washington Park Residents' Advisory Council (WPRAC)** advocates for the residents of Washington Park (Community Area 40) in the areas of housing, education, economic development, safety, health and wellness, community empowerment, and sustainability. WPRAC's mission is centered on Washington Park residents building and sustaining the community through knowledge, skills, resources, values, and commitments.

## Economic Conditions and Opportunities

Equitable development requires residents' economic experiences to be centered and prioritized. Additionally, eTOD projects must add to the existing community assets, heritage, and growth by building on strengths and opportunities for growth. This section covers residents' economic history, regional employment, local industries, small businesses, and land stewardship opportunities.

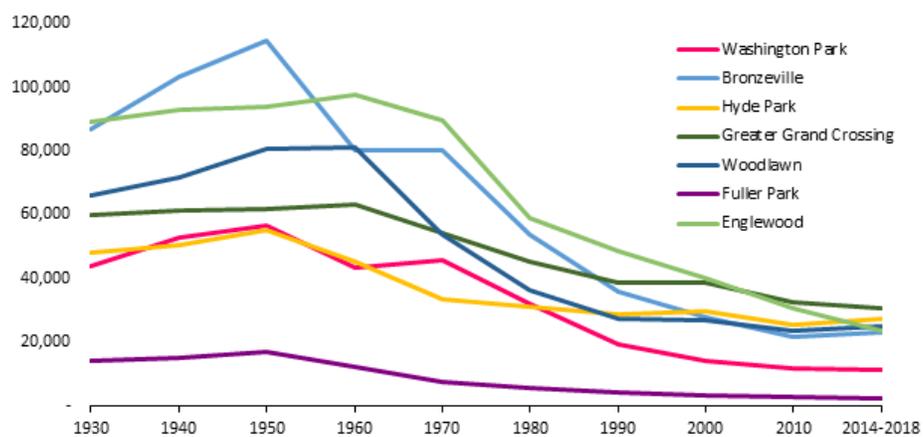
This information can be used to help eTOD projects near the Garfield Green Line Station understand the economic conditions that contribute to the Washington Park community's long history in engaging in asset-based development, stewardship, and self-determinism. It is also essential for eTOD projects to identify and select economic development opportunities that are rooted in addressing challenges that undermine residents' lived experiences and social justice work. These challenges include decades of disinvestment, hypervacancy, higher cost of living, and low development activity.

### Residential Economic History Overview

#### Population Trends

Washington Park has historically been home to a smaller residential base than surrounding communities, particularly when compared to Bronzeville, Woodlawn, and Englewood. Since 1930, the Washington Park population has ranged from 8% to 13% of its neighboring community's total population. Figure 5 shows that it has been the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> smallest neighborhood within its immediate region between 1930 and 2018.

**Figure 5.** Total Population in Washington's Park Surrounding Region (1930-2018)



Source: Rob Paral and Associates Community Area Data

Between 1930 and 1940, Washington Park's population grew by 20%, which was the neighborhood's highest growth rate in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It experienced its second highest growth rate between 1940 and 1950. Figure 5 shows that Black migrants and refugees contributed to most of its growth in the years leading up to 1940. During this time, the share of the neighborhood's Black residents increased by 27% as white residents and residents of various races and ethnicities decreased by 59% and 77% respectively.

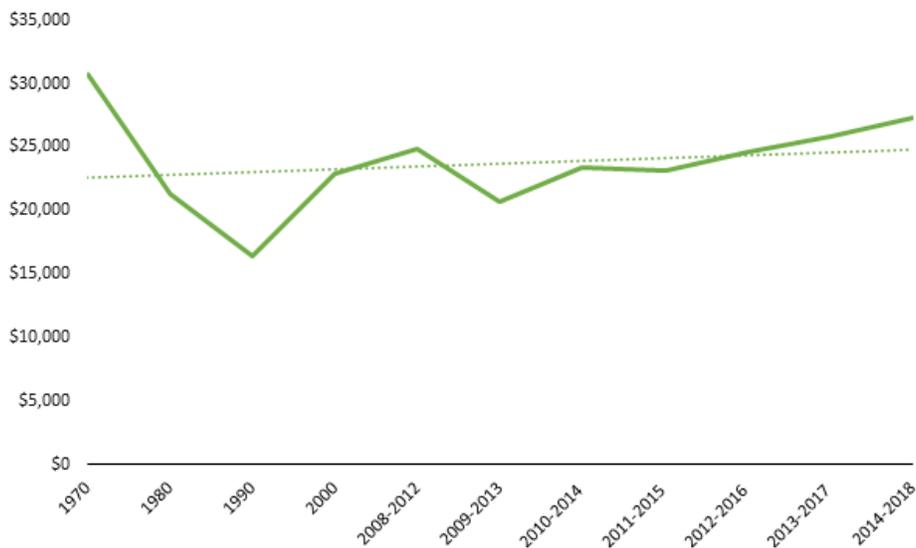
This population trend can be attributed to a variety of factors including racist restrictive covenants that limited Black Chicagoans' housing choices to the Black Metropolis area.<sup>[1]</sup> It can also be connected to the

community networks, joy, and social safety that the Black Metropolis offered during the Jim Crow era – along with the rapid increase in the availability of small apartments (kitchenettes) prior to 1940.<sup>[2]</sup> Black households continued to contribute to the neighborhood’s growth through 1950, after which point the population declined across all racial groups (Figure 5). Although Washington Park gained a significant share of non-white residents and Black residents back between 1960 and 1970, Washington Park’s residential base has experienced substantial declines since 1980 (Figure 5).

### Household Income Trends

Prior to significant drops in the neighborhood’s population between the 1980s and 2000s, Washington Park households were economically better-off. Figure 6 displays the median household income from 1970 to 2018 in 2018 dollars. It shows that households in the middle of the neighborhood’s income spectrum made around \$30,000 in 1970. It also shows that this was the neighborhood’s peak median household income within the last 50-years.

**Figure 6. Median Household Income (1970-2018)**



*Source: Rob Paral and Associates Community Area Data.*

The neighborhood’s residential economic base experienced its lowest median household income in 1990, at approximately \$16,500. This drop in the median household income between 1970 and 1990 occurred at the same time Washington Park’s residential population decreased from 46,024 in 1970 to 19,425 in 1990. This substantial population decline continued until the early 2000s. One of the factors that may have influenced this trend includes the high levels of incarceration Washington Park residents experienced between 1990 and 2005.<sup>[1]</sup> This would particularly reduce the number of people living in the neighborhood and subsequently households’ incomes especially in the 1990s.

Washington Park residents have witnessed an overall marginal, steady increase in household median incomes since 1990 (Figure 6). This is occurring even as the neighborhood’s population declines. While this may be a promising attribute of residents’ economic experiences, it remains lower than the median

household income for the City of Chicago and the Chicago region. The 2014-2018 American Community survey five-year estimates confirm this with their prediction that nearly 75% of the Washington Park households have incomes below the City’s and region’s median household income (\$55,198 and \$70,444 respectively). Nearly half were predicted to make less than \$25,000 (47.4%). This suggests that higher paying jobs in Washington Park’s residents’ employment sectors could serve as an opportunity for growth in the overall neighborhood economy.

## Employment Sector

### *Residents Regional Employment*

Currently, it is estimated that 3,892 residents of the 4,846 eligible working population (aged 16 and older) participate in the regional labor market. While this is a smaller labor force pool, the percentage of the residents participating in the labor market (59.7%) is comparable to the City of Chicago’s participation share (66.7%). There is roughly only a 7% difference between Washington Park’s and Chicago’s labor force participation totals.

Eighty percent of Washington Park’s working population is employed, while the remaining 20% are estimated to be unemployed or looking for work. Although this estimated unemployment rate is higher than the unemployment rate for the City of Chicago (8.9%) and Chicago region (6.7%), Washington Park residents contribute to a variety of industries within the Chicago region. Table 4 lists the top five (5) major industries where Washington Park residents work.

**Table 4.** Washington Park Residents Top Five Industries for Regional Employment (2017)

Industry Sector	Count	Percent Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	699	19.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	472	12.9%
Education	385	10.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	359	9.8%
Retail Trade	355	9.7%

*2017 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Primary Jobs Data*

Residents also added to the region’s Transportation and Warehouse (7.2%), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (4.8%), and Public Administration (4.1%) industries. These industries along with Finance and Insurance (4.0%) and Manufacturing (3.7%) are among the top 10 industries for Washington Park residents in 2017. The top five (5) employment locations were outside of Chicago (31%) and in the Loop (19%), Near North (10%) and West (5%) Sides, and Hyde Park (3%). CMAP will explore these regional employment patterns and their impact on residents’ living and economic conditions in future community engagement efforts for the Garfield Green Line Station Action Plan.

### *Local Industries and Small Businesses*

Washington Park’s public and private sector industries have experienced outstanding job growth since 2007. In 2007, Washington Park’s public and private sector jobs totaled 575. This job total would increase and decrease over the years until 2016 when the job total reached 660. The total spiked to 1,173 in 2017 with the addition of 513 jobs. When compared to 2007 job totals for the neighborhood, this was a 104% increase in public and private jobs. This significant job growth suggests that Washington

Park’s local industries have been prosperous during the 2007 and 2017 period especially when compared to Chicago, which experienced a 14.4% increase in jobs between 2007 and 2017.

The top two industries that contributed to Washington Park’s substantial economic growth are shown in Table 5. The two largest local industries are the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation and Education industries. These two industries make-up 63% of total jobs in the neighborhood. They have each respectively added 487 and 159 jobs to their employment base since 2007. These are the largest number of jobs any local industry have added to Washington Park between 2007 and 2017. This suggests that Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Education jobs are one of Washington Park’s many economic strengths. Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD) projects near the Garfield Green Line Station should be intentional about building on this strength especially given that many Community Arts and Culture and Education assets exist with the Garfield Green Line eHub (Table 1).

**Table 5.** Washington Park’s Top Five (5) Local Industries (2017)

<b>Industry Sector</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent Share</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	529	45.1%
Education	214	18.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	88	7.5%
Other Services	68	5.8%
Retail Trade	61	5.2%

*2017 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Primary Jobs Data*

Development projects centered on equity should also find ways to support the neighborhood’s Accommodation and Food Service, Other Services, and Retail Trade industries. Table 5 shows that these industries were among the neighborhood’s top industries in 2017 even though they made up a smaller portion of total jobs.

Industries that were not among the neighborhood’s top five (5) industries but remain important to the neighborhood’s economy include Construction (4.8%), Health Care and Social Assistance (4.1%), and Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing (3.4%). Manufacturing (3.0%) and Information (1.0%) are also important to the economy. These industries have the potential to grow in the neighborhood, and eTOD projects that help spur job opportunities should ensure these opportunities align with neighborhood’s industrial strengths and residents’ regional employment choices. Industries that meet the latter include Education, Accommodation and Food Services, Retail Trade, and Health Care and Social Assistance, and Manufacturing.

The largest employers in Washington Park are schools, mission-based organizations, and public safety institutions like the Illinois Department of Affairs and the Chicago Fire Department. The name of these organizations and institutions along with their number of employees are listed in Table 6. This table shows that the City of Chicago, K.L.E.O Community Family Life Center, and Beasley Academic Center are among the top producers of jobs in Washington Park. Community assets such as Dyett High School, ACE Technical Charter High School, and the New Life Covenant Church also top neighborhood employers.

**Table 6.** Washington Park’s Top Ten (10) Employers (2014)

<b>Industry Sector</b>	<b>Count</b>
City of Chicago School District 299	401
K.L.E.O. Community Family Life Center	318
Beasley Academic Center	125
Dyett High School	99
New Life Covenant Church-SE	75
Chicago Park District	51
ACE Technical Charter High School	50
American Quality Schools Corporation	45
Illinois Department of Military Affairs	35
City of Chicago Fire Department	31

*2014 Dunn and Bradstreet Local Business Data*

There are a number of top employers selling the largest number of services and goods (sales volume) in the neighborhood. Employers with the largest number of sales volume within the 2014 period include ACE Technical Charter High School (10,076,976), New Life Covenant Church (8,586,000), and K.L.E.O Community Family Life Center (4,199,814). Beasley Academic Center was also among the top 5 sale volumes producer. The largest sale volume producer was Burlington Builders, incorporated—a small African American owned commercial and real estate company that produced almost 27.4 million in sales volumes in 2014. (This sentence will be used as a transition into small business overview/map, formation/turn-over rate, access to capital rates, and sale activity/retail market data when we get that data. Dunn and Bradstreet does not provide small business data. However, that data can be used to examine small business industries with careful examination. And maybe we can squeeze in commerce data following this section).

[Land Stewardship Opportunities](#)

In August 2020, the Washington Park Residents Advisory Council issued a report on the state of land and property development in Washington Park. This report would reveal the findings of the Washington Park Housing Data Project—a project initiated by residents in 2019 in partnership with the University of Chicago Community Accelerator to address years of abandonment and disinvestment. For over a year, youth residents and University of Chicago students would survey over 2,881 parcels. This survey was then contextualized within 20 publicly available datasets to provide a comprehensive understanding of resident and neighborhood challenges, and residents’ perspective on the best strategies to address these challenges.

Their work found that Washington Park faces five key living and economic challenges that residents would like for residents themselves, designers, developers, businesses, and the City to address collectively. These challenges are summarized below.

- **Key Challenge #1: Neighborhood Hyper-Vacancy**

There is a high prevalence of vacant land and vacant properties (44%) in Washington Park especially when compared to surrounding neighborhoods. The survey team found that 41% of parcels are vacant land. This vacancy rate is 39% higher than the percentage of vacant land in neighboring Hyde Park. While there are fewer vacant buildings overall (10%), the Housing Data Project Team found that 80% of all buildings (including vacant buildings) in Washington Park need repair. They attributed these forms of hyper-vacancy to population loss, arson, deferred maintenance, demolition, and property abandonment after several key moments in history. These moments include the assassination of MLK Jr, demolition of the Robert Taylor and Washington Park Homes, and the Great Recession.

- **Key Challenge #2: Financially Vulnerable Renters**

The Housing Data Project Team also found that the neighborhood's community of renters (86%) are rent-burdened and severely rent-burdened. They shared that 58% of residents are paying more than 30% of their income on housing while another 35% are paying more than 50% of their income on housing. These percentages are 10% to 20% higher than the number of rent-burdened and severely rent-burdened households in the City of Chicago. This has resulted in existing Washington Park households being more vulnerable to evictions, experiencing a higher eviction rate (3.3%), and enduring more financial vulnerability than their regional peers.

- **Key Challenge #3: Very Low Homeownership Rate**

There is small percentage of residents who own their homes. Washington Park's homeownership rate is 13% -- a rate that is almost four times lower than the City's ownership rate. In addition to low homeownership, 43% of Washington Park homeowners spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. This high number of cost-burdened homeowners are susceptible to higher foreclosure rate. The Housing Project Data team have noted that losing homeowners can negatively affect existing residents over the long term.

- **Key Challenge #4: Lack of Private Development Despite South Side Growth**

Private development activity has been much lower in Washington Park especially when compared to development activity in surrounding neighborhoods. The Housing Data Project Team found that Washington Park has been left behind even though the neighborhood has a high share of vacant land assets. This means that Washington Park has had very few developments when compared to neighborhoods like Woodlawn and Hyde Park. New developments include: The Arts Incubator; XS Tennis Facility; Sweet Water Foundation commercial farm, community garden, and other spaces on formerly vacant lots; St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation senior housing, townhouse, and apartment complex; KLEO mixed-use development; and CTA Garfield Gateway Project. There is also a concern that private speculators might be acquiring and holding land or buildings to see if future opportunities for development in Washington Park appear several years down the road. This conclusion was drawn from low building permit activity despite an increase in property sales.

- **Key Challenge #5: Unhealthy Built Environment**

Negative health outcomes in Washington Park are largely due to the built environment. Residents experience a disproportionate amount of air and noise pollution due to the neighborhood's proximity to the Dan Ryan Expressway and two railyards of the Norfolk Southern Railway. There is also insufficient tree canopy coverage across the neighborhood with most of the neighborhood's 18% tree coverage being in the Washington Park park. The Housing Data Project Team also identified the lack of sidewalks and existence of poorly maintained sidewalks as a deterrent of physical activity. These findings along with the neighborhood's older building stock' potential environmental hazards were selected as challenges that aggravate residents' health outcomes and create an unhealthy built environment

These challenges suggest that there are plenty of opportunities for commercial, office, and industrial development in addition to residential development in Washington Park. However, development must be responsible and equitable especially given that residents face high costs of living and negative health outcomes due to the built environment. This suggests that equitable transit-oriented (eTOD) projects around the Garfield Green Line station should approach development from a stewardship, or collective care and governance, framework that improve residents' living and economic conditions instead of a solely ownership-framework that can exacerbate negative outcomes. The following sections showcases the various opportunities for retail, office, and industrial land and property stewardship near the Garfield Green Line Station and its immediate surrounding area, and recent development trends.

## Transportation Overview

Transportation is more than just moving people; transportation is a means of accessing resources and opportunities. This section provides an overview of the ability of residents to access resources and opportunities in the region.

### Key findings

- While the number of households without vehicles is higher in Washington Park than Chicago (46 percent versus 27 percent), the percent of commuters who drive alone is similar to the City as a whole (48 percent and 51 percent)
- The street network is broken up by many barriers around the neighborhood; of the 16 east-west streets between 49<sup>th</sup> and 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, only 3 continue both east and west of the community area
- While rail transit ridership has gone up and down over the years, January 2020 was high compared to previous years until the emergence of Coronavirus shut down much of the city
- Garfield Avenue is one of the most dangerous roads in the area for crashes of all types and has high average daily traffic and high speeds; an unfortunate combination for a CDOT-recommended bike route
- Fears of violence and high speeds of cars prevent some people from walking and biking in the neighborhood, even for short trips
- Wide, multi-lane roadways contribute to speeding, but some residents would rather keep them as they are than implement traffic calming

### Census transportation data

The Garfield station lies just 7 miles south of Chicago's Loop. Forty-five percent of Washington Park households have no car available, making them reliant on transit connections and walking or biking to access daily needs. Annual vehicle miles traveled is much lower for Washington Park residents than the

City and the region. Yet the proportion of residents who drive alone to work is similar to the City: 47.5 percent and 51.4, respectively.

### VEHICLES AVAILABLE, 2014-2018

	Washington Park		City of Chicago		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>No Vehicle Available</b>	2,065	45.5	282,815	26.8	394,626	12.7
<b>1 Vehicle Available</b>	1,968	43.4	466,255	44.1	1,104,851	35.6
<b>2 Vehicles Available</b>	457	10.1	234,533	22.2	1,103,712	35.5
<b>3 or More Vehicles Available</b>	48	1.1	72,515	6.9	504,493	16.2

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Universe: Occupied housing units.

### MODE OF TRAVEL TO WORK, 2014-2018

	Washington Park		City of Chicago		6-County Region*	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Work at Home**</b>	177	N/A	62,765	N/A	214,903	N/A
<b>Drive Alone</b>	1,715	47.5	641,747	51.4	2,856,015	72.4
<b>Carpool</b>	181	5.0	102,185	8.2	323,107	8.2
<b>Transit</b>	1,402	38.8	371,521	29.8	551,089	14.0
<b>Walk or Bike</b>	245	6.8	108,245	8.7	163,932	4.2
<b>Other</b>	70	1.9	23,664	1.9	51,124	1.3
<b>TOTAL COMMUTERS</b>	3,613	100.0	1,247,362	100.0	3,945,267	100.0

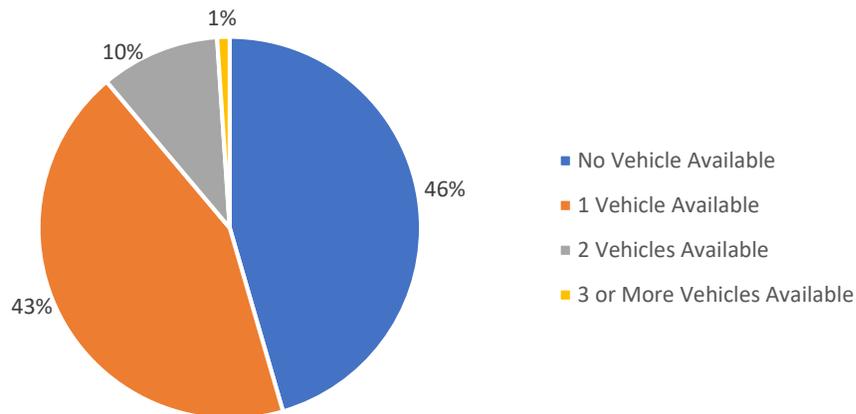
Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Universe: Workers 16 years and older.

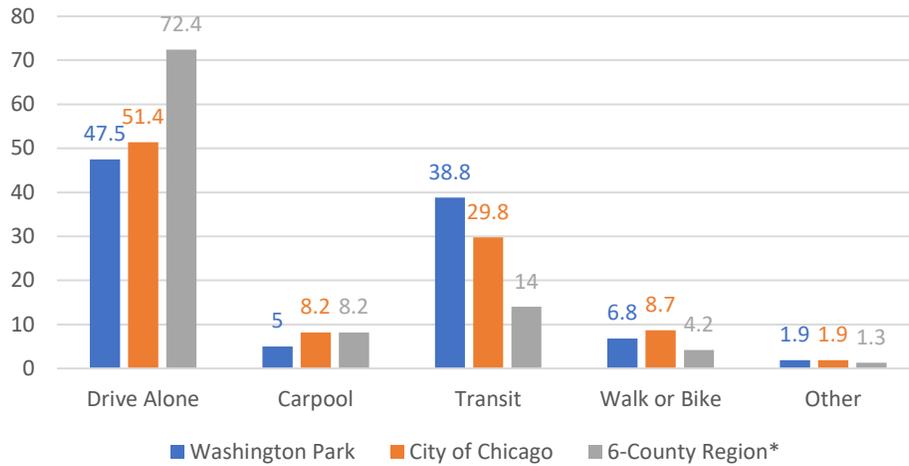
\* Commuter estimates not available for Kendall County.

\*\* Not included in "total commuters."

### Washington Park Household Vehicle Ownership



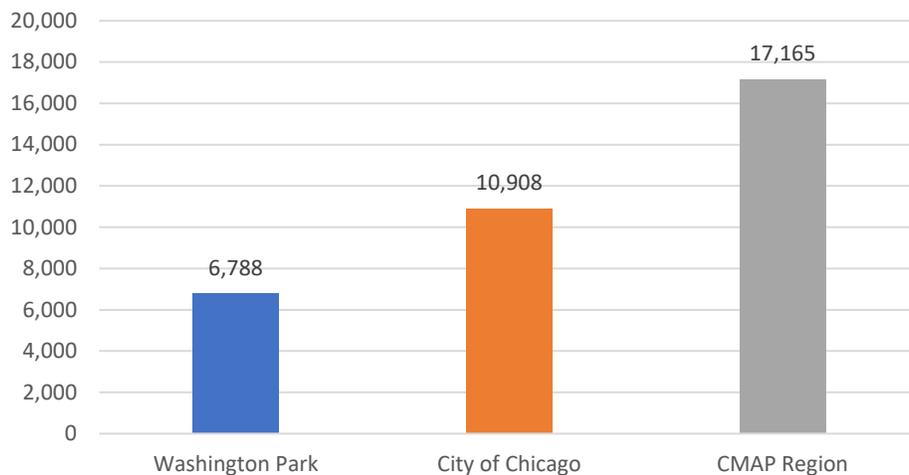
### Mode of Travel to Work, 2014-2018, (percent)



Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

\*Commuter estimates not available for Kendall County.

### Average Vehicle Miles Traveled



### Commute time

Commute time depends on four main factors: place of work, home location, transportation mode, and congestion or reliability of a worker’s commute. A Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) analysis<sup>5</sup> of commute patterns by clustered locations found the South Chicago cluster (where Washington Park is located) to have the longest average one-way commute times. Residents in the “south cluster” spend an average of about 39 minutes commuting each way, compared to some areas at only 25 minutes. This adds up to 58 additional hours each year commuting, as compared to the average resident.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/updates/all/-/asset\\_publisher/UIMfSLnFfMB6/content/travel-patterns-in-economically-disconnected-area-clusters](https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/updates/all/-/asset_publisher/UIMfSLnFfMB6/content/travel-patterns-in-economically-disconnected-area-clusters)

## Roadway Network

Washington Park is, like several neighborhoods on the south side, bordered by several infrastructural barriers that break up the street network and funnel traffic to a handful of streets. The barrier to the west is the Dan Ryan Expressway and the barrier to the east is the park. To the south, there is the highway and several freight rail lines and yards. Between 49<sup>th</sup> Street and 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, of the 16 east-west streets, only three continue from both sides of the community area, five cross the Dan Ryan Expressway to the west, and seven continue east. (See Figure 7).

The lack of connectivity means that people in cars and on bikes or buses are funneled to a small number of streets and the traffic is worse on those streets. For this neighborhood, the street with the most traffic is Garfield, with an estimated 27,400 vehicles per day (AADT). The AADT only measures vehicles and does not indicate which roads carry the most people as a full bus would carry many more people than the cars around them (Figure 8).

Figure 7. East-west street connectivity and continuity in Washington Park

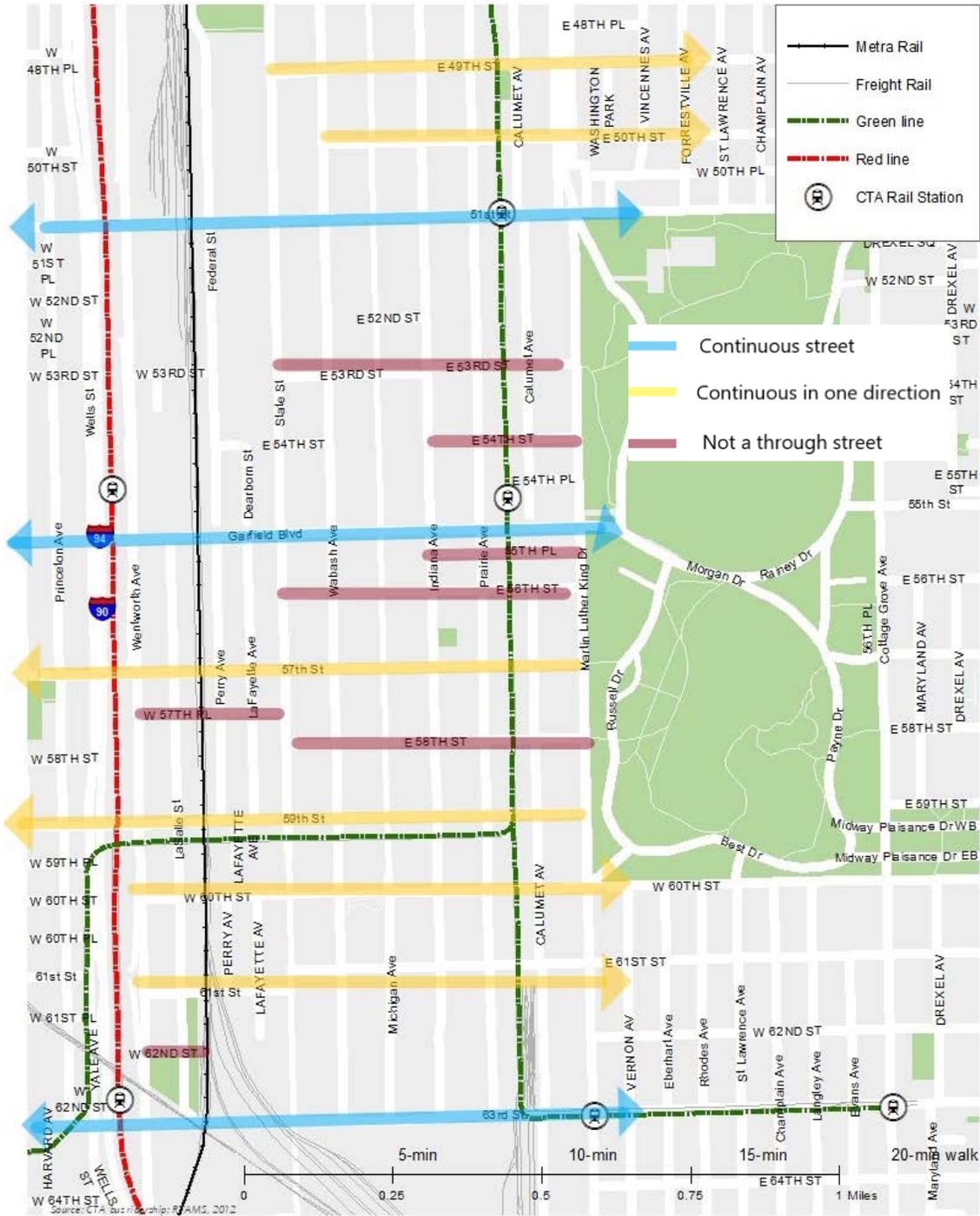
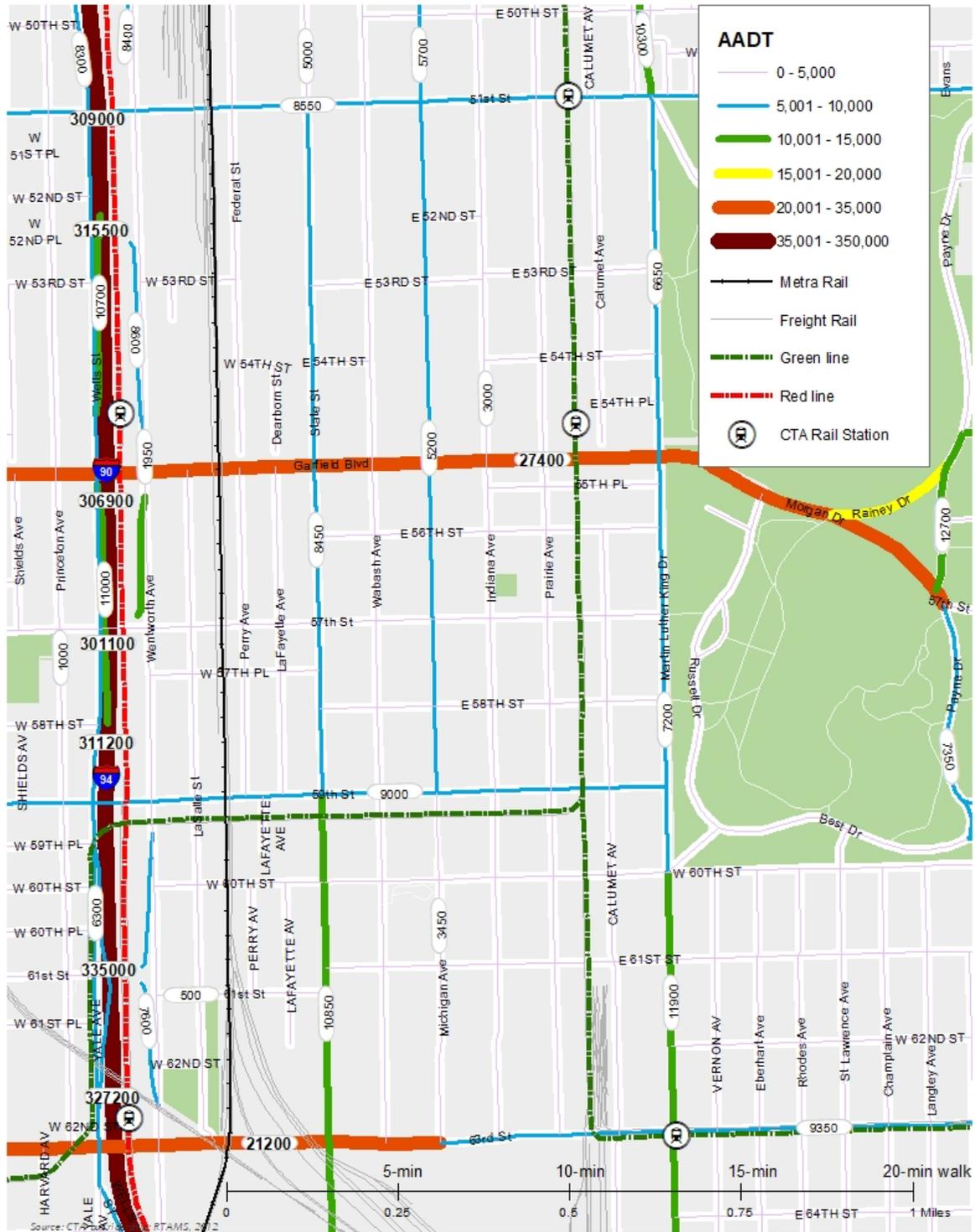


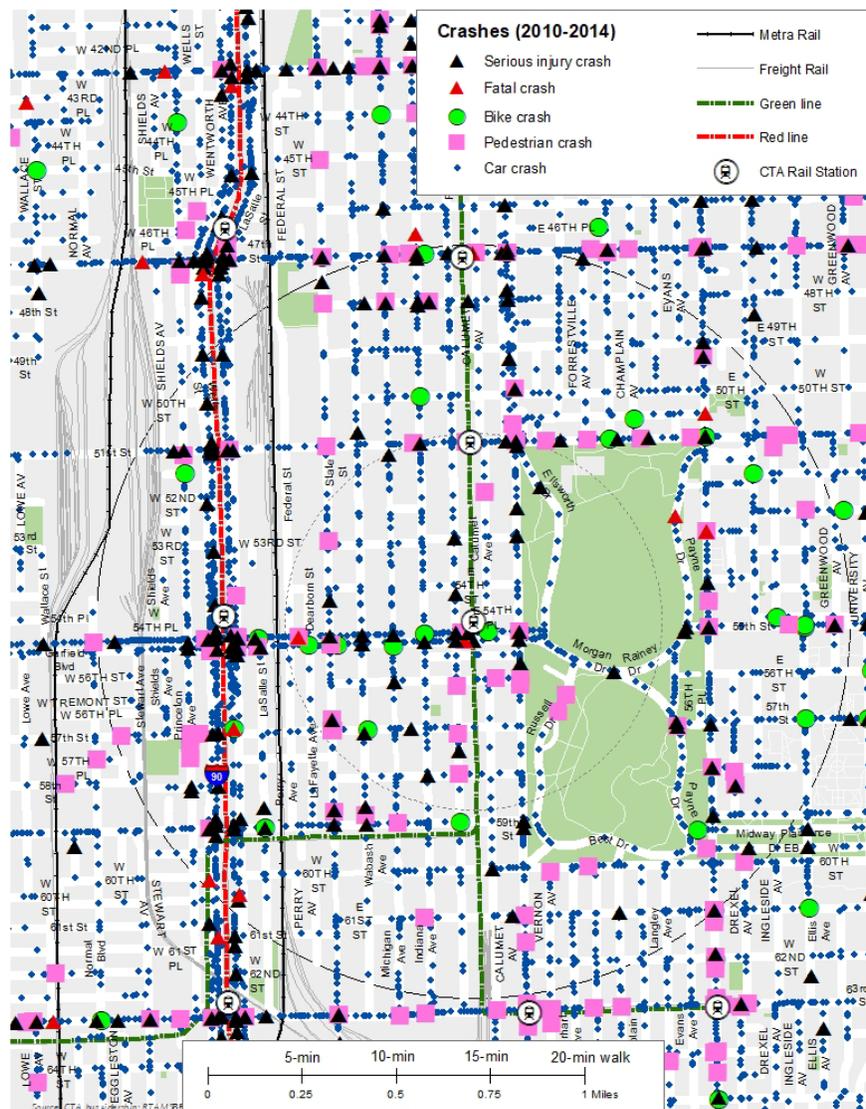
Figure 8. Average Annual Daily Vehicle Traffic in Washington Park



## Crashes

Most crashes involving a car within a mile of the Garfield station occur on the Dan Ryan Expressway and along major commercial corridors. Crashes where drivers hit people on bikes seem to be highest along Garfield Boulevard, while crashes where drivers hit people walking are more common on 51<sup>st</sup> St., but also on 47<sup>th</sup> St., Garfield Blvd., 63<sup>rd</sup> St., King Dr., and Cottage Grove Ave. Besides the highway, most serious and fatal crashes occurred on Garfield Blvd. An unusual amount of serious injury crashes occurred on 48<sup>th</sup> St., which is one way east-bound. Some roads are quite wide for the number of vehicles that typically use the road, which can encourage drivers to travel faster than the speed limit, increasing the likelihood of injuries and fatalities. For example, Indiana Avenue is a one-way street, northbound. It has three lanes and fewer than 5,000 AADT. A two-way road with two lanes and a center turn can comfortably accommodate 18,000 AADT.

Figure 9. Crashes, 20

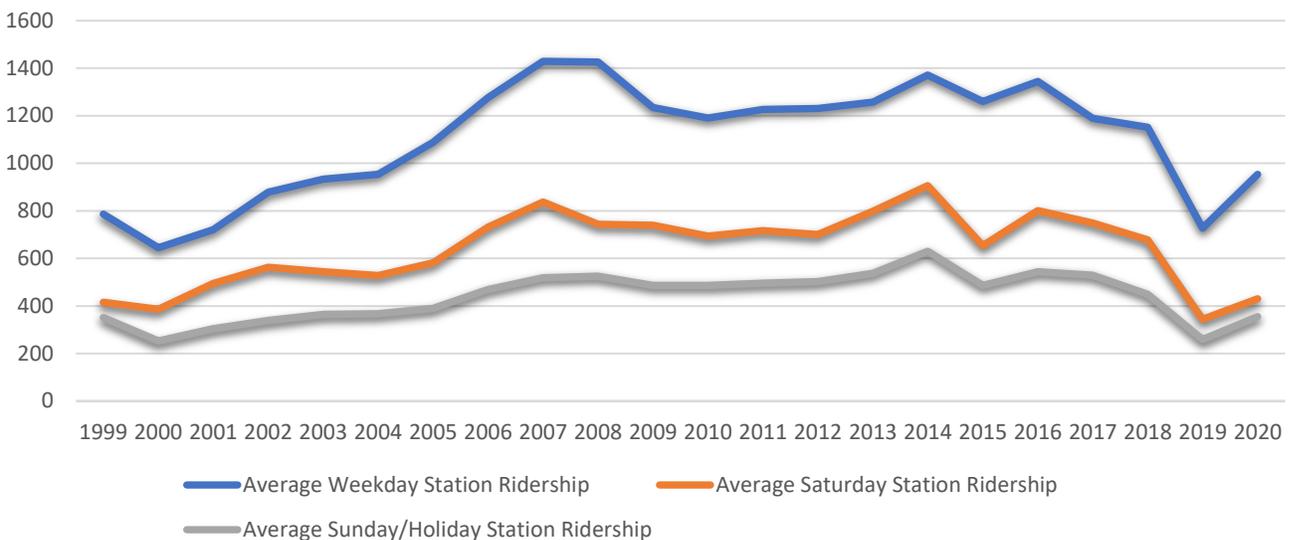


## Transit

### Rail transit

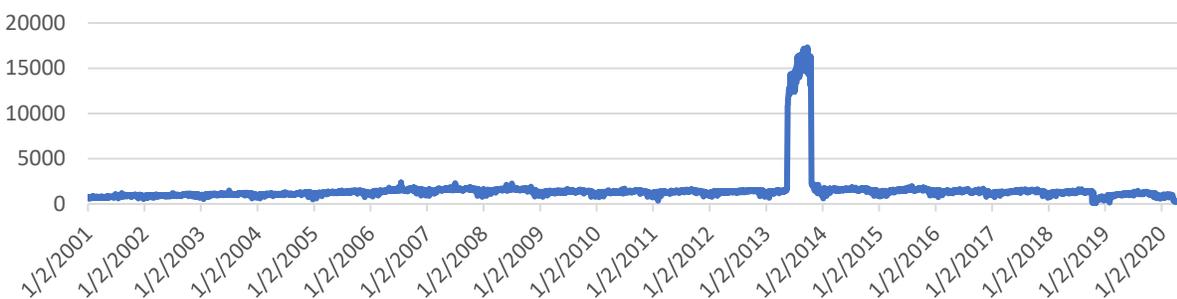
Proximity to a rail transit station provides excellent advantages to residents who work downtown or at other transit-served areas. Transit can also connect residents to other important amenities like grocery stores, restaurants, and retail. Over the last twenty years, average weekday ridership at the Garfield station has fluctuated between 600 and over 1,400 passengers. Weekend ridership is lower (between 200 – 900) and has followed the same peaks and valleys as the weekday ridership.

### Garfield station January ridership trends (1999-2020)

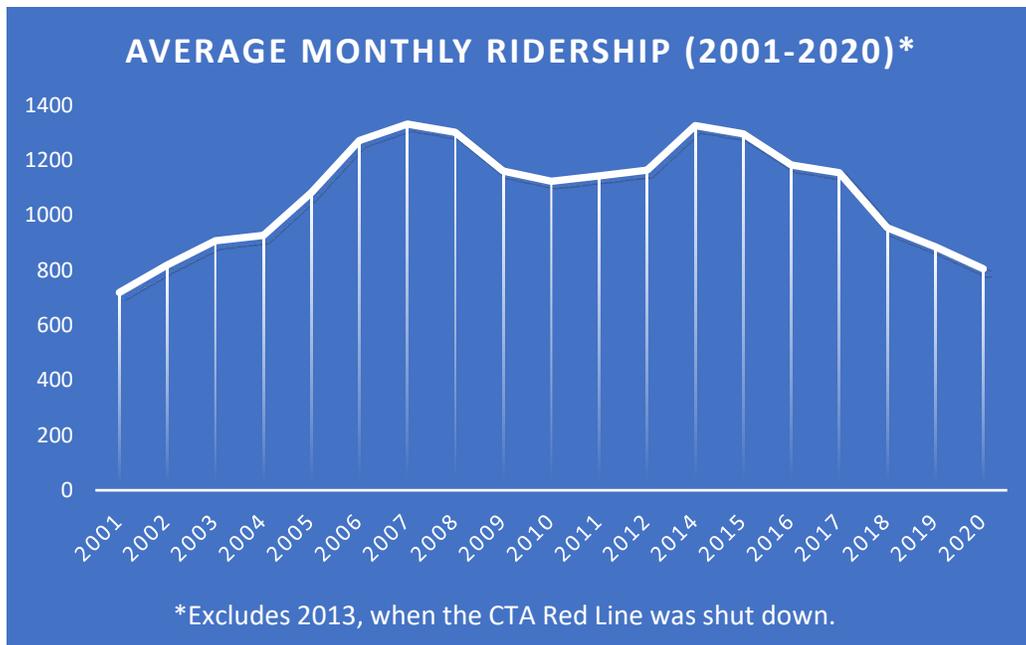


Compared to 2019, the January Garfield ridership numbers in 2020 were up significantly. The impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic have caused rail ridership to fall significantly since March. Over the last twenty years, ridership was highest in 2007, but by 2019 had fallen to the lowest level in twenty years.

### Daily ridership - Garfield Green Line South (2001 - 2020)

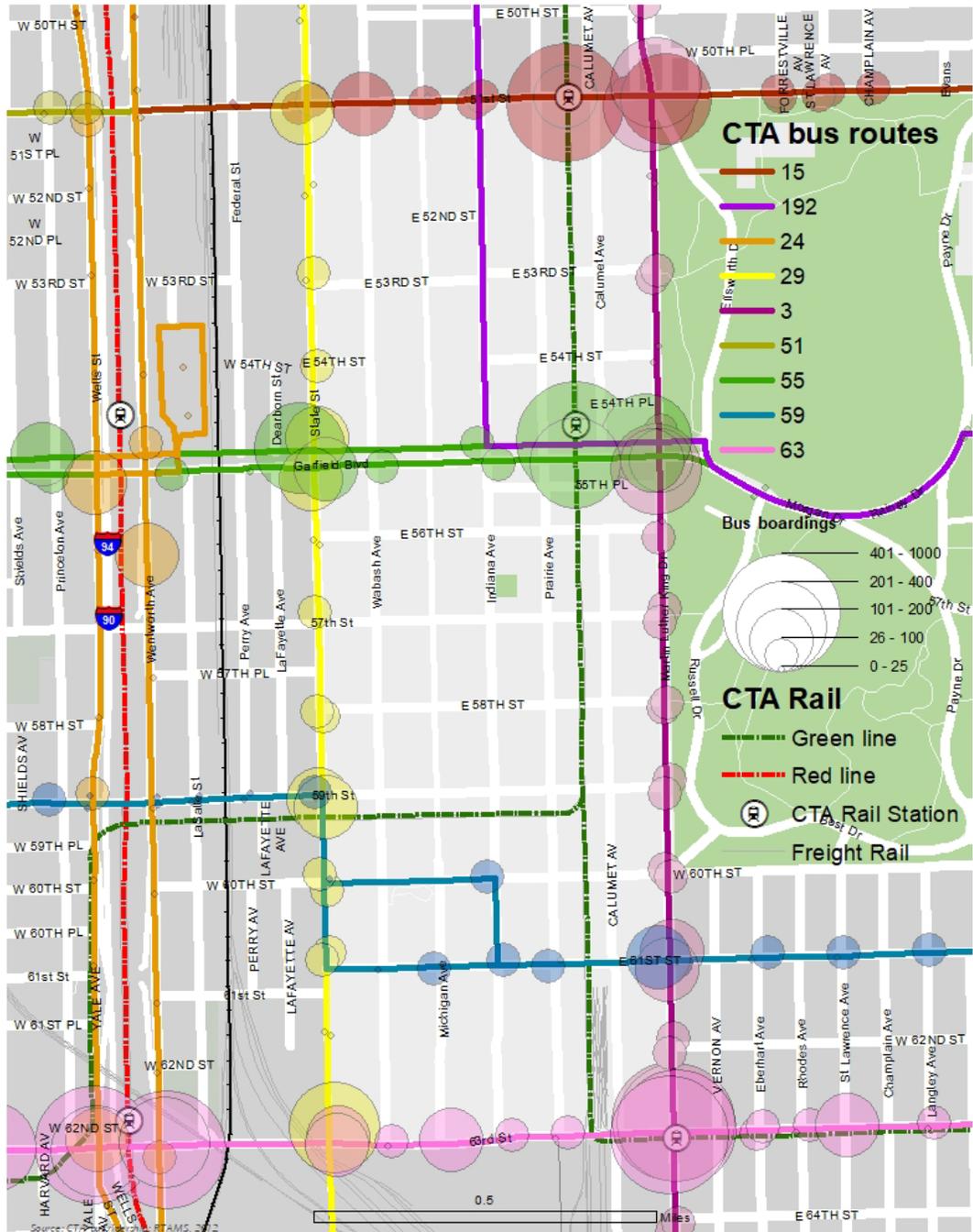


In May of 2013, the Red Line was completely shut down to undergo maintenance and repairs, causing an enormous surge in ridership along the green line. The ridership boost remained for a short time after the red line was re-opened 5 months later. In looking at the monthly average ridership, excluding 2013, the 2014 peak saw ridership fall each year after.



#### Bus transit

Bus boardings in the area are highest around CTA train stations. Four routes past through the neighborhood on east-west routes, and three north-south routes cross through the area. East-west service on 51<sup>st</sup> Street is limited, as the #15 (Jeffrey Local) and the #51 (51<sup>st</sup> St.) both end just before the Dan Ryan Expressway, so continuous travel requires a transfer and a walk over the highway. The 63<sup>rd</sup> Street bus appears to have the highest average ridership in the area.



Source: RTAMS, Average weekday bus stop boardings, 2012.

Technically, only two routes connect directly to the Garfield station: #55 Garfield and #3 King Drive. The #29 State bus has a stop just a couple of blocks away. The other bus routes in the study area do not provide direct access, but they help residents travel to various destinations in Chicago and enable mobility when a car is not an option.

## Walking and biking

### Walking

Walking is considered one of the best ways to improve health and mental well-being—if it is safe, useful, and enjoyable. Several factors make an area more, or less, walkable. A walk is useful if you can reach a variety of destinations and enjoyable if there are sights to see and conditions are comfortable. Safety can be compromised by fears of physical violence from other people or from dangerous roadway conditions (such as lack of sidewalks or crosswalks) and is covered in more detail in the Safety chapter.

In terms of walking comfort, several streets within a half mile of the Garfield station have sidewalks that are missing or have disintegrated due to neglect. The 2018 CMAP Sidewalk Inventory shows parts of Calumet Avenue, 54<sup>th</sup>, and Prairie Avenue as missing sidewalks on both sides. However, the City of Chicago has replaced sidewalks along Calumet Avenue, south of 51<sup>st</sup> Street since 2018. Of all local schools in the neighborhood, Burke Elementary has the poorest sidewalk connectivity around it – with 54<sup>th</sup> Street and Prairie Avenue. Trees also play a role in walkability; shading can make a walk more comfortable in summer heat, but untrimmed trees can block visibility and reduce safety or feelings of safety.

Within the park itself, the paths need improvements, with tree roots cracking the asphalt in many places, causing tripping hazards. Also, while the park is used more recreationally today than in decades past, many residents still have vivid memories of it being a place associated with violence and do not make use of the amenity.

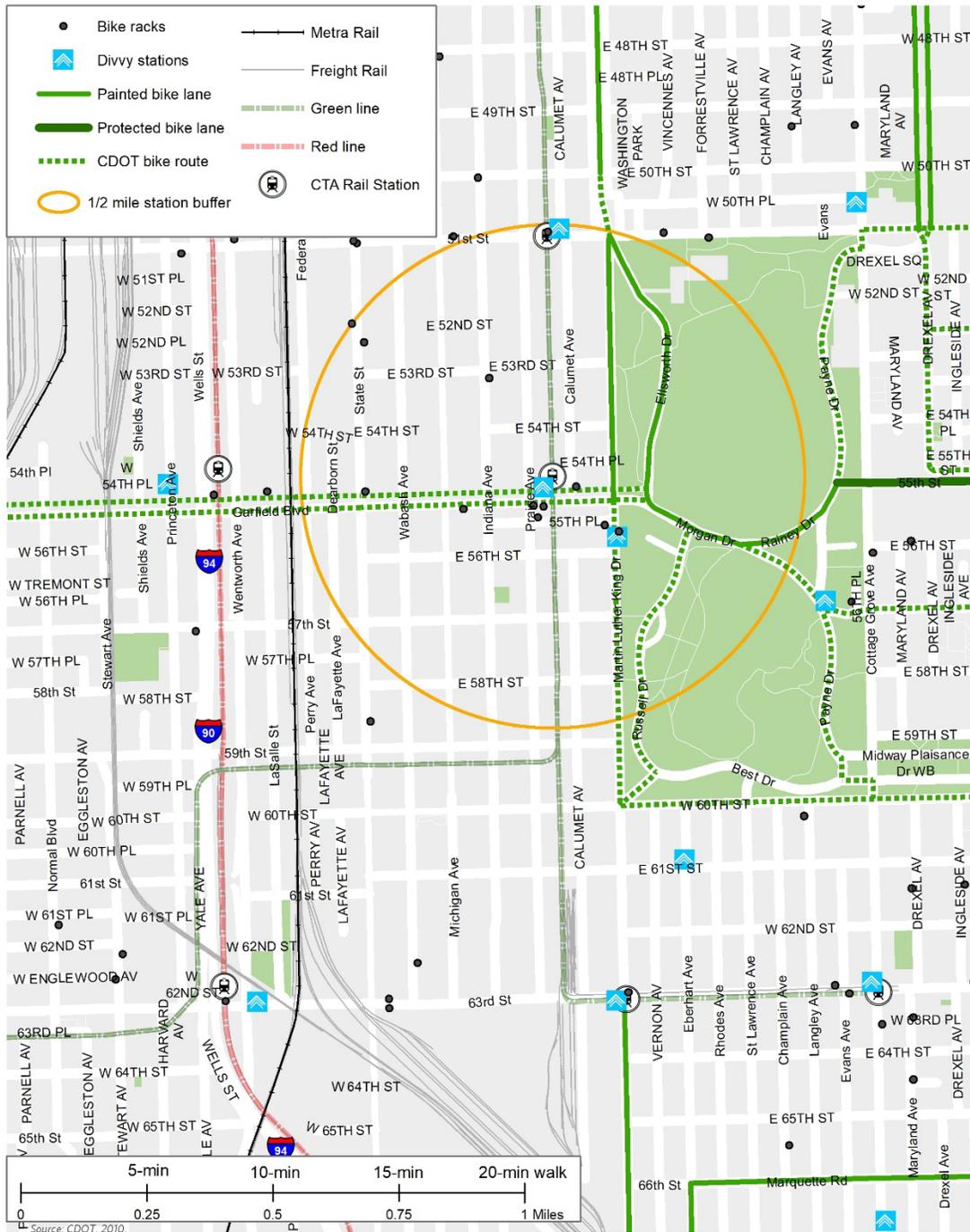
For some measures of walkability, the area has many positive points: the street network generally provides a grid with short blocks south of Garfield (slightly longer blocks to the north), although the freight and transportation infrastructure breaks up the network outside of the community area. There are many schools and other amenities, including small neighborhood food marts. However, some residents do not feel safe walking due to gang activity; gang members may not feel safe walking for fear of crossing into enemy territory. Some women report sexual harassment or “cat-calling” as a deterrent to walking. One resident told CMAP staff that they drive the four blocks to the Garfield station because they do not feel safe walking. People without cars may find themselves limited in when and where they can safely travel.

When school is in session, Chicago Public Schools has a vendor whose staff stands along the main routes to schools to promote safe passage – called “Safe Passage Routes.” Residents who are not school children also benefit from the presence of the safety patrols.

### Biking

As with walking, when people do not feel safe biking, they will not do it – even if the benefits are many. While biking can easily connect residents to nearby amenities, the issue of crossing territories and being exposed to violence may prevent some people from riding bikes. Within a half-mile of the Garfield station, King Dr. and Elsworth Dr. in the park are the only streets with painted bike lanes. Paths within Washington Park serve as low stress routes through and around the park, but the narrow widths can crowd out people walking. Garfield Boulevard is a recommended bike route on City of Chicago maps, but the heavy traffic volume and high speeds make it an unpleasant and unsafe route to ride on, west of the park. In fact, the majority of bike crashes occur on Garfield Blvd., where people in cars hit at least 6 people on bikes between 2010 and 2014. For east-west travel, 57<sup>th</sup> Street offers a more peaceful route

to the west. East of the park, 55<sup>th</sup> Street has a parking-protected bike lane that slows traffic and provides a lower stress bike route. Most Divvy stations are located at CTA stations, as well as within the park.



The Garfield station is just over 2 miles from Jackson Park and the Lakefront Trail, about a 15-minute bike ride. Downtown Chicago is about a 45-minute bike ride away, and all CTA buses are equipped with two bike racks, which enables passengers to extend the distance they can travel on buses when using a bicycle. CTA trains restrict bicycles during rush hour and on major event days but allow them at other times.

## Bike culture

In the Chicago region, an affinity for riding a bicycle has historically been associated with older, northside white men. However, bike culture in Chicago is changing. Groups like Slow Roll Chicago, Equiticity, Go Bronzeville, Black Girls DO Bike, and others, are mainstreaming bike riding and helping Black people – and especially younger folks – connect with the world of bikes. Bicycles have the potential to bring freedom and low-cost transportation to many people. The electric models in the Divvy bike system are particularly helpful to bring skeptical bike riders along, as they make it easier to travel and arrive places without breaking a sweat. Promotional offers and discounts to qualified individuals can make the bikes even more attractive.

## Housing Overview

Homes are more than just physical locations. Where someone lives impacts their access to resources, amenities, and opportunities. Many homes in the area have been torn down, leaving a shortage of housing options.

### Key findings

- Redlining, restrictive covenants, and urban renewal have limited the housing options and wealth-building opportunities for residents of the community
- Washington Park's share of housing developments with three units or more (82 percent) is considerably higher than in the city as a whole (56 percent)
- Washington Park has a higher proportion of renter-occupied units (67.7 percent) than the city as a whole (48 percent)
- Opportunities exist to develop vacant land in the neighborhood, with some residents expressing a desire for more housing variety, including single family homes

### History of housing in Washington Park

Chicago's history is not immune to the harmful history of housing discrimination in this country by federal and local government. Much of the 20th century was known as The Great Migration, when millions of Black Americans travelled from the Deep South to New England, the Midwest, and the West. It is estimated that "approximately 60,000 blacks had moved from the South to Chicago during 1940-44 in search of jobs."<sup>6</sup>

In the 1930s, the federal government aimed to increase the country's housing stock. The idea was to encourage white Americans to become homeowners in a process that can be described as "state sponsored segregation."<sup>7</sup> Between the years of 1935 and 1940, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation

---

<sup>6</sup> "Housing and Race in Chicago," Chicago Public Library, last modified April 30, 2003, <https://www.chipublic.org/housing/#:~:text=African%20Americans%20were%20primarily%20limited,44%20in%20search%20of%20jobs>.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018).

and Federal Housing Administration produced color coded maps of the city's neighborhoods.<sup>8</sup> These maps placed neighborhoods in four categories to determine where it was safe to insure mortgages<sup>9</sup> :

- A. Best (Green)
- B. Still Desirable (Blue)
- C. Definitely Declining (Yellow)
- D. Hazardous (Red)

Black neighborhoods were colored red and labeled "hazardous." This practice became known as redlining, and left Black and integrated communities out of the federally-sponsored expansion of homeownership. The city still feels the scars of the harmful practices of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation's actions today. Redlining prevented Black families from building home equity. Thus, many of these neighborhoods and their residents did not have the economic growth opportunities that were given to white neighborhoods in the city during these and future discriminatory practices.

Washington Park was located in section 74 of Chicago's HOLC map and given the rating of "D," or "Hazardous." After being rated, every section of the city was given a description detailing demographic trends and physical aspects related to development. The area description for the neighborhood provided by the agency states "already Washington Park at the south [of the highlighted area], a very fine park, has been almost completely monopolized by the colored race."<sup>10</sup> These descriptions served as a "watchdog" document for the movement of Black and non-white residents around the city.

Many white residents in the city of Chicago felt threatened by the influx of Black Americans moving to and around the city, so they used racially restrictive covenants in their property deeds to bar Black residents from purchasing white-owned property in certain areas of the city. Restrictive covenants, in general, can bar homeowners from any number of activities on their property, from landscaping to construction limits.<sup>11</sup> Racial covenants specifically barred homeowners and landlords from renting or selling homes to Black or non-white people.

One of the most notorious examples of racially restrictive covenants in the area is the Washington Park Subdivision, which lies directly to the South, on the north side of neighboring Woodlawn. As Black neighborhoods expanded, white residents in the subdivision agreed to only rent to other white people. As this was happening in the later 1930s, landlords found fewer and fewer whites to rent the properties to with the onset of the Great Depression and began to try to subdivide to Black residents. White homeowners in the subdivision still attempted to legally discriminate against incoming Black families.

---

<sup>8</sup> Natalie Moore, "New Redlining Maps Show Chicago Housing Discrimination," *WBEZ*, October 28, 2016, <https://www.wbez.org/stories/new-redlining-maps-show-chicago-housing-discrimination/37c0dce7-0562-474a-8e1c-50948219ecbb>

<sup>9</sup> Terry Gross, "A 'Forgotten History' Of How The U.S. Government Segregated America," *NPR*, May 3, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>

<sup>10</sup> "D74," Chicago, IL, Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=12/41.805/-87.714&city=chicago-il&area=D74&adview=full&adimage=3/7.885/-165.234>

<sup>11</sup> "Restrictive Covenants," Encyclopedia of Chicago, last modified 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1067.html>

In 1940, the Supreme Court ruled in *Lee vs. Hansberry* (the case that inspired *A Raisin in the Sun*, by Lorraine Hansberry) that a neighborhood-wide racial covenant could not be enforced, and Black residents started to move in legally as whites began to flee from city centers in the 1940s.<sup>12</sup> By 1950, the subdivision was 99% Black.<sup>13</sup>

Such restrictions in housing led to Black Chicagoans remaining “limited to an area of Chicago known as the ‘Black Belt,’ which was located between 12th and 79th streets and Wentworth and Cottage Grove avenues” (Housing and Race in Chicago) on the South Side of the city.

Housing injustice did not end with redlining. As the aim of the federal government was to increase homeownership for white residents, many Black residents were ushered into public housing developments to reinforce racial segregation in the city.<sup>14</sup> One of the city’s most well-known public housing projects, the Robert Taylor Homes, stretched into the northern part of Washington Park. Initially designed to curb the development of “slum neighborhoods,” the Robert Taylor Homes were the largest public housing development in the world, and mostly housed Black families.<sup>15</sup>

As these developments were often cut off from needed social services, the Robert Taylor Homes experienced high concentrations of crime and poverty. The three buildings located in Washington Park, numbered 5326, 5323, and 5322, became known as “The Hole” as the epicenter of the first major drug operation run out of public housing development in Chicago.<sup>16</sup> As conditions in the Robert Taylor Homes deteriorated, the buildings in Washington Park were demolished in 1998 in hopes of discouraging the crime that had been concentrated there for decades.<sup>17</sup>

## Housing today

The Chicago Housing Authority has not been swift in their efforts to redevelop the vacant land left in the wake of the Robert Taylor Homes’ demolition. The city itself has taken some action to mitigate the effects of predatory lending on the Chicago’s South Side. In 2011, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance specifically requiring mortgage lenders to take responsibility for the properties abandoned by those whose mortgages they issued. Enforcement has been subpar. The building cannot be sold again until the foreclosure process is complete, and their continuously deteriorating condition serves as a barrier to neighborhood recovery.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> “Restrictive Covenants,” Encyclopedia of Chicago, last modified 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1067.html>

<sup>13</sup> “Washington Park Subdivision,” Encyclopedia of Chicago, last modified 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1320.html>

<sup>14</sup> Terry Gross, “A ‘Forgotten History’ Of How The U.S. Government Segregated America,” *NPR*, May 3, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>

<sup>15</sup> “ROBERT R. TAYLOR HOMES, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (1959-2005),” *Black Past*, last modified December 19, 2009, <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/robert-taylor-homes-chicago-illinois-1959-2005/>

<sup>16</sup> “Robert Taylor Homes,” Housing Project, Chicago Gang History, last modified 2017, <https://chicagoganghistory.com/housing-project/robert-taylor-homes/>

<sup>17</sup> “Robert Taylor Homes,” Housing Project, Chicago Gang History, last modified 2017, <https://chicagoganghistory.com/housing-project/robert-taylor-homes/>

<sup>18</sup> John Gamino, “Vacant and Abandoned,” *South Side Weekly*, April 14, 2015, <https://southsideweekly.com/vacant-and-abandoned/>

In 2014, the CHA sold the Washington Park stretch of the old Robert Taylor Homes to XS Tennis for the construction of a new facility.<sup>19</sup>



Image source: Williams Architects

In 2015, the South Side Weekly reported on south side “zombie” homes, abandoned housing developments that have not gone fully through the foreclosure process.<sup>20</sup> By not recording the change in ownership and changing the deed with the Cook County Recorder of Deeds, lenders that own foreclosed buildings can avoid property taxes, vacant building regulations and fees, utilities bills, and accountability for the property. In neighboring Woodlawn, most vacancies are the result of predatory lending and loss of homes through foreclosure.

In 2018, the Chicago design firm JGMA broke ground on a mixed-income apartment development for artists and their families.<sup>21</sup> Named the KLEO art residences, this development is part of a larger citywide initiative to revitalize Garfield Boulevard, which runs through the center of the community area. Located down the street from the Washington Park Arts Incubator, the apartment complex supports the work of south side artists and their families.

## Review of Housing and Affordability Goals in Past Plans and Studies

### Housing characteristics

A variety of housing options ensures that residents of all income levels are able to find a home in the neighborhood area. Looking at the current mix of housing will help Washington Park determine a plan for housing that meets the needs of current and future residents.

---

<sup>19</sup> Jake Bittle, Srishti Kapur, Jasmine Mithani, “Redeveloping the State Street Corridor,” *South Side Weekly*, January 31, 2017, <https://southsideweekly.com/chicago-unfulfilled-promise-rebuild-public-housing/>

<sup>20</sup> John Gamino, “Vacant and Abandoned,” *South Side Weekly*, April 14, 2015, <https://southsideweekly.com/vacant-and-abandoned/>

<sup>21</sup> Jay Koziarz, “Mixed-income artists’ residences officially break ground in Washington Park,” *Curbed Chicago*, January 9, 2018, <https://chicago.curbed.com/2018/1/9/16871312/construction-kleo-artist-apartments-washington-park>

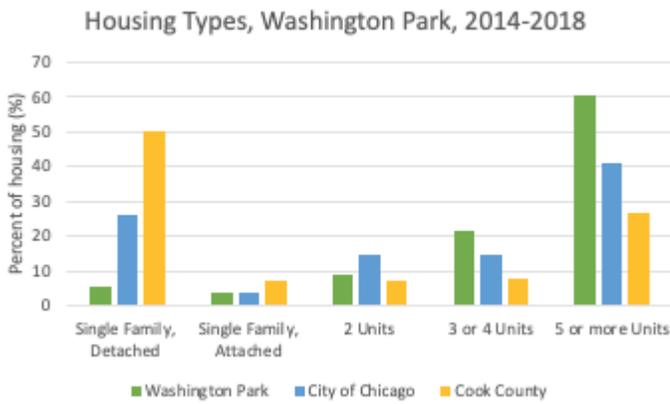
## Housing types

### HOUSING TYPE, 2014-2018\*

	Washington Park		City of Chicago		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Single Family, Detached</b>	310	5.4	314,057	26.0	1,707,038	50.2
<b>Single Family, Attached</b>	209	3.6	42,194	3.5	252,166	7.4
<b>2 Units</b>	503	8.7	174,968	14.5	238,040	7.0
<b>3 or 4 Units</b>	1,230	21.3	180,279	14.9	269,766	7.9
<b>5 or more Units</b>	3,509	60.7	494,763	40.9	906,352	26.7

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.  
\*Excludes mobile, boat, RV, van, etc.

Universe: Housing units.



Housing type taken from the updated 2020 CMAP Community Data Snapshot. Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five year estimates

Washington Park's housing supply is skewed toward multi-unit development, as approximately 82% of housing units are 3-unit developments or more, compared to approximately 56% in the City of Chicago as a whole. Single family housing accounts for approximately 9% of the neighborhood's housing supply.

## Occupied Rental Units

### HOUSING AND TENURE, 2014-2018

	Washington Park		City of Chicago	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	4,538	78.5	1,056,118	87.4
<b>Owner-Occupied*</b>	623	10.8	474,852	39.3
<b>Renter-Occupied*</b>	3,915	67.7	581,266	48.1
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	1,244	21.5	152,721	12.6

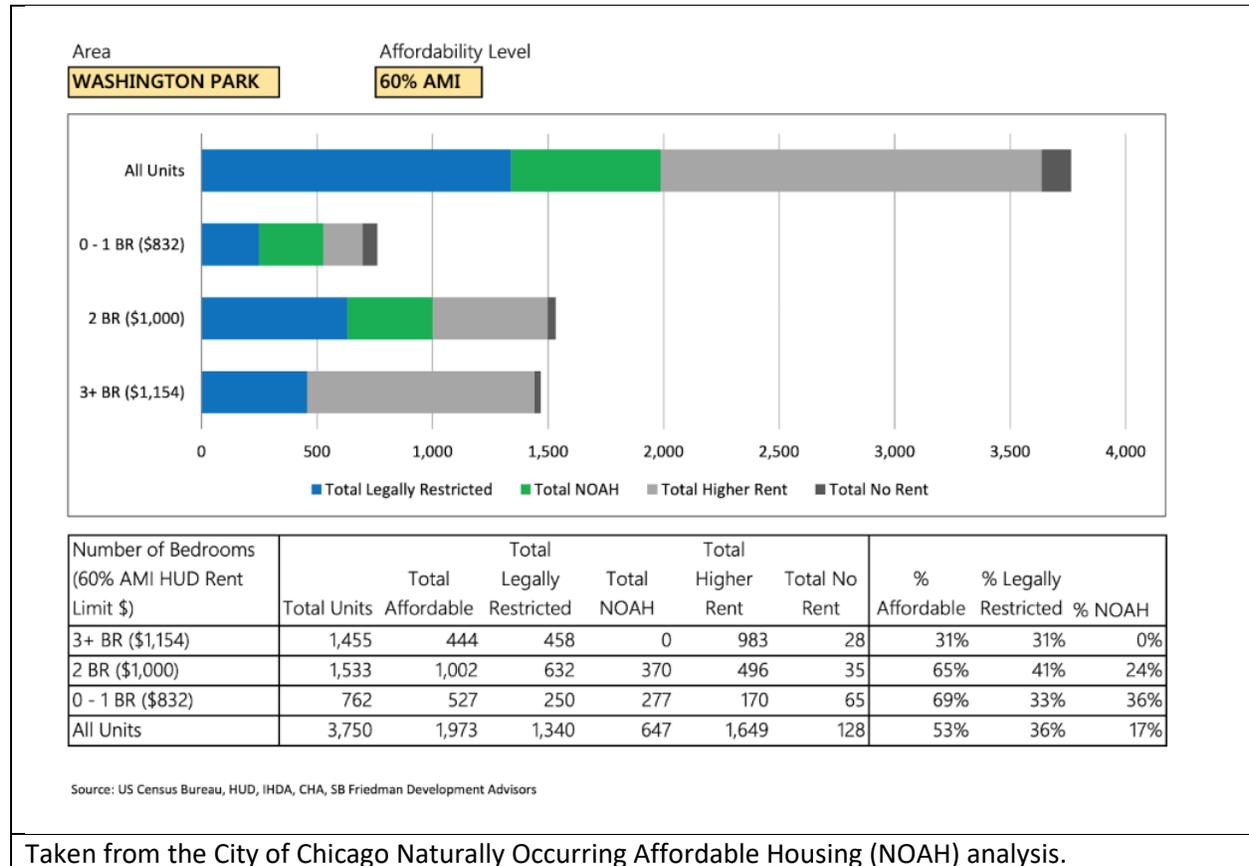
Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Universe: \*O

Housing and tenure taken from the updated 2020 CMAP Community Data Snapshot.

Washington Park has a higher proportion of renter-occupied units at approximately 67.7%, than the city as a whole at approximately 48%. Washington Park's housing unit vacancy rate (21.5%) is also higher than the city of Chicago as a whole (12.6%).

## Affordable Housing



According to a City of Chicago Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) analysis of affordable housing in the area, 53% of all units in Washington Park are considered affordable by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards.<sup>22</sup> Of those affordable units, approximately 33% are considered “Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing.” None of these NOAH units have 3 or more bedrooms. It is also important to note that this study shows naturally occurring affordable housing for residents making 60% of the area median income (AMI).

<sup>22</sup> “Washington Park,” City of Chicago, Citywide NOAH Analysis Model, last modified June 10, 2019,

## Existing Land Use and Zoning

### GENERAL LAND USE, 2013

	Acres	Percent
Single-Family Residential	15.3	1.6
Multi-Family Residential	128.9	13.2
Commercial	20.9	2.1
Industrial	9.1	0.9
Institutional	46.7	4.8
Mixed Use	5.1	0.5
Transportation and Other	229.8	23.6
Agricultural	N/A	N/A
Open Space	349.0	35.9
Vacant	168.1	17.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>972.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Parcel-Based Land Use Inventory 2013.

Land Use analysis taken from updated CMAP 2020 Community Data Snapshot.

Communities with a mix of land uses are better equipped to provide residents with needed amenities. The parcel inventory study found that Washington Park had a lack of private development despite South Side growth, an unhealthy built environment, and neighborhood hypervacancy.

- Open space accounts for the greatest share of land use in Washington Park (35.9 percent), as the neighborhood is home to Washington Park on the east side of the community, which provides over 300 acres of greenspace to residents and visitors alike.
- Vacant land accounts for a significant portion of the neighborhood's land use (17.3 percent). Many of these lots are owned by the city. Residential usage does not account for a significant amount of the neighborhood's land use (14.8 percent), but much of the vacant land in Washington Park is zoned residential, posing opportunities for development and increased housing options. Some residents have expressed interest in expanded development for more single-family homes in the neighborhood.
- Commercial use accounts for 2.1 percent of total neighborhood land use, and development is concentrated along major corridors like Garfield Boulevard and 59th street .

Washington Park is a community with many assets, like access to greenspace and transportation, and further diversifying the land use in the neighborhood could provide residents with more housing, more shopping, and more amenities where they live. Increased development in an area that is so close to important city amenities also poses a potential threat of displacement if prices rise quickly and become unaffordable for existing residents.

### Future opportunities

Opportunities exist in supporting the efforts of community-based developers trying to build wealth in the neighborhood. West Woodlawn native Lamell McMorris started Greenlining Realty, a property

redevelopment firm aimed at righting the wrongs of housing discrimination on the South Side,<sup>23</sup> building on a growing awareness of redlining and other discriminatory housing practices. He hopes to use his rehabilitated properties in West Woodlawn to promote homeownership and build community wealth. Similar efforts in Washington Park could expand homeownership without displacing current neighborhood residents. Past plans have spoken to the growth opportunities in rehabilitating existing housing structures and repurposing vacant land. Approximately 17.3 percent of the land in Washington Park is listed as vacant. The City of Chicago owns hundreds of these lots. Residents could pursue several avenues to acquire those lots. McMorris acquired several lots through the Cook County Land Bank Authority, an agency that acquires vacant or tax delinquent properties and sells them to community-based developers for rehabilitation.

Another method for acquiring land in the Washington Park community area has been through the Large Lots program from the city of Chicago. The City of Chicago sold approximately 20 vacant lots in Washington Park for \$1 each through the program. Through Large Lots, the city hoped to “increase safety, build community, and raise home values by creating more neighborhood investment” in areas of the Chicago where the city owns large amounts of vacant land.<sup>24</sup> The City of Chicago sold two of these lots to support the KLEO Art Residences development.<sup>25</sup>

## Education and Schools

Chicago’s movement for racial justice in the 1960s grew out of the demands for equitable schooling in the city’s Black neighborhoods, especially on the South Side.

### Key findings

- Washington Park has 5 schools within the neighborhood, with different admissions criteria, specialized programming, and governance
- The history of racial segregation in residential housing, combined with 20<sup>th</sup> century Chicago Public Schools policies, have harmed Washington Park schools and students
- Broader population declines in Washington Park are also reflected in decline school enrollments, which also influence local school funding due to Student Based Budgeting
- Most Washington Park schools have higher student mobility rates than the district as a whole, meaning that kids frequently change schools. This is detrimental to student outcomes and connected to instability in family finances.

### Chicago Public Schools History

To understand the state of schools and the built environment in Washington Park today, it is helpful to understand the accumulated structurally racist policies and practices of various Chicago institutions,

---

<sup>23</sup> Darcel Rockett, “A West Woodlawn native wants to right redlining wrongs with some greenlining — and he’s starting in the neighborhood where he grew up,” *Chicago Tribune*, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/real-estate/ct-re-greening-redlined-communities-lamell-mcmorris-0710-20200713-ixmt6tcvhn4dmbk32dpifefre-story.html>

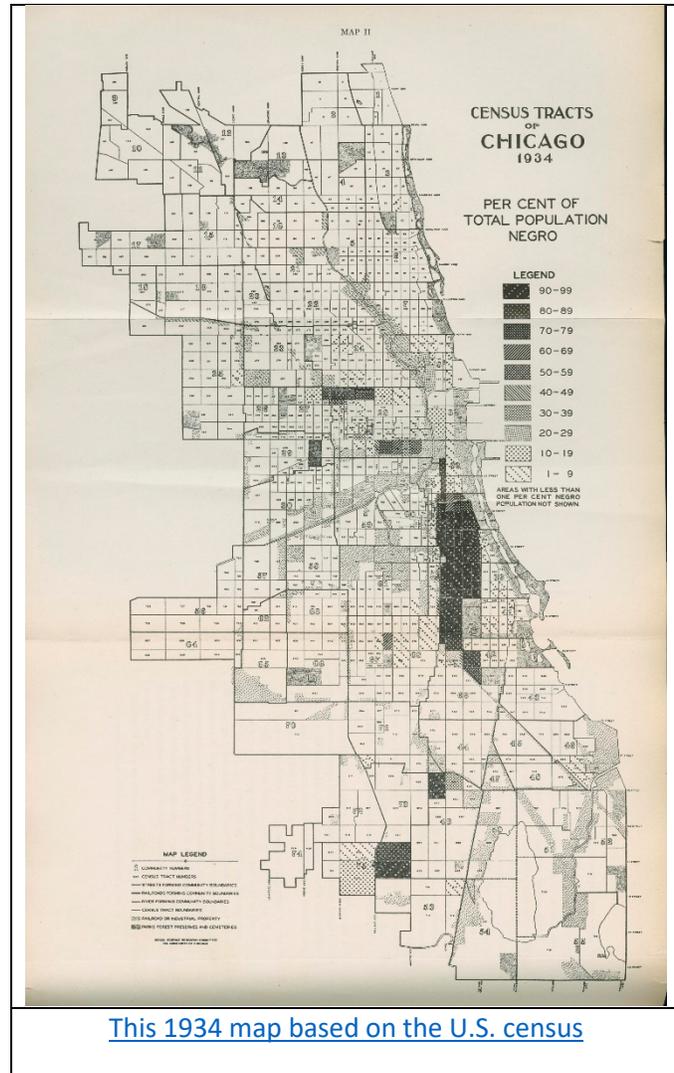
<sup>24</sup> “About”, \$1 Large Lots, last updated July 2020, <https://largelots.org/about/>

<sup>25</sup> Jay Koziarz, “Mixed-income artists’ residences officially break ground in Washington Park,” *Curbed Chicago*, January 9, 2018, <https://chicago.curbed.com/2018/1/9/16871312/construction-kleo-artist-apartments-washington-park>

dating back to the early twentieth century. Starting in roughly 1915 and continuing through the post-war period up to 1970, The Great Migration of Southern Blacks north to Chicago was spurred by the pull of greater economic opportunities and push of racial oppression and violence in Southern states.<sup>26</sup> However, upon arriving in Chicago, Black migrants continued to face racial discrimination and were forced to settle in highly dense housing—often low-quality, unsanitary and crowded—that comprised the “Black Belt” as it was called. In addition to discriminatory legal tools like racial covenants that restricted where Black people could live in the city, racial boundaries were also enforced by extralegal methods of violent white mobs, with tacit approval by city officials.<sup>27</sup> This foundation of residential racial segregation and over-crowding was also reflected in the school system.

In the early 1960s, despite the *Brown v Board of Education* ruling that made segregation in schools illegal, de facto school segregation remained in Chicago due to continued residential segregation. Furthermore, Chicago school officials intentionally drew school boundaries to avoid integrating schools as the Black population continued to grow—leading to a situation of extreme overcrowding in Black schools and white schools with frequently empty seats. Black schools sometimes went so far as to employ “double-shift schedules” to deal with the crowding, with students only attending school for half the day.

Forced to confront the overcrowding, school superintendent Benjamin Willis added trailers to the grounds of Black schools to ease crowding, rather than allow Black students to attend white schools that were below capacity.<sup>28</sup> Black community activists derisively named these trailers “Willis Wagons.” As tensions grew, Black parents, neighborhood groups, and civil rights organizations coordinated to protest continued school segregation and the low-quality education their children were



<sup>26</sup> “Great Migration,” Encyclopedia of Chicago, last modified 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/545.html>

<sup>27</sup> Hirsch, A. R. *Making the second ghetto: Race and housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>28</sup> “1963 Chicago Public School Boycott,” *WTTW News*, last modified October 22, 2013, <https://news.wttw.com/2013/10/22/1963-chicago-public-school-boycott>

receiving. In addition to letter writing and marches, some organizers employed tactics of civil disobedience by lying in front of bulldozers to stop construction of additional trailers and faced arrest. These demonstrations culminated in a massive school boycott of CPS where 200,000 students, nearly half of students in the district, stayed at home and at least 20,000 marched on city streets.<sup>29</sup>

In 1966, Willis retired and was replaced with a superintendent with a more integrationist record, but that was not sufficient to desegregate the schools. The lack of progress to desegregate CPS led to intervention at the federal level and the imposition of a consent decree and school desegregation plan in 1980.<sup>30</sup> White families departed the district in greater numbers, sent their children to private and parochial schools, or left Chicago altogether for predominantly white suburban school districts. From 1970 to 1980 the number of white students in CPS fell by nearly 60 percent, and by the early 1990s it had almost been halved again.<sup>31</sup>

Declining enrollments and increasing expenses in the 1980s led to a fiscal crisis, leading to the extension of more State of Illinois control over the CPS budget and additional white flight. In 2013, CPS finalized a plan for large-scale school closures—the largest in Chicago history—initiated by Mayor Rahm Emmanuel.<sup>32</sup> That plan included the closing of Dyett High School, which in 2008 and seen the largest percentage increase in students attending college in the entire CPS system.<sup>33</sup> The phased closures would result in all current students finishing their high school with no new students enrolling. Complete closure would occur by the 2014-2015 school year.

In response, a coalition of parents, teachers, community members and organizations created the Coalition to Revitalize Dyett. Students filed a Title VI civil rights complaint. The Coalition developed a plan to keep Dyett open with a focus on global leadership and green technology. Under pressure from the community and a publicized hunger strike, CPS agreed to reopen Dyett for the 2016 academic year. CPS returned to the community for suggestions on a reimagined Dyett High School. After several contentious community meetings, the pleas for a focus on global leadership and green technology were ignored. CPS announced Dyett's opening with a focus on arts. The hunger strike continued, asking that the community's plan not be ignored. The hunger strike ended in September of 2015, after 34 days, without a commitment to use the community's plan. Instead, the school was reopened in 2016 as Dyett High School for the Arts following \$14 million in renovations that included a new dance studio, textile design space, and a black-box theater.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> "1963 Chicago Public School Boycott," *WTTW News*

<sup>30</sup> "Schools and Education," *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, last modified 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1124.html>

<sup>31</sup> "Schools and Education," *Encyclopedia of Chicago*

<sup>32</sup> "CPS approves largest school closure in Chicago's history," *Chicago Tribune*, last modified May 23, 2013, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2013-05-23-chi-chicago-school-closings-20130522-story.html>

<sup>33</sup> Ewing, Eve L. "Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side." The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2018.

<sup>34</sup> "5 years later, Dyett High School hunger strikers recall their fight," *Chicago Sun Times*, last modified August 17, 2020, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/education/2020/8/17/21372534/dyett-high-school-hunger-strikers-five-year-anniversary>

## Washington Park Schools Today

The Washington Park community area contains five CPS schools and four out of five are district run. Among the schools, there is a diversity of admissions criteria and attendance boundaries. While some have Fine & Performance Arts or STEM focus areas, others do not offer specialized programming. The CPS accountability ratings—SQRP or School Quality Rating Policy Results—assess all schools on the basis of a variety of data points including: educational attainment and growth as measured by standardized test scores, attendance rates, surveys, and numerous other metrics.<sup>35</sup> Five levels of ratings that can be assigned to a school, and the top three indicate a school in “Good Standing” according to CPS. Of the five schools in Washington Park, four out of five are in good standing, with one, Beasley, being assigned Level 2, just below good standing. Among community groups, there is substantial critique of SQRP ratings. Heavy reliance on data points like standardized test scores and attendance rates can leave out important aspects of school success and limit what is known about the schools.<sup>36</sup>

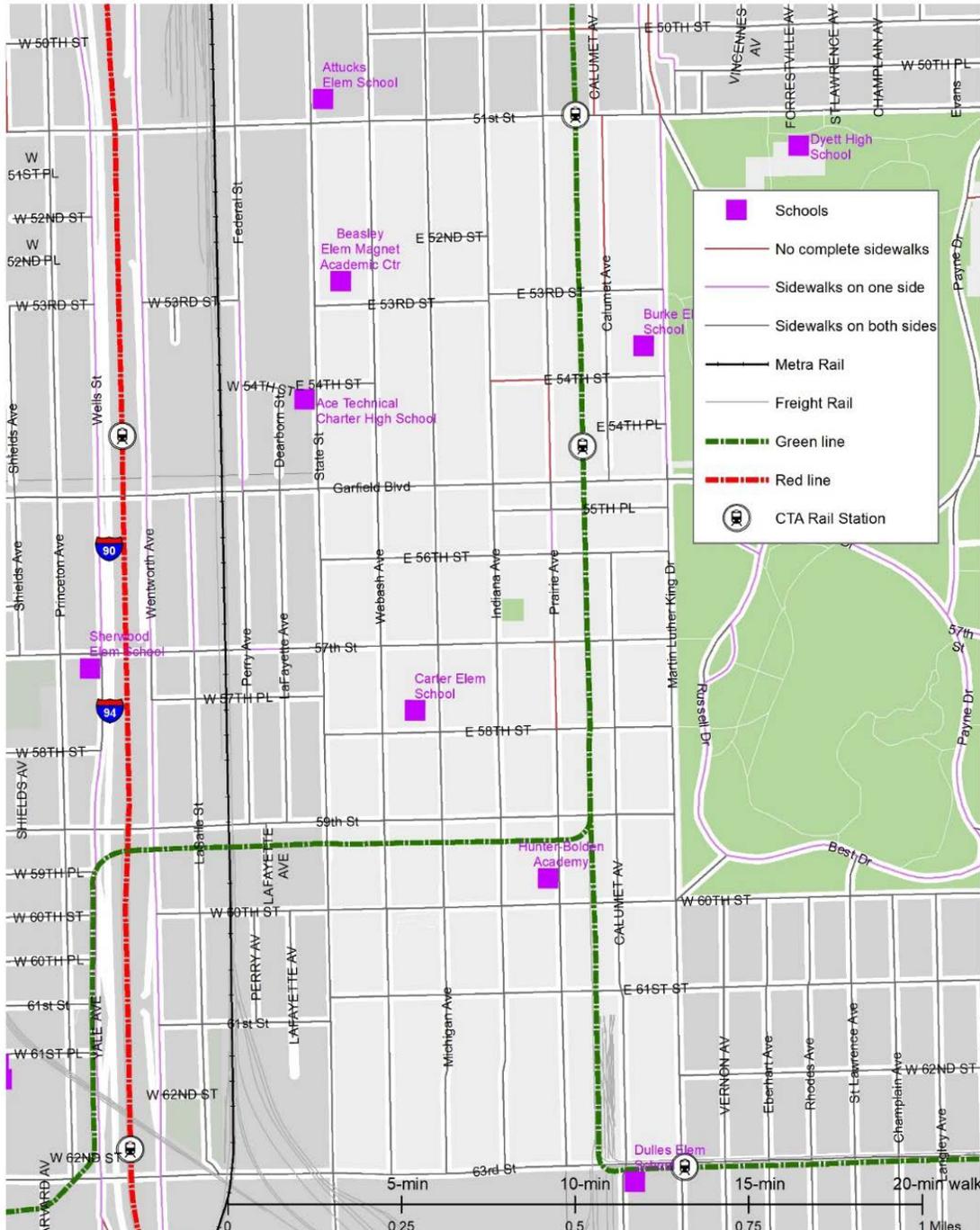
Schools in the study area:

- Beasley Elementary School
- Burke Elementary School
- Carter Elementary School
- CICS-WP Charter School
- Walter H. Dyett High School

---

<sup>35</sup> “School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) Overview,” Chicago Public Schools, accessed November 9, 2020, [https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/about/district-data/metrics/school-quality-rating-policy-sqrp/sqrp\\_overview.pdf](https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/about/district-data/metrics/school-quality-rating-policy-sqrp/sqrp_overview.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> “Chicago school board approves new school ratings scale despite complaints and confusion,” Chalkbeat Chicago, last modified June 26, 2019, <https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2019/6/26/21121077/chicago-school-board-approves-new-school-ratings-scale-despite-complaints-and-confusion>



Source: CMAP Sidewalk Inventory, 2018.

Reflecting the racial/ethnic composition of the neighborhood, the student population in Washington Park schools are overwhelmingly African American, with no school reporting fewer than 90 percent Black students. A high percentage of students attending Washington Park schools qualify for Free/Reduced lunch, ranging from 79.2 percent of students at Beasley Elementary to 96.4 percent at Carter Elementary.

Washington Park as a community has experienced sizable demographics shifts over recent decades and these neighborhood trends have also impacted the schools. From the year 2000 to 2017, Washington Park experienced an 18.7 percent drop in population, outpacing the city-wide drop of 6 percent.<sup>37</sup> Looking at the broader Bronzeville/South Lakefront region Washington Park is part of, the student population was 16,959 in the 2018-19 school year, a drop of 8.8% compared to the 2015-16 school year. Actual student enrollment reduced further during the same period, with a loss of more than 3,200 students (about 14 percent).<sup>38</sup>

In recent years, CPS has utilized Student Based Budgeting (SBB), also known as per-pupil funding, which is a funding structure that ties school budgets to the number of children enrolled.<sup>39</sup> This especially hurts schools with decreasing student enrollments—as population declines, there are fewer financial resources to meet the fixed costs of maintaining schools and providing programming. CPS has provided “Equity Grants” to schools with declining enrollments in an attempt to support high-need schools.

According to CPS data, most schools in Washington Park have student mobility rates that are higher than the district. A school's student mobility rate is the percentage of students who experienced at least one transfer in or out of the school between the first school day of October and the last school day of the year, not including graduates.<sup>40</sup> For example, during the School Year 2018, Burke Elementary has a student mobility rate that was twice the overall district rate, 24 percent as compared to the district rate of 11 percent.<sup>41</sup> Research has found that high student mobility has a detrimental impact on student learning, lower student engagement, and increased likelihood of noncompletion of high school.<sup>42</sup> Student mobility is frequently connected to changes in residence—which is often spurred by instability in parental employment or finances.<sup>43</sup> Highly mobile students tend to be disproportionately, low-income, Black, and experiencing homelessness.<sup>44</sup> This is driven in part by the fact that Black families are more likely to be renters than white families, and renters are significantly more likely to move than homeowners.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Community Data Snapshot Washington Park, CMAP, June 2020,

<https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/126764/Washington+Park.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> 2018-19 Annual Regional Analysis Bronzeville/South Lakefront Region, Chicago Public Schools, [https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/annual-regional-analysis/ara-1819-documents/ARA\\_BronzevilleSouthLakefront\\_1819.pdf](https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/annual-regional-analysis/ara-1819-documents/ARA_BronzevilleSouthLakefront_1819.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> “[School Funding Working Group April 2020](https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/press-releases/pr-2020/school-funding-working-group-april-2020.pdf),” Chicago Public Schools, April 2020, <https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/press-releases/pr-2020/school-funding-working-group-april-2020.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Illinois Report Card, accessed November 9, 2020, <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/district.aspx?source=studentcharacteristics&source2=mobility&Districtid=15016299025>

<sup>41</sup> Mobility Rates, Chicago Public Schools, accessed November 9, 2020, <https://www.cps.edu/about/district-data/metrics/>

<sup>42</sup> “Student Mobility: How It Affects Learning,” *Education Week*, August 11, 2020, <https://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/student-mobility/index.html>

<sup>43</sup> “Changing Schools: A Look at Student Mobility Trends in Chicago Public Schools Since 2009,” *UChicago Consortium on School Research*, January 2009, <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/changing-schools-look-student-mobility-trends-chicago-public-schools-1995>

<sup>44</sup> Student Mobility: How It Affects Learning,” *Education Week*

<sup>45</sup> “Renting on the Rise across All Demographics”, National Low Income Housing Coalition, February 22, 2016, <https://nlihc.org/resource/renting-rise-across-all-demographics>; “Overall Mover Rate Remains at an All-time Low,” Census Bureau, December 21, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2017/12/lower-moving-rate.html>

## Safety

Feeling safe is fundamental to our well-being. The presence of safety, or lack thereof, in the neighborhood where one lives can have major impacts on a person's well-being.

### Key findings

- People are products of their environment: Outcomes like poor health, crime, and poverty are not solely the consequences of families' or individual's characteristics
- Total crime in Washington Park has been gradually declining since 2001

Chicago is a world class city with a thriving economy, higher education institutions, and tourism. Yet, this is not the lived experience of all Chicagoans. For many Chicago residents, their lived experience is limited to the neighborhood where their home is. Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in the country. Neighborhoods vary in size, demographics, and resources which affects income levels, property values, school funding, walkability, and access to food, among many other things, all influencing the overall health and safety of a neighborhood.

In 1987, William Julius Wilson's pivotal work in *The Truly Disadvantaged* found that the social context of neighborhoods greatly influences family and community outcomes.<sup>46</sup> Wilson effectively recognized that people were products of their environments and that outcomes like poor health, crime, and poverty were not solely the consequences of families' or individuals' characteristics. The safety of a neighborhood has been linked to outcomes in mental health, physical health, and well-being. A 2010 research study, "Girls in the 'Hood: How Safety Affects the Life Chances of Low-Income Girls," found that "children, particularly girls in low-income households, raised in unsafe neighborhoods are at a higher risk for numerous negative outcomes such as teen pregnancy, sexual assault, poor mental health, and fewer educational opportunities."<sup>47</sup>

### Crime trends in Chicago and Washington Park

The safety of a neighborhood is often associated with exposure to danger measured by crime.<sup>48</sup> Though this measure may be broadly used by researchers, it is not the only concept that matters. The factors that contribute to the safety of a neighborhood are diverse and complex. Addressing safety, or lack thereof, and its impacts requires the input and contributions of a broad set of stakeholders and community partners, incorporating a wide range of education, economic, health, social policies, and programs. Detailed recommendations for dealing with the many aspects of safety are outside the scope of this plan, which focuses mainly on land use, transportation, and economic development of Washington Park. However, public safety is a significant concern and the plan will include recommendations based on physical design and infrastructure that can contribute to feelings of safety in public spaces.

---

<sup>46</sup> Wilson, William Julius (1987, 2012). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*.

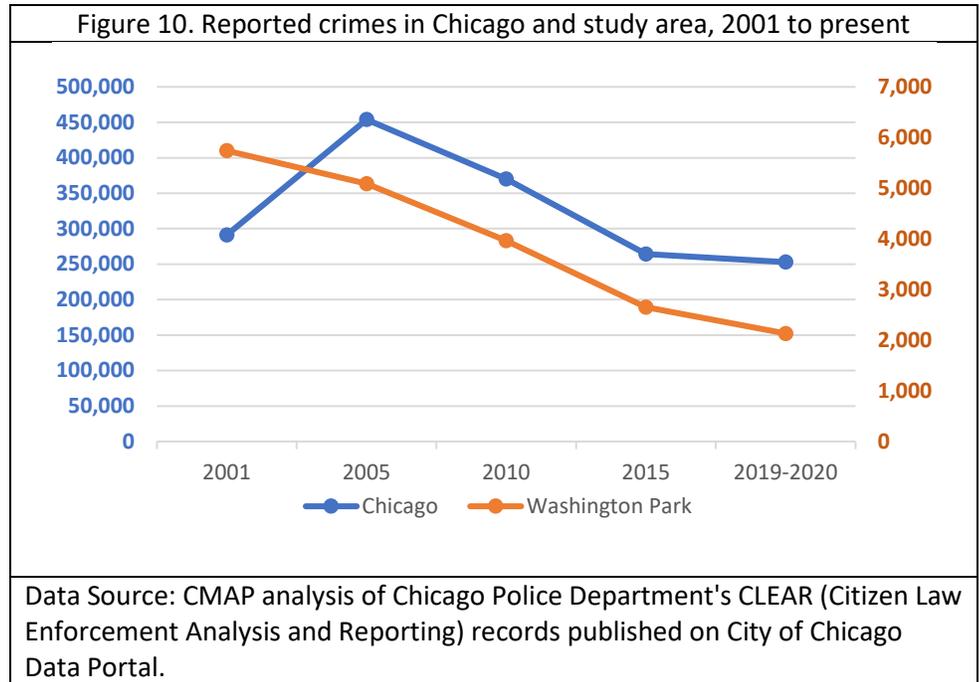
<sup>47</sup> Susan J. Popkin, Tama Leventhal, Gretchen Weismann. 2010. "Girls in the 'Hood: How Safety Affects the Life Chances of Low-Income Girls." *Urban Affairs Review* XX(X) 1–30  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228483371\\_Girls\\_in\\_the'Hood\\_How\\_Safety\\_Affects\\_the\\_Life\\_Chances\\_of\\_Low-Income\\_Girls](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228483371_Girls_in_the'Hood_How_Safety_Affects_the_Life_Chances_of_Low-Income_Girls)

<sup>48</sup> Zuberi, Anita. Feeling Safe in a Dangerous Place: Exploring the Neighborhood Safety Perceptions of Low Income African American Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 2018, Vol. 33(1) 90–116

For the purposes of this report, crimes in the Washington Park area have been categorized into three overarching types, each encompassing several related types of crime. This approach is used by the Chicago Tribune to summarize crime data to assist in identifying city-wide and community area crime trends for the Chicago Police Department. The three crime types are:

- Property crimes including theft, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson
- Quality-of-life crimes including criminal damages, narcotics, and prostitution
- Violent crimes including robbery, battery, assault, homicide, and sexual assault

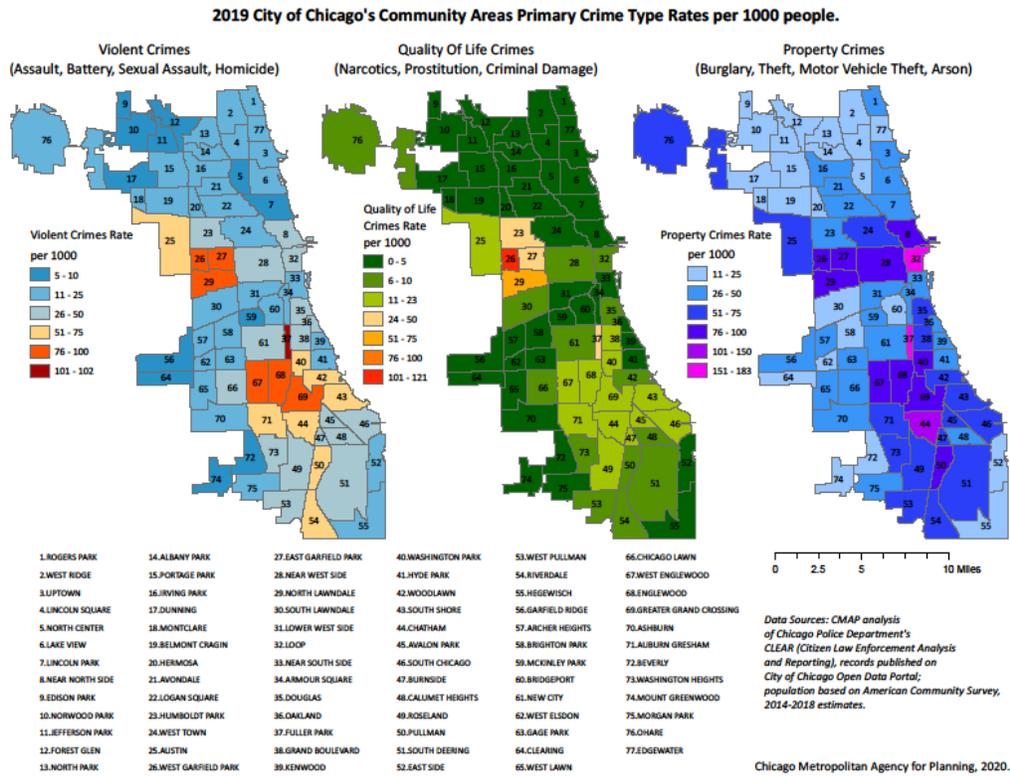
A neighborhood is perceived as unsafe and dangerous when high levels of crime are present. Total crime in the Chicago area has been gradually declining since 2001. Crime totals show that Washington Park has echoed citywide crime trends and even declining at a faster rate than the city as a whole in the last five years.



### Comparison with other Chicago Community Areas

Washington Park's total crime rate is lower than neighboring Community Areas (Grand Boulevard, Woodlawn, and Englewood). Quality of life and property crimes rates in Washington park are comparable to neighboring Community Areas, however violent crime rates in Washington Park are lower than those same Community Areas. In the context of the city as a whole, Washington Park experiences a crime rate that is comparable to much of the south side but higher than many of Chicago's 77 Community Areas.

**Figure 11. Incidence of crime per 1,000 people by Community Area, 2019**



**Location of reported crimes**

As the following “heat maps” of property crimes, quality-of-life crimes, and violent crimes reported in 2019 show, crimes tend to occur in greater numbers in areas of greater population and business density across the south side of Chicago.

Figure 12. Heat map, reported property crimes, 2019

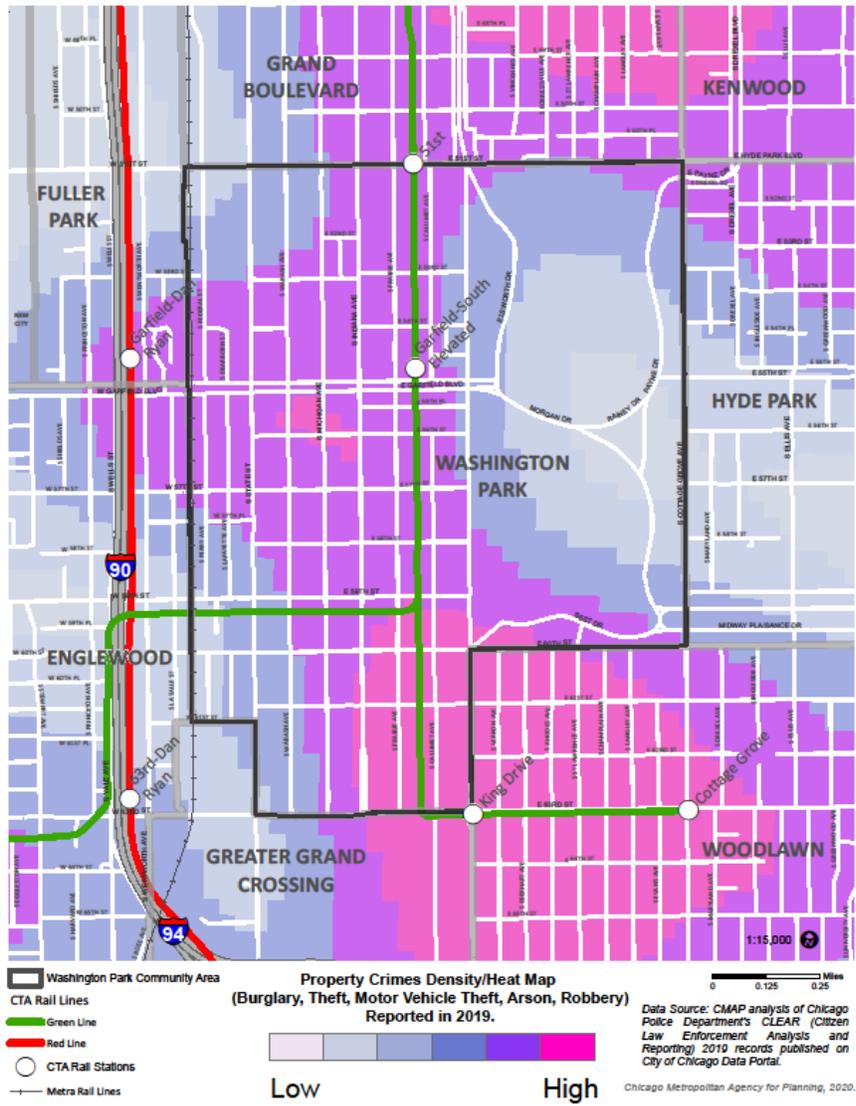


Figure 13. Heat map, reported quality-of-life crimes, 2019

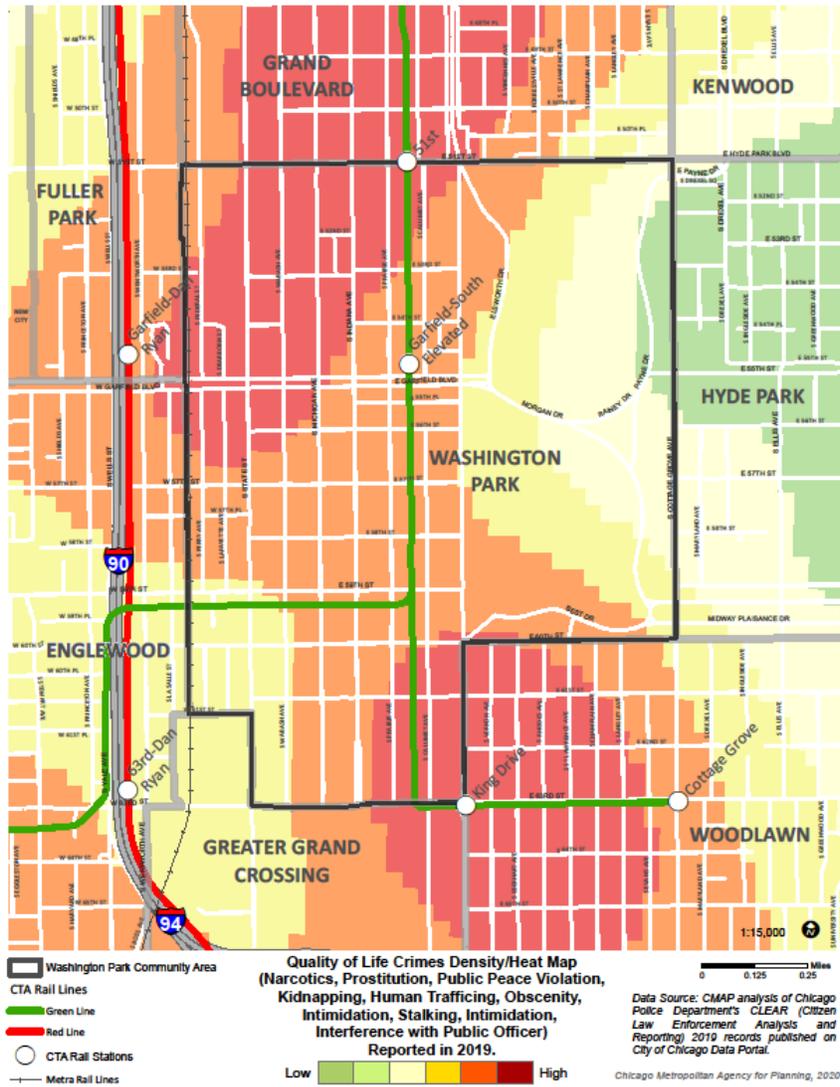
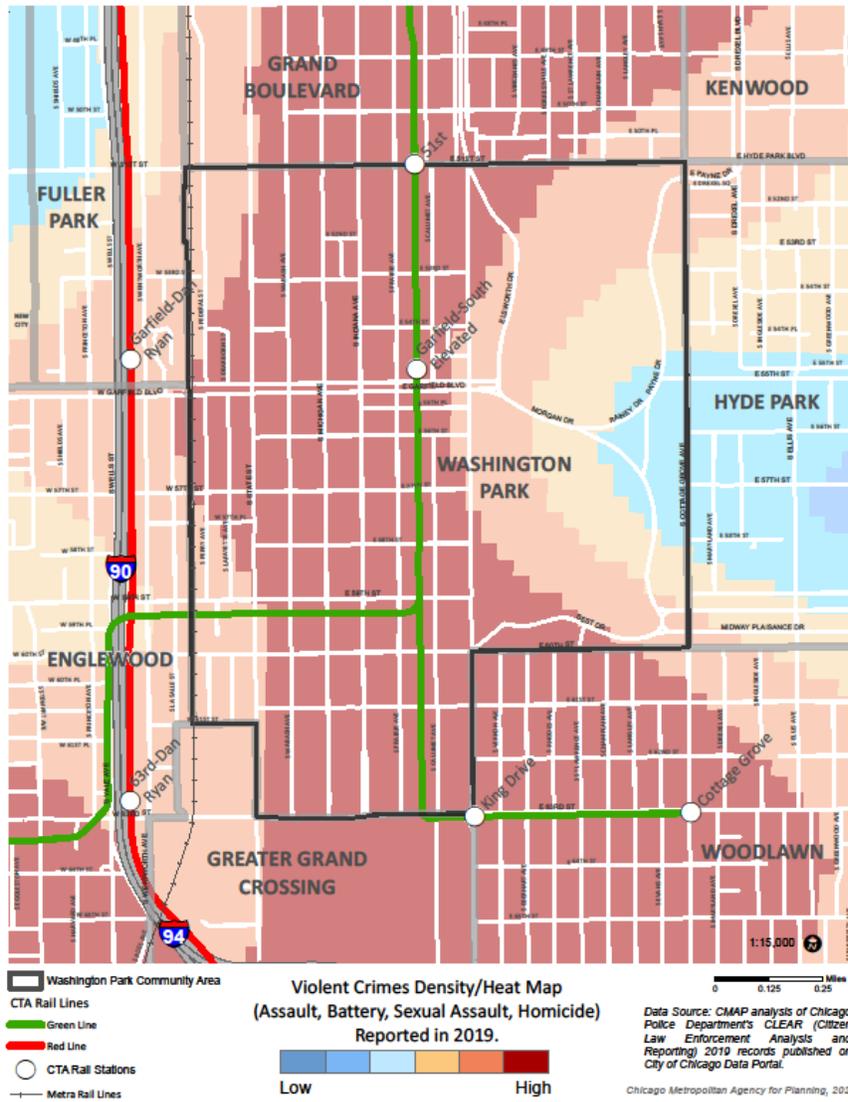


Figure 14. Heat map, reported violent crimes, 2019



## Policing

Public safety has long been the key responsibility of police officers in law enforcement. While policing done right can create public safety, policing done wrong can contribute to feelings of unsafety.

### Policing in Chicago

To better understand the state of policing in Washington Park today, it is helpful to understand the racist and corrupt history of policing in Chicago's past. Policing in America has existed since before the Thirteen Colonies declared their independence from Great Britain in 1776. Initially, policing was carried out by volunteer watch groups with ambiguous roles and responsibilities. It was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that cities across the nation began to establish centralized municipal police forces, and Chicago was no exception.<sup>49</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, scores of German and Irish immigrants settled in Chicago but were met with discrimination and seen as a threat to the fabric of America.<sup>50</sup> The cultural traditions of the new immigrant groups offended the sensibilities of many Anglo nativists. Chicago's population was divided between white American born Protestants and immigrant Catholics. The American born Protestants organized under the anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic party, known as the "Know-Nothing Party".<sup>51</sup> On March 8, 1855, the party elected one of their own into office as Mayor of Chicago, Mayor Levi Day Boone.<sup>52</sup> Once in office, Boone took swift actions against these immigrant groups by targeting drinking establishments, where the German and Irish spent their leisure time. Boone imposed higher liquor license fees with shorter terms and enforced laws requiring drinking establishments to close on Sundays. Boone's actions were met with resistance by the immigrant groups, which eventually led to the Lager Beer Riot on April 21, 1855, Chicago's first civil disturbance.<sup>53</sup> Less than a month after the Riot the Chicago Police Department (CPD) was established. Many modern police forces, in America, are the result of a growing immigrant population, intolerance by nativists, and the disorder that ensued.

Though Chicago now had a Police Department, its anti-immigrant practices continued under Boone, as he refused to hire immigrants onto the force. Eventually, foreign born officers were allowed to serve, yet the department's anti-immigrant tendencies continued to manifest. The police gained a reputation for suppressing immigrant-led labor movements such as the Railroad Strike of 1877 and the Haymarket Affair of 1886.<sup>54</sup> The police had an intelligence unit, later known as the Red Squad, that used coercion

---

<sup>49</sup> Potter, Gary. 2013. "The History of Policing in the United States". ECU School of Justice Studies.

<https://plsonline.eku.edu/sites/plsonline.eku.edu/files/the-history-of-policing-in-us.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> "Early Police in the United States," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified 2019,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/police>

<sup>51</sup> "Lager Beer Riot," Encyclopedia of Chicago, 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/703.html>

<sup>52</sup> "Mayor Levi Boone Bibliography," Chicago Public Library, last modified July 11, 2020,

<https://www.chipublib.org/mayor-levi-day-boone-biography/>

<sup>53</sup> "Lager Beer Riot," Encyclopedia of Chicago, 2005, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/703.html>

<sup>54</sup> University of Chicago, Civic Knowledge Project. 2007. "Police: A short history," (Accessed June 2020)

<https://southside.uchicago.edu/History/Policing.html>

and manipulation tactics to root out labor radicalism.<sup>55</sup> In addition to having an anti-immigrant reputation, CPD also became known for corruption.

While the police force was now centralized – with salaries being paid out of City Hall, policing was locally controlled by ward politicians which opened the door for patronage and bribery. In 1920, the onset of prohibition only made matters worse as Al Capone, an American gangster that led massive bootlegging efforts, paid off police and other City officials to turn a blind eye to their operations.<sup>56</sup> Concerned citizens started the Chicago Crime Commission in response to the corruption in police affairs but despite their best efforts, corruption and patronage continued to plague CPD.<sup>57</sup>

In 1960, a police-burglary ring known as the Summerdale Scandal incited a huge public outcry which forced then Mayor Richard J. Daley to reform CPD.<sup>58</sup> Daley appointed Orlando Winfield Wilson as police superintendent, who reorganized the department from a locally run force to one that was centralized with a police headquarters downtown.<sup>59</sup> Wilson recruited minorities, protected civil rights demonstrators, and created a technologically and bureaucratically advanced CPD. Despite these advances in the force, CPD would once again have a reputation of corruption. In 1968, under Wilson's successor, Chicago police were nationally broadcast beating protesters at the Democratic National Convention.<sup>60</sup> The following year, Chicago cops murdered the leader of the Chicago Black Panther Party, Fred Hampton.<sup>61</sup> Covert police operations did not go away as the Red squad continued to gather intel on thousands of leftist activists and civil rights leaders.<sup>62</sup>

In the years following those events, there were several actions taken in attempts to right the corruption in CPD. In 1973, the department was sued and forced to hire more minorities onto the force.<sup>63</sup> The following year, the Alliance to End Repression challenged the constitutionality of the Red Squad, eventually taking over control of the intelligence unit.<sup>64</sup> In 1993, CPD started the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), a community driven policing strategy.<sup>65</sup> The program aimed to bridge the gap between CPD and Chicago residents by blending traditional and alternative policing strategies to encourage police and the community to work together to prevent and control crime. An assessment of CAPS found that the program did increase public confidence in police but in 2002, as City revenues

---

<sup>55</sup> University of Chicago, Civic Knowledge Project. 2007. "Police: A short history," (Accessed June 2020) <https://southside.uchicago.edu/History/Policing.html>

<sup>56</sup> Michigan State University (2008). "Al Capone: The World's Most Notorious Gangster," <https://msu.edu/~szandzi2/alcapone/corruption.html>

<sup>57</sup> University of Chicago, Civic Knowledge Project. 2007. "Police: A short history," (Accessed June 2020) <https://southside.uchicago.edu/History/Policing.html>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Skogan, Wesley. "Taking Stock: Community Policing in Chicago". Institute for Policy Research: Northwestern University, 2002. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/189909.pdf>

shrank and Federal support of police hiring slowed –funding became limited leaving CPD to do more crime prevention with less funding.<sup>66</sup> Despite these efforts, corruption continues in CPD.

In October 2014, Laquan McDonald, a Black teenager, was fatally shot 16 times, by white Chicago police officer, Jason Van Dyke.<sup>67</sup> No charges were filed as police reported McDonald was behaving erratically and thus the officer’s actions were justified. Over a year later, after being ordered by the court, CPD released dashcam footage of the fatal shooting. The video showed that McDonald was walking away from police when he was shot. That same day, Officer Van Dyke was charged with first-degree murder. In response to these events, the Department of Justice (DOJ) launched an investigation that found CPD officers are poorly trained and use excessive force.<sup>68</sup> In 2018, a federal court ordered Chicago to comply with a consent decree aimed at reform but present day, the City has not met 71 percent of its decree deadlines.<sup>69</sup>

### Policing in Washington Park

The Chicago Police Department serves Washington Park through its 2<sup>nd</sup> District – Wentworth, located at 5101 South Wentworth Avenue. Each Police District is broken into beats via the CAPS program. Washington Park is served by beats 0225, 0231, 0232, 0233, and 0311. Of those, Beat 0231, which surrounds the Garfield Green Line station, had the highest number of reported crimes in 2019 and the highest total number of reported crimes since 2001.

In 2016, prompted by the murder of Laquan McDonald, Mayor Rahm Emanuel established the Community Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP). CPAP called for the creation of the Office of Community Policing (OCP) charged with developing strategic plans for community policing aimed at restoring trust between officers and the public.<sup>70</sup> Districts across Chicago worked with community members to create a 2020 Community Policing Strategic Plan, which “outlines core crime reduction priorities and community engagement goals over the course of a year”.<sup>71</sup> Still in progress, there is little indication of if/how the strategic plans are working. The table below summarizes District 2’s Plan.

---

<sup>66</sup> Skogan, Wesley. “Taking Stock: Community Policing in Chicago”. Institute for Policy Research: Northwestern University, 2002. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/189909.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> Sanburn, John. 2015. “Chicago Releases Video of Laquan McDonald Shooting.” TIME. <https://time.com/4126670/chicago-releases-video-of-laquan-mcdonald-shooting/>

<sup>68</sup> National Public Radio (2017). “DOJ Report on Chicago Police Finds 'Pattern Of Excessive Force'.” <https://www.npr.org/2017/01/13/509722770/doj-report-on-chicago-police-finds-pattern-of-excessive-force>

<sup>69</sup> Chicago Police Department Misses 71% Of Deadlines for Consent Decree Reforms; ‘We’re Not Doing A Slow Roll’,” CBS Chicago, June 19, 2020. <https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2020/06/19/chicago-police-department-misses-71-of-deadlines-for-consent-decree-reforms-were-not-doing-a-slow-roll/>

<sup>70</sup> Chicago Police Department. “District Strategic Plans”. Accessed June 2020. <https://home.chicagopolice.org/office-of-community-policing/district-strategic-plans/>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

## 2020 Community Policing Strategic Plan Overview – District 2

<b>Crime Reduction Priority</b>	Gun Violence	Armed Robberies	Quality of Life Issues: Selling Illegal Cigarettes, and Narcotic loitering
<b>Engagement Goal</b>	Enhance a sense of safety, security, and wellbeing with the youth and law enforcement	Gain active participation of local government, civic and business leaders, residents, churches, schools, and hospitals	Build community institutions that will become partners in addressing chronic problems of disorder (e.g.: gang & narcotic activity, selling illegal cigarettes, gun violence and robberies)

Data Source: CMAP analysis of Chicago Police Department's Community-Driven Approaches to Crime Reduction Strategic District Plan Overview for District 2.

To the east of Washington Park, the University of Chicago maintains the largest private police force in the world – even larger than the Vatican. The private police force has come under scrutiny for racial profiling, and for not being subject to the same levels of public review as a public police department. Unlike the CPD, the University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD) is not required to reveal policies and cannot be subject to a Freedom of Information Act request.

## Health and Wellness

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation defines health equity to mean “that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.” Factors that can improve health outcomes include access to healthy foods, green space, and reduced stress.

### Key Findings

- There are currently only 3 hospitals offering maternity services on the South Side, limiting maternal health options and resulting in higher deaths from pregnancy-related conditions<sup>72</sup>
- The inequities caused by the social determinants of health in Washington Park have had a huge impact on the average lifespan of residents there when compared to the loop, the City of Chicago, or neighboring Hyde Park
- Washington Park has more than 170 acres of inactive property in the form of vacant lots, vacant homes, and other vacant structures<sup>73</sup>

### Overview of Health Inequities in Washington Park

The story of health inequities in Washington Park is part of a much larger story about health inequities on the Southside of Chicago. These inequities are tied to a long history of racial injustice that took shape through discriminatory policies and behaviors that helped propel the pillars of systemic racism and establish barriers that prevented people of color from having the same opportunities as the white

<sup>72</sup> The three hospitals are Mercy, University of Chicago, and Roseland. In July 2020, the health system that owns Mercy announced plans to close that hospital, which will have a huge impact on maternity care on the South Side.

<sup>73</sup> South Side Housing Initiative. [Washington Park Housing Data Project](#). (Retrieved October 2020).

population in Chicago. Policies such as redlining, restrictive covenants, and the war on drugs in addition to mass incarceration and displacement have had severe impacts on Black communities in Chicago. This stark segregation has led to money and resources being funneled into white neighborhoods on the north side while communities on the south side like Washington Park are left to deal with the ramifications of such policies, including fewer services and increased risk of chronic disease. Health inequity in Washington Park is a multi-pronged issue for it is rooted in deficiencies within the built environment, transportation, education systems, and the local economy. Addressing these all of these issues will be necessary in order to increase the health and quality-of-life within Washington Park.

### Analysis of Washington Park Health Characteristics

An analysis of health characteristics within the Washington Park community area confirms data reported in previous plans and studies. This analysis was performed by The Chicago Health Atlas and focuses on clinical care, health behaviors, mortality, and morbidity.<sup>74</sup> It shows that the residents of Washington Park are facing greater health disparities when compared to other neighborhoods in the city. These inequities have led to shorter life spans, chronic health issues, fewer opportunities for children, and continual disinvestment in the neighborhood.

#### Clinical Care

Quick and easy access to clinical care can be the difference between life and death. In Washington Park, there is only one health service facility located within the community area.<sup>75</sup> According to the Chicago Health Atlas, 93.5% of Washington Park residents had routine checkups from 2016 – 2018 however, only 56.4% of residents said that they received the care that they needed during that same time frame.<sup>76</sup> In terms of health care satisfaction, 64.8% of residents in Washington Park were happy with the health care that they received. Only 10.7% of the population reported that they had no health insurance compared to the City of Chicago where 9.8% of residents were uninsured.

A major issue on the South Side is the lack of access to maternal care. According to a 2018 report from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Black women in Illinois were six times more likely to die from pregnancy-related conditions than white women.<sup>77</sup> This gap is twice as large as the national average and the report states that a majority of the deaths were preventable. In Washington Park, only 56.1% of women said they had access to prenatal and maternal care and, with plans for Mercy Hospital to close, this number will likely decrease as access becomes more limited.

#### Health Behaviors

According to the University of Chicago School of Medicine, health behaviors are individual actions people take to prevent illnesses or maintain good health such as exercising and eating a balanced diet.<sup>78</sup> Health behavior is greatly influenced by the social and economic conditions in which people live. For example, it is difficult to walk in the neighborhood to get exercise when you do not feel safe. In

---

<sup>74</sup> Chicago Health Atlas. [Washington Park](#). (Retrieved June 2020).

<sup>75</sup> The Washington Park Free Clinic is located within the community area while Access Grand Boulevard Health, John Sengstacke Health Center, Provident Hospital are all nearby but technically not in the neighborhood.

<sup>76</sup> This is compared to 83.7% of Chicago residents.

<sup>77</sup> Illinois Department of Public Health (Oct. 2018). [Illinois Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Report](#). (Retrieved November 2020)

<sup>78</sup> University of Chicago School of Medicine. [Washington Park Community Profile](#). (Retrieved June 2020).

Washington Park, 23% report not participating in any physical activity or exercise in the past month, 55% report drinking soda or sweetened drinks every day, and 43% of the population report being a smoker.<sup>79</sup> These types of behaviors can have a negative impact on health outcomes.

### Mortality

According to the Chicago Health Atlas, the life expectancy of Washington Park residents is 69 years old compared to Chicago where the average lifespan of 77 years old and the Loop where residents have an average lifespan of 82 years old. Washington Park residents have higher levels of behavioral deaths when compared to Chicago. This includes deaths related to alcohol, drug, and opioid use. With the exception of prostate cancer and Alzheimer's disease, Washington Park residents also have high rates of mortality from a number of chronic diseases compared to the city as a whole. The top causes of death within Washington Park are heart disease, cancer, injury, diabetes-related, and homicide. The years of potential life lost equate to 15,689 compared to Chicago at 8,131 years.

### Morbidity

Although 60.9% of Washington Park residents stated that their overall health status was either excellent, very good, or good, many residents live are faced with a chronic or infectious illness. Illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes can cause residents to be more susceptible to viruses (as experienced with the COVID-19 pandemic). Washington Park has especially high rates of Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease which can cause serious, permanent damage to a woman's reproductive system. The obesity rates for children and adults are 21.9% and 42.8% respectively, which both reflect numbers close to the national average. While people living with chronic and infectious illness might not die from their conditions, their health often suffers because of their condition.

### Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are economic, social, and physical conditions in which people are born, live, work, and play that affect health and well-being.<sup>80</sup> For example, a city with poor air quality can increase the risk for asthma and other chronic respiratory conditions. Unlike health behaviors which are tied to individual choices, the social determinants of health are often times outside of individual control.

In Washington Park, the economic, social, and physical conditions of the neighborhood are strongly correlated to the neighborhood's health profile. Years of disinvestment and neglect from the city, as well as discriminatory policies, have led to a shortage of resources and services that have in turn affected the health of the residents who live there. One resident reported having to travel all the way into the Loop to get her prescription medications because there are no Walgreens in Washington Park. The story of Chicago is the story of two cities which becomes especially clear when you take deeper dive into the social, economic, and physical conditions of all the different neighborhoods.

### Social and Economic Conditions

Social and economic determinants of health include indicators such as community safety, income, education, employment, and family/social support. According to data from the Chicago Health Atlas, residents of Washington Park face serious challenges on all these fronts.

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> University of Chicago School of Medicine. [Washington Park Community Profile](#). (Retrieved June 2020).

**Community Safety** - In Washington Park, only 38.8% of residents aged 18 years and older said that they felt safe in the neighborhood ‘all of the time’ or ‘most of the time’ compared to 75.9% of Chicago residents. One reason is due to the high volumes of crime which include homicide, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and aggravated battery. Violent crime in the neighborhood is 2.5 times higher than in the City of Chicago. According to the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, living in an environment of poverty and violence can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder in African American women with depressive symptoms.<sup>81</sup>

**Income** - The annual median household income in Washington Park is \$25,716 compared to Chicago which is \$56,003 per year, and one of every two children are living in poverty. The long-term consequences of children who grow up in a poor household have been linked to chronic illnesses, delayed brain development, lower educational outcomes, and increased chances of becoming poor as an adult.

**Education** - As Table 1 depicts, educational attainment levels in Washington Park peak at the high school level or equivalent while counts in the City of Chicago and the CMAP region show higher numbers for Associate, Bachelors, and Graduate/Professional degrees.

**Table 1. Educational Attainment, 2014 – 2018 for Washington Park**

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2014-2018**

	Washington Park		City of Chicago		CMAP Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
<b>Less than High School Graduate</b>	1,090	16.2	288,461	15.5	684,093	11.9
<b>High School Graduate or Equivalency</b>	2,225	33.2	427,009	22.9	1,319,895	22.9
<b>Some College, No Degree</b>	1,850	27.6	327,872	17.6	1,110,944	19.3
<b>Associate's Degree</b>	356	5.3	105,792	5.7	400,050	7.0
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	861	12.8	424,212	22.7	1,352,126	23.5
<b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>	329	4.9	291,906	15.6	888,642	15.4

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Universe: Population 25 years and older.

Source: <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/126764/Washington+Park.pdf>

**Employment** - In the City of Chicago, African Americans are more than 3 times more likely to be unemployed than the white population, 14.3% to 4.1% respectively (Figure 15). In Washington Park, we see that 27% of the population is unemployed compared to Chicago at 8%.

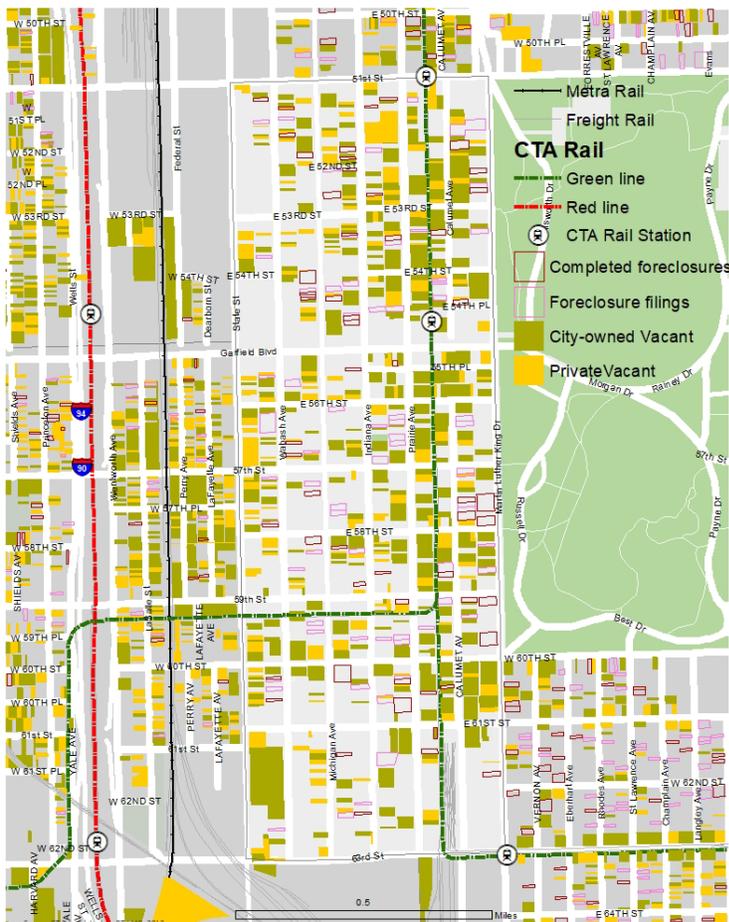
<sup>81</sup> Parker, P. (2017, April 3). [Living in a violent neighborhood can give you PTSD, study suggests](#). State of Opportunity. (Retrieved June 2020)

## Physical Environment

The physical environment of a place can also have adverse impacts on health. For example, in Washington Park, there are no grocery stores within a ½ radius of the Garfield Green Line station. In fact, there are only two groceries stores in the entire neighborhood, one of which is more like an elevated convenience store. This lack of access to quality food means that 67% of households are at risk for food security.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, over half of Washington Park households are receiving food stamps.

According to the parcel inventory conducted by the South Side Housing Initiative in 2019, an estimated 44% of properties in Washington Park are inactive – either a vacant lot or a vacant building (Figure 16).<sup>83</sup> A Tribune analysis of Cook County property records showed that the University of Chicago is the largest landowner with 29 parcels, a mix of vacant lots and commercial buildings, followed by the City of Chicago and the Chicago Transit Authority, which together own another 35 properties. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, vacant lots in urban communities are often contaminated with “hazardous wastes such as lead, cadmium, arsenic and asbestos which result in unsafe conditions for children and adults.”<sup>84</sup>

**Figure 16. Vacant Lots Map of Washington Park (2011)**



*Source: City of Chicago, 2011.*

<sup>82</sup> University of Chicago School of Medicine. [Washington Park Community Profile](#). (Retrieved June 2020).

<sup>83</sup> South Side Housing Initiative. [Washington Park Housing Data Project](#). (Retrieved October 2020).

<sup>84</sup> Environmental Protection Agency. [Vacant Lots](#). (Retrieved June 2020).

## Existing Health and Wellness Assets in Washington Park

Despite numerous health-related challenges, Washington Park does have several existing programs that could be used to bolster the health of its residents, especially its youth. The [Chicago Youth Program](#) was established by volunteers in 1995 and serves the high-need communities of Washington Park, Englewood, and surrounding areas. The community center in Washington Park houses a tutoring room, library, pre-school area, gym, computer lab, garden, and outdoor playground. The center offers programs for literacy, tutoring, mentoring, and recreation.

Through the [Chicago Park District](#), Washington Park offers a variety of programs and activities for adults and youth throughout the year. The Park features two gymnasiums, a photography lab, dance studio, racquetball court, fitness center, game room, and multi-purpose rooms. The park also includes a nature area, a Harvest Garden and an arboretum. Outside, the park offers a lagoon, aquatic center, three playgrounds, basketball/ tennis courts, baseball, football, soccer, cricket, and softball fields. For kids, there is an after-school program, seasonal sports, fitness, Teen Club, Junior Bears Football. On the cultural side, the park offers music and movement and dance. During the summer, youth can participate in the Chicago Park District's popular six-week day camp.

The [XS Tennis and Education Foundation](#) is located in Washington Park and strives to introduce Chicago youth from underserved communities to tennis with the long-term goal of helping students get into college on a tennis scholarship. It was built on the site of former Robert Taylor Homes housing project.

The [Washington Park Free Children's Clinic](#) (WPC) is a pediatric free clinic located a few miles west of the University of Chicago campus. Currently in its 15th year of operation, WPC aims to offer uninsured and underinsured children on the South Side of Chicago a point of entry for medical care and vaccinations. By offering a point of entry for a first clinic visit, WPC can then direct families to a Federally Qualified Health Center, where they can find a medical home, continuity of care and further health counseling.

Lastly, the [K.L.E.O. Community Family Life Center](#) is a non-profit organization and facility dedicated to strengthening families and providing a "safe haven," through education, public safety, health and human services and economic development. Once a month, the KLEO Center does a mobile food pantry and health fair where the goal is to provide free health care screening and food to adults and seniors who often have difficulties getting quality health care and food in the communities that they live in.

## Green infrastructure

The open space network in Washington Park is anchored by the neighborhood's namesake park. In addition to this asset, community gardens, a local farm, and a sunflower field serve to enhance and beautify the neighborhood while providing important environmentally-friendly eco-services.

Before the area was settled, the Vincennes Trail cut through the area and served as a prominent trade route for native American tribes. This was the case because glaciers had left a natural ridge line that sat slightly higher than the surrounding swampy land. In 1871, Frederick Law Olmstead designed the neighborhood's namesake park. Dredging the area in 1884 facilitated settlement five years before it was annexed into the City of Chicago.

## Stormwater

A report compiled for the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), for the Washington Park Development, LLC (WPDG) reviewed stormwater issues in the area north of Garfield Boulevard, between King Drive and just west of Indiana Avenue. The project seeks to build up the area, starting with the significant number of parcels owned by WPDG and the City of Chicago, with an eco-district overlay, remaining consistent to the historical legacy of the area.

The report identified the following opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure for an initiative known as the Legacy of Washington Park (LWP):

- Wide, vegetated parkways
- CTA right-of-way
- Alleys
- Residential yards
- Parking lots
- Garfield Boulevard median
- Garfield transit station and adjacent parking lot

The ridge line that runs through the neighborhood isolates the area from the park, and surface and sewer flows tend to run northward through LWP. The long history of development in the area means that the soils are classified as “urban” and may include manmade fill or even demolition waste. A project planting an acre of sunflowers at 54<sup>th</sup> and Prairie was part of an experiment to bring beauty while helping to remove potential soil contaminants.

## Conclusion

The area around the Garfield station in the Washington Park neighborhood has a rich history whose vibrancy has taken blows over the years from many directions. Harmful policies at the federal level identified the area as a risky investment, reducing the potential for wealth generation. Local policies kept housing segregated and schools over-crowded. Transportation service cut-backs made it more difficult to reliably reach jobs. Decades of “disinvestment” translates into higher levels of crime, less neighborhood stability. In recent years, this area has seen investment primarily relating to the University of Chicago – from Theaster Gates’ arts incubator to a new theatre. To some, this feels like a hostile takeover. To others, it is a welcome and needed influx of new money and new life after many years of neglect.

There are community members who enjoy living in Washington Park for its affordability, the sense of community, access to transit and greenspace, and connections to other neighborhoods. However, like many communities, there is a collective desire for better. After a thorough review of projects recommended in the Elevated Work Plan alongside the recommendations from previous projects, the next step in this project will be to assess progress on previously recommended projects in Elevated’s Green Line South Work Plan, identify any newly developing projects, compare them with other recommendations from past plans, and work with community residents to identify the most appropriate action plan to further implementation.

This plan must be about raising up the quality of life for those that live here, so much so that others will join and fill in the gaps in the vacant landscape, without displacing long-time residents. The Garfield green line station is a vital part of life in the neighborhood, and recommendations for capitalizing on this asset will focus on improving the safety and walkability of the area, identifying small-scale projects that can be implemented quickly and locally, protecting and boosting local arts and culture, improving health and well-being, and generating local wealth-building and community ownership.

## Appendix

### A history of planning and transportation in Washington Park

In this report, we will seek to get a better understanding of history. Our research is inspired by questions Eve Ewing posed in *Ghosts in the Schoolyard*:

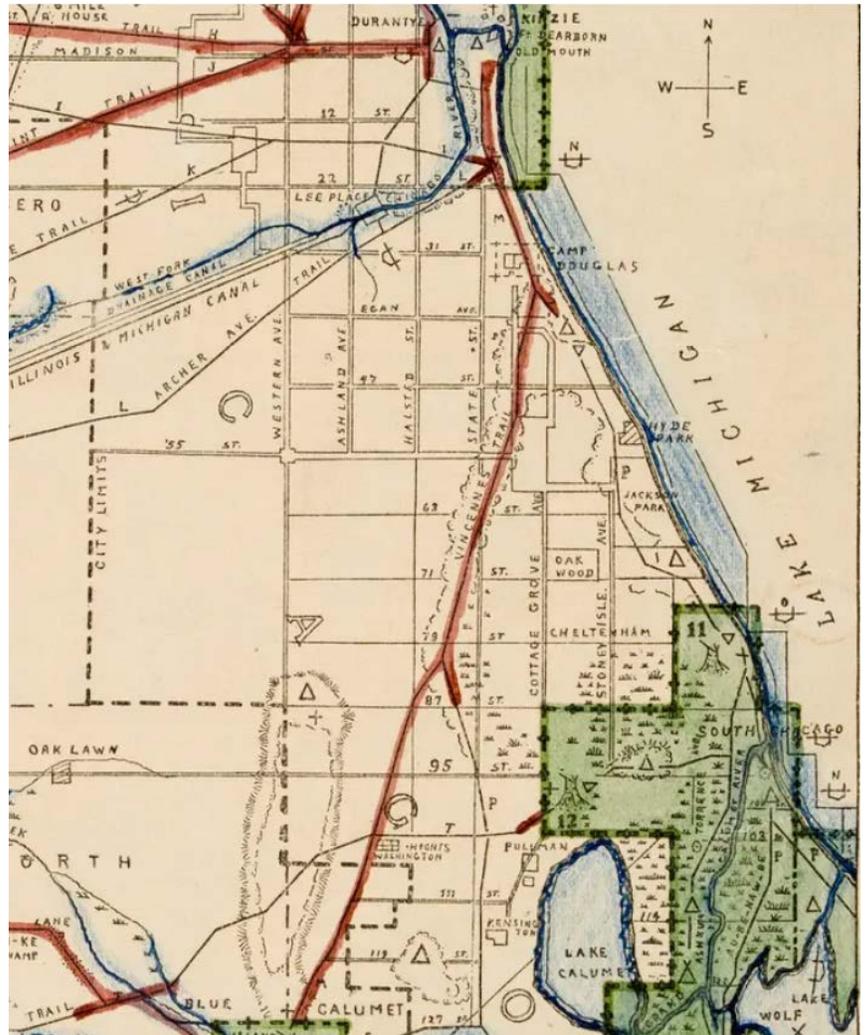
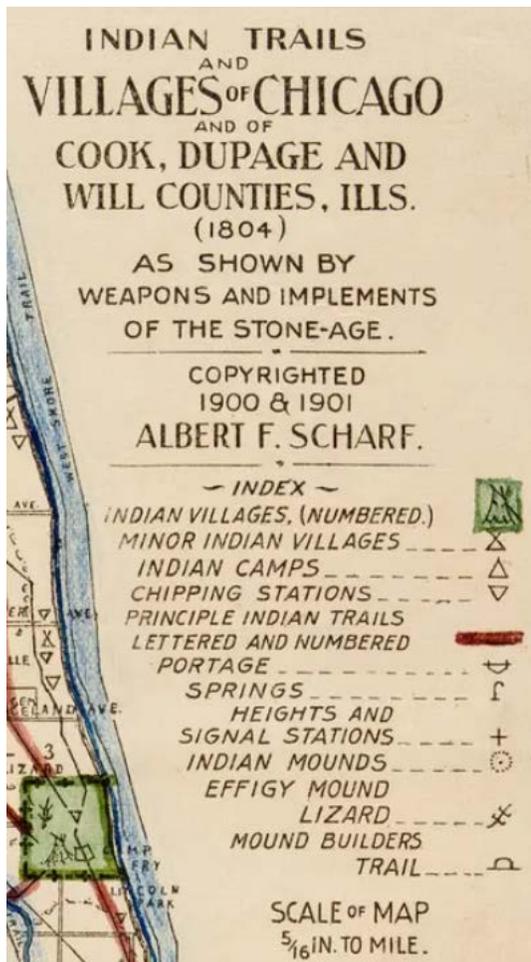
What is the history that has brought us to this moment? How can we learn more about that history from those who have lived it? What does this institution [or institutions] represent for the communities closest to it? Who gets to make decisions here, and how do race, power, and identity inform the answer to that question?

#### Early transportation in Chicago and Washington Park

Prior to Chicago's incorporation as a village, the low-lying swampy area of Washington Park was on the path of an important native American trail. Glacial melt had formed natural high grounds, sitting just 10 or 15 feet above the swampier land, which formed some of the pathways used by people who began to inhabit the area about 11,000 years ago.<sup>85</sup> Early maps of Chicago indicate that the path cutting through Washington Park was given the name "Vincennes Trail," after a French trader in Indiana. The trail connected Camp Douglas (near present-day Ellis Park) to Blue Island. Vincennes Avenue, where it exists today, follows the original path. Several tribes, including the Illini, Potawatomi, and Fox used Chicago as a gathering place.

---

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jan/17/native-american-routes-the-ancient-trails-hidden-in-chicagos-grid-system>



Source: South Side section of a map of American Indian trails and villages in 1804. Map by Albert F. Scharf, 1900-1901. Villages highlighted in green; principle trails in red and waterways in blue. Photograph: Chicago History Museum/Getty Images <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jan/17/native-american-routes-the-ancient-trails-hidden-in-chicagos-grid-system>

The Chicago area was no exception to the custom of using treaties to force indigenous people from land across the US between the years 1778 and 1871. Various treaties laid claim to land in the area beginning with the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, the Treaty of St. Louis in 1816, the Treaty of Chicago in 1821, and two treaties in 1833. After conflicts erupted over disputed treaties, the U.S. government forcibly removed Indian inhabitants under the Indian Removal Act of 1830, pushing them west of the Mississippi River and north to Wisconsin. That same year, surveying for a potential canal to connect the Great Lakes to the Des Plaines River led to wild land speculation whose bubble was burst in 1837, and Chicago's booming growth slowed to a trickle. The City of Chicago was incorporated as a village that same year, but the area around Washington park was not annexed until 1889.

French colonists had brought enslaved Africans from Haiti to Illinois Country (present day Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Wisconsin) as early as 1720.<sup>86</sup> In 1783, Virginia ceded the Northwest Territory to the United States and allowed for free inhabitants to have their possessions and titles retained and protected – and that included the enslaved people who were considered to be possessions. In 1787, Congress passed an ordinance for the territory northwest of the Ohio River which declared: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been convicted." Angered by this, owners of enslaved people worked to change the laws. Many feared that if Illinois/Indiana did not allow for the ownership of human beings, people would not move to the area.

A transition to indentured servitude was used to get around the law in 1807, allowing people to bring their enslaved people before a court clerk to sign a contract of indenture, typically for a period of ninety-nine years. If the person refused to sign, the owner had to "remove such slave to any state where such property could be legally held."<sup>87</sup> Illinois was admitted into the Union in 1818, at which point the Constitution did not allow for slavery or indentured servitude, and it rendered invalid any terms of servitude that were longer than one year. However, in 1819, the first General Assembly of the state passed what was known as "Black Laws." These laws did not allow for emancipation of black or "mulatto" people by moving to the state without a certificate of freedom, which cost \$1,000 to secure in a court. Black people that were freed and current Black residents had to enter their names into a court system with evidence of their freedom. Employers were forbidden from hiring black people without a certificate of freedom, and anyone without their certificate of freedom was subject to arrest and considered a runaway slave.<sup>88</sup>

As an important hub on the Underground Railroad, Chicago was considered a haven for people escaping from the south and west. While the "Black Laws" put restrictions on human rights, many people who escaped slavery were able to find work. With the constitution of 1848 that outlawed both slavery and indentured servitude, Illinois became a truly free state.<sup>89</sup> However, the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act gave more rights to slave owners to re-capture people – even if they had certificates of freedom, and many Black Chicagoans continued on to Canada where they were protected by British Law.<sup>90</sup>

### Railroads, development, and Reconstruction

Much of Chicago's history is tied to the railroads, and the expansion of private railroad companies and developers. The Illinois Central Railroad opened its first Hyde Park station at 51st and Lake Park Avenue in 1856. An ordinance passed in 1858 allowing "horse railways" to operate on certain city streets for a period of 25 years.

Early railroads for freight purposes helped move grain and other goods efficiently across the region and helped fuel the hog industry stockyards. Railroad companies working with the Chicago Pork Packers' Association drew up and implemented plans for the Union Stock Yard and Transit Company, which opened in 1865 to the north and west of Washington Park. Enterprises grew around primary activities to

---

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/landings/Ambot/Archives/transactions/1901/IL-slavery.html>

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/landings/Ambot/Archives/transactions/1901/IL-slavery.html>

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/landings/Ambot/Archives/transactions/1901/IL-slavery.html>

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/landings/Ambot/Archives/transactions/1901/IL-slavery.html>

<sup>90</sup> <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1281.html>

cater to folks selling goods, animals, and meat. In the 1860s and 1870s, large numbers of Irish and Germans immigrated to Chicago to work in the railroad and meat-packing industries.

With the end of the Civil War in 1865, slavery was abolished but the path forward was difficult and unclear. Three days after suggesting that some black men and those that had fought in the war should be given the right to vote, President Lincoln was assassinated.<sup>91</sup> Vice President Andrew Johnson took his place, and rolled back some of Lincoln's more progressive policies. Land that had been confiscated and distributed to freed slaves was returned to prewar owners, and the southern states were free to govern as they saw appropriate. This resulted in "black codes," like those in Illinois from 1819, that restricted the freedom and movement of freed black people. In response, Congress passed the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills and sent them to Johnson for his signature. He vetoed the bills, causing a major rupture with Congress, and the Civil Rights Bill of 1868 became the first bill signed into law over a presidential veto with two-thirds majority of Congress in support.

The Civil Rights Amendments (13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>) passed between 1865 and 1870 abolished slavery, granted citizenship to African-Americans, and outlawed discrimination in voting rights. Unfortunately, there was no enforcement until the 1870 Enforcement Act and the 1871 Ku Klux Klan Act. Many states turned to violence, poll taxes, and literacy requirements to continue the oppression of freed Black people and inhibit their ascension to power. With the brutality of the Jim Crow laws and emergence of the violent Ku Klux Klan in 1865, murders increased and some Black southerners began to move north, often arriving in the Black Belt north of Washington Park.

In 1874, the Grand Boulevard Carriage Path was dug through the Washington Park area, now commonly known as Martin Luther King Boulevard. Expansion of horse-drawn streetcars and cable cars in the 1880s, followed by electric trolleys, both proved to be a boon to developers, who were benefitting from formerly swampy land that had recently been dredged. By 1887, cable cars reached as far south as 63<sup>rd</sup> Street on State Street and 67<sup>th</sup> Street on Cottage Grove.

By the mid-1880s, the 25-year agreement for rail companies using many street rights-of-way was coming to an end. Rather than re-committing to another 25 years, the trend of using aldermanic power to get money and jobs grew; rail companies were forced to shift their business. With money going to bribes and non-rail needs, maintenance and service began to suffer.<sup>92</sup>

From 1890 to 1892, the South Side "Alley L" began to make its way south from the Loop to Jackson Park in time for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Transit service in Chicago began with a collection of private companies and developers who built most of the existing train lines. With the line to the World's Fair, the South Side Elevated Railroad (originally Chicago and South Side Rapid Transit Railroad and now the green line south) laid some of the earliest sections of the CTA's "L." Growing businesses, industry, and increasing population provided reason to continue to expand train service.

In the 1890s, German Jews had begun to settle in eastern Washington Park and African-Americans began moving to the area south of Garfield, west of State Street. It was an early example of neighborhood diversity, but not everywhere was so welcoming. Many municipalities in Illinois were

---

<sup>91</sup> Barrett, Paul. "Chicago's Public Transportation Policy, 1900-1940s." Historical Research and Narrative. Online: <https://www.lib.niu.edu/2001/iht810125.html>

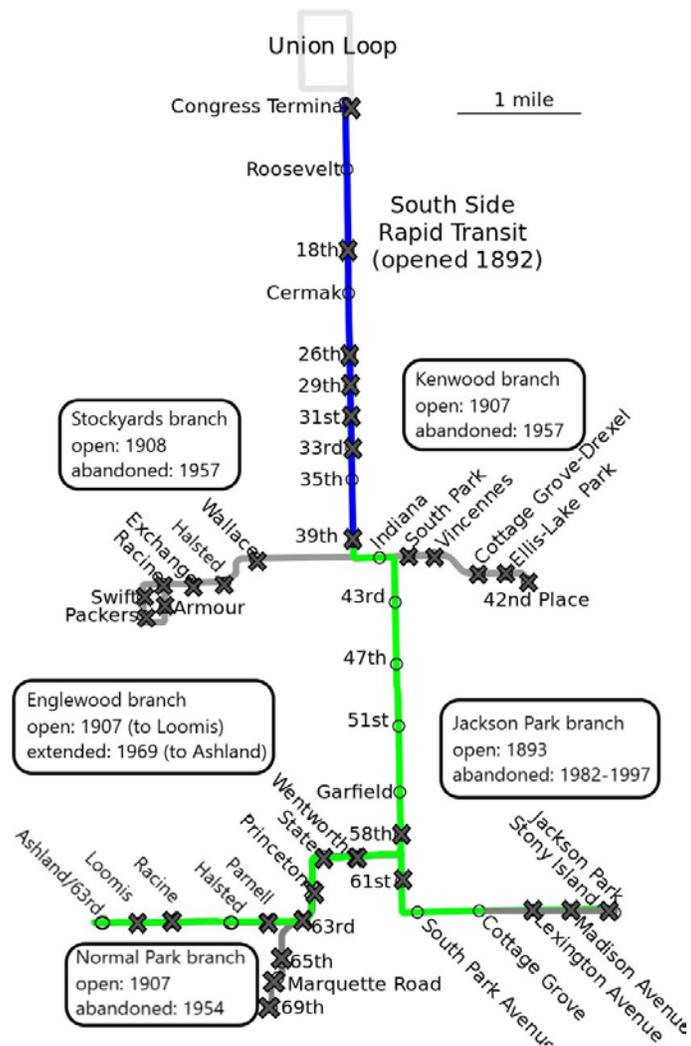
known to be “sundown towns,” where Black people were not allowed to be when the sun went down. The term came into use in the 1890s and thrived through the 1940s and later.<sup>93</sup> Violence was used as a means of restricting movement of Black people and keeping some areas White.

Segregation, White violence, and a shift away from transit (1900 – 1920s)

In 1905, Robert Abbott founded the Chicago Defender, a newspaper famous for highlighting racial injustices and encouraging Black Southerners to move north. Railroad companies were busy and over the following three years, four additional branches of what is now the south green line were opened, including the Kenwood branch, the Stockyards branch, the Normal Park branch, and the Englewood (now Ashland) branch.

With the start of World War I, industries in the north faced significant labor shortages and European immigration was restricted. Recruiters looked to the south, encouraging African Americans to move north, where wages could be three times higher than those in the south. Between 1914 and 1919, approximately one million Black people had moved north, in what is known as the Great Migration. The Black population in Chicago grew by 148 percent.

Following the end of World War I, GIs came home to a different landscape and found fewer jobs available. Racially restrictive covenants (and presumably “sundown towns”) limited where African-Americans could live, and much of the available housing was over-priced and over-crowded. At the turn of the century, transportation was the driver for development. The crowded, “soot-filled” central area of the city was a major hub for business and activity. New rail lines helped affluent residents escape the



Map of the South Side Elevated Railroad and its branches as it appeared in 1921. The first section of the line that opened in 1892 is shown in blue; existing active rail shown in green; abandoned rail lines shown in grey. © 2008, Jeremy Atherton, modified to show closed stations.

<sup>93</sup> <https://news.wttw.com/2019/11/18/shedding-light-sundown-towns-propublica-illinois-investigates>

over-crowding to lower density areas,<sup>94</sup> yet Black people were mostly denied this freedom due to a combination of racial covenants and physical violence perpetrated by White neighbors.

Violence erupted across the country and the Ku Klux Klan revived its terror through lynchings across the south. After a young Black boy in Chicago was drowned for swimming in the White area of the beach in 1919, and police refused to arrest the White man identified for causing the drowning, a week of violence ensued as White gangs sought to prevent any encroachment on “their” land. In response, Black gangs formed to defend themselves. Sixteen days of violence became known as the “Red Summer” and the Chicago Commission on Race Relations found that the rioting was the result of several key issues: competition for jobs, inadequate housing options for Black people, inconsistent law enforcement and pervasive racial discrimination.<sup>95</sup>

While Irish organized crime had long ruled the streets of Chicago, young Sicilian boys on the near north side brought the ways of the Sicilian mafia to Chicago and built off the tactics of the Irish organized crime. During increasingly violent periods, the Irish realized that they needed to enlist other White Europeans to brutalize the African-Americans who ventured out of their lanes. Some even took to setting fire to Polish and Lithuanian neighborhoods, dressed in blackface, to bring Poles and Lithuanians to hate Black people.<sup>96</sup> When Prohibition pushed the production and sale of alcohol underground, the Italian Mafia and other gangs stepped in to fill the needs of thirsty Chicagoans. The gangs transformed into sophisticated criminal enterprises that excelled at bribing politicians.

In the 1920s, Chicago’s “Black Belt” began extending south into Washington Park as Whites fled the chaos of the city. The area south of 55<sup>th</sup> (Garfield Boulevard) was primarily White when Jesse Binga, founder of the first African-American bank in Chicago moved his family into a home just south of the park. The Washington Park subdivision and nearby White neighborhoods violently defended their exclusivity and Binga’s home was bombed 5 times in two years.<sup>97</sup> The subdivision’s racial covenants were eventually struck down by the Supreme Court in 1940 *Hansberry vs. Lee*.

As White people left the central city, they closed many businesses. In 1924, the multiple companies running various train lines merged into the Chicago Rapid Transit (CRT) Company. Despite being in poor financial standing and seeing ridership losses, the CRT continued expanding. In 1926, they built a line to suburban Westchester, which was later abandoned. At the same time, many people were shifting from transit to driving, with the popularity and low cost of Ford’s Model T. Through the 1920s, the number of cars in Chicago quadrupled.<sup>98</sup> Transit ridership peaked in 1926, and as it fell after that point, city leaders began to look for ways to adapt the city for the private automobile. That same year, racially restrictive covenants were upheld by the Supreme Court.

In the decade that followed, increasing car usage led to high levels of congestion on city and suburban streets. The Chicago Motor Club, with assistance from the business-friendly Chicago Tribune, began to mobilize for the construction of urban highways.<sup>99</sup> In 1927, the Chicago Plan Commission proposed a

---

<sup>94</sup> <https://americanhistory.si.edu/america-on-the-move/essays/chicago-transit-metropolis>

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/chicago-race-riot-of-1919>

<sup>96</sup> <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1033.html>

<sup>97</sup> <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4134057.pdf?seq=1>

<sup>98</sup> <https://americanhistory.si.edu/america-on-the-move/essays/chicago-transit-metropolis>

<sup>99</sup> <https://americanhistory.si.edu/america-on-the-move/essays/chicago-transit-metropolis>

system of highways radiating from the Loop that harkened to the arterial plans recommended in the 1909 *Plan of Chicago*.

During the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs included assistance to the homeowners, whose mortgages were threatened. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) was a government-sponsored corporation that was part of the New Deal, created in 1933, to save homes from foreclosure. While there were Black homeowners, they were limited in number and the huge protective measures to save people from losing their homes were benefits that extended primarily to White people.

As more African-Americans continued to move north to Chicago, housing was stressed even further and some families pushed the restricted boundaries of where to live. Most simply moved from one slum to another - where there was least resistance.<sup>100</sup> The over-crowded and unhealthy conditions in many tenements led to the formation of the Chicago Housing Authority in 1937. At the Federal level, the Federal Housing Act classified "any area where dwellings predominate which, by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements or design, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, or any combination of these factors" as a "slum." The exact conditions that resulted from exclusionary policies were given a name.

Mid-century: highways, planning and urban renewal

While the depression slowed growth, it did not squelch the desire for auto-mobility. In 1940, the city council approved a plan for highways "radiating from downtown Chicago that is nearly identical to what was eventually built."<sup>101</sup> However, World War II pulled resources from that effort and growth slowed. With unabated housing challenges, a neighborhood on the north side, known as "Little Hell" saw the city's first public housing project, named after Francis Cabrini, the first American-born saint. It was an integrated project: 75% White and 25% Black. Yet, post-war migration from the south continued with an additional 200,000 African-Americans and the need for housing grew stronger. Around the same time period, there were two government programs to relocate people to Chicago: in the mid-1940s, interned Japanese Americans were placed in interior cities; and in the early 1950s, the policy to urbanize and "decommunalize" American Indians by encouraging those of the Plains and Upper Midwest to move to the city.<sup>102</sup>

In 1940, the federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) created the first "redlined" maps of Chicago, identifying areas by racial composition for risk in home security mortgages, making it extremely difficult for Black people or anyone in integrated neighborhoods to secure loans or generate wealth from home ownership. This created even more housing challenges for Black people in the area. Developers, real estate leaders, and professionals from the Metropolitan Planning and Housing Council (MHPC, now MPC) saw a potential opportunity to address the so-called "blight" by clearing slums and opening areas up for new development.<sup>103</sup> The Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act (NRCA)

---

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1985-03-31-8501180279-story.html>

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/440.html>

<sup>102</sup> [https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=urban\\_pubs](https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=urban_pubs)

<sup>103</sup> Dyja, Thomas. "The Third Coast: When Chicago Built the American Dream." Penguin Press, New York, 2013.

of 1941 was passed with this intention, but it required landowners to acquire 60 percent of the properties in an area to use eminent domain and that proved to be too challenging.<sup>104</sup>

After World War II, new highways and roads opened neighborhoods and suburbs not easily accessible by public transportation. The “result was white flight and the expansion of the South Side's African American neighborhoods well beyond the confines of the old Black Metropolis.”<sup>105</sup> When Mayor Martin Kennelly took office in 1947, the business community and MHPC supplied him with a legislative agenda for slum clearance and public housing. The business community, realtors, developers, and MPDH also lobbied at the state level. The Illinois General Assembly passed the Illinois Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act in 1947, creating a new agency called the Land Clearance Commission with the power to acquire “blighted” land by force and sell it to private developers at a steep discount.

Within twelve square miles in and around Chicago’s Bronzeville neighborhood, three major projects were taking shape: Mies van der Rohe’s Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) campus, Michael Reese Hospital, and the Lake Meadows housing development. Developers, business leaders, and MHPC created a coalition to advance the projects simultaneously: The South Side Planning Board, which did not include a single Bronzeville resident.

Continued shifts from transit to driving was creating two distinct problems in the 1940s: increased traffic congestion and financial troubles at transit companies. In 1945, an inter-governmental agreement created the Chicago Transit Authority to unify the privately operated rail lines. By 1947, CTA had purchased all assets and began operations and decisions about where service would be cut, and stations closed. Nearly 100 stations that had low ridership or were “uneconomical” were closed. While the city was spending money building highways, transit was required to be financially self-sufficient. The Garfield station was designated a “B” stop in 1949 when the CTA instituted A/B skip-stop system for low ridership routes. Maintenance and upgrades to service had to be paid from the fare box revenue. A combination of continued fare increases and service cutbacks pushed even more people into cars.

By the 1950s, three of the branches of the green line south were closed. In total, the green line south went from having 5 branches and 47 stations in 1910 to two branches and only 12 stations today. No north side lines have spacing as distant as the green line. The city moved forward clearing slums and, according to the Chicago Tribune, their programs created a model for the Federal Housing Act of 1949 to build “cheap, clean, modern projects throughout the city.”<sup>106</sup>

The traffic problems of the 1940s led to an emergence in the field of highway engineering. By the mid-1950s, 288 miles of highways had been built around Chicago, but concern was growing that there was not enough technical study for the highways to be done well – and be beneficial for the community. In 1955, Cook County Chairman Daniel Ryan secured passage of a major bond issue, and increased federal funding sources helped to expedite costly highway construction.<sup>107</sup> That same year, the City of Chicago

---

<sup>104</sup> The 1941 NRCA law was amended in 1953 to allow for use of eminent domain with the approval of 60 percent of the owners, rather than ownership.

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1177.html>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1985-03-31-8501180279-story.html>

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/440.html>

and three other governmental agencies, created the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), and charged it with the task of planning the future transportation system for the Chicago metropolitan area.

The goal of CATS was to ensure desirable development of land, achieved through the following objectives: to increase [roadway] speed, increase safety, lower operating costs, economize on new construction, minimize disruption, and promote better land development.<sup>108</sup> While CATS was not heavily staffed with engineers, they followed in the path of prominent engineers to use data to guide decisions about how and where to build transportation infrastructure. Engineers of the time had been criticized for catering to “middle-income motorists who paid gasoline taxes over residents who paid bus fares and rent.”<sup>109</sup> Data bias favored the suburban White families driving to downtown while Black families could not move to many of those suburban communities for fear of violence.

The population of Washington Park peaked at 56,000 in 1950, prior to significant clearing of overcrowded homes. A 1955 Amendment to the Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act allowed for clearing land for non-residential uses, including highways. One major highway, whose construction cleared slums and created a clear divide between White and Black neighborhoods on the south side was the Dan Ryan Expressway. Initial plans for the Dan Ryan had its path going through the Bridgeport neighborhood, but in 1956, “Mayor Richard J. Daley and the city council moved the route to Wentworth Avenue along the eastern edge of Armour Square and Fuller Park,”<sup>110</sup> to go through a Black neighborhood, rather than the White one. The Dan Ryan Expressway opened to 95th Street in 1961–62. The Dan Ryan has 14 lanes in one section, including express lanes, making it one of the world's widest roads.<sup>111</sup>

While the low-rise housing development in Little Hell was considered a success, that style of development was expensive and the CHA shifted to lower cost high-rise construction on a massive scale, with large expansions to the Cabrini homes and huge new projects along the State Street Corridor. The State Street Corridor included the Robert Taylor Homes, Stateway Gardens, Harold Ickes Homes, Dearborn Homes and Hillard Homes. The Robert Taylor Homes were ironically named after a CHA Board member who resigned in 1950 when the City Council would not place homes in racially integrated locations. The project included 28 buildings of 16 stories each in U-shaped clusters that stretched for two miles. It was completed in 1962, casting its shadows upon the newly built Dan Ryan.

---

<sup>108</sup> [https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=urban\\_pubs](https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=urban_pubs)

<sup>109</sup> Barrett and Rose 1999, 418

<sup>110</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/11536.html>

<sup>111</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/440.html>



“Urban renewal took various forms, but the South Side's landscape was most dramatically affected by public housing; institutional expansion in the form of IIT, the University of Chicago, and various hospitals; and the construction of the Dan Ryan and Stevenson Expressways.”<sup>112</sup>

[https://publications.newberry.org/makebigplans/plan\\_images/aerial-view-dan-ryan-expressway-1964](https://publications.newberry.org/makebigplans/plan_images/aerial-view-dan-ryan-expressway-1964)

Even with over 27,000 residents, not everyone who wanted housing could be placed in the Robert Taylor Homes. Priority was given to families with children, which created a new pressure on local schools. There were so many children at the projects, that kids had to wait “seven and eight deep” to use playground equipment. As Eve Ewing writes, “Rather than allow students to enroll in White schools, district officials created ‘double shifts’ where Black students attended school for only part of the day, then traded off with a second group.”<sup>113</sup> Between 1953 and 1966, Chicago Public Schools constructed 208 elementary schools and 13 high schools. In 1960, CHA officials told CPS to expect an increase of 10,000 students from the Robert Taylor Homes. CPS built schools, but not enough, insisting that the number was inflated; they built enough schools to accommodate only 7,765 students.<sup>114</sup>

The clearly inferior, overcrowded and under-funded schools in the Black community added to the growing frustrations in the early 1960s for basic civil rights. A protest in 1963 culminated in a mass walkout with over 220,000 students staying out of school. A 1964 report on CPS found that 90 percent of Black students were enrolled in schools that were at least 90 percent Black, with 26,000 vacant seats in White schools, and the report recommended transporting kids to those seats from over-crowded schools. The recommendations were never implemented.<sup>115</sup>

In 1965, community organizers filed a civil rights complaint alleging racist and discriminatory practices at CPS, which prevented the city from receiving federal funding. Continued marches protesting unequal

<sup>112</sup> <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1177.html>

<sup>113</sup> Ewing, E. L. *Ghosts in the schoolyard: Racism and school closings on Chicago's South Side*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

<sup>114</sup> Ewing, E. L. *Ghosts in the schoolyard: Racism and school closings on Chicago's South Side*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

<sup>115</sup> Ewing, E. L. *Ghosts in the schoolyard: Racism and school closings on Chicago's South Side*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

and segregated schools, led by Black schoolteacher and convener of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCCO), Al Raby, kept the pressure on Mayor Daley. Because of the civil rights complaint, Mayor Daley had to meet personally with President Lyndon Johnson to negotiate a release of federal funds. Raby and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) worked with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to bring national attention to their plights in Chicago. Their demands expanded to fair housing and the Chicago Freedom Movement was born.<sup>116</sup>

That same year, the city and park district rolled out plans to widen South Lake Shore Drive to eight lanes from 47<sup>th</sup> and 67<sup>th</sup> streets and reroute it directly through Jackson Park.<sup>117</sup> The city had already cut down approximately 500 trees when Hyde Park activists clung to remaining trees to stop the chainsaws. Remarkably, Mayor Daley backed down and called for a better plan. The field of planning was growing in importance. The city's new Planning Department had unveiled the 1966 Comprehensive Plan of Chicago following the 1957 Zoning Code. The 1966 Plan expanded the city's growth focus outside of the central core and was focused on policies.

The Chicago Freedom Movement, known as the “most ambitious civil rights campaign in the northern United States,” continued with marches and pressure on city government through early 1967 when an exhausted Mayor sat down with Dr. King and various housing boards with promises to improve housing: reduce segregation, build public housing in White neighborhoods, and fair lending practices. While promises made were not necessarily kept in Chicago, the agreement is credited with providing inspiration for the Fair Housing Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1968.<sup>118</sup>

#### Failures of urban renewal and the War on Drugs

An early critique of Chicago's urban renewal efforts indicated that there was not enough attention to housing the most vulnerable in our society. While urban renewal efforts claimed to address the horrendous living conditions of over-crowding, the plans for clearing and building anew did not significantly increase the number of housing units and failed to improve conditions. And as Black people were cleared from densely populated areas, with few neighborhoods amenable to their arrival, the over-crowding simply intensified – albeit in different locations.

On the other side of globe, the U.S. was in the midst of the Vietnam War, with growing opposition and unrest over our country's involvement. In a Chicago speech in March of 1967, Dr. King publicly condemned the Vietnam War, aligning the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement. While hippies were celebrating the Summer of Love, the poor housing conditions, abusive policing, and institutionalized unemployment in the Black community culminated in uprisings across the United States in the summer of 1967 – the “long, hot summer.”

The Kerner Commission investigating the causes of the “rioting” found that persistent societal inequalities were to blame. Specifically, it said that White racism was to blame; White institutions created ghettos and maintained them.<sup>119</sup> The report preferred the term “rebellion” over “riot” because they felt that riots were irrational and this involved rational people who had no choice to get the

---

<sup>116</sup> <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/221.html>

<sup>117</sup> Hunt and Devries. Planning in Chicago page 49.

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/chicago-freedom-movement-1965-1967/>

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.history.com/news/race-riots-kerner-commission-findings-suppressed-lbj>

government's attention. The researchers trying to identify who was most likely to riot were surprised to find that poverty was not what made a person more likely to riot; rather, having experienced or witnessed police brutality was the factor that made someone most likely to "riot."<sup>120</sup> Unfortunately, most of the recommendations from the Kerner Commission to address civil unrest were ignored.

The following year, Chicago erupted with "rebellions" again following the assassination of Dr. King in Memphis. Destruction of property began on the West side, along West Madison Street. Forty-eight hours of protests and rioting spread to other parts of the city. Two South Side gangs that had worked with Dr. King in 1966, the Blackstone Rangers and the East Side Disciples, are credited with limiting destruction in their neighborhoods as they came together in peace.<sup>121</sup> Mayor Daley gave orders to police to kill any arsonist or people holding Molotov cocktails.<sup>122</sup> Across the US, 39 people were killed – all but five were Black.

In the aftermath of the unrest, President Lyndon B. Johnson urged Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1968 – an expansion of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A day after Dr. King's funeral, the Fair Housing Act was passed, prohibiting discrimination concerning the sale, rental, or financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, and sex. Despite legislative successes, increased deindustrialization, food shortages and newly unhoused people had Chicago on edge in the summer of 1968. Robert F. Kennedy, who had lambasted Dr. King's assassination two months prior, was assassinated in June after winning two states as the Democratic presidential candidate.

As the site for the Democratic National Convention that summer, Mayor Daley's police were called out again with tensions high against the Vietnam War and racial injustice. When the mayor refused to issue permits for protesters, and instead called in 12,000 cops, 6,000 soldiers and 6,000 members of the National Guard, there was nothing the protesters could do legally and the police responded with teargas and clubs.<sup>123</sup> The brutal attacks on protesters were seen on television across the nation and sparked widespread opposition to the War.

In the fall of 1968, the Black Panther Party (BPP) of Chicago emerged on the city's West Side denouncing racism, capitalism, and police brutality. The party quickly grew in numbers and aligned efforts with White and Latino allies – called the "Rainbow Coalition." Beginning with a successful run in Oakland, the BPP expanded free breakfasts for schoolchildren in cities across the US, feeding tens of thousands of kids and providing a model for today's government-led school breakfast programs.<sup>124</sup> On the night before the program's launch in Chicago, police officers raided the church where the children's food was being stored, mashed it up and urinated on it.<sup>125</sup> The Chicago BPP was decimated in December of 1969 when the FBI assassinated party leaders Mark Clark and Fred Hampton, who was asleep in his bed.

The high-rise housing projects that were built as a "solution" to over-crowded housing, quickly deteriorated with neglect. When elevators failed, walking to the 16<sup>th</sup> floor – or any high-level floor—was

---

<sup>120</sup> <https://www.history.com/news/race-riots-kerner-commission-findings-suppressed-lbj>

<sup>121</sup> Risen, Clay (2009). "April 5: 'There are no ghettos in Chicago'". *A nation on fire : America in the wake of the King assassination*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN 978-0-470-17710-5.

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/chi-chicagodays-kingriots-story-story.html>

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2015/08/this-day-in-history-august-28th-the-battle-of-michigan-avenue/>

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.history.com/news/free-school-breakfast-black-panther-party>

<sup>125</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00045600802683767>

exhausting and dangerous. Upkeep of the projects had not been sufficiently budgeted for, and they were left to crumble. As history seems to repeat itself, the miserable living conditions fueled much of the local civil rights activity. Passenger traffic on the Jackson Park branch of the green line began to decrease dramatically in the late 1960s. The Dorchester station was closed on January 13, 1973 in one of several rounds of cost-cutting that year that included multiple station closures and service reductions.

President Nixon took office in 1969 amid tumultuous national conditions. Nixon saw drug use as a major public health concern and budgeted more money for treatment than criminalization. However, as reelection edged closer, anti-war hippies and civil rights activists were seen as barriers to his victory. Officials turned to drugs as a scapegoat for criminalizing both: hippies were associated with marijuana and LSD, Black people with heroin. Government crack-downs would disrupt the respective communities, providing reason to arrest leaders, break up meetings, and vilify them. A top Nixon aide later admitted that they had been lying about the drugs with these nefarious motivations.<sup>126</sup>

In 1974, the federal funding program supporting urban renewal ended and was replaced by the Community Development Block Grant program. Two years later, Mayor Richard J. Daley died of a heart attack and was replaced by Michael A. Bilandic, a Daley supporter and Bridgeport alderman. Bilandic's waning popularity and a poorly handled snowstorm led to his upset in the Democratic primaries by Jane Byrne in 1979. Byrne reached out to the African-American community and her progressive politics and frustration with corruption led to a landslide victory.

Byrne tried to bring attention to housing conditions by moving into the Cabrini Green projects with her husband. "By moving into one of the most deprived areas she hoped to shine a light on the neglected side of the city and in turn hopefully prove that Chicago was a city worth investing in."<sup>127</sup> Her three-week stay raised awareness of the issues in the projects, but little change resulted, and some criticized the move as a "publicity stunt."

After a routine inspection of the bridge over the Illinois Central Railroad in 1982 found serious defects, CTA suspended service south of 61<sup>st</sup> Street on the Green Line's Woodlawn branch. By the end of the year, service had been restored to the University station through Mayor Byrne's \$2 million renovation. Mayor Byrne was criticized for not following through on her progressive platform and catering to the machine politics toward the end of her term. The primary race included Richard M. Daley and U.S. Representative Harold Washington. A massive campaign in the city's "Black Belt" to elect Harold Washington led to him edging out incumbent Byrne in the primary.

Washington's election in the fall was just as close, with racist themes running strong, and many White Democrats unsuccessfully backing a White Republican candidate. Washington sought to change the patronage system in Chicago but found himself at odds with his city council and unable to make significant changes. The national War on Drugs had continued under President Reagan, who passed the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act establishing mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes with huge disparities in punishment for crack (more commonly used by Black people) versus cocaine (more

---

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2019/05/when-the-war-on-drugs-devastated-atlanta-black-neighborhoods-teachers-filled-in-the-void.html>

<sup>127</sup> <https://www.headstuff.org/culture/history/cabrini-green-mayor-jane-byrne/>

commonly used by White people). The law also “channeled \$2 billion into antidrug policing, permitted the death penalty for some drug crimes, and militarized narcotics control.”<sup>128</sup>

Washington won re-election but died in office of a heart attack just a few months into his second term in 1987. Eugene Sawyer was contentiously selected to replace him as Mayor. He lost his reelection in 1989 to Richard M. Daley. A strong War on Drugs in Chicago in the mid-1990s focused on street gangs and targeted gang leadership. After arresting and convicting many people, the leaderless organizations fractured, and more gangs evolved. While the large, organized gangs of the 1980s maintained a semblance of order and protection for the community, smaller cliques were more concerned with respect and reputation.<sup>129</sup> The Robert Taylor Homes, whose residents were largely unemployed, suffered concentrated drug and gang activity and became a symbol for America’s failed housing policies.<sup>130</sup>

In 1992, the City of Chicago combined the Department of Urban Renewal with the Commercial District Development Commission to create the Community Development Commission. The younger Daley focused on revitalizing the downtown core for the business community but worked harder to build bridges in the Black community than his father had done. However, in the neighborhoods, tearing down high-rise housing projects and addressing school failures did little to improve life for Black Chicagoans.

Twelve years after the bridge deficiency discovery on the green line, a major renovation was planned in 1994. The project was controversial with debates over station closings, retention of nighttime “owl” service and when the reopening would occur. Rather than address the infrastructure needs in a piecemeal fashion as is currently being done on the Red-Purple Modernization project, the city closed every station on the green line for two years, leaving commuters out of luck. When the Green Line reopened, the “Jackson Park” branch was renamed the East 63<sup>rd</sup> Street branch, as it no longer serviced Jackson Park. Owl service was retained, but the fate of the tracks to the east remained in the air for another year.<sup>131</sup>

The CTA unveiled a plan to demolish the eastern section of the green line in 1996, rather than replace the bridge. While there was community opposition to the plan, one pastor, rumored to be on the receiving end of city property,<sup>132</sup> supported the track removal. Officials cited public opinion polls supporting demolition by 56 percent. Jacky Grimshaw of the Center for Neighborhood Technology was quoted by the Chicago Tribune: “To lose a fight on dishonest information, inaccurate information and outright lies is extremely disappointing. There is no way we can feel good about it.”<sup>133</sup> The following year, CTA moved forward with its plan to demolish the line. They gave less than 24 hours’ public notice before dismantling the 105-year-old train line.

From 1991 to 1997, federal support for transit fell by 59 percent – from \$41.5 million to \$17.2 million, and in 1998, it went to zero. CTA hired Booz-Allen Hamilton to study and propose network modifications

---

<sup>128</sup> <https://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2019/05/when-the-war-on-drugs-devastated-atlanta-black-neighborhoods-teachers-filled-in-the-void.html>

<sup>129</sup> <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/09/is-chicagos-ghastly-murder-rate-the-result-of-its-1990s-anti-gang-policies.html>

<sup>130</sup> <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/national/090698public-housing.html>

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.chicago-l.org/operations/lines/jacksonpark.html>

<sup>132</sup> <http://www.chicago-l.org/articles/woodlawn3.html>

<sup>133</sup> <http://www.chicago-l.org/articles/woodlawn3.html>

to cut costs. The CTA Board adopted the report in June of 1997. Recommendations in the plan included eliminating “owl service” on the green line between the hours of 1:00 am and 4:00 am, which went into effect in 1997.

### African-American Exodus

While the Black population in Washington Park had been declining steadily since the 1970s, other parts of the city felt the population decline later – and more intensely. With the disappearance of so many of the neighborhood’s residents, schools became “underutilized” and there were fewer people to patronize local shops. Many of those who could afford to leave did and in the 2000s, the city saw the largest drop in African-American population in the country. By 2016, Chicago’s Black population had declined by 350,000 from its peak of nearly 1.2 million in 1980. A UIC report cited rising inequalities as a major reason for the “exodus.”<sup>134</sup>

The 2011 election of Rahm Emmanuel continued to bring attention to the downtown loop and prospective businesses without significant improvements for those living in the Washington Park area and surrounding neighborhoods. Later that year, Mayor Emmanuel announced school closures, including Dyett High School, which in 2008 had seen the largest percentage increase in students attending college in the entire CPS system.<sup>135</sup> The phased closures would result in all current students finishing their high school but no new students enrolling, with complete closure by the 2014-2015 school year.

In response, a coalition of parents, teachers, community members and organizations created the Coalition to Revitalize Dyett. Students filed a Title VI civil rights complaint. The Coalition developed a plan to keep Dyett open with a focus on global leadership and green technology. Under pressure from the community and a publicized hunger strike, CPS agreed to reopen Dyett for the 2016 academic year. CPS returned to the community for suggestions on a reimagined Dyett High School. After several contentious community meetings, the pleas for a focus on global leadership and green technology were ignored and CPS announced Dyett’s opening with a focus on arts. The hunger strike continued, asking that the community’s plan not be ignored. The hunger strike ended in September of 2015, after 34 days, although the community was not successful in getting CPS to use their plan.

In October of 2014, a teenager was shot by police at 41<sup>st</sup> and Pulaski. The city quietly paid the victim’s family \$5 million. Under pressure from a whistleblower, a Cook County judge ordered release of police dashcam video in November of 2015, and the murder caught the attention of the nation. Hours before releasing the video, CPD Officer Jason van Dyke was charged with murder. The video showed him shooting Laquan McDonald 16 times as he walked away from officers, with many bullets still flying after he was down. Pent up anger and frustration led people to take to the streets to demand justice again.

Many point to the murder and associated cover-up as the turning point for Mayor Emmanuel’s reelection possibilities,<sup>136</sup> and he decided not to run for a third term. A guilty conviction inevitably prevented further rioting in 2018. Mayor Lori Lightfoot was sworn into office the following year, promising reforms to the embattled police department. However, the CPD has been slow to change.

---

<sup>134</sup> [https://irpp.uic.edu/pdf/publications/IRRPP\\_StateOfRacialJustice\\_FutureOfBlackChicago.pdf](https://irpp.uic.edu/pdf/publications/IRRPP_StateOfRacialJustice_FutureOfBlackChicago.pdf)

<sup>135</sup> Ewing, Eve L. “Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago’s South Side.” The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2018.

<sup>136</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/the-sudden-but-well-deserved-fall-of-rahm-emanuel>

Even with a new police chief, the protests and looting in the wake of George Floyd's murder are a reminder of how little progress has been made since the city's founding 183 years ago.