Michigan Avenue Streetscape
110th Street to 116th Street

Chicago Department of Transportation
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Introduction and Recommendations

Background & Intent

The Michigan Avenue Corridor is an active commercial street, located on Chicago’s southeast side between 110th Street to the north and 116th Street to the south. Located in the communities of Roseland and West Pullman, the corridor has served as a commercial center since the mid-19th century, serving customers from the surrounding communities including the Pullman Company town to the east. The corridor, originally lined with traditional Chicago commercial buildings, has suffered during the last few decades, and many buildings have been torn down or fallen into disrepair. While many of the northern blocks along the corridor have retained continuous storefronts, the southern end of the corridor contains numerous vacant lots.

Further, the CTA is considering an extension of its Red Line route along the Union Pacific rail line which crosses the corridor. This action has the potential of injecting new energy to the corridor and the neighborhood with a proposed transit stop at Michigan Avenue.

This streetscape master plan provides guidance for future streetscape improvements and plans for complete streets. This intent is more consequential as new development comes into the corridor, and a potential new CTA train station could increase the pedestrian character of the area.

Figure i-2. The map above shows the boundaries of the Michigan Avenue Corridor, extending from 110th Street at the northern boundary to 116th Street at the southern boundary.
Strengths & Challenges

The Michigan Avenue corridor is currently a commercial activity zone with buses, cars, and pedestrians moving through it. There is much opportunity for improvement to the streetscape of the corridor, however, there are multiple challenges to this improvement. The following topics outline the major strengths (or opportunities) and weaknesses (or challenges) of the corridor as it exists today.

Active Business Streetwall

Many of the buildings located along Michigan Avenue house active commercial businesses which contribute to a vibrant and active street life. Storefronts, located adjacent to the sidewalk, open onto the street and encourage foot traffic, window shopping, and informal gatherings and conversations. All of these activities serve to draw customers and contribute to the strength of Michigan Avenue as a destination commercial corridor.

The multi-story height of many of the existing buildings provide opportunities for offices and residences on the corridor. This provides additional foot traffic on the street and comfortable space for pedestrians based on the proportions of building height to street width.

Curb Location and Street Section

Michigan Avenue has wide driving lanes (13 feet), as well as wide, fairly continuous parallel parking lanes that allow for regular flow for car, local truck, and bus traffic. The 10 to 12 feet wide sidewalks are wide enough to provide spaces for street trees and limited street furniture, while allowing ample space for pedestrians next to the buildings. This current street configuration allows for curb extension possibilities with minimal change to the street section.

Wide Side Streets

The existing curb location of the side streets perpendicular to Michigan Avenue provide comfortably wide pedestrian zones. These areas provide an opportunity to expand the narrower streetscape on Michigan Avenue to the side streets, creating small seating and landscape areas. These locations also provide opportunities for additional parking to serve the corridor.

The viaduct of the Union Pacific Railroad just north of 116th Street requires special attention. Because the character of Michigan Avenue changes distinctly south of the viaduct, the strength of the viaduct is its position as a southern gateway to the corridor. While viaducts are often perceived as dark and dangerous to pedestrians, the existing design of this viaduct is better lit and more open than most, presenting less of an interruption to the streetscape. The physical condition of the viaduct is poor, however, and it will need new treatment to integrate into the streetscape.

Transit Service

The neighborhoods along the corridor are well served by transit, with Metra stations along the Metra Electric Line accessible half a mile to the east. The Michigan Avenue corridor itself has several bus lines, bringing customers to the corridor on a regular basis. While the corridor is currently not served by a CTA train line, the proposed Red Line Extension includes a station at the juncture of the Union Pacific rail line and Michigan Avenue. The increased transit access that a new station would provide greatly enhance the desirability of the Michigan commercial corridor as a shopping district and strengthen its role as a community center.

New Development

While the southern portion of the corridor is currently vacant land, there is a large new development planned for one full block of the corridor and an additional multi-park site. New development would activate this currently neglected portion of the street and could incorporate the proposed Red Line Station into the fabric of the neighborhood. The new development should reinforce the positive pedestrian quality of the current corridor without impeding vehicular access to the businesses.

Deteriorating Sidewalks

Most of the sidewalk along the corridor is old and deteriorated. Holes and erosion are both problems along Michigan Avenue. Replacement of all or most of the sidewalks on the corridor is needed in the near future. The sidewalks on the east side of Michigan Avenue are vaulted, though, they only appear in limited locations. All vaulted sidewalks are recommended to be filled, which could add additional expense to the construction of new sidewalks.

Trees

Street trees are an excellent low maintenance way to provide shade and soften the hard edges of the corridor. Currently, the street trees along Michigan Avenue are in poor shape and many tree pits are empty. Planting new street trees and improving their potential lifespan through improved planting conditions results in healthier trees with fuller canopies.

Street Lighting

Street poles are regularly spaced and have been recently painted and outfitted with pedestrian acorn lamps. Light poles are out of date and in need of replacement in the near future, and the overhead wiring should be buried underground.

Limited Parking

The high business activity in the northern portion of the site may lead to the perception of inadequate parking on Michigan Avenue. Retention of the existing on street parking is necessary, but additional management of the spaces should be considered. Other opportunities for parking that will not impede the pedestrian character of the corridor should be considered.

Parkways on Michigan

Some newly developed parcels along Michigan Avenue include 5 feet wide sidewalks constructed with a 5 foot landscaped parkway instead of the typical 12 feet wide walk with tree pits. This narrower walk interrupts the flow of pedestrian and traffic and reduces space for amenities such as street furniture. This method is more typical for a street with less foot traffic than Michigan Avenue.

Figure i-3. Shopping area on Michigan Avenue
1. Existing Conditions

This section of the document addresses the existing conditions on Michigan Avenue between 110th Street and 116th Street. The multi-modal nature of this corridor requires a streetscape that is comfortable for all users of the public way. Analysis focuses on evaluating the sidewalk conditions and pedestrian amenities, identifying availability of transit and bicycle routes, documenting vehicular traffic flow and street infrastructure, and identifying new planned development along the corridor.
Existing Conditions
Sidewalk and Paving

General Conditions
Sidewalks along Michigan Avenue have highly deteriorated over time with the exception of a few recently paved areas at corners and in front of new developments. There is a decorative exposed aggregate striping detail in the sidewalk pavement at regular intervals and around circular tree pits between 111th Street and 115th Street. Originating from a past streetscape implementation, it occurs on both sides of the street.

The sidewalk between 111th Street and 111th Street has more general wear and tear. Hazardous surfaces conditions created by spot patches and uneven erosion of sidewalk paving materials are frequent in this area. The decorative exposed aggregate paving in particular has eroded faster than surrounding concrete.

Sidewalk conditions of side streets adjoining Michigan Avenue vary in their conditions. Streets on the west side of Michigan Avenue have an average amount of wear, with some recently paved segments. To the east of Michigan Avenue, the grade slopes downward and sidewalks on eastern side streets are sometimes stepped to accommodate this change, as indicated in the diagram below. The condition of these stepped walks is badly deteriorated.
Vaulted Sidewalks

Vaulted sidewalks are present on the east side of Michigan Avenue between 110th Street and 116th Street. These sidewalks have an empty cavity beneath a concrete sidewalk slab that is supported by structure. From a visual survey along the corridor, the vaulted spaces are not occupied, and the depth of space below the sidewalk varies. Vaults adjacent to vacant lots have been filled to within two feet of the sidewalk.

Figure 1-4. Exposed I-beams from vaulted sidewalk.

Figure 1-5. Example of sunken patch above vaulted sidewalk.

Heavily cracked sidewalk at corner.

39th St
12th St
111th St
112th St
113th St
110th St

Key
- Parkway
- New Sidewalk
- Intact Sidewalk
- Damaged Sidewalk
- Stepped Sidewalk

Michigan Avenue Streetscape Master Plan, 110th Street to 116th Street
**Existing Conditions**

**Pedestrian Zone**

The sidewalk is an important connection between buildings and users of the public way. When sidewalks are in good condition, they promote more pedestrians on the street, which in turn, leads to more customers in local business. The safety and comfort of the pedestrian zone is strongly influenced by both the physical conditions of the pathway and adjacent land use. Adjacent land use, whether an inviting storefront or parking lot, affects the safety and comfort level of the pedestrian and contributes to the success of the pedestrian zone. To examine the pedestrian experience along the corridor, a PedZone Analysis was completed along Michigan Avenue and adjacent side street segments.

**PedZone Analysis**

This analysis examines the pedestrian zone along Michigan Avenue and designates them as one of three categories. A designation of green means that the zone is both safe and rewarding. Pedestrians would not only feel comfortable walking on the pathway, but also would want to walk there because the adjacent development provides interest or serves as a draw. Yellow defines pedestrian zones that are safe but either uninteresting or uncomfortable for the pedestrian. An example of a pathway that would be defined under this heading is one that runs adjacent to an unscreened parking lot or along a building with a blank facade. Finally, red illustrates locations of potential pedestrian-vehicle conflict, such as curb cuts and crosswalks. The diagram below details how the Michigan Avenue corridor ranks.

**Michigan Avenue between 111th and 115th Street**

The majority of Michigan Avenue north of 115th can be defined as both safe and rewarding for pedestrians. There are a limited number of curb cuts and a continuous street wall with a high level of visual interest. This is enhanced by the number of active businesses with display windows facing the street.

**Michigan Avenue north of 111th and south of 115th Street**

The majority of the corridor north of 111th and south of 115th is designated yellow; safe, but unrewarding. This is due to the large amount of underdeveloped land and surface parking lots in these portions of the corridor. South of 115th Street, the pedestrian zone will be largely influenced by the type of future development that is built along Michigan Avenue between the

**Union Pacific Railroad Viaduct**

Northeast of 111th Street, redevelopment of existing buildings and infill development would increase pedestrian comfort in this area.
**Union Pacific Railroad Viaduct**

The Union Pacific railroad viaduct crossing Michigan Avenue allows passage underneath the railroad tracks and is a point of entry into the corridor. Although it is currently in poor condition, it has the potential to create a gateway to the community area. When compared with many viaducts in the city, the Union Pacific viaduct is open to daylight, reducing a perception that viaducts are unfriendly pedestrian environments.

**Pedestrian Destinations & Context**

The western access to Michigan Avenue is from residential neighborhoods and from the largely commercial area between State Street and Michigan Avenue. This strip is part of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District directed toward increasing business development in the community. The eastern access to the corridor is from residential neighborhoods. In addition, several destination areas are located to the east: Palmer Park, the Pullman Historic District, and the Gwendolyn Brooks High School campus.

In addition, the Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 recommends a north-south bicycle route along Indiana Avenue. For cyclists traveling west to access the proposed Red Line station or the Michigan Avenue Corridor, a substantial ridge exists at the north end of the corridor that flattens at the south end. Their access will likely occur on these flatter streets—along 115th Street or Kensington Avenue.

**Figure 1-10. The map above shows destinations and points of interest within the Michigan corridor and surrounding communities.**
Existing Conditions
Street and Sidewalk Sections

Michigan Avenue
The Michigan Avenue pedestrian zone between the curb and property line is generally consistent along Michigan Avenue at approximately twelve feet wide. Figure 1-11 is a typical section for Michigan Avenue: the road pavement is 42 feet wide and the pedestrian zone from curb face to property line is 12 feet wide and paved. Building and tree pit presence varies. The Seaway Bank sidewalk is a unique situation (Figure 1-13) where a 5 foot parkway replaces the typical tree pit for the portion of Michigan Avenue and side street in front of this building.

Side Streets
Residential Side streets have a pavement width of 30 feet, are typically one way, and have an ample pedestrian zone of 18 feet. This may include a parkway, as illustrated in Figure 1-14. Where planted parkways are present, the resulting sidewalk width is reduced to a minimum 5 feet wide. Refer to Figure 1-3 Sidewalk Conditions Diagram for locations of planted parkways.

The commercial cross streets of 111th Street and 115th Street have unique sidewalk sections. The right-of-way of 111th Street widens to 100 feet east of Michigan Avenue, and the sidewalks are wider as well. The 115th street intersection at Michigan Avenue (Figure 1-17) has a narrow sidewalk where the roadbed widens to accommodate additional right turn lanes. Sidewalks of 9 feet or less prevent the installation of street trees and most types of street furniture. Special care is needed in this narrow sidewalk to maintain pedestrian flow while providing streetscape amenities.

Figure 1-11. Michigan Avenue typical section.
Figure 1-12. Michigan Avenue typical street view.
Figure 1-13. Seaway Bank parkway.
Figure 1-14. Residential side street typical section
Figure 1-15. Typical side street parkway (E. 113th Place).
Figure 1-16. Typical side street paved walk (E. 112th Street).
Figure 1-17. 115th Street section at Michigan Avenue.
Figure 1-18. North side of 115th Street looking east.
Figure 1-19. South side of 115th Street looking east.
Roseland Plaza
A new development is proposed for the block west of Michigan Avenue and south of 115th Street, replacing primarily vacant land. A drive-through drugstore and parking lot is also proposed for the southeast corner of Michigan Avenue and 115th Street. The Roseland Plaza development proposes a retail strip development set back from the street with surface parking lots and side building facades facing Michigan Avenue. This represents a change from the building to street relationship north of 115th Street, where a more traditional storefront street face dominates.

Chicago Transit Authority Red Line Extension
A possible Red Line extension plan from the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) proposes continuing the Red Line south
Existing Conditions

Lighting

Michigan Avenue is lit with streetlights approximately 80’ to 110’ on center using embedded concrete poles with cobra head fixtures. Streetlights and viaduct lighting are aerially wired.

An exception to the standard spacing is the intersection of Michigan Avenue and 116th Street, where there are ComEd electrical poles at the northwest and southeast corners. Overhead wires crossing Michigan Avenue were noted at the 112th Street intersection where older, free standing traffic lights are still in use.

Some of the light poles along Michigan Avenue are outfitted with fabric banners, and between 111th Street and 112th Place, there are hanging metal signs. Existing signage is inconsistent throughout the corridor and represents different installation dates. Light poles were recently painted black, and new acorn style pedestrian light fixtures were installed.
Michigan Avenue Streetscape Master Plan, 110th Street to 116th Street

Existing Conditions

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is a vital component of an urban streetscape. On-street parking serves the adjacent businesses by providing convenient spaces for patrons. Also, it serves as a buffer between the faster moving vehicles and bicyclists and the slower moving pedestrians on the sidewalk. Additionally, on-street parking serves as an inexpensive traffic calming device, making the travel lanes appear narrower, so drivers travel at slower speeds and are more cautious of pedestrians or open doors.

Parking Inventory

This inventory was conducted to determine how much on-street parking is available along the corridor. The results are presented in the diagram below. Parking spaces are not striped, so spaces were quantified by measuring the length of non-metered curb space available for parking.

Between 111th and 115th Street, parking is predominately on-street and metered. The meters are available in increments up to 2 hours and apply from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. everyday.

South of 115th Street, parking is non-metered. Parking is restricted on the east side of Michigan between Kensington Avenue and 116th Street because of bus stops and the viaduct. The west side of Michigan between 117th Street and 116th Street permits on-street parking along the northern portion of the block but prohibits parking during morning rush hour between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m., Monday through Friday.

North of 111th Street, parking is non-metered with a 1 hour time limit on both the east and west side of the street.

Off-Street Parking Access

Off-street access driveways from Michigan Avenue reduce on-street parking capacity, as well as increase conflicts with pedestrians.

Figure 1-25. Existing Parking Diagram
Existing Conditions
Traffic: Cars, Transit and Bicycles

Cars
Michigan Avenue is a 66 foot right-of-way with a centerline and crosswalk pavement markings. On-street parking is not striped, and there are no marked bicycle lanes. There are single traffic lanes in each direction on Michigan Avenue thirteen feet wide with eight foot parking lanes on either side. Additionally, there are designated turning lanes at 115th and 111th Streets. Signaled intersections and one way streets are indicated in Figure 1-27. The signalized intersections indicated in the diagram below all have updated traffic signals with the exception of 112th street, which has several older traffic signals.

Transit
Bus
The Michigan Avenue corridor is well served by both Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus lines and Pace lines. There are three bus lines on Michigan Avenue: #119 provides service between 95th Street and 119th Street, #14 provides service between 95th and 113th Street with limited service to 137th Street and the Calumet Industrial District, and Pace #353 provides service between 111th Street and 127th Street. Bus routes on 115th Street and 111th Street provide east-west connections. Bus routes are indicated on the Neighborhood Transit Routes map inset at left. In addition, Michigan Avenue has JC Decaux bus shelters at 111th Street, 113th Street and Kensington Avenue.

Rail
Several Metra stations are located slightly over half a mile from the site. One is located south of the project area at State Street and three are located east of the project area at 111th Street, 115th Street and 111th Street. This is in addition to the new CTA Red Line station proposed at the junction of Michigan Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad as part of the Red Line extension plan.

Bicycle
Improving connectivity throughout the Michigan Avenue corridor is an important aspect of the plan that will make bicycle connections easier. There are two major physical barriers that limit access— the Metra Electric Line to the east and the Union Pacific Railroad at the southern edge. Both
provide a physical barrier between adjacent neighborhoods and can complicate bicyclists traveling to the corridor.

To the east of the Michigan Avenue corridor is the Pullman neighborhood. This neighborhood is both a storied historic community and tourist destination with strong historic ties to the Roseland and West Pullman communities. The Pullman Neighborhood is accessible through the Metra Electric viaducts at 113th and 111th Street. These streets are also suggested bike routes according to the Streets for Cycling Plan 2020. Indiana Avenue is currently the suggested route for north-south travelers two blocks east of Michigan Avenue. While the Michigan Avenue corridor is not currently a suggested bike route, it is wide enough to include shared bicycle lanes.

Older bike racks were noted along Michigan Avenue, however, the locations are irregular and do not reflect the current business distribution. For example, several bike racks are located near currently vacant land.

Traffic: Cars, Transit and Bicycles

Figure 1-27. New JC Decaux Bus Shelter.

Figure 1-28. Neighborhood Bike Routes

Source: Streets for Cycling Plan 2020

Traffic Diagram Key
- Bus Stop
- Bus Stop with Shelter
- Bike Rack
- Light pole with Traffic Signal (new)
- Traffic Signal (old)
- Stop Sign
Existing Conditions

Trees and Street Furniture

The Michigan Avenue corridor currently has street trees between 111th and 115th Streets, planted in either circular
grates or square pits. Street furniture is limited to mailboxes,
trash cans and news boxes. Bicycle rack locations are discussed
in the Traffic section of this document. There are no benches
or functional kiosks in the corridor. An abandoned newsstand
is located on the corner of 115th Street.

Street Trees
Remnants of a previous streetscape installation remain along the
corridor, including regularly spaced tree pits, some with grates.
Most of the trees currently existing in these pits are relatively
young, possibly planted in the last decade to replace the original
trees. Some existing trees are dead or damaged, and most are
still young with minimal canopies. No street trees are present
south of 115th Street or north of 111th Street.

Between 111th Street and 113th Street, trees are planted in
circular grates 4 feet in diameter. All of these trees are young
and still developing. A few have been removed, likely due
to damage. Between 113th Street and 115th Street trees are
planted predominately in square tree pits with no grates. Soil
compaction was noted in many of the unprotected square
tree pits. Additionally, some circular tree grates are in place
in this area, and most of the trees planted in circular grates
have reached maturity. Going forward, rectangular grates
and structural soil will be required for street trees along the
corridor.

Street Furniture
Michigan Avenue currently has regularly spaced trash cans and
mailboxes. Mailboxes are located approximately every block
between 111th Street and 115th Street. Round planters are
located between 113th Street and 113th Place. The planters are
in poor condition, and no plants were observed at the time of
the site visit. Newspaper boxes are located at 115th Street and
111th Street.
Existing Conditions

Stormwater

Placement of stormwater inlets and catch basins are indicated on the diagram below. Storm drains are either round or square. Currently stormwater from the street drains into the City's combined sewer.

Figure 1-33. Square storm drain.

Figure 1-34. Round storm drain

Figure 1-35. Storm Inlet Diagram
2. Master Plan

This section outlines recommendations for the Michigan Avenue right-of-way and adjoining side streets. These include options for the street paving and crosswalks, street furniture, lighting, and identity features to highlight the unique characteristics of the corridor. Additionally, recommendations are made to apply best management practices for stormwater.
Streetscape Master Plan

Introduction

The streetscape master plan focuses on improvements to the Michigan Avenue right-of-way and adjoining side streets. As it exists today, Michigan Avenue is a busy pedestrian shopping corridor for most of its length. Vehicular traffic is slow with frequent short term stops and metered parking along the street. Sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate the high level of pedestrian traffic, but deteriorated paving conditions and the lack of healthy street trees and vegetation creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment.

This master plan addresses the strengths of the corridor such as sustained pedestrian use and commercial activity. The main goal of the plan is to facilitate existing heavy foot traffic while enhancing the overall pedestrian experience and strengthening the function of the corridor as a beautiful and comfortable public space. Supporting the health and longevity of street trees greens the city and greatly enhances the streetscape environment.

As an additional goal, streetscape elements will serve to celebrate neighborhood identity and define this commercial corridor in order to strengthen its commercial base in the surrounding community. The final goal of the master plan is to promote a sustainable corridor through stormwater management and plantings, integrated with seating areas and streetscape design. These three goals enhanced pedestrian experience, community identity, and sustainability are the basis for the master plan.

Streetscape Recommendations

The master plan defines a Base Streetscape, inclusive of the minimum of all required elements to achieve a successful, comfortable baseline pedestrian way. Multiple optional items have also been included allowing additional streetscape improvements depending on the level of funding available for each part of the corridor. The optional items are designed to integrate in case different segments of the corridor are developed at different times. Table 2-1 outlines the proposed Base Streetscape and optional items along with page references and estimated installation costs. This section provides an overview of each of the base streetscape elements and options with specific applications referenced within this document. Each item is keyed with a letter, utilized throughout the master plan.

Base Streetscape

The Base Streetscape focuses on creating a consistent and pleasant pedestrian realm and represents the baseline improvements from which further options may build upon. The proposed streetscape elements, which focus on recommendations for a typical Michigan Avenue block, are further defined on pages 24 and 25, and include the following items:

Replace Sidewalk

The deteriorated sidewalk conditions present throughout the corridor should be replaced, so that a consistent pavement exists along Michigan Avenue. Sidewalk treatments for specific locations are addressed later in this document. Note: The east side of Michigan Avenue appears to have or to have had at one time vaulted sidewalks. These vaults will need further examination prior to estimating costs for vault filling in these locations.

Street Trees

Street trees are an important functional and aesthetic streetscape element, providing a buffer to traffic, filtering light, providing shade, and reducing the urban heat island effect. The sidewalk section of Michigan Avenue is wide enough to support street trees, and planting the trees in 4’ x 6’ grates will maximize a comfortable walking width for active shopping traffic.

Lighting

Updated street lighting, including the Chicago Gateway 2000 pole, luminaire, and mast arm should be installed along the corridor spaced regularly depending on the existence of driveways, alleys, intersections and proposed street trees. Single Acorn Pedestrian Poles should be installed, alternating between the street lights. This placement is based on the standards in the City of Chicago’s 2002 “Chicago Street Lighting Master Plan”. The Gateway Pole uses a ped-pole cut off MH light fixture to more efficiently direct light onto the roadway, parking, and sidewalk zones. The luminaire itself is designed to spread light in an oval pattern, which better concentrates light on the right-of-way.

Street Furniture

The standard Victor Stanley Steelsite trash container should be installed at the ends of all blocks and at opposite corners of four way intersections. If the trash container is new for the site and not simply replacing an existing container, coordination is required with the Department of Streets and Sanitation to verify trash pickup. In addition, midblock receptacles should be installed on longer blocks on the east side of Michigan, opposite from all “T” intersections. Coordinate with the Department of Streets and Sanitation for waste pick up if receptacle is a new location.

Bicycle racks are key elements in the streetscape design for streets with commercial development. The standard U-shaped bicycle rack is recommended, with approximately two installed per block. As with the trash receptacles, which are also usually installed at two per block, additional bicycle racks may be necessary for the longer blocks, opposite from all “T” intersections. Additional bike racks should be included in the design of the proposed Chicago Transit Authority train station once its location is determined.

Benches can serve as a resting area or as drop off and pick up locations for shoppers and employees. Because of the limited width along Michigan Avenue, recommended bench installation for the Michigan corridor is at the intersections of side streets, along the side streets, and where the sidewalk is widened and can more easily accommodate furniture without impeding regular street activities. The use of pavers, planters, and benches to create small plazas on the side streets of Michigan Avenue will allow for impromptu gatherings.

Hanging Baskets and Planters

Hanging baskets are recommended to be installed on all Chicago Gateway 2000 poles along Michigan Avenue and planters at seating areas on side streets, with the exception of poles at signalized intersections. The baskets and planters should be maintained by the local Special Services Area organization through a maintenance agreement, with landscape material changes per season.
Optional Pocket Parks
Finally, this section outlines transforming one or two parcels of vacant land along the corridor into public open space in the form of a plaza near a heavily utilized bus stop and/or an overlook on the bluff. Refer to page 31.

Optional West and East Side Street Treatments
Refer to pages 12 through 13 for recommendations for unsignalized and minor signalized side streets. West side streets are illustrated with a variety of options from expanded sidewalks to diagonal parking. East side streets are sloped and options for addressing accessibility are illustrated.

Optional Stormwater Management
Refer to pages 34 and 35 for stormwater infiltration practices that would further enhance the corridor. During the streetscape enhancement of the corridor, stormwater management should be addressed to reduce impacts on the city’s sewer systems. Because of the expense of excavation and installation, however, these elements are incorporated as optional tasks. Each item may be utilized separately or combined to have a greater impact on managing rainwater on the corridor.

Notes on Estimated Costs
The costs estimated in Table 2-1 are for one typical block, inclusive of two Michigan Avenue block faces and three side street block faces, as illustrated on pages 24 and 25. Three side street block faces are included as the typical block represents the shorter block faces on the west side of Michigan Avenue. The east side block faces are approximately two typical block faces in length. There are approximately twelve typical blocks along the corridor study area. Refer to Figure 2-1 for locations and numbers of typical blocks.

Also, note that some items are included as one time costs, such as the special paving at 111th and 115th Streets and the pocket parks. All of the west side street, east side street, and stormwater estimates should be added on top of the base street treatment per location. Estimates are based on 2010-2011 typical streetscape construction costs.

Optional Stormwater Management Practices
Optional stormwater management elements that may be installed separately or together to treat portions of stormwater falling on the street in addition to the Base Streetscape and Optional Streetscape Items.

Notes on Estimated Costs
The costs estimated in Table 2-1 are for one typical block, inclusive of two Michigan Avenue block faces and three side street block faces, as illustrated on pages 24 and 25. Three side street block faces are included as the typical block represents the shorter block faces on the west side of Michigan Avenue. The east side block faces are approximately two typical block faces in length. There are approximately twelve typical blocks along the corridor study area. Refer to Figure 2-1 for locations and numbers of typical blocks.

Also, note that some items are included as one time costs, such as the special paving at 111th and 115th Streets and the pocket parks. All of the west side street, east side street, and stormwater estimates should be added on top of the base street treatment per location. Estimates are based on 2010-2011 typical streetscape construction costs.
The Base Streetscape introduces basic streetscape upgrades to the corridor to provide consistent treatment along the corridor and incorporate the side streets up to the alley.

**New Sidewalk Pavement.** New pavement to replace current deteriorated sidewalk pavement. Include paved seating area located on side streets 25 feet back from the Michigan Avenue right-of-way. New curb and gutter to be provided.

**Tree Grates and Street Trees.** Trees installed in 4x6 feet grates spaced evenly. Structural soil installed beneath trees as required in the Chicago Landscape Ordinance.

**New Street Lights and Burried Cables.** Replace existing Cobra style streetlights with Gateway 2000 Pole. Streetlights should be located every 125-145 feet, as recommended in the Chicago Street Lighting Master Plan. Bury overhead electrical wiring. Existing signal poles are kept, but Gateway mast acorns added for lighting.

**Pedestrian Lights.** Add 16’ tall single acorn pedestrian lights along blocks to enhance the pedestrian experience.

**Street Furniture.** See below:

- **Benches.** Install on side streets, see Figure 2-2 for placement. One bench on each side of the street (North and South). See Figure 2-5 for sample bench style.

- **Trash Receptacles.** Install Victor Stanley Steelite trash receptacles. Typically two per block at corners. Figure 2-7 for sample trash receptacle.

- **Bike Racks.** Bike racks located two on every block face and at shopping centers.

- **Hanging Baskets.** Add hanging baskets to Gateway street light poles.

**Pavers Between Street Trees.** Pavers installed between trees to improve aesthetics and allow water and air to infiltrate the ground and reach tree roots.

**Access Drives**

Access drives reduce the safety and comfort of pedestrians, as discussed in the PedZone Analysis in the Existing Conditions section of this document. The proposed development plan for parcels on Michigan Avenue, south of 115th Street, calls for several new access drives. Because these are areas where pedestrians and vehicles share paths, the sidewalks should continue through the driveway so that drivers are reminded to yield to pedestrians when using parking lots. Access drives shall meet all ADA requirements.
Base Streetscape: Typical Side Streets & Signalized Intersections

The Base Streetscape will extend improvements to the alley with a paved seating area extending approximately 25’ back from the Michigan Avenue right-of-way.

**Planters & Seating Area.** Install one planter at each seating area. Streetscape seating areas use decorative pavers to add visual interest and distinguish it from the regular sidewalk. See Figure 2-6 for an example of a seating area.

**Parkway: Non-Signalized Intersection.** Typical side street streetscapes will continue beyond the seating area to the alley and will include a planted parkway with trees. This includes Kensington Avenue and streets west of Michigan Avenue.

**Parkway: Minor and Major Signalized Intersections.** For minor and major signalized intersections, the streetscape beyond the 25’ seating area will consist of trees in tree grates similar to Michigan Avenue and continuing to the alley. Non-signalized side streets fronted by commercial buildings with street level windows may also prefer to use the tree pit with grate option. These include 111th, 113th, and 115th Streets.

![Figure 2-5. Victor Stanley Ribbon Bench (RB-28).](image)

![Figure 2-7. Victor Stanley Steelsite trash receptacle (S-42).](image)

![Figure 2-6. Example of a seating area.](image)

![Figure 2-8. Typical Side Street Streetscape Items](image)

![Figure 2-9. Minor and Major Signalized Intersection Streetscape Items](image)
Optional Streetscape Items: Corridor-Wide Identity Markers

Identity Banners & Pole Fixtures.
Along Michigan Avenue, incorporating permanent identity banners on street light poles are an opportunity to express the corridor character along the street. Pairing temporary community banners with permanent decorative fixtures on light poles will promote the corridor to residents and visitors. The potential designs for the identity fixtures are drawn from the unique character of the area and are illustrated in Figure 2-10. These permanent banners can be cut from metal and colored to match the light poles.

Figure 2-10. Permanent Identity Banner on Lighting Options

Figure 2-11. Optional Streetscape Items - Typical Michigan Ave. Section
Community Identity

There are several options for the Michigan Avenue Corridor to increase its community identity while improving streetscape aesthetics.

**Crosswalk Pavers.** Decorative stamped and colored asphalt used to distinguish crosswalks. Suggested site locations shown in Figure 2-12 and illustrated in Figure 2-13.

**Intersection Paving.** Decorative intersection paving using inlaid thermoplastic will be utilized at the intersections of 111th and 115th Streets creating visual gateways for pedestrians and drivers alike. A potential design is inspired from the name of the Roseland Neighborhood itself and illustrated in Figure 2-13.

**Community Murals.** Figure 2-12 above illustrates possible locations for community murals in the area. This is not a CDOT streetscape improvement item, but they can be coordinated with improvements in the public right-of-way. See Community Mural sidebar at right for more information.

**Community Murals**

Mural development should be led by neighborhood residents, organizations or other booster groups and coordinated with the location-specific property and business owners.

Mural development should be led by neighborhood residents, organizations or other booster groups and coordinated with the location-specific property and business owners.

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs is an available resource. Partnerships may also be possible with area youth organizations such as Gallery 37, which has several campuses in the area, or with nearby Gwendolyn Brooks High School.

Figure 2-12. Community identity map.

Figure 2-13. Potential Intersection Paving Designs

Community murals add color and movement to the street while expressing the character of the neighborhood.
111th Street Intersection

Sidewalks along 111th Street at the Michigan Avenue intersection are comfortably wide. Curbs do not need to be moved within the Base Streetscape. Extension of the streetscape around the corner, extended to the alley should be provided.

Extension to State Street

The hospital streetscape further west of State Street along 111th has existing double acorn lights and new sidewalks. Extending the Michigan Avenue streetscape to State will complete this section of 111th Street. The Base Streetscape improvement have applied to this additional segment of the streetscape master plan.
Streetscape Master Plan

Optional Side Street Treatments: 111th Street Treatment to State Street

KEY
- New Street Lights.
- Street Trees in Grates.
- Double Acorn Pedestrian Lights.
- Trash Receptacles.
- Pay Box.
- Bike Racks.
- Hanging Baskets.
- Permeable Pavers.
- Stamped Asphalt Crosswalk.
115th Street Intersection

The roadway width of 115th Street currently widens approaching Michigan Avenue from both directions in order to include left and right turn lanes. In order to accommodate this roadbed widening, the sidewalks at this intersection are reduced in width to only 7 feet wide. 115th Street is a busy thoroughfare which will receive an increase in pedestrian traffic once the new development is built to the south. The majority of the traffic continues through the intersection and, with the new development, more traffic will be making left turns. Since the intersection is signalized, reducing the street width and eliminating the right turn lane will allow for widening of the sidewalks. Recommendation: A traffic study should be done to measure the impacts of the new development on this intersection.

Continuation of the Michigan Avenue streetscape on 115th Street as far as the alley will incorporate this intersection into the Michigan Avenue corridor.

Intersection Treatment. This segment of 115th is included in the Base Streetscape with a proposal to restripe the lanes and move the curbs to accommodate wider sidewalks at the corners.
Community Pocket Parks

The City currently owns several parcels along the Michigan Avenue Corridor. These parcels provide an opportunity to expand the fairly narrow streetscape at key points to provide community gathering and seating areas. Two locations provide the best opportunities for these pocket parks to occur. Installation of both are recommended to serve different uses at each end of the corridor.

Pocket Park 1
The bus stop at the northwest corner of the 113th Street intersection is well used and contains a bus shelter. This shelter location currently blocks the pedestrian way along Michigan Avenue. The vacant parcel at the northwest corner provides an opportunity to expand this bus stop area and provide additional seating for the people waiting for the bus, as well as those on a shopping break. Because of the limited size of this parcel, it should be mainly paved with decorative paving, creating a plaza type open space, with trees in grates. The side of the adjacent building could be covered with a community mural to add further interest. Finally, the bus shelter should be moved back out of the pedestrian zone.

Pocket Park 2
The second location, at the south end of the corridor, would serve two purposes. This location on the northeast corner of 114th Place and Michigan Avenue is much larger than Park 1. A wider plaza area along the street, designed similarly to Park 1, would serve shoppers and provide some community gathering space. Because the lot slopes downhill to the east, the plaza area should be retained at the street level where the remainder of the space could be terraced down at a lower level than Michigan Avenue. This terraced area could be utilized for community garden space, which would be visible from the above plaza. The terraces could be defined with brick retaining walls and further divided to provide distinctive edges to delineate and contain each plot.

Landscaping and trees make this plaza an enjoyable place to sit and observe the street.
Side Street Options

Side streets abutting Michigan Avenue have a wide right-of-way, which creates an opportunity to increase the functionality of these streets. The options to the left illustrate options for west side streets and Kensington Avenue. Options 4a and 4b on page 33 address the slopes on east side streets.

**Base.** For streets where moving the curb is not recommended, the side street template from Base Streetscape should be used. At Minor Signalized Intersections, reducing the paving width may be inappropriate.

**Option 1a.** Bump out with parkway. This option is recommended for side streets with existing mature trees or residential land use. Bump outs add greenery and create buffered places along the corridor to rest and increase safety by reducing crossing distance.

**Option 1b.** Bump out with tree pits. This option is recommended for side streets with businesses on the side street.

**Option 2.** A “mini plaza” or multi-functional area for special events, is suggested for 112th Place adjacent to the Alderman’s office. This area would be created by expanding the parkway into the parking lane and removing on-street parking on that side.

**Option 3.** Bump out with diagonal parking. This option is recommended to expand on-street parking where diagonal parking would not be interrupted by access drives. CDOT Bureau of Traffic approves all new diagonal parking locations.

**Option 4a, Page 33.** Sloped street with ADA accessible switchback and Diagonal Parking. 112th Street and 114th Place are lower traffic streets, and combined with bump outs, could provide additional parking spaces by installing diagonal parking.

**Option 4b, Page 33.** Sloped street with ADA accessible switchback. 113th Street is a higher traffic, signalized intersection, and so bump outs are not recommended.
Sloped Streets

Sloped streets on the west side of Michigan Avenue require some modification to be accessible for people with disabilities. The following suggested options use switchbacks and hand railings to achieve ADA accessibility. Block lengths and slope vary, so these options are shown as examples only, intended to illustrate schematic design concepts.

The sloped condition of these streets offers a unique opportunity in the flat Chicago landscape. These options recommend maintaining the paved seating area in the Base Streetscape at a level grade 30 feet inward from Michigan Avenue. A natural grade change results in a substantial overlook. Despite the low height, the overlook would still be fenced and could be coupled with a mounted informational plaque about the history of the neighborhood.

Figure 2-23. Longitudinal section and plan showing platform and switchback with diagonal parking option
Option 4a

Figure 2-24. Longitudinal section and plan showing platform and switchback options for ADA capability on 114th Street
Option 4b
Stormwater Options

Optional Stormwater Management Practices design options describe several methods for managing stormwater on the corridor. These methods are chosen to integrate with a high pedestrian traffic street and limited maintenance funds. When implemented, their benefits include reducing the number of combined sewer overflow days per year and a reduction in basement flooding.

- **Stormwater Planter Bump Out.** Located at the terminus of “T” intersections and at corners with bump outs described in Optional Side Street Treatments (see page 32), these stormwater-treating planters occupy the space in the parking lane that is currently unused. Recommended plantings should be low maintenance, consisting of hardy shrubs and perennials that are water and salt tolerant.

- **Stormwater Tree Pits.** Stormwater tree pits are a Best Management Practice (BMP) option that may be used throughout the corridor in lieu of conventional tree pits. Similar to Stormwater planters, stormwater tree pits intercept rain runoff from the road bed traveling along the gutter through grated intake slots in the curb. This water is allowed to infiltrate and be absorbed and cleansed by the tree roots. Stormwater tree pits are not intended to detain high volumes of water from large storm events. Instead, excess water will bypass the intake grate and continuing to the storm sewer inlet. Stormwater tree pits, when used in conjunction with other stormwater management methods, help to reduce peak flow for frequently occurring storms and improve water quality.

- **Pervious Pavement Parking Lane.** Adjacent to asphalt driving lanes, parking lanes can either be pervious concrete or asphalt. Pervious concrete or asphalt can allow stormwater to infiltrate the pavement, reducing rainwater into the inlet. They are a successful stormwater BMP used for narrow streets in Portland, Oregon, and other cities.
Michigan Avenue Streetscape Master Plan, 110th Street to 116th Street

Streetscape Master Plan
Optional Stormwater Management Practices: Stormwater Options

Figure 2-26. Locations of Proposed Stormwater Bump Outs

Figure 2-27. Section A, Stormwater Bump Out

Figure 2-28. Section B, Stormwater Tree Pit

Figure 2-29. Stormwater Planter.

Figure 2-30. Permeable Paver Parking Lane.
Implementation Leaders

The streetscape improvements in this master plan require involvement and coordination of community leaders, developers, and economic development groups. These leaders are entities like the alderman’s office, the Special Service Area, Chamber of Commerce, and other community booster groups.

Developer Responsibilities

While any entity can initiate the recommendations found within this masterplan, developers with projects on Michigan Avenue or 111th Street have a special responsibility to work with the City to include the Base Streetscape elements as part of any infrastructure improvements. Some elements may be able to be phased and added at a later time.

Special Service Area (SSA) Involvement

SSA #40: Michigan Avenue-Roseland funds expanded business improvement services and programs through a localized property tax levy within the area (for SSA boundary, refer Figure 2-32). The SSA would have a particular interest in investing and maintaining the identity and beautification elements recommended in the master plan. These include the special intersection paving, the identity banners, hanging baskets, bike racks, and crosswalk paving.

Community Group Involvement

Murals throughout the corridor can be spearheaded by any kind of community group. The process involves finding interested property and business owners as locations for murals. The map in Figure 2-12 identifies possible locations for murals.

Recommended Priority Investments

The area covered in this master plan stretches many blocks along Michigan Avenue and west along 111th Street. With limited funding available, this corridor is too long to implement all streetscape improvements at one time. The following prioritizes segments of the corridor to focus improvements in order of need.

Priority Area: Level 1

As funding becomes available, priority should be given to the blocks highlighted in red in Figure 2-31 and their side streets. The physical conditions of the streetscape are very deteriorated in this area, and pedestrian accessibility and safety should be addressed here first. Fixing crumbling sidewalks, replacing street lights, and adding street trees with tree grates are all priority actions in this area.

The steep sidewalk, along with the condition of the sidewalk stairs on the side streets in this area make them hard to navigate for pedestrians. Streetscape projects in these areas could install the ramping options illustrated in Figures 2-23 and 2-24.

Priority Area: Level 2

A second priority level is established for the area between 112th Street and 111th Street and its side streets. These blocks make up the heart of the South Michigan Avenue shopping district in Roseland, and streetscape improvements along this part of the corridor may spur potential positive economic development effects. Also, the parcels on these blocks are small with limited vacant lots and have many individual property owners. This makes them less likely to be redeveloped and have their streetscapes completed by major redevelopment projects.

Priority Area: Level 3

As parcels redevelop along the corridor, opportunities to develop the streetscape continuity will emerge in Priority Area 3 and their side streets as the Michigan Avenue and 111th Street streetscapes fill in. The streetscape in these areas is in fair condition and, in some cases, has been moderately improved by new construction projects in the area making it less of a priority than other areas.

Priority Area: Redevelopment

The green blocks in Figure 2-31 are a targeted redevelopment area along South Michigan Avenue. This area will likely be treated with a new base streetscape as part of developer new construction on adjacent parcels.

Possible Funding Sources

Different funding sources for streetscape implementation are available to community leaders, economic development organizations, and community groups depending on the applicant. Below are the most common funding sources:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

South Michigan Avenue is part of the Roseland/Michigan TIF District, established in 2002 and expiring in 2026. (Refer to Figure 2-31 for TIF District boundary). Information regarding the TIF can be found at https://data.cityofchicago.org/browse?q=roseland/michigan%20TIF&sortBy=relevance.

TIF is a special funding tool used by the City of Chicago to promote public and private investment across the city. Funds are used to build and repair roads and infrastructure, clean polluted land, and put vacant properties back to productive use, usually in conjunction with private development projects. Funds are generated by growth in the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of properties within a designated district over a period of 25 years. Participating companies and projects must comply with all federal, state and local program requirements. (http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/tax_increment_financingprogram.html).

Illinois EPA 319 Grant

Grants are available to local units of government and other organizations to protect water quality in Illinois. Projects must address water quality issues relating directly to nonpoint
source pollution. Funds can be used for the implementation of watershed management plans including the development of information/education programs and for the installation of best management practices.

Illinois EPA receives these funds through Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act and administers the program within Illinois. The maximum federal funding available is 60 percent. The program period is two years unless otherwise approved. This is a reimbursement program. (http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/non-point.html).

**Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program for Stormwater Management (IGIG)**

Grant programs are available to local units of government and other organizations to implement green infrastructure best management practices to control stormwater runoff for water quality protection in Illinois. Projects must be located within a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) or Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) area. Funds are limited to the implementation of projects to install best management practices (BMPs). This is a reimbursement program. Grant recipients must perform the work, pay project costs, and submit invoice(s) with supporting documentation before Illinois EPA will reimburse recipients for any approved costs.

Under IGIG, the Illinois EPA will accept proposals for the following three program categories:

**Combined Sewer Overflow Rehabilitation Category**
- Maximum IGIG amount is $1,000,000 or 85 percent of the eligible project cost, whichever is lower.
- Minimum local match requirement is 15 percent.
- Illinois EPA anticipates awarding up to 10 of these grants per year.

**Stormwater Retention and Infiltration Category**
- Maximum IGIG amount is $750,000 or 75 percent of the eligible project cost, whichever is lower.
- Minimum local match requirement is 25 percent.
- Illinois EPA anticipates awarding up to 18 of these grants per year.

**Green Infrastructure Small Projects Category**
- Maximum IGIG amount is $75,000 or 75 percent of the eligible project cost, whichever is lower.
- Minimum local match requirement is 25 percent.
- Illinois EPA anticipates awarding up to 13 of these grants per year.

http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/igig.html

**Public Art Grants**

While public art is not a CDOT streetscape improvement, it offers a great way for the community to get involved in the neighborhood. Outside grants are available from a variety of sources. Some local grant sources include:

**Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs**

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago’s artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago’s non-profit arts sector, independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City’s future cultural and economic growth, via the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan. A list of grants is available here: http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/provdrs/grants.html

**Illinois Arts Council**

The Illinois Arts Council serves the people of Illinois through a variety of Grant Programs and Special Initiatives meant to support Illinois’ arts sector, advance art education, and foster creativity and working artists. A list of grants is available here: http://www.arts.illinois.gov/grants-programs.