



# Bay View

## NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN 2040 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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# BayView

## NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN 2040

FINAL DRAFT PLAN – OCTOBER 2023





▲ Chill on the Hill at Humboldt Park. Source: Bay View Neighborhood Association



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bay View is at an important juncture. At the same time that the neighborhood retains its tight-knit, eclectic, working-class identity, Bay View has become increasingly popular, attracting new residents and becoming a destination for shopping, dining, and recreation. The time is ripe to consider and re-evaluate current planning policies to ensure that they are responsive to both current and future community needs and vision.

This Plan is intended to be a reference for the next ten to twenty years. The Bay View Neighborhood Plan 2040 updates the portion of the 2008 Southeast Side Area Plan relating to Bay View. This Plan engaged residents and stakeholders, over the course of a year and a half in a robust discussion. The resulting Plan:

- Communicates expectations for new development and redevelopment;
- Establishes priorities for infrastructure investments;
- Provides accountability for implementation; and
- Addresses climate resiliency and racial and economic equity.

Not only will this Plan be used by the Department of City Development (DCD) on a regular basis, but it will also be a tool for implementation partners, including referencing land use and policy recommendations, understanding the development and design expectations for development, considering infrastructure improvements, and for collaborating with DCD. Plan recommendations will be relevant to many different stakeholders including:

- Residents and property owners
- Business owners and operators
- Developers
- Additional City departments
- Additional governmental agencies

## Plan Boundary



For the purposes of this Plan, the boundaries are Becher/ Bay Street to the north, Lake Michigan to the east, Morgan Avenue and the railroad to the south, and I-94 and the railroad to the west. The Plan area is entirely within the 14th aldermanic district.

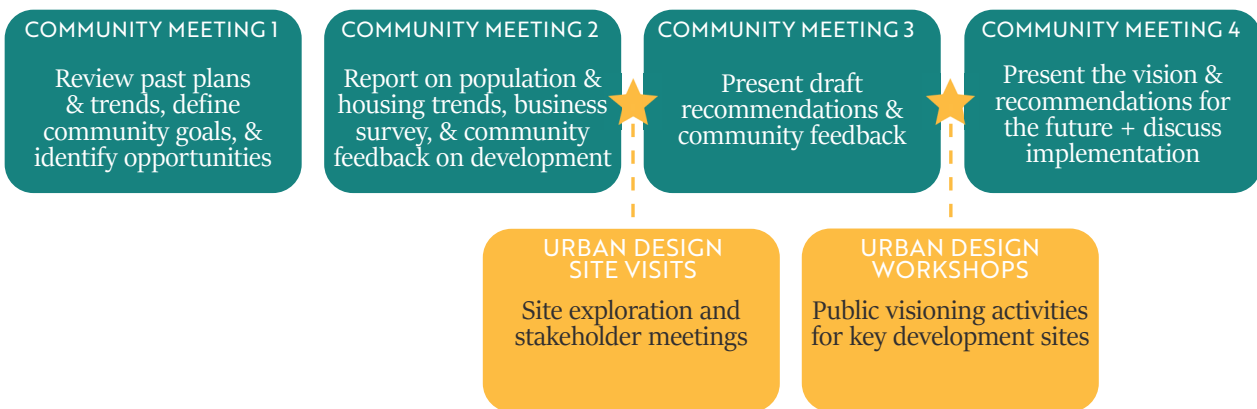
This Executive Summary highlights key findings and recommendations from the following Plan sections. Each section goes in more detail on the important issues, opportunities, results from the public engagement, and recommendations.

- Economic Development
- Land Use, Zoning & Development
- Transportation & Public Realm
- Parks & Sustainability
- Focus Areas

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & PROCESS

Bay View residents and stakeholders showed up in unprecedented numbers to share their thoughts on the future of their neighborhood.

- 4 Community Meetings + 3 Neighborhood Events
- 4 Plan Advisory Group meetings
- Walk Audit
- Business survey and 2 focus groups
- 600+ email list
- Focused outreach to residents and property owners near the former Army Reserve site
- Social Pinpoint (EngageMKE.com) for ongoing online engagement:
  - Over 27,700 website visits
  - Over 8,700 unique users
  - Nearly 350 survey responses
  - 2,100 document downloads
- Site visit with consultants
- Approximately 50 stakeholder interviews with, residents, business owners, developers, advocates, etc.
- Coordination with the Bay View Neighborhood Association
- 3 Aldermanic town hall meetings



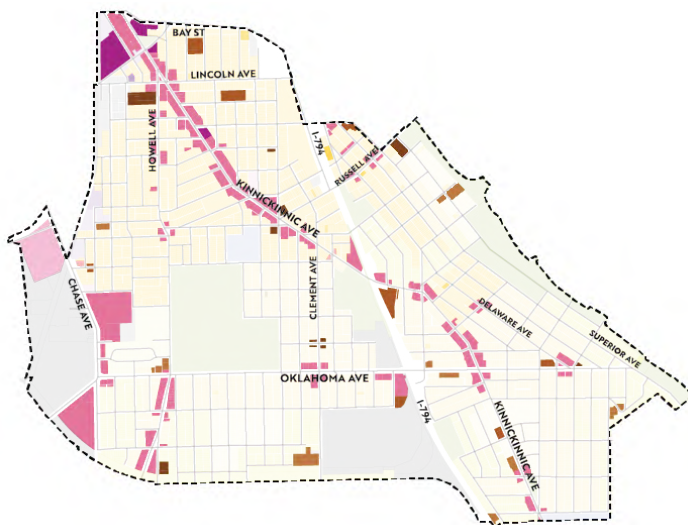
**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
Community meetings, focus groups, online surveying, Social Pinpoint, & neighborhood events

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In many ways, the health of a commercial area reflects the overall health and vitality of a neighborhood. This is promising for Bay View. While the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll, in general, the commercial corridors and nodes within Bay View are occupied by vibrant and healthy businesses that contribute to the eclectic neighborhood vibe and character.

Economic development has many sides. This section focuses on a variety of ways to bolster coordination among businesses and to increase vitality of Bay View’s commercial areas. Any organizational effort needs to have the full support of the business community. While there are various opinions on the best organizational type and structure, there is a desire for communication and coordination among businesses. Identifying shared goals among businesses is a critical first step and a potential stepping stone towards greater coordination. Other sections within this Plan – particularly the Land Use and Transportation sections – also have recommendations that support the business community.

## Commercial & Industrial Districts



▲ Examples of different commercial areas in Bay View.



# LAND USE, ZONING & DEVELOPMENT

One of the main purposes of this Plan is to provide direction on preferred future land use, including where new development is most appropriate within the neighborhood, what new development and redevelopment should look like, and how best to protect places of historic value. This section identifies those strategic growth opportunities with an emphasis on modest and incremental updates to current policies and regulations. While opinions varied, survey results show that a majority of residents and stakeholders expressed support for the recommended land use policies. See the survey results from the second community meeting.

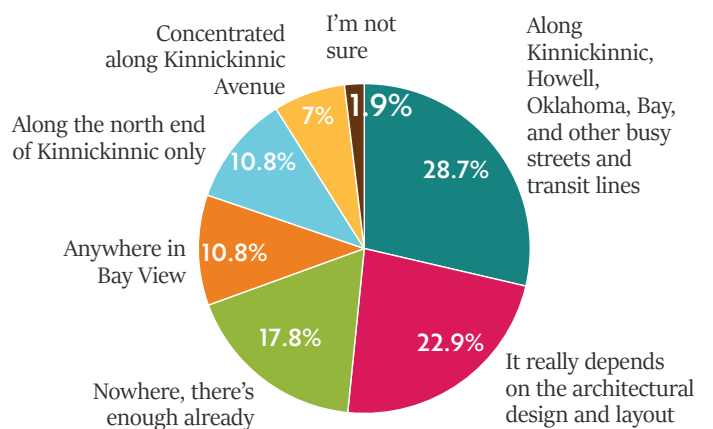
## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Encourage compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development along Kinnickinnic Avenue, particularly the northern part and at key nodes.
- 2 For Howell Avenue, foster the current mix of uses, while encouraging smaller-scale multi-family buildings and mixed-use, live-work, and commercial uses, particularly north of Homer Street and at transit stops.
- 3 Accommodate more housing options within residential areas.
- 4 Allow some industrial properties to transition to other uses.

What are the priorities for development in Bay View?



Where should higher-density housing go?





## Housing

Residential areas make up a large portion of the neighborhood. Housing stock in Bay View is largely older single-family homes and duplexes with limited, mostly newer, multi-family housing. There is, however, demand and need for more housing options that meet a range of incomes, abilities, and life stages. Where one lives has a big impact of your quality of life. Residents and stakeholders voiced concerns about their ability to continue living in Bay View due to rising housing costs. At the same time, there are people who would like to live in Bay View with all that it has to offer but are unable to find a housing option that is affordable. This Plan takes a close look at current housing conditions and trends. Important trends include:

- Aging housing stock
- Rising home prices
- Risk of current lower-income residents being displaced
- Relatively few new housing units being built
- Low vacancy rates in newer multifamily developments
- Limited land available for new development

Recommendations include considerations for updating the residential zoning code to remove barriers for additional housing types to ensure that current residents and future generations can meet their housing needs in light of recent trends.



▲ Examples of “missing middle” housing as residential infill that were well-received at the second community meeting. Sources: Brent Hall Client Service (top); Ross Chapin (middle)

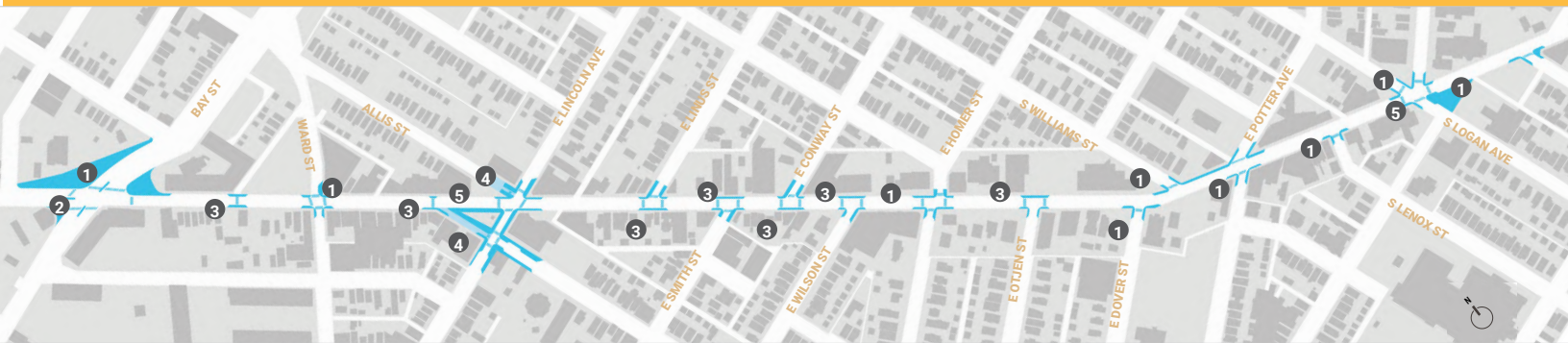
# TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC REALM

Finding ways to make walking and biking safer and more pleasant emerged as a top issue. Reckless driving, in particular, detracts from overall quality of life. Streets are also an opportunity to improve the appearance of the neighborhood, by adding landscaping or green infrastructure. Turning certain street segments into gathering spaces is an important option to consider. Given the importance of Kinnickinnic Ave and its intersection at Howell and Lincoln Avenues, they are explored in greater detail in Chapter 6: Focus Areas.

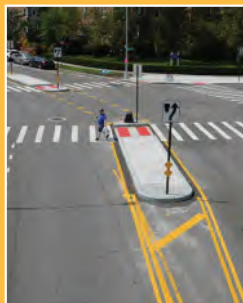
Residents and stakeholders identified a number of issues and opportunities for improvement.

- People driving too fast
- People not yielding to pedestrians
- Poor accessibility for people with mobility issues
- Lack of or inadequate bicycle accommodations
- Poor aesthetics of streets

## KINNICKINNIC AVENUE



1 CURB EXTENSION



2 REFUGE ISLAND



3 MID-BLOCK CROSSING



4 FESTIVAL STREET



5 PUBLIC SPACE

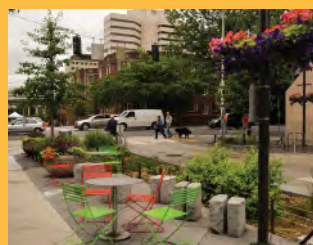
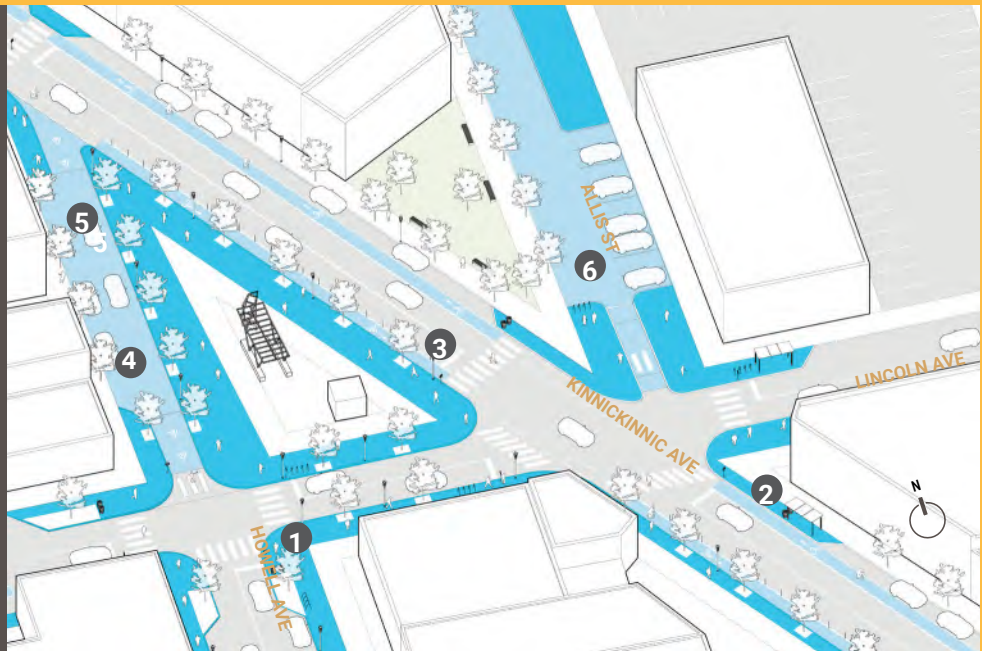


## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prioritize safety improvements at those intersections and corridors with higher pedestrian and bicycle crash rates and near sites that generate a lot of pedestrian activity. Solicit community input in prioritization.
- Reconfigure intersections to be more pedestrian and bicycle friendly and a gateway into the neighborhood.
- Improve biking along Bay Street between Becher Street and Lincoln Avenue by extending the raised bike lane or adding another type of separated bikeway.
- Identify and implement a low-stress bike network, consisting of bike boulevards and protected bike lanes.
- Improve connections to Lincoln Village neighborhood along Lincoln Avenue and to the Crisol Corridor along Oklahoma Avenue.
- Evaluate the intersection of Superior Street and Russell Avenue for improved biking as part of the Oak Leaf Trail.
- As the Grand Trunk Wetland (in Harbor District) is restored, ensure neighborhood access.
- Support initiatives to provide Bus Rapid Transit service along Howell Avenue.
- Close Delaware Avenue at Oklahoma Street to create outdoor gathering space. This could be done temporarily as a pilot program.
- Make Park Road through Humboldt Park a permanent active street, closed to all but essential vehicular traffic. This could be done temporarily as a pilot program.

### KEY STRATEGIES

- 1 Curb extensions to minimize crossing distances and provide more public space and space for outdoor dining
- 2 Push bus stops to edges
- 3 2 travel lanes on all streets
- 4 Table Howell Ave (long speed bump) between Kinnickinnic Ave and Lincoln Ave to slow traffic.
- 5 A bus-only street along Howell could be explored
- 6 Narrow Allis Street and make festival street that could be closed for special events



## PARKS & SUSTAINABILITY

Bay View has many beautiful, well-loved parks. Parks serve many needs, from providing access and enjoyment to the outdoors, places for play and recreation, and gathering spaces. Our analysis shows that Bay View residents have very good access to park space: 100% of the Bay View population lives within a quarter mile of a park, compared with 95.6% of city residents as a whole.

Over time, a community’s needs may shift, meaning that park facilities should be re-evaluated with community input when the time comes for upgrading the parks. During the public engagement process, residents noted, in particular, a desire for a skate park and an improved dog park. Further study and coordination is necessary to identify the best location and operations management responsibility.

Sustainability considerations permeate recommendations in this Plan. From promoting additional housing near existing infrastructure and transit lines to preserving and rehabbing existing buildings to maintaining the many wonderful outdoor parks and open spaces in Bay View, sustainability is multi-faceted.

▼ Chill on the Hill at Humboldt Park. Source: Bay View Neighborhood Association





# FOCUS AREAS

Several sites surfaced as “Focus Areas” for a variety of reasons, but the common theme is strong community interest and transformational potential.

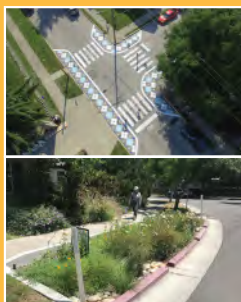
- **BMO Harris site:** currently underutilized site where there has been past development interest
- **Former Army Reserve site:** vacant, City-owned lot that represents the greatest opportunity for new housing (see below)
- **Chase Avenue:** auto-oriented commercial and industrial area with short and long-term potential for infill
- **Kinnickinnic Avenue, including the intersection at Lincoln & Howell Avenues:** the “Main Street” of Bay View, Kinnickinnic Avenue, there is strong desire to find ways to make it a better place for walking, biking, and gathering



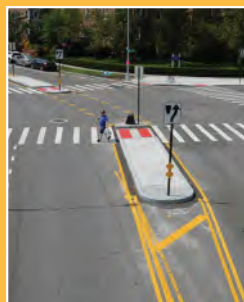
# KINNICKINNIC AVENUE

## KEY STRATEGIES

- Consider different “took-kit” options for different areas of the corridor. For example, on-street parking and gathering space may be a higher priority in the more commercial, northern part of Kinnickinnic Avenue. Further south, where the character is more residential, consider alternatives to the parking lanes, such as wider sidewalks and/ or a wider terrace
- Make Kinnickinnic Avenue slower & easier to cross by minimizing crossing distances at intersections.
- Make Kinnickinnic Avenue better for bus riders by enhancing transit stops and shelters
- Maintain bike accommodations, and consider options for protected bikeways
- Stress the little things for quality of life (cleanliness, sidewalk and lighting repairs, etc.)
- Create more gathering spaces along Kinnickinnic Avenue. For example, Allis Street could be closed temporarily for special events. Russell Avenue between Kinnickinnic and Logan Avenues could be closed and used as a public green space or plaza.



1 CURB EXTENSION



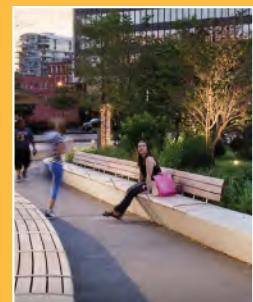
2 REFUGE ISLAND



3 MID-BLOCK CROSSING



4 FESTIVAL STREET



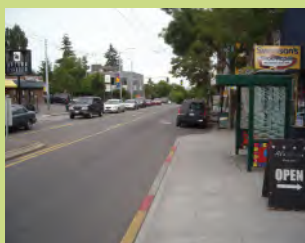
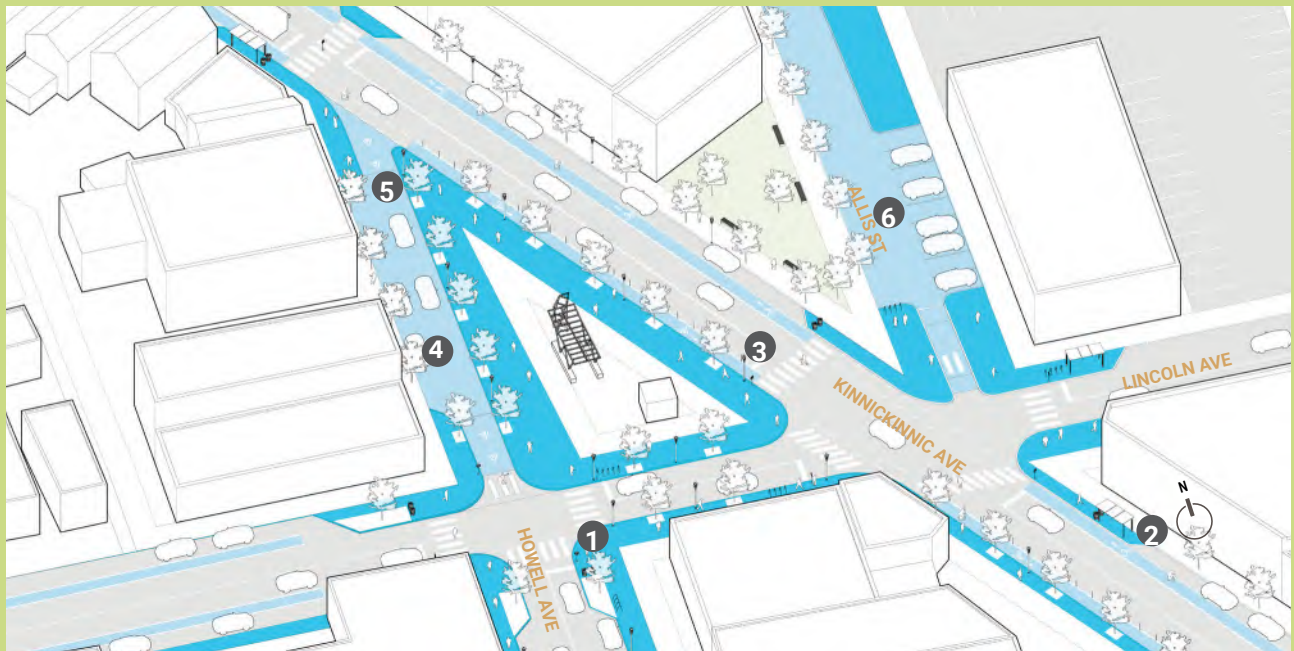
5 PUBLIC SPACE



# LINCOLN & HOWELL INTERSECTION

## KEY STRATEGIES

- 1** Use curb extensions to minimize crossing distances and provide more public space and space for outdoor dining
- 2** Push bus stops to outside of intersection
- 3** Include no more than one travel lane in each direction
- 4** Table Howell Ave (raised street section) between Kinnickinnic Ave and Lincoln Ave to slow traffic.
- 5** A bus-only street along Howell could be explored
- 6** Narrow Allis Street so it could more easily be closed for special events





# BMO HARRIS

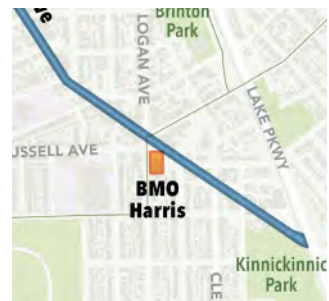
## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE SITE TODAY

- This is a very underutilized site
- Should be a major new development
- Pedestrian plaza with food trucks and makers bazaar until development is ready
- Commercial use
- Incorporate public art

## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT ITS PERSONALITY IN THE FUTURE

### Active

- Close Russell between Kinnickinnic and Logan
- Put 4 or 5 story height along Russell corner
- Explore carriage units to back
- Explore rehabilitating the Bella's building to east
- Thoughtful development that fits neighborhood scale
- Retail, residential, and office are potential uses



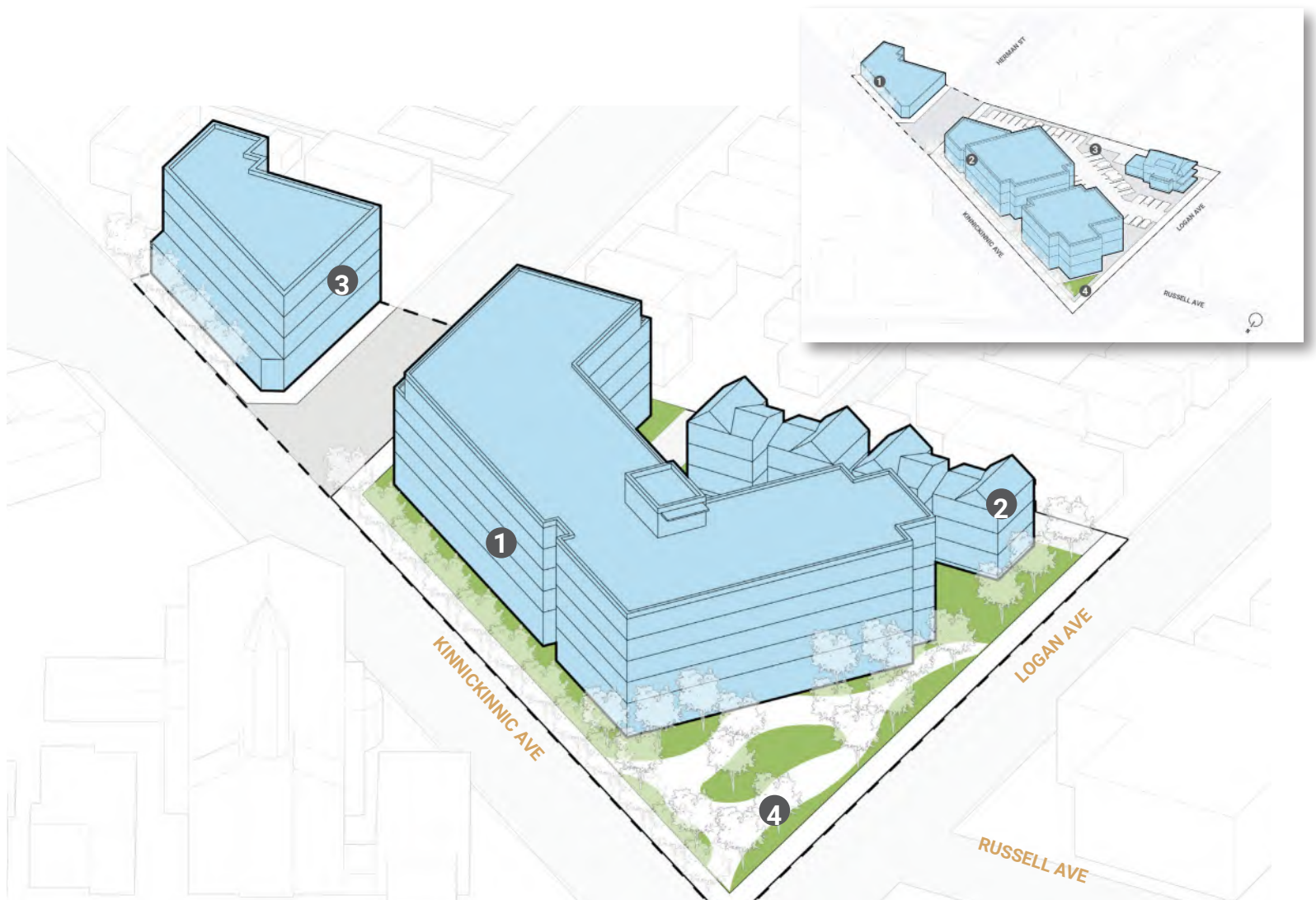


## PREFERRED VISION : COMMERCIAL W/ RESIDENTIAL

Given that this site is privately owned, any development will be initiated by the property owner. Given its prominence on the Kinnickinnic Ave corridor and high potential for future development, DCD engaged the neighborhood in discussion about potential development scenarios. As shown in the massing model below, the preferred development does not incorporate existing single family and duplex homes into overall development site. The inset image is a smaller-scale concept that illustrates a minimum build-out scenario.

### KEY STRATEGIES

- 1** Mixed Use with retail at the corner at Russell Ave. Parking integrated into development
- 2** Town homes on new alley with smaller scale to match adjacent homes to west. Future development does not encroach into neighborhood.
- 3** Preserve Bella's building if possible, with housing on top
- 4** Close Russell Avenue between Kinnickinnic and Logan Avenues and re-purpose as public amenity



# CHASE AVENUE

## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE SITE TODAY

- Excited about the Kinnickinnic River Trail expansion
- Too much parking
- Local DMV is an asset

## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT ITS PERSONALITY IN THE FUTURE

### Buzzing

- Consider a long-term, phased approach
- Active development would mirror the surrounding area
- Connect to Kinnickinnic River Trail
- More activity could help surrounding businesses





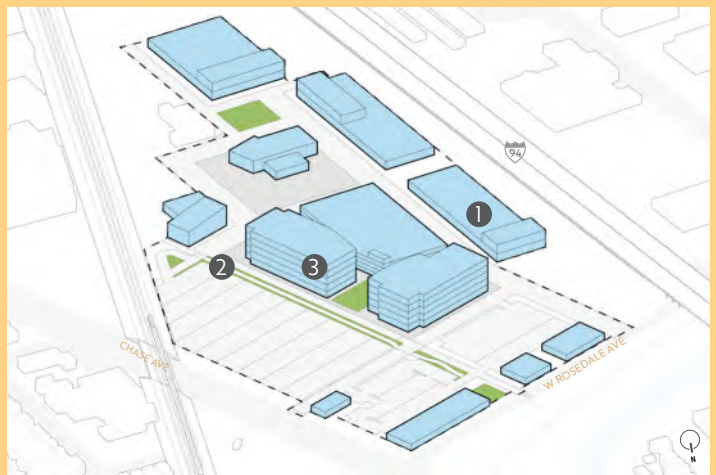
STRATEGIES

- 1 Outlot development
- 2 Reinvest in existing retail center
- 3 Connect to Kinnickinnic River Trail

PHASE 1: SHOP + PLAY



PHASE 2: SHOP + PLAY + WORK



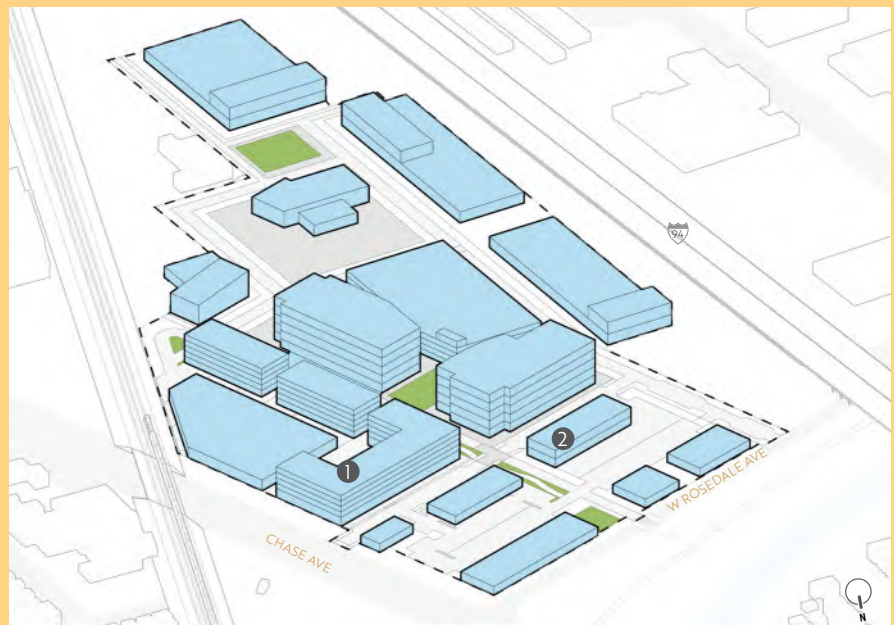
STRATEGIES

- 1 Commercial/industrial behind outlots along Interstate 94
- 2 Extend Kinnickinnic River Trail through site
- 3 Employment centers/ office/ residential

FINAL PHASE SHOP: + PLAY + WORK + LIVE

STRATEGIES

- 1 Mixed-use residential
- 2 Commercial



# ARMY RESERVE



## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE SITE TODAY

- Underutilized
- Place to picnic
- People walk their dogs here

## WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT ITS PERSONALITY IN THE FUTURE

### Quiet

- Should connect to Lincoln & Kinnickinnic Avenues
- Should not draw too much activity
- Maintain similar character to surrounding area
- More housing is desperately needed, including workforce housing
- New community center and park
- Shops for small businesses, potential for small amounts of retail
- Different housing types
- Natural plantings
- Community garden
- Sustainable housing development





The Army Reserve site has been envisioned as a site for housing since the Army de-commissioned and transferred the base to the City for development in 2007. In a neighborhood that is completely built out with very little vacant land, this represents one of the very few opportunities to provide new housing units. Given the rising housing prices and the lack of affordable housing and the lack of housing options suitable for seniors and other households, this is an opportunity to address those needs.

Previous development proposals have fallen through because of unfavorable market timing and neighborhood opposition.

At the third community meeting, several neighborhood events, and targeted outreach to residences closest to the site, DCD presented three different potential visions for development at the Army Reserve site.

The priorities that emerged were:

- Housing that is affordable to a wide range incomes
- Incorporating green space/ outdoor amenity
- Upgrade the Beulah Brinton Community Center

A small percentage of residents opposed any development, instead preferring to keep the vacant lot as an grassy field. Bay View, however, is already well-served by park space and there is no governmental entity that has the resources to develop a new park at this location. Additionally, upgrades are currently underway for Zillman Park and Beulah Brinton Community Center.

The great majority of survey respondents were open to housing development on the Army Reserve though opinions varied on the height and density. Some nearby residents stated a preference for limiting housing styles to single-family homes and townhomes. The future development team will evaluate market conditions; however, the preferred concept illustrates a greater mix of housing styles that also includes multi-family to best meet the goals for workforce and senior housing.

As the Beulah Brinton Community Center facilities and fields reach the end of their useful life and are ready to be rehabbed and reconfigured in the future, DCD and Milwaukee Recreation can explore potential partnership opportunities.



# ARMY RESERVE

The preferred redevelopment of the former Army Reserve site should provide much-needed housing options in a variety of housing styles for all ages, income levels and abilities; features high-quality, sustainable architecture; maintains Logan Street's existing scale and focuses taller buildings along Bay Street; builds the customer base for adjacent and nearby businesses along Kinnickinnic Avenue; expands the City's tax base and ability to provide public services; connect to the neighborhood; and include quality outdoor space. Traffic capacity on existing roads and potential traffic impacts should be analyzed and considered.

When the Department of City Development issues a request for proposals (RFP) to advance the redevelopment of the site, the following qualifications should be considered to ensure a development that aligns with community goals:

- Integrates sustainable design features and landscaping
- Includes a mix of market-rate and affordable units
- Incorporate a mix of housing types (i.e. townhomes, multifamily, etc)
- Features high-quality and attractive design
- Integrates quality amenities for residents
- Integrates into the surrounding neighborhood
- Designed with pedestrian-friendly design
- Extends Linus Street through the site
- Resident Preference Program employment goals

The renderings on the opposite page show what development at the former Army Reserve site could look like, taking into account the priorities voiced during the planning process. The renderings show two different building height options for the northern building to demonstrate that a range of heights is possible as this site is considered for development.







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Credit: Yard & Company





