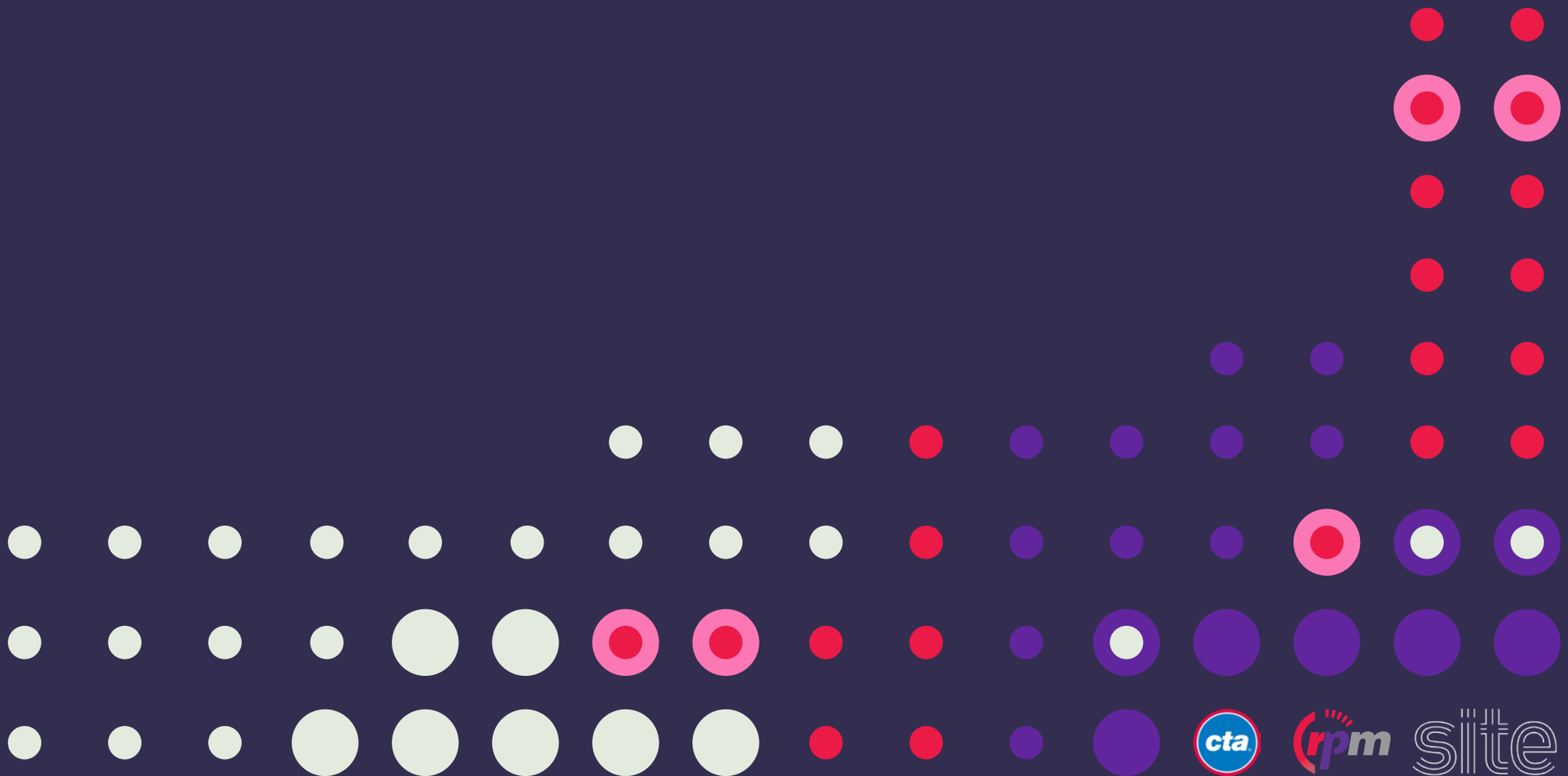


DESIGNING THE UNDER 'L' EXPERIENCE

A PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION FRAMEWORK



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As an enhancement to the RPM Phase One project, CTA has removed the century old embankment structure, a former barrier that stretched from Lawrence to Ardmore, creating more than one mile of open space in Uptown and Edgewater.

By removing the embankment wall, CTA has created a unique opportunity to activate new open space for customers, residents, and visitors. As part of the LBMM Project within the RPM Phase One Initiative, CTA has engaged the community in reimagining how the spaces beneath the elevated 'L' tracks between W Lawrence and W Ardmore avenues can be activated for community use.

The Under 'L' Activation Framework Plan is a guiding document that summarizes the engagement process and principles that will shape the transformation of these spaces. This development seeks to create accessible, community-driven, flexible-use areas beneath the newly constructed rail infrastructure, fostering economic development, artistic expression, and social interaction.

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Figure 1. The Lawrence to Bryn Mawr Modernization (LBMM) project site.

PRESIDENT STATEMENT

In 2023, CTA was honored to share an extraordinary opportunity with the Edgewater and Uptown communities: The creation of new community spaces under new Red and Purple line elevated track, which has been rebuilt as part of our historic Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) Phase One Project.

We achieve this by removing old embankment wall that divided the community for more than a century, creating a bold, first-of-its-kind opportunity in CTA history opportunity to introduce new spaces and ask residents: What would you like to see here?

CTA has worked alongside the community as we invest in these vibrant neighborhoods and create 10 blocks of places that people will love to use. Through our extensive engagement with people who live and work here, we're proud to share their vision via **The Under 'L' Experience: A Public Space Activation Framework**. From a pedestrian trail to dog parks to community plaza areas, this document encapsulates what we heard from you and lays out how we will roll out the vision and make this a reality.

We are pleased to share the community's excitement and anticipation for this new community development and work with local organizations to make this CTA space a great one for all. Thank you from us for your energy and enthusiasm for transit and public works.

Sincerely,

Nora Leerhsen
CTA Acting President

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The LBMM Project is a transformative effort to revitalize a crucial segment of Chicago's transit system, aiming to deliver a safer, more accessible, and efficient experience for all users. The project spurred the removal of the century-old embankment wall eliminating a physical neighborhood barrier and creating new public space beneath the elevated 'L' tracks between Lawrence and Ardmore avenues. CTA capitalized on this historic opportunity to provide its customers, residents, and visitors the opportunity to engage in what this new open space will become.

PROJECT SITE

The Under 'L' Activation will be brought to life across ten blocks within the Edgewater and Uptown neighborhoods. The project extends underneath the Red and Purple line tracks between Lawrence Avenue and Ardmore Avenue, half a block east of Broadway's retail corridor. Adjacencies vary from zero-setback brick facades, alleys used for commercial loading, and residential alleys servicing adjacent garages.

The project area consists of 10 blocks, including:

- Lawrence Avenue to Ainslie Street
- Ainslie Street to Argyle Street
- Argyle Street to Winona Street
- Winona Street to Foster Avenue
- Foster Avenue to Berwyn Avenue
- Berwyn Avenue to Balmoral Avenue
- Balmoral Avenue to Catalpa Avenue
- Catalpa Avenue to Bryn Mawr Avenue
- Bryn Mawr Avenue to Hollywood Avenue
- Hollywood Avenue to Ardmore Avenue

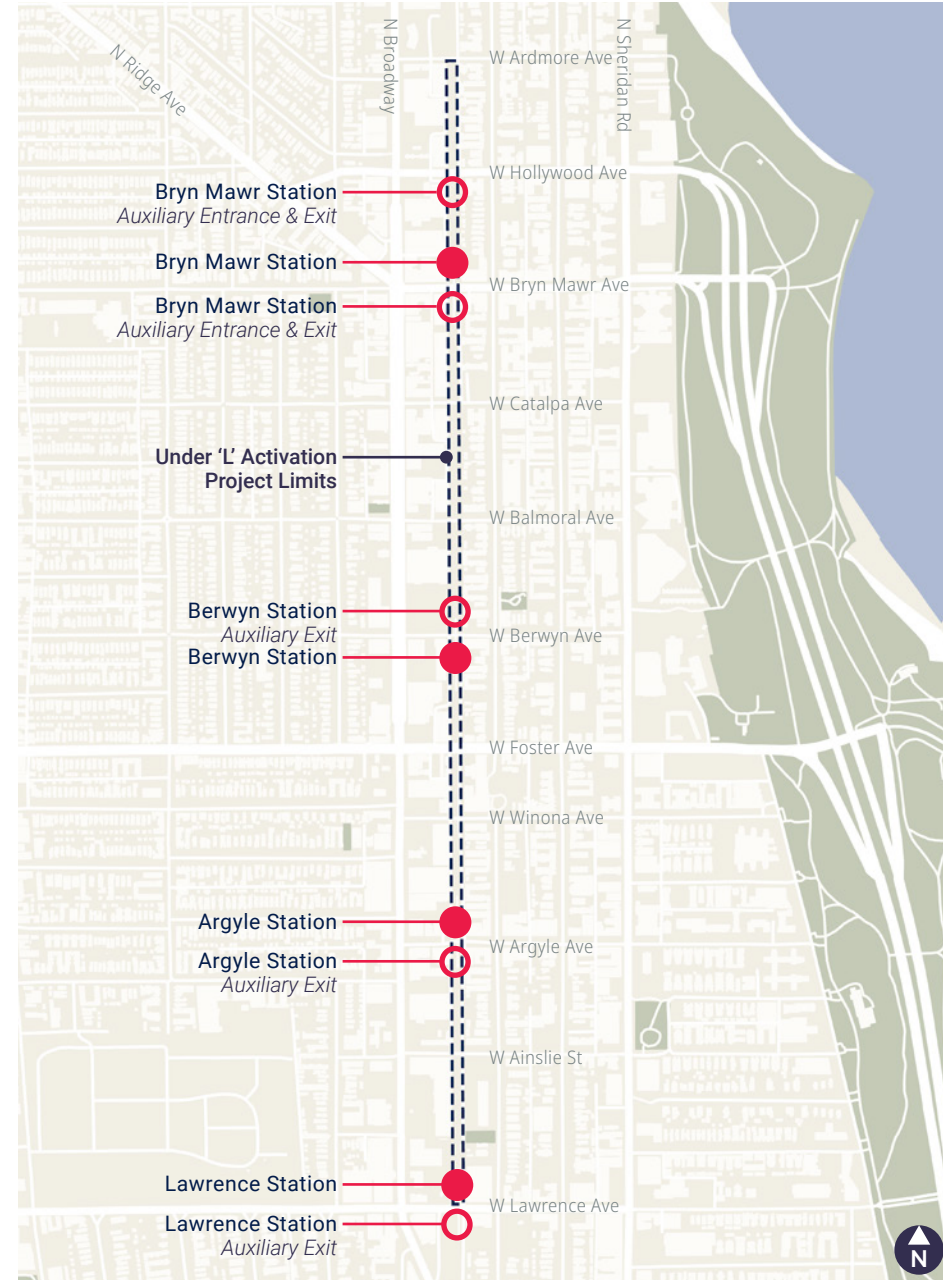


Figure 2. The Under 'L' Activation project site.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Ideation of the Under 'L' Activation began in early 2024 with active community engagement shaping the concept development process which occurred over 2024. Final design concepts were shared in early 2025, followed by the start of design development, with construction set to begin in 2026.



EMBANKMENT WALL



CTA Embankment Wall, 2023

Figure 3. Image capturing the track conditions before the embankment wall was removed.



After Embankment Wall Removal, 2025

Figure 4. Image capturing the spring 2025 conditions following its removal.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

A community-informed vision that reflects local needs and aspirations was developed through an interactive engagement process that gathered input from residents, businesses, transit riders, community organizations, and local agencies.

This vision works to:

● Establish a Framework for Activation

Define guiding principles focused on accessibility, safety, and inclusivity, provide concept and material recommendations, and identify potential partnerships to ensure long-term success.

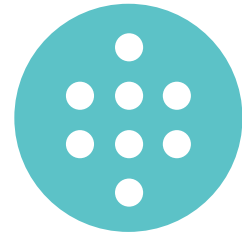
● Enhance Safety and Security

Implement lighting and active uses while coordinating with the Chicago Police Department, elected officials, and social service agencies.

● Protect CTA Infrastructure

Support the structure's longevity, bi-annual railroad inspections, and maintenance regimen while avoiding retention impacts on the underground stormwater management system, which captures 100% of the site's water runoff and naturally allows runoff to be reabsorbed into the earth.

● GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Creating a **continuous rhythm of balanced program** throughout the project area.



Making **programmatic connections** to existing neighborhood events and adjacent land uses.



Amplifying neighborhood resources and providing amenities that **respond to public input**.

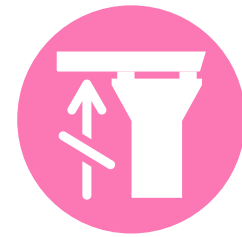
● INFLUENCE OF SITE CONSTRAINTS



CONSTRAINT
Ensure CTA equipment access is maintained

INFLUENCE ON DESIGN

Fencing locations and heights



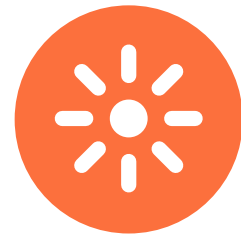
No attachments to the elevated track

Restricted overhead treatments



Protect underground stormwater and utility systems

Location of programs and site elements



Limited sunlight

Restricted planted areas

● UTILITY CONDITIONS

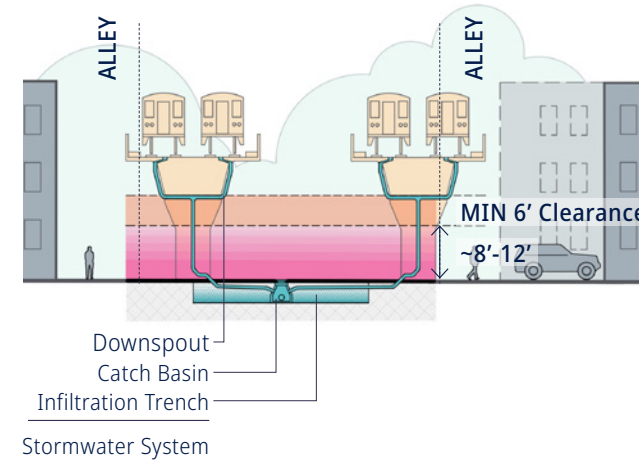


Figure 5. Typical track section

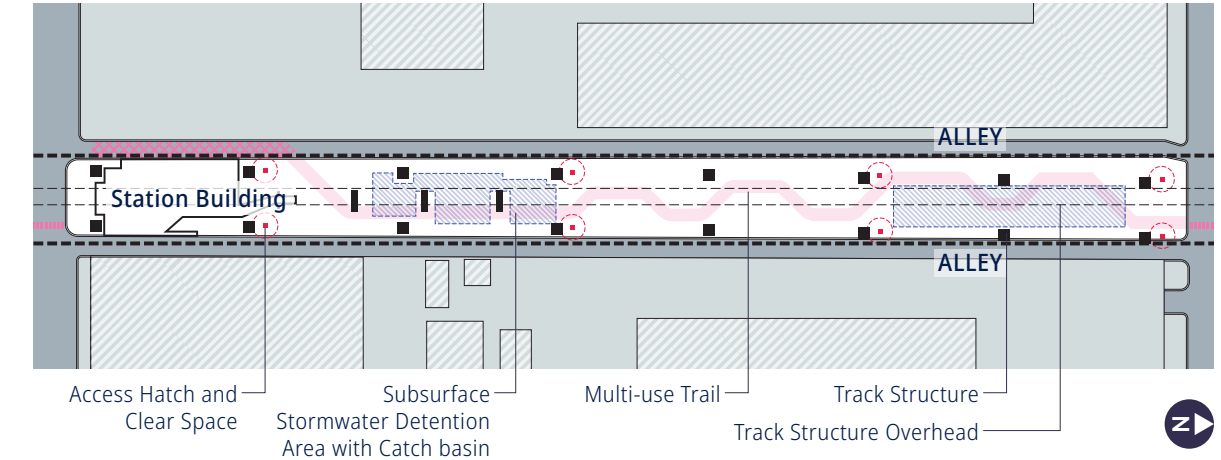


Figure 6. Typical elevated track structure plan view detailing ground level utility constraints



Figure 7. Downspout



Figure 8. Aggregate infiltration



Figure 9. Superstructure columns

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
PROCESSES



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

BUILDING CONSENSUS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The engagement process was essential in shaping a successful vision for the Under 'L' Activation. Through an interactive process, community members had the opportunity to share their ideas for each of the ten blocks, ensuring their voices were heard in the development of the vision.

To gather meaningful input, three sessions of public meetings were held, each consisting of one meeting in Ward 48 at St. Ita Catholic Church and another meeting in Ward 46 at Truman College to ensure representation from both wards and to provide

accessible opportunities for community members across different neighborhoods to participate. This resulted in a total of six meetings throughout the development of the Under 'L' Activation vision.

Each meeting featured a visual slide deck and a verbal presentation, with American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation provided for accessibility. Additionally, all meetings were streamed live on Facebook and later uploaded to YouTube, allowing those unable to attend in person to stay informed and engaged in the process.

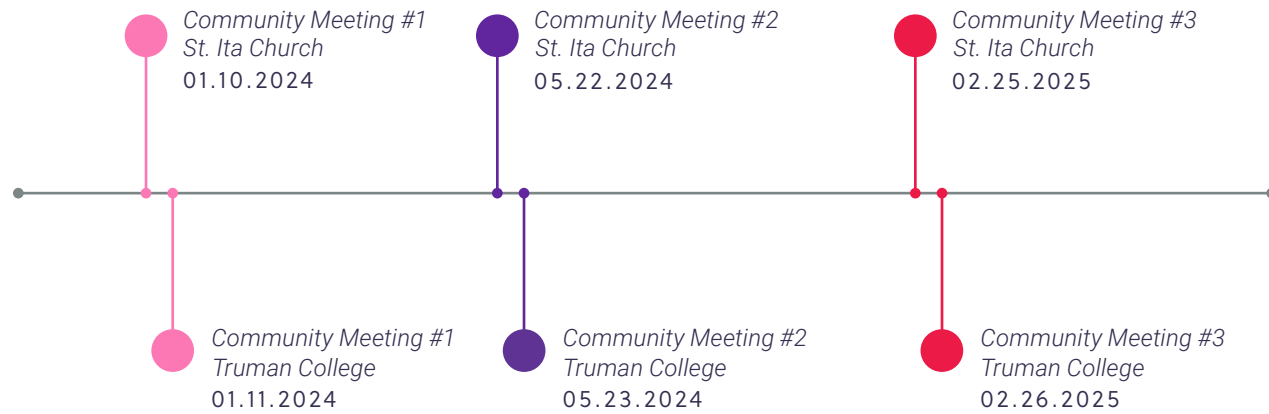


Figure 10. Engagement timeline

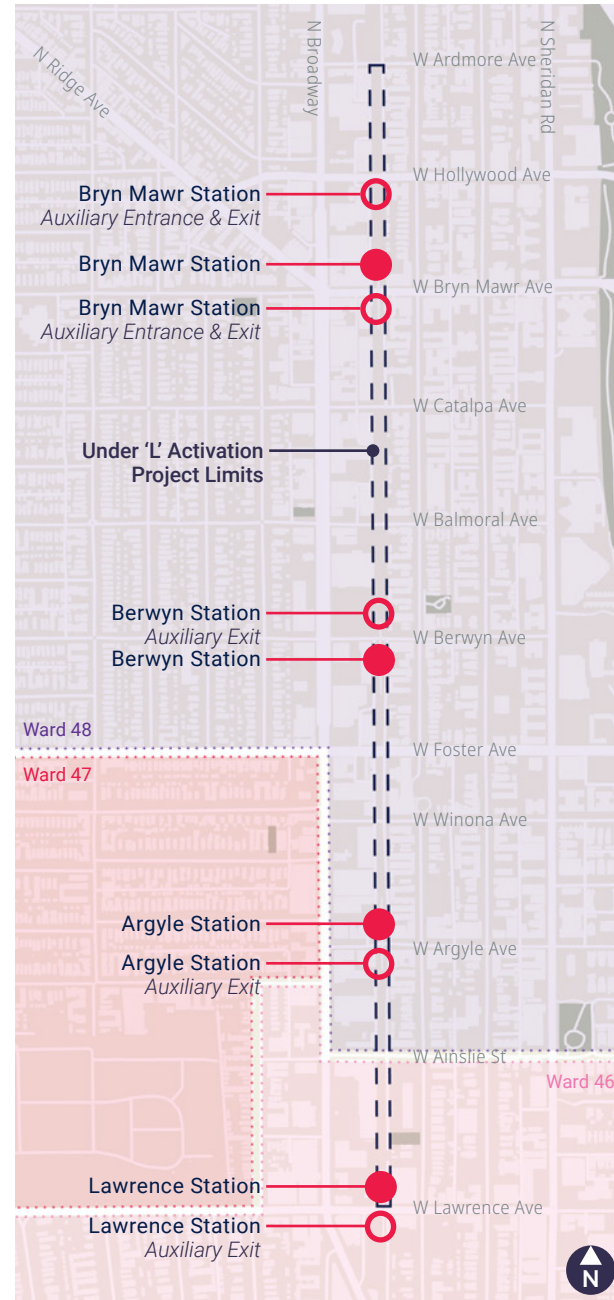


Figure 11. Ward map, 2025

These public engagement efforts would not have been possible without the ongoing help and support of elected officials, city and state agencies, community groups, chambers of commerce, and other groups who have long been advocates for the community.

The CTA Government and Community Relations team had continuous engagement with these stakeholders by:

- Engaging with Uptown United and Edgewater Chamber of Commerce to explore future business opportunities for small businesses and the community;
- Collaborating with the 46th and 48th Wards to ensure alignment with community needs;
- Hosting virtual office hours to provide updates and address stakeholder questions;
- Directing outreach to local businesses along the corridor to discuss logistical alley concerns and mitigate operational challenges; and,
- The established RPM Community office at Foster Ave and Broadway was also retrofitted as a resource for the community and Under 'L' Activation.



Figure 12. Presentation



Figure 14. Preference voting



Figure 13. Open commenting



Figure 15. Map based comments

COMMUNITY MEETING #1

IDEATION

Dates: January 10, 2024 // January 11, 2024

Locations: St. Ita Catholic Church (Ward 48) // Truman College (Ward 46)

Number of Attendees: 301 // 168

The first public engagement session served as both a project kick-off and an ideation workshop, introducing the community to the Under 'L' Activation process and inviting input to help shape its vision from the start. Through a presentation, attendees gained an overview of the project timeline, CTA structure constraints, and examples of similar transformations in other cities, providing important context for the initiative.

Across the two meetings held on January 10 and 11, 2024, a total of 469 people were in attendance. Feedback was collected through questionnaires and interactive presentation boards that allowed participants to vote and share comments. A total of 209 community members submitted completed questionnaires, while another 307 individuals provided input through open feedback channels such as email and YouTube comments.



Figure 16. 1.10.24 community meeting at St. Ita Church



Figure 18. 1.10.24 community meeting at St. Ita Church



Figure 17. 1.11.24 community meeting at Truman College



Figure 19. Roll plot and program engagement board

ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

MOOD PREFERENCES

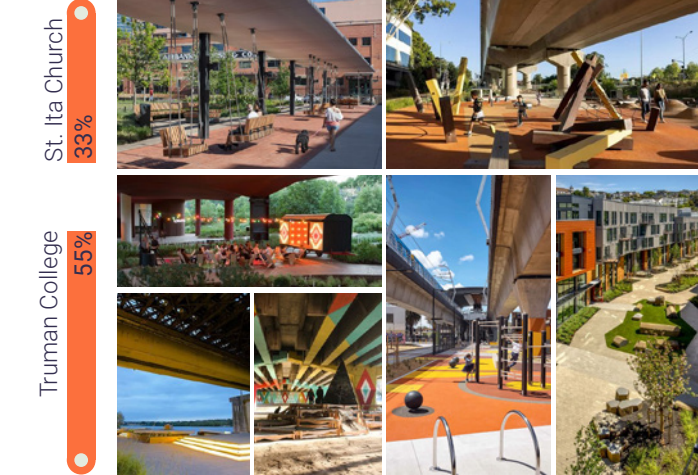
Meeting attendees were invited to help inform the overall mood of the activation. Using sticker dots and write-in responses, participants expressed a preference for atmospheres described as “warm, textural, welcoming, contemporary” and “rustic, natural, peaceful, green space.”



Figure 20. Engagement feedback on the site's mood

CONCEPT 1

Warm, textural, welcoming, contemporary



CONCEPT 2

Rustic, natural, peaceful, green space



Figure 21. Community preferences towards the mood of the site

WHAT ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN SEEING?

“A continuous multi-use path connecting Uptown and Edgewater.”

“Things that build community: dog parks, community gardens, markets, shops.”

“Good lighting/safety and making sure the space is active/activated!”

“Active space for all ages.”

COMMUNITY MEETING #1

IDEATION

PROGRAM FEEDBACK

To understand community priorities, attendees were presented with 16 potential program elements and asked to select up to four they would like to see incorporated within the ten activation blocks. The most popular choices included open plaza/event space, marketplace, public art/mural, park space, and community green space, with additional interest in dog parks, stormwater features, seating areas, sports courts, and nature play.

Participants then placed program-coded stickers on specific blocks where they felt certain program elements should be incorporated. This exercise reinforced key community priorities and amenity locations.

LEGEND

PROGRAMMING	GREEN SPACE	FITNESS + PLAY	PARKING
Open Plaza / Event Space	Community Garden	Sports Court	Bike Parking
Market Place	Park Space	Nature Play	Parking
Seating Area	Dog Park	Outdoor Fitness	
Public Art / Mural	Stormwater Feature	Playground	

Figure 22. Legend of presented amenity options

Some amenities were not incorporated into the final concept due to site constraints, community preferences and safety. Sport courts were removed to preserve the community's preference for flexible-use open space, since they would require perimeter protective fencing which would create an inflexible, boxed-in space. Sun-studies confirmed community gardens would not receive enough sunlight based on adjacent buildings. Stormwater features could not integrate with existing infrastructure. Public art was not feasible within the current construction schedule but remains an opportunity for future phases, and bike parking is consolidated at station houses.

PROGRAM DESIRE BY BLOCK



Figure 23. Community programming preferences by block

LAYOUT FEEDBACK

Attendees also provided input on three potential layout conditions, each featuring different arrangements of parking, amenity pockets, and a pedestrian trail. Feedback revealed a strong opposition to parking at all ten activation blocks, a strong preference for continuous programmed spaces, and support for a continuous pedestrian trail.

- **Layout 1:** Parking on residential (east) side of tracks.
- **Layout 2:** Parking on both sides of site, but for a shorter section.
- **Layout 3:** No parking.

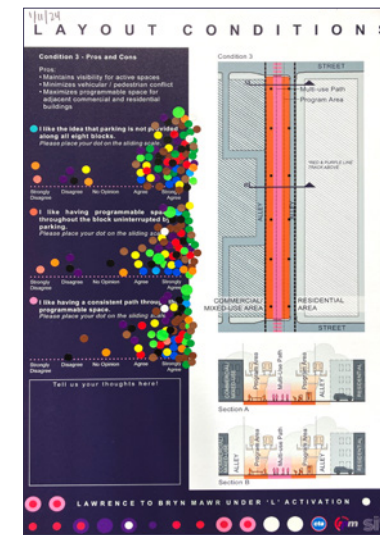


Figure 24. Engagement feedback on layout 3

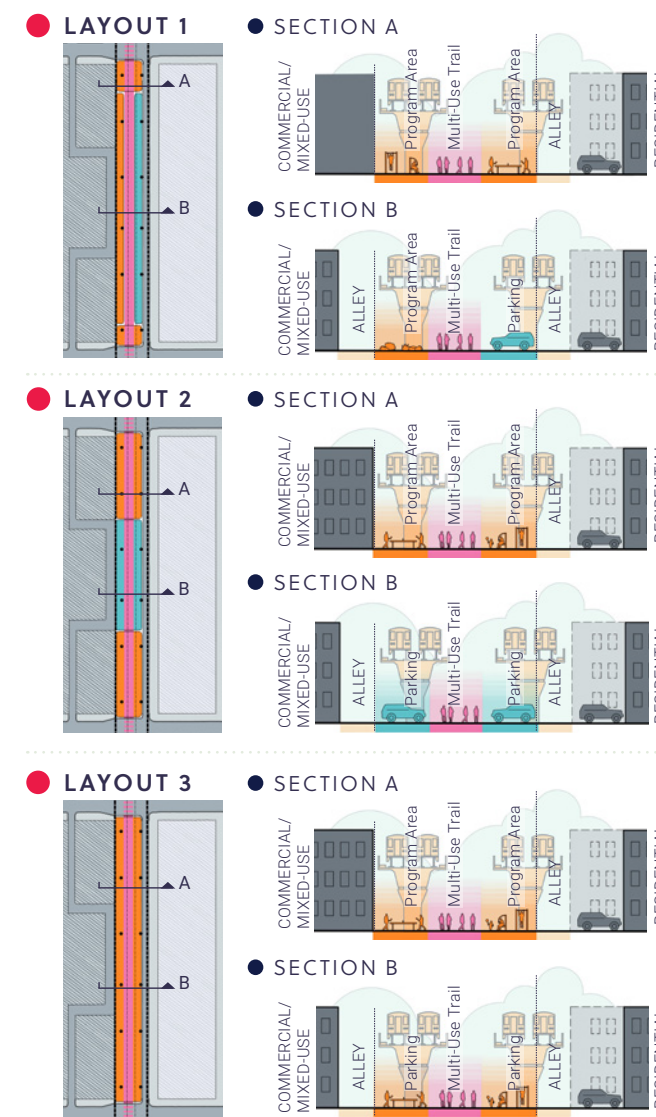


Figure 25. Site layout options detailed in plan and section

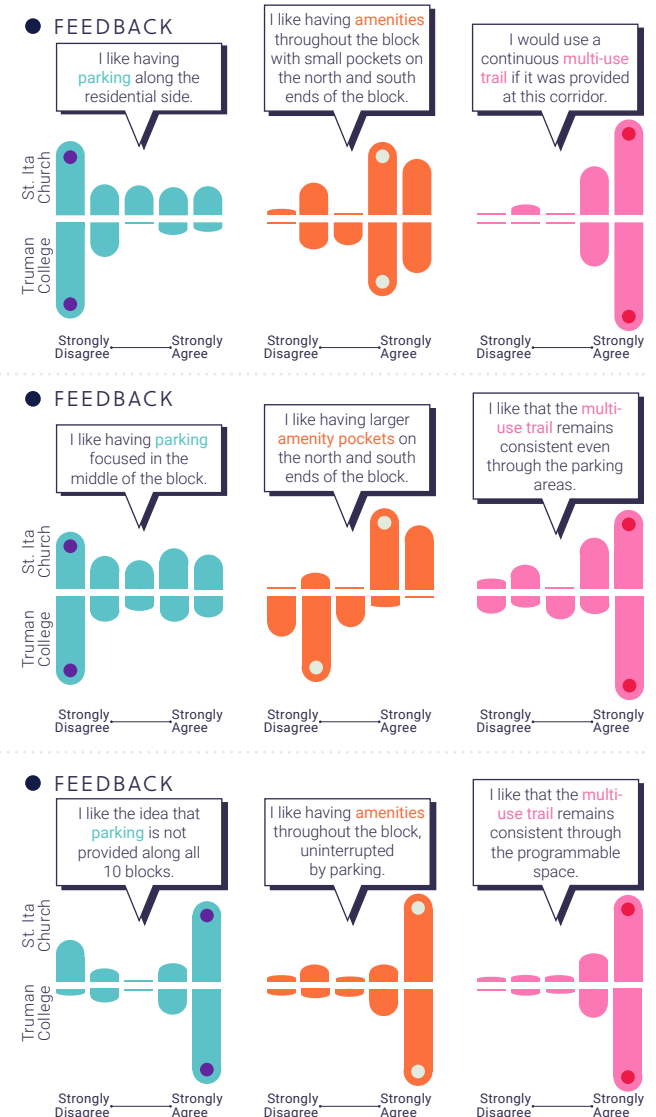


Figure 26. Community layout preferences

COMMUNITY MEETING #1

IDEATION

PARKING FEEDBACK

Community feedback on parking reflected the different contexts along the Under 'L' Activation. On the west side, with its concentration of businesses, participants expressed a desire for parking to support customers and commercial activity. On the east side, which is primarily residential, participants favored community-focused spaces such as green areas, trails, and gathering places instead of parking. To accommodate both perspectives, parking was limited to the west side of the Under 'L' Activation, balancing business desires while preserving the residential character of the east side.



Figure 27. Feedback collected through engagement boards



Figure 28. Community meeting at Truman College



Figure 29. Community Meeting at St. Ita Church

MOST COMMON THEMES

The key themes that emerged from this session centered around a desire for green spaces, vendor and market areas, a continuous trail, safety considerations, and an opposition to parking.

These insights laid the foundation for the development of the Under 'L' Activation vision, ensuring that community priorities would guide the design process.



AGAINST PARKING

Participants representing the residential side opposed parking, preferring spaces that prioritize people, community use, and active programming.



SAFETY CONCERNS

Participants highlighted the need for lighting, visibility, and thoughtful design to create welcoming and safe spaces.



DESIRE FOR VENDOR/MARKET SPACE

There was strong interest in spaces for vendors, markets, and pop-up events that prioritize active and flexible programming.



DESIRE FOR GREEN SPACE

Participants expressed interest in incorporating green areas for opportunities to connect with nature.



DESIRE FOR A CONTINUOUS TRAIL

Support for a continuous multi-use trail envisioned as a safe, accessible connector across the activation.

Figure 30. Most common themes mentioned by the community in community meeting #1

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Dates: May 22, 2024 // May 23, 2024

Locations: St. Ita Catholic Church (Ward 48) // Truman College (Ward 46)

Number of Attendees: 129 // 69

The second round of public engagement meetings, held on May 22 and 23, 2024, welcomed 198 attendees—54% of whom had also participated in the first round of engagement. An additional 58 individuals joined via the Facebook live stream. This phase of engagement built upon the insights gathered from the first engagement session by introducing preliminary design concepts shaped by community feedback.

Through a presentation, attendees reviewed key takeaways from the first engagement session, including mood preferences, layout considerations, and programmatic priorities. Presentation boards incorporated this review of key takeaways from the first engagement session as well as additional site analysis, highlighting site adjacencies and existing conditions to provide context to the preliminary design concepts. Attendees were invited to share their opinions through a feedback questionnaire and interactive boards.

The concepts were displayed on individual boards as well as a continuous roll plot plan graphic, allowing participants to engage with both block-by-block plans and the overall corridor vision. Feedback reflected a strong consistency with priorities expressed during the first meeting, emphasizing flexible plaza spaces, pedestrian safety for cross-block connections, play and branding elements, the inclusion of a dog park and an even greater emphasis on creating more open space. Participants acknowledged that their previous input had been considered, and discussion shifted to safety, management, and long-term maintenance, with divided opinions on parking—some advocating for its inclusion, while others opposed it.



Figure 31. Attendees providing feedback

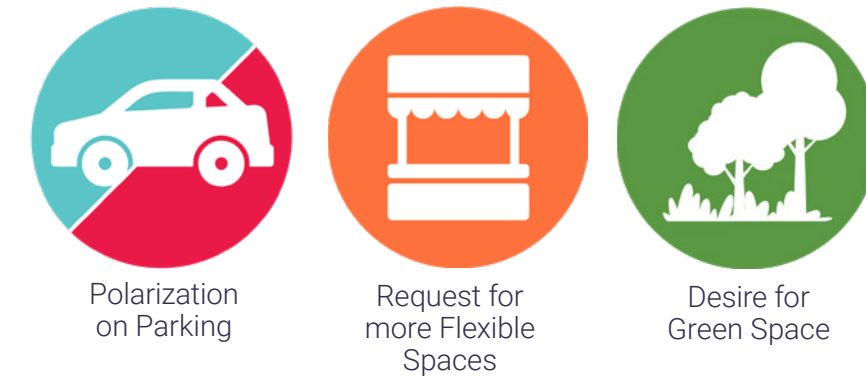


Figure 32. Community meeting at St. Ita



Figure 33. Community meeting at Truman College

MOST COMMON THEMES



Feedback from this session proved an interest in expanding the plaza and flexible open spaces to provide more spaces for vendors, markets, and pop-ups. There was also continued enthusiasm for green space and planters, with requests for an increased presence of these elements in the next design iteration. Parking remained a polarizing subject between residential and business stakeholders expressing different perspectives on its necessity and placement.

MOST DESIRED SPACES



The insights gathered in this session provided valuable direction for refining the Under 'L' Activation plan, ensuring that the concept continues to reflect community priorities while balancing site constraints and design opportunities.

Figure 34. What was heard from community meeting #2

WHAT ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN SEEING?

“ I appreciate the incredible breadth of engagements planned and wonder if the potentials are all shown together as if it is realistic to expect all that can fit under the L? Thanks for the creative, thoughtful work! ”

“ Any new green space made available via this work - pocket parks are great! ”

“ Excited for more open space! ”

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

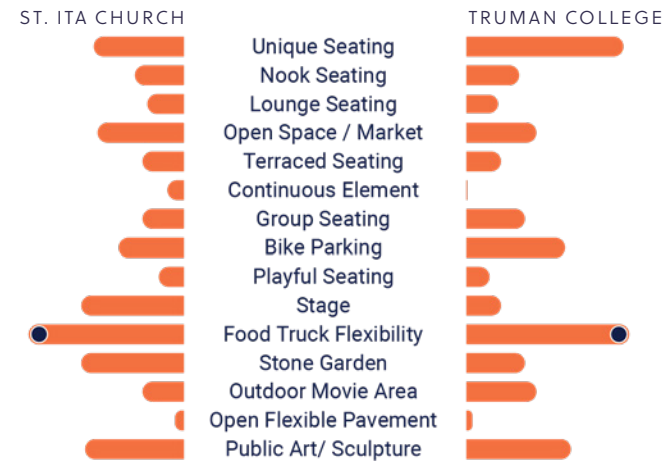
Community members also provided input on a selection of potential program options they would like to see in the key areas of plazas, fitness and game zones, play areas, and identity features. Within plazas, attendees expressed interest in unique seating, open market space, a stage, food truck accommodations, a stone garden, and public art or sculptures. For fitness and game areas, priorities included a climbing wall, skate park, game tables, lawn games, and strength and balance fitness equipment. In the play zones, attendees favored playful topography, play structures and sculptures, natural materials, and a land bridge. When considering the identity of the space, attendees were excited about incorporating wayfinding elements, murals, feature light poles, and public art or sculptures to create a distinctive and welcoming environment.

PLAZA SPACES

MOST CHOSEN SPACES:



Figure 35. Community preferences for types of plaza spaces (Chamian Cruz, Kyungsub Shin, Dave Morris, Landing Studio, Pinterest)



FITNESS & GAME ZONES

MOST CHOSEN SPACES:



Figure 36. Community preferences for types of fitness and game zones (Nikolai Benner, Bob Buckhorn, ArchDaily, Strelka KB, ForeverLawn)



PLAY AREAS

MOST CHOSEN SPACES:



Figure 37. Community preferences for types of play areas (Kate Joyce, RSL, ADEPT + GHB, Earthscape Play, Holi & Xi Tang & Feimin Song)



IDENTITY FEATURES

MOST CHOSEN SPACES:

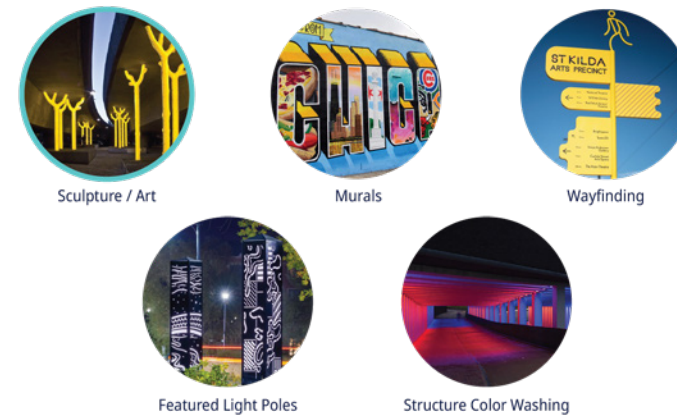


Figure 38. Community preferences for types of identity features (Warren Langley, Yelp, Arterial Design, RDG Planning & Design, Jannes Linders)



COMMUNITY MEETING #3

FRAMEWORK PLAN

Dates: February 25, 2025 // February 26, 2025

Locations: St. Ita Catholic Church (Ward 48) // Truman College (Ward 46)

Number of Attendees: 160 // 82

Held on February 25 and 26, 2025, the third and final round of community engagement meetings welcomed 242 attendees with an additional 69 individuals attending the meeting through the Facebook livestream. This session marked the unveiling of the final block-by-block concepts which were created by feedback and suggestions from hundreds of people who live and work in the Edgewater and Uptown communities.

The final block-by-block concepts were viewable on presentation boards. Each block was detailed in plan view showing the final layout of the trail, amenity zones, and parking. Perspective renders of each block provided a clear vision of how the spaces interact and function.

The final concept ensures the protection and accessibility of railroad infrastructure for CTA maintenance. All permanent features, such as the planters, playgrounds, parking, fitness equipment, dog parks, lighting and others, were strategically located on each block to avoid displacement of the underground stormwater infrastructure which, while unseen due to its underground location, is a major sustainable feature.

In response to community feedback from the second engagement session, the final concept reduces cluttered programming in favor of open, flexible spaces. These adaptable areas, located throughout the ten blocks, allow the community to shape their use based on evolving needs and activities.



Figure 39. Engagement boards at St. Ita Church



Figure 40. Presentation at St. Ita Church

Features of the Under 'L' Activation include two dog parks positioned at either end of the corridor in order to serve the broader community, a playground between Ainslie and Argyle, and a fitness area between Balmoral and Catalpa. Benches and planters are integrated throughout, all connected by a continuous, 10-foot-wide, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible concrete trail with crosswalks added per CDOT accessibility standards. To enhance safety and usability, pedestrian light poles will line the trail, providing consistent illumination.

A strong community desire for more green space and plantings guided the final concept. Due to the site's constraints—namely, the adjacent buildings and the overhead structure limiting sunlight—there are challenges to incorporating green space. Sun/shade studies, which analyze sunlight exposure and seasonal patterns, helped identify viable locations for plants. The underground stormwater system, which captures 100% of CTA site stormwater, further influenced the final concept, as the planters could not be placed on top of this infrastructure.

The selected plants will be suited for a shallow 12" soil profile to accommodate both the site's limited space and the railroad infrastructure needs. Additionally, to introduce more natural landscape materials to the corridor, crushed limestone serves as the primary surface material, covering roughly 75% of the area. The remaining 25% is asphalt, included to accommodate potential vendor food trucks and community programming. Balancing these constraints with community desires led to a final concept that is both viable and sustainable for all involved.

The inclusion of crushed stone throughout the site helped maintain the desire for natural materials while respecting the constraints of the railroad infrastructure. Each block is at least half natural surface treatment of crushed stone which can survive the environmental conditions under the 'L.'

Parking remained a polarizing issue, with strong but opposing opinions from residential and business stakeholders. The final concept carefully balanced these competing views by providing parking throughout the corridor, but not on every block.



Figure 41. Engagement boards at Truman College



Figure 42. Presentation at Truman College

RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

The final design concept, detailed in the following pages, illustrates the vision for each of the ten blocks, a vision guided by over a year of conversations and engagement from the community, businesses, and stakeholders. This collaborative process ensured that each block's design concept reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of those who live, work, and visit the area, creating a space that is both functional and adaptable.

Each block's vision is rooted in the desire to provide flexible spaces that complement and support the dynamic character of Uptown and Edgewater. Whether serving as a gathering place, an active recreational area, or a site for markets and events, these spaces are designed to evolve with the community's changing needs throughout each season and for years to come.

Each block provides open and flexible space, lighting, and a 10' wide concrete pedestrian trail, ensuring accessibility for all to enjoy the site. Crosswalks have been added in accordance with CDOT accessibility standards to ensure continued accessibility. Specific programming can be found throughout the Under 'L' Activation, including benches, dog parks, a playground, and a fitness area.

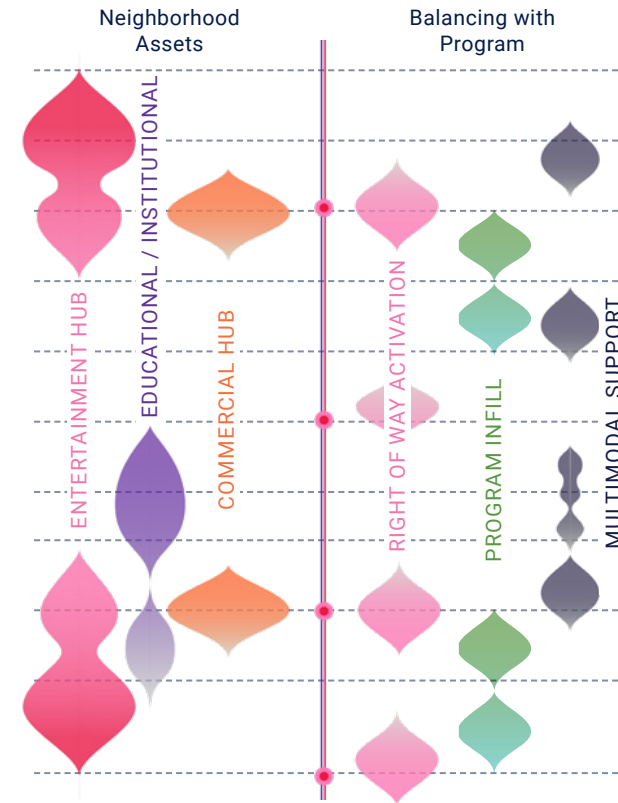


Figure 44. Designed to amplify neighborhood assets and create a balanced rhythm

DESIGN STRATEGY

The design strategy for the Under 'L' Activation prioritizes flexibility, accessibility, and community-driven adaptability. By providing open, flexible spaces, the design empowers the community to shape how the space is used—whether for markets, performances, gatherings, or everyday activities. This approach ensures that the space can support a wide range of uses over time, adapting to the changing needs and interests of current residents and future generations while preserving the integrity of the CTA infrastructure and operations.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTEXTUAL AND COMMUNITY-RESPONSIVE DESIGN

- Designs are shaped by the input from local residents, stakeholders, and city agencies to ensure relevance and usability.
- Amenities, including dog parks, playgrounds, and fitness areas, are tailored to the surrounding neighborhood context and community feedback.
- The design addresses the unique challenges of being located beneath an active railroad, adapting to site-specific constraints while ensuring functionality and durability.

FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTIVE PUBLIC SPACE

- Designed to accommodate markets, vendor fairs, neighborhood events, and food trucks, ensuring year-round activation.
- Surfaces will be composed of asphalt or crushed stone to support diverse programming and adaptability.

SEAMLESS CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- A continuous 10-foot-wide ADA-accessible concrete trail with additional crosswalks added per CDOT accessibility standards will provide safe and inclusive movement throughout the space.
- The site will be integrated with shared pedestrian and vehicular alleyways, enhancing connectivity across blocks.

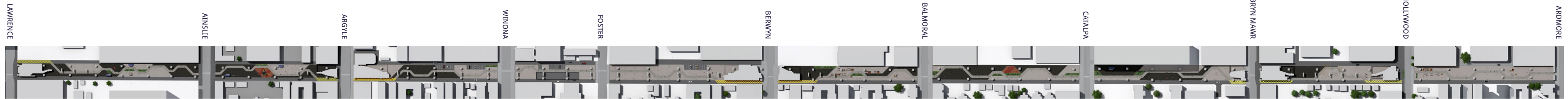


Figure 43. Final concept

LAWRENCE TO AINSLIE

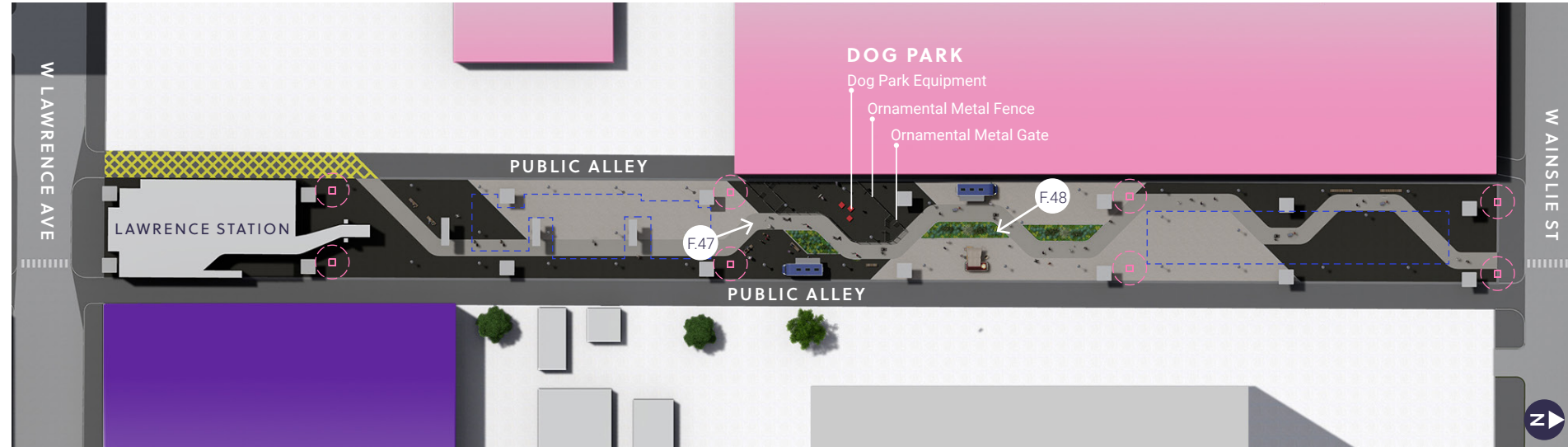


Figure 45. Final concept plan: Lawrence to Ainslie

The southernmost block of the project site, spanning Lawrence to Ainslie, is designed as a flexible space that accommodates both everyday use and event-related activities. The ADA-accessible, 10' concrete trail weaves through planters, with surrounding surfaces of asphalt and crushed stone. Crushed stone adds a natural element to the site, enhancing the overall presence of organic materials

in the urban environment of the Under 'L' Activation. Benches are strategically placed along the trail, offering moments of respite for visitors. Responding to community feedback requesting dog-friendly amenities, this block includes an approximately 1,800-square-foot dog park at its center, providing a needed resource for nearby residents.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Theaters & Performance Venues | Crushed Stone |
| Superstructure Clearances | Asphalt Paving |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Shared Alley |
| Superstructure Columns | Planter |
| | Pole Light |
| | Bench Seating |



Figure 46. Key plan



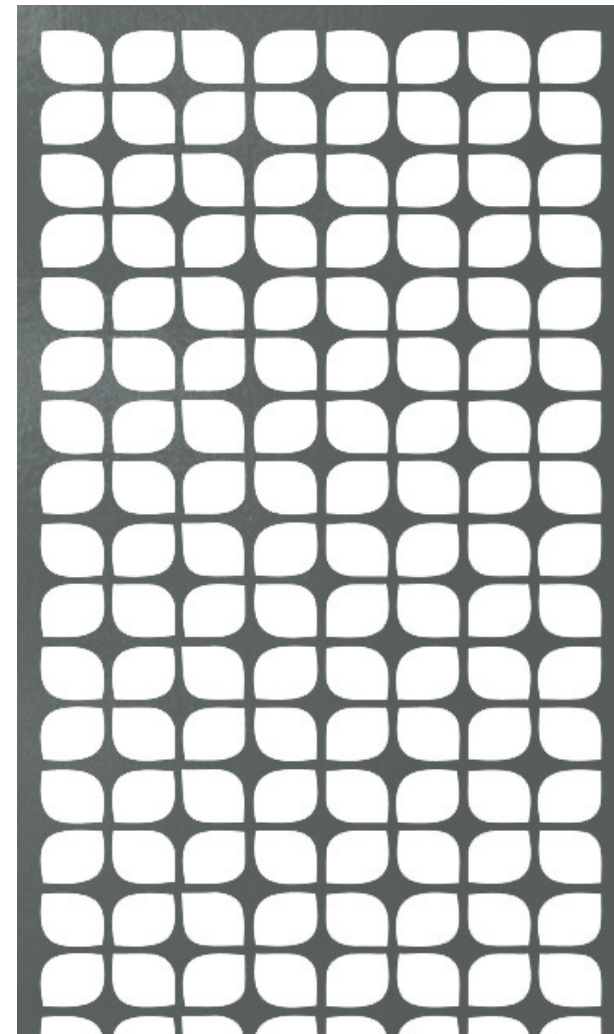
Figure 47. Perspective looking north towards Ainslie Street showcasing the neighborhood dog park and the flexible space activated by a food truck.

Lawrence to Ainslie



Figure 48. Perspective looking south towards Lawrence Avenue demonstrating night-time activation of the block.

● DOG PARK ELEMENTS



ORNAMENTAL METAL FENCE AND GATE

MANUFACTURER	OMEGA
MODEL	OMEGA UNIK, REF 42

(Omega)



DOG PARK EQUIPMENT

MANUFACTURER	WASAU
MODEL	TF5119

(Crowd Control Warehouse)

AINSLIE TO ARGYLE

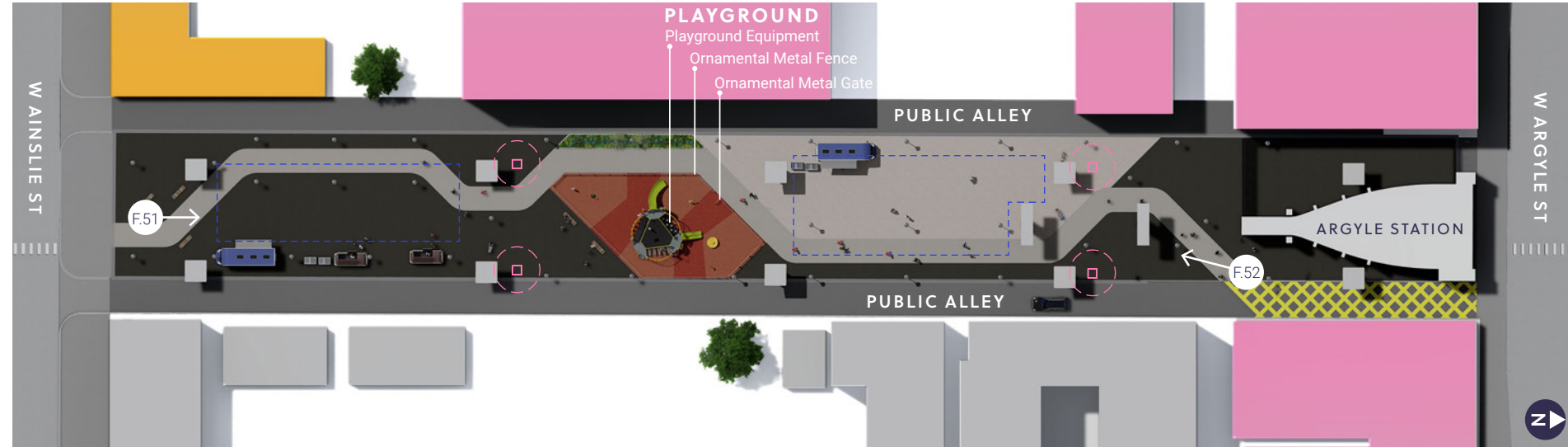


Figure 49. Final concept plan: Ainslie to Argyle

Open plazas are positioned at both the southern end of the block and the northern end behind the Argyle station. The centerpiece of this block is an approximately 2,600-square-foot playground designed with interactive elements that promote physical coordination, balance, and sensory engagement for children. Benches are placed around the playground and plazas, providing spaces for parents and visitors to rest while observing the activities.

The continuous 10' trail runs through the block, enhancing connectivity and ensuring accessibility. At the northern end, the alley east of the Under 'L' Activation features a painted ground graphic, designating a shared trail for both vehicles and pedestrians. Mid-block crossings in front of the stations enhance connectivity between blocks, ensuring safe and efficient pedestrian movement.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Educational Institutions | Crushed Stone |
| Superstructure Clearances | Asphalt Paving |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Rubber Surfacing |
| Superstructure Columns | Shared Alley |
| | Planter |
| | Pole Light |
| | Bench Seating |



Figure 50. Key plan



Figure 51. Perspective looking north towards Argyle Street showing the relationship between the playground and the open space, which is activated by food trucks.

Ainslie to Argyle



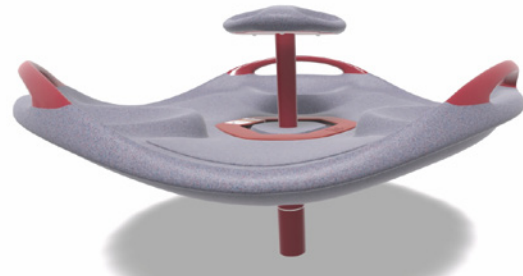
Figure 52. Perspective looking south towards Ainslie Street demonstrating the ground graphic leading pedestrians into the shared alley towards the mid-block crossing.

● PLAYGROUND ELEMENTS



MAIN PLAY STRUCTURE

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	VOLO
(Landscape Structures)	



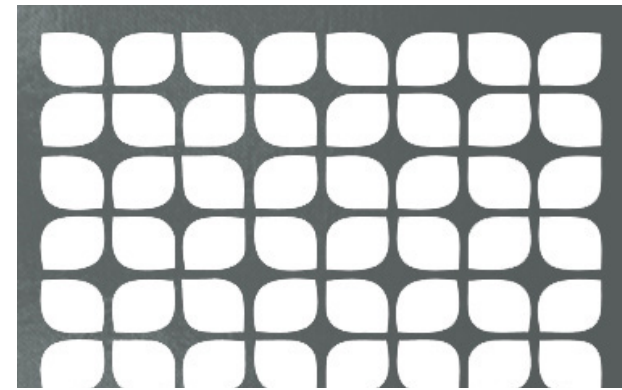
MULTI-USER SPINNER

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	REVIWHEEL SPINNER
(Landscape Structures)	



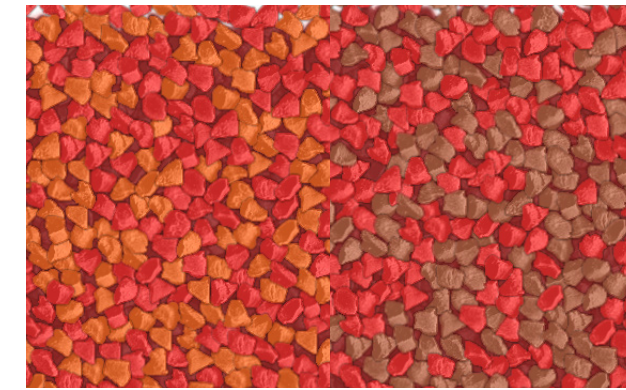
MULTI-USER SPINNER

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	CURVA SPINNER
(Landscape Structures)	



ORNAMENTAL METAL FENCE AND GATE

MANUFACTURER	OMEGA
MODEL	OMEGA UNIK, REF 42
(Omega)	



POURED IN PLACE RUBBER SURFACING

MANUFACTURER	SURFACEAMERICA
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ARGYLE TO WINONA

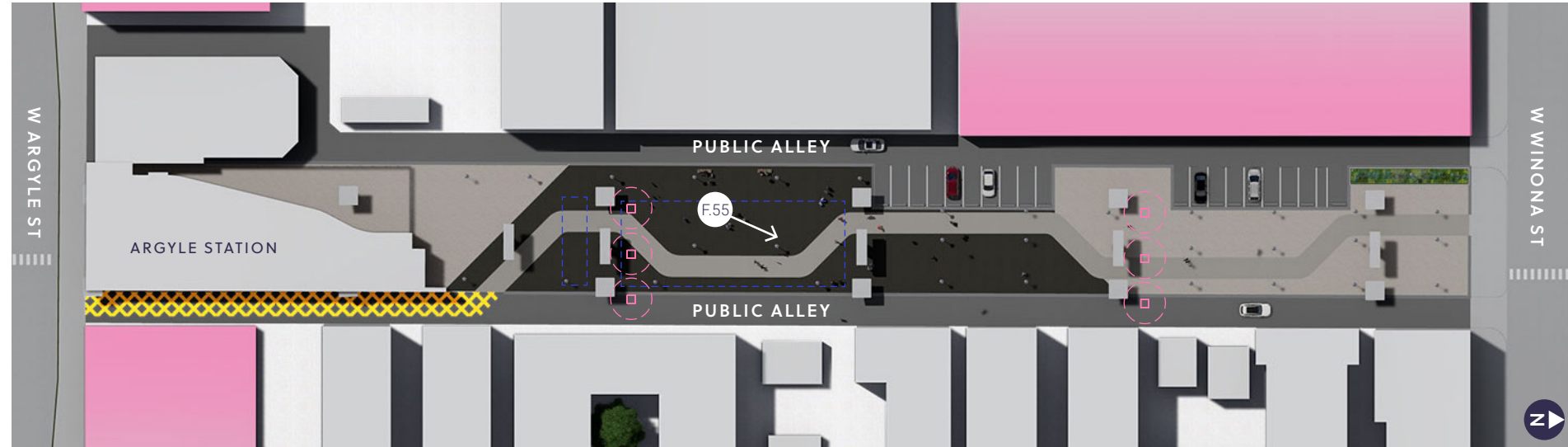


Figure 53. Final concept plan: Argyle to Winona

The block of Argyle to Winona features flexible open space designed to accommodate a variety of neighborhood events. It provides gathering areas and space for market setups, with room for tents, food trucks, and vendors. The versatile space could host seasonal or pop-up activities, adding to the dynamic character of the activation. The continuous trail runs through the block, ensuring accessibility and connectivity between gathering areas.

Additionally, a planter is strategically placed within the space, adding greenery while maintaining open sight lines. The natural material of the planting is complemented and enhanced by the inclusion of crushed stone, a natural element which adds texture and visual interest. The block also includes parking stalls off the western commercial alley, primarily serving businesses on Broadway Avenue and shops along the Argyle retail corridor.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Superstructure Clearances | Crushed Stone |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Asphalt Paving |
| Superstructure Columns | Shared Alley |
| | Planter |
| | Pole Light |
| | Bench Seating |



Figure 54. Key plan



Figure 55. Perspective looking north to Winona Street showing pedestrians using the trail and taking moments of respite on the benches.

WINONA TO FOSTER

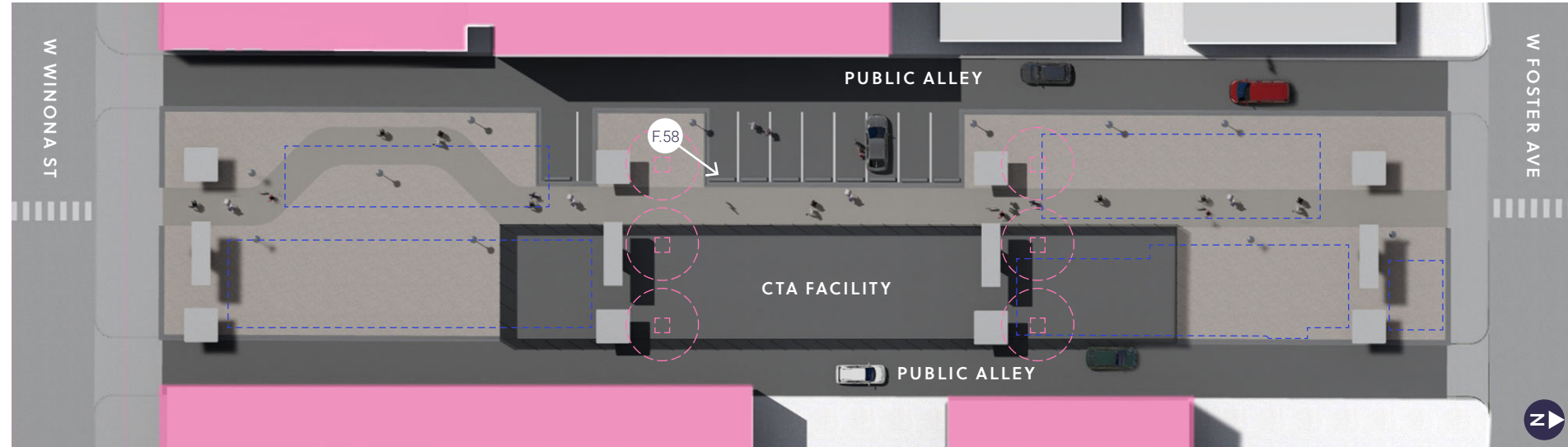


Figure 56. Final concept plan: Winona to Foster

The Under 'L' Activation between Winona and Foster includes two open plazas comprised of crushed stone at either end of the block, creating flexible spaces around the CTA facility. The continuous trail connects the plazas at either end, providing accessible movement through the block. These spaces are designed to be adaptable for a variety of

community events and gatherings, further enhancing the area's role as a hub for local activity. Parking stalls are located to the west of the CTA facility. The flexible spaces and the provided parking stalls can support the needs of the neighboring community, including the schools in the neighborhood.

LEGEND

- Retail & Restaurants
- Pedestrian Trail
- Superstructure Clearances
- Crushed Stone
- Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area
- Superstructure Columns
- Pole Light



Figure 57. Key plan



Figure 58. Perspective looking north towards Foster Avenue illustrating the connection of the provided parking, the accessible walking trail, and the CTA facility.

FOSTER TO BERWYN

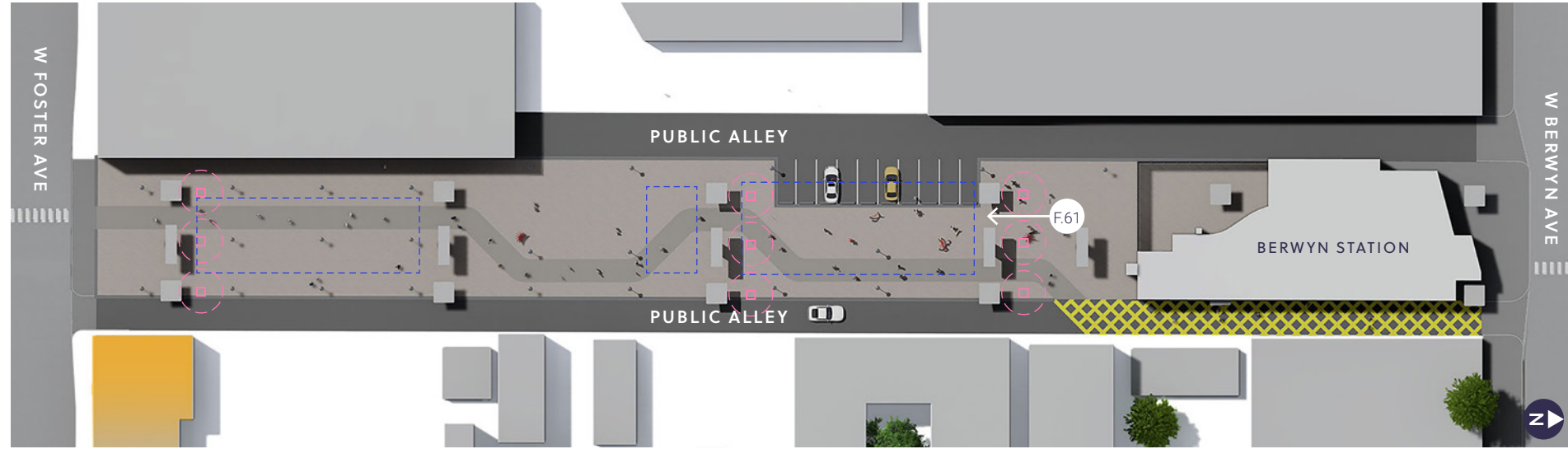


Figure 59. Final concept plan: Foster to Berwyn

Foster to Berwyn is predominantly covered in crushed stone, with the continuous 10' trail weaving through the track columns. The crushed stone surface enhances the space with natural materials and texture while maintaining flexibility for events and gatherings.

The use of crushed stone adds a natural aesthetic while ensuring the area can accommodate diverse activities. Parking stalls along the west alley help meet the parking demand for businesses on Broadway Avenue.

LEGEND

- Educational Institutions
- Pedestrian Trail
- Superstructure Clearances
- Crushed Stone
- Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area
- Shared Alley
- Superstructure Columns
- Pole Light



Figure 60. Key plan



Figure 61. Perspective looking south towards Foster Avenue showing the provided parking and the natural stone flexible areas.

BERWYN TO BALMORAL



Figure 62. Final concept plan: Berwyn to Balmoral

The design of the Berwyn to Balmoral block offers flexibility for multi-seasonal use, with gathering spaces capable of hosting four-season activities, such as outdoor events, markets, and social gatherings. Planters have been strategically placed to ensure plant growth is viable. The trail remains accessible throughout the year, providing

a consistent route for pedestrians in all weather conditions. Benches are placed near the trail and gathering areas, offering opportunities for rest and enhancing the overall experience. This adaptable design ensures the space remains vibrant, functional, and welcoming throughout all seasons.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Superstructure Clearances | Crushed Stone |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Asphalt Paving |
| Superstructure Columns | Shared Alley |
| | Planter |
| | Pole Light |
| | Bench Seating |



Figure 63. Key plan



Figure 64. Perspective looking north towards Balmoral Avenue showcasing the flexibility of the space to provide a market in all seasons.

Berwyn to Balmoral



Figure 65. Perspective looking south towards Berwyn Avenue showing the block's ability to host a busy market.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

“ I really appreciate the amount of pedestrian space and areas open to activation. ”

“ Flexible spaces that can support local activities - especially in summer. ”

“ Want a continuous path the whole way from Ardmore to Lawrence. ”

“ Pop-up market. ”

BALMORAL TO CATALPA



Figure 66. Final concept plan: Balmoral to Catalpa

An approximately 1,500-square-foot fitness area, centrally located within the block, provides a range of fitness equipment designed to improve flexibility, strength, balance, agility, and core stability—offering a much-needed amenity for residents in the surrounding blocks. The fitness area serves as a valuable resource for fostering an active lifestyle within the community. Planters enhance the area, providing beauty

and green space to the block. Benches are included to offer places to rest and enjoy the surroundings. Surrounding the fitness area, open spaces to the north and south offer flexibility for a variety of community activities. The combination of dedicated fitness equipment and adaptable open space creates an inclusive, multifunctional area that meets the diverse needs of the community.

LEGEND

- Superstructure Clearances
- Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area
- Superstructure Columns
- Pedestrian Trail
- Crushed Stone
- Asphalt Paving
- Rubber Surfacing
- Shared Alley
- Planter
- Pole Light
- Bench Seating



Figure 67. Key plan



Figure 68. Perspective looking north towards Catalpa Avenue showcasing the block's planters and open space for community gatherings or programming.

Balmoral to Catalpa



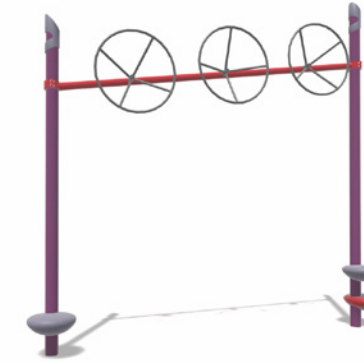
Figure 69. Perspective looking south towards Balmoral Avenue showcasing the flexible space with the fitness area in the background.

FITNESS ELEMENTS



FITNESS EQUIPMENT TYPE 1

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	HEALTHBEAT STRETCH
(Landscape Structures)	



FITNESS EQUIPMENT TYPE 2

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	FITCORE EXTREME WHEEL BRIDGE
(Landscape Structures)	



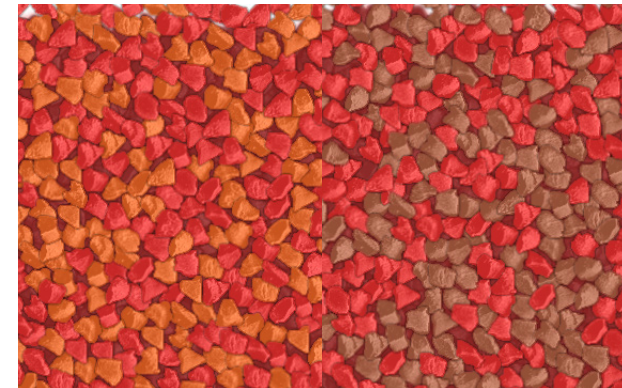
FITNESS EQUIPMENT TYPE 3

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	HEALTHBEAT PULL-UP/DIP
(Landscape Structures)	



FITNESS EQUIPMENT TYPE 4

MANUFACTURER	LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES
MODEL	HEALTHBEAT ASSISTED ROW
(Landscape Structures)	



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MANUFACTURER	SURFACEAMERICA
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CATALPA TO BRYN MAWR

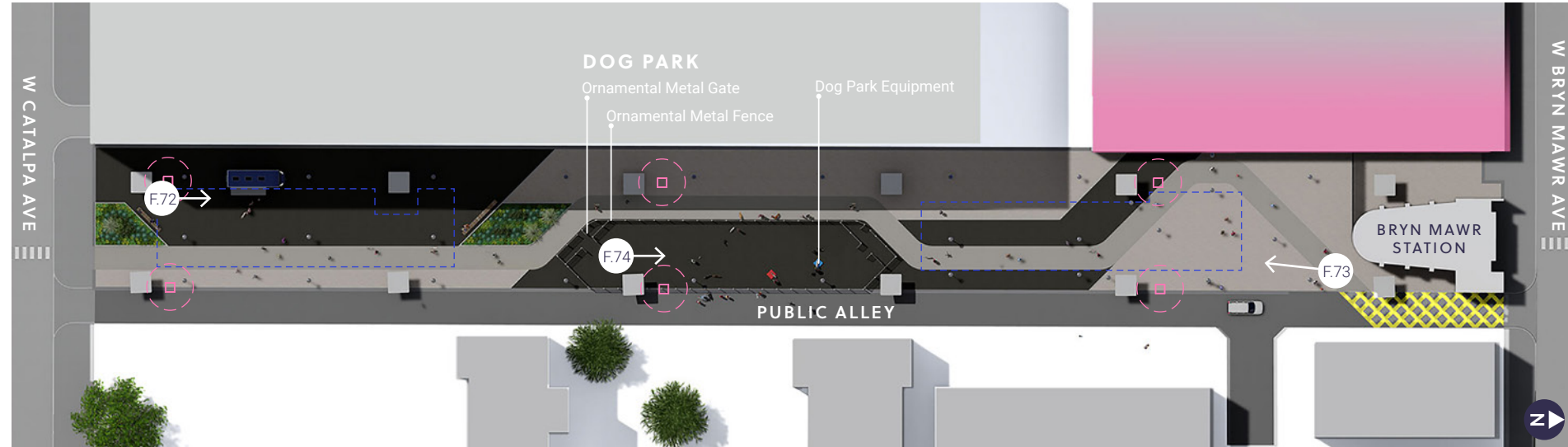


Figure 70. Final concept plan: Catalpa to Bryn Mawr

Catalpa to Bryn Mawr features an approximately 4,000-square-foot dog park, providing a dedicated space for dogs to play and socialize. This dog park complements the dog park located on the south end of the project site between Lawrence Avenue and Ainslie Street. By positioning the two dog parks at either end of the corridor, the design ensures broad community access to this valuable feature.

The open spaces surrounding the dog park are connected by the corridor's continuous trail. The spaces in this block are designed to enhance the Bryn Mawr Retail Corridor, offering an ideal setting for vendor events and market activities. Fixed benches are placed adjacent to the planters, providing moments of respite for visitors.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Superstructure Clearances | Crushed Stone |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Asphalt Paving |
| Superstructure Columns | Shared Alley |
| | Planter |
| | Pole Light |
| | Bench Seating |



Figure 71. Key plan



Figure 72. Perspective looking north towards Bryn Mawr Avenue showing the relationship of the dog park with areas activated by temporary vendors and places to sit.

Catalpa to Bryn Mawr



Figure 73. Perspective looking south towards Catalpa Avenue showing the shared alley and the flexible use space within this block.



Figure 74. Perspective inside the dog park showing dogs and their owners using the space. Image shown for conceptual purposes only. Colors subject to change.

DOG PARK ELEMENTS



ORNAMENTAL METAL FENCE AND GATE

MANUFACTURER	OMEGA
MODEL	OMEGA UNIK, REF 42 (Omega)



DOG PARK EQUIPMENT

MANUFACTURER	WASAU
MODEL	TF5119 (Crowd Control Warehouse)

BRYN MAWR TO HOLLYWOOD

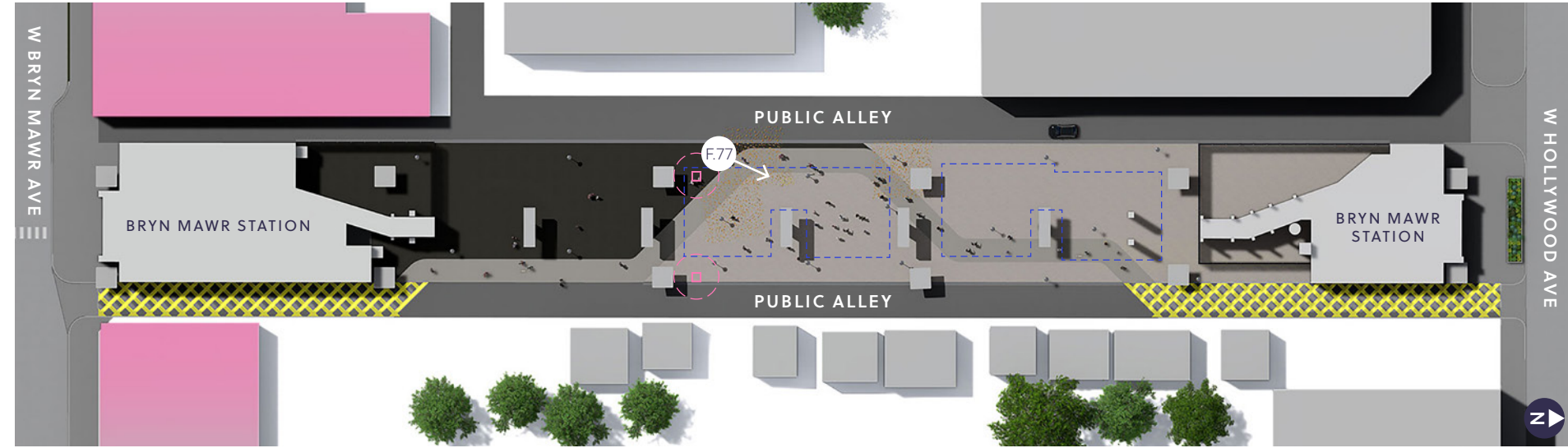


Figure 75. Final concept plan: Bryn Mawr to Hollywood

The activation between Bryn Mawr and Hollywood preserves open space between the stations, creating a flexible gathering area. The ADA-compliant trail continues through this block, offering diverse vantage points of the under track area, and its grand scale provides a unique urban experience.

Planters lined in front of the Hollywood Station enhance pedestrian safety by providing protection from vehicular traffic, encouraging pedestrians to use the designated crosswalks located about a block east and west of the station, and contributing to the area's aesthetic appeal.

LEGEND

- | | |
|---|--|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Superstructure Clearances | Crushed Stone |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Asphalt Paving |
| Superstructure Columns | Shared Alley |
| | Planter |
| | Pole Light |



Figure 76. Key plan



Figure 77. Perspective looking north towards Hollywood Avenue showing a natural crushed stone surface material that sets the stage for the flexible gathering opportunities.

HOLLYWOOD TO ARDMORE

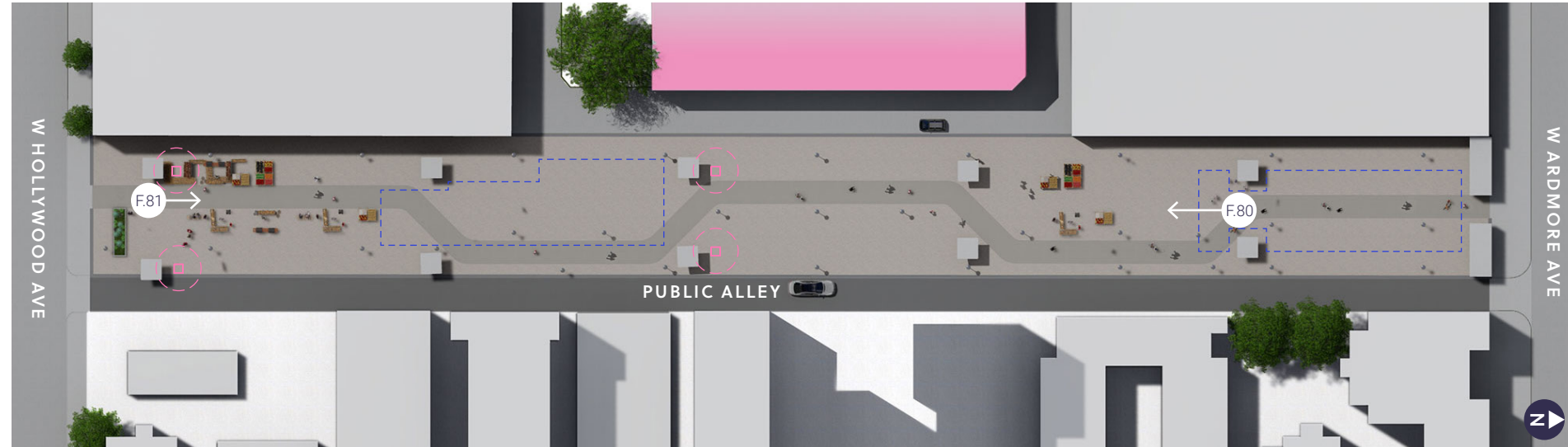


Figure 78. Final concept plan: Hollywood to Ardmore

The northernmost block of the project, Hollywood to Ardmore, features flexible event spaces designed to host Edgewater neighborhood events. The continuous trail winds between columns, creating distinct gathering areas.

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
| Retail & Restaurants | Pedestrian Trail |
| Superstructure Clearances | Crushed Stone |
| Subsurface Stormwater Retention Area | Planter |
| Superstructure Columns | Pole Light |



Figure 79. Key plan



Figure 80. Perspective looking north towards Ardmore Avenue showing the concrete trail that defines the open space.

Hollywood to Ardmore



Figure 81. Perspective looking south towards Hollywood Avenue showcasing the open space activated as a market. The planter in the foreground increases pedestrian safety.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

“ Love the ideas and the openness. ”

“ Flexible spaces/multi-use, transformative for when there’s an event. ”

“ It’s very rare we get new land to develop in this established city, I am excited to see it put to good use. ”

MATERIALITY



OVERVIEW

The material design decisions for the Under 'L' Activation project prioritize durability, comfort, natural material, and long-term community benefit. High-quality, weather-resistant materials have been selected to withstand heavy use and varying climate conditions, ensuring the longevity of the seating, trail, and other fixtures.

GROUND SURFACES

The ground surface materials exhibit a purposeful neutrality, creating a canvas for community-driven uses and allowing the space to evolve and adapt to the neighborhood's changing needs.

The use of durable, low-maintenance materials balances functionality with aesthetic appeal, creating an inviting and resilient environment. This approach fosters a space that can evolve alongside the community, supporting both current engagement and future possibilities.

These design choices reflect a commitment to creating a space that not only meets functional needs but also nurtures a sense of place.

● CRUSHED STONE

Crushed stone, a material used throughout the Chicago Park District, introduces a natural hardscape material to the site, complementing the planters while expanding the availability of flexible open spaces. It helps delineate different areas within the site, creating distinct edges against the concrete trail and other ground surfaces. Its earthy tone adds a natural texture to the design, subtly contrasting with the urban environment and creating a welcoming atmosphere. The subtle crunch of footsteps on crushed stone provides a soothing, tactile sound that is calming in an otherwise busy environment.



CRUSHED STONE
COLOR | NATURAL LIGHT GRAY

● CONCRETE

Concrete is used for the 10' ADA-accessible trail, providing a stable and long-lasting surface for pedestrians. It is used exclusively for the continuous trail that weaves through the ten blocks, establishing a distinct material identity for this feature. This intentional use of concrete delineates the trail from surrounding surfaces and uses, reinforcing its role as a unifying element and guiding movement through the site. Its consistent presence not only supports accessibility but also strengthens wayfinding and provides visual continuity across the varying conditions of each block.



CONCRETE PAVEMENT
COLOR | NATURAL LIGHT GRAY

● ASPHALT

Asphalt is incorporated into flexible spaces, ensuring smooth and durable ground conditions for a variety of uses. This material creates a blank canvas that enhances and supports community programs while also accommodating heavier vehicles for vendors and flexible uses. In a space that invites diverse users and creative programs, the neutral asphalt material will help support flexible community uses.



ASPHALT PAVEMENT
COLOR | BLACK

● RAISED CONCRETE CURB

Low-raised concrete curbs define the edges of planters and crushed stone areas, effectively containing soil and stone materials. Within the raised curbs, planting adds warmth and softness to the site, providing an inviting atmosphere for all who visit. The defined edges frame the planting areas, allowing the natural textures and colors to stand out against the surrounding hardscape.



RAISED CONCRETE CURB
COLOR | NATURAL LIGHT GRAY

SITE FURNISHINGS

AREAS OF RESPITE

Benches will be provided throughout the project site, allowing visitors to sit, observe activity, have a moment of rest, or engage in conversation. Benches will be anchored to the ground so that they cannot be moved or removed from the site. The selected StreetLife Rough & Ready Crosswise Bench is designed for durability, capable of withstanding various weather conditions, and the daily wear of public use. These thoughtfully chosen fixtures contribute to a comfortable and inviting environment for all visitors.



LINEAR BENCH

MANUFACTURER	STREETLIFE
MODEL	ROUGH & READY CROSSWISE BENCH

(ArchiExpo)

PLAY SPACE

Between Ainslie and Argyle, a dedicated children’s play area offers opportunities for active exploration. The play equipment is equipped to encourage skill-building, physical activity, and social interaction. The playground will be located over rubber surfacing and contained by ornamental metal fencing, both of which provide a safe environment for the children using the play space. See block by block recommendations for product imagery.

DOG PARKS

Two fenced dog parks provide a popular and much-needed amenity in the community. These spaces allow dogs to run freely and interact with concrete play features that promote physical activity and stimulation. Space adjacent to the dog park allows dog owners to watch their dogs play. Beyond their use as pet spaces, the dog parks help draw more people to the corridor—boosting daily foot traffic and creating a greater sense of safety through increased visibility and activity along the site. See block by block recommendations for product imagery.

FITNESS ZONES

A centrally located fitness zone between Balmoral and Catalpa provides exercise equipment designed for a wide range of ages and abilities. The space encourages active living and offers a no-cost, equitable way for residents to stay healthy. Similar to the play area, rubber surfacing beneath the equipment creates a safe and comfortable workout environment. Its central location helps serve both Uptown and Edgewater residents, making it a natural hub for community activity. See block by block recommendations for product imagery.

SITE LIGHTING

The site will be illuminated to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for visitors. Due to railroad constraints prohibiting attachments to the structure or tracks, the lighting design relies on pedestrian poles strategically placed throughout the space. These fixtures provide consistent and evenly distributed illumination across each block, enhancing visibility and usability. This approach ensures that the site remains welcoming and accessible, regardless of the time of day.



POLE LIGHT

MANUFACTURER	STERNBERG LIGHTING
MODEL	SL660 MEDIUM SOLANA™ POST TOP, 8' H

(Seginus Lighting)



Figure 82. Pole light installation example (Sternberg)

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

“ Make sure it has good lighting. ”

“ I'd like good lighting/safety and making sure the space is active/activated! ”

“ Lighting everywhere. Decorative and functional. ”

“ Lighting! Lighting! Lighting! ”

“ Lighting for ambiance and safety. ”

PLANTING OVERVIEW

One of the primary priorities of this space is to maintain the railroad infrastructure while ensuring the activation remains viable for all users. Key maintenance considerations include access to emergency hatches and the protection of track columns and the underground stormwater detention system. Because maintenance, irrigation, and sunlight are limited in the Under 'L' Activation, plant species and planter placement have been carefully designed.

The planting design for the Under 'L' Activation prioritizes durability, adaptability, drought tolerance, and low maintenance needs.

SITE CONSTRAINTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The planting conditions under the 'L' present several challenges, including:

Shallow soil profile:

Due to the underground stormwater infrastructure, the planters can only extend 6" underground. A 6" raised curb extends the soil profile to 12", but this remains a constraint, as many plants need more soil for establishment and growth.

Limited Sunlight:

Much of the area under the 'L' is shaded by adjacent buildings and the elevated track structure, significantly restricting sunlight exposure and therefore where planters can be located. A sun/shade analysis of the site was performed to understand viable locations for plant placement.

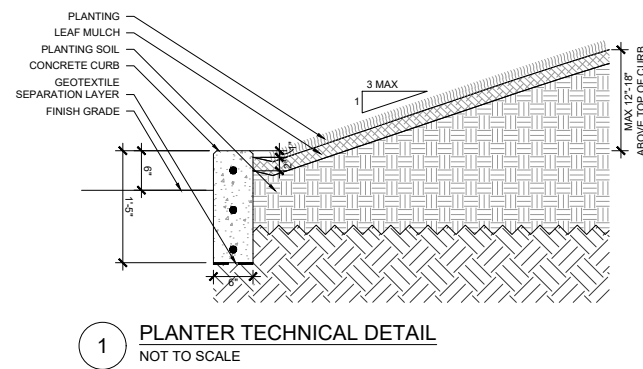


Figure 83. Planter detail

RECOMMENDED SPECIES

The viable plant species include, but are not limited to:

Autumn Moor Grass (*Sesleria autumnalis*)

Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster')

Korean Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis brachytricha*)

Bevan's Bigroot Geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum* 'Bevan's Variety')

This species will be used exclusively in the raised planters on the north and south sides of Hollywood Avenue.

Pardon Me Daylily (*Hemerocallis* 'Pardon Me')

Details of the selected species can be found in the provided plant schedule on page 72.

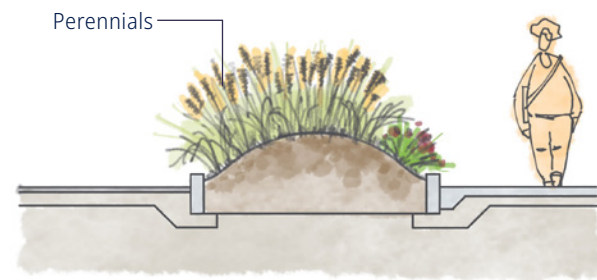


Figure 84. Planting section

DESIGN APPROACH EXAMPLE

The Autumn Moor and Feather Reed Grasses form the foundation of the planting design. These cool-season grasses begin growing in early spring, look excellent through summer and fall, and hold their form in winter, providing year-round interest.

The planting layout follows a 'block-style' planting approach, where plants are arranged in large, defined groupings rather than scattered or mixed randomly. This method creates a bold, structured look that enhances the visual impact of the landscape.

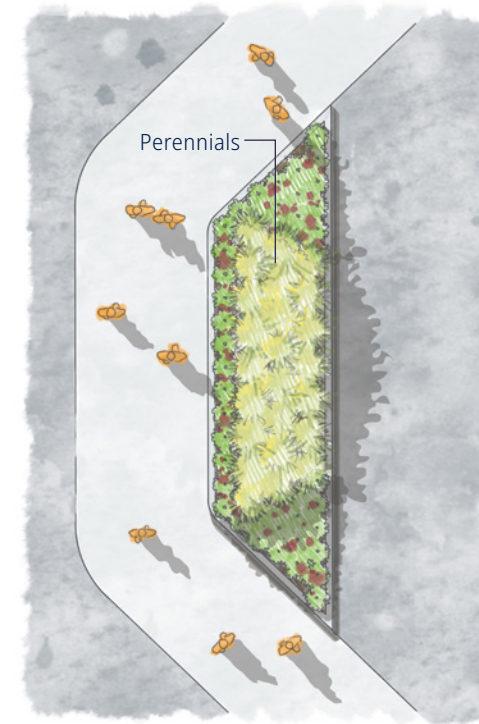


Figure 85. Plan view of planter layout

Geometric-shaped groupings will align with the corridor's overall design. A visual representation of this layout can be found in Figure 85.

The planting strategy is designed to be simple, functional, and effective, ensuring a visually appealing and resilient green space that enhances the Under 'L' Activation while accommodating the site's constraints.

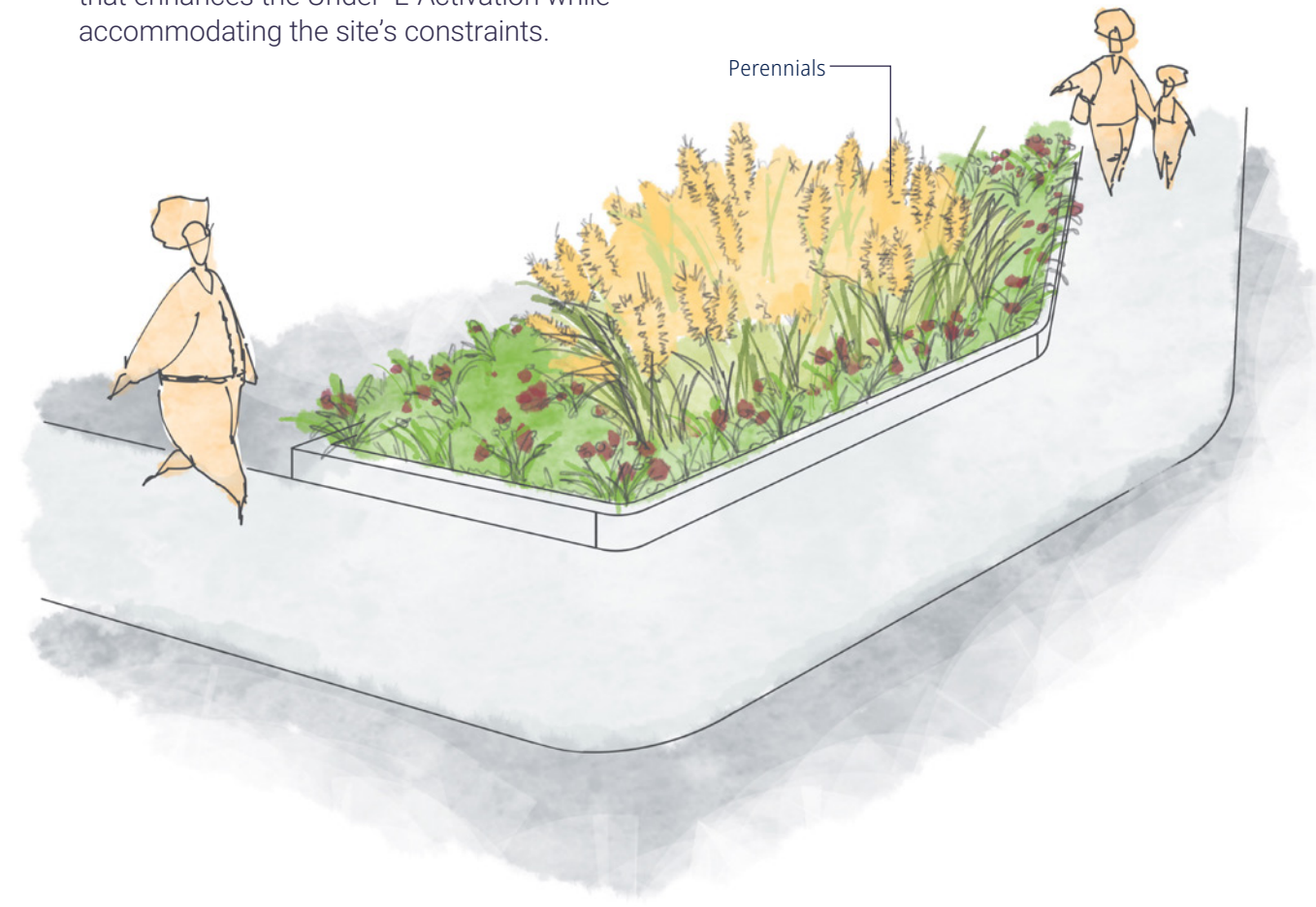


Figure 86. Perspective vignette of planter layout

EXAMPLE PLANT SCHEDULE

PERENNIALS									
COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	CHARACTERISTICS	FLOWER	BLOOM TIME	HEIGHT	WIDTH	CONTAINER	SPACING	NOTES
Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass	<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster'	Vertical accent, fall color	N/A	June, July	4' - 5'	2' - 3'	Container #1	24" oc	Drought tolerant, salt tolerant
Korean Feather Reed Grass	<i>Calamagrostis brachytricha</i>	Feathery plumes in late summer to fall	N/A	September	3' - 4'	3' - 4'	Container #1	24" oc	Drought tolerant, salt tolerant
Autumn Moor Grass	<i>Sesleria autumnalis</i>	Semi-evergreen foliage	N/A	July, August	18" - 24"	12" - 18"	Container #1	15" oc	Drought tolerant, salt tolerant
Bevan's Bigroot Geranium	<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i> 'Bevan's Variety'	Large fragrant green leaves, bearing deep pink flowers in early summer	Pink	June, July	8" - 12"	18" - 24"	Container #1	15" oc	Drought tolerant, heat tolerant
Pardon Me Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> 'Pardon Me'	Tough and reblooming daylily	Red	June, July, August	12" - 18"	18" - 24"	Container #1	15" oc	Drought tolerant, heat tolerant

MULCH			
COMPONENT	MATERIAL	DEPTH	NOTES
Mulch	100% Leaf Mulch	2"D	To be used in all planter beds. Free of weed seeds, double-processed, and with a pH between 5.0 and 6.5.



Figure 87. Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass (The Home Depot)



Figure 88. Korean Feather Reed Grass (Proven Winners)



Figure 89. Autumn Moor Grass (PlantMaster)

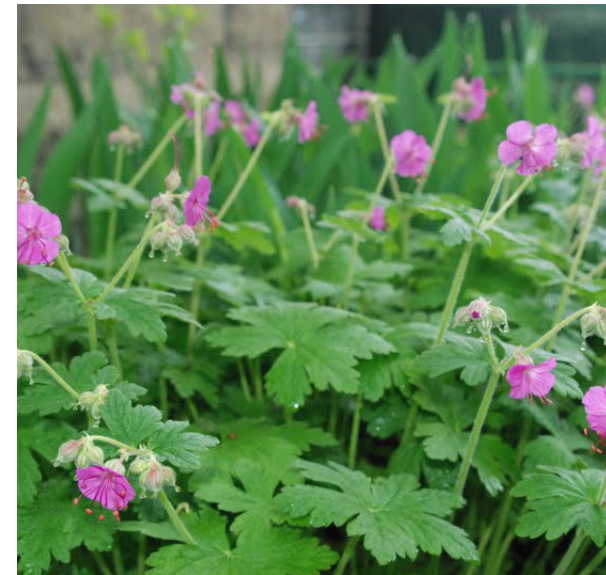


Figure 90. Bevan's Bigroot Geranium (Blogger.com)



Figure 91. Pardon Me Daylily (Innocenti & Mangoni Piante)



Figure 92. Leaf mulch (City of Oakwood)

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION



OVERVIEW

CTA's commitment to developing and maintaining strong partnerships with local organizations, residents, and businesses will ensure that the project reflects the needs, identity, and aspirations of the surrounding community over time. Throughout the engagement process, CTA maintained communication with the local community.

Maintaining these relationships and partnerships is essential to the success of the active and vibrant Under 'L' Activation for several key reasons:

LEVERAGES DIVERSE SKILLS AND RESOURCES

Local partnerships will allow the CTA to tap into the expertise, networks, and resources of community-based organizations, artists, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs.

These collaborators bring:

- Cultural knowledge
- Programming capabilities
- Funding or in-kind support
- Operational capacity (e.g., managing events, maintaining spaces)

The shared responsibility increases the feasibility and impact of activation.

ENCOURAGES INNOVATION AND LOCAL CREATIVITY

Local partners, small business owners, and grassroots organizations can bring innovative and creative ideas to life that may not emerge through a top-down approach. This results in more dynamic and diverse uses of the under 'L' spaces that feel authentic and unique.

SUPPORTS LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

A strong network of partners can help sustain the space beyond initial activation. Through shared stewardship models, maintenance agreements, and ongoing programming, these groups can ensure that the space remains active, welcoming, and well cared for over time.

STRENGTHENS LOCAL ECONOMIES AND SOCIAL COHESION

Activation partnerships that include local vendors, artists, and entrepreneurs support economic development while creating spaces for connection and interaction among residents. This helps strengthen the social fabric of the neighborhood.

CTA will work to identify potential stakeholder partnerships in both the Edgewater and Uptown communities to maximize the community's participation and ownership of these spaces.

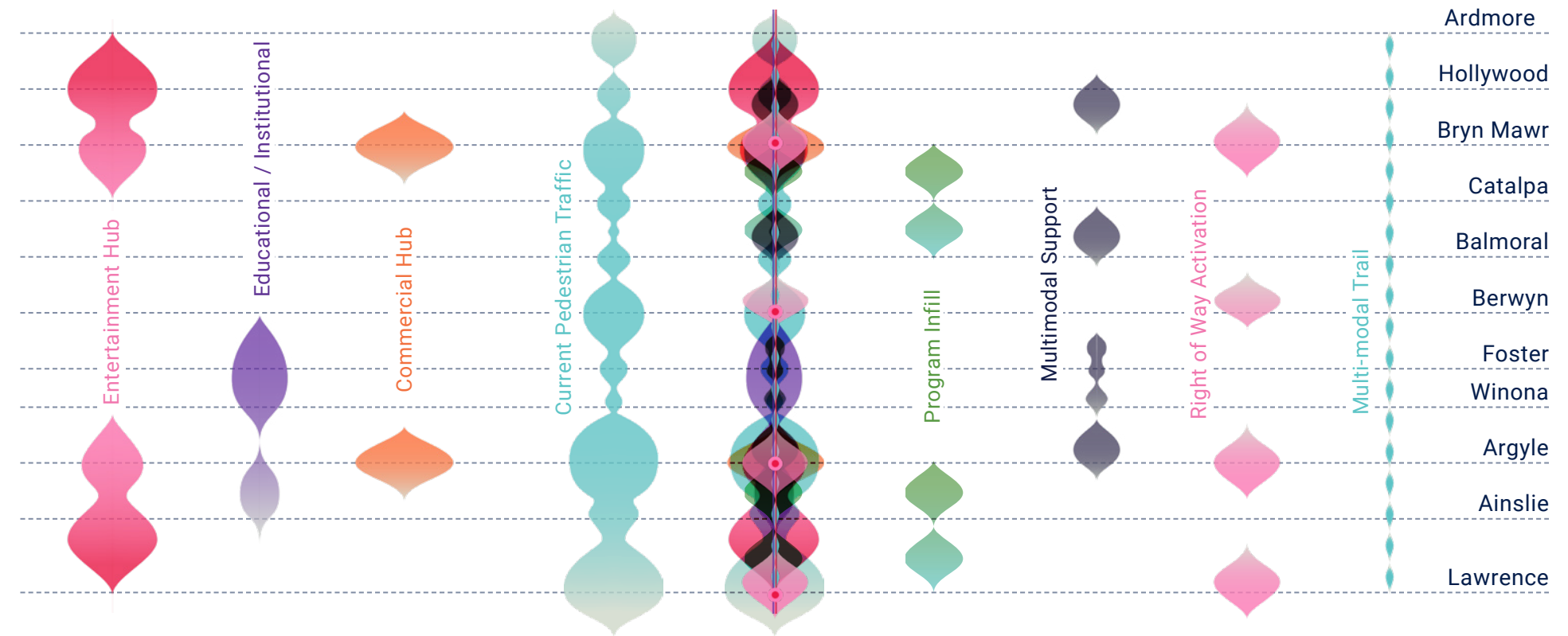


Figure 93. Amplifying neighborhood assets and creating a balanced rhythm

CDOT STREETScape DEVELOPMENTS

Cohabitation with adjacent city infrastructure, alleyways, public right-of-way sidewalks, and roads, create a unique condition requiring coordination, planning and integrated design with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). Throughout the design process, CTA engaged with CDOT to ensure that the spaces surrounding the activation project are safe, accessible, and integrated with broader mobility goals.

UNDER 'L' ACTIVATION: SHARED ALLEYS

A shared alley condition is required at each block with a station house(s), as the stations span the full width of the Under 'L' Activation site, preventing the 10' trail from carrying through to the mid-block crossing. To accommodate a continuous trail, partial alleys adjacent to blocks with station structures have been designated as a shared alley in coordination with CDOT. The shared alley will be clearly demarcated with thermoplastic ground paint.



Figure 94. People Alley: Couch Place (Streetsblog Chicago)

UNDER 'L' ACTIVATION: MID-BLOCK CROSSINGS

Mid-block crossings are provided at all but one of the intersections along the Under 'L' Activation, connecting each block of the corridor. These mid-block crossings are in accordance with CDOT specifications.

At Hollywood Avenue, pedestrians are encouraged to use designated crosswalks at the nearest intersections for safe crossing. To further enhance safety, raised planters have been strategically placed on both the north and south sides of Hollywood Avenue in front of the Under 'L' Activation site to discourage mid-block crossing and increase pedestrian safety.



Figure 95. CDOT 55th Street mid-block crossing (CDOT)

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is actively working in the Uptown and Edgewater neighborhoods, with a particular focus on the area surrounding the Under 'L' Activation. DPD developed the Broadway Land Use Framework to guide development decisions along the Broadway corridor by outlining expectations for land use, density, zoning, and other planning parameters. The Under 'L' Activation directly supports many of the goals outlined in this plan. By introducing a pedestrian trail adjacent to Broadway, the project encourages walkability and draws people into the heart of the commercial corridor. It also creates opportunities for local businesses to engage the community through pop-up shops and vendor markets. With its emphasis on walkability, accessible public spaces, and community-driven programming, the Under 'L' Activation will help support the goals of the Broadway Land Use Framework to cultivate a vibrant, connected environment that enhances the surrounding neighborhood.

To ensure future development along Broadway aligns with the Under 'L' Activation Project, CTA should work in close and ongoing partnership with the DPD. The goal is to ensure that public and private development along this corridor supports a cohesive vision for livability, access, identity, and activation around the modernized Red Line infrastructure.

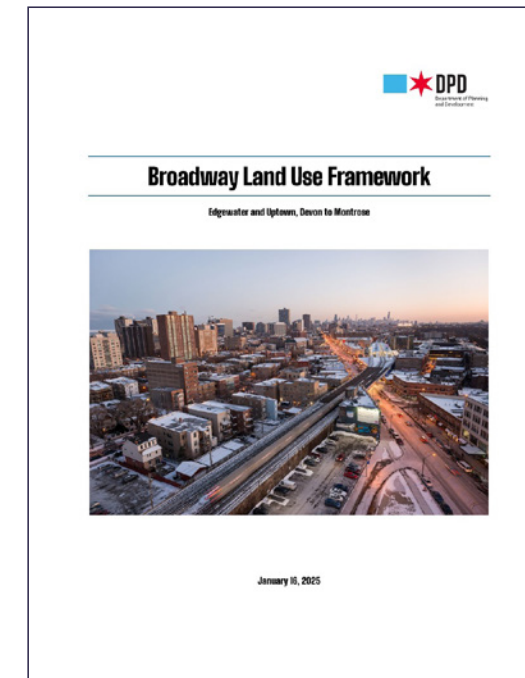


Figure 96. Cover of DPD's Broadway Land Use Framework Plan (DPD)

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT CONNECTIONS

In 2018, CTA published the Transit-Oriented Development Plan Summary Report, which provided context and recommendations for the CTA-owned redevelopment sites within the Red-Purple Modernization Plan's extent. Many of these sites are immediately adjacent to the Under 'L' Activation project limits, and the potential development should respond to the new conditions.

● ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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Infrastructure Coordination and Design Input



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