



CHAPTER 2 | TRANSPORT

IMPROVE CONNECTIONS FOR ALL MODES

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Objective 1:
Improve Safety for People Walking
and Biking

Objective 2:
Improve Traffic Flow

Objective 3:
Reinforce a Sense of Place

Objective 4:
Improve Connections

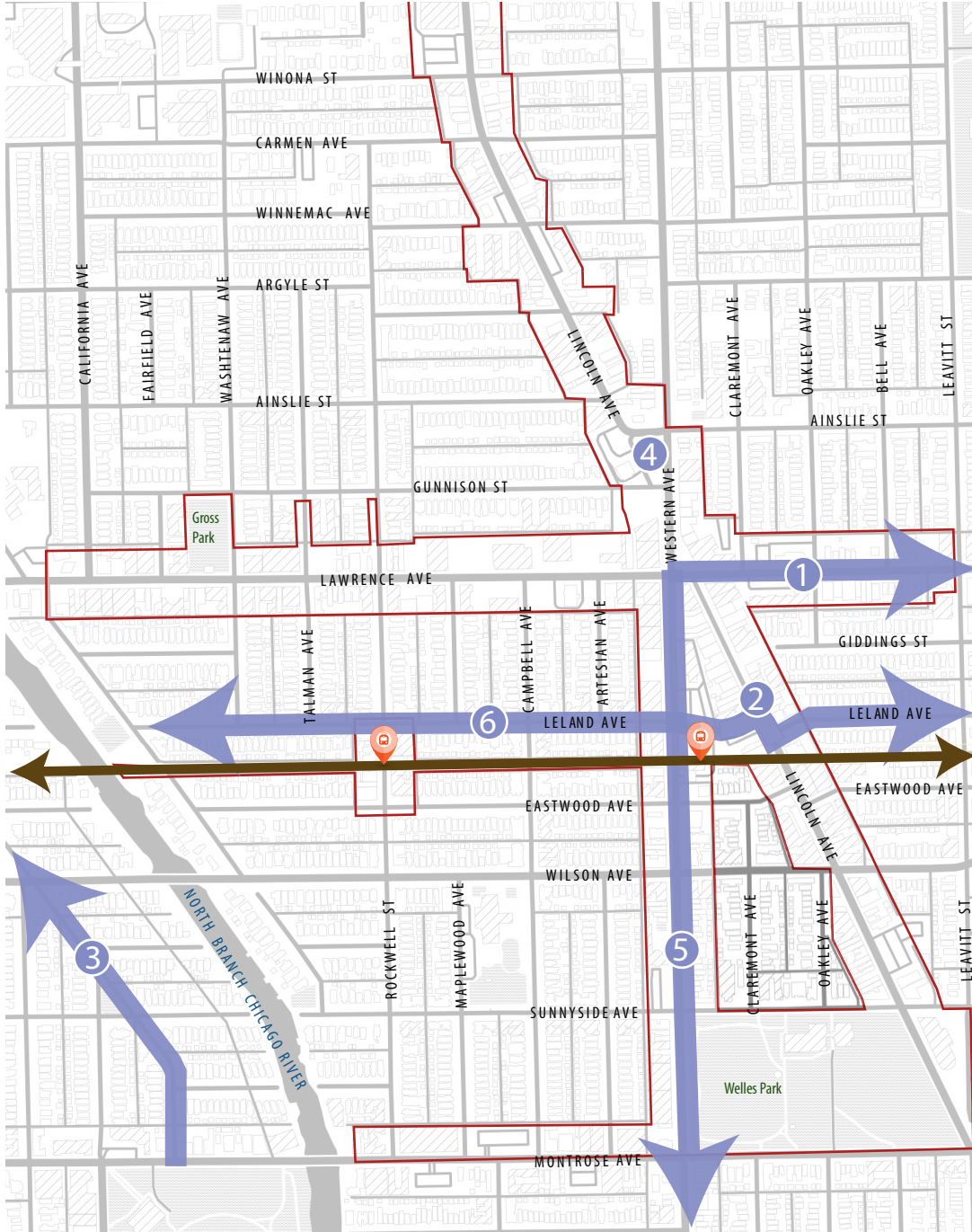


IMPROVE CONNECTIONS FOR ALL MODES

Lincoln Square is a well connected community with access to the Western and Rockwell Brown Line CTA stations, multiple CTA bus routes, (including route numbers 49, 49B, 78, 81, and 11), Divvy stations, bike routes (both existing and planned), and connected sidewalks. Yet the safety and connectivity of pedestrian and bicycle transit, in particular, must be improved to connect residents to destinations.




In 2015, the City of Chicago amended the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Ordinance that was first enacted in 2013. The TOD Ordinance provides incentives in terms of reduced parking and minimum lot area requirements. The revised ordinance doubles the TOD eligibility zone to 1,320 feet (1/4-mile) from a transit station or 2,640 feet (1/2-mile) along a Pedestrian Designated Street (P Street), like Lincoln Avenue in Lincoln Square. Developments in these areas can propose residential parking reductions up to 100% of the normally required amount, provided they meet certain criteria. The ordinance promotes alternative transportation and encourages denser development near transit nodes that can serve residents. With its Pedestrian Streets and two CTA stations, Lincoln Square is ripe for transit oriented development.





Projects

- 1 LAWRENCE AVENUE STREETScape (WESTERN AVE TO CLARK ST)
- 2 LINCOLN-LELAND CURVE
- 3 MANOR AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD GREENWAY
- 4 LINCOLN SQUARE GATEWAY
- 5 WESTERN AVENUE VISION ZERO PL (LAWRENCE AVE TO IRVING PARK F)
- 6 LELAND AVE GREENWAY

-  Brown Line Station
-  Brown Line
-  SSA #21 Boundary



Objective 1: Improve Safety for People Walking and Biking

Safety along and across Lincoln Square's streets, sidewalks and public spaces is paramount to the neighborhood's livability. Conflicts are avoidable and should be considered unacceptable on the streets of Lincoln Square and Chicago overall. Recent initiatives by the City of Chicago and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) include the Vision Zero program, which aims to improve street safety for all users. The projects identified here align with and build upon these programs.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 1.1: Build upon Vision Zero
- 1.2: Improve access to transit

PROJECT 1.1

Build Upon Vision Zero

Between 2013-2016, high traffic areas along Western and Lawrence Avenues saw the most car crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists. Since that time, improvements derived from the Vision Zero program, such as pedestrian refuge crossings along Western Avenue and streetscape improvements along Lawrence Avenue, have been installed to lower the number of these potentially fatal incidents.

Vision Zero's methods include:

- Collecting and using data to prioritize limited City resources towards successful and effective approaches
- Choosing effective street designs that prioritize safety
- Using enforcement to prevent the most dangerous roadway behaviors
- Working with community leaders and all Chicagoans to educate on safe roadway behaviors

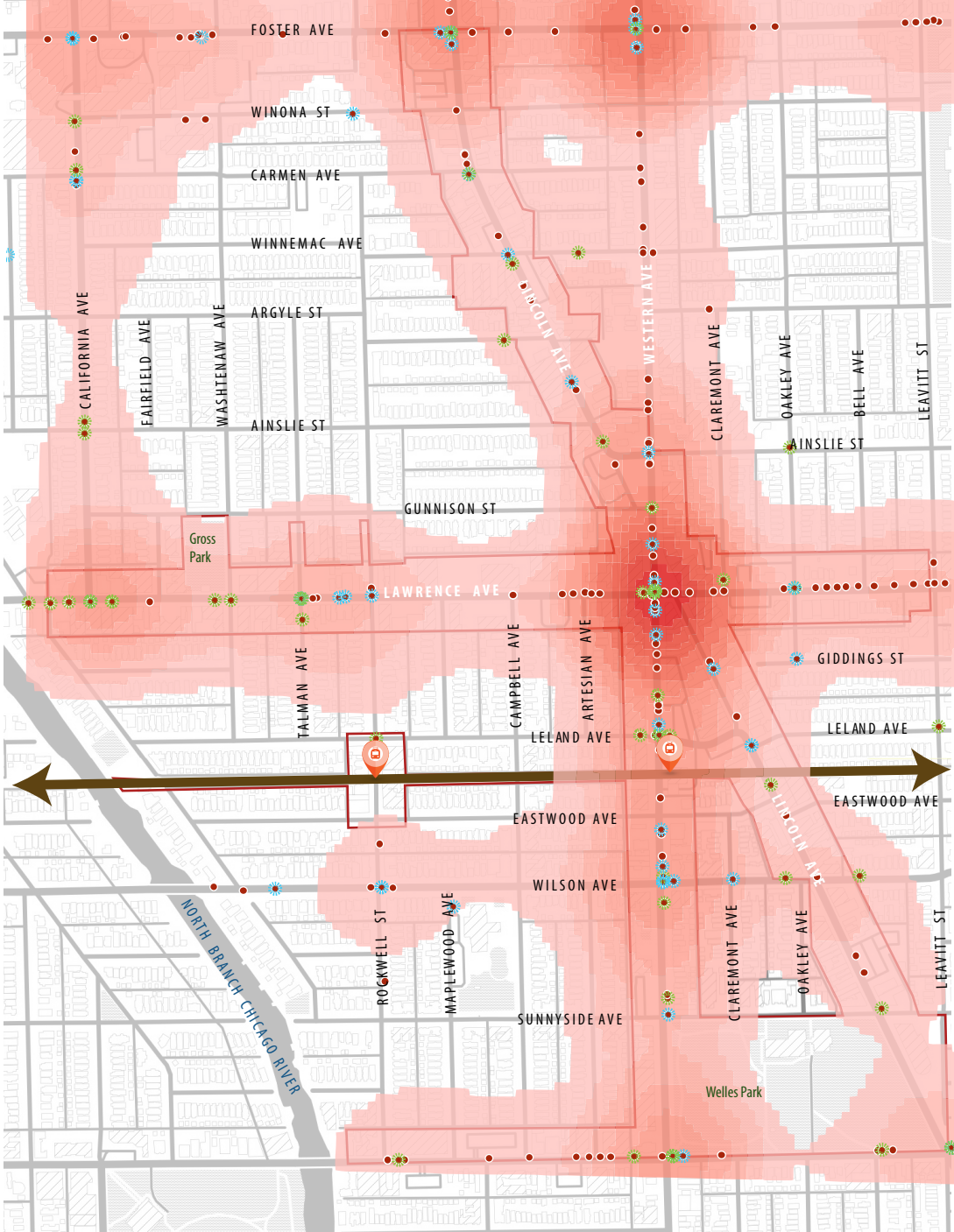
(visionzerochicago.org)

As Lincoln Square continues to partner with Aldermanic offices and CDOT on future roadway improvements, cyclists and pedestrian safety must be given special priority.

Actions

- **Improve bike and pedestrian crossings at intersections where crashes are concentrated, such as:**
 - Lawrence and California
 - Lawrence and Virginia
 - Lawrence and Talman
 - Lawrence and Rockwell
 - Lawrence and Claremont
 - Lincoln and Winnemac
 - Lincoln and Ainslie
 - Lincoln and Argyle
- **Establish a network of low stress bicycle facilities throughout the neighborhood, building off of recent and planned facilities along Lincoln Avenue and Leland Avenue**





Crash Analysis

- All Crash Types
- Crash involving Pedestrian
- Crash involving Bicyclist
- Crash Density (High to Low)

Lincoln Square Crash Data Source: IDOT (2013–2016)

- 📍 Brown Line Station
- Brown Line
- SSA #21 Boundary

PROJECT 1.2

Improve Access to Transit

For the 110,000 monthly riders at the Western Station and the 48,000 monthly riders at the Rockwell Station, the areas surrounding Lincoln Square's CTA stations serve as gateways to the neighborhood, providing access to surrounding businesses and gathering spaces for passers-by. As such, station areas are opportunities to not only address safety and access, but also to promote community development. Bus access along Lincoln Square's corridors is also critical to maintaining connectivity throughout Lincoln Square and surrounding areas.

Partnerships with CDOT and CTA are critical to addressing the areas in and around transit stations.



Actions

- Prioritize pedestrian connections and crossing enhancements at bus stops with high ridership:**
 - Western and Leland
 - Western and Lawrence
 - Western and Montrose
 - Foster and Lincoln

- Partner with CTA to improve aesthetics and access to of the station areas**




- Partner with CDOT and CTA to develop gateway signage in front of the CTA structure at Western Avenue**

- Partner with CDOT and CTA to add wayfinding signage to direct travelers from station areas to Lincoln Square businesses**

- Partner with CDOT and CTA to improve the plaza around the Western Brown Line station and beneath the Elevated structure , adding enhanced lighting, pavements, plantings, etc.**



Bus Routes

-  Brown Line Station
-  Brown Line
-  SSA #21 Boundary



PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 2.1: Evaluate east Lawrence improvements to inform the west Lawrence streetscape
- 2.2: Identify potential improvements to traffic signal timings

Objective 2: Improve Traffic Flow

Lincoln Square's roadways must balance traffic from buses, bicycles, and pedestrians with traffic from automobiles. According to data from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), average automobile traffic on these roadways is as follows:

- Lawrence Avenue: 15,700 – 17,900 vehicles per day
- Western Avenue: 16,800 vehicles per day
- Lincoln Avenue: 9,900 – 14,100 vehicles per day

Currently, bicycle facilities exist along Lawrence Avenue and Lincoln Avenue south of Leland. California Avenue, Wilson Avenue, and portions of Lincoln, Western, and Leland Avenues are identified by CDOT as Streets For Cycling Routes. Plans are currently underway to develop a neighborhood greenway along Leland Avenue from east of Lincoln Square to Rockwell Street.

Divvy bike stations are located throughout the SSA. Per Divvy records between April – June 2018, 12,600 Divvy trips were documented to and from the SSA area. The highest use of Divvy bikes was documented at the Divvy station in the Western Avenue CTA plaza.

Additionally, Lincoln Avenue between Lawrence Avenue to Sunnyside Avenue is designated as a Pedestrian Street (or P-Street). This designation is intended to preserve and enhance the character of streets and intersections in Chicago. P-Streets include regulations for building facades, entrances, parking requirements and prohibited uses. P-Streets encourage sidewalk cafes, outdoor seating and landscape plantings that promote a pedestrian first environment.

PROJECT 2.1

Evaluate East Lawrence Improvements to Inform the West Lawrence Streetscape

The Lawrence Avenue streetscape project was planned to be implemented in two phases. The recently completed Phase 1 extends between Ashland Avenue at the east to Western Avenue at the west. Phase 2 is slated to extend between Western Avenue at the east to Kedzie Avenue at the west. The streetscape utilizes widened sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes to make non automotive travel more appealing. Other features of the streetscape include improved lighting, community identifiers, site furnishings, permeable paving, stormwater bump outs and landscape plantings. As Lincoln Square plans to embark on the streetscape's second phase, key lessons should be considered moving forward, such as the need for coordination between adjacent land uses, appropriate site furnishing placements and maintenance and durability of plant materials.

Actions

- ❑ **Work with Aldermanic offices to guide site developments reflecting the pedestrian oriented nature of Lawrence Avenue**
- ❑ **Partner with CDOT to ensure bench placement is compatible with adjacent land uses and suited to pedestrian comfort**
- ❑ **Insofar as the SSA is responsible for landscape maintenance, partner with CDOT to appropriately select and install new plantings**



PROJECT 2.2

Identify Potential Improvements to Traffic Signal Timings

Reliable travel times are important to people no matter how they choose to get around. Appropriately timed traffic signals are critical to efficient traffic flow throughout the SSA. Inefficient flow can lead to congestion and frustration for drivers and can also create safety hazards if drivers speed up in order to get through a signal.

Signals with pedestrian countdown timers, where a number counts down the time remaining for pedestrians to clear a crosswalk, are more intuitive than traditional pedestrian signals. A pedestrian countdown timer begins in conjunction with the flashing “DON’T WALK” signal and allows pedestrians to decide if they have enough time to complete a crossing. All new or modernized traffic signals are required to include countdown timers, and old ones should be upgraded accordingly. All countdown timers should be programmed to allow street crossings at a maximum walking speed of 3.5 feet per second. Walking speeds slower than 3.5 feet per second should be considered at all locations, particularly at crossings typically used by children, seniors and people with disabilities.

Actions

- ❑ **Call for volunteers to take an inventory of all pedestrian signals within the SSA**
- ❑ **Identify with CDOT opportunities to upgrade pedestrian signals in conjunction with other projects**
- ❑ **Work with Aldermen to study signal timings and identify places where signals could be added, upgraded, or adjusted, focusing on these critical corridors:**
 - Western Avenue, Wilson – Lawrence
 - Lawrence Avenue, Oakley – Western
 - Montrose Avenue





Objective 3: Reinforce a Sense of Place

Lincoln Square, particularly its core surrounding Giddings Plaza, is a beloved place due in part to the walkable environment of Lincoln Avenue and the many festivals and events that come and go in this part of the neighborhood. Welcoming though it is, Lincoln Square could still be more attractive to residents and visitors alike.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 3.1: Maintain a special event space that complements and connects the Western Avenue Brown Line Station to businesses on Lincoln Avenue
- 3.2: Establish gateway and wayfinding signage for all modes of travel
- 3.3: Encourage pedestrian activity by creating a flexible streetscape along Lincoln Avenue

PROJECT 3.1

Maintain Special Event Space That Complements and Connects the Western Avenue Brown Line Station to Businesses on Lincoln Avenue

Actions

- Continue to program community events at the parking lot abutting the Western Brown Line station
- Develop a concept plan in coordination with CDOT and CTA to enhance the parking lot with future improvements, including access to power, enhanced surface treatments, and landscaping

Current pathway is a dismal dirty pigeon haven. Add attractive (warm) lighting, shade-loving perennial plants, cheerful paint color to train structure and art projects along the pathway. Sound dampening would be very helpful here too. As a juncture between mass transit and LS, this area serves a huge number of people every day, including tourists.

-Comment posted to the project website.

PROJECT 3.2

Establish Gateway and Wayfinding Signage for All Modes of Travel

The Square is recognized as a destination for shops and dining. However, many passers-by remain unaware of destinations throughout the SSA. Gateway and wayfinding signage can extend the visitor experience, encouraging walkers and bikers to explore Lincoln Square's different corridors. Typically gateway signs mark the entrances to neighborhoods and districts. Wayfinding signs provide direction to community destinations.

Actions

- Partner with CDOT to develop a conceptual wayfinding sign plan
- Partner with local businesses to develop a business sign kiosk that promotes their locations
- Partner with CTA and CDOT to develop gateway signs at key locations throughout the SSA

"There are some wide sidewalks here that look out of place. Could add seating, sculptures, colorful paint, above-ground planters, Little Free Library, community bulletin board... something"

-Comment posted to project website about Western Ave.



PROJECT 3.3

Encourage Pedestrian Activity by Creating a Flexible Streetscape Along Lincoln Avenue

Lincoln Avenue between Lawrence and Leland, commonly referred to as simply The Square, serves a variety of day-to-day and event specific functions. The existing roadway configuration includes diagonal parking at the east side of the street and a one-way southbound travel lane. The diagonal parking arrangement inhibits visible pedestrian crossings, and curbs and gutters become obstacles for special events that would preferably be held on level ground. A “shared street,” in which the sidewalk lies level with the roadway, might be utilized here to overcome this latter challenge. As this section of street is at the heart of Lincoln Square, home to many stakeholder residents and businesses, any modifications would require careful study. Design objectives would include accommodating parking and delivery needs for businesses, calming traffic, providing a pedestrian first environment, and supporting special events.

Actions

- ❑ Conduct a streetscape test using temporary paint, barricades, etc. Evaluate alternative roadway and parking strategies such as chicanes, bump outs, and parallel parking arrangements
- ❑ Develop a survey to understand outcomes of the test
- ❑ In partnership with CDOT, develop a concept plan based on the test and survey outcome



“Creating a gateway out of the train overpass at Western would be a good opportunity to mark the neighborhood.”

-Comment posted to project website.



Objective 4: Improve Connections

Recently completed transportation projects such as the Western Avenue Vision Zero crossing improvements, Lincoln-Leland Avenue Curve and Manor Avenue Neighborhood Greenway enhance connectivity within Lincoln Square. The planned Lawrence Avenue Streetscape extension from Western Avenue to the Chicago River will also improve pedestrian and bike connections between Lincoln Square and surrounding areas. Proposed transportation projects should build upon existing efforts to better connect Lincoln Square for both bicyclists and pedestrians.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 4.1: Identify site specific solutions to barriers that disconnect south and north Lincoln Avenue
- 4.2: Identify and promote low stress north-south and east-west bike routes
- 4.3: Prioritize connections to nearby bike and pedestrian facilities, both existing and planned

PROJECT 4.1**Identify Site Specific Solutions to Barriers That Disconnect South and North Lincoln Avenue**

As Lincoln Avenue travels diagonally through the Chicago grid, it is disrupted by the intersections of Gunnison Street, Western Avenue and Lawrence Avenue. Developments in these areas should be planned with an eye toward connecting the heart of Lincoln Square with neighborhoods west of Western and north of Lawrence. Plazas surrounding the Lincoln-Lawrence-Western intersection can serve as gateways, creating physical and visual continuity between the separate sides of these major thoroughfares.

Actions

- Enhance Lincoln Ave with gateway enhancements at the Lincoln Statue Plaza and the triangular green space adjacent to McDonalds
- Partner with CDOT to improve signal timing at key intersections with Lincoln Avenue
- Partner with CDOT to improve Lincoln Avenue's pedestrian crossings with striping and countdown timers

“Revitalize Western Ave: It would be great to find ways to turn this major neighborhood artery into a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly thoroughfare. Filling the large number of vacant storefronts would be a great start. And protected bike lanes would also encourage destination commerce, in addition to creating an overall calming effect.”

-Comment posted to project website.

PROJECT 4.2**Identify and Promote Low Stress North-South and East-West Bike Routes**

Although bike routes are designated along Lincoln Avenue, Western Avenue and Lawrence Avenue, additional low stress routes should act as alternatives to these busy streets. The Manor Avenue Neighborhood Greenway is an example of a low stress bike route that connects the neighborhood along the west side of the Chicago River to the Chicago River Trail. Similarly, Leland Avenue in Lincoln Square is being converted into a low stress east-west connector. A similar north-south connector should be evaluated for Lincoln Square, perhaps along Rockwell Street and/or Leavitt Street.

Actions

- Conduct neighborhood bike rides and follow up surveys regarding proposed low stress bike routes to understand demand and build support
- Work with local businesses and bicycling advocates to promote low stress bike routes
- Partner with CDOT to develop plans for low stress bike routes, marked with formal signage and equipped with appropriate traffic calming devices

PROJECT 4.3

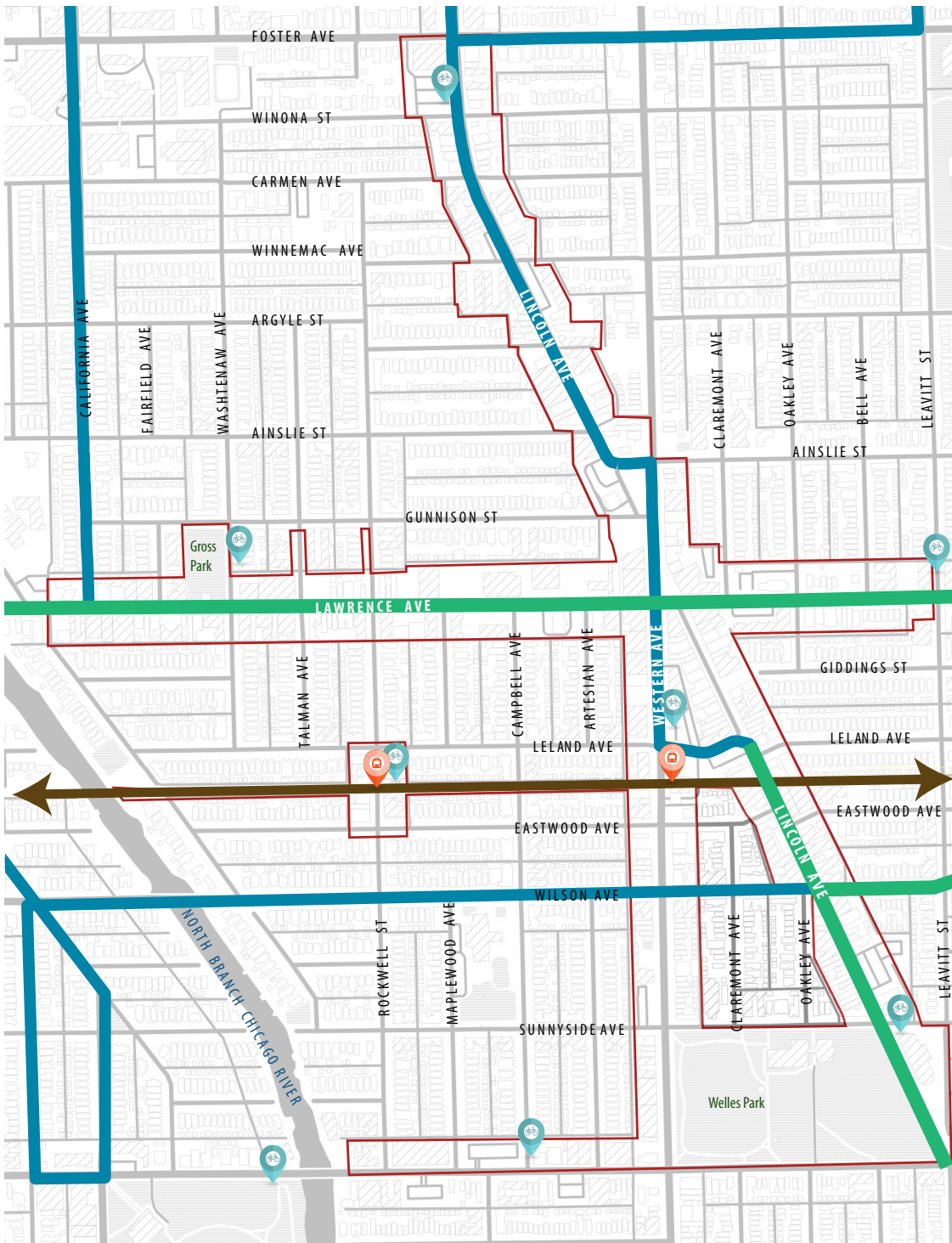
Prioritize Connections to Nearby Bike and Pedestrian Facilities, Both Existing and Planned

Chicago is home to a large network of designated bike routes, including Lawrence Avenue and Lincoln Avenue south of Leland Avenue. In addition, Foster Avenue, California Avenue, Wilson Avenue, and Lincoln Avenue north of Leland Avenue are all CDOT designated Streets for Cycling. As the SSA plans bike related improvements, such as bike route expansions, low stress routes and new and upgraded bike facilities, these improvements should be prioritized. Such a strategy would support, rather than compete with, CDOT's efforts to make Chicago more bike friendly.


Actions

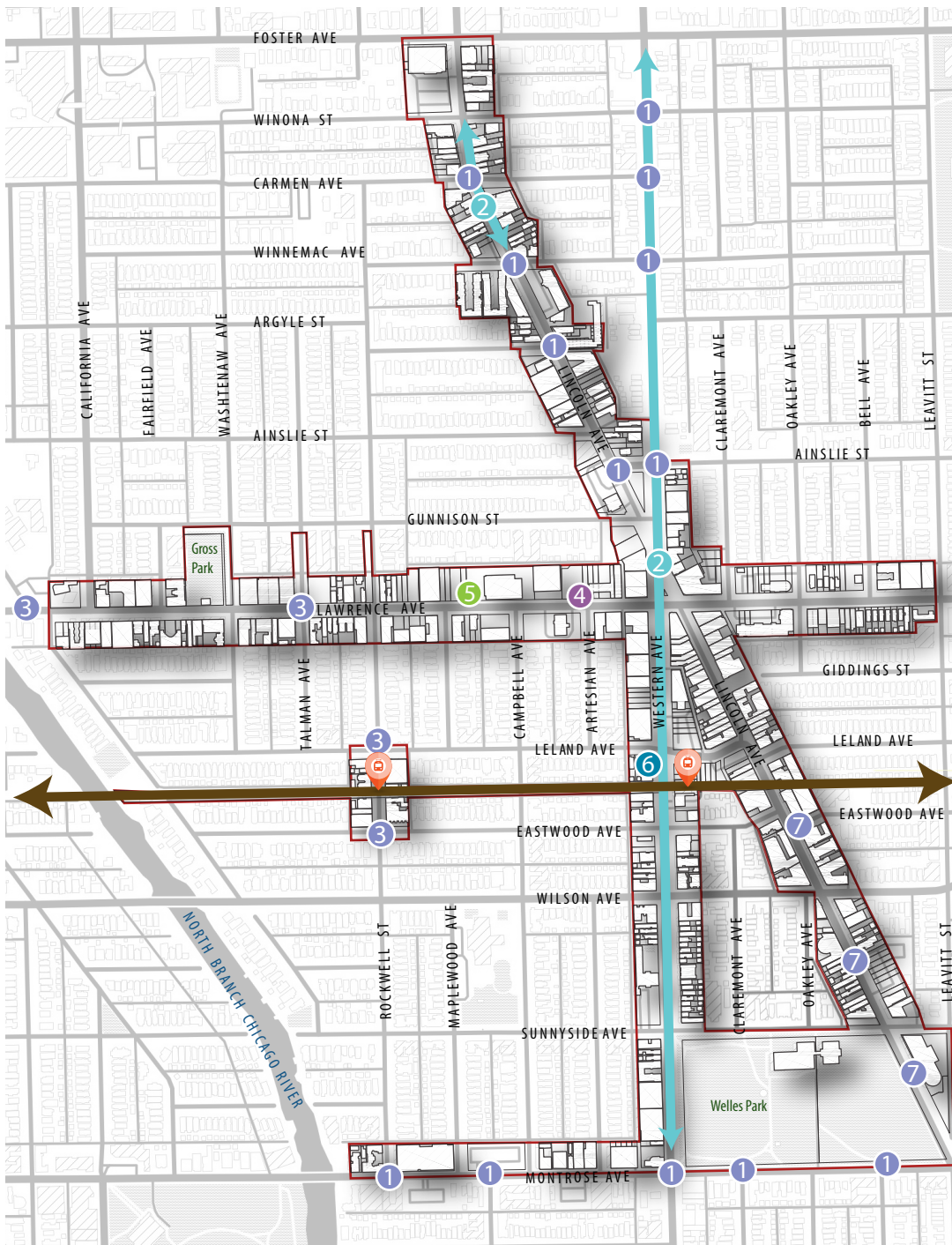
- ❑ Monitor Divvy bike uses to understand ridership trends
- ❑ Continue planning the Leland Avenue Greenway and potential north-south low stress bike routes
- ❑ Partner with CDOT to strategically install bike racks and other bike facilities, such as repair stations, as appropriate








Bicycle Facilities

-  Existing Bike Facility
-  CDOT Street's for Cycling Route
-  Divvy Station
-  Brown Line Station
-  Brown Line
-  SSA #21 Boundary



Master Plan Recommendations

- 1 BUMP OUT / IMPROVED CROSSWALK
- 2 BOULEVARD/ REFUGE ISLAND
- 3 CROSSING ENHANCEMENT
- 4 REDUCE CURB CUTS
- 5 SIDEWALK/ PARKING LANDSCAPING
- 6 IMPROVED BROWN LINE STATION ACCESS
- 7 NEW CROSSWALK

-  Brown Line Station
-  Brown Line
-  SSA #21 Boundary