



UPTOWN UNITED
Business - Development - Community

Community Development Guidelines



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THE CHALLENGE OF RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

Uptown is proud of its history which includes a century of immigration, a wealth of world-class architecture and a long-lived theatrical district. We also recognize its challenges. We retain many historical buildings and honor that architecture by establishing three National Historic Districts. We are among the most diverse neighborhoods in the United States and strive to make our diversity relational. We recognize that our diversity is economic as well, and one of our challenges is to foster a safe community that is inclusive, offers housing, goods and services for all, and attracts dollars and investment from outside our borders. How will we use our community assets: our population and density, our lakeside location, and our proximity to transportation, to continue to develop as a community?

Simply stated, our challenge in building one community will be:

- **To be mindful of the values established by the Corridors of Vision studies,**
- **To protect and build on our community assets, and**
- **To attract goods, services, customers and investors to sustain the residential and commercial communities.**

HISTORY

Uptown is one of Chicago's oldest neighborhoods and is located six miles north of downtown Chicago, along Lake Michigan.

At its peak, Uptown was Chicago's busiest

neighborhood shopping area, second only to the Loop. The Loren Miller Department Store (now Borders Books) was the largest department store outside the Loop.

Blocks nearer Lake Michigan were developed with grand residence hotels to accommodate vacationers. Lesser residence hotels housed the many service staff who worked in the neighborhood.

Uptown was an entertainment center. It was rich with vaudeville and movie theaters, including The Uptown Theatre, The Lakeside and The Riviera, as well as many other small stages. The Uptown Theatre, the grandest of the Rapp and Rapp theaters, is second in size only to Radio City Music Hall.



Loren Miller Department Store
Postcard circa 1926 [courtesy of Lake County (IL) Discovery Center, Curt Teich Postcard Archives]



Shuttered Goldblatt's Store
The Goldblatt's complex in 2000



Completed Uptown Square - Lawrence and Racine
Joseph Freed's completed Uptown Square redevelopment in 2006



Wilson east of Broadway (current TCF Bank)

Postcard image from the Studio of Charles R. Childs, ©1909, from the collection of Compass Rose Cultural Resources.



Aragon Ballroom - 1106 W. Lawrence

One hundred years old in 2008, the Green Mill Garden is the oldest continuing use tavern in Chicago. Located at Lawrence and Broadway, it operates as a popular jazz venue. Other smaller entertainment venues dotted the commercial areas into the 1950s and 1960s.

The Aragon Ballroom is world famous. From its opening in 1926 through the 1950s, the Aragon Ballroom was world famous as a home for dance bands. Today, the Aragon remains a popular presenter of concerts and events and, through continuous good management, it is a model for historic preservation and popular programming. Several factors contributed to significant change in Uptown during the 1940s and 1950s:

G.I. Mortgages – After World War Two and the Korean War, soldiers returned wanting something different. The ideal was a single family house and dedicated back yard. Uptown’s grand flats were passé and government-backed mortgages made it possible for young families to move to single family houses and to the suburbs.

Automobiles – Prosperity brought automobiles. Women became drivers. While all neighborhoods had shopping districts, they could not compete with supermarkets and regional shopping. Chicagoans had the ability to shop for price and selection not limited by location. Parking became an issue in all commercial areas.

Migration – After World War Two, Chicago continued to be one of the greatest manufacturing centers. The promise of jobs brought workers from the South, Southwest and Appalachia, including Native Americans from all over the United States. Japanese Americans who had been held in internment camps were relocated to Chicago. The grand flats were split into multiple (and often illegal) units. Common hall residence hotels became inexpensive housing. Uptown was a center for affordable housing, and most folks could get along without a car.

Deinstitutionalization of the Mentally Ill – During the 1960s and 1970s, Federal and local governments concluded that some institutionalized people could live independently. Many were released with no families to accept or care for them. Uptown’s affordable single room living was one of their few possibilities for housing. Supportive services followed.

Immigration – Uptown’s tradition as an entry point for immigrants began in the late 19th century with the arrival of Swedes, Germans and Russian Jews. Since then, there is hardly a group that has not made a significant contribution to the richness of Uptown life. Beginning in the late 1970s, the Boat People from Vietnam came to Argyle Street, as did Laotians, Cambodians, Thai and Tibetans.

Through years of change, there continue to be long-term residents, businesses, churches and institutions that have cared for people and for the community as a whole. The Chamber of Commerce is over 85 years old, and The Peoples Church—started by Dr. Preston Bradley—is still active. Uptown National Bank (now Bridgeview Bank) began years ago lending to people in the neighborhood who had been turned down by larger Chicago banks because of their ethnicity or low net worth.



Uptown Bank Building - 4753 N. Broadway
(now Bridgeview Bank)

CORRIDORS OF VISION

In 1999, the Board of Directors of Uptown Community Development Corporation (now Uptown United), saw the need for a shared community vision. The “Corridors of Vision” program, created by Mary Laura Jones of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and Rev. Dr. Sid Mohn of Heartland Alliance, analyzed the community by examining specific geographic areas within Uptown and asking the same five questions about each area:

1. What is the perceived level of **SAFETY** in each area? How could this area feel more secure?
2. What are the available **GOODS AND SERVICES** in this area? What could be available that is not currently available?
3. In what ways does this area give a **SENSE OF COMMUNITY**, inclusive of Uptown’s current population diversity and multicultural traditions?
4. What is the **AESTHETIC** feel of this area, including its green space, design, streetscape, etc.?
5. How is this area **ACCESSIBLE AND AMENABLE** to the needs of residents and visitors?

The Corridors of Vision values spring from these five questions. Studies were conducted on each of Uptown's commercial corridors. There is also a Corridors study on the topic of public art. Each study involved community residents, businesses and institutions, experts in the fields of architecture and commercial development. To reference these studies, see www.CorridorsofVision.org.



A long-term goal of Corridors of Vision and of the Uptown United Board was to have a set of Community Development Guidelines to assist in the analysis of new development projects. The Guidelines would be based on Zoning and other mandates, would include principles of modern development and would address the values established by Corridors of Vision.

While we are sensitive to issues of diverse housing, these Guidelines were intended to address commercial aspects of development. Our organization does support present legislation and the preservation of economic diversity in Uptown.

A general planning session for the Guidelines was held in September 2006. Invitees included many Uptown leaders, some of whom were instrumental in the Corridors of Vision process and all of whom have a long-term commitment to Uptown. Also in attendance were representatives of Loyola University's Center for Urban Research and Learning which is interested in Uptown's studies as they relate to business and diversity. Using the results of the planning session, Uptown United's Board and its partner groups, Development Partners, Community Partners and Business Partners, the Chamber for Uptown, each refined their input to the Guidelines.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are intended to serve as tools for evaluation of future private and public projects. We understand that, with the exception of Zoning and other mandated regulations, the guidelines are not enforceable. They are our shared standards.



Magnolia Cafe - 1224 W Wilson
Pedestrian Friendly Sidewalk Cafe

Zoning

We very much appreciate the November 1, 2004 revised City of Chicago Zoning Code. We feel that the Code in general reflects positive changes in neighborhood development, is accurate and provides protection against unwise development. We do not wish to impose any additional restrictions, and, in particular, favor its treatment of:

New developments, expansions and increases in intensity -

Due to the large number of high rise buildings between the Lake and Broadway, we are already a dense community. We are mindful that the creation of additional density may be appropriate in some areas, but not in others depending on proximity to transportation, infrastructure, amenities, schools, etc. Careful consideration will be given to proposals that will increase household density, pedestrian and automobile traffic.

Parkways, trees and landscaping – We believe that the provision for trees and other landscaping under the new codes is appropriate. Because of the density of population and the prominence of asphalt and concrete due to the infrastructure, we favor inclusion of trees and landscaping in addition to the standards. Adhering to setback requirements, we would ask owners to add landscaping, trees and planters to enhance their developments.

Possible overlay districts – Respecting the Zoning Code, we reserve the right to request the application of an overlay district if it will enhance or protect a particular area of development.

Pedestrian streets – The new designation of Pedestrian Streets applies to only a few areas of Uptown, but we want to encourage walkability on all our commercial corridors. Because we have access to the Red Line and many bus routes, many people living and working in Uptown do not have or use automobiles. Also, we want people coming to shop, eat and frequent entertainment venues to use public transportation as much as possible. For safety and aesthetic reasons, curb cuts will be considered judiciously.

Eminent Domain/Acquisition

Recognizing that one of the basic rights Americans cherish is the right to own property, Uptown United regards the taking of private property for sale to another private party very seriously. Among the factors to be considered are

- Current use of the property
- Condition and on-going maintenance
- Historic nature
- Displacement of residents and/or businesses
- Proposed use
- Impact of proposal on commercial corridor and related residential
- Relevance to existing plan for the subject area

In addition to addressing the above issues, significant public benefit must be demonstrated to justify a taking by eminent domain or other public taking.

Community Oriented Design Promoting Walkability, Safety and Cleanliness

Before automobiles were a factor in local commerce, streets were lined with shops that faced the sidewalk. How else could a shopper be attracted to come inside? Today many shoppers drive to shopping destinations - they have already been attracted through other means and do not need to be drawn inside. Thus, the shopping mall – driving by, no goods are to be seen. But that is not who we are or how we want to shop and live. We believe that shoppers will shop and spend more, stay longer, and come back, if they



Crew Bar + Grill - 4804 N. Broadway
Sidewalk Cafe



Uptown Broadway Building in 2004 and rendering of renovation completed in 2008



Rendering courtesy of Thaddeus Wong, @Properties

are faced with changing windows and attractions in the retail corridors. Cleanliness is essential and this includes adequate trash removal and regular street side maintenance. We favor windows on the street and street side entrances.

Sensitivity to Existing Façade/Building Materials

Because of Uptown’s wealth of historic buildings and National Historic Districts, we require that all new construction and renovation be executed with excellent materials and workmanship. In the case of significant rehabilitation, we request that design be respectful of the existing façade and original materials.

Lighting

Because our entertainment venues—among them restaurants, clubs and lounges—accommodate late night customers, lighting in addition to standard city street lights is desirable. So long as additional lighting does not disturb nearby housing, bright signage and downward lighting are encouraged. It is essential that the streets and businesses be safe, especially near public transportation.

Pedestrian Shelters

Because we have many seniors in Uptown and to provide for the disabled who use our goods and services, we believe in adequate seating and shelter adjacent to heavily used bus and rail transit. We do, however, recognize that the shelters can be a safety concern and request advice from the neighboring organizations and institutions as to the advisability and placement of shelters.

Parking

While we are rich in public transit, we understand that there will be a continuing need to provide parking for day time businesses and night time entertainment venues and restaurants. In addition to the City's existing zoning requirements and regulations regarding parking, we believe that parking should be incremental so as not to put an undue burden on any one street or constituency. Parking structures are encouraged to have first floor commercial uses and to be mindful of walkability when designing ingress and egress. New developments should have a parking plan.

If businesses want to use valet services, we ask that they cooperate with near by users to create one valet program and that regulations regarding off-street valet parking be rigorously enforced.

Signage

It is requested that signage be respectful of the area in which it will be viewed. A sign that is appropriate in the Entertainment District may not be fitting or attractive on a narrower or residential corridor. If possible, signage should be incorporated into an awning or store front. If vintage signage exists for an historic location, all attempts should be made to retain the look if not the sign itself.



Roots of Argyle Mural, SW corner Argyle and Winthrop

Public Art

One full Corridors of Vision study is dedicated to public art (www.CorridorsofVision.org). Uptown is home to many artists and contains many murals and other public art projects. Among them are Sunnyside Mall, Roots of Argyle, and the bricollage at 4730 N. Sheridan. We feel that public art is a welcome addition, whether the art is on the face of a building or along the public way. The art helps establish a neighborhood identity, expresses community values and themes, and serves as an orientation point for newcomers and neighbors.

Local Economic & Employment Development (LEED) Standard/Energy Efficiency

We are concerned with the environment and appreciate development that utilizes innovative energy-saving technology and recycling programs wherever possible.

Open Space

Community development is our goal, but we believe that open space is desirable in every community, and especially in as densely populated an area as Uptown. We support the preservation of open space for use by the community for gardens, parks and other forms of recreation.

Economic Diversity in Businesses/Serving Community Needs

We appreciate that we are in the difficult position of having many eclectic interests to serve. We also recognize that very few local economies can sustain themselves with no support from outside. We seek a mix of businesses, predominantly locally owned, that serve all ranges of wealth within the community.

Incentives for Development/Improvement of Existing Businesses

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) DISTRICTS

As of autumn 2008, there are five operating TIF Districts in Uptown, two of which include a Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF). Two other districts will see an additional SBIF component realized in 2009 or 2010. See pages 11 and 12 for maps.

- Clark Montrose TIF (currently includes SBIF)
- Wilson Yard TIF (currently includes SBIF)
- Lawrence Broadway TIF (SBIF in 2009/10)
- Hollywood Sheridan TIF (SBIF in 2009/10)
- Lakeside Clarendon TIF

SMALL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT FUND (SBIF)

We work closely with the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development and its agents to promote the program which is an excellent and easy-to-use source of cash for improvement of commercial real estate. The SBIF program may be used by owners or tenants and does not include many of the requirements of federally funded programs. Along with the Chamber of Commerce and Edgewater Uptown Builders Association, we support and encourage the use of this program for physical improvements.

FAÇADE REBATE

From time to time the City of Chicago offers façade rebate money through Community Development Block Grant or corporate funds. While funding for this program is scarce, it is an excellent mechanism to replace or enhance a commercial façade and is available to owners and tenants with owner permission. This program is available through the City of Chicago Department of Community Development.

HISTORIC DISTRICT TAX CREDITS See pages 13 & 14 for maps.

- Buena Park Historic District
- Sheridan Park Historic District
- Uptown Square Historic District

OTHER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS

With Business Partners, the Chamber for Uptown, we partner with Uptown Center Hull House, Jane Addams Resource Center, the Coleman Entrepreneurship Center of DePaul University, Truman College, and other institutions to provide technical assistance to local businesses. Help with business plans, promotions, technology and other specific needs are handled on a case by case basis through a network of local and city-wide business organizations.

Promotion of Locally Owned Business

Our goal is a retail district that will include a healthy mix of retail businesses, including local, regional and national retailers. The size of some retail locations (i.e., the Borders store) makes it unlikely that small business could support the rent or ownership and taxes. We are interested in working on a program with the City and County to address the tax burden which is making it more difficult for small business to remain on the commercial corridors. We would seek some tax rebate or relief to building owners that rent to locally owned business and keep the rents affordable.

Business Recruitment

We actively seek referrals for businesses to fill specific retail needs. While we are not exclusive and do not have the right to unilaterally restrict certain types of business, we do look for owners and tenants that will enhance the retail corridors and that will bring new investment to Uptown. We want to recruit businesses that will create synergy with the existing businesses and that do not replicate services already available in Uptown. Through recruitment we seek to maintain the economic diversity of businesses referenced above.

Community Hiring

Uptown United is a member of several training initiatives whose goal is local jobs for local people. We ask that new construction projects employ a percentage of qualified neighborhood people. We also ask end-use employers to hire from the pool of locally trained people through our employment network. We connect new businesses with similar businesses that use the employment programs to share their experiences of hiring in Uptown.



RESOURCES

Uptown relies upon many resources: Our boards of directors, local elected leadership, the City of Chicago Department of Community Development, and the State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. We thank the many community organizations committed to the quality of life in Uptown and to the promotion of local business.

For information or assistance regarding development in Uptown, please phone us at **773-878-1064**, or contact us at **info@uptownunited.org**.

Business Partners, the Chamber for Uptown, www.uptownbusinesspartners.com

Center for Neighborhood Technology, www.cnt.org

Chicago GIS, <http://maps.cityofchicago.org/mapchicago>

Chicago Center for Green Technology,

<http://egov.cityofchicago.org/city/webportal/portalEntityHomeAction.do?entityName=Chicago+Center+for+Green+Technology&entityNameEnumValue=161>

City of Chicago, Department of Environment,

<http://www.cityofchicago.org/Environment/>

City of Chicago Department of Community Development (formerly Planning and Development), www.CityofChicago.org/dpd

City of Chicago Zoning Department, www.cityofchicago.org/zoning

Community Investment Corp., www.cichicago.org

Coleman Entrepreneurship Center of De Paul University,

www.luc.edu/curl/escd/curl/index.shtml

Historic District Tax Credit Resource Center,

www.novoco.com/related_program/historic_tax_credit

Landmarks Illinois, www.landmarks.org

Local Economic and Employment Development Council (LEED),

www.leedcouncil.org

Loyola University, Center on Urban Research and Learning,

www.luc.edu/curl/escd/curl/index.shtml

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities,

http://egov.cityofchicago.org:80/city/webportal/portalEntityHomeAction.do?BV_SessionID=@@@@0031386402.1214241149@@@@&BV_EngineID=ccceadeehfeimekcefecelldffhdfhm.0&entityName=Disabilities&entityNameEnumValue=11

National Park Service, Historic District Tax Incentives, www.nps.gov

National Park Service – Heritage Documentation Program,

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hdp/>

State of Illinois, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Info on mapping, tax issues, etc.,

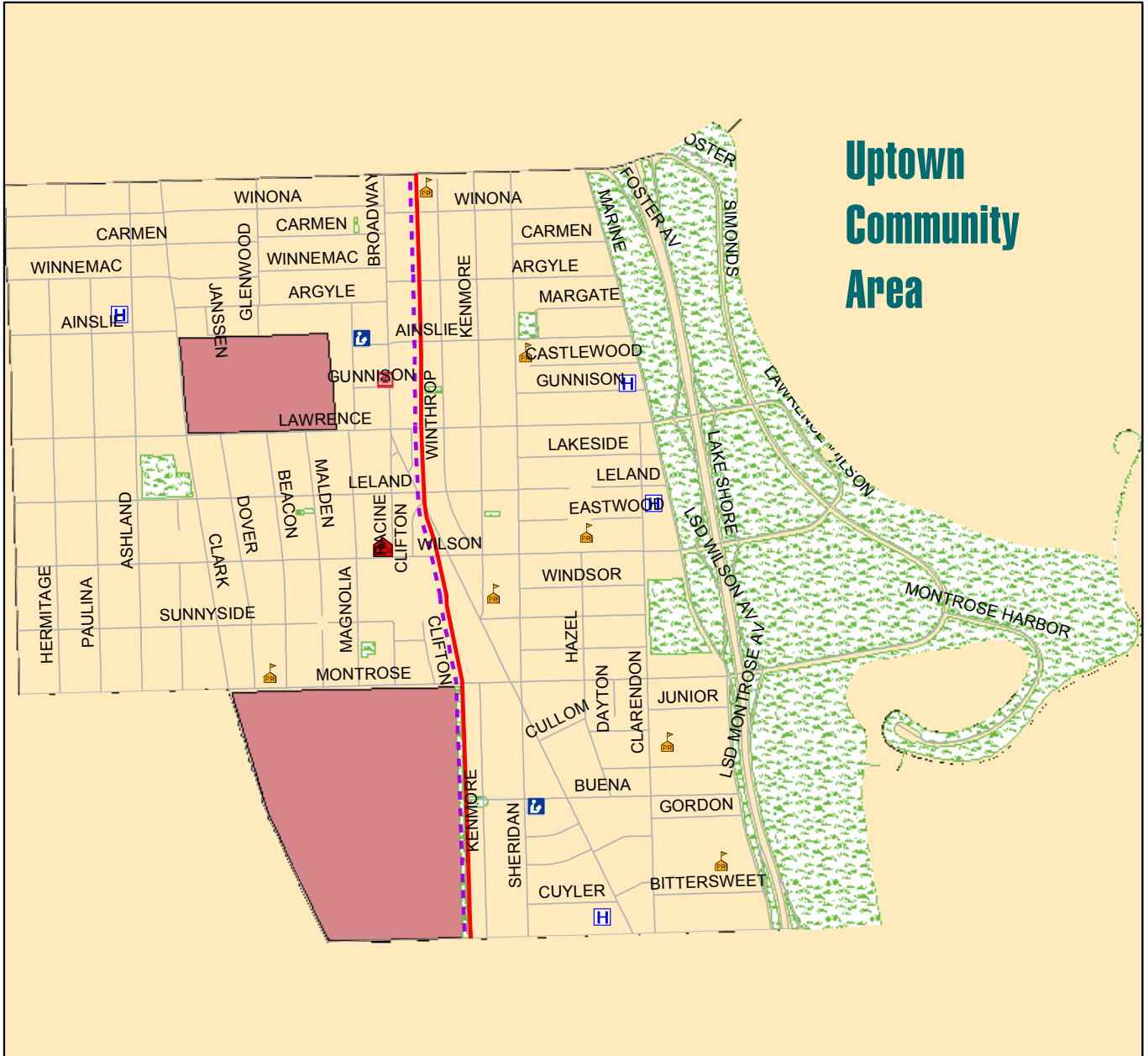
<http://www.illinoishistory.gov/>

TIF/SBIF info, <http://www.somercor.com/>

U. S. Green Building Council, www.usgbc.org



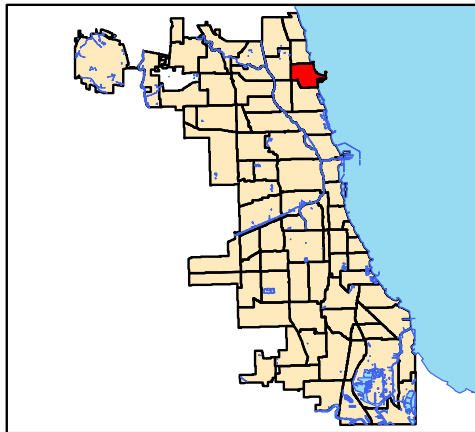
UPTOWN

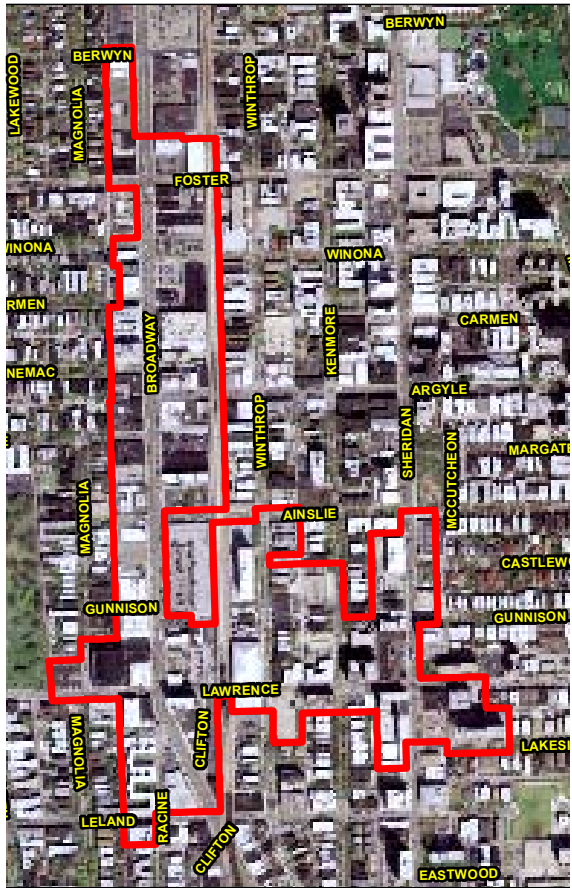


**Uptown
Community
Area**

Legend

- Firehouses
- Hospitals
- Libraries
- Police Facilities
- Schools
- U S Post Offices
- Railroads
- Parks
- Cemeteries
- Blue Line Subway
- Blue Line Elevated/At-Grade
- Brown Line
- Brown, Purple Lines
- Green Line
- Green, Orange Lines
- Pink, Brown, Purple, Orange Lines
- Pink, Brown, Purple, Orange, Green Lines
- Orange Line
- Purple Line
- Red Line Subway
- Red Line Elevated/At-Grade
- Red, Purple Lines
- Red, Purple, Brown Lines
- Yellow Line

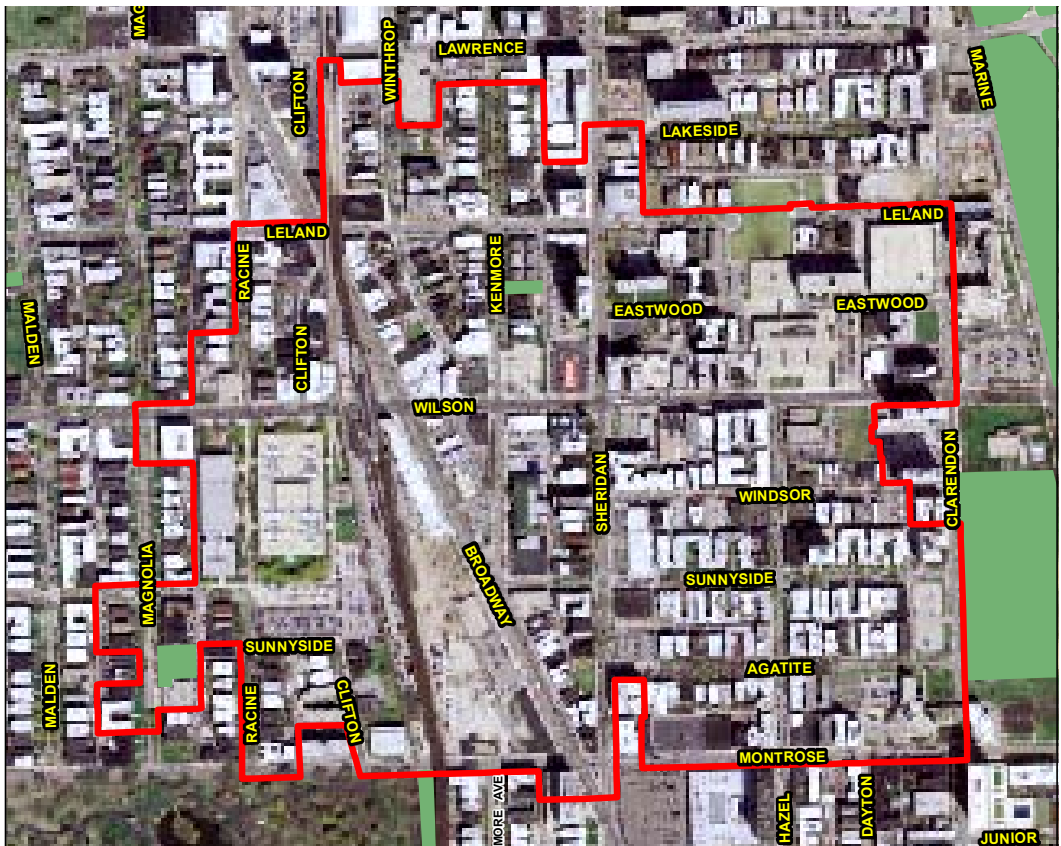


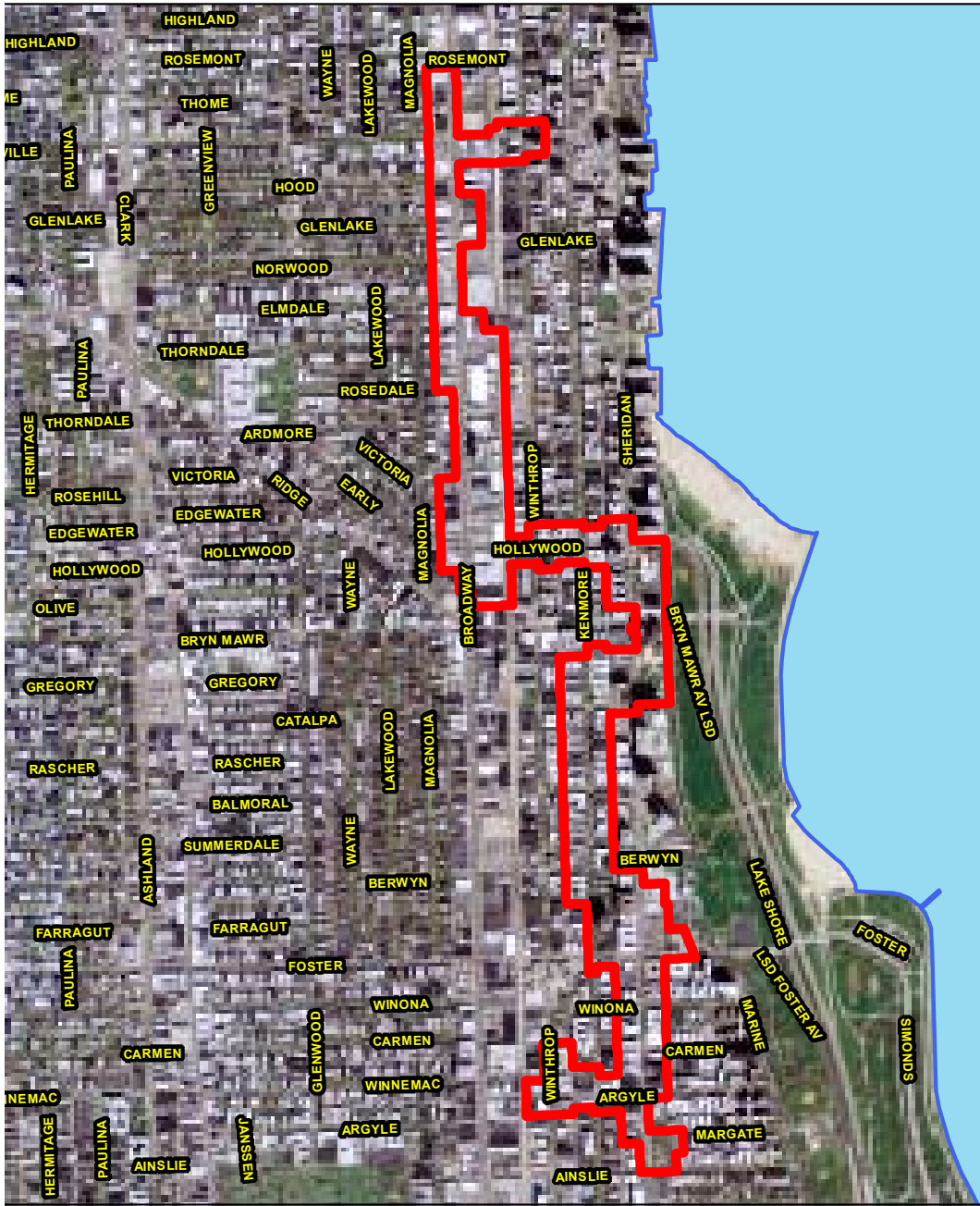


↑ Lawrence Broadway TIF

← Clark Montrose TIF

↓ Wilson Yard TIF





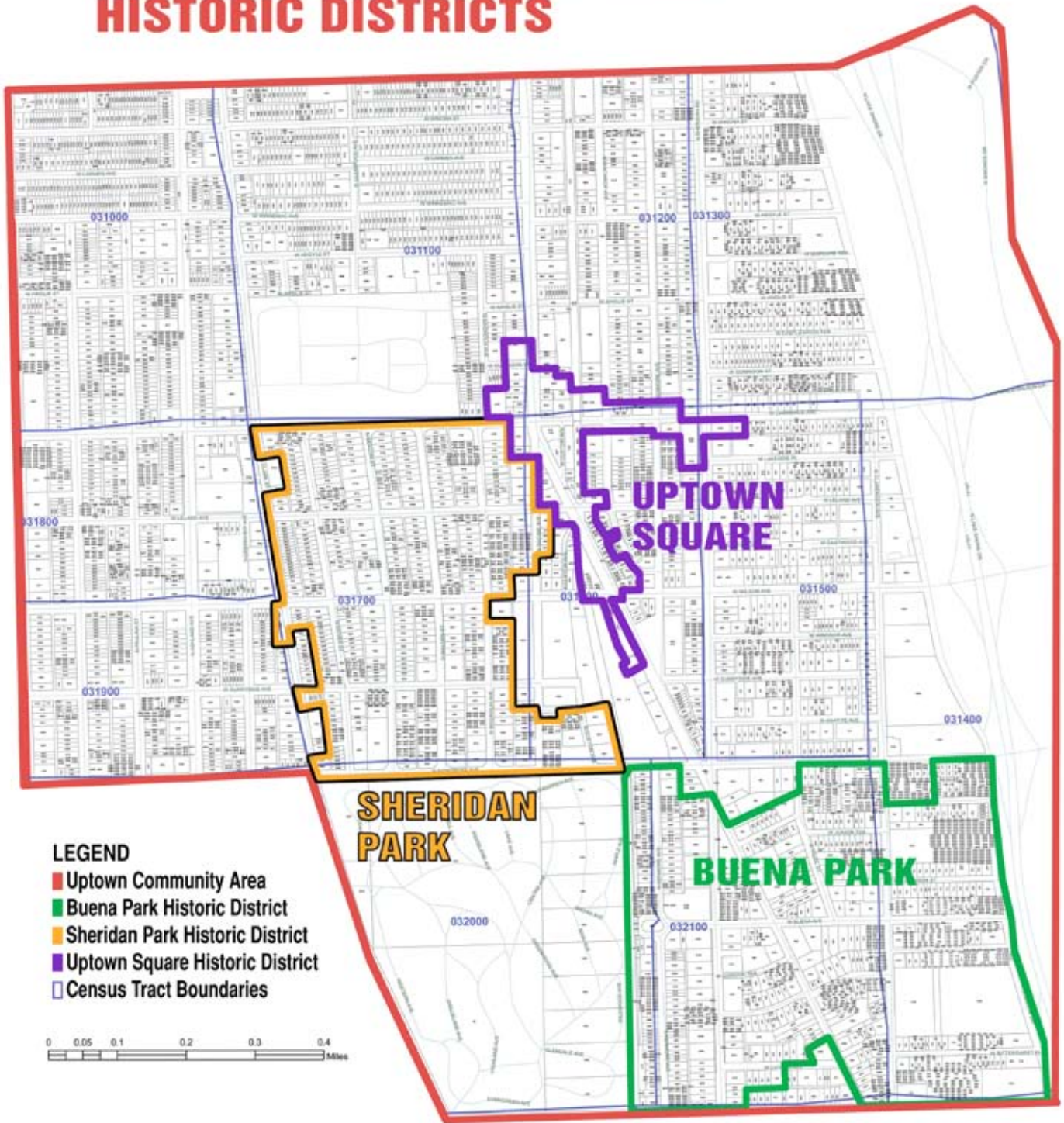
↑ Hollywood Sheridan TIF



← Lakeside Clarendon TIF

TIF areas outlined in red

UPTOWN COMMUNITY AREA HISTORIC DISTRICTS



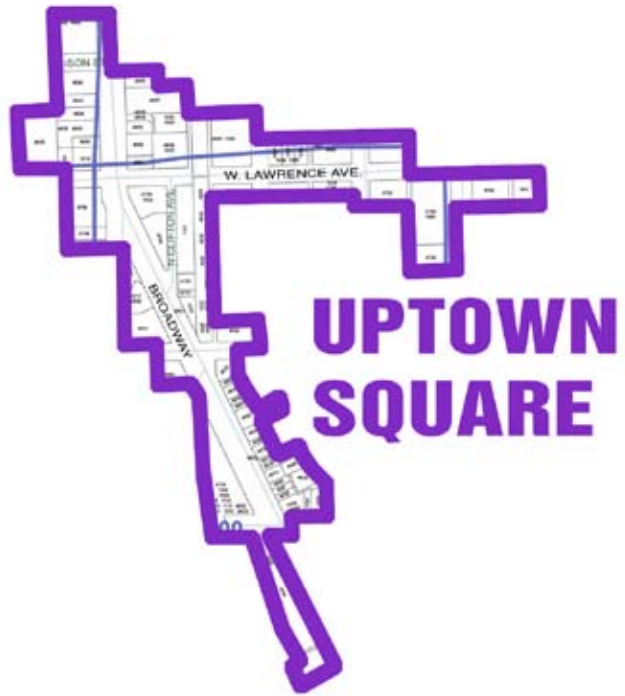
LEGEND

- Uptown Community Area
- Buena Park Historic District
- Sheridan Park Historic District
- Uptown Square Historic District
- Census Tract Boundaries

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles



SHERIDAN PARK



UPTOWN SQUARE

**Uptown
Historic
Districts**

BUENA PARK

