



Strategic

Blueprint

**of the Lakeview Chamber,
SSA 27, and Friends of Lakeview**

Adopted November 2018

This Strategic Blueprint is a tool to guide the work of the Lakeview Chamber of Commerce, Special Service Area 27 (SSA 27), and Friends of Lakeview, developed jointly by their board members based on research, community surveys, and interviews with stakeholders. It is intended to help point our collective efforts in a direction that will most effectively move the needle toward realizing our shared vision for our community. It will provide a framework for developing annual work plans and for measuring our success, while also serving as a tool to communicate how we approach our work to people both internally and externally.

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Who Are We?

The **Lakeview Chamber** is a 501(c)(6) non-profit membership organization originally founded in 1951 as the Lincoln-Belmont-Ashland Business Association to promote and to foster cooperation among the business, professional, civic, and industrial interests of the Lincoln-Belmont-Ashland district and the greater Lakeview community. In 1978, the Association was merged into a new entity, the Lakeview Chamber. As the Chamber has grown, we have developed a strong position of leadership within the community. In 2003, the Lakeview Chamber established **SSA 27** to provide public funding for supplemental public services to our commercial districts through a local property tax levy. Facing growing local economic needs, the Chamber and SSA 27 developed the Lakeview Area Master Plan (LAMP), released in 2011, identifying strategies to continue to make Lakeview a place where people desire to live, linger and long to return to. Also in 2011, the Chamber created a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the **Friends of Lakeview**, to serve as a partner to the Lakeview Chamber and SSA 27 in implementing LAMP. Today, we are three partners who together leverage private funding, government resources and programs, and support from more than 260 members to help our local community thrive.

Vision

We envision West Lakeview as Chicagoland's most sought after neighborhood.

Mission

Our mission is to support a resilient local economy and high quality of life for the benefit of businesses and residents in Chicago's West Lakeview community through neighborhood promotion, business development, advocacy, and public space enhancements. We are a partnership between the Lakeview Chamber, SSA 27 and Friends of Lakeview, and we support each other to advance our common mission.

Values

- **Community First:** We believe that our purpose is to support and promote our community, not our

organization. This should lead in everything we do. We make decisions based on the best interest of our greater community, not for the benefit of any one individual or business.

- **Innovation:** We believe that innovating is an important way to inspire people and to set our community apart, while ensuring that we are adapting for the future in a rapidly-changing environment. We are forward-thinking optimists who believe there's power in positive thinking and are not afraid to take risks. We focus more on promoting what we want for our community than opposing what we don't want.
- **Inclusivity:** We believe diversity is important for a community's success and resilience. We strive to be a community that welcomes people from diverse backgrounds.

Service Area



- SSA 27 Service Area
- Lakeview Chamber / Friends of Lakeview Service Area

Theory of Change

A Theory of Change defines the impact we want to have in our community and connects the dots between our vision and our activities. It helps to explain what preconditions we believe are necessary in order to achieve our desired impact.

Our Vision: West Lakeview is Chicagoland's most sought after neighborhood

This means that several stakeholder groups need to be attracted to our neighborhood, including residents, businesses, visitors, and investors. We are focused on what benefits residents and businesses, though we believe that these different stakeholders depend on each other.

Our Desired Community Impact: A Resilient Local Economy & High Quality of Life

This is the foundation necessary to achieve our vision. There are fundamental community building blocks that we believe are necessary to lay this foundation: Prosperity, Happiness, Diversity, Safety, Health, and Education.

Our Desired Outcomes

We identified many preconditions necessary to achieving our desired community impact. Considering our strengths and role in our community, we've focused on these outcomes:

- Vibrant Business Mix
- Robust Consumer Spending
- Business-Friendly Environment
- Safe & Easy Transportation
- Quality Parks & Public Spaces
- Fun Community Traditions
- Strong Neighborhood Reputation
- Abundant & Diverse Housing
- Welcoming & Inclusive Culture
- Confidence in Public Safety
- Organized & Connected Neighbors

Our Program Areas

Our activities to achieve our desired outcomes fall into these core program areas.

- **Neighborhood Promotion:** We market our neighborhood as a desirable destination for consumers and investors, host memorable community events that connect consumers to our retail districts, and also assist individual businesses with promoting themselves.
- **Business Development:** We provide regular networking and education events as well as one-on-one technical assistance in order to strengthen our businesses, while also recruiting new businesses to our community.
- **Advocacy:** We serve as the voice of local businesses and protect our neighborhood's commercial interests by representing small business needs on important policy and development issues that impact our area.
- **Public Space Enhancements:** We maintain clean, green and welcoming sidewalks and develop new spaces that invite people to linger and connect with their community.

Focus Areas

We believe that among our desired outcomes, these are the areas where our community most needs to move the needle in order to achieve our vision. While we will focus especially on expanding efforts to make progress on these priorities, this does not mean we will neglect the other important areas of our work.

Vibrant Business Mix

We need strong neighborhood hubs with clusters of businesses that benefit from each others' presence and that serve the local community's needs. These neighborhood hubs are not only important to businesses, but they also create the "main street" environment that makes a neighborhood more lovable and enjoyable to live in. Vacancies have a negative impact on the energy on the street. And while many business sectors are important to our neighborhood, residents desire more retail and hospitality on Lincoln Avenue.

Robust Consumer Spending

We need stronger consumer spending in order to sustain successful businesses. This is determined by both local residents and visitors. The primary factors influencing consumer spending include the number of visitors to the neighborhood, density of residents, and how much residents are spending locally vs. in other communities or online. A strong reputation and sense of community pride are also important to attracting consumers and keeping locals spending locally.

Quality Parks & Public Spaces

We need well designed public spaces that support economic and civic activity. Our neighborhood public spaces -- sidewalks, streets, parks, and plazas -- play a crucial role in shaping the experiences of our residents and visitors. Public space should set the stage for the community to enjoy their neighborhood and invite people to linger. It should reinforce community pride, increase connectivity, and encourage people to explore.

Recommended Strategies

After reviewing the outstanding and incomplete recommendations from our 2011 Lakeview Area Master Plan (LAMP) and discussing new ideas, we've identified the following strategies as the next steps toward advancing our focus areas.

Vibrant Business Mix

- Finalize and implement a business recruitment plan that targets prospective businesses by sector
- Develop a plan for creating a shared/pop-up retail space to incubate new businesses
- Support existing businesses to help them remain in our neighborhood
 - Facilitate partnerships between major institutions and local businesses
 - Develop a shared expense program for businesses
- Recruit property investors who are aligned with our community's success and educate existing property owners about our vision

Robust Consumer Spending

- Advocate for increased housing density and diversity near train stations and on commercial streets
- Promote the neighborhood as a destination for tourists and visitors
- Promote shopping local to local residents
- Grow community programming that sets our neighborhood apart while attracting visitors and encouraging locals to spend more time in their own neighborhood
- Increase connectivity to Wrigley Field

Quality Parks & Public Spaces

- Complete the Lakeview Low-Line
- Install streetscape improvements and amenities that improve the pedestrian experience such as People Spots, seating areas, plazas, and spaces for community programming
- Develop gateways with signage or branding to reinforce neighborhood identity and sense of place
- Explore opportunities for a dog park space
- Execute and support public art programming that sets our neighborhood apart and attracts visitors and attention

Key Performance Indicators

Reporting on these indicators on at least an annual basis will help to monitor our progress toward our vision.

Vibrant Business Mix

- Fewer Vacant Storefronts: Vacancy Rate by Sub-District
- Balanced Mix of Businesses: Analysis by Business Category and Local / National by Sub-District

Robust Consumer Spending

- Increased Foot Traffic: Pedestrian Counts by Sub-District
- More Spending Stays Local: Leakage Rate
- Increased Density: Housing Units and Households
- Increased Media Coverage: Media Placements & Impressions

Quality Parks & Public Spaces

- Improved Neighborhood Satisfaction: Community Survey
- Completion of the Lakeview Low-Line: Percentage Complete
- Expanded Public Art: Number of Works of Public Art