

# **GGNA Zoning and Planning Committee Guidelines**

## **Forward**

The GGNA Zoning and Planning Committee (GGNA-ZAPC) was formed in the summer of 2004 by the GGNA Board as a mechanism by which the community within the GGNA boundaries gains a voice in determining the nature of development in the neighborhood. It is our goal to maintain and nourish the beauty, appeal, and affordability of our neighborhood; at once encouraging complementary development and rejecting development that will mar or destroy said neighborhood appeal. We welcome progress, but not at the expense of losing the charm of the neighborhood to the interests of over-reaching development.

Our members are volunteers and residents of the GGNA community. We make recommendations to the Alderman who makes the final decision of approval or disapproval of a project. These guidelines were developed over the past decade to provide a more transparent and inclusive process.

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## **Statement of Purpose**

The GGNA Zoning And Planning Committee (ZAPC) serves the Alderman as a mechanism to obtain the community's input on zoning change requests and any other related matters referred to the ZAPC by the alderman. The ZAPC gives voice to the community in zoning decisions through volunteer from the community and through public meetings. The ZAPC will also serve as a tool to educate the community and those seeking to redevelop property in the process by which zoning decisions are made within the GGNA wards.

## Definitions

**Affordable Housing:** A generally accepted definition of affordable housing is housing that costs, including utilities, no more than 30% of a low or moderate income family's gross earnings. For for-sale units, "affordable housing" generally means that **household** earnings must not exceed **100%** of the current Area Median Income (AMI) (the City of Chicago identifies this as \$76,900 for a family of four). For rental units, household earnings must not exceed **60%** of the AMI (the City of Chicago identifies this as \$46,140 for a family of 4).<sup>1 2</sup> Projects falling under the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) must provide 10% of the project's total units as affordable (20% if the project receives financial assistance from the City).<sup>3 4</sup>

**CHA:** Chicago Housing Authority. The CHA acts as one of the largest public housing agencies in the country, serving more than 20,000 low-income households. "CHA public housing properties are leased to randomly selected applicants from the CHA waitlist."<sup>5</sup>

**CPAN:** Chicago Partnership for Affordable Neighborhoods. CPAN is a program funded by the City of Chicago to enable developers to provide affordable condominiums in market rate developments, particularly in appreciating neighborhoods, through two steps: developer write-down and purchase price assistance to home buyers.

**LEED Certified:** The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

**Low Income Housing Trust Fund:** The Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund (Trust Fund) is dedicated to providing financial assistance to meet the housing needs of Chicago's poorest residents. The Trust Fund offers three programs: (1) Rental Subsidy Program; (2) Affordable Rents for Chicago (ARC); and (3) Supportive Housing Program.

**Sustainability:** The principles of sustainability in housing include using renewable materials in construction while minimizing waste and constructing buildings that use a minimum amount of energy to heat, cool, light and run appliances.

**TOD:** Transit-oriented development. A TOD is a mixed-use residential and commercial area designed to maximize access to public transport, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership.<sup>6</sup>

## **GGNA ZAPC: Committee Membership**

The GGNA ZAPC will be made up of representatives of active community volunteers within the GGNA perimeter but are not required to be members of the GGNA. The primary criteria for membership will be that the volunteers attend 7-10 ZAPC meeting each year and have the capacity and willingness to reach out to the community.

1) The committee should be limited to no more than 9 members. It is desirable to have as broad a scope of neighbors as possible, but it must be recognized that involvement in the committee is voluntary and as a result broad scope can not be guaranteed - it relies on the willingness of neighbors to be constructively involved.

a.) Best efforts will be made to select one ZAPC member from each of the six sectors of the GGNA with three at-large members. If a volunteer cannot be found from one the sectors an additional volunteer at large will be encouraged to join the committee.

2) No realtors or developers shall be voting members of the committee to minimize the possibility of compromising the credibility of committee recommendations. They may attend meetings as advisory members and at appropriate times in the meeting, can be asked for their reactions or input.

3) A majority of ZAPC members is necessary to conduct the business of the committee.

4) The ZAPC should empanel its own set of officers, such as a Chairman, Co-chairman and a Secretary. The Chairman will act as liason between the committee, Alderman's office, and the project developers and will lead both committee and community meetings. The Co-chairman will be allowed Chairman duties at the discretion of the Chairman. The Secretary will be charged with the responsibility of keeping meeting minutes. These minutes should include a list of all individuals present at the meeting. A copy of the minutes should be archived with the zoning application files as well as being posted on the GGNA Zoning website.

5) ZAPC meetings are public meetings. As such, these should be held at a public meeting place, such as a park district field house, local library or school.

6) All ZAPC terms shall be 3-year terms. The ZAPC will select new members in February of every year. If there is an insufficient number of volunteers available to fill a vacant ZAPC position, an incumbent member may serve another three-year term. For current terms at a ZAPC meeting ZAPC members will decide which members will be serving 1-, 2- and 3-year terms. The selection process shall be a lottery-type process to ensure each and every member has an equal opportunity.

7) The ZAPC will also accept applications year-round to fill newly created vacancies during the year as needed. If a ZAPC vacancy occurs before the expiration of the three-year term, the ZAPC may appoint an applicant that is on file to serve the remainder of the term.

8) A committee member must attend at least 66% of regularly scheduled monthly meetings within a 12 month period, to remain an active member. A ZAPC member who misses three consecutive meetings will forfeit his/her position on the ZAPC.

## **Training**

All new volunteers must read the GGNA Zoning And Planning Committee Guidelines before attending their first ZAPC meeting.

Other suggested reading material:

- 1) Milwaukee Ave Corridor Plan which can be found at:  
[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp\\_info/milwaukee\\_avenuecorridorplan.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/milwaukee_avenuecorridorplan.html)
- 2) The Politics of Place, copies of which are available at the Logan Square Branch of the Chicago Public Library; and
- 3) The City of Chicago Zoning Ordinance can be found at  
[www.cityofchicago.org/zoning](http://www.cityofchicago.org/zoning)
- 4) The Death and Life of Great American Cities
- 5) The New Communities Program" administered by Logan Square NA at  
<http://www.newcommunities.org/communities/logan/>

## **General GGNA ZAPC Principals**

- 1) Zoning regulations exist to protect the community and guide development. Consideration of a change to the existing zoning classification of a property will only be approved when the consensus of the ZAPC is that the change will benefit and not injure the community.
- 2) The recommendation for a change in zoning is a privilege and not a right. Decisions about recommendations will be based on unique conditions, unusual hardship, or exceptional contributions to the neighborhood. These can include developments which will encourage positive change to troubled areas within the neighborhood.
- 3) Each Proposal will be considered on its merit and on a case-by-case basis as each parcel is unique. The evaluation of each Proposal will be made in its context with the surrounding area and a review of development trends in the neighborhood. No approved zoning change will set a precedent for a subsequent Proposal.
- 4) Whether an Applicant is asked, after construction is completed, to return a parcel to its prior zoning classification, shall be decided at the time the ZAPC makes its recommendation to the Alderman. This decision shall be made on a case-by-case basis. The ZAPC will be responsible to follow-up on projects requiring a down-zoning.
- 5) The ZAPC affirms the City's transit oriented development policy of higher density near mass transit stops. The criteria established in 2007 for up zoning, when justified, is RT 3.5 in RS 3 areas and similar modest up zoning in business and commercial areas.

- 6) The ZAPC encourages the reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings in order to preserve the characteristic of the neighborhood.
- 7) If a demolition permit is obtained prior to the approval of an up zoning, the zoning on the subject property will be frozen for a period of five years at the classification assigned to the property prior to the demolition permit being obtained. Properties that have been the victim of a fire, explosion or other non-natural disaster shall also have their zoning classification frozen for five years at the pre-catastrophe level. Time on the zoning freeze shall begin to toll from the date of the demolition permit or the date of the catastrophic event.
- 8) High quality building materials and construction are required for all proposals. Additionally, samples of building materials to be used are required at meetings. This may be a physical sample or photograph if a physical sample is unavailable at the time.
- 9) All projects of six or more dwelling units are encouraged to include 20% affordable units on-site and must be presented and voted on through a community meeting.
- 10) All proposals approved by the ZAPC and supported by the Alderman shall be submitted to the City of Chicago Department of Zoning as a Type I Application. Additionally, at the Applicant's expense, a restrictive covenant approved by the ZAPC shall be recorded with the Cook County Recorder after the City Council approves the amendment to the zoning ordinance for the proposal.
- 11) Proposals will be evaluated on the following factors:
  - a) The extent to which the Proposal harmonizes with the surrounding neighborhood;
  - b) The extent to which the Proposal fits in with the long term development, enrichment, and preservation of the community;
  - c) Density;
  - d) Height of the Structure;
  - e) Mass of the Structure;
  - f) Setbacks;
  - g) Use;
  - h) Zoning variance(s) requested by the developer;
  - i) Desire to provide multi-unit residential that are affordable, handicapped accessible and/or low cost rental;
  - j) Number of parking places per unit;
  - k) Effect on traffic patterns;
  - l) Unique conditions of the site i.e. size, shape, parking access limitations;
  - m) LEED Certification of the Structure or compliance with the City's Green Housing Program;
  - n) The number of curb cuts requested;
  - o) Green spaces, roofs, and landscaping;
  - p) Onsite rainwater management

12) Desirable features for proposed projects include:

- a) High-quality building materials
- b) Fair labor practices and affirmative hiring practices

- c) Appropriate parking and traffic circulation
- d) Additional green space and landscape
- e) Exceed the minimum number of affordable units
- f) Traffic calming, bicycling-friendly, or pedestrian friendly elements
- g) Preserving architecturally significant features of existing structures as well as significant landscaping features
- h) A contribution to benefit the general public, for example, street improvement; pedestrian bridge, public art, mural site, bicycle trail, park space, public bench, donations to park or school projects in the neighborhood or some other initiative to benefit the surrounding community. This public benefit may be bestowed at a location other than the site of the subject property.
- i) The development will help solve a unique problem within the area of the development i.e. gang and vandal suppression or encouragement of appropriate local business.

13) Neither the price an applicant paid for the subject property nor the amount of profit the applicant or the original property owner may earn shall be a determining factor in ZAPC's recommendation to the Alderman.

## **The Project Review Process**

- 1) The developer contacts the GGNA-ZAPC chair to set up a presentation at the next available regularly scheduled meeting, typically the evening of the 2nd Monday of the month. The GGNA-ZAPC convenes to discuss zoning changes, variances, exceptions, and matters regarding treatment of historic buildings.
- 2) Two weeks prior to the monthly meeting, the developer provides to the GGNA-ZAPC a proposal including a Project Data Sheet and all items from the Proposal Requirements Sheet.
- 3) Under the discretion of the ZAPC, proposals not accompanied by a complete Application will not be considered. Applications will be reviewed for completeness by two members of the ZAPC designated to receive proposals. This will be a rotating responsibility within the ZAPC. Developers shall be notified by the chair one week prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting whether their project will be discussed and if there are issues with the proposal.
- 4) The Proposal will be posted on the GGNA-ZAPC website 5 days before the regular ZAPC meeting. All ZAPC members will be notified of the next ZAPC meeting date, time and place and the posting of each proposal on the ZAPC website.
- 5) Developers will be allotted a total of 30 minutes for presentations to the GGNA-ZAPC committee. After the formal presentation to the ZAPC the developer is excused from the meeting and the committee further discusses the project. ZAPC open meetings will allow for five minutes of relevant community discussions.
- 6) Upon taking a ZAPC vote, the GGNA-ZAPC provides its recommendation to the Alderman by letter, usually within 7-14 days. Its recommendation may be that the developer be asked by the Alderman and the GGNA-ZAPC to make a presentation to a public meeting or to make changes to the project.

- 7) If GGNA-ZAPC rejects a project out-right, GGNA-ZAPC will recommend to the Alderman any changes that, being made to the project, would bring said project into congruence with the principals of the ZAPC. The Alderman will advise the developer of those changes. The developer should notify GGNA-ZAPC upon completed revision of the plans to arrange a follow-up meeting. Steps 1- 6 above will be repeated.
- 8) In the event that GGNA-ZAPC recommends a presentation to a community meeting, a vote will be taken at the community meeting, tallied and forwarded to the Alderman for final determination. A letter of recommendation by the GGNA-ZAPC will accompany the tallied votes. Again, the final decision of approval or disapproval of a project will be left to the discretion of the Alderman.
- 9) The Chairperson of the Committee shall preside over the meetings of the ZAPC and, especially when dealing with conflicts, will use Roberts Rules of Order for procedures. Minutes of the meeting will also be taken and posted on the GGNA-ZAPC website.
- 10) If a member has a financial interest in a given Proposal, the member must disclose this conflict of interest to the ZAPC and recuse themselves from the discussion on the Proposal. Members of the ZAPC must also disclose any other conflicts they may have with a given Proposal including, but not limited to friendly or unfriendly personal relationships with an Applicant or anyone who may benefit or who may be adversely affected by the proposed zoning change.
- 11) If a member cannot objectively judge a Proposal purely on the merits of the Proposal or the member's judgment will be biased for personal reasons, then the member must abstain from commenting on the Proposal. Recommendations made by the ZAPC to the Alderman are not rewards for friends or punishments for enemies.
- 12) In all cases the Alderman retains the right to adopt or reject the ZAPC's recommendation. In all cases in which a negotiated agreement is reached with an Applicant, a Restrictive Covenant shall be drafted and recorded with the Cook County Recorder within five business days of the City Council's approval of the Applicant's Application to Amend the Zoning Map. A copy will be provided to the ZAPC as well as exterior photos of completed projects.
- 13) The GGNA-ZAPC is not a part of the City's Zoning and Planning approval process and therefore not responsible for interpreting zoning or building codes.

## **Planned Developments**

The general ZAPC review process will be used for a project that will go to the City of Chicago's Planning Department as a Planned Development. But in addition, the Applicant will attend a meeting with the residents of the neighborhood adjacent to the site of the Proposal to describe the Project to the public and to get input from the public which may be incorporated into the Proposal. The Alderman's office will send out a notice to all registered voters in the adjacent area. Member of the ZAPC will also be notified and may provide input.

There is no limit on the number of meetings between the Applicant, the public, and the

ZAPC. The number of meetings may vary from Proposal to Proposal until the adjacent neighbors, the ZAPC and the Applicant come to an agreement on the Proposal or an impasse. In either event, the ZAPC shall draft and send a letter to the alderman's office that includes its recommendations for the Proposal for the City of Chicago Planning Department.

After the Proposal has completed the Planning Department review, but before the planned development document is executed by the Applicant and the City, the Applicant shall make a final presentation to the community to present the final planned development document. The purpose of this final meeting is to let the community know what is going to be built and a proposed time table for the construction. Provided the Proposal substantially includes the recommendations of the ZAPC, the ZAPC shall recommend the alderman approve the zoning change.

## **Community Meetings**

Community meetings are held to gauge public opinion on general development issues or specific proposals that have come before the ZAPC. Notice of community meetings will be given through fliers distributed by the applicant to the neighbors on the blocks surrounding the proposed development within 250 feet, by letters sent by the Alderman to registered voters and through posted notices on the GGNA-ZAPC and Alderman's websites.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Sample email to Applicant Requesting to Present a Proposal to the ZAPC**

Dear Applicant:

Please complete the attached Project Data Sheet and provide all documentation requested. Feel free to ask about any items on the form. We also encourage you to read the GGNA ZAPC Zoning Guide lines to understand how your project will be reviewed.

The purpose of the form and documentation is to give our committee a clear picture of the proposal and why a zoning change or other consideration is requested. Also, please provide a narrative that describes the situation and explains the need for the zoning change.

The GGNA ZAPC usually meets on the second Monday of each month. Zoning applications must be emailed to [designated ZAPC member] at least two weeks prior to the meeting in order to be reviewed at the next ZAPC meeting.

When presenting to the ZAC, please be prepared to show a site plan and a rendering of the project along with a view of the proposed project in the block as it now looks with photos of adjoining buildings.

If a public meeting is scheduled, the applicant/developer is responsible for all associated costs which includes; (1) production and distribution of promotional flyer (2) rental fee of meeting location if applicable and (3) refreshments (optional).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. We look forward to learning more about your project.

Sincerely,

[Chair],  
Chairman of the GGNA Zoning and Planning Committee

# APPENDIX B

## Project Data Sheet

### Project Data Sheet

Proposed projects that are to be reviewed by the GGNA Zoning & Planning Committee must provide the following information:

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_  
Developer/Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_  
Architect: \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning of Adjacent Area: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

PINs \_\_\_\_\_  
Proposed Variences \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dwelling Units: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lot Dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. x \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Lot Area: \_\_\_\_\_ s.f.

Proposed Floor Area: \_\_\_\_\_ s.f. (new) \_\_\_\_\_ s.f. (existing) \_\_\_\_\_ s.f. (addition)  
FAR: \_\_\_\_\_ (existing) \_\_\_\_\_ (proposed) Building area excluded from FAR: \_\_\_\_\_ s.f.

Green space (unpaved): \_\_\_\_\_ s.f. \_\_\_\_\_ % of lot area

Proposed MLA: \_\_\_\_\_ Allowed MLA: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Parking: \_\_\_\_\_ spaces Zoning Required Parking: \_\_\_\_\_ spaces

Building Height Proposed: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Allowed: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. At highest point: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Proposed front yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Required front yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Proposed side yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Required side yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Proposed rear yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Required rear yard setback: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Are there any existing buildings on site? \_\_\_\_\_ describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Will any (or all) be demolished? \_\_\_\_\_

Other Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A PDF file of the Project Data Sheet & requested architectural materials (listed below) for each project should be e-mailed to Jose Espejo at [espejo.jose@gmail.com](mailto:espejo.jose@gmail.com) at least one week before the meeting date.

Nine (9) copies of the Project Data Sheet & requested architectural materials (listed below) should be brought to the meeting for the ZAPC members.

- a.) Small scale context footprint. This should show how the project will fit in with the surrounding properties 100 ft. on each side. Pictures of the site and adjacent properties are helpful.
- b.) A Site plan with setbacks (especially showing setbacks to adjacent neighboring properties), landscaping, fences, garages, parking, curb cuts and sidewalks
- c.) Zoning Data as shown on the Project Data Sheet
- d.) Measured site plan with the following:
  - New building(s) to be shaded gray
  - Landscaped areas to be shaded light green. Show proposed and existing trees and shrubbery on property and parkway.
  - Streets and alleys to be labeled.
  - Building(s) and setbacks to be clearly dimensioned.
  - Show outline of existing building(s) to remain on property and building(s) on properties adjacent to project. If not practical, a partial outline is acceptable for adjacent properties.
  - Clearly show dimensioned parking spaces, bike storage, trash containers/enclosures and fences.
- e.) Floor plans with the following:
  - Provide floor plans of each floor with overall dimensions.
  - Label and dimension all rooms.
  - For floors with identical layouts, just provide one plan and note the floors in drawing label.
  - Label square footage of each unit and each floor.
- f.) Exterior elevations with the following:
  - Provide exterior elevations showing doors, windows, railings and other architectural elements.
  - Dimension all elevations with overall heights, floor to floor heights and floor to ceiling heights.
  - Include elevation benchmarks at each floor, roof, top of parapets or ridge and the top of any stair/elevator tower.
  - Label major finish materials on elevations.
- g.) Relevant isometric renderings showing adjacent properties for context.
- f. Outline of development team
- h.) Ultimate property use and type of ownership
- i.) Any relevant information about the historic use and nature of any existing buildings on the property.
- j.) Provide product info and if possible sample of exterior finish materials with proposed color and texture for meetings.

## APPENDIX C

### Proposed Zoning Information

Explain why the proposed structure or alterations are appropriate for the site and how that the change will benefit and not injure the community.. Include a site plan and a rendering of the project along with a view of the proposed project in the block as it now looks, with photos of adjoining buildings. Please use a separate sheet of paper, if necessary.

## APPENDIX D

### Voting Slips



#### COMMUNITY MEETING

FOR:  
DATE:  
PLACE: Haas Park 2402 N. Washtenaw Ave.

##### Comments & Evaluation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email/Phone \_\_\_\_\_

My opinion on the proposed zoning change : (circle one)

**Support** *Support with conditions(explain below)* **Do not support**

Please provide additional comments on your choice:

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I felt free to contribute and make my voice heard: (circle one)

*Strongly Disagree* *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Comments and/or suggestions on Zoning Community Meetings:

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#### COMMUNITY MEETING

FOR:  
DATE:  
PLACE: Haas Park 2402 N. Washtenaw Ave.

##### Comments & Evaluation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email/Phone \_\_\_\_\_

My opinion on the proposed zoning change : (circle one)

**Support** *Support with conditions(explain below)* **Do not support**

Please provide additional comments on your choice:

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I felt free to contribute and make my voice heard: (circle one)

*Strongly Disagree* *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Comments and/or suggestions on Zoning Community Meetings:

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## APPENDIX E

### GGNA Sectors

SECTOR 1 is boarded by California, Milwaukee and Armitage.

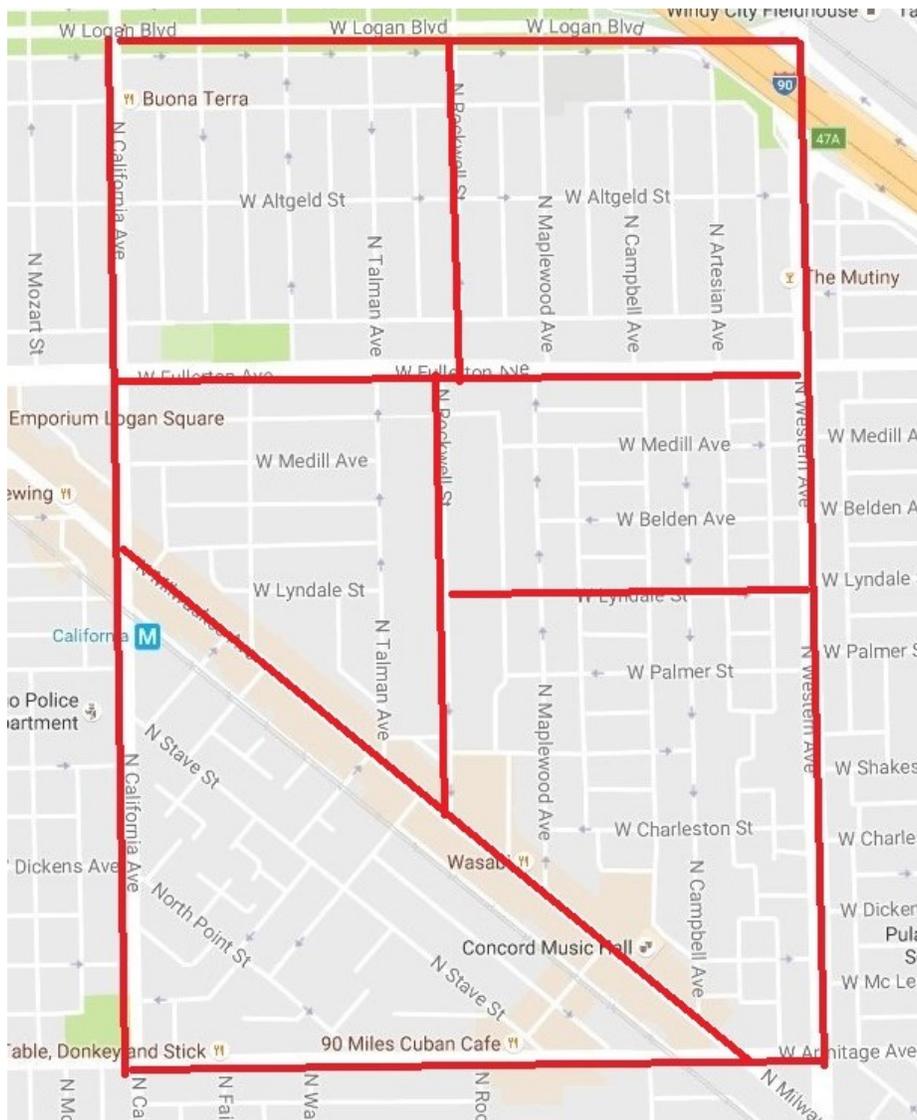
SECTOR 2 is boarded by Rockwell, Lyndale, Western and Milwaukee.

SECTOR 3 is boarded by Rockwell, Fullerton, Western and Lyndale.

SECTOR 4 is boarded by California, Fullerton, Rockwell and Milwaukee.

SECTOR 5 is boarded by California, Logan Boulevard, Rockwell and Fullerton.

SECTOR 6 is boarded by Rockwell, Logan Boulevard, Western and Fullerton.



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> City of Chicago, “Developer’s Guide to the ARO.” Retrieved from:  
<http://www.cityofchicago.org/dam/city/depts/dcd/general/housing/ARodevelopersguide.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> City of Chicago, “Area Median Income Chart.” Retrieved from:  
[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp\\_info/area\\_median\\_incomeamichart.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/area_median_incomeamichart.html)
- <sup>3</sup> City of Chicago, “Affordable Requirements Ordinance.” Retrieved from:  
<http://www.cityofchicago.org/ARO>
- <sup>4</sup> City of Chicago, “2015 ARO Zones Map.” Retrieved from:  
[http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/dcd/general/housing/2015\\_ARO\\_Zone\\_Map\\_JULY\\_28\\_2015.pdf](http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/dcd/general/housing/2015_ARO_Zone_Map_JULY_28_2015.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> Chicago Housing Authority website. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.thecha.org/residents/public-housing/>
- <sup>6</sup> Wikipedia, “Transit-oriented development.” Retrieved from:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transit-oriented\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transit-oriented_development)