



## IV Goals and Vision

On the first pages of the Existing Conditions section of this report, the WPB SSA's stated goals and values set the tone for the plan. The public input collected throughout the planning process suggests that the SSA's goals and values are both on target and reflective of the community's hopes, dreams, and expectations for WPB's future.

An overarching goal of this Master Plan for the WPB SSA is to help the SSA balance the good that comes from increased prosperity along the corridors and within the neighborhoods with the strong desire to preserve local attitude and diversity and reinforce local arts, ecology, heritage, affordability, and values. The collective desires to



*Photo Suggestion Booth results reflective of WPB's stated values... and humor.*

**[drive less, bike more, buy local, go green, improve the sidewalks and celebrate street ballet, retain the area's character, honor the past, welcome a progressive future, and do so as a unified community]**

translate into a vision for Wicker Park Bucktown – a common vision for the six commercial corridors that comprise WPB and the surrounding residential communities...

## Vision for the Area

... a vision of WPB as:

- walkable, of course, but equally bikeable (if not more so)**  
 a connected urban neighborhood where cars take a back seat to those traveling on foot, bicycle, or transit; where elaborate and personalized, clean and safe sidewalks are populated by interesting people and shops, rewarding those moving at slower speeds
- fiercely independent in artistic expression, business ownership, and resident activism**  
 a distinctive and colorful neighborhood where creativity and expression are a part of each moment and view, where the shops are locally owned, and where the residents are empowered as proactive participants in the area's growth and redevelopment
- experimental and pioneering**  
 a progressive, informed, and open minded neighborhood willing to embrace and pilot new solutions to tough urban problems like affordability and traffic, transit and dysfunctional public space to achieve an equitable and sustainable future
- diverse and eclectic yet collaborative and committed**  
 a true community of neighbors and partners rather than strangers living and working in close proximity

Indeed, in many ways WPB is already an amazing and beloved urban neighborhood, grounded by rich history, made gritty by use, and kept that way out of respect for an edgy aesthetic and an appreciation for urban living. Regarding these characteristics, the vision for the future is to turn up the volume, to protect, preserve, and enhance the qualities of WPB so cherished by local residents and businesses, visitors and tourists alike.

## Vision for each Corridor

And while a common vision for Wicker Park Bucktown is important and necessary for guiding area-wide recommendations, the physical and market conditions along the WPB SSA's six commercial corridors are varied, the urban dynamics unique enough to call for a more tailored and specific vision for each corridor.

**["Wicker Park Bucktown would not be Wicker Park Bucktown without Milwaukee Avenue"]**



**Milwaukee Avenue** is a gritty collage, bravely navigated by an army of cyclists. The vision for this tight and individualistic diagonal corridor, which bisects Wicker Park Bucktown from southeast to northwest is about character and theater – augmenting the quirky charm and unique cluttered streetscape, carving out new public spaces where locals and visitors alike can indulge in unparalleled people watching, and humanizing the intersections so that all *walks* of life can coexist.



**Ashland Avenue** is a wide and auto-dominated corridor marking WPB's eastern edge. The vision for this thoroughfare is about motion and movement because – sometimes – it is okay to design for the car; it is about contrasting speed with stillness and finding time to pause, reconsider the everyday landscape, and revisit the landscape treatments and retail opportunities in this corner of WPB.



**Western Avenue** marks the western edge of Wicker Park and Bucktown, serving as a dividing line between WPB and the Logan Square and Humboldt Park neighborhoods to the west. Unclaimed by any adjacent neighborhood and dominated instead by a steady stream of cars and trucks, the corridor's identity wavers between that of a highway and that of a neighborhood street. The vision for Western Avenue is about bridging four neighborhoods by reprogramming the street – about reclaiming space that is taken for granted and giving neighbors and passers by a reason and a desire to inhabit the sidewalks.



**North Avenue** is a major east-west corridor, choked with traffic, but urban in spite of itself, lined by mixed use structures and compact but active sidewalks. The vision for North Avenue is about rebalancing and bookending – about creating a more balanced street by slowing vehicular speeds and recovering small pieces of the automobile environment for use by pedestrians and cyclists, about extending the commercial energy and vibe concentrated near the six-point intersection to welcome people from West(ern) to the Kennedy.



**Division Street**, with its sizable sidewalks, is as broad as the range of uses that it hosts. It serves all walks of life – the people who inhabit the residences, frequent the local shops and bars, dine on the sidewalks, attend the schools, work or seek care at the hospital, lounge in the parks, or even bathe in the Russian and Turkish baths. The vision for Division Street is about continuity and surface – about extending the aesthetics and vibe of the street by extending the locals-only entrepreneurial district eastward and westward from Damen Avenue and maximizing the potential of the streetscape by making full use of the sidewalks and institutional edges.



**Damen Avenue** is the most intimate of WPB's streets. Home to a wide array of boutique retail and local shops, it provides a central spine for strolling. Damen Avenue is also the connective tissue between Wicker Park (the park), Churchill Park, and what will be the Bloomingdale Trail. Its parks serve the community; its retail draws the world. The vision for Damen Avenue is about an intimate scale and a slower pace.



- spread the word
- promote local arts
- guide development
- make connections
- greenify
- keep an eye on things
- spruce up the place

rocking more hats than  
the village people.



*Seven hats, or organizing themes, provide a framework for the recommendations.*

