

# V Recommendations

## The WPB SSA's Seven Hats

### [get organized]

The Interface Studio team envisions the WPB SSA donning seven hats as it transitions from planning to implementation – an organized, flexible, and skilled (not to mention fashionable) multi-tasker, like a chef moving expertly between seven simmering pots toward a perfectly timed and well orchestrated meal. These seven hats serve as themes that organize the recommendations.

#### 1 Spruce Up the Place

Sprucing up the place is about improving the cleanliness and appearance of WPB's streetscapes without sterilizing them – about preserving the area's beloved "grit" but scrubbing and polishing just enough to encourage people to linger a little longer and return a little sooner.

#### 2 Keep an Eye on Things

Keeping an eye on things is about increasing public safety along WPB's corridors – a most basic necessity that, when present, is often unnoticed or unappreciated but, when missing, is immediately perceived and potentially damaging to the area's reputation and use.

#### 3 Spread the Word

Spreading the word is about recognizing WPB's best assets and flaunting them – about generating buzz, intrigue, and excitement about the area and the people, businesses, and organizations that make the area unique.

#### 4 Promote Local Arts

Promoting local arts is about maintaining WPB's identity – about helping artists remain in the community, marketing their presence, and putting them to work on a range of community projects that will help to further distinguish WPB as a creative and creating hub.

#### 5 Guide Development

Guiding development is about managing change by embracing a proactive role in shaping WPB's unfolding future – about establishing upfront expectations for development, redevelopment, and commercial tenant attraction and retention that enable the community to inform rather than respond to proposed changes in WPB's physical form and retail mix.

#### 6 Greenify

Greenifying is about becoming an environmentally sound and ecologically sensitive community not only in ideas and ideals but in practice and on the ground – about altering habits at the individual scale and investing in landscapes at the neighborhood scale to allow WPB to evolve as a sustainable and lush urban district.

#### 7 Make Connections

Making connections is about multi-modal mobility and circulation along WPB's corridors – about investing in and prioritizing the local pedestrian, bicycle, and transit systems to reinforce the area's green agenda and urban character, and making responsible decisions regarding automobile usage, parking resources, and the network of streets.



## spend the budget



## advocate



## review

*An action, two, or several accompany each recommendation to provide structure for implementation efforts.*

### Actions

Each of the following recommendations begins with an **ACTION** directive. Think of them as CliffsNotes – a summary of the main points and tasks required by each recommendation and a suggestion about what the SSA's role in implementation should be. The action statements are easy to read and process at a glance, just enough so that someone skimming the plan can understand the main objectives and piece together who exactly will be the force driving each of the proposed ideas toward reality. For those interested, meatier descriptions of the recommendations follow the action items.

The action directives are also intended to help the SSA organize its efforts within three categories: Spend the Budget, Advocate, and Review. Some recommendations require work within one single category; others necessitate an approach that blends two or all three of the action items.

#### **ACTION** > Spend the Budget

Recommendations that call for Spending the Budget require a very concrete and measurable action. In many cases, they are recommendations that the SSA can take ownership of and move forward with independently and immediately. Quite simply, these recommendations will help the SSA do what it is charged to do, to “balance the needs and desires of all residents, visitors, and businesses in the allocation and expenditure of their tax dollars.”

The other piece of the SSA's mission requires actions that are less tangible but of equal importance. Recommendations that call for Advocacy and Review will help the SSA “preserve, encourage, and enhance the qualities of Wicker Park and Bucktown that make the neighborhoods and their corridors distinctly Wicker Park and Bucktown.”

#### **ACTION** > Advocate

Recommendations that call for Advocacy are recommendations that will require partnerships and collaboration, recommendations that will ultimately be implemented by a City official or government agency but that the SSA must help to pioneer. As the driving force behind this plan and the eyes and ears that oversaw its development, the SSA is uniquely positioned to lobby the powers that be on behalf of the WPB community.

#### **ACTION** > Review

Recommendations that call for Review are recommendations that will help the SSA guide future development and manage growth along WPB's corridors. They recognize the SSA's role as an informed and empowered participant in the area's unfolding history and offer guidelines for how best to establish clear development expectations, evaluate redevelopment proposals, and negotiate with developers at work within the SSA's district.

Sidewalk cleaning, street sweeping, snow removal, graffiti prevention, and pest control are important activities along any commercial corridor and suitable tasks for an improvement district like the WPB SSA to undertake. In fact, the WPB SSA is already working on many initiatives in keeping with most of the following recommendations, recognizing that conditions within the public arena – along the streets, sidewalks, and streetwalls of Wicker Park Bucktown – inform not only the pedestrian environment, but local image, businesses retention and recruitment, resident quality of life, and the WPB experience enjoyed by visitors and, increasingly, tourists. With improvements already underway, the future calls for maintenance – making habit of these urban chores and doing so in a way that reflects and resonates with the values of neighborhood residents and business owners.

Sprucing up the place is about improving the cleanliness and appearance of WPB's streetscapes without sterilizing them – about preserving the area's beloved "grit" but scrubbing and polishing just enough to encourage people to linger a little longer and return a little sooner. The following recommendations detail ideas for keeping the WPB SSA's commercial corridors clean (in a green and environmentally conscious way).



Figure 74. Spruce Up the Place Overview Diagram

### 1.1 Undertake an annual pressure washing of corridor sidewalks.

**ACTION > Spend the Budget**

Contract with an eco-friendly pressure washing company to clean corridor sidewalks twice per year.

The first SSA-sponsored sidewalk washing in the late summer of 2007 yielded dramatic results, removing years of dirt and grime. In theory, the sidewalks are cleaner now than they were before their hose down, but the sidewalks in WPB are heavily used and once cleaned, must be kept clean. The WPB SSA should contract with a pressure washing company to clean corridor sidewalks once per year with spot treatments in between as necessary. In keeping with the area's green agenda, the SSA should, if possible, contract only with an eco-friendly company that uses organic cleaning solutions and a water recovery system to filter and reuse the water necessary for cleaning, thereby reducing project water usage by 60 to 70 percent.<sup>16</sup>



Pressure washing.

<sup>16</sup> [www.orlandopressurewash.com/eco-friendly-cleaning/](http://www.orlandopressurewash.com/eco-friendly-cleaning/)



Photo Booth suggestion from the WPB Open Houses.

### 1.2 Adopt eco-friendly street cleaning and landscaping practices.

**ACTION > Spend the Budget**

Purchase eco-sensitive cleaning, gardening, and disposal products for discount resale to community members and Cleanslate.

If contracting with a privately-held landscaping or streetscape maintenance company, contract with a company that has a firm commitment to green business practices.

**ACTION > Advocate**

Launch an education campaign about eco-friendly street cleaning and landscaping practices targeting WPB residents and business owners, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Bureau of Forestry, Cleanslate, and other groups active in tending and maintaining WPB's outdoor environment.

As an environmentally conscious organization that sponsors improvements in the public way, the WPB SSA should adopt eco-friendly street cleaning and landscaping practices and work with the community and community partners to implement these cleaner, greener cleaning and greening techniques. As a first step, the SSA should launch a program at the local level that makes eco-friendly cleaning, gardening, and disposal products more readily available and more widely recognized and used within its district.

Forexample, the SSA should consider purchasing biodegradable, compostable trash bags, like BioBags, in bulk for resale at discounted prices to corridor businesses, neighborhood residents, and Cleanslate. BioBags exist for trash cans of all sizes – indoor and outdoor, for yard and outdoor waste, and for pet waste for use in local dog parks. The SSA should also investigate options for bulk purchases of organic, biodegradable lawn and tree care products, as well as rain barrels for water collection and urban compost tumblers to lessen the disposal burden.



Dog Park BioBags.

Because the City's Bureau of Forestry maintains the trees that line Chicago's streets and the Chicago Park District maintains the parklands, the SSA should also launch a larger scale initiative to encourage broader adoption of such environmentally sensitive maintenance practices. As a green community striving to grow greener, the SSA should lobby to position Wicker Park Bucktown for City pilot projects that focus on implementing these strategies.

### 1.3 Market the SSA's snow removal service.

#### **ACTION** > Spend the Budget

Contract for continued snow removal each winter.

Allocate dollars within the snow removal budget to an awareness campaign that reminds property owners of the limits and extent of the WPB SSA's shoveling services. Incorporate a snow removal service dispatch notice on the SSA website.

The WPB SSA uses district tax dollars to fund supplemental snow removal along its six commercial corridors or 13 miles of sidewalk. The SSA's snow removal service, designed to assist property owners with their snow removal responsibilities rather than assume these responsibilities in full, is prompt and effective, but it only hits the streets if there has been more than one inch of accumulation. When storms drop less than one inch of snow, snow removal duties are the sole responsibility of property owners. While in place to maximize efficiency and manage costs, this minimum snowfall requirement causes confusion among tax payers under the impression that the SSA has assumed responsibility for all snow removal. The SSA should contract for continued snow removal each winter but should couple that initiative with an awareness campaign that reminds property owners of the limits and extent of the WPB shoveling service.

To prevent further confusion, which can lead to treacherous sidewalks, slipping, and falling, the SSA should incorporate a notice item on its website for snowy days that indicates whether or not the shoveling service has been dispatched to manage the snowfall of a given storm.

### 1.4 More trash cans, please!

#### **ACTION** > Spend the Budget

Establish a program to replace damaged trash cans with new ones and place them at appropriate locations.

#### **ACTION** > Advocate

Coordinate with the City Streets and Sanitation Department's Ward Superintendents on permitting and implementation procedures.

Trash cans in the SSA have become worn out and damaged at many locations, suggesting a lack of area maintenance. The SSA has already started the process of purchasing and deploying new trash bins and has been coordinating with the City Streets and Sanitation Department's Ward Superintendents on permitting and implementation issues. Such communication and strong working relationships should be maintained into the future in order to expedite the process should the SSA determine a need for additional bins.

Trash cans should be strategically located where trash volume supply is high and spaced every two blocks along the sidewalk. They should not be placed on narrow sidewalks or in other locations that may hinder a person's ability to walk or restrict the physically disabled. SSA #8 in the City of Chicago has installed BigBelly trash cans, solar powered bins that compact the trash to reduce the number of times the trash is picked up as well as to reduce waste overflow. Though these bins are expensive, advertising space on the bins' outer walls can be used to defray costs... or to display art by local artists and designers.



Big Belly.  
Source: [www.bigbellsolar.com](http://www.bigbellsolar.com)



Artist-adorned trash bins in Amsterdam.

## 1.5 Promote graffiti removal and prevention programs and help connect business owners with assistance.

### ACTION > Advocate

Continue the SSA's graffiti removal and prevention outreach by linking business owners and residents with information and existing City resources.

### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Survey business and property owners to gauge their interest in acid-etch graffiti prevention products and help to facilitate the purchase and installation of such materials.

Commission a work of "Reverse Graffiti" to reinforce that WPB supports graffiti as an art form.

Most community members in Wicker Park Bucktown have an appreciation for graffiti as a form of art. Beautiful, elaborate, and colorful painted designs adorn many walls and surfaces throughout the area. Quirky wheat paste stickers reinforce the area's creative and gritty reputation. Temporary chalk demonstrations draw crowds. Graffiti comes in yet another form, though, a form that is less art and more vandalism, a form that defaces property and degrades the highly personalized and well cared for streetscape. The City of Chicago provides a host of resources to combat and prevent this latter form of graffiti, and the SSA should continue its efforts to link business owners and residents with City programs as well as additional information to help protect the integrity of local façades.



Photo Booth suggestion from the WPB Open Houses.

Specifically, the SSA should improve WPB's awareness of the following existing resources:

- The City's 311 line, a 24-hour call center that accepts a wide range of non-emergency complaints including graffiti removal. The call center will need the following information to process a complaint: the defaced surface material (brick, stucco, etc.), the estimated height of the graffiti from the ground, and the exact address or location of the graffiti.<sup>17</sup>
- The City's Graffiti Blasters, a subset of the Department of Streets and Sanitation's crews that provide free graffiti removal using a blasting technique that employs baking soda and high water pressure to clean mineral surfaces and paint cover graffiti on remaining surfaces.<sup>18</sup>
- The WPB Graffiti Abatement Program, which assists WPB property owners or tenants by providing a rebate for a portion of glass repair or replacement or graffiti prevention costs. Glass repair includes buffing and polishing glass to remove graffiti damage, and glass replacement includes removing and replacing glass due to graffiti damage. Graffiti prevention includes installing a protective film on glass surfaces that protects glass from permanent damage due to paint, markers, scratching, or etching, etc. The Program reimburses 50% of the cost of glass repair or replacement and/or 50% of the cost of graffiti prevention to a maximum of \$1,000 per location per year. Program applicants receive contact information for local graffiti removal and prevention providers.

To reinforce the SSA's appreciation of graffiti as an art form and an integral component of WPB's gritty character, the SSA should commission a work of "Reverse Graffiti"<sup>19</sup> like that of British street artist, Moose,<sup>20</sup> who tags using soap and water on grime-covered city walls rather than using spray paint. (Think "wash me" drawn in a car's dirty windshield.)

<sup>17</sup> [www.timeout.com/chicago/articles/features/28614/the-411-on-311](http://www.timeout.com/chicago/articles/features/28614/the-411-on-311)

<sup>18</sup> [http://egov.cityofchicago.org/city/webportal/portalContentItemAction.do?contentOID=536909830&contentTypeName= COC\\_EDITORIAL&topChannelName=HomePage](http://egov.cityofchicago.org/city/webportal/portalContentItemAction.do?contentOID=536909830&contentTypeName= COC_EDITORIAL&topChannelName=HomePage)

<sup>19</sup> [www.inhabitat.com/2007/01/11/reverse-graffiti/](http://www.inhabitat.com/2007/01/11/reverse-graffiti/)

<sup>20</sup> [www.symbollix.com/main.html](http://www.symbollix.com/main.html)



Reverse graffiti by Moose.  
Sources:  
[www.symbolix.com](http://www.symbolix.com) and  
[www.inhabit.com](http://www.inhabit.com)

## 1.6 Contract annually to address vermin issues.

### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Consider hiring an Integrated Pest Management company to create and implement a low- to non-toxic pest control action plan for WPB.

### ACTION > Advocate

Alternatively, link community members with information about natural products and DIY pest control methods.

To a certain extent, pests are a part of urban living. In areas with high concentrations of food-related establishments, like Wicker Park Bucktown, pest problems are much more pronounced, and complaints on the subject surfaced repeatedly during the public outreach process. The WPB SSA should survey corridor businesses, focusing on food and beverage establishments, to determine the level of interest in a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) action plan for the area. IPM is a low- to non-toxic approach to pest control that originated in agriculture, but has been making inroads in the urban environment and public health. It employs little or no reliance on pesticides, focusing instead on “pest biology, environmental information, and available technology.”<sup>21</sup> A large-scale IPM action plan for the SSA might evaluate the relationships between chronic offenders and/or problem areas and focus on ways to alter and enforce human behavior such that it curbs ongoing vermin issues. Chicago-based Safer Pest Control Project (SPCP) is a good potential partner for this initiative.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the greenest approach is to provide education and outreach about non-toxic do-it-yourself pest control methods<sup>23</sup> and natural pest control products<sup>24</sup> to better equip community members in their indoor battles against WPB’s pests. Outdoors? Live and let live, within reason of course.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ncipmc.org/whatisipm.cfm>

<sup>22</sup> <http://spcpweb.org>

<sup>23</sup> See [www.beyondpesticides.org/safetysource/index.htm](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/safetysource/index.htm) for a list of Least-Toxic and Non-Toxic Pest Management service providers and [www.beyondpesticides.org/alternatives/factsheets/index.htm](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/alternatives/factsheets/index.htm) for quick, natural, DIY tips to help control 25 different pests.

<sup>24</sup> See [www.pristineplanet.com](http://www.pristineplanet.com), among other resources, for eco-friendly comparison shopping.

## 2 Keep an Eye on Things

Overall, local inhabitants and visitors to the area report feeling safe in Wicker Park Bucktown. Indeed, the vast majority of candid comments about fear and danger in WPB involve bicycle riding and crossing the street – both treacherous activities at times, to be discussed at length in the Making Connections section (Section 7) of the Recommendations. With regard to general public safety, one resident explained,

**["it's not an unsafe neighborhood, but just like anywhere... you have to be careful walking alone at night."]** Improved public safety along WPB's commercial corridors will benefit local residents and employees, business owners and customers, visitors and tourists, alike, and as such, the SSA should consider advocating for added bicycle police, solar-powered safety lighting, and surveillance cameras at dangerous intersections. Keeping an eye on things is about increasing public safety on WPB's streets.



Figure 75. Keep an Eye on Things Overview Diagram

## 2.1 Lobby for bicycle police presence.

**ACTION** > *Advocate*

Lobby the Chicago Police Department for an increased bicycle patrol in WPB.

WPB is home to an active and activist biking community, so much so that **["there's almost bike congestion."]** Together with cyclists, pedestrians comprise the heart of the area's streetlife. Vehicular traffic clogs the SSA's six roadways, removed yet at times interfering with the rhythms of the sidewalk flow and the stream of cyclists along or across Milwaukee Avenue's Hipster Highway. When a driver's destination is WPB, he or she parks and then walks. It follows, then, that to improve public safety in WPB, policing must be tailored to the spaces that the public inhabits and the speeds at which members of the public move. The SSA should lobby the Chicago Police Department for an increased patrol by bicycle cops in Wicker Park Bucktown. The benefits of bicycle patrols are many:

- Officers are more approachable on bicycle than in patrol cars;
- They enjoy enhanced mobility, as they are not restricted to the roadways or hemmed in by congestion;
- They enjoy faster speeds than those patrolling on foot;
- Their presence will raise awareness of bicyclists;
- Their use of WPB's bicycle infrastructure will raise awareness of the challenges and dangers cyclists in the area face; and
- Swapping a car for a bike translates to a lesser burden on the roadways and the parking resources as well as less air pollution.



*Bicycle cops at work.*

## 2.2 Shed a little light on the scene.

**ACTION** > *Advocate*

Coordinate with the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation regarding the installation of solar-powered pedestrian-scale lights in the dark pockets of the SSA's sidewalks.

**ACTION** > *Spend the Budget*

Purchase and install solar-powered pedestrian-scale lighting to improve public safety.

Public comments from the WPB Open House budgeting exercise and postcard visioning exercise indicate a desire for improved pedestrian lighting along the SSA's commercial corridors. Reflecting the green values of the community, residents further specified that the new lighting be solar-powered. Depending on existing infrastructure and input from the Department of Streets and Sanitation, the new lighting can either be affixed to light poles in the area (as has been done on portions of Damen) or installed in the sidewalks independently. North, Ashland, and segments of Milwaukee have newer, more ornate light fixtures, which stand at or close to the height of an auto-oriented cobra fixture. Division, Western, and parts of Milwaukee, however, have only the cobra fixtures, and should be earmarked for the first phases of new lighting installation.



*Solar-powered street lights.*

## 2.3 Consider lobbying for video cameras to increase safety at key intersections.

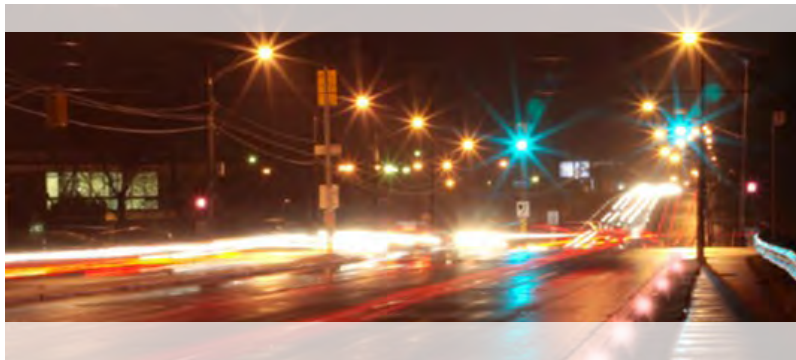
### ACTION > Advocate

Work with CDOT to add Red Light Cameras at key intersections.

Red light cameras are used to enforce traffic laws, such as when vehicles run a red light or make a right-turn on red when that movement is prohibited. This practice is already done at many locations in the City and could be expanded to additional intersections in the SSA. In fact, a March 2008 article published in the *Chicago Tribune*, reported 69 intersections with red light cameras in the City and a signed City contract that will install 220 more cameras by 2012.<sup>25</sup> Recognizing the substantial infrastructure expense and the necessity of allocating these resources in the places of highest need throughout the City, the SSA should work with CDOT to add Red Light Cameras to the intersections of:

- Western Avenue/Armitage Avenue/Milwaukee Avenue
- Division Street/Western Avenue
- North Avenue/Ashland Avenue
- North Avenue/Damen Avenue/Milwaukee Avenue

If the cameras go in, the SSA might consider advocating for a live web feed or outdoor projection of the recorded material – and then consider encouraging the neighborhood’s many characters to stop by every once and a while to perform for the camera and the neighborhood audience. Surveillance, WPB-style.



Wave to the camera.

<sup>25</sup> [www.rajivshah.com/camera/archives/red\\_light\\_cameras/](http://www.rajivshah.com/camera/archives/red_light_cameras/), quoting [www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com)

### 3 Spread the Word

Clean and safe are widely accepted basics for commercial corridors. Communication, branding, and marketing represent a close third. Because the visions for each of the WPB SSA's six streets vary greatly, the SSA will need to work harder than other commercial entities to raise the awareness of the SSA, tell the story of WPB, and distinctly promote each corridor.

Spreading the word is about recognizing WPB's best assets and flaunting them – about generating buzz, intrigue, and excitement about the area and the people, businesses, and organizations that make the area unique. The following recommendations detail ideas for telling the world what WPB has to offer, celebrating the quality of life enjoyed by residents, boosting community pride, and inviting the world to come and experience WPB first-hand.

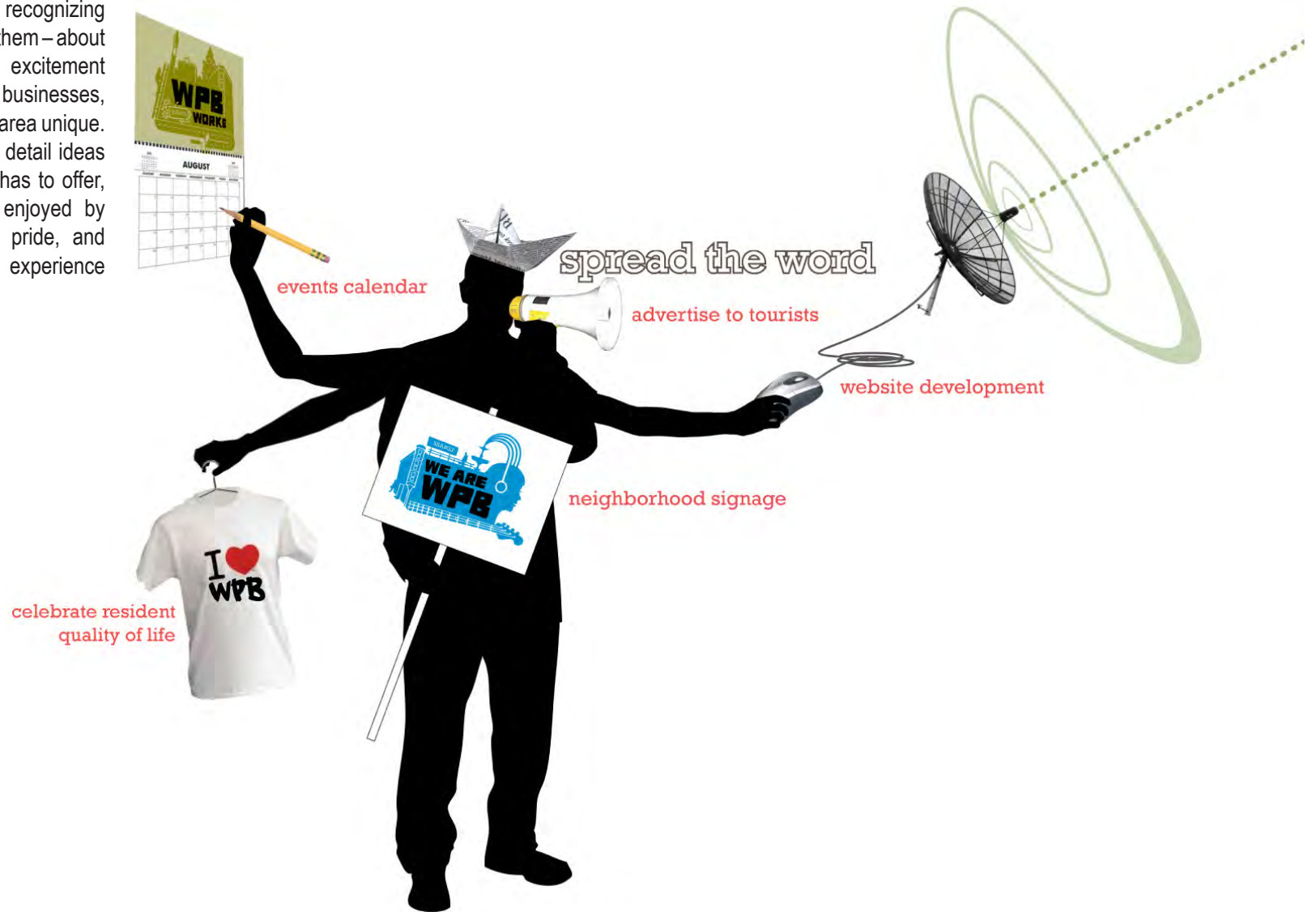


Figure 76. Spread the Word Overview Diagram

### 3.1 Commission new, multi-lingual neighborhood signage.

#### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Work with a local graphic design firm to design and develop new, multi-lingual WPB signage for the SSA's gateways and corridors.

The new(ish) WPB SSA logos in English, Polish, and Spanish are fantastic. Graphically, they are fresh and contemporary. Their content celebrates the best and most unique qualities of the WPB, past and present – its Polish roots, its Latino history, and the continued presence of the Polish and Spanish-speaking communities, its literary past, its iconic architecture, its transit options, its artists, its music scene, its gardens and greenery, its proposed Bloomingdale Trail. New signage on the SSA's streets should be just as descriptive and full of character, welcoming people to the area or reminding people of where there are.

Work with local graphic designers and fabricators to develop and produce new, multi-lingual WPB signage at a range of scales for the SSA's gateways and corridors. Potential locations include gateway intersections (Western and Division, North at the Kennedy, Ashland at the Kennedy), the Polish Triangle and the six-point intersection.



WPB's new, multi-lingual logos.  
Translations: blue, Polish, "We are WPB"  
green, Spanish, "WPB works."

### 3.2 Develop an ongoing online story-telling component for the SSA website.

#### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Create an interactive web interface that collects, presents, and invites people to share their WPB stories and histories in written or visual form, video segments, or sound recordings.

Embed this feature in the SSA website.

In addition to signage, the WPB SSA should be using its website to communicate with the neighbors and the public about all that is interesting in Wicker Park Bucktown, past and present. The community photo exhibit and story telling booth at the WPB Open Houses offered a sense of the rich, if somewhat sequestered, material that exists in the area. The proposed website/evolving digital art installation designed to uncover and communicate WPB's hidden narratives could take many forms, inspired and influenced by the local creative community, already very much engaged in a digital WPB dialog (see comments on the Flickr photos from the WPB Open House).<sup>26</sup>

Beautiful and compelling examples exist of web-based storytelling initiatives underway in other cities. Look to Murmur in Toronto,<sup>27</sup> which ties recorded oral histories to an online map of specific districts in the City. Murmur's stories can also be accessed via cell phone as people explore the city streets.

**["The city is full of stories, and some of them happen in parking lots and bungalows, diners and front lawns. The smallest, greyest or most nondescript building can be transformed by the stories that live in it."]**

- Murmur

In Los Angeles, an independent online media source, KCET,<sup>28</sup> has published a series of neighborhood profiles under the title, Explore CA, Departures. The profiles merge photography and annotated collage, video and audio portraits to offer a glimpse of the place and its people.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.flickr.com/search/?q=SSA+33>

<sup>27</sup> <http://murmurtoronto.ca>

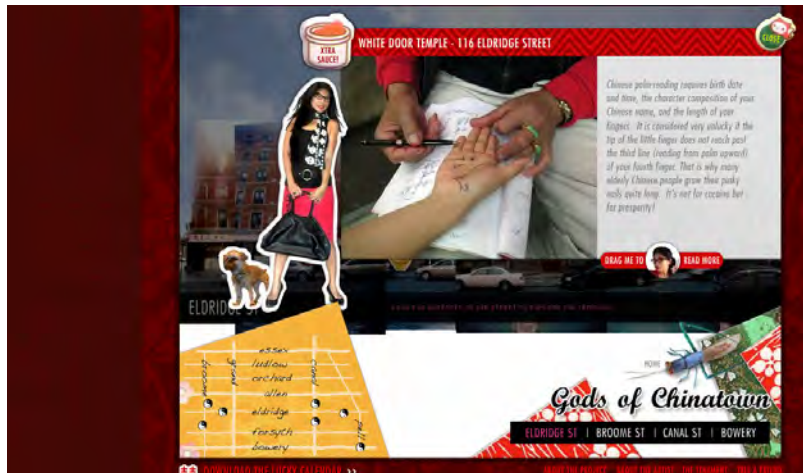
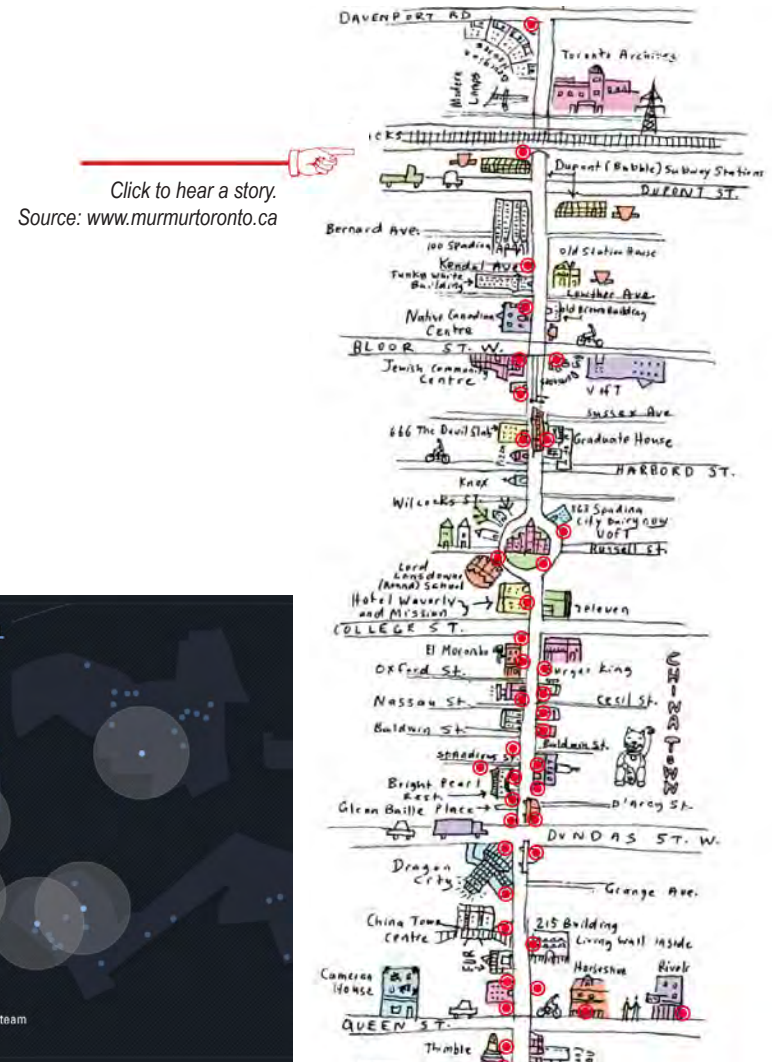
<sup>28</sup> [www.kcet.org](http://www.kcet.org)

<sup>29</sup> [www.kcet.org/explore-ca/departures-watts](http://www.kcet.org/explore-ca/departures-watts)

Also investigate the Lower East Side Tenement Museum’s Digital Artist in Residence Program (DARP) in New York City.<sup>30</sup> The program, focused on explorations of the contemporary immigrant experience, invites emerging artists to apply for a six-month virtual residency. Benefits include the opportunity to show original works of art in the Museum’s space and to have an ongoing digital exhibition linked to the Museum’s website.

Given WPB’s contemporary music scene and musical history, one artist group that participated in the Lower East Side Tenement Museum’s Digital Artist in Residence Program, in particular, might prove to be a compelling partner for a WPB online storytelling initiative. Consider reaching out to The Folk Songs Project,<sup>31</sup> a collaboration of artists who map sounds collected from a place’s landscape and invite people to make music by mixing local sounds. Their *Manchester: Peripheral* project is especially beautiful, and found expression not only online, but also through interactive sound projections of Manchester musicians in the urban environment.<sup>32</sup>

Tap local creative interests and technology talent to give the corridor’s untold stories a visual form and web presence; tap local chatter bugs to get people talking.



Digital Artist in Residence Program project, Gods of Chinatown. Source: www.tenement.org/darp



Manchester Peripheral Interactive Sound Map. Source: www.manchesterperipheral.com/phase1/soundmap

<sup>30</sup> www.tenement.org/darp.html

<sup>31</sup> www.folksongsproject.com/

<sup>32</sup> www.manchesterperipheral.com/phase2/installation/

### 3.3 Develop a directory and annual calendar for arts, small businesses, and services and put it online.

**ACTION** > Spend the Budget

Create a comprehensive online directory of local businesses, artists, and service providers. Post it on the SSA website and keep it up to date.

Add an annual calendar of major neighborhood events to the SSA website, and create a yearly print edition to fundraise for the arts.

Wicker Park Bucktown has an active web community. As the neighborhoods grow in popularity, so too will their online media presence, attracting armchair researchers from throughout the City, region, and world. The SSA's website should be a portal to the neighborhood, providing information not only relevant to SSA taxpayers but also to neighborhood residents, visitors, and tourists. The website should maintain a full directory of corridor businesses, artists, and service providers complete with links to their websites, hours of operation, address, telephone number, and possibly promotions offered to people frequenting the website in search of information. The directory should highlight those businesses that are new to the area as well as those that are locally-owned independents.

The website should also include an annual calendar of events highlighting sales events, festivals, programs at Wicker Park and other neighborhood green spaces, and fundraisers for projects like the Bloomingdale Trail, etc. This calendar could also be re-packaged as a print edition calendar for sale to raise money for the local arts. The Northern Liberties neighborhood in Philadelphia develops a new theme every year for its calendar, which raises money for the local community association (last year's theme was "The Dogs of Northern Liberties").

### 3.4 Celebrate the seasons in WPB with temporary streetscape improvements and events.

**ACTION** > Spend the Budget

Organize and sponsor annual holiday decorations and festivals.

Host an annual Winter Open House or SSA party.

Change is a defining characteristic in WPB. While the area's historic architecture, myths, and legends provide a firm grounding for Wicker Park and Bucktown, the neighborhoods' streetscapes feel alive and vibrant, changing daily – in big ways with new construction and rehabilitation and small ways through new signage and plantings, public art and artful graffiti. In WPB, the temporary adds value and interest.

The WPB SSA can and should play a role in contributing to the area's evolving streetscape and public dialogue by investing in temporary streetscape improvements and community events like the annual festivals and the Open Houses hosted as part of the planning process this past winter. The SSA should commission artistic and inventive seasonal decorations that tie the district together visually as a whole during certain parts of the year, while also supporting the annual arts, crafts, music, and street festivals, which celebrate the uniqueness of WPB's local corridors or districts one at a time. An annual Winter Open House or SSA party should be planned to get the neighbors (and SSA tax-payers in particular) out and talking to each other, involved in the community and organized to support implementation of this plan.



### 3.5 Advertise to reach tourist shoppers.

#### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Develop marketing materials for distribution at downtown hotels and local businesses and Bed and Breakfasts tailored to the tourist market.

Post downloadable visitors maps in multiple languages and short write-ups of upcoming local events on the SSA website that invite tourists to visit the neighborhood and experience it like a neighbor.



UWISHUNU what to do thingyabob



#### artsyfartsywitha5stariae

Too many galleries, not enough time is your philosophy. Art makes the world go round and Philly is an art lover's paradise. Here is a path of least resistance to see some super unique stuff.

##### Day 1

**Wake up:** Reasonably early

**Head to:** Café Lift (428 N 13th St, Philadelphia) for brunch (don't forget to check out the featured artist)

**Then to:** Old City for some galleries

**After that:** Bahdee Bahdu (309 Cherry Street, Philadelphia)

**How to:** Mercato (1216 Spruce St, Philadelphia)

**After that:** The Walnut Street Theatre (825 Walnut St Philadelphia)

*Personalized itinerary builder for visitors... or residents.*

*Source: [www.uwishunu.com/thingyabob-questions/](http://www.uwishunu.com/thingyabob-questions/)*

Locals say it is starting to happen. Concierges at downtown hotels are sending visitors to Wicker Park and Bucktown, but without first giving them a sense of the area's offerings. Several of the boutiques, restaurants, and bars have become destinations, but many of WPB's hidden gems remain just slightly off of the beaten path... which is, in part, what makes them so special. Advertising to reach the tourist market is a challenge that requires balancing a desire to support local businesses by helping them to expand their customer base and reputation with a desire to maintain WPB's local feel. Milwaukee Avenue populated by the droves of tourists coursing along the Magnificent Mile becomes a very different Milwaukee Avenue indeed.

An advertising campaign targeting tourists must, therefore, be tailored to the right kind of tourists – tourists who share common values (like the environment, the gritty city, creative expression, and style) and who saturate rather than dilute WPB's urban arena. Marketing materials distributed at downtown hotels and at local businesses and Bed and Breakfasts should convey the area's edge and aesthetic in addition to listing the names and addresses of local destinations.

A web campaign should take cues from Philadelphia's [www.uwishunu.com](http://www.uwishunu.com) (pronounced "you wish you knew"), a blog-based marketing campaign sponsored (shhh) by the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Commission<sup>33</sup> that publishes posts by local Philadelphians "in the know" about upcoming local events distinctly different from and drawing different crowds than the traditional historic Philadelphia tourist experience.

While the benefit of WPB tourists to local businesses is quite clear, the benefit to local residents is seemingly less so. In fact though, the local businesses so cherished by WPB residents rely on the shopping habits of visitors from elsewhere. The uniquely Wicker Park Bucktown retail and entertainment would struggle to survive on the local customer base alone.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.uwishunu.com/about-uwishunu/>

### 3.6 Broaden the reach of the WPB Community Grant with a granting arm of the SSA, the WPB FUNd.

#### ACTION > Spend the Budget

Continue to allocate a portion of the SSA annual budget each year to support local initiatives and local people whose mission and work contribute to the Wicker Park Bucktown community.

Allocate additional funds to the WPB FUNd to be made available to WPB property owners for façade improvements.

Continue the competitive application process to help determine which grants to award each year.

#### ACTION > Advocate

Act as an information clearinghouse to help property owners within the Milwaukee Avenue Historic District access City and State historic preservation program dollars.

Wicker Park Bucktown is an area of incredible talent and creative energy. Throughout the SSA, people and organizations are at work on beautiful, expressive, curious, meaningful, activist, and colorful projects – projects poised to change the world and projects that contribute to WPB's vibe and environment. Wicker Park Bucktown is an inspiring place in which to work, and people who create – artists, designers, musicians, poets, organizers, dancers, actors, crafters, chefs, bakers – are hard at work, in step with the SSA itself.

The catch? That many such creative enterprises lack the financial backing, and therefore freedom, to develop in full. The SSA should expand the reach of its WPB Community Grant with a WPB FUNd, allocating a portion of its yearly budget to support compelling local projects, in both the public and private realm. The Community Grant as it exists today sponsors “public programs, events, initiatives, or services that demonstrate a measurable benefit to the community and foster community growth and development within the SSA district.”

Understanding that the area's architectural fabric also contributes to the local streetscape and urban environment, the SSA should allocate additional dollars for the WPB FUNd to be made available to private property owners for façade improvements and other preservation or restoration projects targeting building exteriors. As the creation of the new Milwaukee Avenue Historic District grants property owners within that district access to City and State historic preservation program dollars such as State-administered Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits, the SSA should target property owners *not* within the newly designated Historic District for FUNd dollars. However, for property owners that do fall within the Milwaukee Avenue Historic District, the SSA should play an advocacy role, helping to link owners with information on available preservation and restoration resources and guidance regarding how to navigate the process.

