

# SUMMARY OF MEETING

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE #2

### JEFFERSON PARK STATION AREA MASTER PLAN

July 10, 2017 | Copernicus Center

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met for the second time on Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> to review and discuss the Draft Existing Conditions Report. The TAC is one of three groups that advises the on-going development of the plan, along with the Resident Resource Group and the Business Resource Group. Representatives from the 45<sup>th</sup> Ward, RTA, Metra, Pace, CTA, and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) all participate in the committee which provides technical guidance to the project.

The July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting kicked off with a recap of the first Community Meeting. TAC members agreed that turnout was strong (with over 150 people), there was a wide variety of feedback, and many different neighborhood groups were represented. The meeting had a positive tone and was a productive way for the community to provide meaningful input for the Master Plan. Key feedback included the desire to manage change in the community while maintaining the feeling of an authentic neighborhood that respects the history and culture of Jefferson Park.

### PRESENTATION SLIDES

This meeting summary relates to presentation slides that led discussion. These slides can be found on the project website:

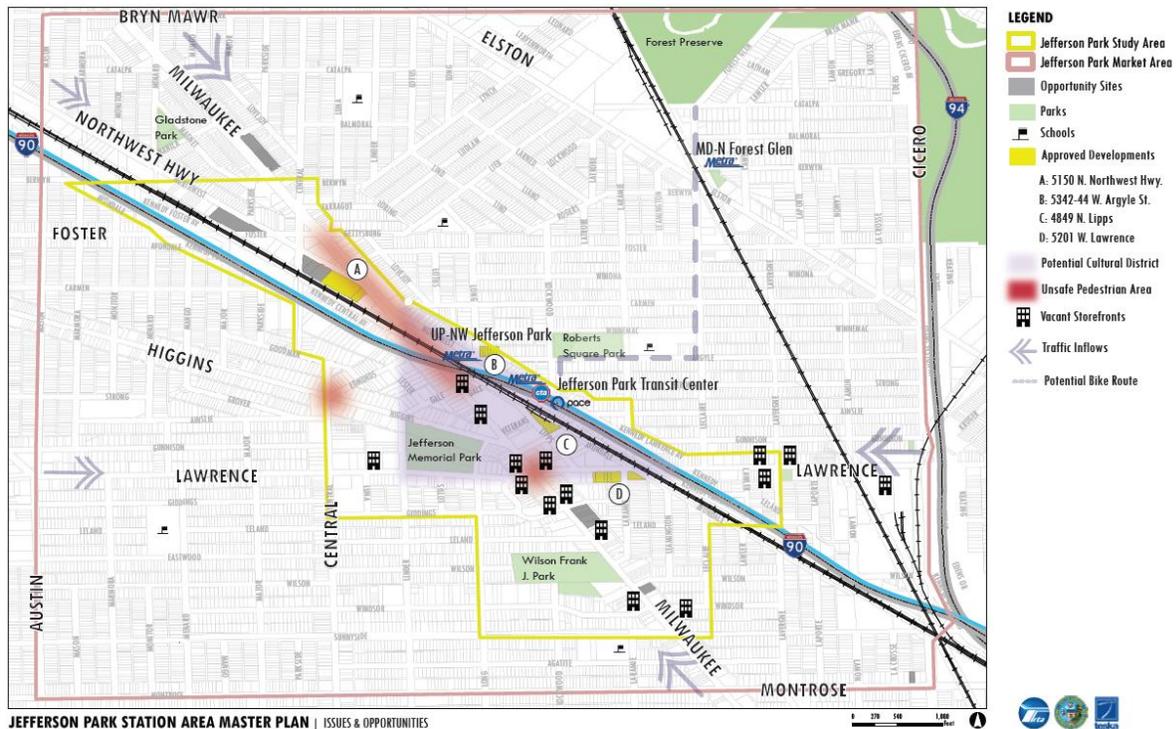
[www.accessjeffpark.org](http://www.accessjeffpark.org)

Next, the consultant team shared the final survey results. In total, 969 people answered questions about what they want to see for future improvements of the Jefferson Park Station Area. 70% of respondents live in the neighborhood, while most others are residents of the neighboring communities of Norwood Park, Forest Glen, Edgebrook, or Mayfair. Some survey highlights include:

- 84% of respondents rate transit access as either good or excellent.
  - Local shopping (77%), restaurants (70%), and walkability (49%) are the top elements rated as needing improvement.
- Almost half (48%) of respondents report that they shop in Jefferson Park at least once per week.
  - 58% of people also shop in Niles at least once per week, and other popular areas include: Harlem Irving Plaza, Edison Park/Norwood Park, Six Corners, Lincoln Square, Harwood Heights, and Park Ridge.
- The most common place for respondents to dine is Jefferson Park, with 43% reporting that they go to a neighborhood restaurant at least once per week.
  - Other dining destinations include: Niles, Edison Park/Norwood Park, Portage Park, Rosemont, Lincoln Square, Lincoln Park, Park Ridge, and Downtown.
- 67% of respondents say that pedestrian crossings are a high priority for future improvements in the station area.
  - Other high priorities are improvements to staircases and viaducts (62%), greater walkability (46%), and more landscaping and greenery (39%).

Then the group moved on to discussing preliminary issues and opportunities identified in the station area. Alderman Arena noted that the areas marked as “unsafe for pedestrians” often overlap with areas in which there is a concentration of vacant storefronts. The consultant team explained the potential opportunity of

cultivating a cultural district in the area, supported primarily by the Copernicus Center, Jefferson Memorial Park, the Gift Theatre, the Ed Paschke Art Center, the Masonic Temple, the Jefferson Park Library, and the Transit Center. Ed Bannon from the Alderman’s Office also suggested designating the Postal Annex as an opportunity site.



The Existing Conditions Report is divided into three key themes: Community Character & Land Use, Economic Development & Housing, and Transportation. The TAC discussed key points of the report and provided feedback.

- Community Character & Land Use
  - Members of the TAC noted how the report points to the variety of housing types and land uses in the Jefferson Park Market Area. For example, 41% of the housing units are renter-occupied. The TAC saw this as an important reminder to consider all elements that contribute to the character of the community and providing housing options for all stages of life, from people coming back from college wanting a place to rent, to families renting or purchasing homes, to seniors who would like to stay in the community but don’t want to take care of a single-family home anymore.
- Economic Development & Housing
  - The TAC compared statistics regarding the Jefferson Park station area with other peer business districts. One member observed that the most successful business districts are those which have a greater concentration of residents living near retail and that the household income levels of Jeff Park compared well with the other business districts, but that retail demand exceeded supply, indicating that the area could support more retail and restaurants, but people are leaving the area for other districts.
  - The Alderman said that he would like to take a closer look at demographic changes over time for the entire Market Area, as what happens in the Market Area will ultimately drive future changes in the smaller Study Area around the station.

- The TAC also talked about ways to improve building conditions as a way to spur economic development. Alderman Arena suggested that the Plan might explore ways to help local property owners get their storefronts business-ready.
- Transportation
  - The group discussed the overall question of how to make transit more appealing to residents who might not view it as a primary mode of transportation. The Plan will seek to complement the Transit Center improvements to ensure a safer and more attractive transit experience.

In the final portion of the meeting, the TAC reviewed a draft of the Plan’s mission statement and goals. One TAC member raised an important question: Is this a plan for the present or a plan for the future? This was also a point raised by residents at the Community Meeting. After some discussion, the group agreed that the Plan must focus on working with the community to strike a proper balance of change that works for both current and future residents. The mission statement and draft goals are below:

**Mission Statement**

Support Jefferson Park’s social character and economic viability through leveraging the investment in transit and transportation options at the Jefferson Park Transit Center.

**Draft Plan Goals**

- 1. Community Character and Land Use**
  - a. Reinforce the history and culture of Jefferson Park
  - b. Improve and create public spaces to increase social interaction and pride of place
  - c. Improve streetscapes and the public right-of-way to foster walkability and sense of place
  - d. Develop design guidelines to enhance the character of the community through new development and redevelopment
- 2. Economic Development and Housing**
  - a. Provide assistance to retain local and small businesses
  - b. Attract a range of businesses to serve the needs of Jefferson Park residents, employees, visitors and transit riders.
  - c. Support cultural development in Jefferson Park
  - d. Provide a range of housing options to accommodate people of all ages and at various stages of their lives.
- 3. Transportation**
  - a. Improve walkability around the Jefferson Park Transit Center and along commercial corridors
  - b. Provide welcoming and conflict-free access to the Transit Center for all users (bus, pedestrian, bike and car)
  - c. Make the street network more user-friendly near the Transit Center to enhance safety and navigation
  - d. Improve bikeability and access to Forest Preserves, bike routes and regional destinations
  - e. Strategically address parking needs to support businesses and local destinations

## NEXT STEPS

- **Community Events:** Outreach at local events, including farmers market, library, fieldhouse, and Jeff Fest
- **Next TAC Meeting:** September 11, 2017
- **Next RRG and BRG Meetings:** September 11, 2017
- **Community Meeting #2:** October 16, 2017

## MEETING ATTENDEES

### TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE | July 10, 2017

NAME	AFFILIATION
<b>AGENCIES &amp; CONSULTANT TEAM</b>	
Ald. John Arena	45 <sup>th</sup> Ward Office
Ed Bannon	45 <sup>th</sup> Ward Office
Allison Buchwach	Metra
Emily Drexler	CTA
Scott Goldstein	Teska Associates, Inc.
Benet Haller	City of Chicago, Department of Planning & Development
Brenda Racnher McGruder	CDOT
Luis Monterrubio	City of Chicago, Department of Planning & Development
Joseph Osowski	CTA
Valerie Kretchmer	Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates
Scott Presslak	Metra
Martin Sandoval	Pace
Heather Tabbert	RTA
Francesca Sallinger	Teska Associates, Inc.