



PARTNERS FOR
ROGERS PARK

PLANNING PROCESS REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Between 1986 and today, approximately 20 plans and studies were prepared for Rogers Park evaluating topics such as commercial revitalization, housing and overall community needs. The image of the community that is presented in these studies is that of an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse community. Rising levels of crime and physical decay were seen to be interconnected, while the changing housing market in Chicago has made Rogers Park a continually more attractive area to condominium conversions of rental property. Most of the studies provided brief, non-specific recommendations at the end of their analysis. Overall, most of the recommendations lacked any measureable indicators, making it difficult to evaluate progress or measure implementation.

Within this context, Partners for Rogers Park (PRP) was created. PRP began as the North of Howard Leadership Forum (NOHLF), an informal gathering whereby local non-profit leaders could come together to share information; discuss topics such as services provided; determined community strengths and challenges; while also embarking on joint initiatives.

This informal structure became formalized in 2006 and in late 2008, PRP launched a community-oriented planning process, the purpose of which was to involve the community in providing direction for PRP. Specifically, the objectives of the planning process were to:

- Involve the community in providing direction for PRP as a coalition of voluntary organizations;
- Combine neighborhood priorities with longer range community development projects by local groups and agencies;
- Create a work plan for the community whose pieces are owned by various stakeholders in the neighborhood;
- Agree on activities and measurements so the community can assess progress.

The mission of Partners for Rogers Park is to promote positive community development for current residents through open and inclusive partnerships that foster a healthy and just Rogers Park.

The team assembled to conduct the planning effort brought a Results-Based Accountability (RBA) approach to the work which starts with the ends and works backward, step by step, to the means. A key component of the RBA approach is to determine what the desired result is and then to ask a series of questions that help to frame an action plan.

RBA is intended to be a process that gets participants from talk to action quickly by posing clear, relevant questions focusing on identifying results, indicators, and performance measures so that the community as a whole can determine:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

With the RBA approach defining the overall effort, PRP began the planning process by preparing a State of the Neighborhood assessment. This assessment combined data from a variety of sources with opinions gathered through online and in-person surveys. Upon completion of the data collection and surveys, interviews were conducted with stakeholders to validate and/or clarify the information collected.

The next step was to present the information collected at a series of neighborhood meetings to get final confirmation of the starting point and to get input on the greatest concerns and priorities.

Input provided at the public meetings indicated the following values that the Roger Park community holds for itself:

- Inclusion
- Opportunity
- Diversity
- Community Participation
- Equality
- Open Leadership
- Fair Access
- Civic Engagement
- Sustainability

The results of these discussions also revealed the following priority work areas for PRP:

1. Education
2. Affordable Housing
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Economic Opportunity

Because PRP and the community determined that a willing and able “owner” would be essential to be able to implement an effective work plan, the additional priorities of Community Engagement, Health, and Public Safety will require further collaboration beyond that of which was accomplished during the planning process thus far in order to prepare a workable program of action.

In response to this input on priorities, PRP has adapted its organizational structure to provide additional committees charged with implementing work plans in the four priority areas. These work groups will execute strategies and actions intended to positively influence the following key indicators:

Education

1. High school drop out rate
2. Number of slots in pre-school and Head Start programs
3. Student educational experience as evaluated by state and national assessments
4. Number of remedial or alternative school options for completing basic education requirements
5. Number of partnerships that provide supportive pathways to higher education
6. Number of lifelong learning and enrichment programs
7. Positive relationships between children and adults
8. Participation at Annual Community Forum and Educational Fair to promote educational creativity and innovation

Affordable Housing

1. Zoning ordinances and laws
2. Quality of affordable housing stock
3. Number of affordable housing units produced and preserved

Environmental Sustainability

1. Number of “green” and environmentally-focused groups that are part of PRP
2. Size and number of green community spaces
3. Number and availability of fresh, organic food options available in Rogers Park

Economic Opportunity

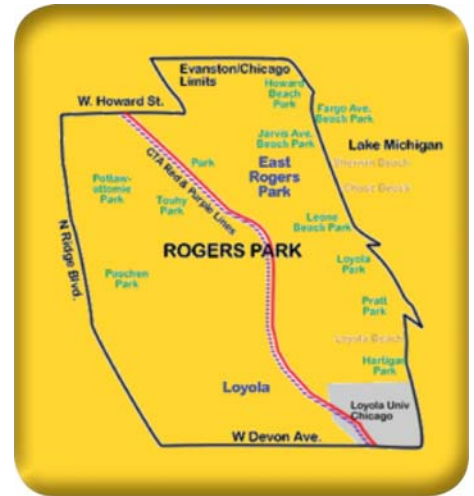
1. Diversity of business types (target market, retail/sector composition)
2. Number of businesses supporting community activities
3. Number of residents who work in community
4. Number of locally-owned businesses

Progress made toward these indicators will be reported to the community at least annually through PRP’s website and at an annual neighborhood summit during which priorities and strategies may be revisited and revised.

Overview

Rogers Park, one of only two north side Chicago communities where residents can walk to the lake without crossing a major highway, is characterized by a mix of mid-rise and single family residential homes set on tree-lined streets. While the neighborhood contains a number of business districts, it remains predominantly a residential area; in 2006, Rogers Park residents exceeded Rogers Park workers by nearly three times (65,161 residents to 22,243 workers).

The southern border of the neighborhood is Devon Avenue, home to a number of Middle Eastern cultures. Devon Avenue is lined with Middle Eastern businesses which attract visitors from all over the region. The eastern border is Lake Michigan and has a college flavor at the southeast end of the community due to the presence of Loyola University. The northern edge is the border between the cities of Chicago and Evanston (Calvary Cemetery), just a few blocks north of Howard Street. The western border is Ridge Boulevard. In the western section, the Clark Street corridor is home to a vibrant, predominantly Hispanic community. Many small Hispanic businesses line Clark Street and the area is a densely populated part of the neighborhood.



At the southeastern border of the community is Loyola University of Chicago, Lake Shore Campus--a private university founded in 1906 by the Jesuits. Approximately 40% of the undergraduate students are from outside of Illinois. The campus has 40 buildings and is a major local employer. The Loyola community contributes to the economic stability of the area.

Lake Michigan encompasses the entire eastern border of Rogers Park. There are public and private beaches along the lakefront as well as bike/pedestrian paths that are often utilized by bicyclists, roller bladders, walkers and runners.

About 88.5% of the housing stock in Rogers Park was built before 1970; 41% was built before 1940. More than 75% of the housing stock consists of rental units.

Although the presence of an art community is visible throughout the neighborhood, a number of studios have clustered on Glenwood Avenue, a small side street. Glenwood is divided into two corridors, one-way stretches on both the east and west sides of the elevated train tracks; much of the concrete embankment is painted with murals. One section still retains its original cobblestones and, combined with foliage growing on the embankment, distinguishes itself from the surrounding neighborhood.

Quite noticeable throughout Rogers Park is the elevated train system. The "L" connects Rogers Park to Downtown Chicago in about 40 minutes and can connect residents to surrounding suburbs and O'Hare Airport. Bus lines run up and down major streets with only a few exceptions. Ridge Avenue, the western border of the community, currently has no bus service in Chicago.

The diversity of Rogers Park is one of the consistently referenced strengths of the area. Residents speak more than 38 languages, coming from more than 82 countries.

Only 20 years ago, 90.9% of the neighborhood was white compared to 31.8% in 2000. While the White population in Rogers Park and the City of Chicago will decline at about the same rate by 2010, growth of the Hispanic population in Rogers Park will be more than three times that of the City of Chicago.

The Rogers Park community has been steadily growing since 1980 - and has been diversifying in terms of racial composition since that time. The White, Black, and Hispanic populations are now nearly equally represented.

Highlights of the detailed State of the Neighborhood presentation follow. A complete copy of the information can be found on the Partners for Rogers Park website.

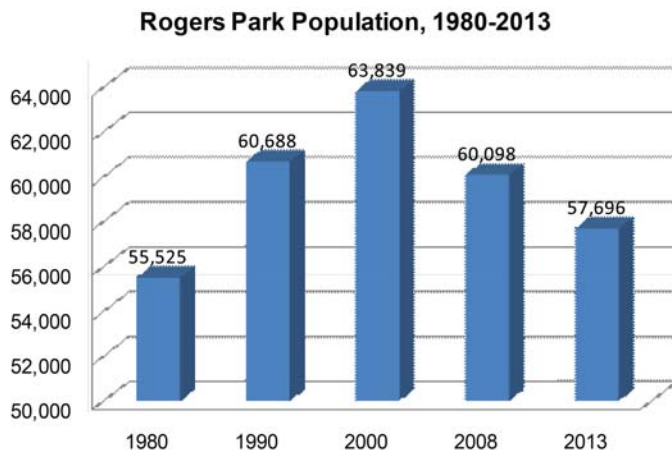
POPULATION

The number of people living in Rogers Park has been declining since 2000; however, the neighborhood is still one of the densest in the City. As elsewhere, the Rogers Park population is aging.

The number of young children is declining slightly, but the numbers of youth and young adults aged 12 to 24 is increasing. The population aged 45 to 64 is increasing at the greatest rate.

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Population Density throughout Chicago, 2010 (persons/sq. mile)

Rogers Park 35,871

Uptown 21,088

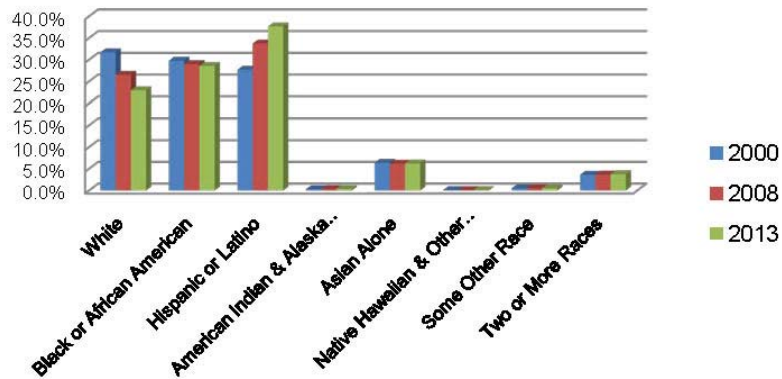
Edgewater 28.173

Albany Park 23.711

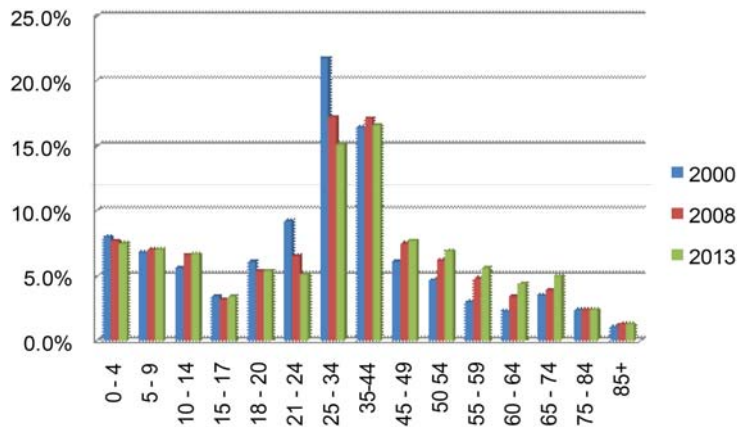
Hyde Park 3,773

City of Chicago 12,625

Rogers Park Population by Race



Rogers Park Population by Age



Rogers Park Community Overview, 1980-2010	1980	1990	2000	2005 (estimates)	2010 (projections)
Population	55,525	60,378	63,484	65,161	66,362
% White	77	55	46	43	39
% Black	9	27	30	30	31
% Hispanic	12	20	28	33	38
% Elderly (age 65+)	15	9	7	7	7
% College Education	31	34	32	20	21
Median Family Income	\$18,784	\$27,330	\$34,728	\$53,001	\$65,430
% Owner Occupied	13.7	15	18	19	19
% Vacant Housing	7	9	7	6	5
Median House Value	\$66,100	\$108,400	\$180,569	\$149,485	\$150,616
% in Same Place of Residence for 5 Years		15	28	20	53
% Children (age 0-17) Living Below Poverty Line		28	25	46	47
% Employed in Managerial/Professional Specialties	29	29	34	35	37
% Unemployed	6	8	8	7	7
% Families Headed by Females with Children Under 18	10	18	18	9	9
% of Enrolled Students Attending Private Schools	31	16	12	15	14

HOUSING

Rogers Park is predominantly a rental housing marketplace with more than 80% of the housing units being renter occupied. In comparison, the City as a whole is more evenly split with rental units comprising roughly 55% and owner occupied 45% of the housing stock. Slightly more than 40% of the housing stock was built in 1939 or earlier. Slightly less than 40% was built between 1960 and 1940.

Home loans in Rogers Park have been somewhat volatile and Whites have been the predominant home buyer. As elsewhere, the last two years have brought increasing numbers of foreclosures to Rogers Park.

Foreclosures in Rogers Park grew by more than 157% between 2007 and 2008. The City of Chicago experienced a 48.4% change during the same time period.

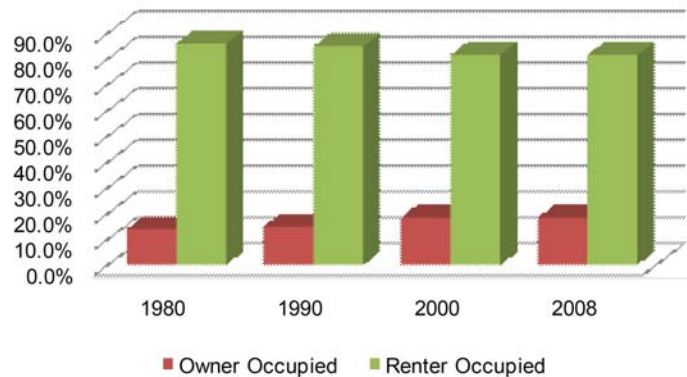
Rogers Park had the 29th highest rate of foreclosure increases of the 77 City of Chicago Community Areas.

In Rogers Park, the 25.5 percent small building foreclosure rate could impact anywhere between 28 and 168 units (depending on whether the buildings were 2-unit or 6-unit structures).

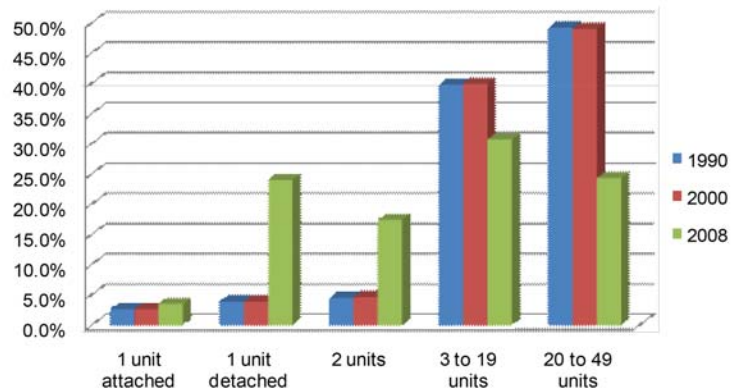
Estimates indicate that each conventional foreclosure within 1/8 of a mile of a single-family home results in between a 0.9 and 1.236 percent decline in value.

Given a median housing value of \$149,485, the potential loss of home value could range from \$1,345 to \$1,700. whether the buildings were 2-unit or 6-unit structures).

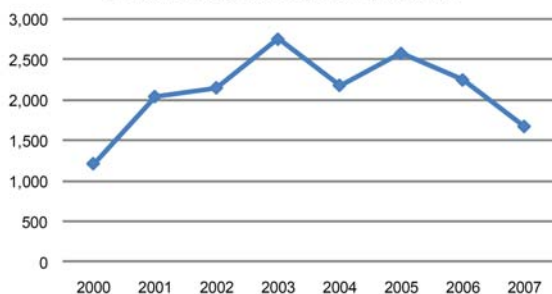
Rogers Park Housing Occupancy, 1980-2008



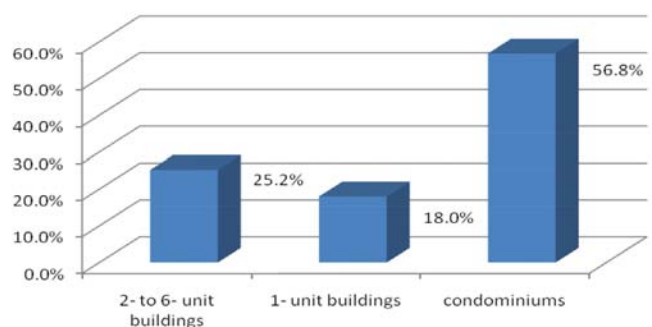
Rogers Park Housing by Units in Structure



Total Housing Lending in Rogers Park

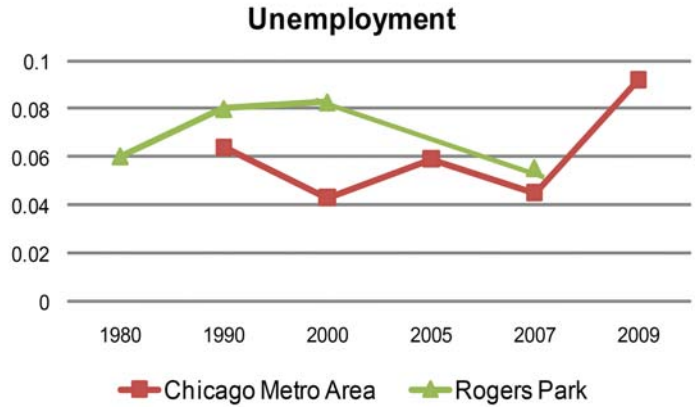


Rogers Park Foreclosures by Type, 2007



EMPLOYMENT

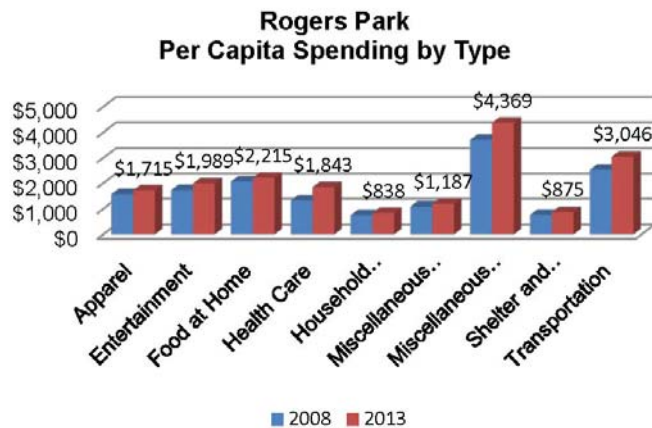
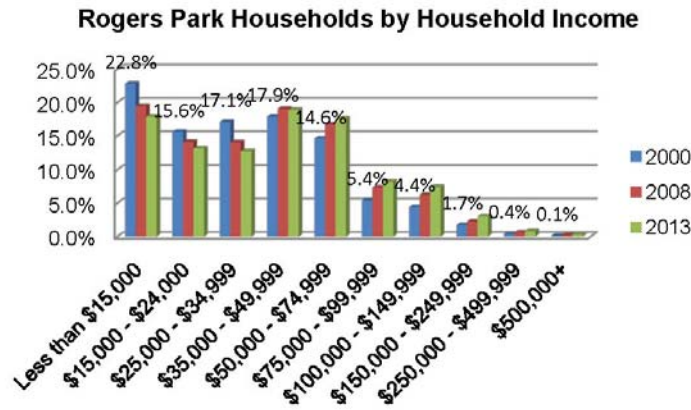
Educational services represent the largest employment section within Rogers Park, due in large part to the presence of Loyola University. This predominance of educational jobs could account for a relatively steady unemployment rate (in comparison to the City overall).



INCOME AND SPENDING

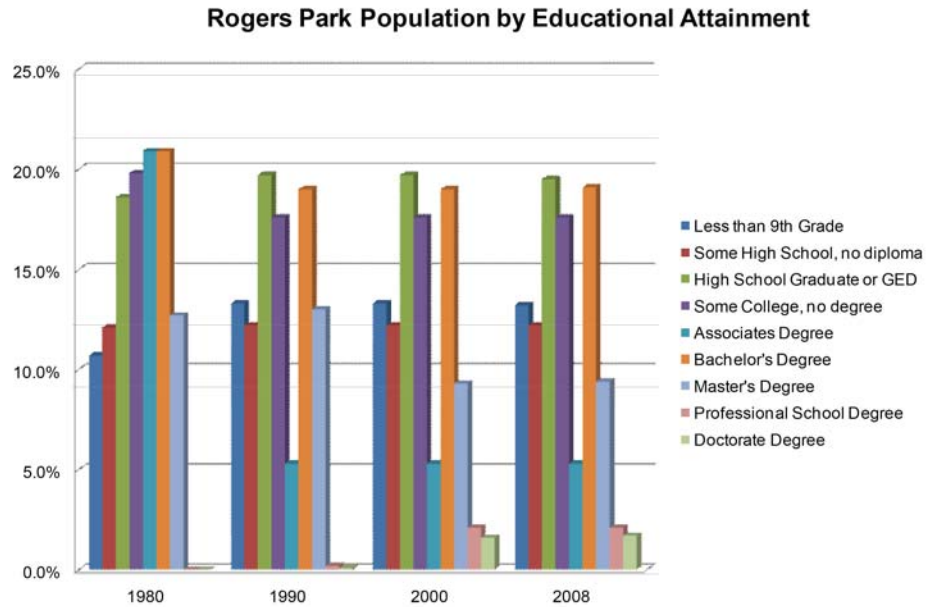
The proportion of households at the lowest end of the income spectrum has been declining; however, Rogers Park median household income is still nearly \$20,000 lower than that of the City overall.

Interestingly, for all its transit resources, transportation costs are the second highest household expense - nearly four times that of shelter.



EDUCATION

Fewer than 20 percent of Rogers Park residents have a high school degree. However, the percentage of high school drop outs has been declining from a high of 17 percent in 2005. By 2007, it was below seven percent.



COMMUNITY INPUT

Additional information beyond the neighborhood data was collected in order to get resident and stakeholder opinions about conditions and priorities. Mechanisms used to gather this information included:

- Survey
- Stakeholder interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Community “town hall” meetings

Survey Results

Hard copy and electronic versions (in both English and Spanish) of the same survey were distributed throughout the community. There were a total of 1,397 responses to these survey instruments; 486 of the respondents were electronic using an online survey website and 911 were the result of in-person/hard copy distribution. About 16 percent (224 surveys) were Spanish-speaking respondents. Key questions asked on the survey included:

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being most favorable and 5 being most unfavorable)

- What is your overall opinion of Rogers Park as a neighborhood?
- In general, how do you feel about the Rogers Park community today as compared to two years ago?
- In your opinion, how does the future look for Rogers Park?

Respondents were also asked to provide input on:

- How they feel efforts in the certain areas improved or declined over the last 5 years.
- Their top three neighborhood concerns.

Respondents who identified themselves as residents of Rogers Park were also asked:

- What their main reason for living in Rogers Park is?
- How they would rate their quality of life in the neighborhood?
- If they intend to be living in Rogers Park in the next 5 years?

Tables detailing the responses from the surveys follow. In general, input revealed a majority of respondents:

- Have an overall favorable opinion of the neighborhood.
- Feel more positive about Rogers Park than two years ago.
- Feel the number is going to get better in the future.
- Live in Rogers Park
- Own their own home

A slight majority of Rogers Park resident respondents (43 percent) rated their quality of life as outstanding; 31 percent rated it as needing improvement.

Top concerns of all neighborhood respondents were:

- Affordable housing
- Public safety
- Quality of public schools
- Economic development

More details on the survey respondents and results are included in the Appendix.

Interview/Focus Group Highlights

About two dozen interviews and focus group discussions with a variety of stakeholders were held during the planning process. Key questions asked and a summary of responses are provided below.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings were held in order to present the “State of the Neighborhood” data and to get additional input on priorities. Participants were presented with the goal, or result, shown at right that was the motivating factor for PRP to undertake the planning process. This result was identified by PRP because it is closely aligned with the mission of the coalition.

To introduce and reinforce the results-based accountability process, participants were asked the following series of questions, based on that desired result:

- What does a “healthy” and “just” Rogers Park mean to you?
- What would it take to achieve a “healthy” and “just” Rogers Park?
- What would the result look like?
- What can you do to help achieve a “healthy” and “just” Rogers Park?

Input on what “healthy” and “just” means to participants indicated that the residents of Rogers Park value:

- Inclusion
- Opportunity
- Diversity
- Community Participation
- Equality
- Open Leadership
- Fair Access
- Civic Engagement
- Sustainability

Further discussion at the public meetings provided the following information on what the result would look like (or how it would be experienced) if it were to be achieved:

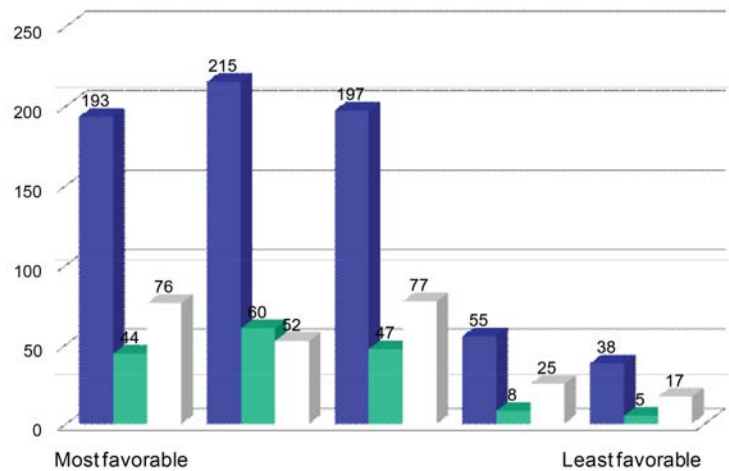
- Rogers Park would be known for respectful engagement and active community participation.
- Open leadership would foster strong civic engagement and everyone would have a voice in decision-making.

- Learners of all ages would have access to quality educational opportunities that prepare them for success in life.
- Students in schools would receive quality educations that prepare them for success in life.
- Rogers Park would overcome gender, racial, and economic barriers so that all residents shared the wealth of information, economic opportunity, and equal rights.
- Everyone would have a safe, affordable place to live and healthcare.
- A more positive police presence would support community engagement and facilitate a violence-free, safe place to live where residents routinely walk, bike, and interact with one another on the streets.
- Rogers Park's active community life would be supported by a network of open green spaces and community services that provide safe and welcoming places to congregate.
- Sustainability of the community would be supported through recycling and other environmental efforts as well as a balance of businesses that keep the economy local so that it is self-contained.

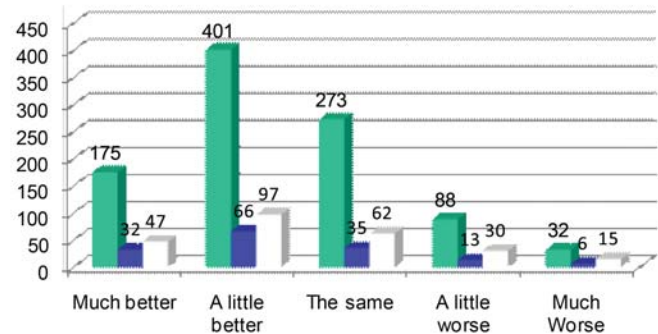
Following the public meetings- PRP began organizing itself to focus on the priority areas identified through the public involvement process:

- Education
- Affordable Housing
- Environmental Sustainability
- Economic Opportunity

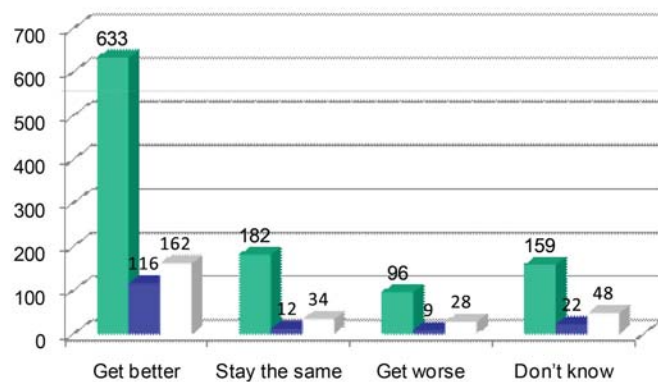
Overall Opinion of the Neighborhood



Feelings About Neighborhood Compared to 2 Years Ago



Feelings About Future of Rogers Park



Work groups were created that brought together those interested - residents and organizational stakeholders - in one of the four topic areas/ These groups were charged with framing their discussions in the Results-Accountability Framework in order to answer the following questions or gather the following information:

- How will we know if we are better off? - Key Indicators
- What works to achieve the result? – Strategies
- What will we, as a group and individuals, do? - Action Plan
- Who has a role to play in achieving the result? - Lead Organizations and Partners

Because PRP and the community agreed that no work plan would be prepared without a willing and able “owner” for the tasks at hand, the additional priorities of Community Engagement, Health, and Public Safety will require further collaboration beyond that of which was accomplished during the planning process thus far in order to prepare a workable program of action.

In response to this input on priorities, PRP has adapted its organizational structure to provide additional committees charged with implementing work plans in the four priority areas. These work groups will execute strategies and actions intended to positively influence the following key indicators described below.

Environmental Sustainability

- Number of “green” and environmentally-focused groups that are part of PRP
- Size and number of green community spaces
- Number and availability of fresh, organic food options available in Rogers Park

Economic Opportunity

- Diversity of business types (target market, retail/sector composition)
- Number of businesses supporting community activities
- Number of residents who work in community
- Number of locally-owned businesses

Stakeholder Interview/Focus Group Key Question	Recurring Responses (more than one person gave this answer)	Other Responses
What concerns are you hearing from your constituents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Affordable housing • Gang activity • Perception of crime • Cleanliness and litter • Bloggers 	After school programs, run-down housing, low parental involvement, lack of mental health resources, undocumented immigrants stay “under the radar”, unemployment, senior housing
What do you consider to be Rogers Park’s most significant asset/strengths— those things that make the community a desirable place to live, work and play?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity • Lakefront access • Transportation • Good sense of community • Engaged residents that care • Many organizations with well-developed social anchors; rich in non-profits • “High culture”—arts, theater, etc. 	Good place to open a business because there is not a lot of competition, business-oriented SSA’s support, youth programming, Rogers Park is a “way” station for immigrants, “intragrants”, and students, neighborhood improvement, housing stock, affordable, leadership
What do you consider to be the most significant issues or problems that threaten the ability of the neighborhood to sustain these assets/strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Gang activity • Perception of crime • Lack of “balanced development” • Bloggers • Lack of communication between organizations • Bad physical planning 	Economic downtown, quality of education and (lack of) attention to schools, negative street presence, vacancies, extension of Lake Shore Drive, new development, lack of resources for immigrants, blighted buildings, neighborhood reputation
PRP’s mission is to promote positive community development for current residents through open and inclusive partnerships that fosters a healthy and just Rogers Park... tell us how such an organization could support and your work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease vacant storefronts and dark areas of the neighborhood • Promote economic development • Increase walking traffic • Make sure that residents, businesses, and agencies are all represented at the table • Welcome and communicate with immigrant groups • Help spread the word of community happenings • Generate a master calendar • Partner for events • Increase civic engagement • Facilitate organizational collaboration • Organize property managers meetings 	
What type of work or projects would you like to see an organization like PRP—or someone— undertake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill storefronts with thriving businesses • Build relationships with immigrant groups • Bring more resources to the neighborhood • Create a place for teenagers to hang out • Create a community forum • Host a health care provider forum • Unite organizations • Share information and resources • Host summertime programming • Clean up the neighborhood 	

Stakeholder Interview/Focus Group Key Question	Recurring Responses (more than one person gave this answer)	Other Responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate with the Chicago Park District• Engage in high-profile projects like public safety, the Rogers Park image, etc.• Start projects that focus more on the place, not the people, so that when people come to Rogers Park they want to stay• Identify one collaborative issue• Facilitate or create a service providers group• Create a planning process	

ACTION PLAN | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Work Group
Key Indicators of Progress
1. Diversity of business types (target market, retail/sector composition).
2. Number of businesses supporting community activities.
3. Number of residents who work in the community.
4. Number of locally-owned businesses.

Strategies to Achieve the Progress
1. Increase number and stability of local businesses through access to incentives, marketing, training opportunities and access to credit and capital.
2. Promote a “Rogers Park Give Back” campaign that encourages RP businesses to donate/support local initiatives, nonprofits, events, etc.
3. Increase number of residents employed.
4. Increase and/or provide access to training and education to further develop a skilled and competitive workforce.
5. Increase the number of schools, churches, business and organizations that teach, promote, and pursue recycling, reuse, air quality, water conservation and issues related to community and personal health.
6. Increase teaching and re-skilling related to gardening, cooking, food preservation, canning, freezing, biking, energy consumption, urban growing, etc.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP					
Action	Year			Lead Organization	Partners/Collaborators
	1	2	3		
Connect employers and employees through centralized neighborhood communication tools. <i>Performance Measures: Develop frequently updated list of employers that are seeking employees; work with partners to develop centralized neighborhood communication tools such as a job board, electronic site, etc.</i>		X	X	Howard Area Community Center (HACC)	Housing Opportunities for Women (HOW), Rogers Park Business Alliance
Provide information to Rogers Park businesses about the availability of work study students. <i>Performance Measures: Meet with Loyola University, gain training on program parameters, host informational session for local employers, distribute information about program through flyers and/or electronically, track number of businesses that participate and number of students hired.</i>	X	X	X	Rogers Park Business Alliance	Loyola University

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP

Action	Year			Lead Organization	Partners/Collaborators
	1	2	3		
<p>Recruit, retain and develop businesses that meet the needs of the community.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Design and produce business attraction piece and update as needed; personally visit and /or meet with 15 new business prospects per year; host prospect tours; provide needed support services for business retention of desired businesses.</i></p>	X	X	X	Rogers Park Business Alliance	49 th Ward Alderman's Office
<p>Develop and maintain a community bulletin board or other communication tool that lists workforce skills training in or near the neighborhood.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Survey existing workforce training sites and/organizations; develop list of training offered; update regularly; develop intra-organizational and external methods of communication.</i></p>		X	X	HACC	HOW
<p>Support and strengthen existing neighborhood-serving business community through rezoning, mapping and commercial corridor planning efforts.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Re-evaluate existing commercial zoning against desired uses and recommend changes as needed; map zoning, business types, building conditions, property/business owner information and other information and data as needed; update regularly; complete commercial plans for Sheridan Road, Western Avenue and Clark Street.</i></p>	X	X	X	Rogers Park Business Alliance	49 th Ward Alderman's Office
<p>Canvass local employers to identify local hiring needs.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Develop employer survey; visit all businesses in Rogers Park; develop database with needs; determine how and when database will be updated and accessed/shared with other organizations and jobseekers</i></p>		X	X	HOW	HACC, Rogers Park Business Alliance

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP					
Action	Year			Lead Organization	Partners/Collaborators
	1	2	3		
<p>Organize a “Rogers Park Give Back” campaign.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Create expectation that all businesses in the Rogers Park community will give back to the community in which they earn profits by supporting local initiatives, groups, organizations, events, etc; survey all Rogers Park businesses to determine level of local support; encourage 100% “Give Back” participation.</i></p>		X		Rogers Park Business Alliance	49 th Ward Alderman’s Office
<p>Secure ongoing funding for incentives for existing and new businesses (façade, build-out, signage, etc.).</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Continue providing rebate funding through SSA programs and SBIF for façade projects that improve signage, windows, façade, etc.</i></p>	X	X	X	Rogers Park Business Alliance	SSA #19, SSA #24, 49 th Ward Alderman’s Office
<p>Promote a Rogers Park “buy local” initiative.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures: Continue membership in “Local First Chicago”; encourage locally-owned and independent businesses to join “Local First”; promote local spending in locally-owned and independent stores in Rogers Park through events, newsletter articles, web postings, social media, etc.</i></p>	X	X	X	Rogers Park Business Alliance	SSA #19, SSA #24, Local First Chicago