



# Little Village

QUALITY-OF-LIFE PLAN

Family • Culture • Community

## Steering Committee

We acknowledge and thank the individuals and organizations that participated in the Quality-of-Life Plan Steering Committee, which met regularly throughout the process.

Patricia Aguilar, Parent Leader, Rosario Castellanos Elementary School  
Juana Ballesteros, Alivio Medical Center  
Sean Bolger, Home Run Inn  
Rob Castaneda, Beyond the Ball  
Matt DeMateo, New Life Community Church  
Fanny Diego-Alvarez, Enlace Chicago  
Nilda Esparza, Little Village Chamber of Commerce  
Adrian Esquivel, Enlace Chicago  
Jovita Flores, Healthy School Campaign  
Cristina Garcia, Erie Neighborhood House  
Maria Rocio Garcia, Little Village Lawndale High School Alumni  
Julio Guerrero, The Resurrection Project  
Luis Gutierrez, Latinos Progresando  
Alhelí Herrera, Enlace Chicago  
Hermilo Hinojosa, General Woods and Little Village Boys & Girls Club  
Lillian Lazu, Principal, Little Village Academy

Rocky Lopez, Enlace Chicago Board  
Maria Martinez, Little Village Yoga Instructor  
Uriel Montoya, Enlace Chicago  
Ernesto Morales, Telpochcalli Community Education Project  
Andrea Muñoz, Jorge Prieto Health Center  
Ricardo Muñoz, 22nd Ward Alderman  
Katya Nuques, Enlace Chicago  
Evelyn Rodriguez, Erie Neighborhood House  
Michael D. Rodríguez, Enlace Chicago  
Jaime Roth, Central States SER  
Vanessa Sanchez, Yollocalli Arts Reach  
Jim Sifuentes, St. Anthony Hospital  
Rosamaria Sosa, Good Shepherd Congregational Leader  
Michel Tilapa, Beyond the Ball  
Maria Velazquez, Telpochcalli Community Education Project  
Steve Zrike, West Side Network Chief, Chicago Public Schools



# Vision

As we plan our future in Little Village, we value our **family, culture and community**. Our vision is a community that is educated, peaceful, united, clean, and prosperous.

## Quality-of-Life Plan Summary

The community engagement process created a plan with eight topic areas, each with specific goals.



### A. Arts & Culture

- A.1 Support and encourage collaboration among local artists
- A.2 Strengthen community events and programs focused on arts and culture
- A.3 Create and expand temporary and long-term spaces for arts and culture



### B. Economic Development

- B.1 Increase resources for entrepreneurs
- B.2 Support branding and beautification efforts
- B.3 Increase workforce development programs and job opportunities



### C. Education

- C.1 Strengthen and expand early childhood opportunities
- C.2 Support children in elementary and middle school
- C.3 Support youth in high school, in college and in their career goals
- C.4 Enhance Adult Education



### D. Green Space & Recreation

- D.1 Maintain, support, and enhance existing green and recreational spaces
- D.2 Develop new recreational spaces
- D.3 Increase community impact through improved programming



### E. Health

- E.1 Improve access to quality healthcare for the entire community
- E.2 Strengthen preventive health measures for residents
- E.3 Reduce chronic illnesses



### F. Housing

- F.1 Increase sustainable home ownership and reduce foreclosures
- F.2 Increase the affordability and quality of rental housing
- F.3 Develop new housing options for a diverse range of incomes



### G. Immigration

- G.1 Promote leadership development around immigration issues
- G.2 Strengthen the capacity of existing service providers and encourage partnerships to attract additional resources
- G.3 Provide accurate and timely immigration information to the community



### H. Safety

- H.1 Continue to develop violence prevention programs for youth and families
- H.2 Enhance and broaden educational opportunities for youth
- H.3 Increase community engagement and leadership around safety issues
- H.4 Strengthen the community and police relationship
- H.5 Create a safer and cleaner physical environment

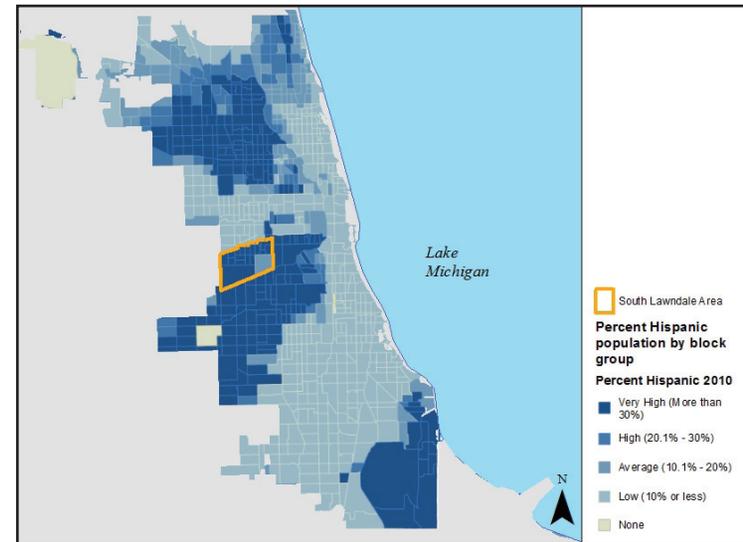
## Our Community

In 2003, LISC Chicago's New Communities Program (NCP), funded by the The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, presented an opportunity to conduct comprehensive community planning in Little Village. Enlace Chicago (then Little Village Community Development Corporation) worked with 150 community residents and partner organizations to craft a quality-of-life plan to guide neighborhood improvements. That plan was published in 2005 and many organizations have since participated in its implementation.

**The principal port-of-entry for Mexican immigrants to the Midwest, Little Village is 82 percent Latino.** The mix of multiple generations of Mexican-Americans living, working, and shopping together creates a unique culture in Little Village that blends traditions brought from Mexico with new traditions unique to Chicago. Forty-seven percent of residents are foreign born; 53 percent are native born; and 31 percent are not citizens. This unique community characteristic impacts the culture, institutions, systems relationships, political representation, and economy of the community. Little Village represents a block of Latino voting power and has a powerful history of political struggle, being home to some of the first Mexican-American elected officials in the state of Illinois.

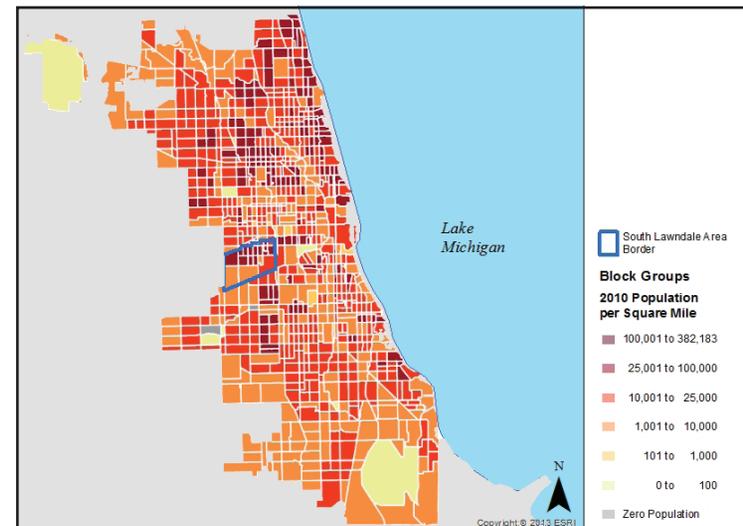
**Little Village is one of the densest communities in Chicago.** With nearly 80,000 residents in an area less than five square miles, Little Village has more than 17,000 people living per square mile. This adds to the community's vibrancy and prosperity, especially the service and business sectors, and leaves few housing or business vacancies. However, it can also lead to crowding within housing structures, individual households, and schools. The density also causes limitations to new construction and development of green space.

Chicago Hispanic or Latino Population by Census Block



Little Village is 82 percent Latino.

City of Chicago Population Density



Little Village has more than 17,000 people living per square mile.

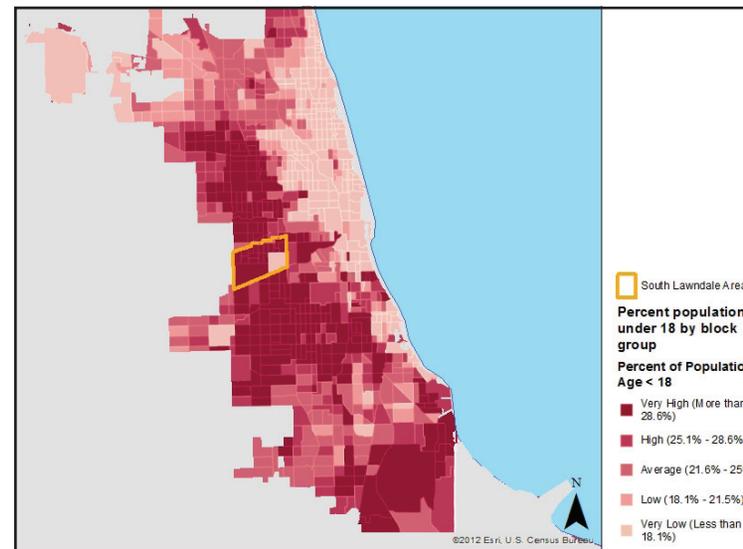
**Little Village has a very young population.** Thirty percent of the Little Village community is under the age of 18. Ten percent is under the age of five. Family-oriented culture is a defining characteristic. The young population creates a high demand for schools, services, and park space. Developing community resources for this young population creates unique opportunities and challenges.

**Educational attainment levels are below average.** Only 24 percent of Little Village residents hold a high school diploma or its equivalent, and only 10 percent have college experience. Five percent hold a four-year degree and less than one percent hold an advanced degree. This creates significant barriers to job attainment and income growth. Many parents are unable to provide homework help at home. Others have difficulty helping their children navigate the education system, especially college entrance. Addressing these long-standing educational inequalities by providing accessible educational opportunities to adult learners, and culturally/language competent family support systems within schools, is vital for the success of youth and adults.

**The average household income is \$33,668, about 60 percent of the state average.** Thirty-three percent of residents live below the poverty level. With unemployment at 12 percent, just 1 percent higher than the rest of the city, it is clear that many families are working and yet still living in poverty. Undocumented community members do not have access to many types of employment, and are vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and low wages. Employment abuse is rampant. Temp agencies that link community members to manufacturing employers have actively engaged in scams and wage theft. Additionally, many residents work as day laborers with little to no protections. Many are paid below the minimum wage. Low levels of educational attainment also affect job attainment and income growth.

**More than 1,800 employers create 30,000 jobs in the neighborhood trade area.** Many of these employ community residents. The health-care sector employs 11,046 people. Other service jobs employ 7,061. Retail, manufacturing, and wholesale trade sectors total 8,612 employees combined. The high concentration of local employers also brings residents of other neighborhoods into Little Village, providing potential customers for local businesses.

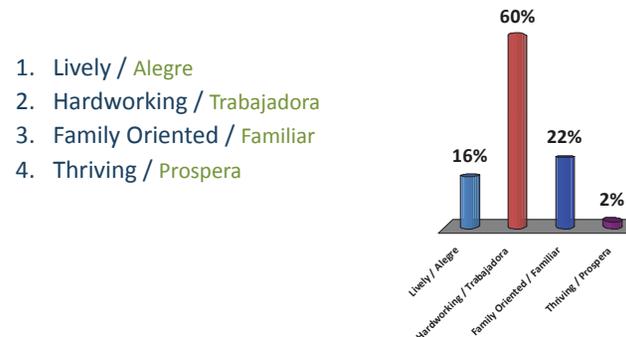
Chicago Population Under 18 Years by Census Block



30 Percent of the Little Village community is under the age of 18.

WHAT WORD BEST DESCRIBES LITTLE VILLAGE?

¿QUÉ PALABRA DESCRIBE A LA VILLITA?



When asked what best describes Little Village Public Meeting participants overwhelmingly chose Hardworking

**Powerful networks of service providers and organizers are working to improve Little Village.** Little Village is home to many nonprofit community organizations, health clinics, and institutions that provide services and organize around community issues. There are also a number of collaborative bodies that build capacity and coordinate activities. These include:

Violence Prevention Collaborative was formed in 2001 by committed organizations and individuals who work toward a just and peaceful community through organizing, advocating, and coordinating programs to reduce violence and address issues of economic and social justice.

Roots to Wellness was convened in 2009 to create a space for providers to come together and be able to advocate, inform, and increase access to mental health services for residents of Little Village and surrounding areas.

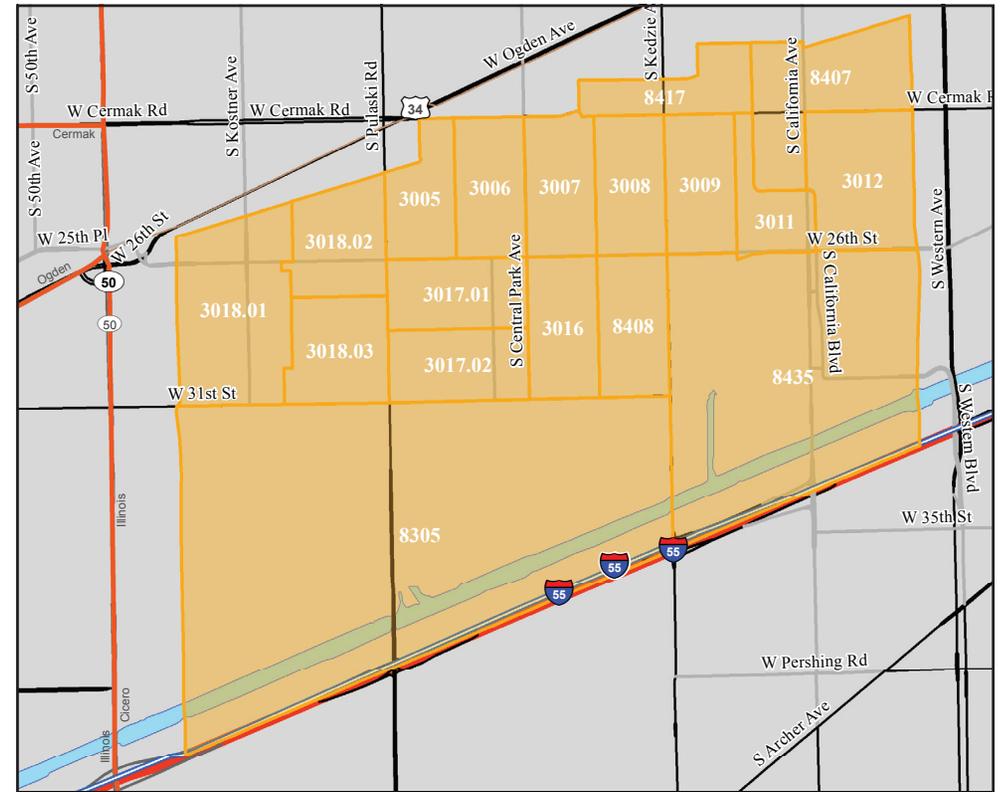
Hope Response Coalition, founded in 2010, is a network of organizations that address basic needs provision. Its mission is to promote healthy families and to improve the ability of member agencies to build strong communities.

Neighborhood Sports Little Village was formed in 2010 to unify youth sports advocates and providers and to strengthen the impact of sports based youth development programming.

Marshall Square Resource Network was formed to strengthen the capacity of organizations in Marshall Square (often called East Little Village), bounded by Kedzie Avenue to Western Avenue, and 26th Street to 16th Street.

These collaborations, along with the wealth of organizations that make up their membership, allow for referrals and distribution of resources, cross training opportunities, resource development, common advocacy agendas, and community-wide campaigns.

Ten years ago, Little Village was in need of many basic resources. Now, with many more resources in the community, the need is for increased collaboration, coordination, and innovation to maximize the impact of resources and sustain them.



South Lawndale Community Area Map.



**Sources:**

- American Community Survey 2006 to 2010 (5-Year Estimates), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau
- US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts
- <http://www.wbez.org/blogs/john-r-schmidt/2013-03/south-lawndale-aka-little-village-105892>
- Special Service Area #25 Market Analysis and Economic Development Plan, December 4th 2012. Teska Associates, Inc. and Axia Development

## Our Story

In 2003, LISC Chicago's New Communities Program (NCP), funded by the MacArthur Foundation, presented an opportunity to conduct comprehensive community planning in Little Village. Enlace Chicago (then Little Village Community Development Corporation) worked with 150 community residents and partner organizations to craft a quality-of-life plan to guide neighborhood improvements. That plan was published in 2005 and many organizations have since participated in its implementation.

Little Village embarked in 2013 on a second planning process to define transformative ideas for the next five to 10 years. This 2013 plan reflects a community with more resources, stronger organizations, more experience, and deeper connections than before. The 2013 process worked to engage and encourage meaningful, constant, and inclusive participation through public meetings, focus groups, one-on-one meetings, and a broad Steering Committee.

In February 2013, the Quality-of-Life Plan Steering Committee had its first meeting at New Life Community Church. This group was made up of nearly 40 community leaders including residents, youth, church leaders, school principals, business owners, and agency staff and board members. The Steering Committee, representing 22 community agencies and institutions, was charged with leading the planning process and approval of the document itself. It met regularly throughout the process.

Wanting a plan that truly represented the aspirations, challenges, and ideas of the community, a large public meeting was organized for March 7th. More than 325 community members, and more than 40 organizations, gathered at Little Village Academy for the bilingual meeting, at which participants worked individually and in small groups to develop the vision and topic areas of this plan.

To inform a first draft of goals and strategies, focus groups were organized to involve 150 individuals representing 58 agencies, businesses, and institutions. The Education focus group had over 60 participants. This diverse and powerful group included 11 principals or assistant principals, teachers, out-of-school-time providers, students, child care workers, adult educators, elected officials, and CPS network officers. This team of stakeholders developed a plan for lifelong education from infancy to adults. Each focus group was a powerful collaboration that strengthened community networks, identified priorities, and began to set the structure for implementation of this plan.



March 7th 2013 Quality-of-Life Public Meeting at Little Village Academy.

Fifteen one-on-one meetings with community leaders helped surface other ideas not discussed in the larger groups, such as domestic violence. They also provided deeper insight and history into specific topics and plans.

The second public meeting, on April 13, involved 135 community residents and 29 agencies in development of the goals and strategies in each topic area. A special Youth Only meeting was held concurrently to get input from more than 30 youth. Residents and youth ended the meeting by sharing their ideas and voting on priorities.

The Steering Committee, along with community members, continued to work with the content of the plan to maximize its impact and feasibility, and to ensure that the 2013 Plan truly reflected the community, identified all necessary partners, and included a framework for implementation.

The plan was approved by the Steering Committee and ratified by the community on June 29, 2013.

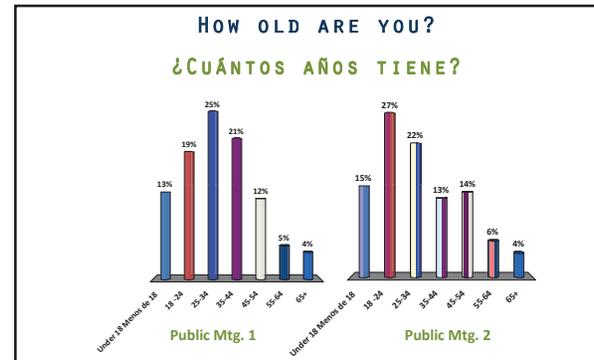
More than 650 people, and over 80 agencies and institutions, helped create this plan. Little Village is a well-connected and engaged community that is deeply invested in defining its own future and creating a higher quality of life for all of its constituents, and for the generations to come.



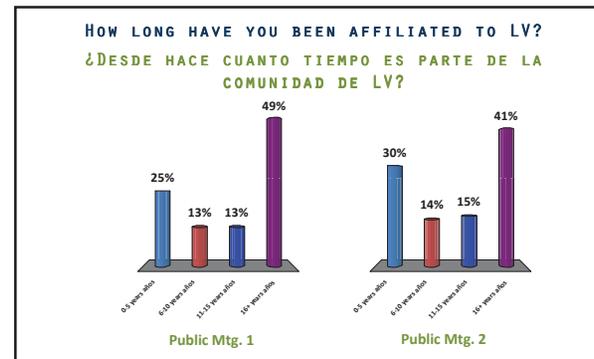
April 13th 2013 Quality-of Life Public Meeting at Francisco Madero Middle School.



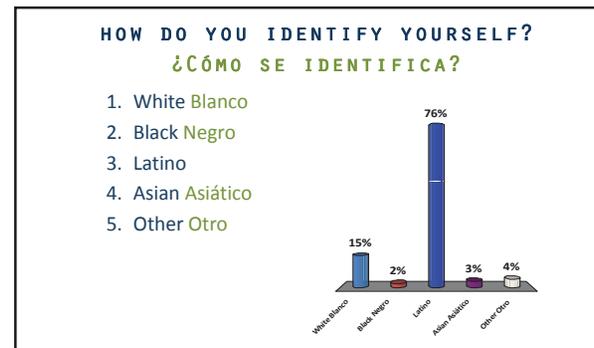
**Public Meeting participants used key pad voting to provide important information and feedback**



A variety of age groups participated in Quality-of-Life planning.



The majority of Quality-of-Life participants have been in the community for more than 16 years.



The majority of Quality-of-Life participants are Latino.

## Participating Organizations

We acknowledge and thank the many organizations and institutions that participated and gave valuable feedback to the Quality-of-Life Plan.

Access Living  
Active Transportation Alliance  
After School Matters  
Amor De Dios Church  
Beyond the Ball  
Cafe Catedral  
Cambiando Vidas  
Catholic Charities  
CeaseFire  
Central States SER  
Chicago Community and Workers' Rights  
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Chicago Police Department, 10th District  
Chicago Youth Boxing Club  
Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children  
Corkery Elementary School  
Dulcelandia  
Eli Whitney Elementary School  
Enlace Chicago  
Erie Neighborhood House  
Esperanza Health Centers  
Farragut Career Academy  
Francisco Madero Middle School  
Gads Hill Center  
GEAR UP  
Good Shepherd Church  
Hammond Elementary School

Healthy Schools Campaign  
Hispanic Housing Development Corporation  
Home Run Inn  
Illinois State University  
Infinity High School  
JGMA: Juan Gabriel Moreno Architects  
Jorge Prieto Health Center  
Latinos Progresando  
La Villita Community Church  
Little Village Academy  
Little Village Chamber of Commerce  
Little Village Environmental Justice Organization  
Live Strong  
Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago  
Mercy Housing Lakefront  
Moreno's Liquors  
MRC Polymers  
Mt. Sinai Hospital  
New Life Community Church  
Office of Alderman Ricardo Muñoz  
Office of Cook County Commissioner Jesús "Chuy" García  
Office of State Senator Martin Sandoval  
Ortiz de Dominguez School  
Paderewski Elementary School  
Park Advisory Council – Shedd, Miami, Limas  
Project Vida  
Prosper Skate Shop

Rosario Castellanos Elementary School  
Saucedo Elementary Scholastic Academy  
Scientists for Tomorrow  
Small Parks Advisory Council  
Social Justice High School  
Son Chiquitos  
Special Service Area #25  
St. Agnes Church  
St. Anthony Hospital  
St. Augustine College  
Student Conservation Alliance  
Taller de José  
Teatro Americana  
Telpochcalli Community Education Project  
The General Woods &  
Little Village Boys and Girls Club  
The Resurrection Project  
The Tolton Center  
UIC School of Public Health  
Universidad Popular  
University of Chicago  
Villapalooza  
Villarte  
World Language High School  
Yollocalli Arts Reach

The Little Village quality-of-life planning process was convened by:  
[Enlace Chicago](#)

inclusive universal creativity solidarity organization beautiful experience joy arts voice  
 motivation inspiration proud theater colors music cathartic dreams  
 message stories murals community  
 sculpture nationalities schools peace diversity  
 media engagement knowledge team work careers diverse fun  
 family development support safe  
 telling stories dance historically history compelling therapeutic opportunity  
 openness performance unity  
 laughter infrastructure



## Overview

**Culture is a part of all aspects of life in Little Village,** most vividly in the developing arts movement. Arts, music, and film festivals have brought new attention to the artistic skill and passion of the community. Murals, skillful graffiti compositions, and mosaics transform spaces and add vibrancy to the neighborhood. Out-of-school-time and community programming offer arts learning opportunities for youth and adults. But while many positive advances have been made, there are barriers to growth. Access to and maintenance of limited existing spaces is a common concern, as is staff capacity and marketing. Sustainability for Little Village's emerging arts movement will be key to its future.



## Strengths

**Little Village has been transformed by art.** Arts, music, and film festivals have transformed vacant and underused spaces into galleries, music venues, and theaters, even if just for a weekend. The talent and culture of the community can be seen in the streets, schools, gardens, and festivals. Youth engagement represents a positive reclaiming of community space by youth, showing their investment and aspirations

**Arts education opportunities have grown rapidly.** Arts-based learning for youth has increased dramatically over the last 10 years thanks to out-of-school-time programs. Even as schools struggle to keep their arts programs running during the school day, there are music, theater, photography, animation, graphic design, and dance programs available after school in many neighborhood schools and through programs offered by neighborhood agencies. Adults are also served through school-based and community programs. Flower making in various mediums, jewelry making, gelatina designs, and other crafts are popular among parents. There are Aztec dance groups for adults and youth and even a Samba/Tahitian dance group.

**Exciting opportunities are on the horizon.** Arts organizations, like Yollocalli and Vocalo, are investing in Little Village. New spaces for cultural programs and events are planned for the development at Park #553 (the former Celotex industrial site), at St. Anthony Hospital's new Focal Point development at 31st and Kedzie, and as part of Mercy Housing Lakefront's planned construction at 26th and Kostner. A large-scale arts project by the Chicago Public Art Group, Enlace Chicago, and neighborhood artist Maria Gaspar will transform the Cook County Jail Wall along two blocks of 26th Street, changing the look and perception of that space forever.



## Challenges

**There are barriers to continued growth for art.** Access and maintenance of limited existing spaces is a common concern. Well-maintained, modern spaces for the arts are limited. The spaces that do exist in schools and community centers struggle to accommodate demand for programs and events. Lack of staff capacity makes it difficult to keep spaces open, staffed, and secure. In addition, marketing for existing programs is limited by staff capacities, budgets, and lack of communication among programs and agencies.

**Sustainability is threatened.** Major community arts initiatives, such as Villarte (formed in 2005), and events such as Little Village Arts Fest and Villapalooza, are showcases of community talent and culture. They encourage artistic and cultural expression and begin to change the perception of the community for residents and visitors. But without sustained year-to-year funding, the future of these important events is untenable.



# Goals & Strategies

## A.1 Support and encourage collaboration among local artists

Developing stronger collaboration among local artists and organizations is essential to strengthening the arts. Strategies include:

Creation of a Little Village Artist Collective for artistic and professional development.

Development of a Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal to increase collaborations on existing and new programming and on funding opportunities.

Development of a collaboration of arts organizations that is resourced, staffed, and able to carry forward a larger vision for the arts in Little Village.

## A.2 Strengthen community events and programs focused on arts and culture

Keeping existing cultural events running and growing is an important goal that can be met through development of organizational networks that foster collaborative marketing, archiving, and information-sharing mechanisms like an Online Portal. Increasing organizational capacities and funding is important to this goal. Creation of arts-based internships and career development for youth are also important.

## A.3 Create and expand temporary and long-term spaces for arts and culture

Designated spaces for arts and cultural activities are key to the growth of arts in Little Village. The first step is to identify and support current spaces used for arts activities, then to create low-rent incubator and gallery spaces along 25th Street to allow for artists to grow professionally and stay connected to the community. A longer-term strategy is to develop a community arts and cultural center that hosts multiple disciplines and reflects Little Village's unique artistic qualities.



## Goals & Strategies Chart

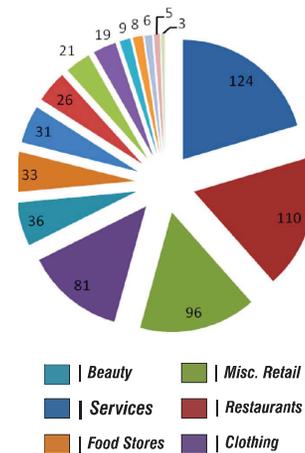
A. Arts and Culture				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals		Strategies		Lead Organizations			
<b>Collaboration</b>							
A.1	Support and encourage collaboration among local artists	A.1a	Host regular gatherings with artists from various artistic disciplines to share ideas on artistic practices, promote arts and culture events, and nurture artistic engagement.	A new Little Village Artist Collective, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists	x		
		A.1b	Increase cross agency and artistic collaborations on existing and new programming.	A new Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists	x		
		A.1c	Collaborate on funding efforts to support the sustainability of arts and culture in the community.	A new Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists		x	
		A.1d	Create a sustainable, resourced arts collaborative focused on sustaining and developing the arts in Little Village.	Enlace Chicago, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Boys and Girls Club, Universidad Popular, TCEP, School Art Departments, Teatro Americano	x		
<b>Programs and Events</b>							
A.2	Strengthen community events and programs focused on arts and culture	A.2a	Support and expand existing community arts events that feature local artists.	Little Village Artist Collective, Villarte, Villapalooza	x		
		A.2a	Increase the number and access to art programs for residents of all ages.	Enlace Chicago, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Boys and Girls Club, Universidad Popular, TCEP, School Art Departments, Teatro Americana		x	
		A.2a	Create an archive of community arts and culture events for sharing artistic information, process, and history of variety of artistic endeavors in Little Village.	A new Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists	x		
		A.2a	Increase art based internships or career development opportunities for youth.	A new Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists		x	
		A.2a	Create a platform where all community arts organizations and artists can support the marketing efforts for one another's programming.	A new Little Village Arts and Culture Network and Online Portal, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Local Artists	x		
<b>Locations</b>							
A.3	Create and expand temporary and long-term spaces for arts and culture	A.3a	Identify existing arts facilities and spaces used for art in Little Village and support a funding campaign for resourcing these creative and unique spaces in preparation for permanent space.	Little Village Arts Initiative, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Enlace Chicago, Teatro Americano, Telpochcalli Community Education Project	x		
		A.3b	Establish permanent gallery and studio spaces for local artists.			x	
		A.3c	Create an arts incubator space that provides a dedicated location for artists to grow professionally, while strengthening their connections with the community through participatory arts events and open dialogue.		x		
		A.3d	Establish a well-designed and thoughtful community arts and culture center that reflects Little Village's unique artistic qualities for cross-disciplinary artistic practices and a strong staff leadership that oversees this development and larger vision.				x





## Strengths

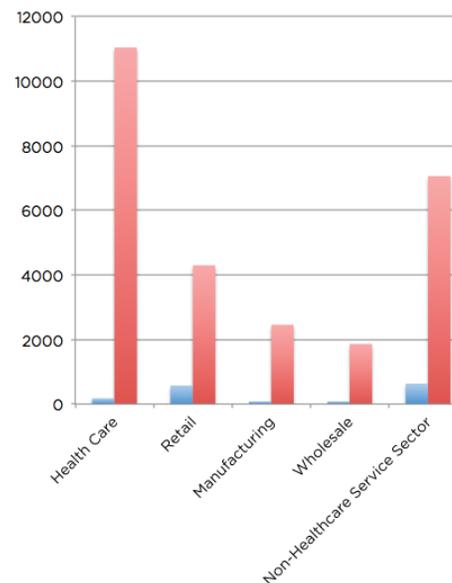
**Little Village is home to vibrant business districts.** The main commercial corridors are along 26th Street, Pulaski Road, 31st Street, Kedzie Avenue, and parts of 25th Street. Most businesses cater to Little Village’s unique community as well as to Mexican and Latino families from across the city and region. The commercial corridors are home to restaurants, specialty grocery stores, music stores, and bridal and quinceañera shops. The largest commercial corridor is along 26th Street, which many claim to be the second-highest tax-generating corridor in Chicago, second only to the Magnificent Mile. The street is in a densely populated area and has extremely high traffic counts. There are 95,000 people living within a five-minute drive and 350,000 people living within a 10-minute drive. An estimated 18,000 people visit Little Village daily. The Little Village Chamber of Commerce serves the local business base and administers Special Service Area #25, a taxing district that funds services related to community and business improvement. The industrial corridor along 31st street is home to over 85 companies.



Business Type	Number of Businesses	Percent of Total
Services	124	20%
Restaurants	110	18%
Misc. Retail	96	16%
Clothing	81	13%
Beauty	36	6%
Food Stores	33	5%
Auto Dealers and Parts	31	5%
General Merchandise	26	4%
Building Materials/Contractors	21	3%
Peddler	19	3%
Furniture	9	1%
Health Care	8	1%
Sporting Goods	6	1%
Liquor	5	1%
Optical	3	0%
TOTAL	608	100%

Source: Special Service Area #25 Market Analysis and Economic Development Plan.

**Little Village is a major job center.** Two hospitals and a number of clinics employ more than 11,000 people. Other service, retail, industrial, and wholesale-trade sectors also provide substantial employment opportunities for local residents. The health-care and industry sectors provide opportunities for career advancement, skilled job placement, and income growth. Also, the high concentration of employers brings potential customers for local businesses.



**177 Health Care**  
11,046 Employees

**574 Retail**  
4,296 Employees

**84 Manufacturing**  
2,456 Employees

**79 Wholesale**  
1,860 Employees

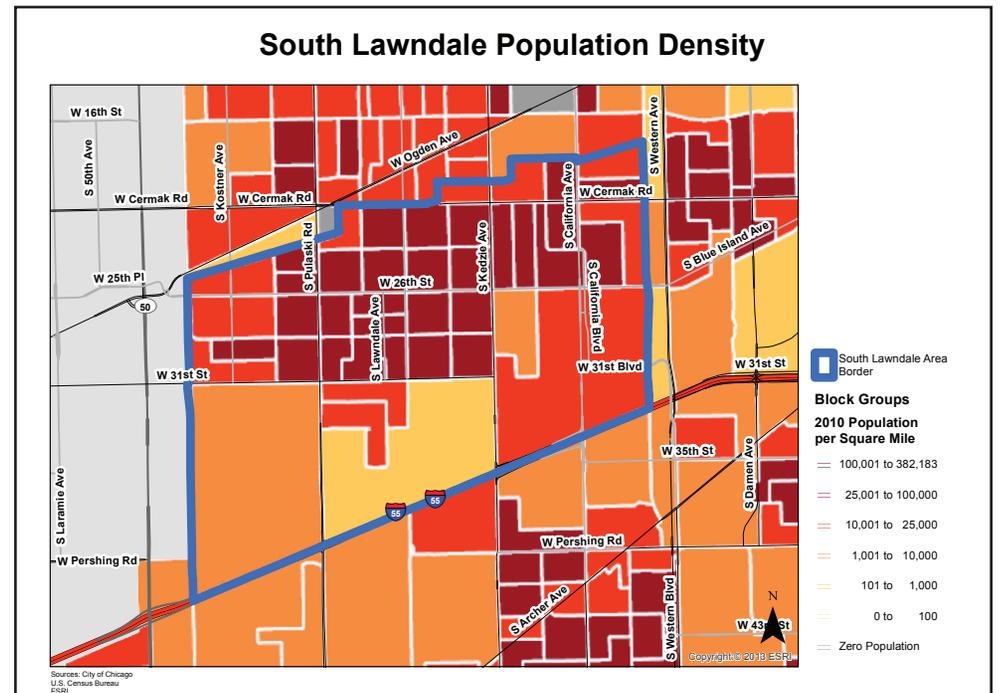
**630 Non-Healthcare Service Sector**  
7,061 Employees

■ Number of Establishments  
■ Number of Employees

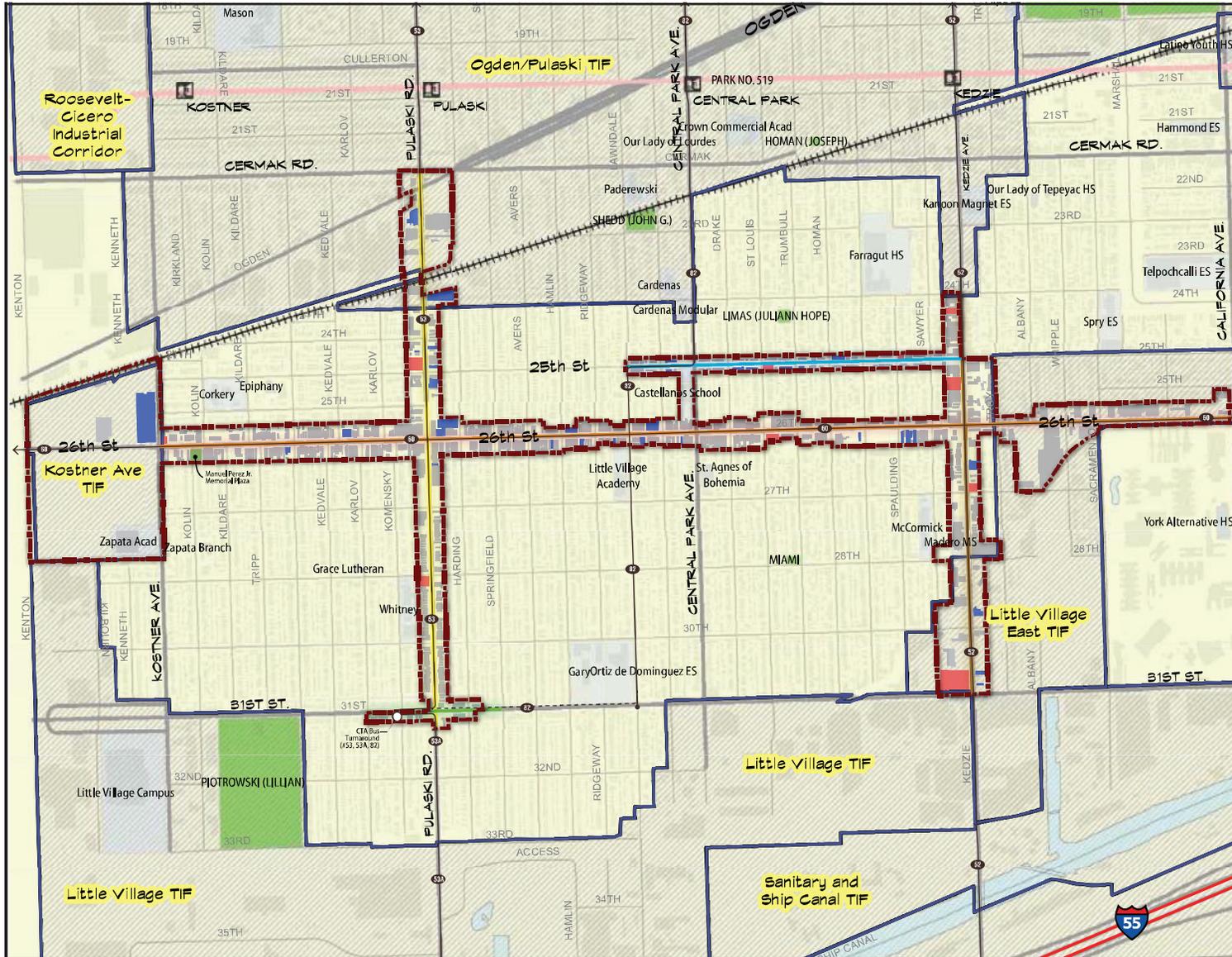


## Overview

**Little Village is a hard working community with a vibrant local economy.** Little Village is fortunate to have multiple retail business districts as well as nearby industrial centers and large institutional employers, including two hospitals. More than 1,800 employers in the Little Village trade area support about 30,000 jobs. A strong spirit of entrepreneurship endures, with more than 600 small businesses catering to Little Village residents, Mexican-Americans from throughout the Midwest, and visitors from other neighborhoods. The density of the community helps to generate this vibrancy and richness, but also limits opportunities for growth. Low wages and poverty continue to be an issue for residents, who face barriers in securing job stability and income growth. A priority is increasing the number of quality jobs available.



## Land Use and Business Characteristics

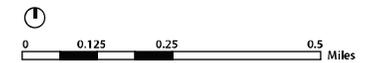


## Existing Conditions Map

### COMMERCIAL SECTORS

- - 26th Ave. between Kostner and California Ave.
- - 31st St. between Springfield and Karlov
- - Kedzie Ave. between 25th and 31st
- - 25th St. between Troy & Lawndale
- - Pulaski Ave. between 31st and Ogden Ave.

- Little Village SSA #25
- TIF Districts
- Buildings
- Parks
- Streets
- School Lots
- CTA Pink Line
- Bus Routes
- Vacant Buildings (1 or more vacancies)
- Vacant Lots



Source: Special Service Area #25 Market Analysis and Economic Development Plan.

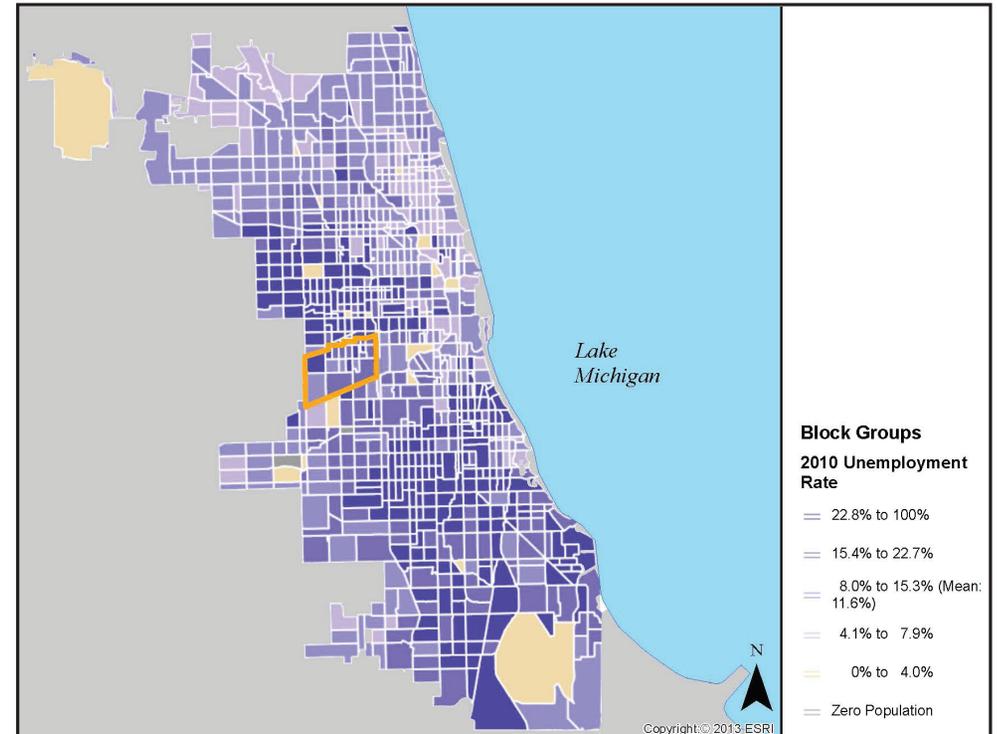


## Challenges

**Continued growth has spatial and cost barriers.** Commercial rental rates are high, especially along 26th Street, which threatens the continued growth of small businesses and has led to a number of vacancies. Rents on 26th Street have begun to approach those of Milwaukee Avenue and other commercial districts in higher-income neighborhoods. Some businesses may choose to move to locations with comparable rents to capture higher revenue. There is also limited space for continued development. Neighborhood density is a strength for businesses, but it limits space for new developments and for improvements such as increased parking spaces, outdoor seating, or green space.

**These challenges pale compared to the larger issue of poverty.** The average household income is \$33,857, about 60 percent of the state average. Undocumented community members do not have access to many types of employment, and are vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and low wages. Only one-fourth of Little Village residents hold a high school diploma or its equivalent, and only four percent hold a four-year college degree. Literacy and language are other barriers to employment and career advancement.

2010 Unemployment Rate by Census Block Group



## Goals & Strategies

### B.1 Increase resources for entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is the driving force for business development in Little Village. It can be supported by three strategies that provide more resources for entrepreneurs:

Creation of small-business education programs that include topics such as financing and technology use.

Support to businesses and entrepreneurs to help them understand the changing demographics of the community and to adjust to meet market opportunities.

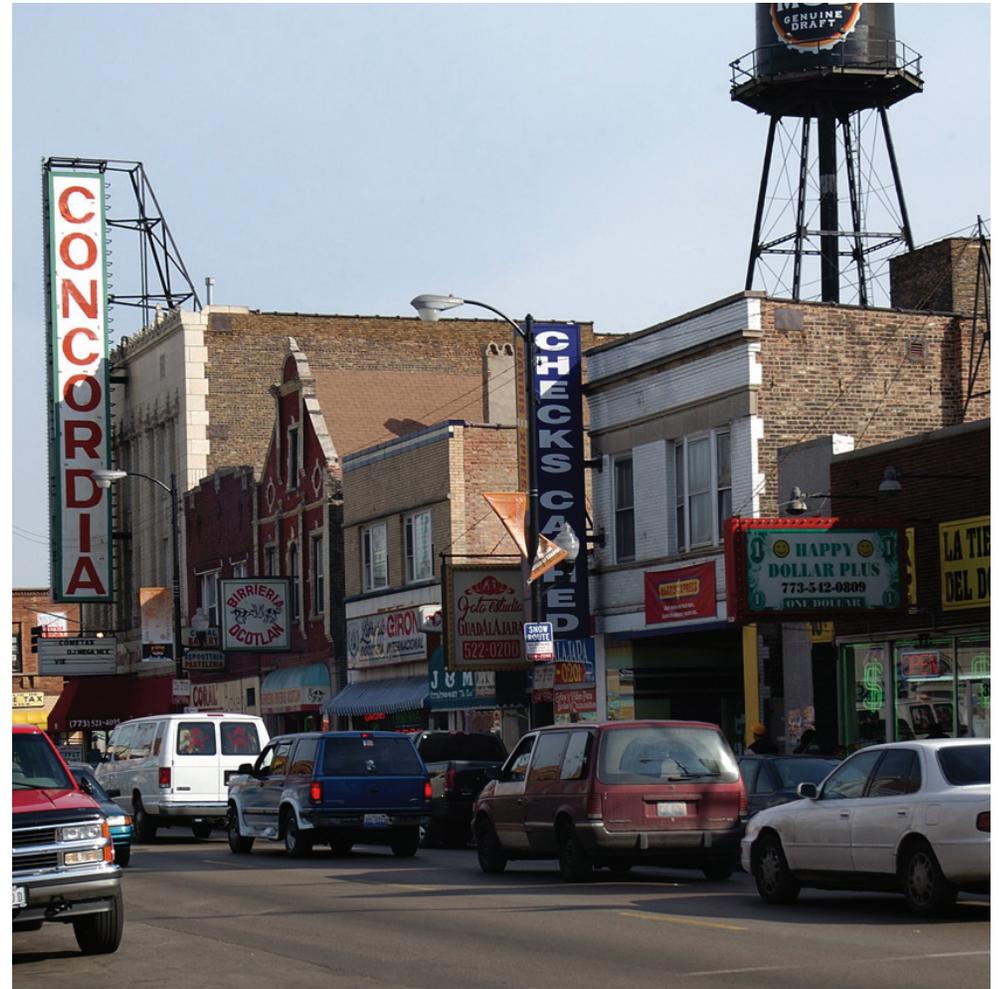
Broader and more diverse opportunities for business loans. Creation of flexible or customizable loan packages would make a tremendous impact.

### B.2 Support branding and beautification efforts

Branding and beautification are needed to maximize community, regional, and national spending in Little Village's commercial districts. The first strategy is to develop branding and marketing that promotes Little Village as a culturally rich, family-oriented community, with great food and shopping options. The second is to create a beautification plan for commercial strips that includes music, art, plantings, and gathering spaces. Also proposed is a beautification anchor for the western approach to 26th Street, such as a second archway.

### B.3 Increase workforce development programs and job opportunities

Better linkages among community agencies and local employers can create a job pipeline for Little Village residents enrolled in language, education, and job-skills programs. Other strategies include internship development, use of TIF funds for workforce programs, and implementation of a market analysis to better understand local employment.



The main commercial corridor in Little Village is 26th Street.

## Goals & Strategies Chart

B. Economic Development				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals	Strategies		Lead Organizations				
<b>Small Business Development</b>							
B.1	Increase resources for entrepreneurs	B.1a	Create small business development education programming for business owners that include topics such as financing and technology use	Chamber of Commerce		X	
		B.1b	Create youth entrepreneurship programs	Enlace Chicago, Central State SER, Chamber of Commerce, New Life Community Church, UP		X	
		B.1c	Create entrepreneurship programs for undocumented residents	Enlace Chicago, The Resurrection Project, Universidad Popular		X	
		B.1d	Partner with banks and other institutions to increase access to capital opportunities for business owners	The Resurrection Project	X		
		B.1e	Create and or identify alternative financing lending models	The Chamber of Commerce, The Resurrection Project			X
		B.1f	Respond to the growing changing demographics of the community and adjust market opportunities to meet their needs and wants	The Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Community			X
		B.1g	Conduct market analysis of potential business sectors currently underrepresented such as family oriented activates, craft beer, food options and health and fitness needs, etc.	Special Service Aarea #25, Research Partners		X	
<b>Branding</b>							
B.2	Support branding and beautification efforts	B.2a	Develop a unique, community specific, branding and marketing strategy to promote Little Village's culture, arts, food and family throughout Chicago and the region	The Chamber of Commerce, SSA #25	X		
		B.2b	Develop a beautification plan for the commercial strip to make it pedestrian friendly and supports art, music and places to gather	Enlace Chicago, SSA #25, Chamber of Commerce		X	
		B.2c	Ensure that the development on 26th Street and Kostner Avenue includes and features a community approved beatification anchor to the west end of the 26th street commercial corridor	Mercy Housing, Enlace Chicago, SSA#25			X
<b>Workforce Development</b>							
B.3	Increase workforce development programs and job opportunities	B.3a	Develop a partnership with local employers and service organizations to match employees and jobs	Central State SER, Erie House, Enlace Chicago	X		
		B.3b	Commission a market analysis study of employment opportunities in Little Village and workforce needs	Special Service Aarea #25		X	
		B.3c	Develop workforce program specifically addressing the needs of local employers using TIF Funds	Enlace Chicago		X	
		B.3d	Create local internship opportunities for community residents	Central State SER, Erie House, Enlace Chicago	X		

### Sources

Special Service Area #25 Market Analysis and Economic Development Plan, December 4th 2012.  
 Teska Associates, Inc. and Axia Development  
 US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts





# Overview

**Education is a critical community issue.** The aspirations of Little Village hinge on an increase in educational attainment for all residents, especially youth. While there are glimmers of success in Little Village educational outcomes, test scores and other performance measures continue to be low. In some neighborhood high schools, dropout rates are significantly higher than the city average. College entry levels are as low as 38 percent, and college graduation rates much lower. However, the community has fought for improvements and increased resources over the last 15 years. A number of new schools have been built. Community involvement in schools has increased through a network of neighborhood schools that partner with community organizations. The expansion of out-of-school-time and family programming has brought positive results in social-emotional learning, academic achievement, youth leadership, parental engagement, and college entry.



## Strengths

**Through community involvement, Little Village has increased the number of schools in the community.** Little Village is the youngest and most densely populated community in Chicago. Educational needs are immense, with more than 18,000 school-age youth and nearly 9,000 children under the age of five. Historically served by overcrowded schools, Little Village residents advocated over the last 15 years for more schools, with positive results. Four elementary and one middle school were built between 1997 and 1999. In 2001, Little Village residents hosted a 19-day hunger strike to advocate for a new high school on 31st and Kostner. Backed by many community institutions, this group won the fight. The Little Village Lawndale High School Campus now houses four autonomous small schools, each with its own curriculum. Community involvement and resources continue to shape the schools' curriculum, vision, and programming. Despite a number of administrative transitions, outcomes at the LVLHS campus have been relatively positive, and the educational prospects of the community overall have risen dramatically.

**Thirteen neighborhood schools are Community Schools.** Public schools and community organizations have created partnerships to provide wraparound family programming in the evenings, weekends, and summer months. They transform local schools into safe, accessible environments and bring additional resources to support academic enrichment. This model has leveraged millions of dollars in educational resources, allowing students and their families to explore their interests and passions. Youth regularly attend internships, summer jobs, and summer programs. Parents learn English as a Second Language, yoga, and aerobics, but also develop leadership skills by becoming members of decision-making bodies such as Local School Councils. Enlace Chicago partners with two elementary schools, one middle school, and five high schools. The Boys & Girls Clubs partner with Spry Community Links High School; Telpochoalli Community Education Project works with Telpochoalli School; Central States SER works with Corkery Elementary; and Alivio Medical Center partners with Little Village Academy. There is strong evidence that these types of programs contribute to healthier development of youth.<sup>1</sup>

**Little Village high schools are showing improvements.** While Little Village's six public high schools are still struggling, there is a trend towards improvement. Four of the high schools are small schools within the Little Village Lawndale High Schools Campus (Infinity, World Language, Social Justice, and Multicultural Academy); the others are Farragut Career Academy and Spry Community Links High School. Four high schools show lower dropout rates and higher graduation rates than the city average. Freshman on-track rates are at 99 percent and 100 percent at two high schools. About 20 percent of students on the Little Village Lawndale High School Campus are in Advanced Placement classes and students tend to score on par or above citywide averages on the standardized final exam. Attendance rates are also above citywide averages in all but one school. College enrollment ranges from 38 percent to 62 percent, bracketing the citywide average of 59.5 percent. Five high schools are community schools partnered with Enlace, and the sixth with the Boys & Girls Club. Most work with college-readiness programs including GEAR UP and a few with Upward Bound.



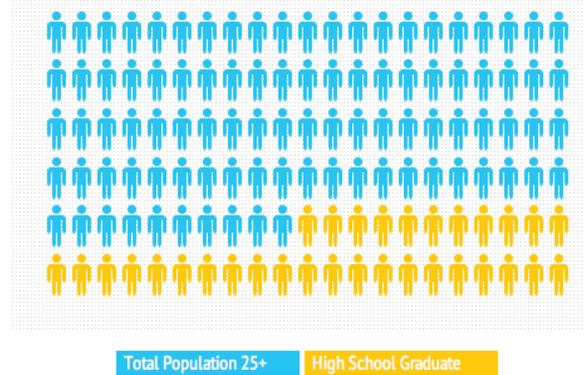
# Challenges

**Educational attainment levels remain below average.** Only 24 percent of Little Village residents hold a high school diploma or its equivalent, and only 10 percent have any college experience. This creates significant barriers to job attainment and income growth. Many parents are unable to provide homework help at home. Others have difficulty helping their children navigate the education system, especially college entrance. To address these long-standing educational inequalities, organizations like Enlace Chicago, Universidad Popular, The Tolton Center, Erie Neighborhood House, and Telpochcalli Community Education Project are providing adult education opportunities such as GED, ESL, and enrichment programs.

**Many youth struggle to complete high school.** More than 30 percent of Little Village youth between the ages of 16 and 19 are not currently enrolled or graduated from high school. Nearly 43 percent of males 16-19 are not in school, compared to about 12 percent of females. Both rates are significantly higher than the city average of nine percent. Organizations like Central States SER and Job Corps work to reengage youth and provide job opportunities and workforce development. To improve graduation rates, more programs like this are needed alongside changes within the schools. Instituto del Progreso Latino is planning to open an alternative school on the west side of Little Village to reengage disconnected youth and promote an increase in graduation rates.

**Students need support to attend and graduate from college.** Academic standards leave many youth unprepared for college, and even those with adequate ACT scores may not receive the family support they need. Parents, unlikely to have a college experience, often do not understand the opportunities, financial options, or expectations of college.<sup>2</sup> Common issues include discouraging travel to out-of-town schools, refusing loans, creating unnecessary fear and confusion, burdening youth with financial and sibling-care obligations, and incorrectly completing financial aid documents. There are systemic discouragements as well. Undocumented students are not eligible for Federal Student Aid, and only a few high-achieving students gain merit-based scholarships. With the cost of a four-year degree out of reach, many attend two-year city college programs that have low graduation and transfer rates. Four-year schools also face low retention and graduation rates among low-income community youth, who may experience culture shock, lack of academic preparedness, and misunderstanding of financial aid.

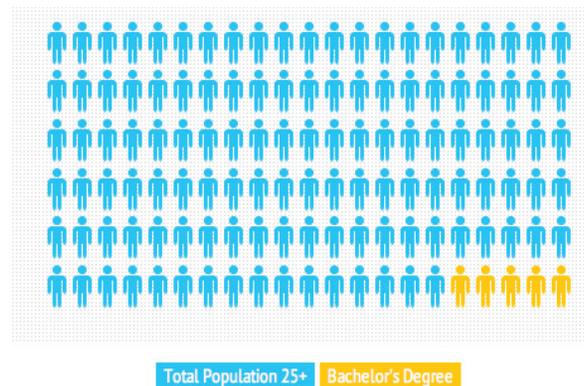
## South Lawndale High School Attainment 25+ Years



South Lawndale High School Graduates 25 Years and Older shown in Orange. 25.6% of South Lawndale.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

## South Lawndale Bachelor Degree Attainment 25+ Years

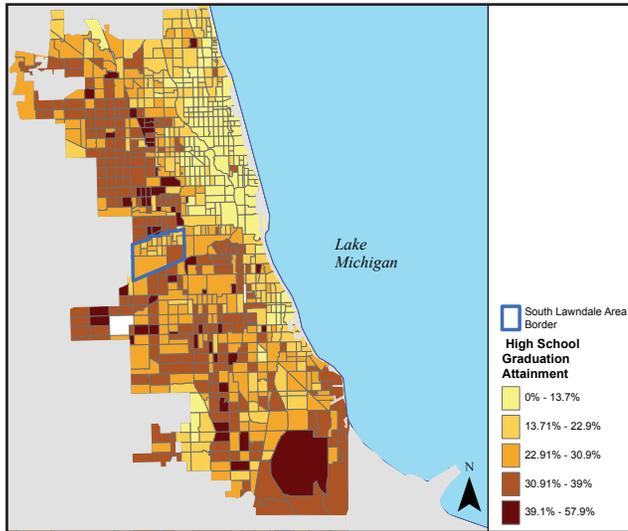


South Lawndale Residents with Bachelor Degree 25 Years and Older shown in Orange. 4.29% of South Lawndale.

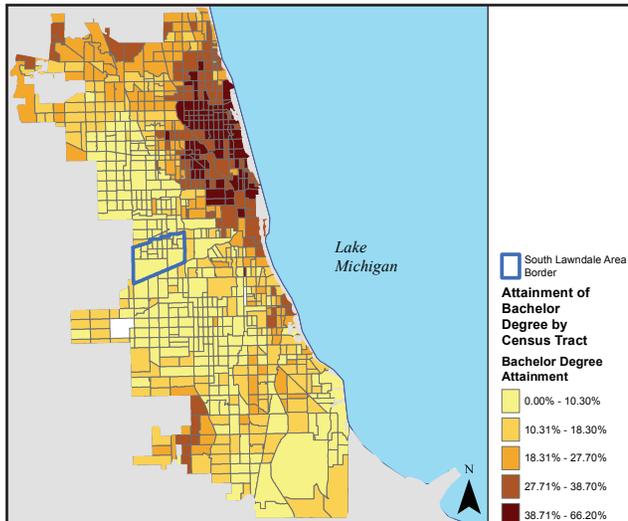
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey



# Challenges



Chicago population 25 years & older attainment of high school diploma by census tract



Chicago population 25 years & older attainment of bachelor degree by census tract

	South Lawndale	Chicago	Illinois
<b>School Dropout Rate For Population 16 To 19 Years</b>			
Civilian Population 16 to 19 Years:			
Not high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped Out)	26%	9%	6%
High school graduate, or enrolled	75%	91%	94%
<b>School Dropout Rate For Male Population 16 To 19 Years</b>			
Male Civilian Population 16 To 19 Years:			
Not high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped Out)	35%	10%	7%
High school graduate, or enrolled	65%	90%	94%
<b>School Dropout Rate For Female Population 16 To 19 Years</b>			
Female Civilian Population 16 To 19 Years:			
Not high school graduate, not enrolled (Dropped Out)	12%	7%	5%
High school graduate, or enrolled	88%	93%	95%
Source: U.S. Census (2010). American Community Survey 2006-2010 (5 year estimates). Social Explorer.			

Little Village School Dropout Rate



## Special Opportunities

### **Students and families need more support during educational transitions.**

These transitions include pre-K or childcare to kindergarten, kindergarten to elementary school, middle school to high school, and high school to post-secondary education. Important ideas include:

- 1) Increasing school readiness and understanding of expectations by strengthening partnerships between home, childcare, pre-k programs and kindergarten programs;
- 2) Increasing community promotion of early childhood education and the importance of pre-K;
- 3) Supporting elementary to high school transition by increasing collaboration between high schools and their feeders and supporting stronger summer transition programs hosted by schools and community organizations;
- 4) Providing more one-on-one supports for high school students transitioning to college and careers; and
- 5) Increasing parent education and engagement during transitions.



**Social-emotional learning is vital to student success.** Youth self awareness, ability to form positive relationships, and decision-making skills all affect education and life outcomes. Important strategies include strengthening partnerships with community organizations to provide social and emotional support to the youth, increasing the number of caring adults in schools, creating support groups for youth on issues that are impacting them, and developing a program of mentors from the community. Other strategies include making counseling and mental health services more accessible to middle school children, helping children and their families become more comfortable using these services, and better identifying youth expectations of adults so that programs can match these expectations. These approaches can be applied to adult learning as well.

**Community Schools should be further developed.** Supporting stronger relationships between community resources and schools can advance all education goals. Schools can support improved parent literacy, leadership opportunities, health, and violence reduction. To be successful, schools must have an extensive and trusted network of community resources that are integrated into the school.



# Goals & Strategies

## C.1 Strengthen and expand early childhood opportunities

- Increase the number of high-quality, affordable early-childhood slots
- Increase resources to support early-childhood education opportunities
- Increase the number of families using early-childhood education
- Expand and support school-based pre-K and full-day kindergarten programs in all Little Village elementary schools
- Improve school readiness for Little Village children

## C.2 Support children in elementary and middle school

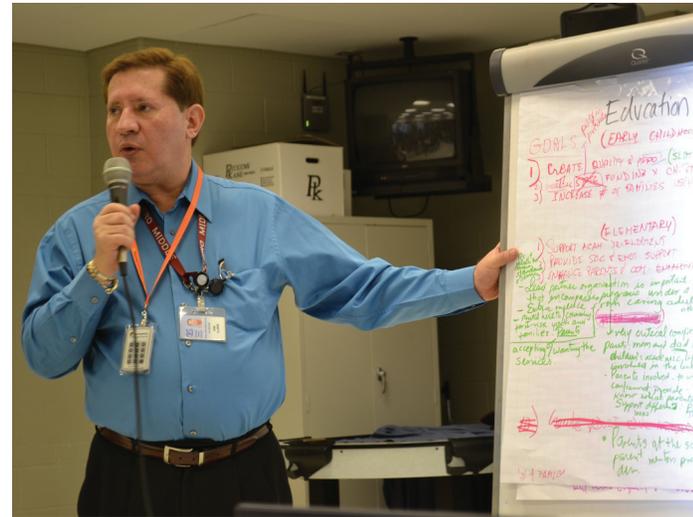
- Support academic development
- Provide social and emotional support
- Enhance parent and community engagement

## C.3 Support youth in high school, in college, and in their career goals

- Support academic excellence
- Increase post secondary planning and career exploration opportunities
- Reduce high school dropout rates and increase re-entry opportunities for youth
- Increase collaboration among youth service providers

## C.4 Enhance adult education

- Create a network of adult-education service providers
- Incorporate mental health services in adult education programs
- Support immigrants in retaining jobs and re-entering the workforce
- Increase family literacy through a holistic service model



The principal of Madero Middle School presents small group discussion on education at the April 13th Quality-of-Life Public Meeting at Francisco Madero Middle School.



The principal of Castellanos Elementary School presents with one of her students at the Quality-of-Life Education Focus Group.



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 1

C. Education				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years			
Goals	Strategy	Detail Strategy	Lead Organizations						
<b>Early Childhood</b>									
C.1	Strengthen and expand early childhood opportunities	C.1a	Increase the number of quality, affordable early-childhood slots	C.1a.i	Increase the number of state certified home-based childcare providers, open childcare centers in high schools and build new child-care centers.			X	
		C.1b	Increase resources to support early childhood education opportunities	C.1b.i	Develop a comprehensive funding strategy for early childhood education		X		
		C.1c	Increase the number of families using early childhood education	C.1c.i	Launch a community education campaign focused on the benefits of early childhood education	El Valor, Enlace Chicago, CPS Schools, Erie Neighborhood House, Tolton Center	X		
		C.1d	Expand and support school based pre-k and full-day kindergarten programs in all Little Village elementary schools	C.1d.i	Develop a stronger partnerships with CBO and CPS to support this effort		X		
		C.1e	Increase school readiness for Little Village children	C.1e.i	Strengthen partnerships between home, childcare, pre-k programs and kindergarten programs				X
<b>Elementary and Middle School</b>									
C.2	Support Children in Elementary and Middle School	C.2a	Support Academic Development	C.2a.i	Increase literacy programs	Community School Agencies (Enlace Chicago, Boys & Girls Club, Tellpochcalli Community Education Project, Central State SER, Alivio Medical Center) Universidad Popular, CPS Schools	X		
				C.2a.ii	Support out of school programming that includes tutoring and uses creative and engaging methods to teach topics addressed in class		X		
				C.2a.iii	Provide hands on learning experiences and mentorship opportunities		X		
				C.2a.iv	Develop a stronger partnership with practitioners and engage them to help the children better relate the subjects they are learning at school with real life applications of the topics		X		
				C.2a.v	Increase the resources to community schools that support the comprehensive well being of the student			X	
				C.2a.vi	Increase recess time				X
				C.2a.vii	Provide basic needs such as food to support student development			X	
	C.2b	Provide social and emotional support	C.2b.i	Identify, via a survey or other methods, the youths' expectations of adults and develop services to match these desires			X		
			C.2b.ii	Develop a mentorship program that identifies and highlights mentors from the community			X		
			C.2b.iii	Make counseling and mental health services more accessible to middle school children and help children and their families become more comfortable using these services		X			
			C.2b.iv	Create programs that help children transition from middle school to high school		X			
			C.2b.v	Create support groups for youth on issues that are most important in their lives and are impacting them the most			X		
			C.2b.vi	Increase and strengthen partnerships with community organizations to provide social and emotional support to the youth		X			
			C.2b.vii	Increase the number of caring adults in schools to help with social and emotional issues		X			



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 2

C. Education				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years		
Goals		Strategy	Detail Strategy	Lead Organizations				
Elementary and Middle School				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years		
C.2	Support Children in Elementary and Middle School	C.2c	Enhance parent and community engagement	C.2c.i	Strengthen parent and teacher relationships		X	
				C.2c.ii	Develop a tool box to facilitate teachers and parent engagement		X	
				C.2c.iii	Support teachers to become more aware and actively involved in their students home environment		X	
				C.2c.iv	Increase the participation of parents in the children's academic development	X		
				C.2c.v	Increase parent services and programs at schools		X	
				C.2c.vi	Continue and strengthen parent mentorship programs	X		
				C.2c.vii	Develop a variety of parent engagement models that vary in abilities and availability	X		
				C.2c.viii	Develop a parent planning and goal setting program to help parents plan for their children to enter high school and higher education		X	
				C.2c.ix	Continue to foster partnerships between community organizations and schools	X		
High School and College				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years		
C.3	Support youth in high school, in college, and in their career goals	C.3a	Support Academic Excellence	C.3a.i	Enhance the quality of the school curriculum			X
				C.3a.ii	Provide a wider range of classes available to students			X
				C.3a.iii	Increase the number of teachers committed to education			X
				C.3a.iv	Amplify students' voices at school		X	
				C.3a.v	Increase the number of minority teachers			X
				C.3a.vi	Support more student and teachers meeting time		X	
				C.3a.vii	Encourage students to excel academically and respect their school, teachers, and peers.	X		
				C.3a.viii	Structure more peer -to-peer support mechanisms		X	
				C.3a.ix	Encourage strong and consistent messages to prioritize graduating from college	X		



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 3

C. Education				0-2 YRS			3-5 Yrs			6+ Years						
Goals		Strategy		Detail Strategy			Lead Organizations									
High School and College				Detail Strategy			Lead Organizations									
							0-2 YRS			3-5 Yrs			6+ Years			
C.3	Support youth in high school, in college, and in their career goals	C.3b	Increase post secondary planning and career exploration opportunities	C.3b.i	Improve the quality and the connections for youth with outside partners for career exposure and planning				x							
				C.3b.ii	Increase internships and provide college trips for youth and parents				x							
				C.3b.iii	Educate families on post secondary financing and choices			Enlace Chicago, Boys and Girls Club, GEAR UP, Latinos Progresando, Universidad Popular, CPS Schools		x						
				C.3b.iv	Connect enrolled college and vocational students back to the community to mentor younger youth					x						
				C.3b.v	Build staff capacity within community agencies and increase the number of staff working in this area					x						
C.3	Support youth in high school, in college, and in their career goals	C.3c	Reduce high school dropout rates and increase re-entry opportunities for youth	C.3c.i	Develop a mentorship plan for high risk youth upon high school entry			Violence Prevention Collaborative , LV CARE, Job Corp, Central State SER, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Erie neighborhood House, Enlace Chicago, Boys and Girls Club, Universidad Popular, Yolocalli Arts Reach		x						
				C.3c.ii	Support and increase existing out-of-school activities					x						
				C.3c.iii	Increase awareness and referral of youth into out-of-school youth programs							x				
				C.3c.iv	Create and enhance programs to help the youth transition from elementary school to high school and assist their parents in this transition as well					x						
				C.3c.v	Focus on mentorship for youth through transitional periods (8th-9th, Junior - College)					x						
		C.3d	Increase collaboration among youth service providers	C.3d.i	Support programs to help connect the youth from school to community based organizations			Community School Agencies, GEAR UP, Central State SER, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Erie Neighborhood House, Job Corp, LV Care				x				
				C.3d.ii	Strengthen the collaboration between community organization and school for youth to complete service hours							x				
				C.3d.iii	Host community meetings on education							x				
				C.3d.iv	Create an education referral database							x				
				C.3d.v	Host and education summits and/or workshops for parents at various locations and times					x						
C.3d.vi	Create an on-line portal that connects youth to resources and connects youth resources to youth				x											
C.3d.vii	Designate a point person for community partnership and referral management per school and per agency							x								



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 4

C. Education											
Goals		Strategy		Detail Strategy		Lead Organizations		0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Adult Education		Strategy		Detail Strategy		Lead Organizations		0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
C.4	Enhance Adult Education	C.4a	Create a network of adult-education service provider	C.4a.i	Set-up meetings with all organizations that do parent engagement work	Taller de Jose, Roots to Wellness, Grupo Consuelo, LV Garden Network, Tolton Center, Erie Neighborhood House, Catholic Charities, MALDEF, Parent Mentor Program, Community School Agencies, Latinos Progresando, City of Colleges of Chicago		X			
				C.4a.ii	Set-up a website wiki to list all available adult education programs			X			
		C.4b	Incorporate mental health services in adult education programs	C.4b.i	Support and enhance support groups to assist in social and emotional needs for adults				X		
				C.4b.ii	Bring mental health related resources to schools and adult education groups			X			
				C.4b.iii	Promote and encourage the use of mental health programs			X			
		C.4c	Support immigrants in retaining jobs and re-entering the workforce	C.4c.i	Work with local universities and universities abroad to create a re-accreditation of their degree or re-entry process for an accredited degree in the US					X	
				C.4c.ii	Develop financial mechanisms for "Adult Dreamers"					X	
		C.4d	Increase family literacy through a holistic service model	C.4d.i	Include leadership development, library services, early childhood education, parenting and parent-child together programs in adult education programs.				X		
				C.4d.ii	Broaden library services and increase the use of library programs by community residents					X	
				C.4d.iii	Support bilingual literacy (Spanish and English) for parents and their children				X		

1 "Evidence is mounting that where and how youth spend their time outside of normal school hours has important implications for their development...young people benefit when they spend time engaged in structured pursuits that offer opportunities for positive interactions with adults and peers, encourage them to contribute and take initiative, and contain challenging and engaging tasks that help them develop and apply new skills and personal talents." American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Carnegie Corporation, 1992; Larson & Vera, 1999; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002.

2 Research shows students whose parents did not go to college are considerably less likely to gain admission to college than peers whose parents have college experience. Engle, American Federation of Teachers, Postsecondary Access and Success for First-Generation College Students.

### Sources

American Community Survey 2005-2009 (5-Year Estimates), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau School Scorecards [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu)  
US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts



multipurpose  
 community buildings  
 recreational  
 connection  
 facilities  
 safe and accessible  
 sports  
 physical activities  
 community gardens  
 play  
 nature  
 safe and welcoming  
 cultural expression  
 sports  
 public space  
 mental health  
 healthy living  
 open space  
 intellectual  
 play lots  
 intergenerational  
 gardening and food  
 socializing  
 seasonal  
 families  
 density  
 parks  
 healthy eating



## Green Space and Recreation

## Overview

**Little Village is one of the youngest and densest communities in Chicago, and has the least green space per resident.** The neighborhood has made good progress on this issue since it was identified as a community need in the 2005 Quality-of-Life Plan. Community efforts have resulted in a new skate plaza at Piotrowski Park, community gardens, and a \$1.5 million artificial-turf field at Gary Ortiz School. Three large green space developments are planned for development over the next five to 10 years. With one of the city's highest obesity rates, and lowest activity rates, access to recreational space and food-producing gardens remains a pressing concern. Green space and recreation can also contribute to violence reduction, environmental education, and community building.



Community members garden at 28th Street and Harding Ave.



The Sembrando en el Sol Garden



Silver Skate Plaza



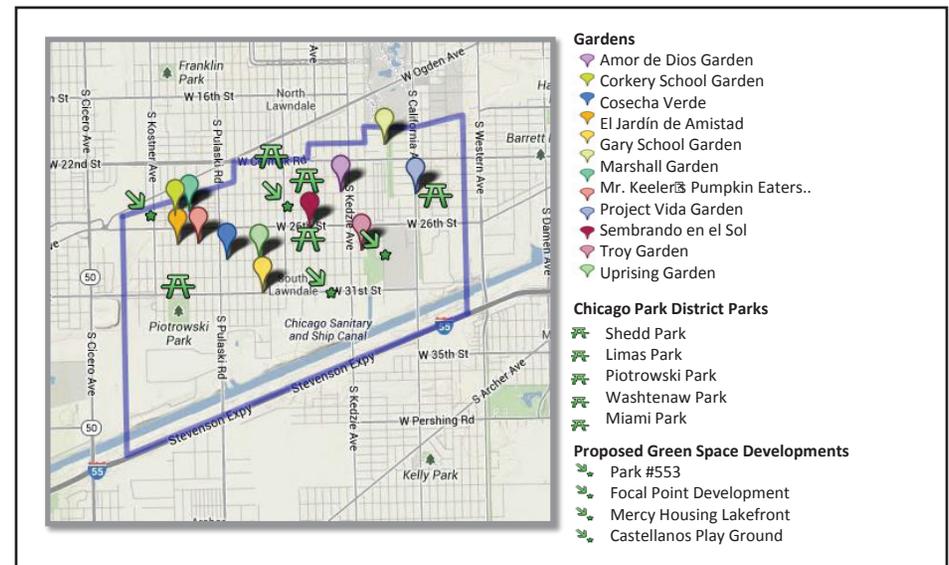
## Strengths

**Important steps have been made.** A skate plaza at Piotrowski Park has replaced an underutilized tennis court to host more people and support a positive youth culture. La Villita and New Life Community Churches have installed gyms, and St. Agnes and Grace Lutheran have opened their gyms for community use. Other improvements to Piotrowski Park include new basketball courts, new soft-court soccer field, and updated playground. Efforts to clean and improve school playgrounds and small parks, like Miami and Shedd, have been launched by school-based groups and Park Councils. Lighting improvements include Farragut Career Academy's field and the skate plaza. In the process of winning these investments, important models have been developed for community-involved design processes and partnerships.

**Strong collaborations support development of green spaces and recreational opportunities.** A partnership between Joseph E. Gary Elementary School, Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez Elementary School, Alderman Ricardo Muñoz, and local organizations such as Beyond the Ball and Enlace Chicago, helped transform an asphalt playground into a soccer field, track, and basketball court. The vibrant, positive, and safe community space represents a model for increasing community utilization of existing open spaces through physical improvements and intentional programming. Other partnerships, including Neighborhood Sports Little Village and the Little Village Community Garden Network, are also expanding recreational opportunities.

**Vacant lots and open spaces have been converted to community gardens.** Twelve community gardens host murals, garden plots, compost bins, rain barrels, and play areas. Most are food-producing gardens maintained by community members in partnership with local institutions, such as Amor de Dios, Enlace Chicago, Esperanza Health Center, LVEJO, Project Vida, Telpochcalli Community Education Project, and Universidad Popular. The Sembrando en el Sol Garden at 26th and Trumbull has been transformed from a concrete lot to a food garden with a water system, shed, compost bin, and adjacent children's play area made from recycled tires. Amor de Dios Garden includes chicken coops. These sites are also a space for health education, service projects, workshops, and other environmental and health initiatives. Many community leaders have emerged through their engagement in community gardening.

**Three large green-space developments are planned.** St. Anthony's Hospital is partnering on a mixed-use health space and hospital at the Focal Point Chicago development at 31st and Kedzie, including a large recreational area and other green spaces. A nonprofit housing developer, Mercy Housing Lakefront, has purchased the old Storkline furniture factory at 26th and Kostner for conversion into 148 affordable housing units; the development will include a recreational area. Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO) is working with the Chicago Park District to design and develop Park #553 on the former Celotex asphalt factory at 31st Street and Albany Avenue. LVEJO has hosted community meetings to engage residents in the design of the park's planned bandstand, skate park, playing fields, and field house.



Little Village Parks and Gardens

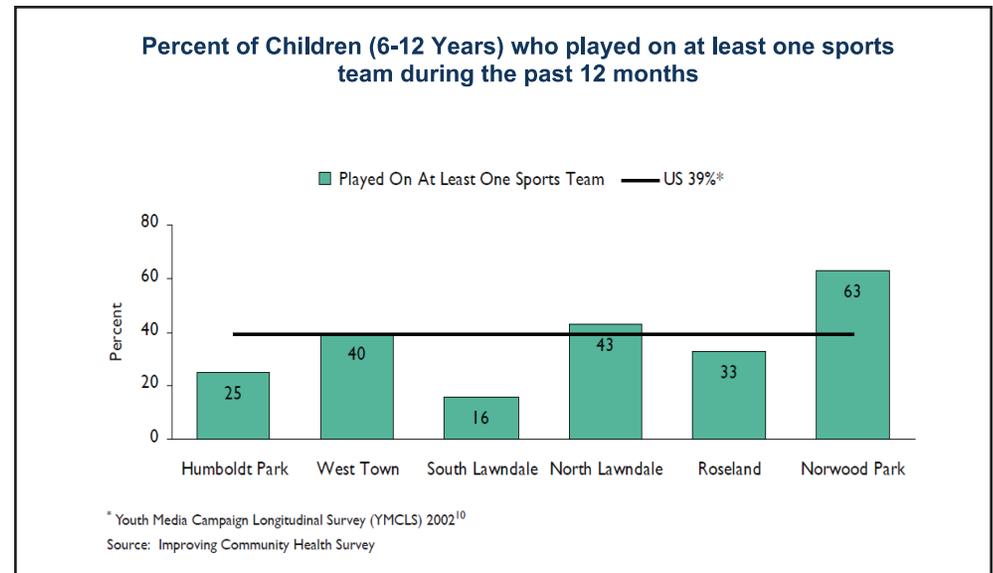
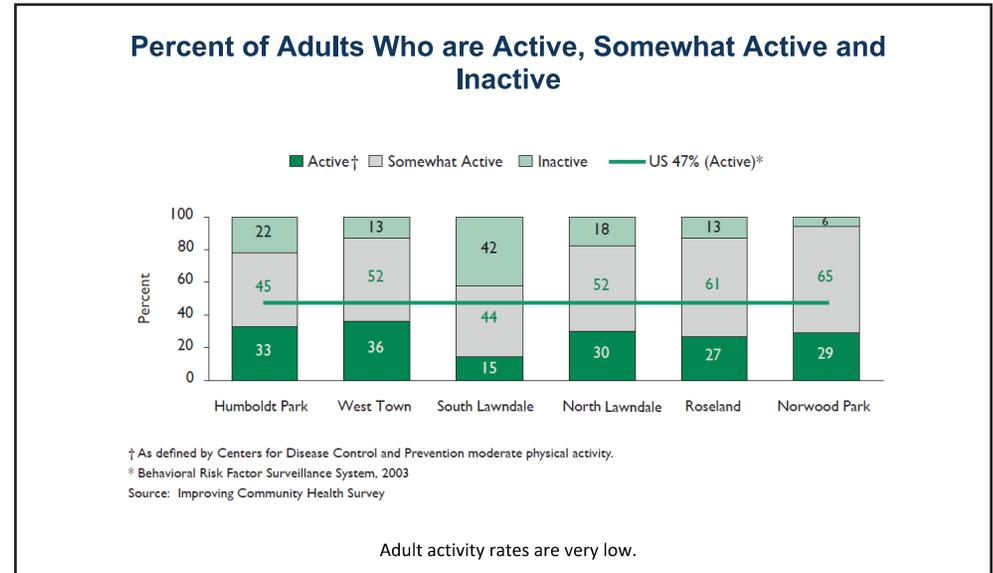


## Challenges

**Limited access to recreational spaces contributes to health and safety concerns.** With one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the city, more than half of children are overweight or obese. A study in 2003 found that only 15 percent of adult residents were considered active, about half the level of comparable communities. Only 16 percent of youth played on a sports team. The limited access to recreation and play spaces is considered a contributing factor in neighborhood violence. It is detrimental to the connectedness and trust among neighborhood families, and it leaves youth without safe access to positive activities among friends, or with family, in the evenings.

**There is limited space for green space development, especially in central locations.** Even as new green space is being planned at major new developments, the density of the neighborhood leaves only a few options for additional conversion of green space. Along the central corridor there are two schools with the potential for improvements: Rosario Castellanos Elementary School, which has a large parking lot, but no playground, and Little Village Academy, whose play lot is in need of improvements and has the potential to serve students and the community. This school is working with CPS and the alderman to determine how additional classroom space can be developed without compromising the attached recreational space. School and community partnerships are necessary to leverage the necessary funds and to ensure maximum utilization of the spaces.

**Not all existing spaces have maximized their utilization and impact.** Increases in programs, partnerships, and overall quality of parks and school facilities are necessary to fully serve local needs. The two largest park field houses are Piotrowski and Shedd. According to the Chicago Park District, Piotrowski is operating at full program capacity, while Shedd Park is not close to capacity. Not enough support from external partners has been established in diversifying or expanding programs at both sites. Washtenaw Park is small, but does have one staff member who supervises the park and engages the community. Two play lots, Miami and Limas, are great areas for families with small children, but are not able to offer any programs. Schools have opened up to significant community use through Community Schools partnerships, but are still far from having the capacity or policy leadership to maximize use of their spaces. Many existing resources are also in need of maintenance, upgrades, equipment, and resources to stay open during evenings, weekends, holidays, and summers.



Little Village activity rates and sports involvement have historically been very low.



## Goals & Strategies

### D1. Maintain, support, and enhance existing green and recreational spaces

Higher levels of community involvement can improve the level of maintenance, use, capacity, and impact of neighborhood spaces. A media and marketing campaign will encourage involvement in parks and gardens, along with increased promotion of volunteer opportunities.

### D2. Develop new recreational spaces

A neighborhood priority is to maximize green and recreational spaces in new developments, including the Focal Point Chicago and Mercy Housing Lakefront developments on either end of the community. Another priority is to develop community agency and school partnerships to improve recreational spaces and play lots connected to schools, but open to the community. This strategy is vital to create green space in the community's dense center. Finally, the community supports development of Park #553 at the Celotex site on the east side of the community, as it will bring significant recreational amenities to the community.

### D3. Increase community impact through improved programming

Recreational spaces offer opportunities for increased safety, health, environmentalism, skills development, leadership opportunities, family play time, and community connectivity. One strategy is to increase programming in existing spaces by better leveraging partnerships within and outside of the community. Another is to better connect to residents, organizations, and schools through existing networks.



St. Anthony Hospital's Focal Point Project at 31st Street and Kedzie.



## Goals & Strategies Chart

D. Green Space and Recreation				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals	Strategies		Lead Organizations				
<b>Existing Spaces</b>							
D.1	Maintain, support and enhance existing spaces	D.1a	Encourage participation in community gardens to enhance existing spaces	Community Garden Network	X		
		D.1b	Increase involvement in current opportunities for park stewardship and street clean up projects.	Park Advisory Councils and Block Clubs		X	
		D.1c	Increase youth involvement in park and garden maintenance through service learning initiatives and school based clubs.	Community Garden Network, NSLV, School Counselors and CPS Office of Service Learning		X	
		D.1d	Develop a unique media campaign to promote community engagement in green spaces and community gardens.	Community Garden Network and NSLV	X		
		D.1e	Enhance existing parks by repainting, improving existing lawn conditions and walkways, and replacing play lot equipment.	Park Advisory Councils	X		
		D.2f	Collaborate with Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Park District, Chicago Police Department on clean-up, safety, resources and repairs for parks and gardens	Community Garden Network and NSLV		X	
<b>New Spaces</b>							
D.2	Create new green and recreational spaces	D.2a	Create and improve green and recreational space, specially in schools located in the center of the community.	School leadership (staff, parents, students), Community Garden Network, and NSLV		X	
		D.2b	Support the development and construction of Park 553	LVEJO		X	
		D.2c	Ensure new green and recreational spaces in new developments including developments at 31st & Kedzie and 26th & Kostner.	Enlace			X
		D.2d	Assist community institutions, as well as homeowners and renters, with beautification assistance and the creation of green spaces	Community Garden Network and NSLV		X	
		D.2e	Seek financial resources, including green infrastructure funds, to maintain and create new spaces	Community Garden Network and NSLV	X		
<b>Programming</b>							
D.3	Increase community impact through improved programming	D.3a	Support NSLV and community-wide efforts to promote sports and physical activity in permanent and temporary spaces	Neighborhood Sports Little Village (NSLV)	X		
		D.3ab	Support the development of the Little Village Community Garden Network and connect home gardeners to this network	Community Garden Network	X		
		D.3c	Connect schools to neighborhood green spaces for recreational and educational opportunities	School leadership (staff, parents, students), Community Garden Network, and NSLV		X	
		D.3d	Seek additional resources through partnership with the Nature Museum, Field Museum, Lincoln Park Zoo and other established institutions in order to increase outdoor family programming	School leadership (staff, parents, students), Community Garden Network, and NSLV		X	
		D.3e	Expand curriculum and programs that promote wellness, violence prevention, intergenerational learning, arts and culture through green and recreational spaces	Community Garden Network and NSLV		X	
		D.3f	Develop opportunities for skill-development, certification, training, employment and income-generating opportunities through park and gardens	Community Garden Network			X
		D.3g	Incorporate and expand recycling, reuse and composting options in the community	Ward and Streets and Sanitation Offices, Community Garden Network and NSLV			X

### Sources

Overweight and Obesity among Chicago Public Schools Students, 2010-2011, City of Chicago. February 2013.

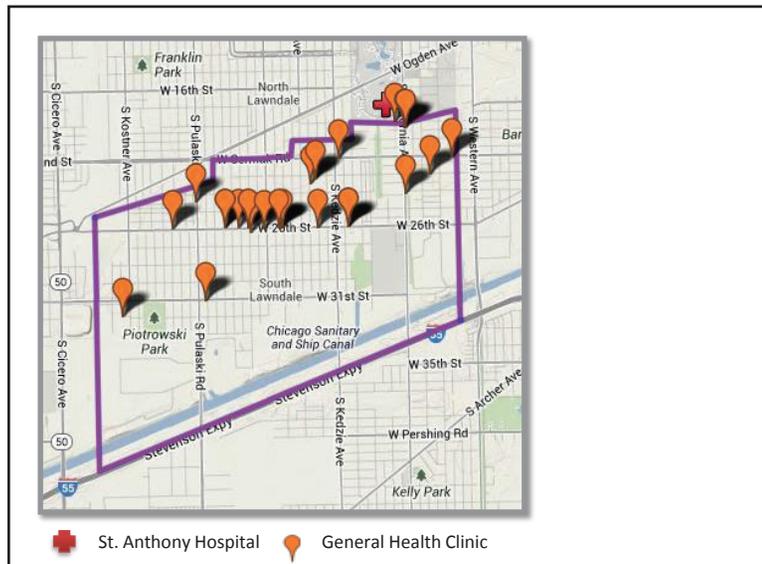
Shah AM, Whitman S. Sinai Health System's Improving Community Health Survey: Report 2. Chicago, IL: Sinai Health System, September 2005.





## Overview

**Health and wellness is a priority in improving the quality of life for Little Village residents.** Little Village has many health resources and community clinics providing primary, prenatal, and pediatric care. Little Village also has unique, culturally specific, mechanisms for health promotion. School-based and community programs for youth and adults promote health and wellness. Community health workers serve as a trusted link between community members and health providers, and many bilingual services are available. Despite these positive resources, quality health care access for all residents is still far from a reality, with only 46% of residents with insurance. Undocumented residents, especially men and women without children, often see little or no preventative care or medical follow up. Many others have limited access to specialists and treatment options for serious medical conditions. Rates for obesity and related illnesses, teen pregnancy, and depression are some of the highest in the city. Great models for care exist in the community, but much more work is needed to improve access and outcomes.



Little Village Community Health Centers

## Strengths

**Little Village has more clinics for uninsured and Medicare/Medicaid patients than its neighboring communities.** With 28 general health clinics, including two school-based health clinics, and two nearby hospitals, Little Village has substantial health resources. Low-income, uninsured, under-insured, and Medicare/Medicaid patients have access to primary, prenatal, and pediatric care and many health and wellness programs. Residents also have access to traditional medicines through 10 botanicas in the community. These resources have had some positive impact. For example, there are high rates of prenatal care among pregnant women, with maternal and baby health outcomes comparable to the state average. These rankings are significantly higher than comparable low-income communities, but work is needed to increase options and update practices. Two collaboratives are working to improve the situation. Roots to Wellness convenes community health providers to improve mental health resources for residents. The Hope Response Coalition, focused primarily on provision of basic needs, has also convened healthcare providers to support the improvement of services and community health education.

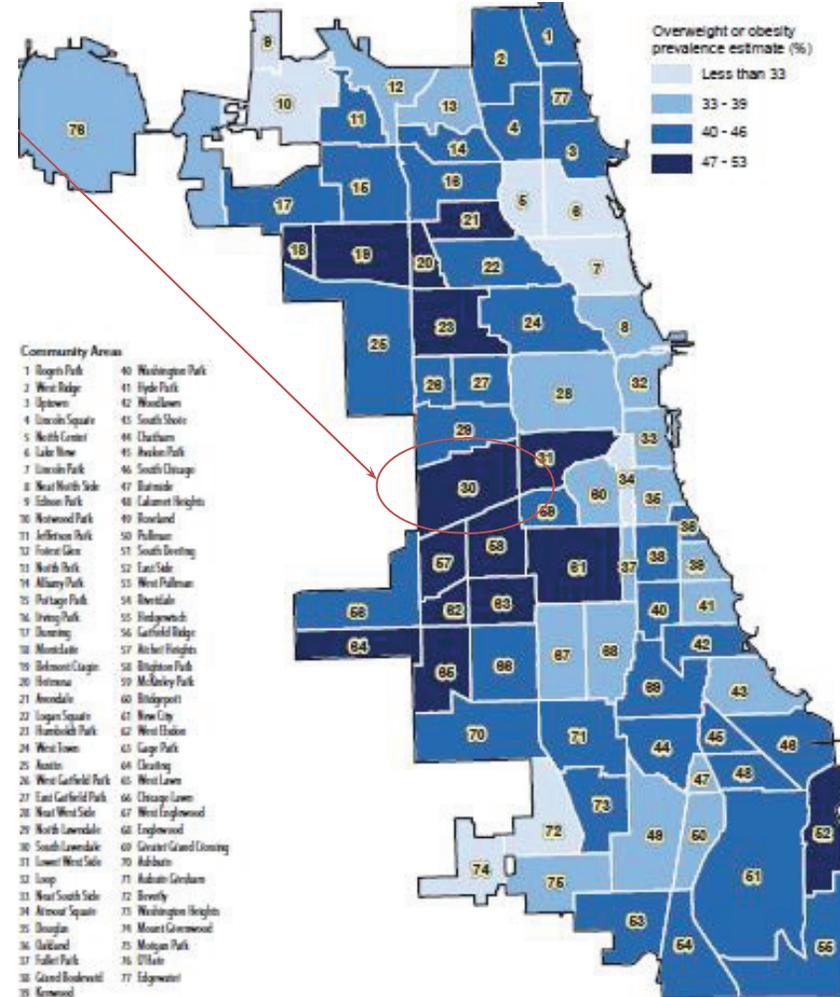
**Unique, culturally competent programs and alternative spaces have been used to promote community health.** Clinics and other service agencies have worked to develop culturally specific programs to promote health and wellness, and to connect community residents to health providers. Promotoras, compañeros, peer counselors, and other community health worker programs disseminate health information through Alivio Medical Center, Esperanza Community Health Center, Jorge Prieto Clinic, and St. Anthony's Hospital. They also help build trusted relationships between health providers and community members. Schools, adult and youth programs, and community gardens are also used as spaces for health and wellness education.

## Challenges

**Despite access to clinics and health workers, there are many serious community health issues.** The rates of obesity and related illnesses are among the highest in the city, most strikingly among children. Teen birth rates are also among the highest in the city, with no significant decreases over the last 10 years. Depression, stress, and anxiety rates are also high, as are instances of trauma. These mental-health issues go untreated for many residents as resource availability, stigma, and awareness all discourage treatment.

**Access to health care is not adequate.** While primary care and many other services are available, they are not always well utilized by the most vulnerable populations. Trust, language, awareness, and fear continue to play a role. Health providers still struggle to provide truly bilingual and culturally competent services. In addition, many residents who need services are still not able to access them. All women, even undocumented women, have access to health services at least temporarily if they are pregnant. They are able to see doctors while pregnant and for the first years of their child's life. During these times women learn a lot about their own health and general health concepts. They also often visit the doctor with their children, giving them access to health information and advice for themselves and their children. But undocumented adult men and women without children do not have the same access to care and health information. This dramatically underserved community often receives only emergency care and receives little follow up care.

**Specialist and treatment options for major diseases are limited for many residents.** Many residents do not have access to the care of specialists because of limited nearby services and because such services are largely unavailable for people who are undocumented, uninsured, underinsured or on Medicare/Medicaid. Care is often denied to low-income and immigrant residents whose treatment will not be fully covered. Cook County Hospital provides services for these families, but the wait to see specialists can be very long, and the easy access and community specific culture and programs available in neighborhood hospitals is not available at Cook County. This inequality can devastate families financially and emotionally.



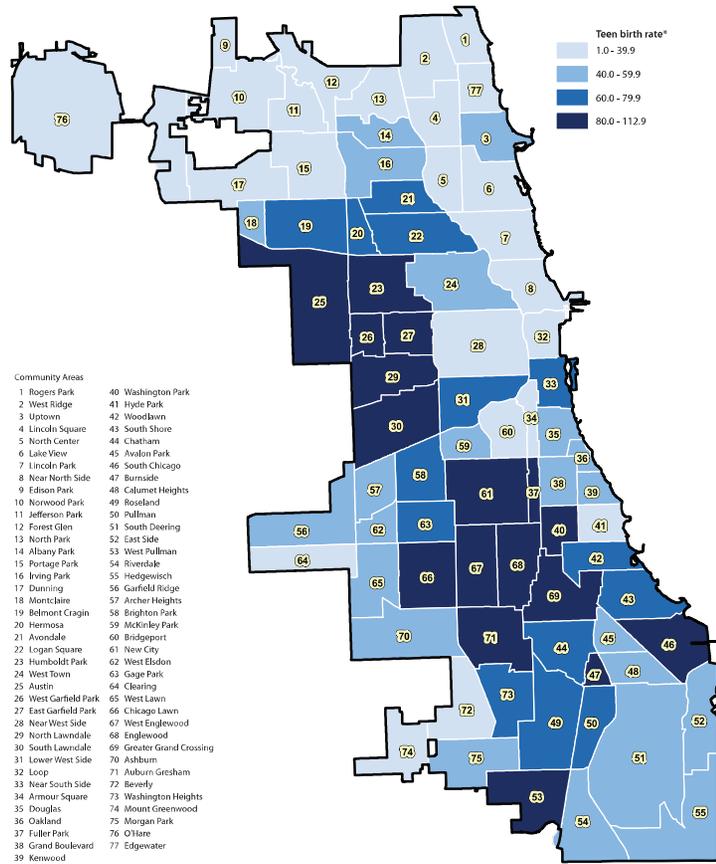
Over half of Little Village children are obese or overweight.

# Challenges

## Teen Birth Rates

HEALTHY CHICAGO: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF OUR CITY

Figure 3. Average annual teen birth rates\* by community area of residence of mother, Chicago, 2005-2009



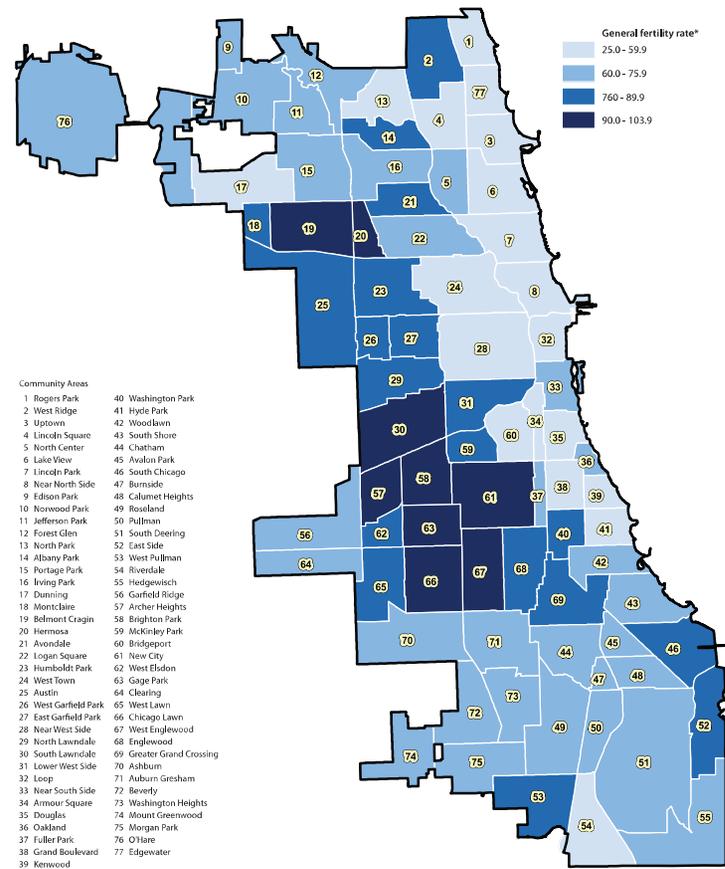
\*per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years.

Little Village has one of the highest teen pregnancy and overall fertility rate in the city.

## Fertility Rates

HEALTHY CHICAGO: TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF OUR CITY

Figure 2. Average annual general fertility rates\* by community area of residence of mother, Chicago, 2005-2009



\*per 1,000 females aged 15-44 years.



## Goals & Strategies

### E.1 Improve access to quality healthcare for the entire community

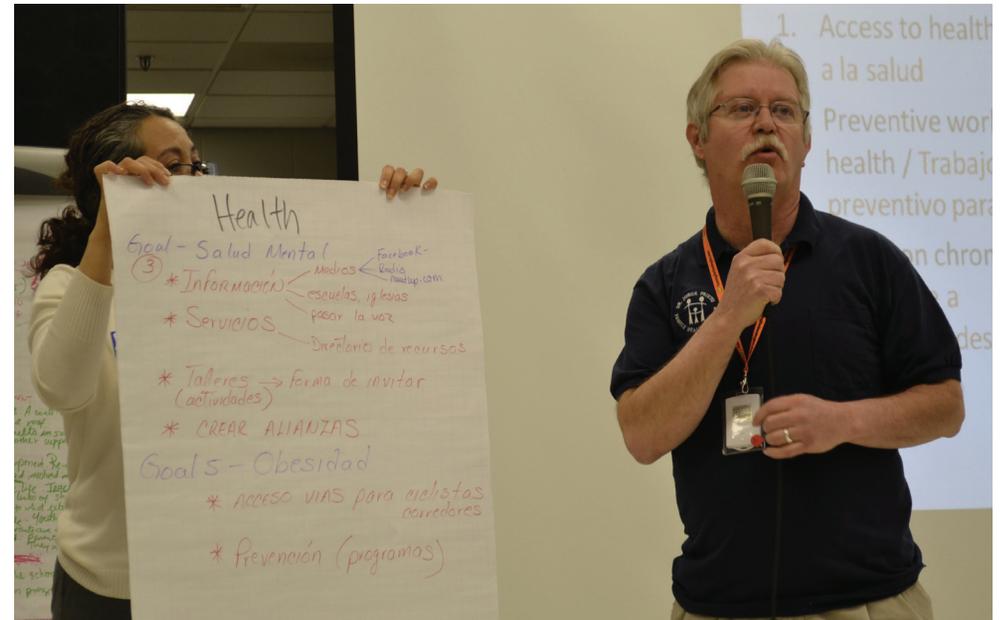
The first strategy is to better identify health care barriers and new opportunities under the Affordable Care Act for all residents, especially those who are undocumented, and to increase education and available healthcare services to the most underserved populations. The second is to increase provider collaboration and sharing of best practices to expand services and increase quality.

### E.2 Strengthen preventative health measures for residents

Prevention strategies should focus on teen pregnancy, obesity, mental health, diabetes, and domestic violence. Priority strategies include launching community-wide health campaigns through trusted partnerships, increasing mental health services through schools and community programs, and using school-based clinics to help reduce teen birth rates.

### E.3 Reduce chronic illnesses

Chronic illnesses can be reduced, controlled, and delayed by creating culturally appropriate education opportunities to increase health literacy and increase understanding of follow up care. A second strategy is to increase community access to health specialists by addressing current barriers and by better educating people about health policy changes that could improve access.



Jim Donahue from Jorge Prieto Clinic and yoga instructor Maria Martinez present on health at the April 13th Public Meeting.

## Goals & Strategies Chart

E. Health				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals	Strategies	Lead Organizations					
<b>Access</b>							
E.1	Improve access to quality healthcare for the entire community	E.1a	Educate residents on healthcare options in the community and on policies that impact services	Federally Qualified Health Centers, St. Anthony's Hospital, and Mount Sinai, Jorge Prieto Clinic, Taller de Jose	X		
		E.1b	Support and increase services for the undocumented population	Federally Qualified Health Centers, St. Anthony's Hospital, and Mount Sinai, Jorge Prieto Clinic, Taller de Jose	X		
		E.1c	Create a stronger network among healthcare providers to expand the services provided to the community	Roots to Wellness, HOPE Response Coalition, Existing Health Providers	X		
		E.1d	Create a structure for residents to engage in a frequent dialog regarding health issues and resources that focus on health and wellness.	Community School Agencies, LV Garden Network, Roots to Wellness, St. Agnes, HOPE Response Coalition		X	
		E.1e	Identify and address key barriers for access to existing healthcare services under new healthcare policy	Research Partner		X	
<b>Prevention</b>							
E.2	Strengthen preventive health measures for residents	E.2a	Support mental health assistance for children and teens	Roots to Wellness, Elementary and Middle Schools, Community School Agencies	X		
		E.2b	Decrease teen pregnancies through family education and involvement and through partnership with school based health clinics	Enlace Chicago, Boys & Girls Club, Lawndale Christian Health Center at FCA, Alivio Medical Center at LVLHS			X
		E.2c	Create methods to mobilize the community, including launching a health campaign that includes healthcare providers and media to share a clear and common messages regarding health issues	Roots to Wellness, CARE Network		X	
		E.2d	Conduct regular and frequent training on health related issues throughout the community	Federally Qualified Health Clinics, Community School Agencies, LV Garden Network, Roots to Wellness, Jorge Prieto Clinic	X		
		E.2e	Increase senior activity and community involvement	Federally Qualified Health Clinics, Jorge Prieto Clinic		X	
		E.2f	Develop and strengthen domestic and family violence services in the community	Rainbow House, Mujeres Latinas en Accion.		X	
<b>Chronic Illnesses</b>							
E.3	Reduce chronic illnesses	E.3a	Develop culturally competent education methods and materials that increases health literacy around key chronic illnesses affecting the community	Federally Qualified Health Centers, St. Anthony, Mount Sinai, Jorge Prieto Clinic	X		
		E.3b	Decrease obesity rates specially among children	Community Health Providers, Community School Agencies, LV Garden Network, HOPE Response Coalition, Chicago Park District			X
		E.3c	Increase the number of specialty doctors in Little Village and increase the overall access to specialty doctors for residents	St. Anthony, Mount Sinai, Chamber of Commerce, SSA, Jorge Prieto Clinic, Federally Qualified Health Centers			X
		E.3d	Decrease rates of diabetes among community members	Federally Qualified Health Centers, St. Anthony, Mount Sinai, Jorge Prieto Clinic			X

### Sources

Births in Chicago, 1999-2009. Chicago Department of Health. December 2012.

Overweight and Obesity among Chicago Public Schools Students, 2010-2011, City of Chicago. February 2013.

Shah AM, Whitman S. Sinai Health System's Improving Community Health Survey: Report 2. Chicago, IL: Sinai Health System, September 2005.

<http://healthcarereportcard.illinois.gov/>





## Overview

**Little Village is a dense community.** Nearly 80,000 people live in 21,100 housing units, mostly in multi-unit structures. More than half of all households have children under the age of 18. Thirty-three percent of community residents are homeowners, lower than the citywide average of 45 percent, but on par or higher than other low-income communities. The overall stock of homes is old, with most homes built before 1939, yet relatively well kept.



Most homes in Little Village were built before 1939.

## Strengths

**Opportunities to reduce foreclosure and increase affordable housing are expanding.** Responding to financial and foreclosure crises, there are a number of organizations working to help homeowners facing housing challenges. Erie Neighborhood House recently launched Buen HOGAR, to better inform community residents, especially seniors, on CHA opportunities. Other support agencies work hand in hand with the housing agencies to provide basic needs, and Taller de José often supports families with complicated housing and tenant concerns. The Resurrection Project, which has developed affordable housing in Pilsen and Back of the Yards, plans to expand services into Little Village. It has partnered with Second Federal Savings to improve community access to sustainable loan packages and housing counseling.

**Stability and culture allow for a distinct neighborhood feel and charm.** As a traditional port of entry for immigrants, Little Village has multiple generations of families who call the neighborhood home. Many families have been in the community for 20-plus years and are highly invested in the community's future. Their styles and personalities are reflected in the exterior and interiors of their homes.

**New family housing units are planned at 26th and Kostner.** The nonprofit housing developer Mercy Housing Lakefront has purchased the former children's furniture factory and adjacent land on the northwest corner of 26th Street and Kostner Avenue. Mercy plans to convert the 206,000-square-foot Storkline building into 148 apartment units with on-site amenities and attached green space. Forty percent of the units will have three or four bedrooms, which are in high demand. With little land vacancy, this development is an opportunity to diversify the available stock of housing and provide housing to those currently underserved, such as seniors and people with disabilities. It may also encourage more young people to stay in the community. Mercy hopes to acquire the vacant land across the street for additional housing units and services for families.

	South Lawndale	Chicago	Illinois
<b>Community Demographic Data</b>			
Housing Units	21,108	1,194,337	5,296,715
Homeownership rate	33%	45%	67%
Owner occupied	28%	39%	62%
Renter occupied	58%	48%	30%
Vacant	14%	12%	9%
Land Area in square miles	4.6	227.6	55,518.93
Persons per square mile	17,269	11,842	231
Persons per household	3.81	2.57	2.62
Median household income	\$ 33,668	\$ 47,371	\$ 56,576
Persons below poverty level	33%	21%	13%

Source: US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts 2007-2011

Community Demographics

	South Lawndale	Chicago
<b>Renter</b>		
Renters who are <b>cost burdened</b>	55%	51%
Renters who are <b>severely cost burdened</b>	27%	28%
<b>Homeowner</b>		
Owners who are <b>cost burdened</b> by housing costs	53%	42%
Owners who are <b>severely burdened</b> by housing costs	26%	19%

Source: US Census Bureau. Estimates 2007-2011

Housing Stats



## Challenges

**Families live in crowded homes.** Many properties have been illegally converted into multi-unit rental properties. These illegal conversions compromise the quality of the property, and often provide substandard housing for occupants. Because senior and other specialty housing is extremely limited, many elderly and people with disabilities live with their families, adding to the density of households.

**The foreclosure rate and housing-cost burden are high.** After the 2008 financial crisis, the Little Village community experienced a 75 percent increase in foreclosure auctions. Over the past year, the rate of auctions increased 6.3 percent. Many homeowners are “under water,” holding mortgages at values higher than the market value of their homes, which undermines wealth acquisition and family stability. Fifty-five percent of renters are considered cost burdened, meaning that more than 30 percent of their income goes to housing. More than half of homeowners are considered cost burdened. The weak housing market means that families investing significantly in their homes may not see a positive return on investment for many years.

**Housing issues are not being sufficiently addressed.** Housing services in Little Village have historically been minimal, with few services for first-time home buyers, families facing foreclosure, and tenants needing legal assistance. This is an area that needs continued development to ensure community growth and prosperity. While some organizations provide housing services, including Enlace Chicago and Erie Neighborhood House, there is no lead housing agency. Expanded partnerships with organizations such as The Resurrection Project can help fill this need.

## Goals & Strategies

### F.1 Increase sustainable home ownership and reduce foreclosures

Increased access to housing counseling and foreclosure assistance is needed to help address the high foreclosure rate. Homeowner education and the development of an active homeowners association will better inform, empower, and support homeowners. Homeowners who are educated and better connected to resources will be better able to finance, maintain, and keep their homes. Additional strategies include:

- Development of beautification and preservation programs to preserve home values and attract investment

- Expanded programs with community-based lenders to provide affordable, high-quality lending products.

- Focused foreclosure assistance on the hardest-hit areas of the community

### F.2 Increase the affordability and quality of rental housing

The two-thirds of residents who live in rental units often face challenges in terms of affordability, quality, crowding, and maintenance. Key strategies include educating residents on tenant and housing rights, increasing access and community support for federally subsidized affordable housing programs and developments, and addressing housing needs for seniors and undocumented residents.

### F.3 Develop new housing options for a diverse range of incomes

A community-involved process is needed to ensure that large-scale housing development moves forward and meets community needs. Specific focus should be placed on development of senior housing, transitional housing, and housing that will attract diverse income ranges. To attract public and private capital for housing development, the community will map current investments and market the community to attract additional investments



## Goals & Strategies Chart

F. Housing				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals	Strategies	Lead Organizations					
<b>Homeownership</b>							
F.1	Increase sustainable home ownership and reduce foreclosures	F.1a	Work with lenders to provide community-based, quality, and affordable, lending products	Erie Neighborhood House The Resurrection Project Enlace Chicago Metropolitan Tenants Organization NHS, Taller de Jose	X		
		F.1b	Create a homeowners association to advocate and empower homeowners			X	
		F.1c	Prepare and educate able and ready homebuyers and current homeowners in positive lending practices, money management, home maintenance, taxes, codes and leasing		X		
		F.1d	Develop programs to educate homeowners on proper home maintenance and work with lenders to assist in financing			X	
		F.1e	Develop beautification programs to preserve home values and attract new investment				X
		F.1f	Increase access and availability of foreclosure counseling and education around best options, self-advocacy, and knowing when to let go		X		
		F.1g	Focus available foreclosure resources on hardest hit blocks or community areas and advocate for lender-leasing options		X		
<b>Rental Housing</b>							
F.2.	Increase the affordability and quality of rental housing	F.2a	Create quality and affordable rental housing units that properly accommodate large families	Erie Neighborhood House The Resurrection Project Enlace Chicago Metropolitan Tenants Organization NHS			X
		F.2b	Create affordable and accessible rental housing options for seniors				X
		F.2c	Educate resident on federally subsidized housing programs			X	
		F.2d	Educate residents on tenants rights and housing rights			X	
		F.2e	Advocate for housing assistance programs that service community residents including undocumented residents		X		
<b>New Developments</b>							
F.3	Develop new housing options for a diverse range of incomes	F.3a	Develop senior housing options that include resources and services for seniors	Mercy Housing, The Resurrection Project			
		F.3b	Provide transitional housing options for veterans and people with special needs	Mercy Housing, The Resurrection Project		X	
		F.3c	Develop new home construction with amenities that can attract and retain college graduates in the community.	Mercy Housing, The Resurrection Project			X
		F.3d	Support small and large community based housing development projects	Enlace Chicago	X		
		F.3d	Develop a community-involved process for large scale community development	Enlace Chicago, a new Development Advisory Council	X		
		F.3e	Attract public and private capital for new development by mapping existing investment and marketing to additional private and public capital sources	Chamber of Commerce, SSA25			X

### Sources

US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts

<http://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/South-Lawndale-Chicago-IL.html>

Chicago Rehab Network Fact Sheet: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census and Estimates from the 2009 American Community Survey.

**Chicago City and Regional Foreclosure Activity.** Second Half 2012 © 2013 Woodstock Institute, Source: Record Information Services

Chicago City and Regional Foreclosure Activity. Full Year 2008 Foreclosure Figures © 2009 Woodstock Institute, Source: Record Information Services

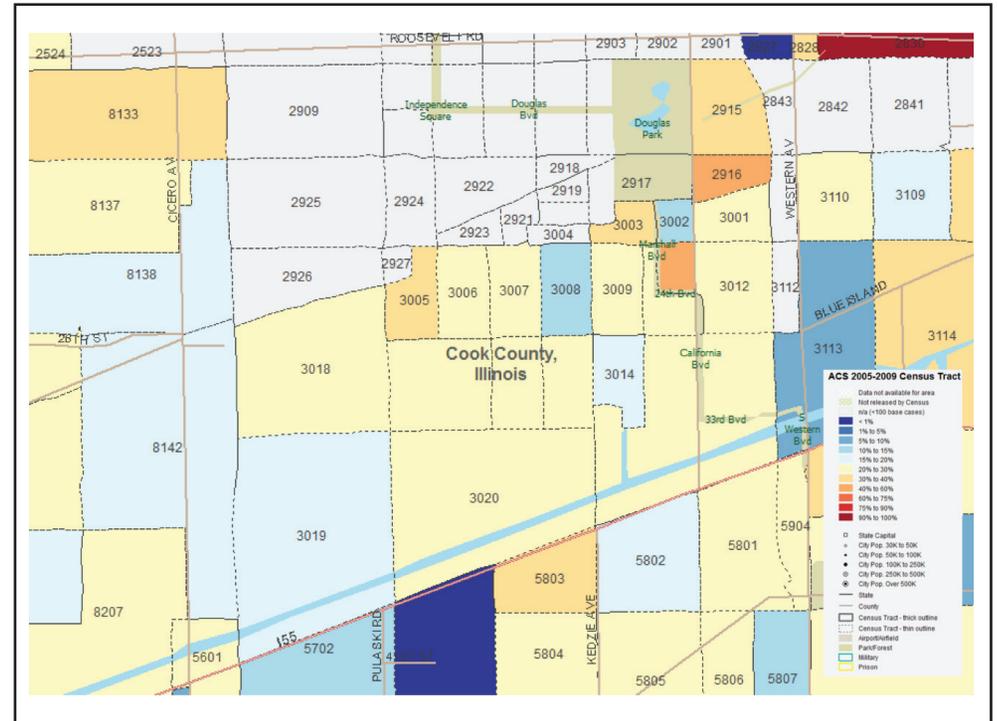
<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20130417/little-village/old-storkline-factory-set-for-large-rental-development-for-families>





# Overview

**Little Village is an immigrant community.** With a Hispanic, mostly Mexican, population representing nearly 82 percent of the neighborhood, Little Village is a community centered around Mexican culture and business. It is a port of entry for more than 36,000 foreign-born community members. Most other residents were born to immigrant families. While many community resources exist to support immigrant families, the capacity for legal services and other supports for undocumented residents do not meet current or projected needs.



ACD 2005-2009 Census Tract - % Entered: 2000 or Later

	South Lawndale	Cook County	Illinois
<b>Year of entry for foreign-born population</b>			
2000 or Later	28%	27%	28%
1990 to 1999	31%	32%	32%
1980 to 1989	19%	18%	18%
Before 1980	23%	24%	23%

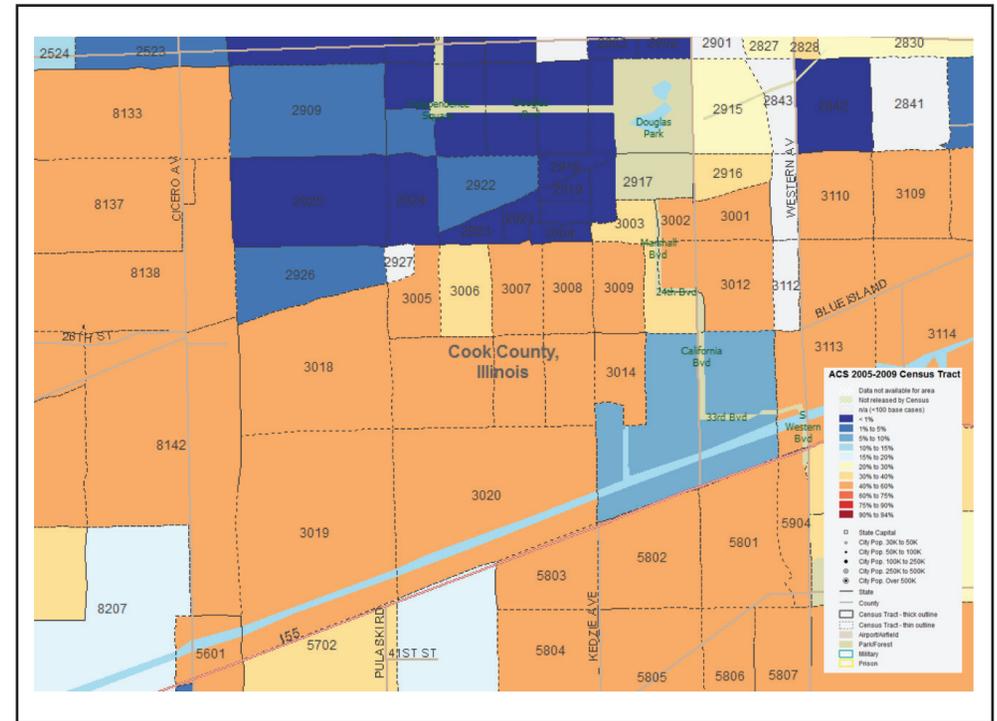
Source: U.S. Census (2010). American Community Survey 2006-2010 (5 year estimates). Social Explorer.



## Strengths

**Many resources support immigrant families.** Little Village has a strong sense of camaraderie and shared experiences thanks to multiple generations of Latino immigrants living together. The prevalence of the Spanish language, culturally appropriate services and specialty products have helped the Mexican culture flourish. A number of organizations provide English as a second language and GED classes. Latinos Progresando is the only non-profit provider of immigration legal services in the community, and also supports a scholarship fund, arts programs, and resources for immigrant families. Taller de José provides accompaniment services (one-on-one support) that help families through crisis situations, citizenship processes, deportation situations, and navigation of government systems. Catholic Charities and Erie Neighborhood House provide citizenship classes and other supports. At Little Village Lawndale High School and Farragut Career Academy, Community Schools programs provide one-on-one college planning and support for undocumented seniors, including the Dreamers Unidos Scholarship Fund and Deferred Action application support and referrals.

**Immigrant advocacy is on the rise.** With federal reforms on the horizon, advocacy for the immigrant community is increasing, along with opportunities for involvement and leadership development. Undocumented youth and students are taking a leading role, and their engagement on this issue, and in the community long term, will garner many positive outcomes. This positive movement helps to relieve some of the fear of living in this country undocumented, and provides an opportunity to challenge the exploitation and barriers faced by undocumented residents. It also creates spaces for changing perceptions about immigrants and immigrant communities like Little Village.



ACD 2005-2009 Census Tract - % Foreign Born

	South Lawndale	Cook County	Illinois
<b>Native and foreign born populations</b>			
Native Born	53%	79%	86%
Foreign Born	47%	21%	14%

Source: Census Estimated percent of all people who were "foreign born" as of 2007-2011.

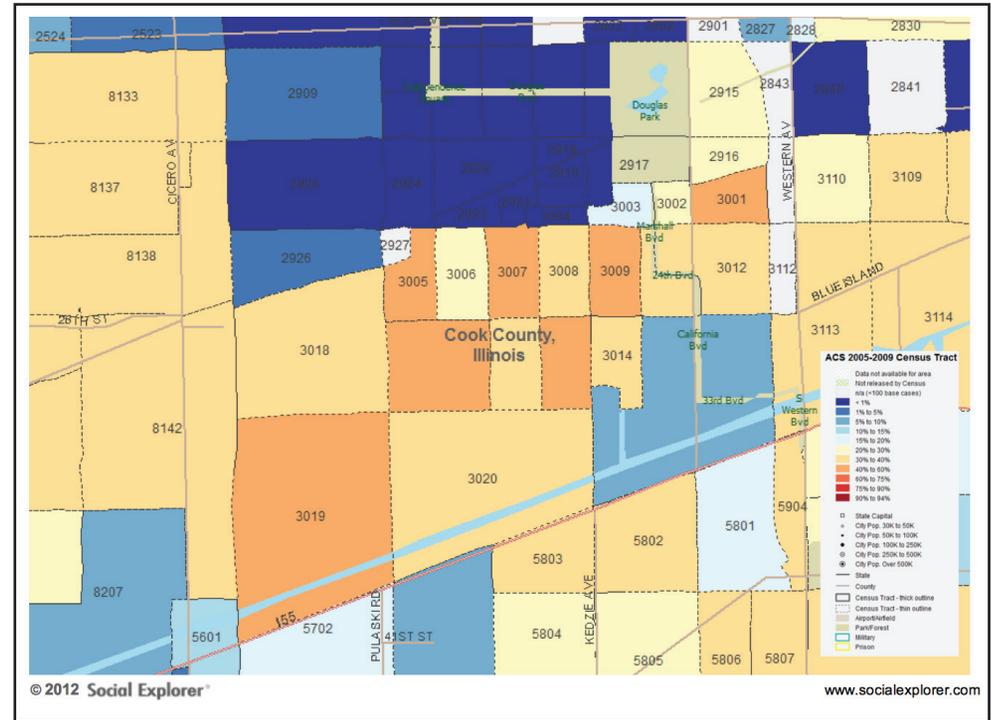


# Challenges

**For many immigrants, citizenship is not an opportunity.** Only eight percent of Little Village community members have gained U.S. citizenship since arriving. More than 31 percent of community members are not citizens. There are formal and informal systems that help families and individuals meet their daily needs, but fear and exploitation are part of the common experience. Students in particular worry about long term access to educational and career opportunities.

**Additional services are needed. Local service capacity must be increased to address the current need as well as projected needs as reforms are advanced.** Local service capacity must be increased to address the current need as well as projected needs as reforms advance. Low-cost legal support services are especially needed to provide assistance on citizenship applications, accompaniment, translation, and navigation of public systems. Because any immigration reforms will likely require applicants to know basic English, an increase in capacity is needed in ESL and GED classes. Citizenship classes will also be needed. While such services are currently available on a small scale, they have been historically underfunded by government and foundations. As policy changes occur, the need for these services will increase.

**Prospects for many families hinge on policy change.** The long-term prospects for many families hinge on pending immigration and economic policies. While advocacy efforts help give voice to the community, progress will be slow until undocumented residents are able to more fully and freely participate in neighborhood progress.



ACD 2005-2009 Census Tract - % Not a Citizen

	South Lawndale	Cook County	Illinois
<b>Citizenship Status</b>			
Naturalized Citizen	8%	9%	6%
Not a Citizen	31%	12%	8%

Source: U.S. Census (2010). American Community Survey 2006-2010 (5 year estimates). Social Explorer.



## Goals & Strategies

### G.1 Promote leadership development through advocacy for comprehensive immigration reform

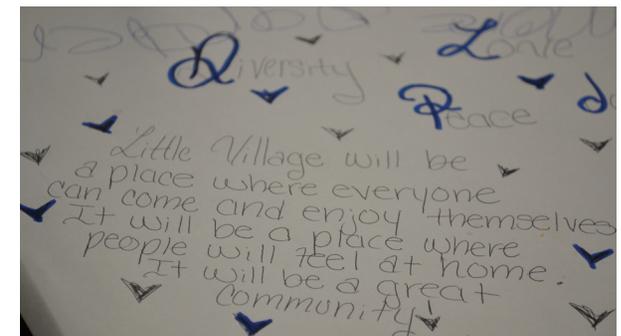
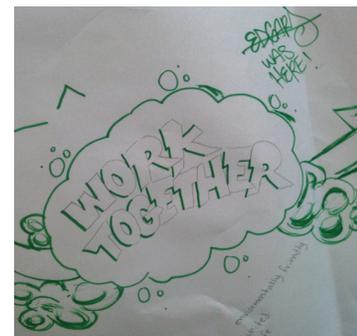
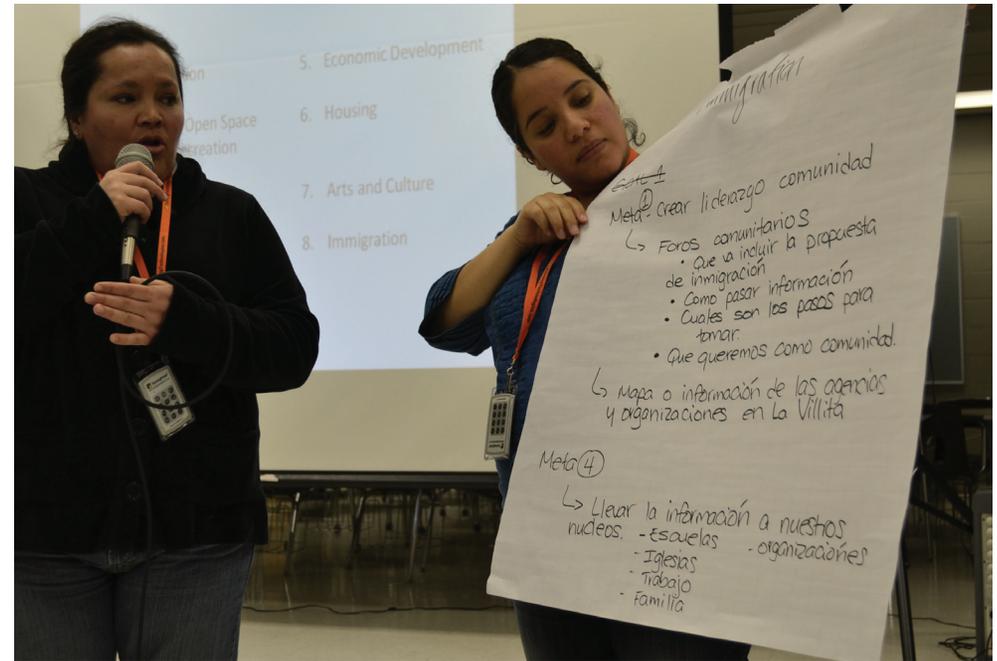
The stories and power of community residents can be amplified through two priority strategies. The first is to build a sense of entitlement, ownership, and power among community residents through a leadership development ladder that engages, validates, and trains immigrant community members. The second is to develop an advocacy plan that is supported by a wide range of community organizations.

### G.2 Strengthen the capacity of existing service providers and encourage partnerships to attract additional resources

Increasing collaboration among organizations providing immigration services is essential to meeting current and projected needs. Additional strategies are to strengthen the network of immigration service providers and potential partners, build stronger working relationships, and develop a collaborative strategy for resource development and sustainability.

### G.3 Provide accurate and timely immigration information to the community

The first strategy is to identify accessible and effective methods to communicate about immigration issues to residents. The second is to organize partners to better engage and inform their constituents. The last is to institute regular public immigration forums that are hosted by trusted institutions to share information and connect residents to service providers. Community leaders can also be trained as information promoters who direct families to credible services and away from fraud and scams.



## Goals & Strategies Chart

Immigration				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals		Strategies		Lead Organization			
<b>Leadership</b>							
G.1	Promote leadership development around immigration issues	G.1a	Strengthen efforts to support local and national immigration movements	Enlace Chicago Latinos Progresando	X		
		G.1b	Build a sense of entitlement, ownership, and power among community residents through a leadership development ladder that engages, validates, and trains immigrant residents			X	
		G.1c	Engage and develop community leaders to take on a role as community educators, leading small forums and disseminating accurate information and referrals to trusted providers		X		
		G.1d	Develop an advocacy plan that includes and is supported by a wide range of community organizations			X	
<b>Capacity</b>							
G.2	Strengthen the capacity of existing immigration service providers and encourage partnerships to attract additional resources	G.2a	Create a resource guide that provides reliable immigration service providers	Latinos Progresando Catholic Charities Erie Neighborhood House Enlace Chicago	X		
		G.2b	Strengthen the network of service providers, advocacy organizations, legal services, adult education providers, and citizenship classes providers to support each other's work		X		
		G.2c	Create a sustainability/funding plan to support and maintain quality immigration services to community residents			X	
		G.2d	Providing cross trainings sessions on immigrations for organizations		X		
		G.2e	Identify and engage additional partners to support local organizations on immigration issues and services		X		
<b>Communication</b>							
G.3	Provide accurate and timely immigration information to the community	G.3a	Identify accessible and efficient methods of communication to inform community residents of immigration issues	Enlace Chicago Latinos Progresando Religious Institutions (Our Lady of Guadalupe, St Agnes, Good Shepard)	X		
		G.3b	Develop strong partnerships with trusted community entities to engage and inform their constituents on immigration issues		X		
		G.3c	Host regular public forums, strategically located throughout the community and with trusted institutions to share information with the community		X		

### Sources

American Community Survey 2006 to 2010 (5-Year Estimates), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau  
US Census Bureau State and County QuickFacts





## Overview

Many resources and a lot of hard work have made Little Village a safer community. Many impactful programs have been developed over the past 10 years to address safety concerns. Collaboration among community organizations has helped to dramatically increase resources, strengthen programs, and support advocacy. But while crime has decreased significantly, it is still a major concern. Gang involvement is an issue, especially among young men. The neighborhood has high levels of disconnected youth who lack engagement in employment and school, which leaves them vulnerable to violence. Their lack of positive connections can also encourage engagement in informal systems that can be harmful and lead to involvement with the criminal justice system. Improving access to opportunities for these youth, encouraging a positive relationship between community members and police, and creating a safer and cleaner physical environment are all essential to improving safety.



## Strengths

**Over 25 agencies participate in a Violence Prevention Collaborative that works to strengthen programs, support mentorship, coordinate advocacy, and leverage resources.** This collaborative structure supports youth and family development programming and maximizes available resources. It is also a platform for advocacy work that focuses on violence prevention, promoting effective interventions, school culture, juvenile justice, and opportunities for youth. Coordination with the Chicago Police Department and other agencies is easier and more effective at a common table. Little Village violence prevention programs have gained national attention for their effectiveness and innovation.

**Many resources have been developed to support preventative, mentorship, safety, and advocacy work.** A number of mentorship programs work with youth and provide family support services. The Urban Life Skills Program at New Life Community Church is a nationally recognized mentorship program for youth on juvenile probation. Peaceful practices and youth-friendly intervention strategies are becoming a part of the curriculum of neighborhood schools. Safe passages have been created at Farragut Career Academy and Little Village Lawndale High School Campus through the Community Watch program and around Rosario Castellanos through a network of committed parents. Testing The Model (TTM), an initiative of LISC Chicago funded by the MacArthur Foundation, is working with a network of community agencies to promote positive development of middle school youth as a means to increase public safety. Groups are sharing data on predictive indicators of becoming the victim or perpetrator of violence. Groups are also sharing best practices and focusing on positive outcomes for the targeted youth, including improved school achievement and community safety.

**Recreational and family programs have created family-friendly spaces.**

New playing fields at Joseph E. Gary and Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez schools provide a place for families, youth, and teens to safely hang out and play late into the evening. Neighborhood Sports Little Village works to support sports-based youth development programs at this site and others. Similarly, the Silver Skate Plaza at Piotrowski Park is a safe teen hangout that is positive and nonviolent. La Villita Community Church, and the Chicago Youth Boxing Program located in the church basement, also provide positive support programs and opportunities for youth. Clean Street, Safe Streets is an initiative of a large number of community organizations that engage neighbors in street and park cleanups throughout the community. Through community schools partnerships, many schools keep their doors open late and early in the morning, even opening at times on weekends, and many out-of-school-time programs for youth and families create safe community spaces where new positive dynamics can emerge.

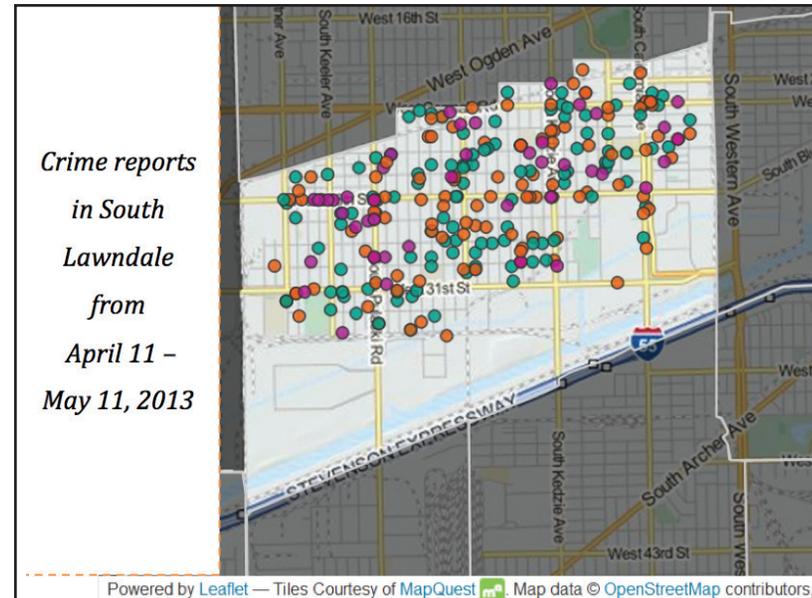
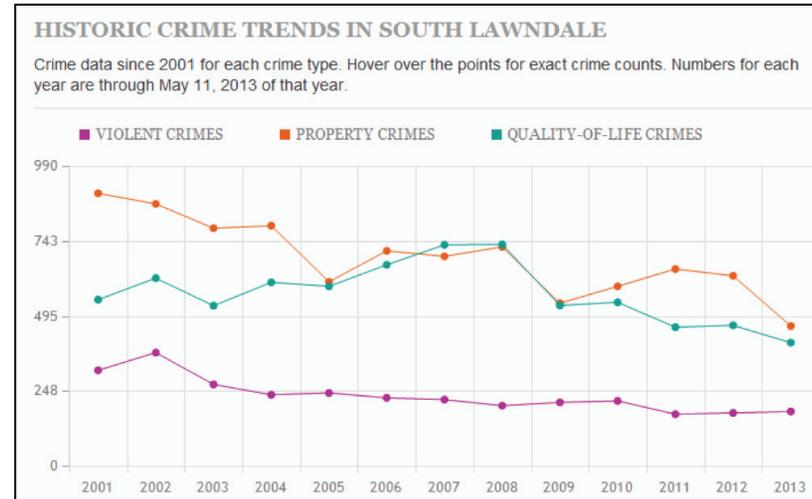


## Challenges

**Dropout rates and under-employment remain high.** About 30 percent of all youth ages 16 to 19 drop out, and the rate is much higher for males, at 43 percent. Employment prospects for all youth are limited, with or without a high school degree. Undocumented young people cannot legally obtain employment, and bad economic times have curtailed opportunities for others. While tutoring and enrichment opportunities exist, they have had a limited impact on youth with the highest level of need. There are many talented and ambitious youth who are not being successfully engaged or challenged or presented with opportunities.

**Systems may negatively impact the healthy development of Little Village youth.** The power of Little Village youth to access resources and opportunity is stunted when systems do not appropriately address their needs or resolve their conflicts. Some schools have seen increases in arrests even though there were no increases in violent incidences, a sign of what some advocates fear is a school-to-prison pipeline. Non-violent Latino and African-American youth are much more likely to be sentenced to incarceration versus alternatives to detention than their white counterparts. For non-violent offenders, alternatives to detention are proven to be less expensive, more culturally relevant and more productive at reducing crime. Restorative justice practices that address infractions and encourage appropriate redress to the offended, by the offender, are not systematically available. Restorative justice practices assure that victims of infractions receive appropriate recourse while also reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system.

**There is a lack of safe and healing spaces for young people to receive support in navigating the different structures that impact their development.** Lack of green and recreational space, the prominence of gang graffiti, and crowding in the physical environment encourage disrespect of the community and discourage a more family-oriented street culture. All neighborhood institutions can play a role in creating a safety net for our youth. Faith-based institutions, businesses, schools, and non-profit organizations are collaborating to strengthen our prevention network. Coalitions like LV Care and the Violence Prevention Collaborative help build consensus around the public safety concerns of residents to challenge oppressive structures and advocate for systems and policy change.



Source: Chicago Tribune Community Crime Study for South Lawndale



# Goals & Strategies

## H.1 Continue to develop violence prevention programs for youth and families

An important strategy to achieve this goal is to focus on early-age prevention programs for 5th to 8th graders through the Testing the Model LV Youth Safety Net Program. Connecting youth at a young age to mental health and social services can help them cope with the stress and trauma that many experience. Youth have asked for more programming and services around substance abuse; more such resources need to be developed.

## H.2 Enhance and broaden educational opportunities for youth

Increasing the opportunities for youth to remain in school and to re-engage if they have left is an important goal. Strategies include the development of a west-side alternative high school that supports re-entry. Other strategies include encouraging school engagement by decreasing expulsions and detentions, and implementing pro-social, restorative justice, and non-violence teaching in Little Village schools. The final strategy is continued advocacy for year-round youth employment programs.

## H.3 Increase community engagement and leadership around safety issues

Community members and youth expressed interest in becoming more involved and taking on more leadership in maintaining community safety. Strategies include enhancing and creating youth leadership development programs, and developing parent led safety programs, like safe passages or community watch. Additional strategies include developing more parent-to-parent support systems to address family and community-wide safety issues, educating residents on safety-related services and programs, and encouraging further family engagement in youth programs.

## H.4 Strengthen the community and police relationship

Community members, organizational staff, and police identified the need for a more positive and trusting relationship between community members and police. An important strategy is to improve CAPS meetings so that they are bilingual, relevant to more community members, and better attended and utilized. Also important is increased participation by 10th District police in community sports event, youth programs, and social activities to build relationships and understanding. More work on trust is needed for these strategies to be successful..

## H.5 Create a safer and cleaner physical environment

Strategies include removing gang graffiti from buildings by creating youth led anti-tagging crews, increasing color options for repainting, and encouraging residents to report graffiti damage. Other priorities include improving lighting in crime hot spots, and encouraging positive community use and ownership of public spaces



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 1

H. Safety				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years	
Goals	Strategies	Organization					
<b>Violence Prevention</b>							
H.1	Continue to develop violence prevention programs for youth and families	H.1a	Increase the capacity for early intervention programs (5th-8th Grade)	ITM Partners		X	
		H.1b	Incorporate mental health services in family and youth programs	Roots to Wellness		X	
		H.1c	Define and implement engagement strategies for the most high risk youth	Ceasefire, New Life, YMCA Street Intervention Program	X		
		H.1d	Educate community on healthy families & healthy relationships.	Rainbow House, Mujeres Latinas en Accion		X	
		H.1e	Educate community on how to deal with family, domestic, and sexual violence issues	Rainbow House, Mujeres Latinas en Accion	X		
		H.1f	Advocate for juvenile justice reform	Enlace Chicago	X		
		H.1g	Develop and strengthen anti-bullying programs	Community School Agencies			X
		H.1h	Increase and support drug use prevention and intervention programs	VPC			X
<b>Education</b>							
H.2	Enhance and broaden educational opportunities youth	H.2a	Develop an alternative school for youth on the west side of the community that supports re-entry	Instituto Del Progreso Latino			X
		H.2b	Implement pro-social, restorative justice, and non-violence teaching in Little Village schools	Marquette Center for Peacemaking	X		
		H.2c	Develop methods to decrease the number of expulsions and detentions for youth that result in them being pushed out of school	Violence Prevention Collaborative, Community School Agencies, School Leadership (parents, staff, & youth)			X
		H.2d	Increase year-round employment opportunities for youth (16-24)	LV CARE (Enlace & Universidad Popular)		X	



## Goals & Strategies Chart - Part 2

H. Safety				0-2 YRS	3-5 Yrs	6+ Years
Goals	Strategies		Organization			
<b>Community Engagement</b>						
H.3 Increase community engagement and leadership around safety issues	H.3a	Enhance and create community oriented and community-wide youth leadership programs	Telpochcalli Community Education Project, Enlace Chicago, Universidad Popular, Instituto Del Progreso Latino, Latinos Progresando	X		
	H.3b	Develop parent to parent support systems to address family and community-wide safety issues	Telpochcalli Community Education Project, Enlace Chicago, Universidad Popular, The Resurrection Project		X	
	H.3c	Create and enhance programs such as parent-run safe passages, community watch in parks and other positive community safety programs	Enlace Chicago			X
	H.3d	Educate residents on safety related services and programs available to them and their families	VPC, Roots to Wellness, Hope Response	X		
	H.3e	Encourage family inclusive strategies in youth programs	VPC		X	
<b>Police</b>						
H.4 Strengthen the community and police relationship	H.4a	Support and promote District 10 police participation in youth programs	VPC & LV CARE	X		
	H.4b	Create sports or social activities where youth can get to know police members	VPC & LV CARE	X		
	H.4c	Increase community resident participation in CAPS	VPC & LV CARE	X		
	H.4d	Modify CAPS meetings to accommodate more community residents and Spanish speaking audiences	VPC & LV CARE		X	
	H.4e	Partner with CAPS to train and develop parent and community leaders on violence prevention issues	VPC & LV CARE		X	
<b>Physical Environment</b>						
H.5 Create a safer and cleaner physical environment	H.5a	Improve safety amenities, including lighting in specific hot spots in the community	LV CARE, Clean Streets Safe Streets	X		
	H.5b	Promote positive space transformation and increased family ownership of public spaces.	10th District Police Department, NSLV, Arts Initiative, SSA #25, Clean Streets Safe Streets		X	
	H.5c	Remove gang graffiti from buildings by creating youth led anti-tagging crews, increasing color re-painting options and by encouraging residents to report graffiti damages on buildings	LV CARE, Clean Streets Safe Streets	X		
	H.5d	Support and increase community clean-up and improvement efforts by community members and specifically by youth	LV CARE, Clean Streets Safe Streets	X		
<small>VPC = Violence Prevention Collaborative LV CARE = Little Village Community Anti-violence &amp; Restoration Effort</small>						

### Sources

American Community Survey 2005-2009 (5-Year Estimates), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau

<http://crime.chicagotribune.com/chicago/community/south-lawndale>



## About Enlace Chicago

In 1990, a group of civic and community leaders in Little Village founded what was then called Little Village Community Development Corporation (LV CDC) and is now Enlace Chicago.

Enlace Chicago is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of residents of the Little Village community in Southwest Chicago by fostering a physically safe and healthy environment in which to live and by championing opportunities for educational advancement and economic development.

Enlace Chicago has four program areas: Community Education, Community and Economic Development, Organizing and Advocacy, and Violence Prevention. It directly serves more than 8,000 youth and adults yet impacts the entire community of nearly 100,000 residents by creating opportunities and resources. Enlace Chicago has two offices located at 2756 S. Harding and 2329 S. Troy.



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Thank you • Gracias