



## CHAPTER 6

# CLEAN, GREEN + SAFE



## CHAPTER 6 CLEAN, GREEN + SAFE

**Objective 1:**  
Enhance Safety and Quality-of-Life

**Objective 2:**  
Further Corridor Maintenance &  
Beautification



## CLEAN, GREEN + SAFE

**Earlier chapters of this plan focus on major infrastructure systems, such as transportation, development or cultural issues. These are vital, but so are day-to-day, quality-of-life issues.**

People are attracted to Wicker Park Bucktown not only because of its artistic vibe, but also because the neighborhood is Clean, Green + Safe. This plan update aims to keep it that way.

SSA #33 remains committed to providing services to maintain and improve the public right-of-way, keeping the area attractive, clean and welcoming for all businesses and residents.



These efforts build on the many measures referred to in earlier chapters to ensure active commercial corridors, while improving dated infrastructure, such as the underpasses at the edges of the neighborhood.

By enhancing the sense of activity on each street, keeping the area clean and well-lit, and improving infrastructure that may be deteriorated, the quality-of-life for all residents and visitors will be improved leading to an even safer community.

### What is Clean, Green + Safe in WPB?

□ Residents want Wicker Park Bucktown to remain **“gritty,” but also clean**, as in litter-free streets, few-if-any rodents, and dog walkers who pick up after their dogs. As is often the case, it’s a question of balance. It is a group effort between businesses, residents, the SSA, the City of Chicago, and partners to maintain the quality-of-life of the community.

□ **Sustainability is a core value** of the neighborhood and of this plan. Some might perceive an inherent conflict between environmental consciousness and a healthy economy, but doing what’s right for the planet can also enhance economic development. Efforts to support green buildings, green technologies, and environmentally-responsible landscaping practices are critically important to maintain best practices for our community.

□ **Continue partnerships** and strong relationships to support this policy. The SSA will work with the Aldermen and the City of Chicago to make sure WPB’s infrastructure is well-maintained, clean, and beautified wherever possible.



## Objective 1: Enhance Safety and Quality-of-Life

Keeping any neighborhood safe is a continual effort, a combination of demography, good police work and active vigilant residents and businesses. These factors are not mutually exclusive. In fact, cooperative citizens enhance police work. Communication between the police and neighborhood leaders is quite good, and citizens are not shy about seeking help from the police. But police patrols are stretched thin, which can affect response time. Strategies and projects in this plan aim to strengthen the civic infrastructure, the “eyes and ears” to improve public safety. Through activating public spaces, maintaining strong relationships, and targeted measures such as security cameras, we will work to continue the improvements in quality-of-life and public safety that have been made over the past two decades. These efforts build on the concepts established in the Arts + Culture, Guide Development and Transportation Chapters that all seek to provide more “eyes on the street” and active use of public spaces as the best way to ensure high quality-of-life and a strong sense of safety in the community.



*Bicyclists on Milwaukee Avenue in Wicker Park | Photo by Steven Vance*

### PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 1.1: Maintain strong relationships between community organizations and Chicago Police Department to further crime awareness, education and prevention.
- 1.2: Install additional surveillance cameras at key intersections to monitor higher crime areas.
- 1.3: Offer rebate programs for safety cameras and lighting around storefronts, residences, and/or alleyways for addresses within the SSA.

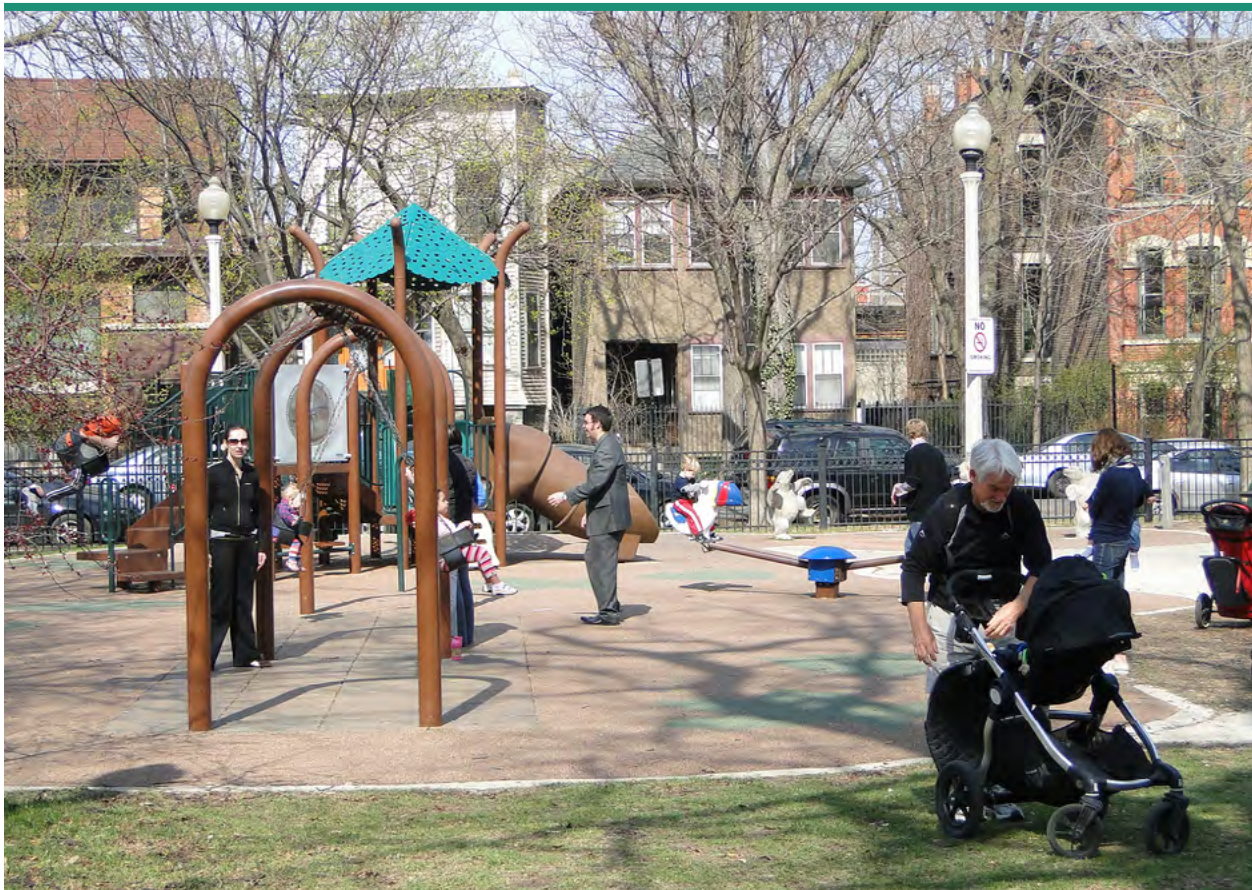
## PROJECT 1.1

### Maintain strong relationships between community organizations and Chicago Police Department (CPD) to further crime awareness, education and prevention.

The most important element of improving public safety is having a strong partnership with CPD, neighborhood organizations and local businesses. As a major hub of activity and late-night destinations, we need to work with the police to restore foot patrols and late-night officers. Restaurants and bars would do their part to ensure public safety of their patrons.

### Actions

- Continue to include CPD in planning efforts and community events.
- Use social media to communicate problems quickly. For example, bar owners can notify each other when they evict rowdy patrons.
- Advocate for an increase in beat cops and bicycle cops in WPB.



Safe, active space in Wicker Park Bucktown | Photo by Adam Jones

## PROJECT 1.2

### Install additional security surveillance cameras at key intersections to monitor higher crime areas.

WPB is one of the busiest locations for entertainment, restaurants, and shopping in Chicago. While the area has become safer over the years, any incident is one too many. Efforts to show visibility, whether through improved lighting and/or visible cameras can provide a deterrent effect as well as provide valuable information if needed.

#### Actions

- Obtain information on potential vendors.
- Find out which property owners and tenants would be interested in cameras.
- Work with police to determine best locations.
- Investigate potential for governmental grant funding.



Chicago Police Department Security Camera | Photo by Senor Codo



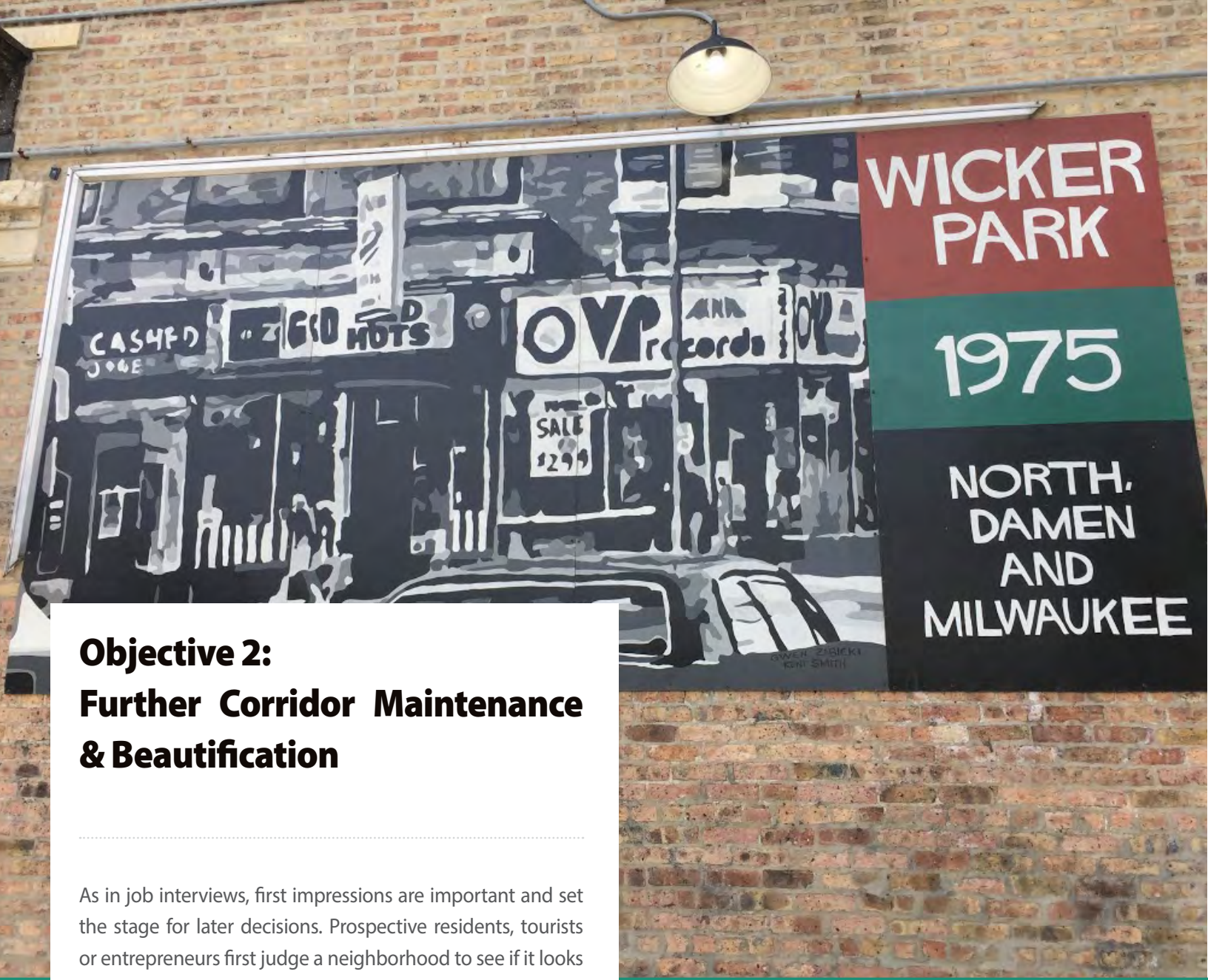
Lighting on the façade of Revolution Brewing | Photo by Steven Vance

## PROJECT 1.3

### Offer rebate programs for security cameras and lighting around storefronts, residences, and/or alleyways for addresses within the SSA.

#### Actions

- Establish a rebate program for property owners within the SSA.
- Partner with organizations such as CPD, Chamber of Commerce, BCO, WPC, Active Transportation Alliance and CDOT.



## Objective 2: Further Corridor Maintenance & Beautification

As in job interviews, first impressions are important and set the stage for later decisions. Prospective residents, tourists or entrepreneurs first judge a neighborhood to see if it looks interesting, vibrant, clean or cool. Or does it look tired and unkept?

The SSA does an excellent job in this area, providing maintenance - including snow removal, graffiti abatement, sidewalk cleaning, landscaping and tree care - as well as beautification - including banners, holiday decorations and a façade improvement program.

The idea is to keep the neighborhood looking good, but not try to make it look like every other business district. This is a tricky balance to maintain where “fiercely independent” residents and business people take pride in the community’s countercultural, Bohemian vibe. As one Advisory Committee member said, “We need funky, leftover spaces.” So true, so difficult to measure, but a worthwhile goal.

### PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 2.1: Continue to clean up graffiti and reduce opportunities for tagging by adding art and murals where buildings are tagged.
- 2.2: Maintain health of streets and seek opportunities for additional trees and landscaping.
- 2.3: Maintain and improve cleanliness of public way via street cleaning, plowing and garbage/recycling collection.
- 2.3: Maintain and improve infrastructure of public way, sidewalks and medians.

## PROJECT 2.1

**Continue to clean up, remove graffiti and reduce opportunities for tagging by adding art and murals where buildings are often tagged.**

Graffiti remains a major issue in WPB, with stickers and tagging private property. By creating outlets or appropriate locations for creative expression, the SSA can channel this energy into appropriate locations rather than private property.

### Actions

- Seek volunteers, building owners or tenants who would be interested.
- Seek artists and match them to appropriate building owners.
- When new murals are complete, send photos and info to news media, social media.



## PROJECT 2.2

**Maintain health of streets and seek opportunities for additional trees and landscaping.**

### Actions

- Inventory problem areas, such as big potholes and dead/damaged trees.
- When replacing trees, seek diversity of species to avoid too much of the urban forest falling victim to unanticipated future pests, such as the emerald ash borer.



### PROJECT 2.3

#### Maintain and improve cleanliness of public way via street cleaning, plowing and garbage / recycling collection.

During the reauthorization of the SSA in 2014, outreach to businesses, residents and property owners showed that maintenance and cleanliness of the public way was one of the most important functions of the SSA. Working with Cleanslate, a job training program, cleaning is provided along each major corridor on a year-round regular schedule with more frequent cleaning in the summer when more people are outside, and sidewalk snow plowing in the winter. By maintaining cleanliness and making sure trash receptacles are emptied the area is not only more welcoming for residents and visitors, but safer and reduces problems such as rodents.

#### Actions

- Inventory trouble spots, such as garbage collection facilities that get overfilled on weekends and during special events.
- Undertake periodic pressure washing of underpasses.
- Utilize eco-friendly landscaping practices including integrating native plants, bioswales, rain gardens, stormwater trees, landscaped bumpouts, and green gutters.

### PROJECT 2.4

#### Maintain and improve infrastructure of public way, sidewalks and medians.

One of the most consistent remarks during public outreach was the importance of maintaining public infrastructure such as sidewalks and parkways. The SSA can play a critical role working with the City of Chicago and other partners to seek additional funds to reinvest in areas where there are gaps, poor conditions, or needed maintenance.

#### Actions

- Maintain sidewalks, fix gaps and make repairs as needed.
- Continue to use public art as pilot projects in parkways, medians and public ways.
- Focus efforts on streets such as Western Avenue that has a wide sidewalk but deteriorated infrastructure. New stores and restaurants could be attracted to build on the high number of transit riders, access to the 606 and relatively more affordable commercial space.



**STORMWATER TREES** | In this example, a single stormwater tree manages a portion of runoff from the street right-of-way. A single curb cut conveys water from the street into the bed of the planter.

**GREEN GUTTERS** | Green gutters are at the same elevation, or level with the roadway. This allows the gutter to collect stormwater runoff directly from the surface of the road.

**STORMWATER BUMPOUTS** | Stormwater bumpouts act as a barrier between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, but they also calm traffic by acting as a visual obstacle

# GREENSPIRATION | *A look at ways communities are going green...*



Healthy Soil Compost

**FACT: It takes about a hundred pounds of food waste to make about one pound of compost.**

### ■ Curbside Composting Pilot Program

Embark upon a public education push aimed at convincing residents and businesses to separate food waste into buckets provided by the city, which would be placed for pick-up alongside blue recycling bins and regular trash cans for same day pick-up; prior to, put out an RFP to contract a local waste hauler.

RESOURCE: [WWW.HEALTHYSOILCOMPOST.COM](http://WWW.HEALTHYSOILCOMPOST.COM)

**FACT: Technology and smartphones have become part of our day-to-day lives.**

### ■ WiFi Enabled Solar Powered Charging Stations

Meet Soofa, a solar powered charging station/bench! With this new equipment, it only takes four bolts in the ground and a little sunlight to provide a new service to park users as well as new data to help the park district better serve the community. The benches currently cost ~ \$2,500 and can also be outfitted with sensors to track air quality, noise levels and pedestrian activity.

RESOURCE: [WWW.SOOFA.CO](http://WWW.SOOFA.CO)



Air Monitoring Bench @ Jane Addams School | Environmental Protection Agency

**Fact: Environmental indicators and baseline data is required to measure on-going success.**

### ■ Wind-Solar-Powered Air Monitoring Station

Contract a “build” of an air monitoring station. The Village Green Project is a community-based activity to demonstrate the capabilities of new real-time monitoring technology for residents and citizen scientists to learn about local air quality. Visit link below for details on how to replicate.

RESOURCE: [WWW.EPA.GOV/AIR-RESEARCH/VILLAGE-GREEN-PROJECT](http://WWW.EPA.GOV/AIR-RESEARCH/VILLAGE-GREEN-PROJECT)

**Chicago Tribune Article | June 2016:** “A wind and solar-powered air monitoring bench was installed in Chicago’s Southeast Side area earlier this year. The Chicago station sits outside Jane Addams Elementary School, where it operates around the clock, measuring the pollutant ozone and fine particle pollution – such as dirt, dust and soot – in the air. The structure also measures weather conditions like wind speed, temperature and humidity. Real-time climate and weather data recorded by the station is available online as well as on-site via an LCD screen. Making such information accessible to the public was a key goal of the project. The EPA installed the station in February. EPA environmental scientist Marta Fuoco said the station’s results will be incorporated into the curriculum at Jane Addams.”



**Signage increases public awareness.**



**FACT: Compared to a conventional lawn, rain gardens allow 30% more water to soak into the ground.**

**Partner, Plant, Greenify + Educate**

Partner with community groups to lead and organize projects to enhance underutilized local green space and pair with educational signage on Best Practices. Identify locations and coordinate volunteers to plant native prairie grasses and flowers to create a community rain garden and outdoor classroom. Look to local Chicago examples and past service projects, including those conducted by the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.) Students and Young Professionals committee (SYPC) highlighted below.

RESOURCE: NEWS.WEF.ORG

**The Pershing Cultivation Project: Growing Green Gardens and Young Minds | WEFTEC 2015:**

For the third WEFTEC service project completed in Chicago, volunteers helped create a rain garden and outdoor classroom with permeable pavers and underground stormwater storage at the Pershing Magnet School. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

**Reading, Writing, and Rain Gardens at John C. Haines Elementary School in Chicago | WEFTEC 2013:**

Volunteers helped replace pavement with green space by removing a concrete layer subsurface; laying topsoil; planting 13 different types of grasses, flowering plants, shrubs, and trees; laying 28 stone pavers for a walking path; picking up trash; and installing screen fencing to block litter from the playground. SYPC hosted the Water Palooza event at the school to engage students in interactive activities to educate them about pollution, rain gardens, and other sustainability-related topics.

“Install a solar charging station park bench for the community to use, partner with the WP Garden Club and redo some local green space with native plants and add signs for educational purposes, or add a bioswale to an empty lot... How about a few small wind-turbines to power something local?”

- Online Comment, Project Website



WEF leaders joined project organizers and leaders to cut a ribbon celebrating the opening of the Pershing Garden. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.



Volunteers help construct a rain garden in Chicago as part of the “Reading, Writing, and Rain Gardens” project at Haines Elementary School. Photo courtesy of Falconer

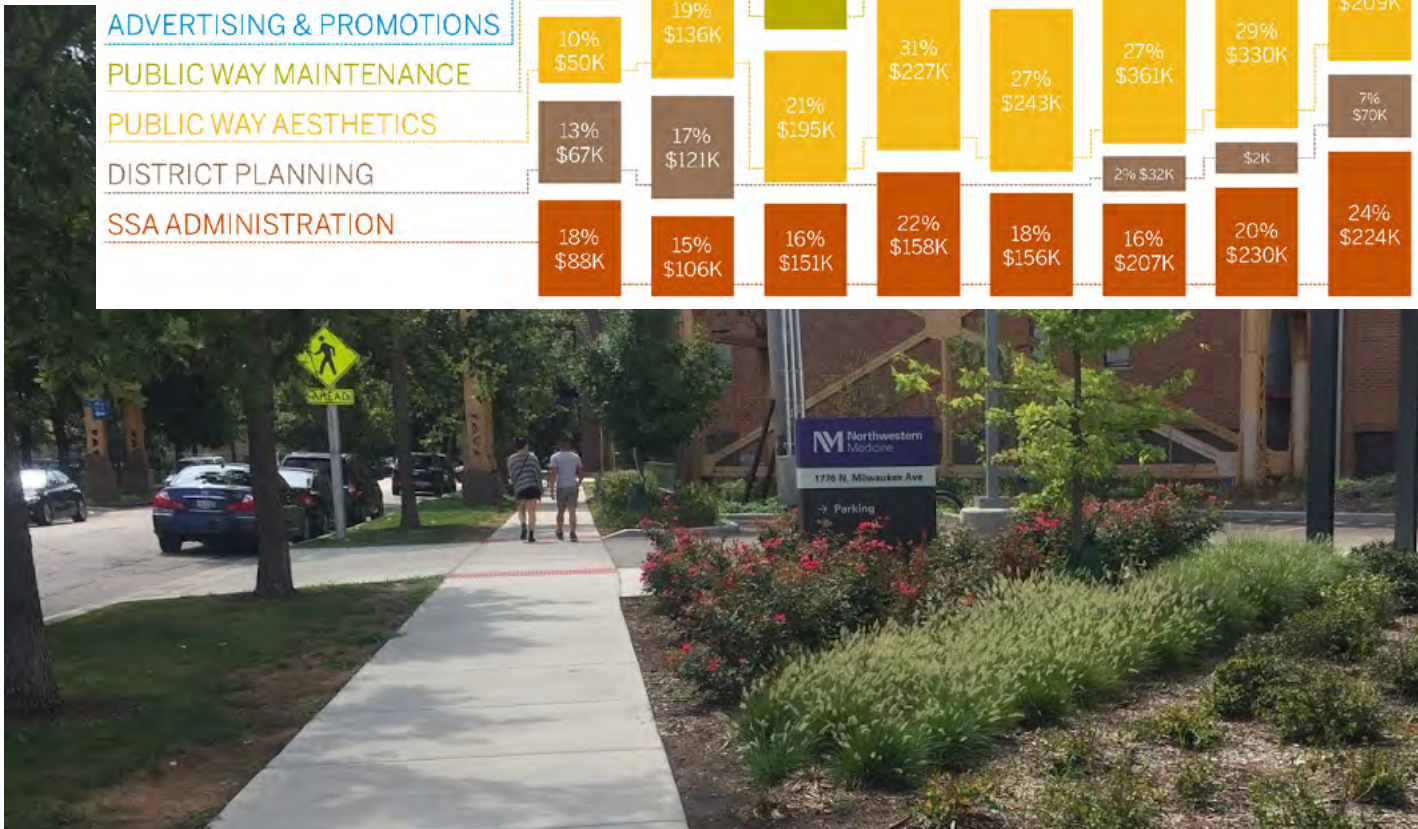
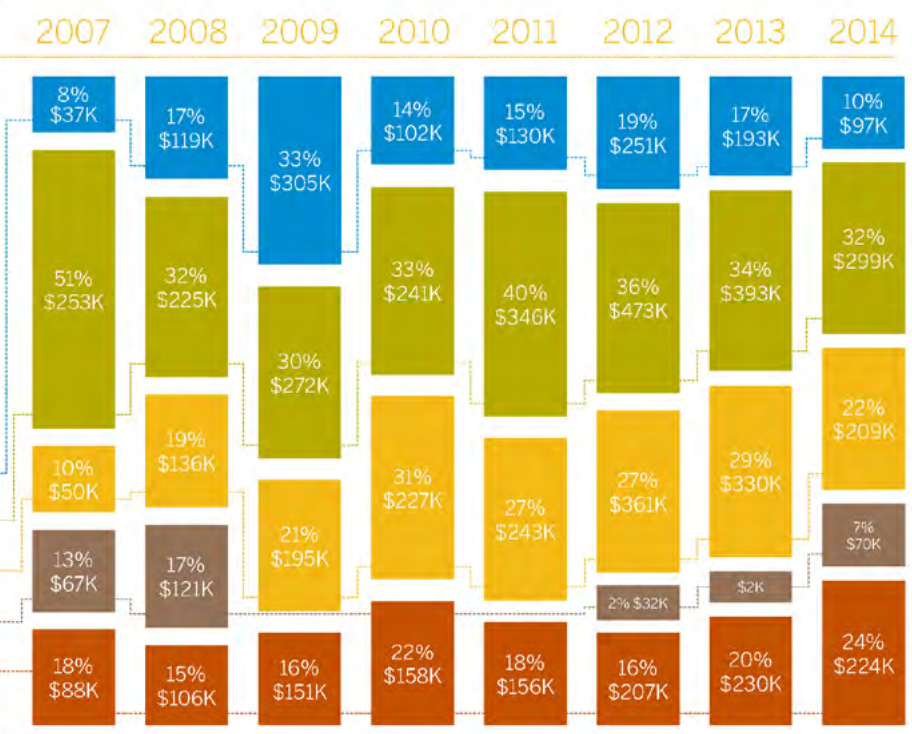
# Keep on doing what you're doing!

**Did you know that WPB SSA #33 recycled over 400 tons of waste in 2013 and 2014? Impressive.**

Keeping Wicker Park Bucktown clean, green and safe is a primary priority of the SSA and a job they are doing quite well. As highlighted in the latest WPB Annual Report from 2013-2014, the SSA typically dedicates the majority of their budget to Public Way Maintenance, which includes a diversity of actions from street cleaning and snow plowing to graffiti abatement and recycling. The projects mentioned within this chapter celebrate the continuation of these efforts and future progress.

## OUR BUDGET

The budget is driven by the **WPB MISSION** and **MASTER PLAN**. The planning process revealed community priorities in five areas that became the Committees and budget segments. This chart is a breakdown of how the budget is spent.



# Quality of Life

The **CLEAN, GREEN & SAFE COMMITTEE** is tasked with three responsibilities from the Master Plan: “to spruce up the place, greenify and keep an eye on things.” This is achieved through a wide variety of initiatives throughout the WPB community.

## CLEAN, GREEN & SAFE COMMITTEE



- GRAFFITI ABATEMENT PROGRAM
- GRAFFITI ACTION DAYS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH 1ST WARD
- GRAFFITI REMOVAL PARTNERSHIP WITH THE 32ND WARD
- TREE CARE IN THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING PRUNING, FERTILIZING & IRRIGATION
- 14 NEW TREES PLANTED IN THE DISTRICT
- BI-MONTHLY COMMUNITY SHREDDING & E-WASTE RECYCLING
- SIDEWALK SNOW CLEARANCE
- HOLIDAY DECORATIONS — LIGHTING, BANNERS & SNOWFLAKES
- SIDEWALK CLEANING
- SUPPLEMENTAL GARBAGE SERVICE & GRAFFITI REMOVAL
- REPAIR OF THE PLANTING BED FENCES ON NORTH AVENUE
- RECYCLING STATIONS AT GREEN MUSIC FEST
- BENEFICIAL INSECT RELEASE IN WICKER PARK COURTESY OF BARTLETT TREE EXPERTS
- GREEN BUSINESS RESOURCES FAIR



Photo by Christy Webber Landscaping

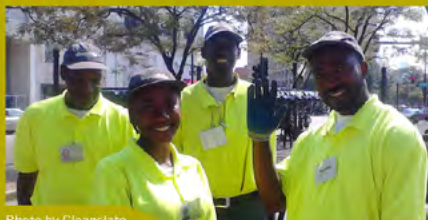


Photo by Cleanslate



Photo by W. Janik



## ONGOING ACHIEVEMENTS



Improving the **CLEANLINESS & APPEARANCE OF WPB'S STREETSCAPES** through public way maintenance (sidewalk sweeping, trash removal, sidewalk snow removal and occasional sidewalk pressure washing), landscaping, tree care and holiday decorations.

Promoting an attractive community, the **GRAFFITI ABATEMENT** rebate program encourages business owners to keep their storefronts free of graffiti and helps with the cost of graffiti removal. For more information, visit [wickerparkbucktown.org](http://wickerparkbucktown.org).

Becoming a more environmentally sound and ecologically sensitive community by providing on-street recycling receptacles, recycling at festivals and providing funding to other green efforts in the district such as LaSalle II community garden.

WASTE COLLECTION	2013	2014
TRASH	132 TONS	162 TONS
RECYCLING	38 TONS	41 TONS
PAPER	10 TONS	11 TONS
ELECTRONICS	3.5 TONS	3.5 TONS

