Welcome to Rogers Park

A Guide to Commercial Development
Acknowledgements

The Commercial Development Guide was created by Rogers Park Business Alliance’s Planning and Development Committee to be a resource for developers.

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# Table of Contents

Welcome to Rogers Park 3

Introduction to the Commercial Development Guide 4

Rogers Park at a Glance 5

Map of Rogers Park 6

Rogers Park Commercial Corridors Typology Chart 7

Commercial Corridor Map 8

Commercial Corridors 9
  Neighborhood Pedestrian Retail
  Transit-Supported Districts
  Residential with Retail Option Corridors
  Auto-Oriented Corridors

Design Guidelines 12
  Façade
  Landscaping
  Lighting
  Signage
  Setback
  Adaptive Reuse
  Auto-Oriented

Regulatory and Review Procedures 18
  49th Ward
  Rogers Park Business Alliance

Resources 21

About Rogers Park Business Alliance 23
Welcome

Welcome to Rogers Park, a historic lakefront community that is home to the most diverse population in the City of Chicago. We are characterized by a mix of mid-rise buildings and single family residential homes set on tree-lined streets, just blocks from 13 of the loveliest and most accessible beaches in the City.

Rogers Park Business Alliance encourages and supports new business development in its diverse commercial corridors. From pedestrian-oriented storefronts on Clark Street and Jarvis Square, to the burgeoning arts and entertainment district on Morse and Glenwood, to the more auto-oriented uses of Western Avenue, Rogers Park provides a wide variety of business development opportunities.

Businesses locating in Rogers Park benefit from:

- Young, educated, diverse consumer base
- Population that is three times as dense as Chicago overall, offering a concentrated pool of customers within easy walking distance of neighborhood businesses
- Cultural amenities and ethnic enclaves that draw people from outside the neighborhood
- Convenient location only 10 miles from downtown Chicago
- Access to mass transit with the Red, Purple and Yellow CTA lines, numerous bus lines, and Metra
- Significant unmet consumer demand
- Available space at competitive prices
Introduction

Each commercial corridor in Rogers Park has a unique set of characteristics. The Rogers Park Commercial Development Guide presents a vision for developing the community’s commercial districts in a manner that builds upon and improves existing characteristics. In order to achieve that vision, the Guide addresses appropriate uses and design elements for each corridor.

This guide may be helpful if you are:
- Thinking about starting a business in Rogers Park
- Rehabbing or expanding a business in Rogers Park
- Developing or rehabbing property on a commercial corridor in Rogers Park

The purpose of this guide is to help prospective business owners and developers:
- Understand the vision for each corridor
- Determine the best corridor for their business needs and uses
- Design buildings, facades and signage that are appropriate for the selected site
- Access existing resources to inform decisions and create a successful business
- Successfully navigate the community and aldermanic review and approval processes

The guide includes:
- Demographic and market data, TIF information, community plans, SSA façade rebate guidelines and other resources to support business planning and development
- Overview of each commercial corridor and its current and preferred uses
- Design guidelines
- Guidelines for the 49th Ward Zoning and Land Use Committee process and Rogers Park Business Alliance’s Planning and Development Committee review process
Rogers Park at a Glance

RACE/ETHNICITY *

White ................................................................. 39.3%
Black or African American ....................... 26.3%
Hispanic or Latino ........................................ 24.4%
Asian .............................................................. 6.4%
Two or More Races ................................. 2.9%
Some Other Race ........................................ 0.8%

HOUSEHOLDS

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

$37,910

MEDIAN AGE

0-17 .................... 24.2%
18-44 ............... 45.1%
45+ ....................... 30.7%

CONSUMER SPENDING PER SQUARE MILE

$496.5 Million

BACHELORS DEGREE OR HIGHER

37%

Source: Claritas 2010, *Census, 2010
### Commercial Corridors by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale (height of buildings)</th>
<th>Pedestrian Retail</th>
<th>Transit Supported (within 1/4 miles of transit station)</th>
<th>Residential with Retail Option</th>
<th>Auto-Oriented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 stories</td>
<td>2-7 stories</td>
<td>2-4 stories</td>
<td>1-2 stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5 feet</td>
<td>0-5 feet</td>
<td>0-5 feet</td>
<td>25% of street wall 0-5 feet, remainder no limit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Uses</th>
<th>Ground floor retail required Residential and/or office upper story encouraged No auto-oriented uses</th>
<th>Ground floor retail required Residential and/or office upper story required No auto-oriented uses</th>
<th>Residential Ground level retail permitted No auto-oriented uses</th>
<th>Auto-oriented uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shopfront Commercial block Civic building</td>
<td>Commercial block Stacked flat Tower Civic building</td>
<td>Rowhouse Stacked flat Courtyard block</td>
<td>Auto service Strip center Civic building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Transparency | A minimum of 60% of the street level façade (up to 10’ in height) must be composed of clear, non-reflective windows | A minimum of 60% of the street level façade (up to 10’ in height) must be composed of clear, non-reflective windows | A minimum of 60% of the street level façade (up to 10’ in height) must be composed of clear, non-reflective windows | Any portion of the building within 0-5 feet of commercial corridor should have a minimum of 60% of the street level façade (up to 10’ in height) must be composed of clear, non-reflective windows |

| Example | Clark: Estes to Greenleaf | Morse: Glenwood to Ashland | Howard: Greenview to Sheridan | Western: Touhy to Howard |

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A Guide to Commercial Development 8
Commercial Corridors by Type

- Sheridan Rd
- Jarvis Ave
- Morse Ave
- Devon Avenue
- Howard St
- Clark St
- Ridge Ave

- Western Avenue
- Rogers Ave
- S&C Electric
- Arthur Ave
- Claremont Ave
- Oakley Ave
- Oakley Ave
- Western Avenue

- Devan Avenue
- Juneway Terrace
- Jonquil Terrace

Legend:
- RPBA Service Area
- Streets
- CTA Red Line
- CTA Station
- Metra
- Metra Station
- Neighborhood Pedestrian Retail
- Transit Supported
- Residential with Retail Option
- Auto Oriented
Commercial Corridors

Pedestrian Retail

Pedestrian Retail Corridors are characterized by first floor retail and walkability. Building facades extend to the sidewalk to create a unified street presence. Storefronts should have windows, lighting and signage that draw people into the stores. A wide variety of business uses are encouraged in these corridors including restaurants, small and mid-sized retail stores and services. Auto-oriented uses, curb cuts and strip-mall structures are discouraged.

Two of the Pedestrian Retail Corridors have special characteristics worth noting. Morse/Glenwood is home to an arts and entertainment district anchored by the Mayne Stage music theater on Morse, and includes gallery spaces, several theater companies, restaurants and bars. This is a prime corridor for additional arts, entertainment and dining establishments that can add to the district’s growing reputation as a destination for both local residents and visitors from surrounding communities.

Jarvis Square (at Greenview) is a neighborhood restaurant district, which also includes a theater, a gym and a gourmet wine and food shop. Conveniently accessed by the Jarvis Square “L” stop, the continued development of this corridor with small-scale retail and dining establishments is desirable.
Commercial Corridors

Transit-Supported

Transit-Supported Districts are an additional designation in certain areas of commercial corridors. Development in these districts should follow the guidelines of the district, but can support greater density due to their proximity to transit.

The two major transportation hubs include the Howard transit station, which is served by three “L” lines and city and suburban buses and the Loyola “L” stop, which connects with numerous bus lines on Sheridan, Broadway and Devon. These hubs provide opportunities for higher density (mid-rise) residential development that includes ground-floor retail. Business uses could include restaurants, small and mid-size retail and services. Businesses that serve Loyola University students and faculty are encouraged near the Loyola stop. The “L” stop at Morse provides access to The Glenwood Avenue Arts District and can also support higher density, mid-rise development that fits in with the scale of the corridor.

Given the proximity of the Jarvis “L” stop to single-family residential districts, this Transit Supported District is more suited to low-rise (2-4 story) development with small ground-floor commercial.
Commercial Corridors

Residential with Retail Option

Residential with Retail Option Corridors are buildings and blocks on the edges of commercial centers that provide a transition between residential and retail uses. These are prime corridors for small retail establishments, services and offices, which can fit in well with adjacent residential buildings. These corridors are similar to Pedestrian Retail Corridors, as both commercial and residential buildings should be pedestrian-oriented with facades that extend to the sidewalk. Building height should keep in scale with surrounding buildings, and auto-oriented uses, curb cuts and strip-mall structures are not allowed.

Auto-Oriented

Auto-Oriented Corridors are locations best suited to larger retail stores and auto-oriented services. These corridors tend to have larger available parcels, wider streets and are more suited to retail and services that require parking and easy vehicular access. Even in these corridors it is important that businesses are designed to enhance the streetscape. This includes setting buildings at the sidewalk, where possible, while locating parking on the side or rear. Facades should engage the street, rather than face it with a blank wall. Sites on these corridors must also have adequate landscaping, fencing and screening.
Design Guidelines: Facade

Desirable Features

- Cohesive materials and colors
- Inset front entrance
- Large windows
- Quality building materials
- Standard brick size
- 18” knee wall
- No security grates on windows
- High percentage of transparency
- Articulated façade
- Defined entry-way

Façade Rebate Programs

Howard Street Special Service Area #19
Rebate of 50% of approved costs up to $10,000

Clark/Morse/Glenwood
Special Service Area #24
Rebate of 50% of approved costs up to $5,000
Contact Rogers Park Business Alliance for eligibility requirements
Design Guidelines: Landscaping

Desirable Features

- Lush plantings
- Low maintenance
- Native plants
- Buffer between pedestrians and traffic
- Provides shade

City Requirements: Parking Lots

Parking lots larger than 1,200 square feet must be set back at least 7' from the property lines and be effectively screened from the view of the street.

Hedges must be between 2.5’ and 4’ feet in height. They must be at least 24” wide and spaced no more than 36” from center. In addition to hedges, there must be one tree for every 25’ of linear street frontage.

City Requirements: Parkways

A tree with a minimum 2.5” caliper size must be planted in the parkway every 25’. Tree grates are required for trees planted in sidewalk openings.
Design Guidelines: Lighting

Desirable Features

Well-lit façade, including upper story
Decorative
Bright storefront
LED or solar cell energy source
Display window lighting
Up or back lit canopy and/or sign
Landscape lighting
Design Guidelines: Signage

Desirable Features

Cohesive colors
Creative
Enhances the overall façade

For sign guidelines, reference the Chicago Municipal Code, Chapter 17-12.
Design Guidelines: Setback

Desirable Features

- Built to lot line
- Maintains continuous street wall
- Inset front entrance
- No balconies over the public way
- Respect for traditional street corner
Design Guidelines: Adaptive Reuse

Desirable Features

Maintains existing structure and architecturally significant features

Additions and modifications compliment original materials and colors

Maximizes ADA accessibility
Design Guidelines: Auto-Oriented

Desirable Features

Maximize percent of building on street frontage
Curb cuts minimize impact on pedestrians
Minimize percent of site occupied by automobiles though structured or reduced parking
Review Process: 49th Ward

As in many other neighborhoods in Chicago, the first step in the zoning process is meeting with the Alderman. Rogers Park falls largely in the 49th Ward, the alderman of which is Joe Moore. When making decisions about zoning variances, planned unit developments, special uses and other significant zoning issues, the Alderman relies on input from his zoning committee, Rogers Park Business Alliance and his constituents. Business owners and developers with new proposals requiring some type of zoning accommodation follow the process below:

- The applicant contacts Mike Land, aldermanic staff assistant, at 773.338.5796 ormland@cityofchicago.org, to initiate request for approval and arrange a meeting with the alderman or his representative.

- If the proposal is in one of Rogers Park’s commercial corridor, the alderman’s office will direct the applicant to meet first with the Rogers Park Business Alliance. (See page 21 for more information on the RPBA process.)

- After meeting with Alderman Moore or his staff and RPBA (if the project is in a commercial corridor), the applicant will make a presentation to the Alderman’s 49th Ward Zoning and Land Use Advisory Committee (ZALUAC), which meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the 49th Ward office, 7356 N. Greenview. There is a short application that must be completed by the applicant and submitted to Staff Assistant Mike Land in advance, in order for the proposal to be placed on the ZALUAC agenda. The committee members discuss the proposal and vote on an initial recommendation, which may sometimes require the applicant to make changes and return to the committee at a subsequent meeting.

- On all but routine zoning matters, the Alderman will refer the proposal to the community at large for comment. Community meetings are publicized and presided over by either the alderman or the ZALUAC chair. The applicant makes a presentation to the community and responds to any questions.

- Following the community meeting, ZALUAC may again deliberate and vote on a recommendation to the alderman. Once he has heard the comments from the community, recommendations from ZALUAC and taken into consideration any comments or changes in the proposal by the applicant, the alderman makes his decision. The decision is made public to the community via email and posted on the 49th Ward website. The alderman then conveys his recommendation in writing.
Review Process: RPBA

For development proposals on the commercial corridors in Rogers Park, the Alderman directs the proponent to present to Rogers Park Business Alliance’s Planning and Development Committee for review before presenting at ZALUAC.

The purpose of the Rogers Park Business Alliance Planning and Development Committee is to review proposed developments that are sited on and/or impact the commercial districts of Rogers Park. The committee provides a forum for small group discussion and feedback with applicants that is not always achieved in an open public meeting.

After the developer meets with the P&D committee, the chair of the P&D committee will present the project to the Rogers Park Business Alliance’s Board of Directors. The Board will develop a position on the project by taking into consideration the recommendation of the committee and any other relevant information. Once the board has taken a position on the proposal, the applicant will receive comments in writing. These comments will also be forwarded to the Alderman and other parties as necessary.

The Planning and Development Committee meets the Thursday before ZALUAC at 6:15 p.m. at Rogers Park Business Alliance’s office, 1448 W. Morse Ave.

Materials must be submitted the Friday before the next P&D meeting in order to be placed on the agenda. The applicant is to provide one electronic copy and 5 hard copies for distribution to the committee. See page 22 for a list of required materials.
Review Process: RPBA

Required materials are as follows:

- Brief narrative describing the project, use, ownership, historic building information (if applicable) and the nature of the request
- Small scale context map. This should show how the project will fit in with the surrounding properties (approximately 100 ft. on each side). Pictures of the site and the adjacent properties are encouraged.
- Zoning map (including adjacent properties)
- Site plan with proposed setbacks, landscaping, fences, garages, parking, curb cuts, and sidewalk
- Floor plans
- Elevations
- List of project team members’ and experience

The committee considers these issues when reviewing a proposal as applicable:

- Density
- Scale of project relative to neighborhood
- Type of retail or service use on the first floor and whether it positively contributes to strengthening the commercial corridor
- Impacts on adjacent property owners, existing businesses, traffic patterns, etc.
- Height
- Design: pedestrian orientation, signage, building materials
- Historic preservation: the committee strongly encourages use of existing buildings as a means of retaining the character of Rogers Park
- Sustainability of use and materials
Definitions: Building Type

Civic Building
Buildings used for public purposes whose forms are intended to stand separate from their contexts, typically configured according to design traditions open to interpretation, typically occupy prominent sites, can be a complex of related structures, examples include schools, museums, government office buildings, post offices, churches, exhibition halls, and theaters.

Commercial Block
A multistory building designed for occupancy for retail or office uses on the ground floor (may be entire ground floor or partial depending on context) with upper floors also configured for those uses and/or residential or hospitality uses, lot occupancy is very high to 100%, building heights and footprints vary depending on placement within the urban context, parking is sometimes accommodated to the side, rear, or underground, but not in the first story or in the front, is always zero lot line at principal frontages with ample ground floor fenestration.

Courtyard Block
A stacked unit or commercial block building with a courtyard formed by recessing the principal frontage significantly inward at the center, creating a building form shaped like a “U”.

Rowhouse
Attached, sometimes identical residences of more than four units, width per unit rarely exceeds 25 feet, height varies between 1 and 4 stories depending on the context, parking in the rear if it exists a tall, also can contain ground floor nonresidential

Shopfront
A 1-story retail or office structure, always zero-lot line with ample fenestration and a front door, ground floor elevation is rarely less than 15 feet in height.

Stacked Flat
A multistory structure consisting of residential, office or hospitality uses, lot occupancy is high to 100%, building heights and footprints vary depending on placement within the urban context, parking is sometimes accommodated to the side, rear, or underground, but not in the first story or in the front, sometimes contains retail or services within an enclosed lobby

Tower
A tall commercial block or stacked unit structure (7 or more stories), often containing a pronounced central lobby.
Resources

Rogers Park Business Alliance offers custom market and demographic analysis, technical assistance, zoning expertise, and facade improvement programs. http://www.rogers-park.com/

Alderman Joe Moore of the 49th Ward.
http://www.ward49.com/zoning-economic-development-land-use/

Alderman Debra Silverstein of the 50th Ward.
http://50thwardchicago.com/

Look up the zoning classification for any area of the City.
Search by specific address, intersection or ward.
https://gisapps.cityofchicago.org/zoning/

Search for sign and landscape ordinances as well as the zoning code.

Developed in 2006, the Howard Street and Morse Avenue Commercial Corridor Revitalization Plan includes revitalization strategies for each commercial corridor.
Resources

The Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) is a rebate program for small businesses in TIF districts. SomerCor 504 administers the SBIF program for the City of Chicago. Properties in the Devon/Sheridan TIF are eligible for SBIF funding. http://www.somercor.com/sbif/

Devon/Sheridan TIF designated in 2004; expires 2027.

Clark/Ridge TIF designated in 1999; expires 2022.

Rogers Park Business Alliance encourages earth friendly development policies and procedures when possible. Visit the United States Green Building Council for more information.
https://www.usgbc.org/

Adding Green to Urban Design, A City for us and Future Generations.
This plan presents a vision and a detailed implementation strategy for economically sound and environmentally sustainable urban design in the City of Chicago.
http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam(city/depts/zlup/Sustainable_Development/Publications/Green_Urban_Design/
Resources

Howard Street Special Service Area #19 offers additional services to businesses on Howard Street from Sheridan to Ridge.
http://www.rogers-park.com/2006/05/howard_street_s.html

Clark/Morse/Glenwood Special Service Area #24 offers additional services to businesses on Clark, Morse and Glenwood in Rogers Park.
http://www.rogers-park.com/2006/06/clarkmorseglenw_1.html
Rogers Park Business Alliance was formed in 1993 to improve the neighborhood through business, community and economic development. Serving the far north side of Chicago from Lake Michigan to Western Avenue and from Devon Avenue to the Evanston border, RPBA engages in numerous activities to enhance business development including marketing, location, networking, and technical assistance to area businesses and entrepreneurs. Its Board of Directors is composed of local business owners, residents, institutional representatives and other stakeholders that guide the work of the organization.

Prospective business owners are encouraged to work with Rogers Park Business Alliance before opening their business in Rogers Park for business plan reviews, access to market information, lender referrals, and assistance with permitting, license and leasing issues.

Rogers Park Business Alliance administers three Special Service Areas (Clark/Morse/Glenwood (SSA #24) and Howard Street (SSA #19) and Sheridan Road SSA #54) that offer beautification, façade rebate programs, technical assistance, and street cleaning to their respective commercial districts.