

# Mars Wrigley Site

Community Engagement Series + Recommendations



Mars Wrigley Site Building Façade

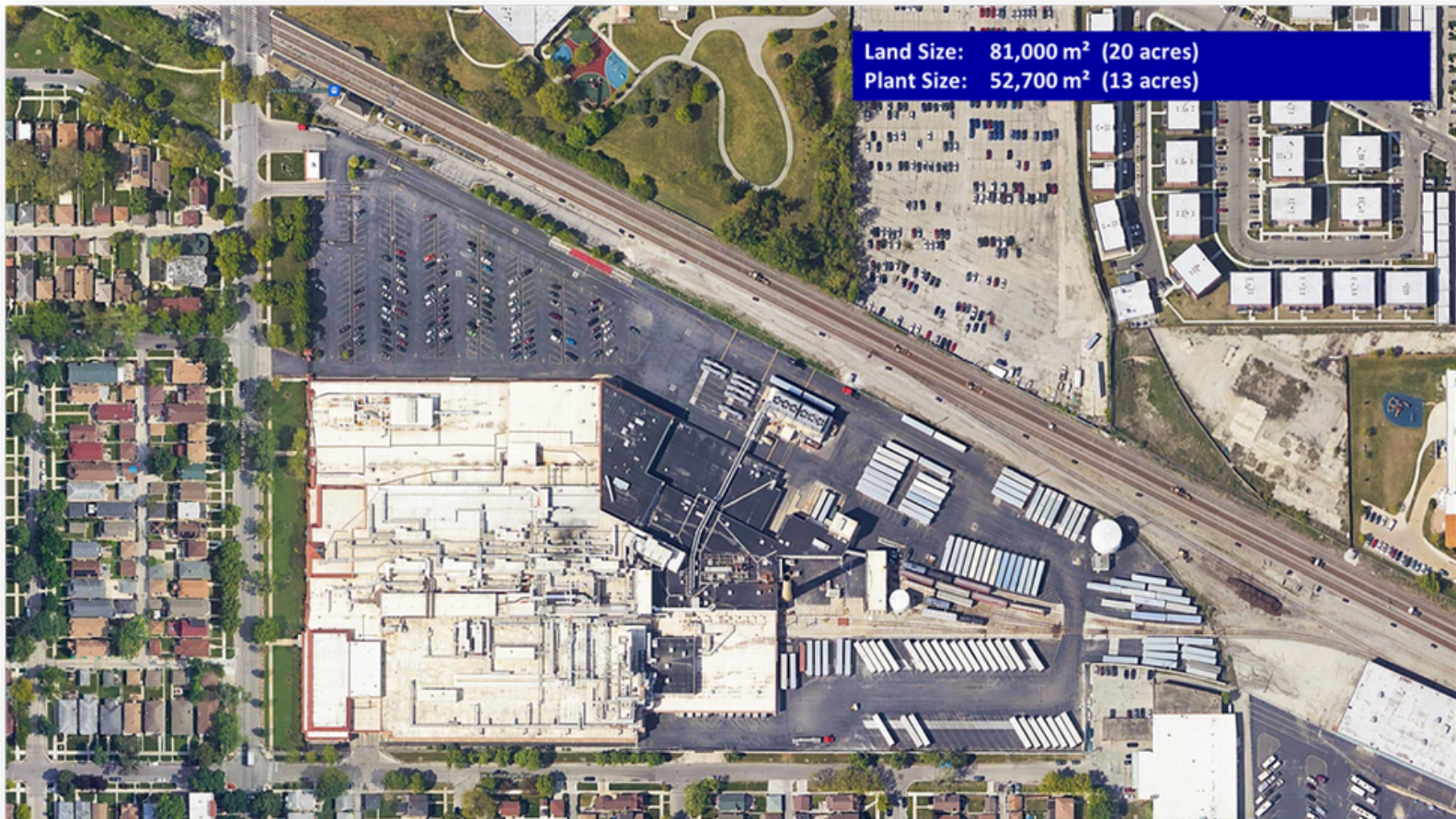
Report Prepared By:

LISC

Collaborative Connections

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Aerial View of the Mars Wrigley Site

In late January of 2022, Mars Wrigley announced its decision to move operations from its Chicago manufacturing site, located at 2019 N Oak Park Avenue, to other facilities in the United States. While Mars remains committed to the Chicago community, maintaining and growing its operations on Goose Island, Burr Ridge and other facilities throughout Illinois, this decision was based on capacity issues the company was facing in its U.S. operations. Mars has stated their commitment to convey the 81,000 square meters/20-acre site upon the facility's closure in 2024 to an appropriate entity for redevelopment. The decisions on who and how this transition will be made will take into consideration the recommendations from the community engagement process, market feasibility, and alignment with Mars principles. Ultimately, the future developers/site will have to comply with the City of Chicago's regulatory framework regarding zoning as the property is part of a planned manufacturing district. Mars intends to work closely with the City, the community, and all potential developers of the site to ensure that any potential zoning decision reflects stakeholders' perspectives. Since March of 2022, Mars has worked with local community organizations, residents, and the City in a community engagement process to help inform the future use of the site. The purpose of this report is to document the process, partners, and outcomes of this initiative. This executive summary offers a high-level view of the process, while the complete document offers a more detailed account of the project.

Mars' intention was to have an authentic, transparent process that engaged the communities surrounding the site and for community members to form alignment on their recommendation for the future of the site. Mars partnered with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC - Chicago) to set up a team to support and carry out the community engagement sessions. The team members included Mars, LISC Chicago, local-community organizations Austin Coming Together, Galewood Neighbors, Northwest Center, and participatory design experts Collaborative Connections. This team worked together from March through October 2022 to co-design an inclusive, educational and accessible community engagement process. The aims of the process were to understand the community's historical perspective of Mars' impact, solicit ideas and vision for the future of the site and ultimately arrive at a consensus concept of the community's recommendation for the future development of the site. Mars will take this input into consideration as it works to identify a future redeveloper of the site. Any final decisions on the future use will depend on market viability and will be subject to the City's planning process, as further described herein.

Since March of 2022, priorities, timelines, outreach, and values were agreed to and set by the co-design team. Guiding principles were set for working together and creating a community engagement process that was (1) intentional and inclusive on how and who is being engaged, (2) transparent & accountable to the community, (3) open to innovative ideas, (4) inviting of contributions from all, and (5) respectful of all who participate. Mars also had several priorities that aligned with community partners and were adopted by the co-design team. These were (1) the future site provides broad, long-term, and sustainable community benefit; (2) the site does not sit vacant for a long period of time, so the use needs to be viable in the market; (3) that the process could potentially serve as a model for others to learn from and refine in the future. The team also expanded over time to include members of the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, and staff of Teska, a local planning organization.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The co-design team planned five scaffolded community engagement sessions with a goal of arriving at a community consensus on a preferred use for the future site. Two of the five meetings were held in person in the community and three were hosted virtually to accommodate a broad range of participation. The co-design team mapped out a range of stakeholders who would be important to the community engagement and decision-making process. This included residents, block clubs, community partners, local and state elected officials, businesses, churches and governmental staff. The team also created an outreach strategy for advising and inviting community members to attend the community sessions.

The scaffolded design of the community sessions provided a structured approach to participation while enabling greater freedom of expression and voice. The first session focused on understanding the opportunity and learning the scope of the site. Mars shared details on the decision to close the facility and their commitment to support current employees and to listen to the communities' insights shared during the community engagement process. Community members were able to clearly understand the scope of the project, and also learn about the current community plans that exist within each neighboring communities. The second session focused on weaving together the history of the site, the surrounding neighborhoods, Chicago, and the world-at-large. The third session, and first in-person meeting, started the process of visioning the key characteristics the community wants the future site to hold. Community members agreed upon nine elements they thought were important in the future use of the site.

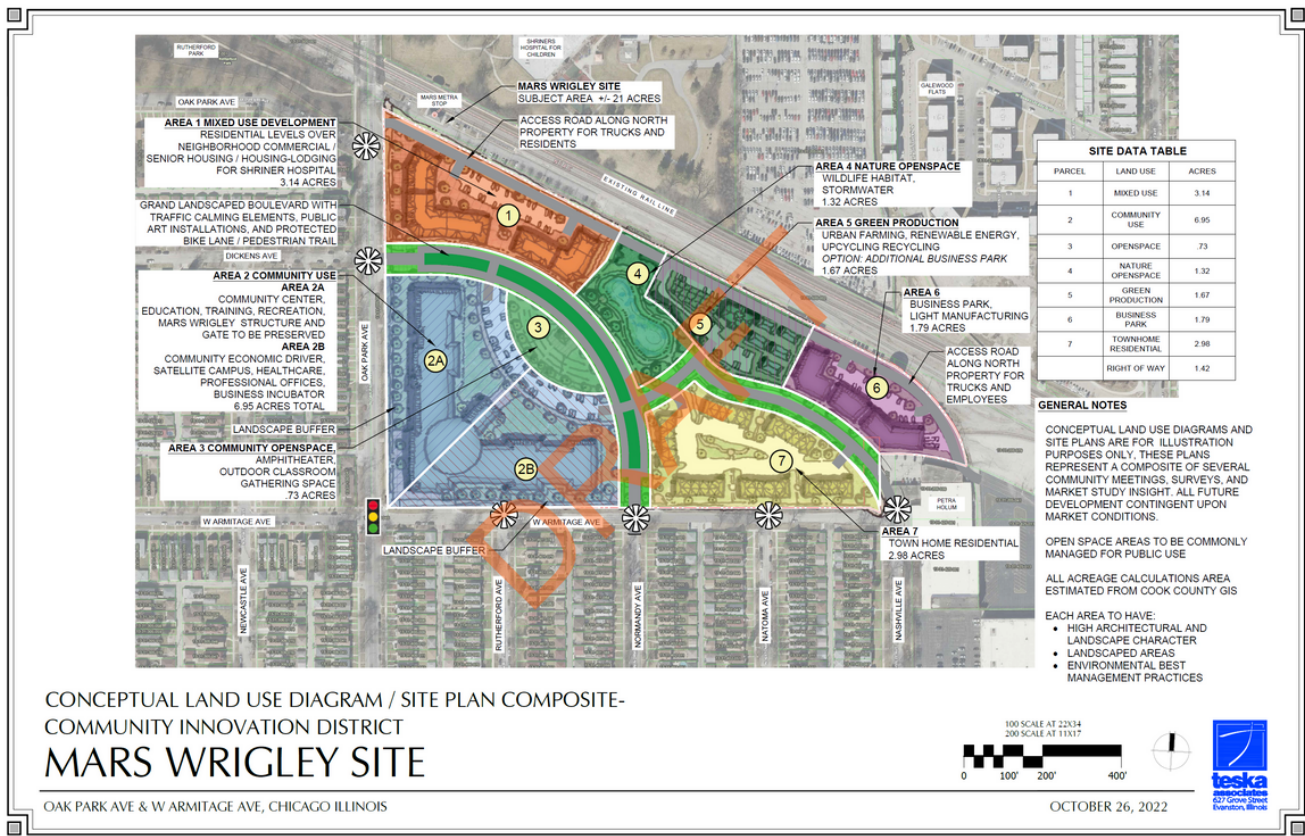
The fourth session, and second in-person meeting, focused on giving more shape to their vision by culling the nine elements they identified after receiving demographic data, residential data, and commercial and industrial data to consider. Participants reviewed three visual land use concepts based on their feedback and chose a preferred concept and requested a few further modifications. The fifth and final session focused on finalizing the one preferred community concept, and offering 'non-negotiables' if elements cannot come to fruition due to market feasibility, along with values that ought to be kept in the next steps of the process. Meeting participants learned how zoning changes work in the city, and what would need to happen in order for the property to no longer be zoned as a Planned Manufacturing District, and Mars shared their next steps. Finally, community members celebrated their time together; many had attended all five sessions and contributed so much to the final product.

Key highlights from all of the community sessions were positive sentiments toward Mars for years of being a good neighbor and creating fond memories, as well as appreciation for their desire to work with the community to identify a future use. The community was interested in a mix of uses on the site incorporating community gathering, environmental sustainability, economic development, housing and green space while honoring the history of the site and ensuring it has another 100 years of rich history. Co-design partners reiterated that preferred concepts would need to be market tested to determine feasibility to avoid a vacant site for an extended period of time. The participants preferred the combination of different but complementary uses on the site laid out in a boulevard concept.

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The following is a [draft rendering](#) of the concept of a mixed-use development with ample green space and key land use as suggested by community members.



Final Draft Concept from Community Meetings

Upon completion of the community engagement sessions, Mars is moving into the next phase of the project. The immediate next step is for Mars to internally review the community preferred land use concept. Mars has committed to keeping the community updated through quarterly communications in 2023 as the project progresses. Mars is currently evaluating the timeline, process and approach to engage potential developers. While the co-created community concept is critical, the final decision of the future of the site will rest with Mars, and will be subject to the City of Chicago's regulatory process and be viable in the market. Mars has committed to continue working with members of the co-design team to determine how best to engage going forward and keep the broader community and other stakeholders informed.

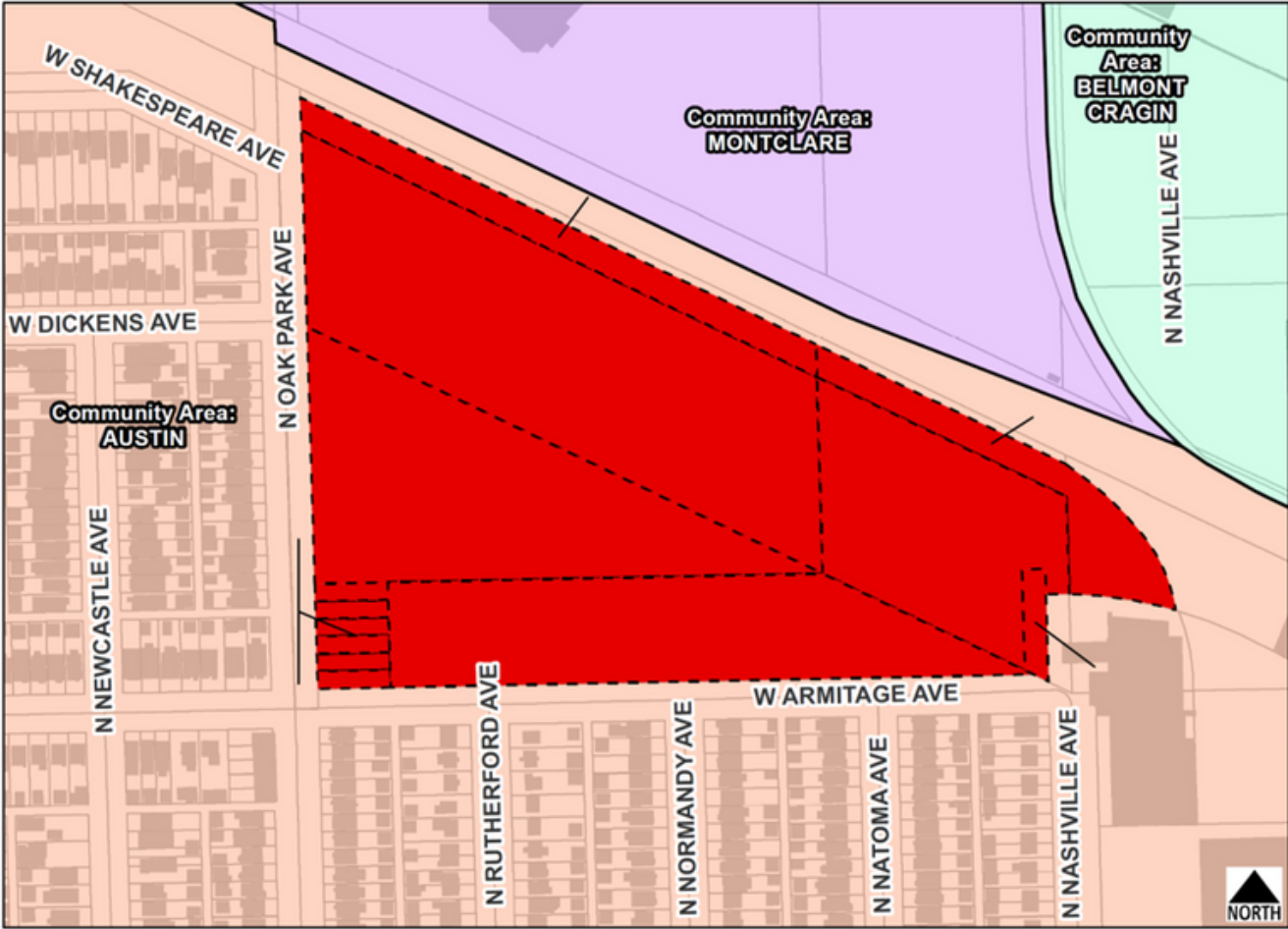
# Full Report

## CONTEXT

In January of 2022, Mars announced the decision to move operations from its site, located at 2019 N Oak Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60707, to other facilities in the U.S. over the next two years. The site will remain operational until sometime in 2024. Mars has made a commitment to community residents to lead an inclusive community engagement process, and to convey the 81,000 square meter/20-acre site to a future use that, (1) best reflects the community preference, (2) is feasible in the market and, (3) that aligns with Mars principles.

The Mars Wrigley site has been a good neighbor and served as an anchor for Galewood, Montclare, and other nearby neighborhoods during its nearly 100 years of operation. Mars would like to see a continued legacy for the site that will benefit to the community and be good neighbor remain. Mars is actively working with LISC-Chicago, community partners, and the City of Chicago to consider the best possible future for the historic site.

### Mars Factory - 2019 N Oak Park Ave



Graphic Overlay of Mars Parcels + Surrounding Areas

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## SITE HISTORY

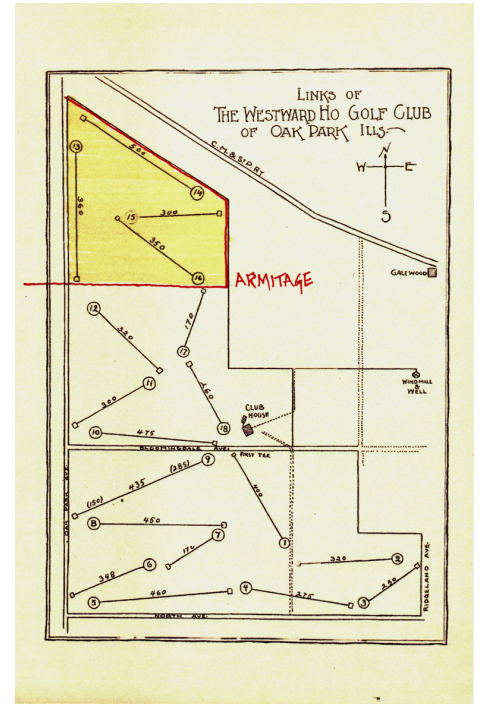
The Mars Wrigley Site is located on Chicago's west side; it is nestled within the residential area of Galewood, a neighborhood in the Community Area of Austin. The factory opened its doors in 1928, designed in a Spanish Colonial Revival style that complimented the surrounding residential areas, and over the next nearly hundred years has been committed to being a good neighbor to the adjoining neighborhoods. The site is both of historical significance to the neighborhood, Chicago at-large, and to the company itself. (1)

Abram Gale bought the land that is now Galewood from the federal government in 1838. A portion of his farm was turned into a golf course, Westward Ho, in 1900. It was later developed as Galewood Estates for homes in 1927 by his grandson, G. Whittier, who enticed Franklin Mars to move to Chicago and locate the Mars factory on the northern portion of the former golf course. The residential neighborhood to the south of the factory blossomed as the effects of the Great Depression faded. (2)

The site is located along a rail line, and a railspur located on the property made it feasible to ship all of the company's products across the US. The site served as the official headquarters for Mars - and was the birthplace of many candy favorites- from Snickers in the 1930's to Three Musketeers. The movement of Mars to this area supported a cascade of many Candy companies calling Chicago home.

On its 75th anniversary, Chicago dubbed Oak Park Avenue, a main street fronting the site, the honorary Milky Way. Neighbors remember Halloween as a special time to live in that area - Starting in the 90's the Mars factory would give out treats on the holiday. However on any given day, the smell of sweet chocolate fills the air in much of the neighborhood.

As Mars made the decision to move the operations at this site to other Mars locations within the United States, it wanted to honor this rich history and legacy, and continue to be good neighbors to the surrounding community. It is within this context this community engagement process unfolded.



Westward Ho Golf Course Links

## Minneapolis Candy Firm Moving Here

Chicago's position as one of the sweet tooth centers of the nation will be considerably strengthened when the new plant of Mars, Inc., now under construction at 2019-53 North Oak Park Avenue, is completed. Mars, Inc. is a candy company, and it is being moved here from Minneapolis.

Frank C. Mars, president of the organization, was impelled to make the change from the Flour city to Chicago by reason of the facilities here for the shipment of his products and the reception of raw materials—important in the case of candies, which require a quick turnover.

Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963); Aug 12, 1928;

1.Chicago Tribune, September 4, 1927 and September 30, 1927  
2.Chicago Tribune, August 12, 1928

## SITE CONDITIONS

The site is located at 2019 N Oak Park Avenue. The land size (site area) is ~81,000 square meters and current site (building floor area) is ~52,000 square meters. It includes some unique features like the front façade and landscaping as well as a dedicated rail line on the east side of the property which helps deliver ingredients directly to the facility. There is also a Metra passenger rail station immediately to the north of the site named after Mars. The site is located in Galewood, a neighborhood of the Austin Community Area, and adjacent to the Montclare and Belmont-Cragin Community Areas.

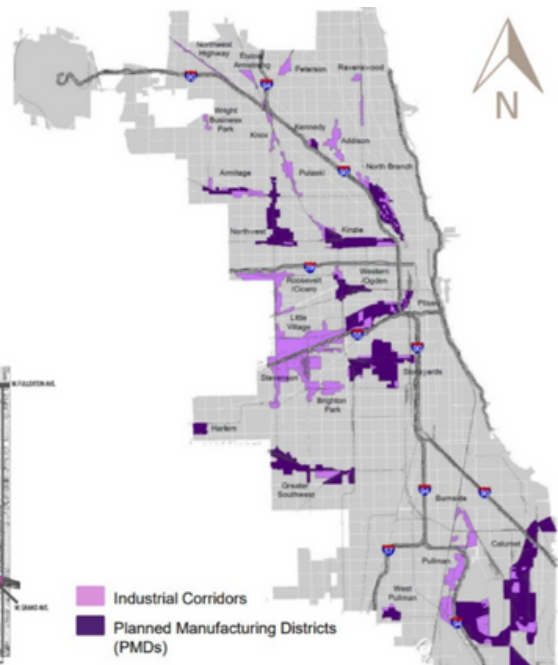
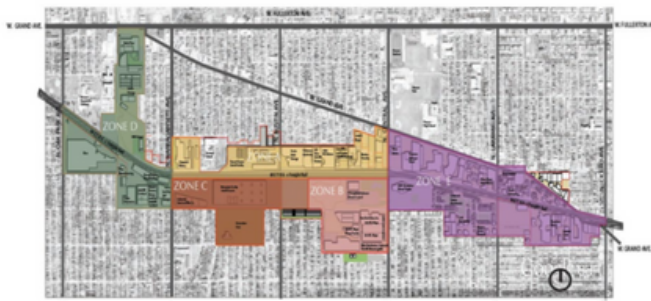
The site is located in the Armitage Industrial Corridor, as defined by the City of Chicago, and in the Planned Manufacturing District #15 zoning district. The Industrial Corridor System was created in the late 1980's and early 1990's by the City of Chicago to preserve manufacturing jobs and maintain economic diversity in the city's neighborhoods. Planned Manufacturing Districts (or PMD's) are special industrial districts that establish additional zoning protections in some industrial corridors by limiting certain non-industrial uses. The Armitage Industrial Corridor is roughly two miles long and 465 acres in area, stretching roughly from Oak Park Avenue on the west to Central Avenue on the east along the Milwaukee District rail corridor. Notable occupants of the corridor, in addition to Mars, are Cloverhill Bakery (2035 N. Narragansett Ave.) and Precision Dialogue Direct (5501 W. Grand Ave.)

### Industrial Corridor System

**Industrial Corridors** are defined areas for industrial development that require a zoning amendment for other uses, such as residential and retail. There are 26 total in the City.

The **corridor system** was created in the late 80's to early 90's with the goals of:

- Preserve manufacturing districts that provide access to industrial jobs
- Maintain diversity in the City's economy
- Encourage industrial investment, modernization and expansion



Information Shared about Industrial Corridors at Community Meeting 5 - City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development



## ABOUT MARS

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For more than a century, Mars, Incorporated has been driven by the belief that the world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today. This common purpose unites our 140,000+ Associates. It is at the center of who we are as a global, family-owned business, and it fuels how we are transforming, innovating, and evolving to make a positive impact on the world.

Every year, our diverse and expanding portfolio of quality confectionery, food, and pet care products and services delight millions of people and supports millions of pets. With some of the world's best-loved brands including Ben's Original™, CESAR®, Cocoavia®, DOVE®, EXTRA®, KIND®, M&M's®, SNICKERS®, PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, and WHISKAS®. We are creating a better world for pets through nutrition, breakthrough programs in diagnostics, wearable health monitoring, DNA testing, pet welfare and comprehensive veterinary care with AniCura, BANFIELD™, BLUEPEARL™, Linnaeus and VCA™.

We know we can only be truly successful if our partners and the communities in which we operate prosper. The Mars Five Principles – Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom – inspire our Associates to act every day to help create a better world tomorrow in which the planet, its people and pets can thrive. For more information about Mars, please visit [www.mars.com](http://www.mars.com).

# MARS



## KEY PARTNERSHIPS

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With a desire for strong community input in the future of the site, Mars decided to partner with local organizations to outreach, organize, and facilitate the community engagement session. Mars partnered with LISC Chicago, who convened diverse community organizations and community engagement specialists to co-create an inclusive and thoughtful process. Mars Wrigley Foundation and LISC have worked together since 2018 to support communities through a variety of placemaking strategies in Chicago neighborhoods including the Austin community, the home of the Mars facility being redeveloped. LISC has a rich history of partnerships with community development agencies throughout many Chicago community areas.

The following groups were convened, for their deep connections with local community residents, and their expertise in cultivating community voice in the planning process. This co-design team was comprised of the following groups:



LISC Chicago is the local office of the nation's leading community development investment organization. Together with residents and partners, LISC builds resilient and inclusive communities that are great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. LISC is an investor/lender, capacity builder, convener and innovator. LISC's core belief is that communities and residents must influence or be at the table when investment decisions are made.

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Collaborative Connections is a non-profit whose mission is to ensure that the people who are impacted by a decision or outcome are the ones who are able to collectively shape it. Collaborative Connections works with justice-centered communities and organizations that are seeking support in group alignment or collective decision making for their future.

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Austin Coming Together: is a non-profit organization that seeks to increase the collective impact of its member organizations on improving education and economic development outcomes for the Austin community.

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Galewood Neighbors are a diverse group of Galewood neighborhood residents, families and businesses working toward the betterment of their community, parks, schools and businesses for our overall quality of life.

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Northwest Center exists to identify and respond to the needs of the community to improve the economic well-being and quality of life in Belmont Cragin and the surrounding communities. By identifying and responding to the needs of our community, we offer housing counseling, financial literacy programs, organizing & activism, and neighborhood-specific initiatives.

## KEY PARTNERSHIPS

As the team gathered they established values for the engagement sessions, completed a framework of support for all the organizations and people who should be involved or informed of the project, and began to co-design the meetings and overall flow for engagement. Additionally, it was determined that local government stakeholders should be invited to participate, as they will play a pivotal role in future development and required approvals.

The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development was invited to join the co-design team during the engagement phase. As the principal planning agency for the City of Chicago, DPD promotes the comprehensive growth and sustainability of the City and its neighborhoods. The department also oversees the City's zoning and land use policies and employs a variety of resources to encourage business and real estate development, historic preservation, accessible waterfronts, walkable neighborhoods, and related community improvements.

Additional partners engaged to support the community in this work included technical expert in the real estate industry and urban planning. The co-design team engaged the Goodman Williams group and Teska and Associates. The Goodman Williams Group specializes in market feasibility analyses for individual properties, large development sites, downtowns, and redeveloping neighborhoods. Teska and Associates is a leader in urban planning, landscape architecture, site design, economic development, and community engagement. The community partners met with 29th Ward Alderman Christopher Taliaferro to walk through the community engagement process and invite his participation in the meetings. Alderman Taliaferro and State Representative Camille Lily attended many of the sessions alongside community members.



The Co-Design Team at a site visit in July 2022

## PLANNING FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Mars' commitment to community prosperity led to working with LISC. LISC Chicago and Mars then partnered to lead a community engagement process centered on the goal of hearing from residents, stakeholders and community leaders, on what they view as the next best use of the Mars site. The first step was to talk with community leaders and convene a group of community partners to create a co-design team.

From March through August of 2022, the co-design team worked to co-create a broad-based community engagement process that will allow local residents to help inform decision making on the future use of the site. These community groups were asked to join the co-design team based on their experience in cultivating and representing local community voice in both comprehensive planning projects and site-specific projects. Northwest Center represented the community area of Belmont-Cragin, Austin Coming Together the broader Austin Community area, and Galewood Neighbors, the specific neighborhood of Galewood, where the site is currently located. The group was facilitated by LISC-Chicago and Collaborative Connections. One of the initial tasks of the co-design team was to create values that they wanted to hold during the community engagement process. They agreed to co-create a process that was (1) intentional and inclusive on how and who is being engaged, (2) transparent & accountable to the community, (3) open to innovative ideas, (4) inviting of contributions from all, and (5) respectful of all who participate.

The co-design team determined that five community engagement sessions, from late August through October, would be needed to achieve the goals of the process and to arrive at consensus on a proposed preference for the future of the site. While the design of the meetings was scaffolded (each session was unique and built off the work done at the previous one) each meeting had a thorough review and reflection of previous sessions so newcomers were still able to effectively participate. The sessions were deliberately a mix of weeknights and weekends, virtual and in-person, with the goal of make the meetings accessible to a wide array of community members.

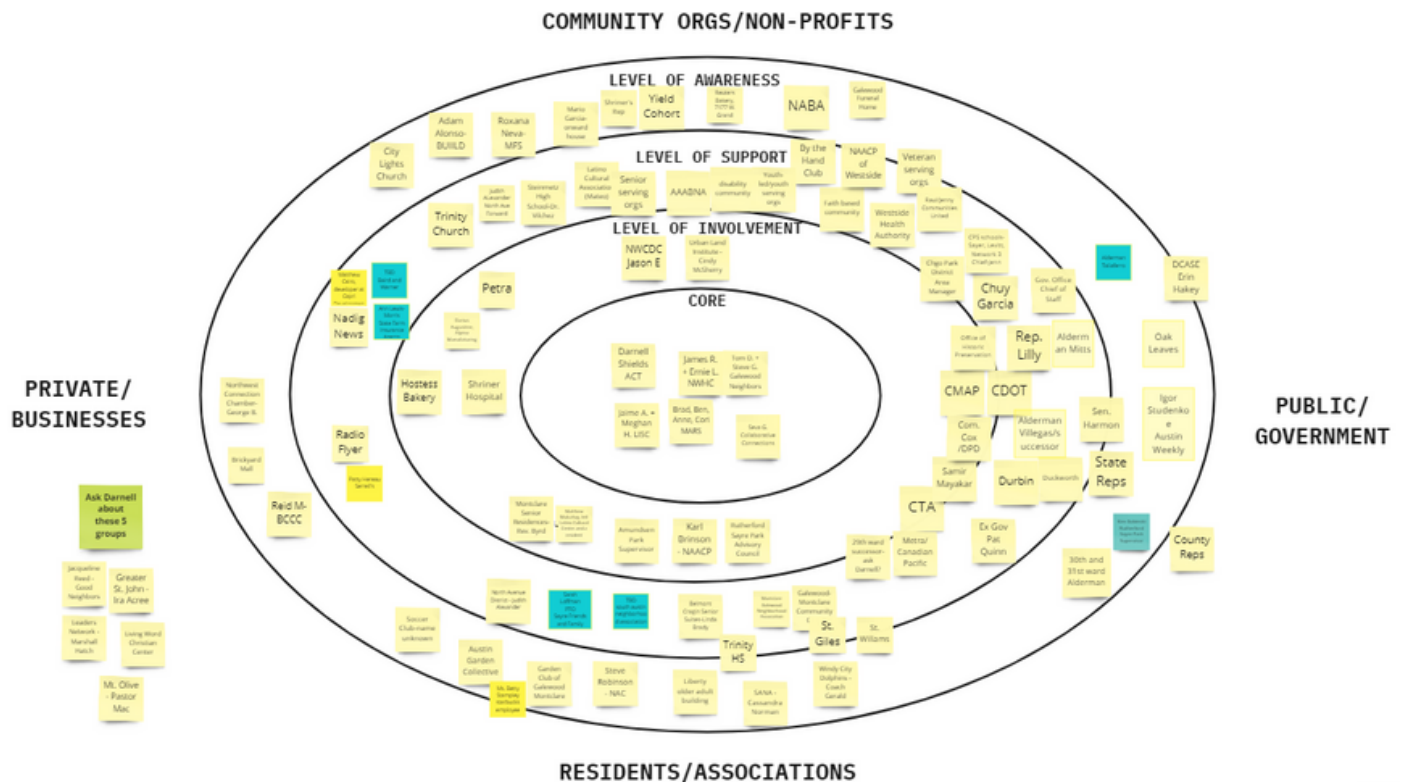
The approach to outreach for the community planning sessions was multi-tiered. The goal of outreach was first and foremost to engage as many community residents and stakeholders as possible in the process. Additionally, sharing information accurately and directly from the co-design team members was crucial to maintaining transparency and keeping people updated on progress. In that effort the team created contact lists, coordinated on community notifications, and focused broadly on getting information to community media outlets.

Contact Lists: Determining who should be included in the outreach list started with brainstorming sessions with the co-design team to identify a broad list of stakeholders and the best way to contact them. Prior to engaging as a co-design team, the Galewood Neighbors had engaged their constituents with information, surveys and other informal discussions which enabled them to identify potential interested community members and partners which helped add to the overall outreach efforts. In total, LISC has maintained a list of over 450 individuals who responded to meeting invites or who were identified by the co-design team for direct proactive outreach.

## PLANNING FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Community Notifications:** After identifying stakeholders, the team co-authored an announcement to the community introducing the co-design team members, explaining the principles and goals of the engagement process and sharing the dates, times and locations of each meeting. Each co-design team member shared the letter with their membership, partners and residents. Galewood Neighbors volunteered to be the main location for posting meeting information and all documentation for the engagement process.

**Earned Media:** The Mars Communications team and LISC’s communications partner, RISE, collaborated to reach out to local community media outlets, including Austin Weekly News, Block Club Chicago, and Austin Talks. Members of the Austin Weekly News reporting staff were in attendance at most of the community sessions and reported on the progress.



Framework of Support for the Engagement Process

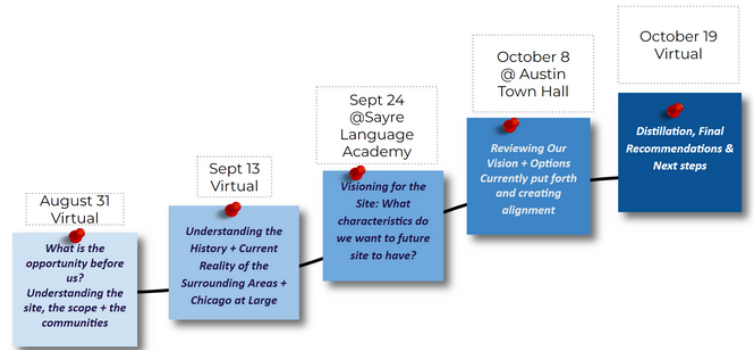
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS - OVERVIEW + TAKEAWAYS

Collaborative Connections and LISC Chicago employed the Technology of Participation (ToP)<sup>®</sup> facilitation methods when designing and facilitating the engagement sessions. ToP methods are a values-based approach to facilitation. The values that undergird these methods are profound respect inclusive participation, teamwork and collaboration, individual and group creativity, action and ownership, and reflection and learning. These values influenced all points of engagement with community members, including meeting design, the way information from content experts was processed, and the way community members made decisions during the meetings. ToP methods distinguish between buy-in (a group agreeing to a pre-conceived idea or plan) and ownership (a group co-creating the outcomes they would like to see). ToP Methods are designed to allow groups to have ownership over the final product they created. The meeting facilitation prioritized group ownership by relying on consensus-based decisions making; the community decisions and recommendations through this process reflect outcomes that all participants were willing to move forward with, rather than the result of a majority vote.

While traditional community planning meetings involve participation, it is generally relegated to content experts presenting ideas or offering suggestions or options to choose from, and community members asking questions and providing feedback. These community engagement sessions instead focused on building trust and community among participants, educating participants so they could fully participate and offer critical thoughts on the topic, and created bi-directional communication between content experts and community members. Those who attended the meetings co-created the final product together, not through a series of voting or feedback, but by helping shape the concept in the first place. In addition to providing brainstorm ideas and out of the box thinking, community members themselves also wrestled with the nuances of the project, and the reasons certain ideas might not work. Using popular education techniques, complex information was able to be shared in a digestible format, and the meeting participants themselves were able to determine what to do with the information they were given.

Design elements that were intentionally included to build trust and alignment included but were not limited to: transparency in design and process, taking the time to start with meaningful small group introduction, allowing adequate time for critical thinking (each session was 2.5 hours long), sending detailed meeting notes and follow up references, making sure that participants felt comfortable with the technology, ensuring that newcomers and repeat users were able to follow the group journey and build on previous ideas, oscillating between individual processing time, dialogue in small and share and discussion in large group.

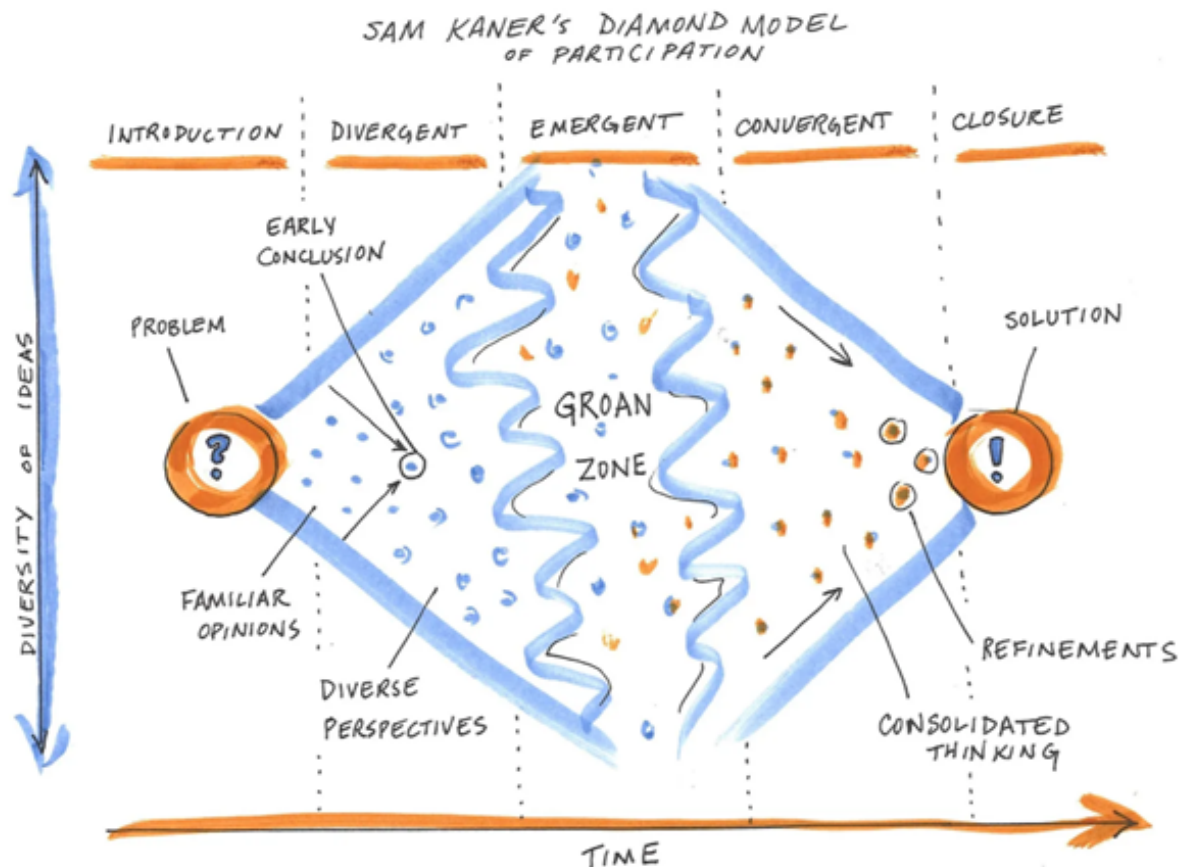
### Community Engagement Sessions Overview We are on a journey of co-creating together!



The community engagement series journey shared at each

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SSESSIONS - OVERVIEW + TAKEAWAYS

The session format followed Sam Kaner's model of group decision making (image below), and employed a scaffolded design, with each meeting building off of the work of the previous meeting. The goal was to follow the steps of the diamond model of participatory decision making, and move meeting participants from the problem to the solution. This was both the flow of the overall series, and the flow within each of the meetings. Each session was designed to make sure any new comers who had not attended previous sessions could still fully participate. The meetings saw a mix of consistent participants, and newcomers each time.



Adaptation of Kaner's Diamond Model of Participation in 'Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making.' Credit: Carrie Kappel.

In total in all 5 meetings, there were 162 unique participants, with the total count of participants throughout the 5 meetings (including repeat participants) at 301. The total count of participants per meeting can be found on the meeting summaries below. 94 people, or about 58% of total participants attended for only 1 meeting, 25 people, or 16% for 2 meetings, 20 people, or 12% attended a total of three meetings, 13 people (8%) for 4 meetings, and 10 people (6%) for all 5 meetings. These members include 4 organizers from the co-design team who were present who do not live directly in the community.

**Date and Time:** Wednesday, August 31st from 6:00 – 8:30 PM (Virtual) - 97 participants

**Key Focus:** Understanding the Scope of the Site + Opportunity

### Meeting Notes

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#### **Meeting Overview**

Participants who joined the virtual meeting and were able to hear directly from Mars Wrigley - a representative from Mars welcomed the participants, shared a [video](#) that had been created to show the scale of the site, shared details regarding the factory closing, and briefly answered questions from the participants. The goal of the meeting was to make sure that participants had a thorough introduction to Mars, to the site, to the plan for the following sessions and the surrounding community areas.

After thorough context was given, participants were invited to self-select into small groups to learn more about one of the surrounding communities by either reviewing plans that were already in place from local community organizations, or reflecting on their own lived experience in the area. Any participants who did not live in the neighborhood were instructed to specifically review and get inside of the current plans or demographic or land use data of the communities surrounding the site. After this scanning process, small groups were invited to consider what implications and insights the plans that were already in place in the neighborhoods had on the potential future use of the site.

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#### **Key Meeting Takeaways:**

- Safety and Diversity were two arenas that Galewood residents believed to be the greatest strengths of the neighborhood.
- Gaps that participants noted (across all neighboring communities) were: a lack of amenities/retail, insufficient employment or engagement opportunities for youth, not enough affordable housing, and the need for more green space/ community events.
- Participants were able to do some initial brainstorming on uses for the site that would build on the area's strengths while addressing some of the gaps. Some of the most salient brainstorm ideas that ended up on multiple lists included: green space, an arts/education/culture/community center, job training facility, and mixed use.
- Participants were given the opportunity to offer some out of the box ideas, and some notable ideas included: a candy museum, a recreation center (pool, skating etc.) restaurants, and outdoor pavilion space, a satellite site for city college roller, aviation training center, advanced industrial tech training center, clean energy/solar cells/panels, or urban farming.
- Many participants raised concerns on the tax implications of whatever came next and the need to know more about what it would be (this was addressed in subsequent meetings).
- Many participants also raised values-based suggestions for the future of the site - they wanted to make sure that the sustainability of the site from both an environmental and economic perspective was taken into consideration, and that the community voice not get co-opted by other powers that be throughout the city, and that there ought to be something that is intergenerational - something for everyone.



**Date and Time:** Tuesday, September 13th from 6:00 – 8:30 PM (Virtual) - 70 participants

**Key Focus:** Weaving together the History of the Site, the Surrounding Neighborhoods and Chicago

[Meeting Notes](#)

[Key Group Product](#)

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### **Meeting Overview**

This meeting reviewed and rehearsed the context from the previous meetings, and participants came together to create a shared understanding of the historical markers that got us to our current reality. Community members and Mars staff collectively created a history wall that spanned back over 100 years, answering the question ‘What events, innovations, actions and people have shaped our Communities, Chicago and Mars Site over the past century?’ Participants spent the session sharing insights and stories in both small group and large group and weaving together a collective narrative of how interconnected all of our history is - and came to an understanding of how we emerged at the reality we face today.

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### **Key Meeting Takeaways:**

The Wall of Wonder, or historical scan exercise, seeks to create both a shared narrative for the group, and also to help the participants reflect on the past as they plan for the future. As the group reflected on the shared journey of the past century, some depth-level insights of what this meant for the future of the site were shared. Some notable reflections/implications on future planning included:

- A strong need and desire to plan not only for immediate needs, but also long term needs, and consider options that will be on the front end of addressing climate change, from things like renewable energy sources to flood mitigation through restoration of natural areas.
- A strong desire to have this project be a showcase of how to include community voice, and how to change the inequitable way that race and class have left so much of community voice out of decision making and wealth building over time. There was rich discussion about the importance of equity and the ability to actually let people have a say in what their community looks like versus the ‘powers that be’ determining what the community deserves/ needs.
- A request that the future of the site honor, share, and educate about our collective history; from the rich history of the communities that surround the area, both in the ways they were historically oppressed but continued to grow and stabilize, to the history of Mars and the importance of this site on their company.
- A desire to finally be proactive and think long-term, instead of being reactive to a situation. A request that the future of the site is not just what makes sense now, but what is visionary for what the future may hold. There was a strong desire that the community be ahead of the curve and be prepared for what is coming down the pike in the future - e.g., items like electric cars, or the changing nature of retail.
- A reminder that residents deserve enjoyment, leisure, recreation, and fun. And that Mars has a value in freedom - how to instill this value and hold it as we think about the future of the site.

**Date and Time:** Saturday, September 24th from 9:30 – 12:00 PM @Sayre Language Academy - 42 participants

**Key Focus:** Visioning for the key characteristics we want the future of the site to hold

[Meeting Notes](#)

[Key Group Product](#)

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### **Meeting Overview**

Having spent the first two meetings taking an environmental scan of both the current reality in the local neighborhoods and the past, this meeting was focusing on building on the lessons learned from the scan and projecting a vision for the future. Participants were asked to answer the question 'What are the key elements we want the future site to hold.' This was the first meeting that took place face to face, so a little more time was spent on getting participants to meet one another, and reviewing the work of the first two meetings. After using a workshop method to categorize everyone's ideas on the key elements, participants self-selected into small groups to further flesh out and add to the arena, and offer the category a title. They were also given a list of ideas that had been generated months prior from a community survey from a local community group and asked to incorporate whichever of those ideas fit the intent of their category.

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### **Key Meeting Takeaways:**

There were nine elements that participants wanted to see in the future site. They included:

#### **State of the Art Community District/Gathering Space**

Participants wanted a space for the community to be able to gather; even finding a venue for these meetings that was meant for community gathering and could hold more than 75+ people was difficult to come by. They wanted the community gathering space to be inclusive (intergenerational, family friendly, multicultural)

#### **Welcoming Green Space**

Community members had many ideas of how to offer a natural space + environment within the current site. From koi ponds to garden beds, prairie restoration to walking trails, the desire for green space was very high on many community members' lists.

#### **Center for Lifelong Community Learning**

Participants wanted to see education related components at the future site- spaces such as after school programs, culture/arts center, satellite college campus etc. were listed.

#### **Human Service/ Multi-generational Community Concern Center**

Community Members were interested in senior centers, recreation/youth centers, multi-generational activities, and mental health and human services centers.

**Viable Economic Drivers for Local Area**

Participants were seeking some element for employment training, co-working, and/or business incubation. The idea was to have some element that could build people's capacity to either work together to create economic opportunity in the area, or to support workforce training/development.

**Local Small Businesses**

Participants want to see food, gathering, and recreation-related small businesses

**Natural Sustainable Production**

There was a strong desire to have a future focus when it came to production of energy (solar and wind were named) or food (hydroponics, urban agriculture) - in addition to facilities that bridged technology and nature.

**Living Landmark**

Participants wanted to make sure that the future space pays homage to/educates the public on the historical significance of the site/local neighborhoods.

**New Inclusive Housing Subdivision**

Community members were interested in potential short-term housing for parents who were visiting Shriners Hospital next door, as well as intergenerational housing options

.....  
In addition to these elements, community members further offered suggestions and ideas with the nine arenas. A professional planner was present in the room and was able to distill all the feedback into three arenas: Design Principles, Design Characteristics, and Uses. This allowed the planners to take these concepts and shape them into a conceptual drawing/layout for the next meeting.

Additionally, community members raised questions about tax implications and landmarking implications, and the co-design team decided to address those concerns in subsequent meetings as well.

COMMUNITY PLANNING - MEETING 4

**Date and Time:** Saturday, October 8th from 9:30 – 12:00 PM @Austin Town Hall - 32 participants

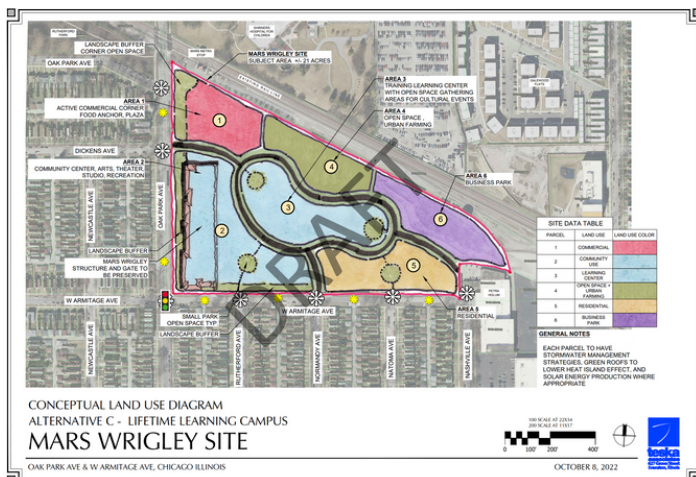
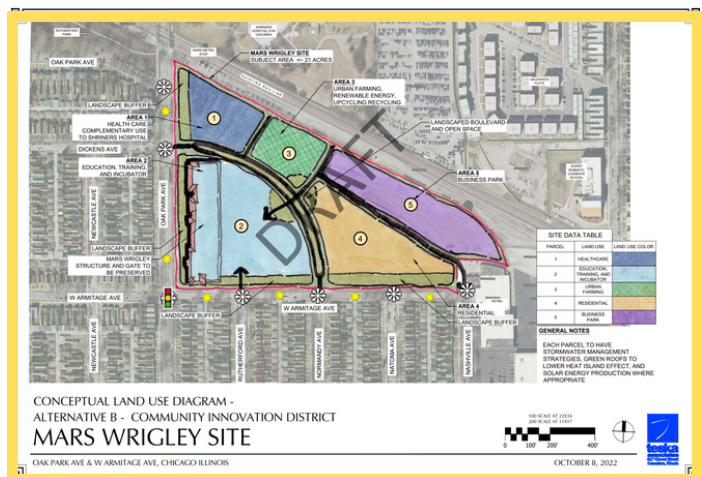
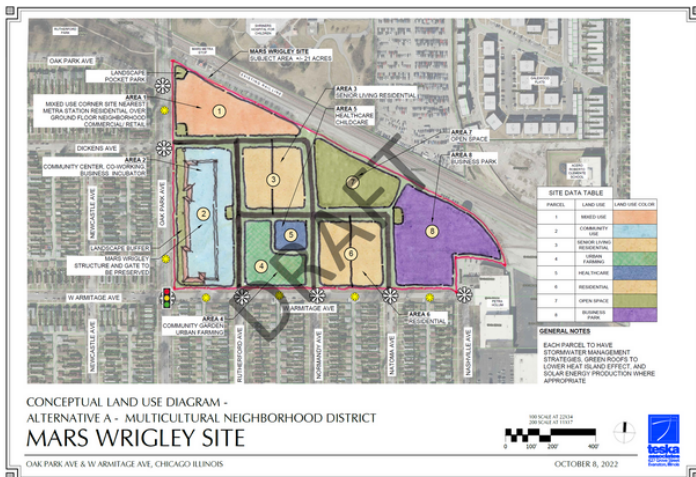
**Key Focus:** Reviewing our vision and options put forth and aligning around a few options

Meeting Notes

Key Reports Shared

Meeting Overview

The first of the convergence meetings, this meeting sought to winnow down the wide variety of ideas and brainstorm elements put forth in the previous meeting. There was information shared from the City of Chicago on the [implications of landmarking](#), from Goodman and Associates on a preliminary [understanding of the market area](#), and from Teska, the planning design firm - taking the verbal information shared to date and offering [three conceptual land use designs](#) that reflected what community members wanted to see at the site. After hearing from all parties and asking questions of clarifications/ offering reflections, community members were divided into small groups, and each group was asked to look at one of the conceptual designs and consider the key market insights shared (residential info, demographic info, commercial + industry info) and offer suggestions for refinements to the concept based on the data.



Three conceptual land use designs Shared at meeting 4 based on a visioning exercise during meeting 3

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### **Key Meeting Takeaways:**

Community Members appreciated the way in which the conceptual design captured their vision from the previous session and were very active in small groups, discussing all the major benefits and drawbacks to the approach as well as offering changes and suggestions. Teska laid out three design concepts, one following the Chicago grid style, one in a boulevard style, and one in a more campus approach. In addition each rendering offered different proportions of land use concepts within each model. The following were some of the key comments from the small group work:

- Community members really appreciated the layout of the space, the accessibility into an area which has long been behind a gate, and that there was green/nature space in the area.
- There were concerns over accessibility, transit, the business park being too large (based on market data), or not large enough (based on economic viability of the site)
- Changes community members wanted to see on the site included more inclusion of natural areas/ green spaces, more of a clear roadway to the business park, increased use of community space, and additional traffic/transit research and planning.
- Some market specific insights that community members offered:
  - A recommendation for senior housing due to the demographic trends of an aging population, the fact that educational/community facilitates need to be intergenerational and have something for all age brackets,
  - Additional housing options other than single family homes might accommodate the large housing need in the area,
  - Concerns that the business park will get filled given the declining nature of industry in this part of the city.

Mars was seeking one agreed-upon vision from the community and community members at the meeting agreed that the Boulevard style approach seemed to have the most perks/ green space and be most inviting of all the conceptual models, as long as it did not result in a substantial increase in local traffic. They also agreed that community space, education/training/incubator, healthcare, recreation center, mixed use residential, and urban farming, and open/green space were the most important of the land uses.

**Date and Time:** Wednesday, October 19th 6:00 – 8:30 PM (Virtual) 60 participants

**Key Focus:** Distillation, Recommendations + Next Steps

[Meeting Notes](#)

[Key Document Shared](#)

### **Meeting Overview**

The final meeting sought to conclude the series and make sure community members had one final chance to offer suggestions and feedback after the designer made changes based on the previous session. There were four key questions community members were asked about the final conceptual drawing -- (1) what about it resonates with you? (2) What doesn't seem quite right? (3) Much of the next step revolves around which developers step forward and respond to the request/market feasibility -- what do you think are must haves/non negotiables that are currently laid out in the concept design? (4) Much of the next step revolves around which developers step forward and respond to the request/market feasibility - - What values/processes do you think are most important to keep? (e.g., site not vacant very long, inclusion of community, hire local, etc.) The questions were answered in eight small groups for a large portion of the meeting.

There were also many questions on next steps for the project, so both the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development staff shared how zoning changes work in the city, and what would need to happen in order for the area to no longer be zoned as a Planned Manufacturing District. Mars also shared next steps, what will happen with the community feedback, a bit about their images of what was coming next. The last step was to celebrate all of the time and energy that community members had contributed to help shape what might come next.

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### **Key Meeting Takeaways:**

Community Members were by and large very pleased with Teska's changes based on their previous feedback. The elements that resonated the most with nearly each of the small groups included

- The Boulevard Design, and what that would allow in terms for accessibility and pedestrian use,
- The amount of green space - in each meeting community members wanted to see more green space, and were pleased that the final conceptual drawings had an adequate amount
- The fact that it had so many diverse uses and 'something for everyone' and wasn't a monolithic replacement - they were pleased that the smaller parcels meant that it would be easier to fill over time
- That there was additional residential townhomes and mixed use housing, and that the townhomes were facing the current residential area and could be integrated in
- That the community might finally have access to a true community center and event space
- And that there were options for Shriners (nearby children's hospital) parents and families for lodging

Elements that did not resonate as well included:

- Questions if the space currently allotted for industrial was fillable, or was simply too large
- Traffic concerns and requests for traffic studies to not make the neighborhood overflowing with cars
- That the thread of a recreation center had been lost and was important
- That the healthcare area also consider mental health services

**Key Meeting Takeaways:**

Top Preferences and Themes for the future of the site that were consistent for most of the small groups included:

- A strong desire to continue community involved as the project progresses.
- The preservation of the original facade, and the landmark component
- Some type of educational facility or training center
- Green Space
- Flood mitigation/ sufficient stormwater management
- An income generating component to ensure the sustainability of the future site

What values/processes do you think are most important to keep?

- That the community be heard and involved as Mars makes the final decision, or developer that is chosen, some way of keeping community members at the table (noted in every small group in some shape or form)
- That Mars continue to be connected and support this site in some form or fashion that lends to its ongoing sustainability. (e.g. possibly establishing some type of endowment managed in partnership with a local CBO(s))
- That the site not stay vacant for very long
- Transparency of process
- Hiring local for the next steps of the process
- Honoring the community vision that has been created throughout our time together
- That the future development be respectful of the community it is in, in terms of look and feel and traffic etc.

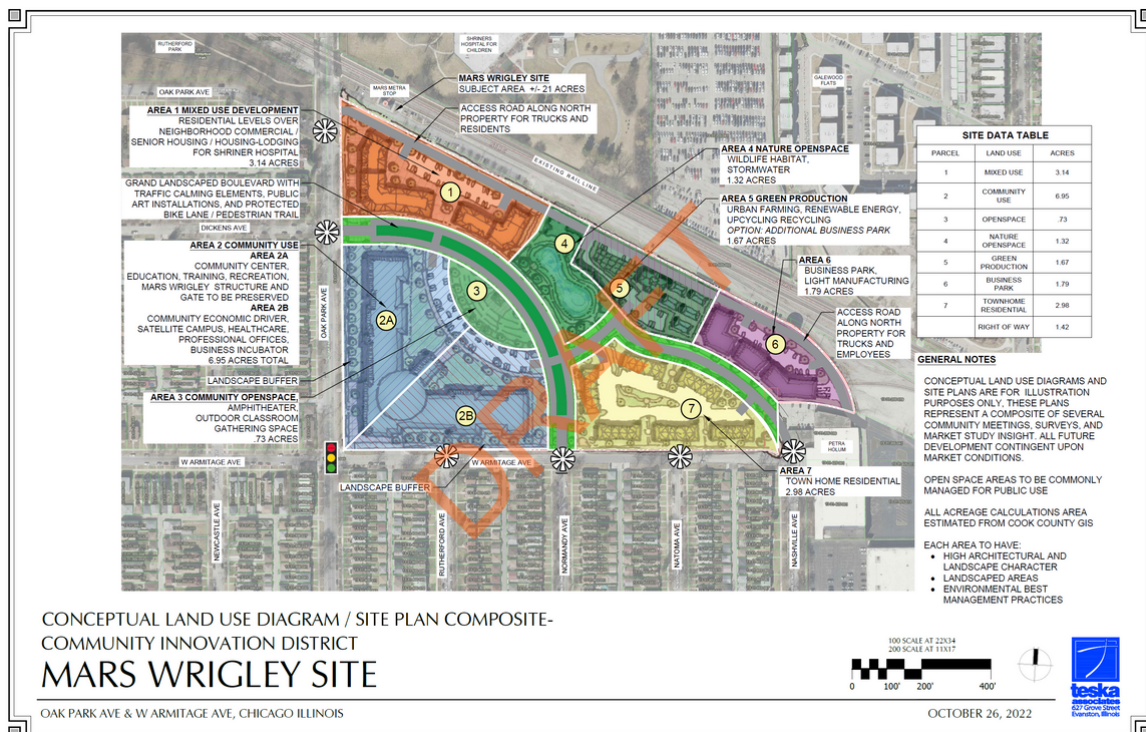
## SUMMARY, FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS, & NEXT STEPS

Throughout the planning process, Mars' commitment to community residents to lead an inclusive community engagement process has persisted. The co-design team worked to build trust amongst each other to be able to maintain the authentic, inclusive, and transparent process of engaging the broader community in planning for the future of the site. Overwhelmingly, the community has enjoyed their neighbor, Mars, for nearly a century, fondly recalling first jobs, aroma of chocolate, beautifully maintained facilities and great Halloween treats.

The sadness of losing such a great neighbor and historic relationship, turned into excitement about the potential future opportunities for redevelopment and investment in the community. As the planning sessions progressed, community members were deeply engaged in visioning the future and ultimately reached consensus on a variety of potential uses and a preferred layout for the site.

As explained in every meeting, this vision needs to be market tested with developers to become a reality. Additionally, any proposals for future development will be subject to the City of Chicago's zoning regulations and entitlements process.

The proposed "Community Innovation District" is based on a boulevard concept through a park-like campus setting. The boulevard is the great connector - of neighborhoods, cultures, open spaces and employment generators. The concept is based on the cumulative results of the community engagement process, building on a spirit of openness and transparency, literally opening up the site to new uses, experiences and relationships, with indoor and outdoor opportunities to host community events, recreation, entertainment, education and employment.





## SUMMARY, FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS, & NEXT STEPS

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There are five areas that make up the concept plan. Note that each of these uses are proposed ideas - actual building uses will depend on zoning approval, market demand and changing conditions.

- Area 1 is proposed as a mixed-use development adjacent to the Mars Metra Station at the northwest corner of the site. It would include three stories of residential uses over neighborhood commercial or health care uses. Residential could include apartments and/or senior housing or extended stays to fill the demand in the area.
- Area 2A includes the reuse of the historic Mars building along Oak Park Avenue. It would include community uses such as education, training, recreation. Area 2B would be comprised of new construction addition to the building along Armitage Avenue and would be a community economic driver including uses such as a higher education satellite campus, health care, professional offices and/or business incubator.
- Area 3 would be a central open space / amphitheater / open air classroom between the former Mars building and the new green boulevard. It could be used for outdoor music, entertainment, education and community events.
- Area 4 would be reserved for nature and open space, housing a naturally-designed stormwater facility, walking trails and natural habitat.
- Area 5 would be for green production such as urban agriculture or community gardening. It would include environmental features such as renewable energy, upcycling and recycling and offer production and employment opportunities for the community.
- Area 6 would be a business park, offering flexible space for users such as light manufacturing, crafts, and artisan production.
- Area 7 would be a townhome community that would provide a transition to the residential area south of the site. It would include both public open space in its courtyard as well as private yards for each unit.

Upon completion of the community planning sessions, Mars is moving into the next phase of redevelopment of the site. The factory is slated to close in 2024, so major updates or announcements are not expected in 2023. The immediate next step is for Mars to review the community recommendation and the final report documenting the community engagement process. Mars is evaluating the timeline, process and approach to engage the development community. Mars intends to continue to work cooperatively with the Department of Planning and Development and the co-design partners, and is committed to keep the broader community and other stakeholders informed via quarterly updates in 2023.



December 14, 2022

Meghan Harte  
LISC Chicago  
10 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1700  
Chicago, IL 60606

Subject: Mars-Wrigley Community Plan – DPD Review Comments

To Ms. Harte,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report for the community planning effort that LISC is leading in coordination with the Mars corporation for their facility located at 2019 N. Oak Park Ave. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has reviewed the draft plan and the intent of this letter and memo is to share feedback on the plan and document the City's perspective on the future of this site.

DPD recognizes that the Mars facility is of great significance to the surrounding community as a large employer and local landmark. Therefore, it is the department's goal to collaborate with company leadership, community stakeholders and local residents to facilitate a long-term development on the site that is both complementary to the surrounding area and economically viable. As planning and development efforts continue, DPD wishes to discuss partnership opportunities with Mars to identify potential developers and uses for the site.

DPD is also committed to assisting Mars and/or a future development partner to facilitating future development on the site. However, the property is located in a Planned Manufacturing District 15 within the Armitage Industrial Corridor and contains an orange-rated building which DPD is interested in landmarking. Any changes proposed to the existing uses currently permitted by the zoning designations will involve extensive legislative approval processes with established requirements and timelines outline below.

If you would like to discuss DPD's feedback in further detail, please feel free to contact me at (312) 744-7217 or [brian.hacker@cityofchicago.org](mailto:brian.hacker@cityofchicago.org).

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Hacker'.

Brian Hacker, AICP  
Planner V, West Region  
Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago  
121 N LaSalle Street, Suite 1006  
Chicago, IL 60602

CC: Seva Gandhi, Brad Figel, Anne Vela-Wagner, Ben Anders, Cori Herbig, Jaime Arteaga

# Mars-Wrigley Community Plan

## DPD Review Comments

### Zoning/Planned Manufacturing District 15

- The uses proposed in the concept plan are not consistent with the uses permitted in PMD 15 as established in Section 17-6-0403-F of the Zoning Ordinance. Although there is a process for amending the PMD, the community plan completed by LISC and Mars would not meet the requirements established in Section 17-13-0711 of the Zoning Ordinance. This does not preclude the possibility of a development that reflects the community's preferred scheme; but further study and evaluation of the PMD is needed to complete a map amendment. The process of boundary revisions or changes to permitted land uses in a PMD involves a review of the entire district, including all sites, in conjunction with the community, industrial corridor tenants and the City administration. DPD staff would begin this process by scoping a research study for the Armitage Industrial Corridor consistent with previously completed projects for the [North Branch Industrial Corridor](#) and [Kinzie Industrial Corridor](#). These efforts must go through Plan Commission and City Council review and have generally taken 18-24 months to complete. Further resources can be found on DPD's webpage for the [Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative](#).
- The Goodman-Williams report, Mars Wrigley Site, Redevelopment Opportunities Market Insights (undated), notes there is "demand for smaller light industrial uses that could take advantage of the labor market..." including Incubator or job training facility, or light industrial - assembly or storage. These uses align with the current zoning and industrial corridor designation of the subject property. DPD requests that Mars provide the source of this data. DPD's Citywide division recommends that these potential industrial and manufacturing land uses cited in the Goodman-Williams report be explored in greater depth, along with the upcoming federal grants that may be available and can connect Mars with a network of industrial professionals who may be able to assist with finding suitable industrial users for the site.

### Next Steps: Site Redevelopment

- DPD wishes to have further discussions regarding Mars approach to soliciting proposals for future development of the site and the process for selecting a preferred developer. Although the possibility of releasing a RFP has been previously considered, additional collaboration is needed to create a scope of work for the transition process and determine the City's involvement in it. At this stage in the process, DPD recommends that the property owner prioritizes coordination with the City's zoning process rather than a re-design of the site.
- DPD recommends that an agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU), be established to document the redevelopment process, as well as the potential partnership arrangement with Mars.

**For inquiries, contact:**

**[MarsChicagoCommunity@effem.com](mailto:MarsChicagoCommunity@effem.com)**

