

Pershing Road Central Manufacturing District Chicago, IL

1700 – 2300 W. Pershing Road

Students
Reinventing
Cities

The Pershing Road Central Manufacturing District (“District”) is located in Chicago, Illinois, in McKinley Park, a stable, working class neighborhood on the city’s south-west side. The District is located in an area of transitioning land uses, with active industrial to the south, and residential neighborhoods and a destination park to the north. In recent years, several buildings in the District have been redeveloped into non-industrial uses.

The District includes nearly one dozen industrial buildings, built around 1918. Over recent years, several buildings within the District have redeveloped into non-industrial uses, but redevelopment has been piecemeal and disconnected from the broader context.

The City of Chicago seeks a master plan and cohesive vision for the District, which unifies current and potential future land uses, identifies adaptive reuse opportunities, incorporates Green and Just recovery principles, and positions the District for future success, with a particular focus on opportunities for the re-development and adaptive reuse of city-owned property.

The vision should serve as an example for supporting Chicago’s Climate Action Plan to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, greenhouse gas emissions, and reinforce key Green Urban Design strategies to capture rainfall. Since 2018, the City has partnered with C40 on a previous Reinventing Cities competition for the city-owned property that was not successful, and has also worked to identify mitigation strategies for an existing asphalt plant that impacts the area.

Approx. site area:

60 acres/24.5ha

Demographics:

Population of 15900. 17% white, 56% Hispanic or Latino and 25% Asian. 15% of area residents work in the service industry, 11% in retail, and around 9% work in manufacturing 70% of residents leave the neighborhood for employment

Priority areas & main City expectations:

All the buildings located between Ashland Avenue and Western Avenue, north of the freight rail,



Central Manufacturing District clock tower

Less recently, the City has worked with brokers to develop marketing materials for the city-owned buildings. A successful vision for this District will build on these past efforts, approach the District comprehensively, incorporate green and carbon-neutral strategies, identify appropriate adaptive reuse options that can serve the community, and thoughtfully address existing and potential future land use conflicts. The vision must respect the historical character of the District, engage the public, and provide connections to Pershing Road, neighboring residential areas and McKinley Park.

should be included in the competition. The City of Chicago seeks a cohesive vision for the District which may take the form of a more traditional master plan for the District. A successful vision for this District will be comprehensive and incorporate existing industrial and nonindustrial uses with potential future uses, creatively incorporate green and carbon-neutral strategies, identify appropriate adaptive reuse options that can serve the community, and address existing and potential future land use conflicts. Please see the deliverables identified in the “Other Expectations section.

Presentation of the site



Birds-eye view of the Pershing Road Central Manufacturing District (red dashed) and city-owned properties (yellow)

The District is located six miles southwest of downtown in Chicago's McKinley Park neighborhood, named for the 69-acre public park located just north of the site. The site is easily reached by car or truck from the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) to the north and the Dan Ryan Expressway (I-90/I-94) to the east. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) offers direct commuter rail access to downtown or Midway Airport from the Orange Line stop at 35th Street and Archer Avenue, a 10-minute walk north. Three CTA bus routes (#9, #39, and #49) also serve the area, while designated bicycle lanes span the length of Pershing Road. Current uses in the District include smaller manufacturing and fabrication, warehousing, maker-space, two charter schools and institutional uses. Most visitors will have some association with these existing uses; the District does not currently serve as a destination otherwise.

The City's desire is to have a cohesive vision for the entire corridor, with a particular focus on city-owned property. These city-owned properties include three six-story industrial buildings located at 1769, 1819 and 1869 W. Pershing Road, 80% of the 12-story clock tower at 1985 W. Pershing Road, and a one-story building with an accessory parking lot at 1717 W. Pershing Road. The buildings at 1717 and 1869 W. Pershing Road are currently being used for city operations. While 1769, 1819, 1869 and 1985 W. Pershing Road are historic and must be preserved, 1717 W. Pershing Road could be demolished for new construction. Parking will be a challenge for the redevelopment of any of these sites, both due to a lack of physical space for surface parking as prevailing transportation preferences. Students should explore ways to better integrate existing public transit and non-motorized transportation options into the District to encourage multi-modal and non-automobile access. The buildings are located in the Central Manufacturing District, one of the nation's first planned industrial districts that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015. The larger buildings measure approximately 263 feet wide and 325 feet deep, and contain over 570,000 square feet of space, with 13-foot clear floor-to-ceiling heights. The building facades are detailed with terra cotta string courses, sills, expressed piers, crenellated parapets, and corner towers.

While the city can have the biggest impact on those properties which it controls, the city-owned properties sit within the context of the District and the McKinley neighborhood more broadly, and recommendations should be for the entire Central Manufacturing District, and not just the city-owned property. That said, redevelopment ideas for the city-owned sites must provide amenities for the neighborhood, create a destination, and enhance the neighborhood's workforce opportunities. Potential uses should aim to provide a carbon-neutral development that supports the community's green initiatives and addresses future sustainability concerns. Development concepts should be open and engage the public by interacting with the street, provide usable public spaces, introduce innovative features to maintain the properties, implement sustainable landscaping within and surrounding the sites, and address concerns of financial feasibility. The residents and local neighborhood organizations are very passionate about their community and would be a great partner for future community engagement opportunities. Concepts for the District should also consider the existing neighboring

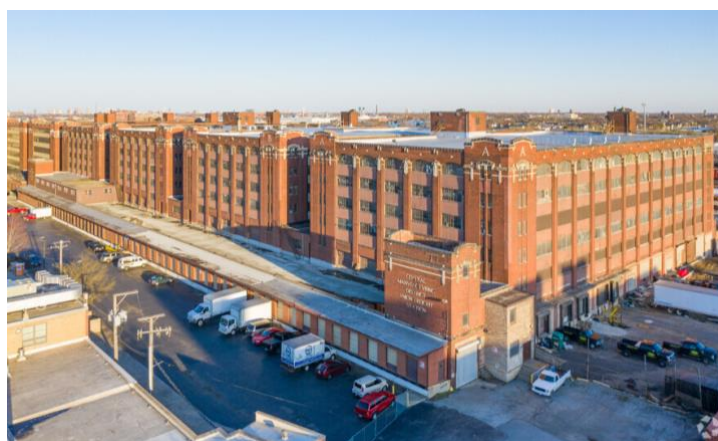
asphalt plant and other existing land use challenges that could support or hinder the feasibility of the adaptive reuse of these buildings.

In 2018 and 2019, The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) – the regional planning organization – developed a neighborhood plan for McKinley Park that included a robust community engagement and visioning process, and devoted an entire chapter to the modernization of the Central Manufacturing District (Chapter 6). This plan will be included in C40’s online Data Room, and students should consider the vision and ideas contained within that chapter to inform an initial direction.

Also included in the Data Room for this project are several documents: the City’s Greater Stockyards neighborhood planning summary, two marketing booklets prepared for the buildings by DTZ America, Inc., and the National Register Nomination for the Central Manufacturing District: Pershing Road Development Historic District. Floor plans for the six-story buildings can be found in the DTZ America documents. Also included for reference in the online Data Room is a community survey conducted by the City in 2018, and the following reports for the 6-story buildings: Fleet & Facility Management 1769 & 1819 Pershing Road Assessment Report, 1819 W Pershing Rd UST Removal Report, 1819 W Pershing Rd Phase I ESA report, and 1819 W Pershing Rd Phase II ESA report.



A view of the city-owned buildings looking west on Pershing Road



A view of privately owned character buildings in the District, looking to the southeast

City climate priorities and specific environmental issues to address

The City of Chicago's [Climate Action Plan](#), adopted in 2008, outlines 26 mitigation or emissions reduction actions that aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the City of Chicago and do its part to avoid the worst global impacts of climate change. The goals and recommendations contained with the Climate Action Plan should be considered and incorporated into any vision for the District.

Climate Action Plan goals that could be incorporated into a vision for the District include, but are not limited to:

- Reduce summer energy use through weatherization and green infrastructure (landscaping, reflective roofing, reflective and permeable pavement, rooftop garden requirements, etc.);
- Improve air quality by incentivizing electric vehicles and fleets on-site, and identifying adjacent users that are contributing to reduced air quality;
- Recommend storm water capture solutions to reduce flood risk and use water on-site;
- Implement Green Urban Design strategies;
- Recommend landscaping plans that help to remove pollutants from the air, mitigate heat island effect, absorb storm water, and can tolerate expected climate changes.

According to U.S. Climate Data, Chicago has 2611 annual hours of sunshine and the average annual precipitation is 33.2 inches (84.3 cm) with 120 days per year of precipitation. The average temperature is around 50°F (10°C) with average highs in July of 81°F (21°C) and average lows in January of 18°F (-8°C). About half of the precipitation in Illinois comes from short and intense thunderstorms during the warmer months of the year and the Chicago region experiences an average of 8-10 days a year with over an inch of precipitation (data from June 2015 Report for the Urban Flooding Awareness Act by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources).

As is typical of many older cities in the country, Chicago has a combined storm and sewerage utility system. To help manage excessive storm water, developments in Chicago are regulated by the City's Storm Water Ordinance. Recommendations should consider ways in which redevelopment of sites within the District can mitigate heavy rain events, reduce flooding risk and capture rainwater for on-site uses.

In accordance with the Students Reinventing Cities competition goals, the City expects an exemplary vision for the District that will highlight the City of Chicago's commitment to addressing climate change. The vision should seek to deliver a greener way of life by providing resilient urban development. Therefore, the vision must demonstrate carbon-neutral and adaptive reuse with implementation strategies based on Green and Just Recovery principles.

Other Expectations for the Site's Redevelopment

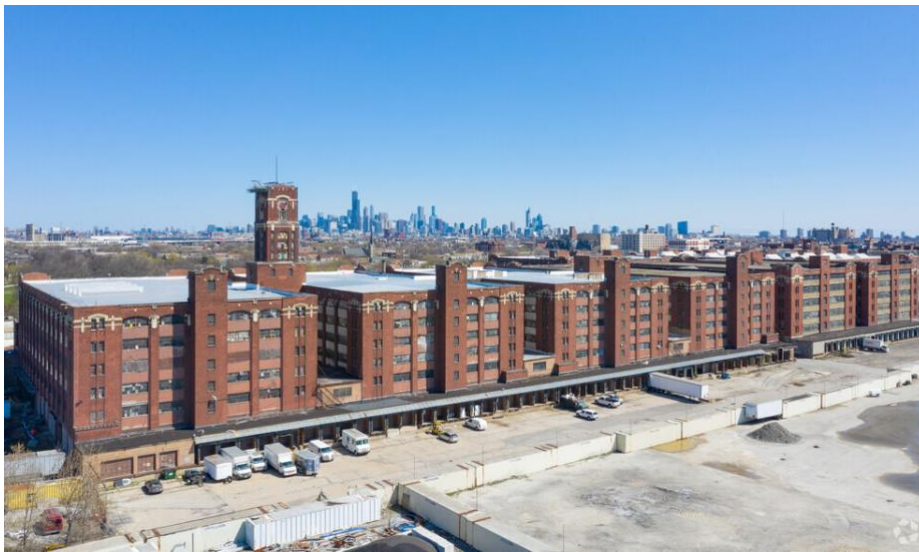
A vision for the District should honor the history of the buildings and respond to their massive presence in an innovative way that engages the neighborhood. The interior large floor plates have the flexibility to accommodate a variety of uses and may include, among other things, retail, dining, institutional, research, technology/development centers, or office space. The vision should also help to create a destination that encourages street life, accommodates different modes of travel, connects to the park, and engages the surrounding community in a meaningful way.

Ultimately the goal should be to inject economic growth and investment into this existing corridor and neighborhood. One of the ongoing challenges with the District is the challenge of balancing job retention and creation with sustainable practices and environmental justice concerns, especially given the District's current configuration towards more industrial uses. Students will need to balance the

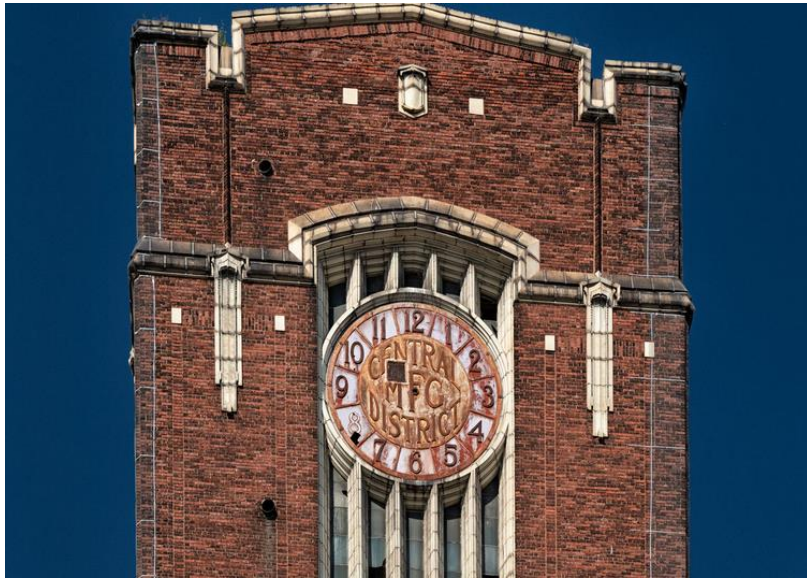
goals of economic development and employment opportunities with potential environmental and land use impacts. Students should also explore the challenges around marketing and developing such large and historically significant buildings. A successful vision should identify ways to balance these tensions in a way that provides job opportunities and amenities for the surrounding neighborhood – and the city more broadly – while mitigating environmental justice and social equity concerns.

The vision should also acknowledge and identify ways to manage current and potential future land use conflicts in the District and recommend ways to mitigate these impacts. The following provides a list of expected deliverables from this project:

- A vision for the District that unifies current and potential future land uses, identifies adaptive reuse opportunities, incorporates Green and Just Recovery principles, and positions the District for future success;
- Conceptual renders, site plans, and other visuals that illustrate the vision;
- Recommendations for the adaptive reuse of city-owned property in the District;
- Recommendations for managing existing land use conflicts and mitigating their impact, including incorporating buffering strategies related to the existing asphalt plant and other areas where potential land use conflicts might exist;
- Recommendations for meaningfully connecting the District to the surrounding neighborhood and engaging residents;
- Ideas for marketing the District to potential investors and developers.



A view of privately owned character buildings in the District and the city-owned clock tower, looking northeast towards downtown Chicago



Architecturally significant details on the Central Manufacturing District clock tower

Specific City Planning Rules and Regulation

The development of sites within the District is governed by land use regulations contained in the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, as well as others that govern specific aspects of development, such as Chicago's Building Code and the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO).

In 2019, the City of Chicago adopted an ordinance for transit-served locations (TSL). The TSL ordinance allows for parking reductions and density bonuses for development that occurs within ¼-mile of a transit station or high capacity bus route. McKinley Park is well-served by transit, including a CTA Orange Line station at 35th Street and Archer Avenue, and the Ashland #9 and Western #49 bus routes are both included in the TSL ordinance. This should be taken into consideration and TOD-style development options prioritized in any vision for the District.

The District is predominantly zoned M2-3 for Light Industrial uses. Immediately south of the site is the Stockyards Industrial Corridor which has an active manufacturing base. Successful visions for this corridor will thoughtfully address compatible uses given and potential conflicts given this existing context. Any proposed changes to the underlying zoning, including the creation of a new Planned Development, requires the review and approval of the Department of Planning and Development, the Chicago Plan Commission, and City Council. The Planned Development review and approval process is outlined in the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 17-8, along with the City's design standards and guidelines. Zoning Chapter 17-8 is available online.

The site is also located within the 35th/Halsted Tax Increment Financing District, more information on this TIF is available on the City's website.

Ideas and recommendations for the District should broadly conform to the above rules and regulations, and leverage existing incentives (such as density bonuses and parking reductions available through the city's TSL ordinance). That said, creative ideas that amend or enhance the above rules and regulations and enhance climate action goals will certainly be considered.