

TRANSIT MEANS BUSINESS



MetropolitanPlanningCouncil

Metroplanning.org/transitmeansbusiness



Table of Contents
Introduction: Transit Drives Business Decisions 3
Transit Has a Net Economic Benefit 5
Talent Prefers Transit 7
Transit Delivers Talent 10
Job Creation is Accelerated Near Transit 12
Transit Fosters Economic Resiliency 14
Transit Delivers Value to Business 15
Case Studies 17
End Notes & Acknowledgements 47

Introduction: Transit Drives Business Decisions

McDonald's. Caterpillar. Motorola Solutions. These Chicago region-based companies have many things in common:

They employ thousands, help drive our region's economy, and cite transit as a key factor in their location and recruitment strategy.

Businesses throughout the region rely on and benefit from metropolitan Chicago's transit system.

However, the critical connection between transit investments and our ability to recruit and retain business in metropolitan Chicago is not broadly understood. With *Transit Means Business*, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) is bringing together business leaders, transit leadership and state and local government to advocate for stronger investments in our region's transit system.

The reasons to mobilize now are clear. Businesses are betting on transit, but without sufficient investment the competitive advantage our system provides is eroding and will start to fail. Our metropolitan-wide research shows:

- Businesses are choosing to locate near transit to access larger labor pools;
- Locations near transit offer businesses increased resiliency;
- Transit-accessible locations outperform the regional average on job growth, especially near rail.

This report dives into the data to reveal how transit supports businesses, and profiles companies who are making transit-based decisions that benefit their bottom line.

A growing and thriving transit system means a growing and thriving economy. Decades of research show a well-funded and robust transit system yields many benefits including new jobs, increased worker productivity, better health outcomes and a strong real estate market.

Business in the Chicago region has reaped the rewards of an extensive and well-maintained transit system. To retain those benefits and attract new jobs, it is critical to invest in, adapt and grow transit to meet modern needs.



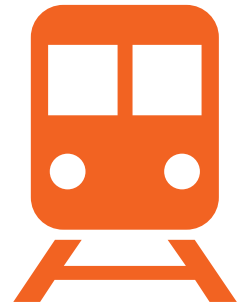
Transit Has a Net Economic Benefit

Quantifying the economic impacts and benefits of transit

Decades of economic analysis have yielded a singular conclusive finding:

Investing in transit results in regional economic growth.

The studies in *Table 1* all calculate benefit-cost ratios for transit investments in urbanized areas. Benefit-cost ratios are a quantification of the economic returns that result from a financial investment. In all cases shown below, the benefit-cost ratio exceeds 1, meaning that \$1 invested in transit yields more than \$1 in economic benefits. Three Chicago-specific studies conducted over the past two decades all show significant benefits to the region if we were to invest in a state of good repair or expand service. Of all the studies we surveyed, the smallest expected return from investing in transit was 21%. This would be considered a hugely successful investment in the private sector.



Decades of research show that transit positively impacts the economic health of our region through a broad range of pathways.

Table 1. Transit Yields a High Return on Investment

City or Region	Economic benefit for every \$1 invested in transit	Study
Chicago Region	\$3+	Cambridge Systematics (1995)
	\$1.21- 1.62	Metropolis 2020 (2007)
	\$1.9	Regional Transportation Authority (2007)
San Francisco (SFMTA)	\$2.0 - 2.9	EPS (2015)
Twin Cities	\$1.5 - 3.1	Itasca Project (2012)
State of Illinois	\$1.8	Godavarthy et al. (2014)
State of Wisconsin	\$3.41	HDR (2006)
US Cities over 2.5m	\$1.34	Hartford (2006)
All US Cities	\$2.79	Litman (2010)

Economic benefits to residents, employers and communities

Transit benefits the economic health of the greater Chicago region in a variety of ways.^{1, 2, 3} When regions step up their transit investment and transit ridership increases, businesses, households and communities experience the following types of economic benefits:

- **Access to talent:** Businesses gain access to larger labor markets with more diverse skills, enabled by larger public transit service areas and reduced traffic congestion. Residents can live in a wide variety of locations throughout the region and access well-paid jobs.
- **Less traffic:** Transit investments reduce roadway congestion for cars and trucks, shortening commutes and improving freight delivery.
- **More disposable household income:** When more people ride transit, their travel costs are lowered and funds are freed for housing, entertainment and other living expenses.
- **More well-paid jobs:** Investment in transit attracts more employers to the region. Companies that are looking to locate in world-class regions are increasingly seeking places with robust transit systems. Public transit is seen as a necessary urban amenity for places to compete for workers, conventions and other economic activities.⁴
- **Employment from transit system operations and infrastructure investments:** The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace collectively employed 14,532 full-time people in 2017. These solid middle-class jobs provide a service that enables the region to function. Additionally, construction jobs are created by major transit capital investments that maintain or expand the system. For example, CTA's new South Terminal at 95th / Dan Ryan created over 760 construction jobs.⁵

When combining all providers together, public transit was the 10th largest employer in the Chicago region in 2017.

- **Increased productivity:** High-quality transit that speeds travel and allows workers to perform tasks other than driving during their commutes means increased morale and output.
- **Higher property values:** Transit investment often catalyzes residential and commercial property development. Increased property values near transit grow wealth for owners and increase tax revenue. From 2015 to 2017, new CTA stations at Morgan and Cermak-McCormick Place yielded over \$2.5 billion in private land investment.⁶
- **Equitable and affordable transportation:** Nearly 20 percent of RTA transit riders have incomes under \$25,000 per year.⁷ When lower income groups have improved mobility and access, it generates savings on government services and support programs.⁸
- **Reduced vehicle emissions and improved air quality:**⁹ Transit's ability to reduce solo drivers and auto emissions improves the environment.



Carbon Reduction

Public transportation produces significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions per passenger mile than private vehicles.¹⁰



Buses' emissions are 33% lower than cars, and passenger trains are 76% lower.

- **Reduced fatalities and injuries:** Trips shifted from cars to transit reduce traffic-related injuries and deaths, a significant societal cost.
- **Improved health outcomes:** Transit increases opportunities for active transportation like walking and biking, resulting in a healthier population.

Success breeds success

Expanded investment yields more transit usage, while minimal investment depresses the number of riders. As municipalities and regions grapple with how to keep their transportation infrastructure functioning policy makers face tough decisions about how and where to make investments. The following chart is a simplified framework of how different levels of investment impact ridership. If our region wants more people to use transit — a highly efficient, equitable and sustainable form of transportation — we need to invest in it.

Table 2: Tending to Transit

	Action →	Impact →	Outcome 📍
Current System	Expand and Enhance System	Improved Service Quality	Increased Transit Usage
	Maintain Current Operating Status	Maintained Service Quality	Stable Transit Usage
	Minimal Operational Investment	Degraded Service Quality	Decreased Transit Usage

Adapted from *Tending to Transit*, Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, Schwieterman, et al. (2012)

Talent Prefers Transit

Commutes to work on transit are up, despite overall ridership being down

While it's true that the region has experienced a downward trend in transit ridership since a 20-year high in 2012, that's not telling the full story. The proportion of commuters taking transit to work has actually seen a small but steady increase for over a decade now, as shown in *Figure 1*. This suggests that ridership loss may stem from discretionary trips far more than the daily journey to and from work. And considering that the number of jobs in the region increased by over 300,000 from 2005 to 2015, it's clear that many more people are taking transit to work than any time in recent memory.



Let's Move It!

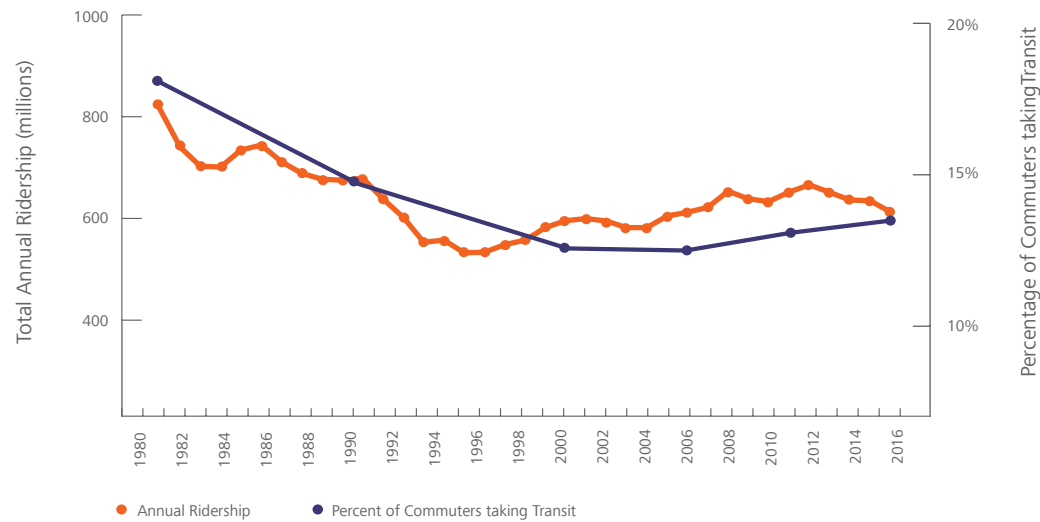
Healthy Chicago 2.0 identifies active transportation as a key solution for increasing overall regional health. Objectives include increasing those who bike, walk and take public transportation to work.¹¹



Fewer Traffic Deaths

Analysis of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Federal Transit Administration data show that metro areas with higher public transportation use have lower traffic fatality rates.¹²

Figure 1: Total Ridership Fluctuates, but Transit Work Trips are on the Rise



Transit Usage in the 7-County Region since 1980 (Source: CMAP, US Census, ACS)

Transit commuting is strong and growing for the largest segments of the workforce

Table 3 shows data on the age composition of the overall workforce and the subset that commute by public transit. By comparing the percent of the total workforce to the percent of total transit commuters, it's possible to see which age groups are over- or underrepresented among transit commuters. The last two columns show how the different age groups are growing in the overall workforce, and among transit commuters specifically. Workers aged 25 to 44 (which includes the majority of Millennial workers) are the largest part of the workforce, and will be for decades to come. They make up an even larger share of transit commuters, and their numbers are still swelling. The number of workers taking transit in the Millennial cohort grew by 8 percent in the last five years alone.

Older age groups also have an interesting story to tell. The Boomer generation aged 55 and up makes up 21 percent of the workforce, but only 15 percent of transit commuters. However, Boomers are the fastest growing part of the workforce and they're taking transit to work in swiftly growing numbers. In the last five years, the number of workers over 55 taking transit grew by an impressive 11 to 13 percent.

Table 3: Millennials and Boomers Increasingly Choose Transit

	% of total workforce, 2016	% of transit commuters, 2016	Workforce Growth by Age, 2011-2016	
			All Modes	Public Transit Commuters
Total workers 16 and over	—	—	3%	6%
16 to 19 years	3%	2%	-12%	-17%
20 to 24 years	9%	12%	5%	6%
25 to 44 years	45%	53%	<1%	8%
45 to 54 years	22%	18%	-1%	-1%
55 to 59 years	10%	7%	13%	11%
60 years and over	11%	8%	22%	13%

Workforce Composition and Growth by Age Group (Source: ACS 2011, 2016)

Transit commuters are increasingly high-earners, but ridership is growing across income categories

Transit riders are fairly proportional by income groups to the overall workforce, with the exception of the highest earners. Those making \$75,000 or more a year make up 23 percent of the workforce, but 27 percent of transit commuters as shown in Table 4. The five-year growth rates are striking, showing the Chicago region's workforce is getting wealthier at a fast rate. The share of workers (using all modes) earning \$75,000 or more grew by 16 percent, while most other income groups actually shrunk or stayed constant. However, the growth of workers riding transit increased by about five percent more than the overall growth rate of commuters (using all modes) for income groups above \$25,000. While there are clear equity implications as the region's workforce skews towards the higher-earning end of the spectrum, workers across the board are commuting by transit in increasing numbers.

Table 4: High Earners are Taking Transit

	% of total workforce, 2016	% of transit commuters, 2016	Workforce Growth by Income, 2011-2016	
			All Modes	Public Transit Commuters
Total workers 16 and over	—	—	3%	6%
\$9,999 or less	12%	12%	-1%	<1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7%	7%	<1%	-6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14%	13%	5%	3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12%	11%	-3%	2%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15%	13%	-4%	1%
\$50,000 to \$64,999	12%	12%	2%	7%
\$65,000 to \$74,999	5%	6%	-1%	5%
\$75,000 +	23%	27%	16%	21%

Workforce Composition and Growth by Income Group (Source: ACS 2011, 2016)
 Note: For a 40-hour workweek at the Illinois 2018 minimum wage of \$8.25 per hour, annual income is approximately \$17,160.

Looking at the change in median earnings by commute mode in *Table 5* reinforces the previous findings. While earnings are up overall, growth is substantially higher for people commuting by transit. People driving alone saw a much lower median increase than the region as a whole.

Table 5: Transit Riders are Earning More

All modes	Drive alone	Public Transit
\$1,057	\$277	\$2,081

Change in Median Earnings for 7-county region, 2011-2016 (Source: ACS 2011, 2016)

Transit Delivers Access

Transit access matters to the significant share of workers and customers without a personal vehicle

Although the region’s dominant form of transportation is the personal vehicle, a significant portion of the labor pool and customer base does not have regular access to a car. *Table 6* shows that 13 percent of all

households in the region do not own a car. Considering that 71 percent of households have more than one adult, it’s significant that a full quarter of the region’s households only have one car and are further than a half mile from rail transit. What’s more, six percent of households, representing more than half a million people, have no personal vehicle and are more than one-half mile from rapid rail transit. These households contain customers and employees that can more fully participate in the economy with access to high-quality transit.

Table 6: Many are Far from Rail without a Car

Rail Proximity	All HHs	Households by Number of Cars			
		None	One	Two	Three or more
More than 1/2 mile	75%	6%	25%	30%	14%
1/4 to 1/2 mile	16%	4%	7%	4%	1%
1/4 mile or less	10%	3%	4%	2%	1%
Total	100%	13%	36%	36%	16%

Percent of all households by proximity to rail and number of available vehicles (Source: ACS 2016)

Similarly, *Table 7* shows that about eight percent of the region’s households have one or zero cars and low to moderately low transit access, as measured by The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s (CMAP) transit availability index (1=low/no transit access). Most of these places have no rail service and infrequent bus service.¹³

Table 7: Some Have No Car and No Transit

Transit Availability Index	All HHs	Households by Number of Cars			
		None	One	Two	Three or more
1	9%	0%	2%	4%	2%
2	19%	1%	5%	9%	4%
3	18%	1%	6%	8%	3%
4	37%	5%	15%	12%	5%
5	17%	6%	8%	3%	1%
Total	100%	13%	36%	36%	16%

Percent of all households by transit availability index and number of available vehicles (Source: ACS 2016, CMAP)

Table 8 takes a more nuanced look at vehicle availability by comparing the number of adults in a household to the number of cars available. Grey cells represent households that have more adults than cars, and orange cells represent the opposite. We know that carpooling rates are very low in the region, so a very large number of people must rely on transportation other than a personal vehicle for their daily

trips based on these data. Including all households in the 7-county region where adults outnumber available cars, there are over 2.6 million people “unmatched” to a personal vehicle. That represents about 40 percent of the adult population, all of whom are potential customers, employees and transit riders.

Table 8: Unmet Demand for Transportation

		Number of cars				
		0	1	2	3	4+
Number of adults	1	240,858	564,021	65,155	8,361	3,434
	2	84,441	290,328	467,845	67,331	14,046
	3	32,513	118,808	201,061	110,553	22,697
	4	36,569	133,839	360,583	161,357	98,130

Household Count by Size and Vehicle Ownership (Source: ACS 2016)

Job Creation is Accelerated Near Transit

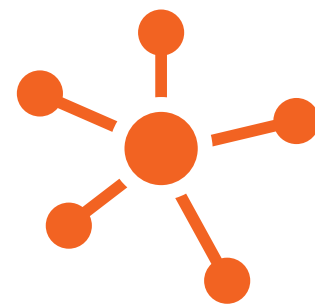
Transit-accessible locations outperform on job growth

From 2005 to 2015, the Chicago metropolitan region added about 334,000 jobs, a growth rate of nearly 9 percent. About half of those new jobs are located within a half-mile of a CTA or Metra station, and 60 percent of them are in areas with high-quality transit service.¹⁴ *Table 9* shows that areas close to stations grew jobs at a much faster rate than the regional average. Areas within a quarter-mile — a five-minute walk — of a CTA ‘L’ or Metra station, grew by 20 percent, more than twice the regional rate. Conversely, areas further than a half-mile from rail grew two percent slower than the regional average.

Table 9: Job Growth is Higher Near Transit

Rail Station Proximity	Total Jobs, 2005	Total Jobs, 2015	% Change
All Locations	3,765,878	4,099,751	8.87%
1/4 mile or less	730,485	873,335	19.56%
1/2 mile or less	1,209,222	1,371,901	13.45%
More than 1/2 mile	2,556,656	2,727,850	6.70%

Job Growth by Proximity to a Rail Station, 7-county region (Source: 2015 LEHD Census)



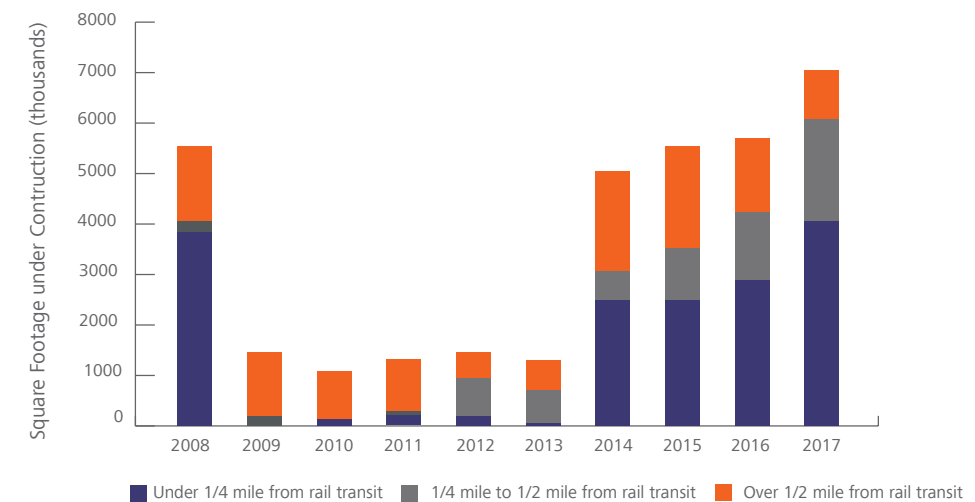
Central Cities as Magnets

Since 2009, Chicago has experienced an influx of suburban companies relocating or adding satellite offices to the central business district. The trend doesn't look like it will slow down any time soon, with companies desiring to capture young talent and achieve a live-work-play environment for their employees.¹⁵

Commercial development is accelerating in transit-oriented areas

Commercial construction is another indicator that the region's economy is growing near transit. While construction rates are closely tied to broader economic conditions, the past 10 years show a clear trend that has been rapidly strengthening since 2014. Increasingly, commercial construction is happening within a half-mile or less of a CTA ‘L’ or Metra station. In 2017, 85 percent of all commercial construction happened in this relatively miniscule area as shown in *Figure 2*. While there are many factors motivating a developer's decision to build, the market has a clear preference for locations near transit.

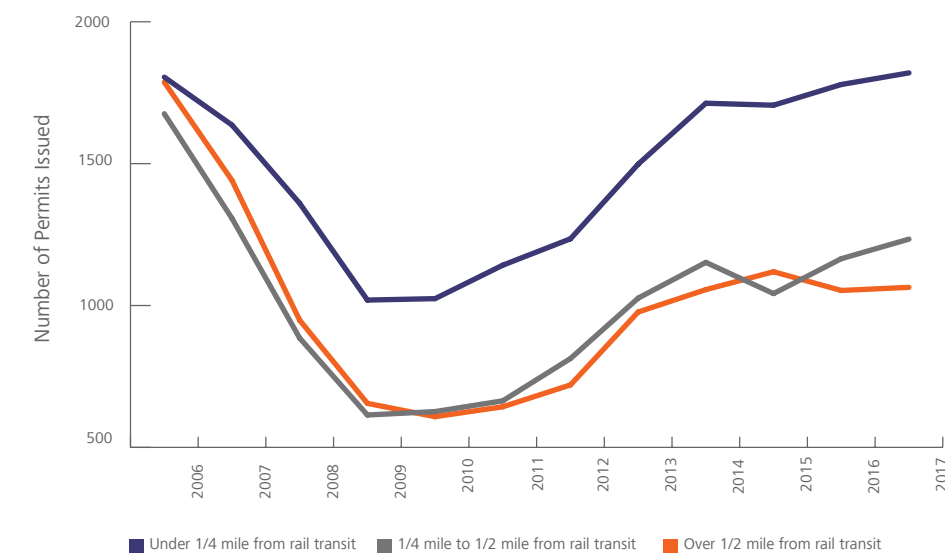
Figure 2: Commercial Construction Ramps Up Near Transit



(Source: CoStar)

This transit-friendly trend also goes beyond commercial construction. *Figure 3* shows all permits issued in the City of Chicago for new construction or renovation valued at \$100,000 or more. Areas closest to rail transit have consistently attracted more investment. The same is also true if bus service is included.

Figure 3: Chicago Construction Near Transit Is Most Attractive



Number of issued permits valued at \$100k or more for new construction or renovation in the City of Chicago by proximity to rail transit. (Source: City of Chicago.)

Transit Fosters Economic Resiliency

Even during the recession, locations near transit added nearly 11,000 jobs

Transit can help insulate businesses and employees from economic shocks. The price of transit stays relatively stable compared to driving costs, and having an expanded set of transportation choices means businesses have a reliable connection to talent, customers and partners.

During the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the Chicago market shed jobs like the rest of the nation. The entire region lost nearly 150,000 jobs, but the loss was very uneven. Areas closer to a rail station fared much better. In fact, in areas less than a quarter-mile from a CTA 'L' or Metra station, jobs were added even during the steepest year of decline as shown in *Table 10*.

Table 10: Jobs are More Stable near Transit During Economic Shocks

Rail Station Proximity	Job Change, 2008-2009	% Change
All Locations	-143,384	-3.65%
1/4 mile or less	10,883	1.36%
1/4 mile to 1/2 mile	-15,744	-3.25%
More than 1/2 mile	-138,523	-5.25%

Job Loss from 2008 to 2009 by Proximity to a Rail Station, 7-county region (Source: 2015 LEHD Census)

How desirable are properties near transit? In August 2018, in the 7-county Chicago region, 76 percent of the multifamily properties under construction were within a 10-minute walking distance of rail transit.¹⁶

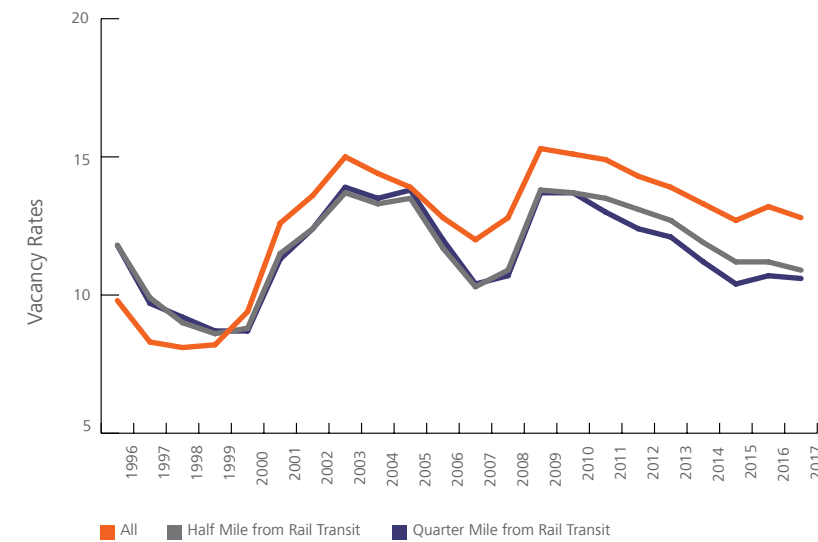
Similarly, office buildings close to transit consistently attract and retain tenants at a higher rate, even through economic downturns. As shown in *Figure 4*, in 2017, vacancy rates were an average of two percentage points lower than the regional average in locations within 1/2 mile of rail transit. Over the past 10 years, office space within 1/4 mile of a rail station was on average 2 percentage points below the regional vacancy rate. Areas within 1/2 mile beat the region by 1.5 percentage points.



Suburban focus

Excluding the Chicago real estate market, suburban office buildings within a half-mile of rail transit had a 20% lower vacancy rate compared to the regional average over the past decade.

Figure 4: Buildings Near Transit Stay Occupied



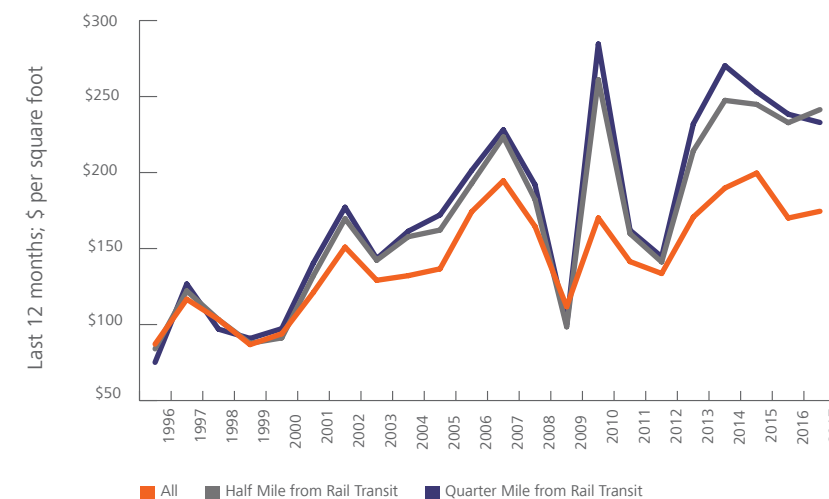
Vacancy rates over a 21-year period for the 7-county region, by rail transit proximity (Source: CoStar)

Transit Delivers Value to Business

Sale price and asking rents 30% higher for space close to transit

Asking rent levels for office space near transit have increasingly demanded a premium, reflecting the value that transit provides in terms of accessibility. That premium has steadily increased over the past 20 years, and the gap now stands at over 30 percent. Sale prices have been a bit more volatile, ebbing and flowing with the market, but the premium exists there as well. Since the recovery began in earnest in 2012, prices for office space near rail transit have been about a third higher.

Figure 5: Offices Near Transit Sell for More



Average Office Sale Price per Square Foot by Proximity to Rail Transit (Source: CoStar)



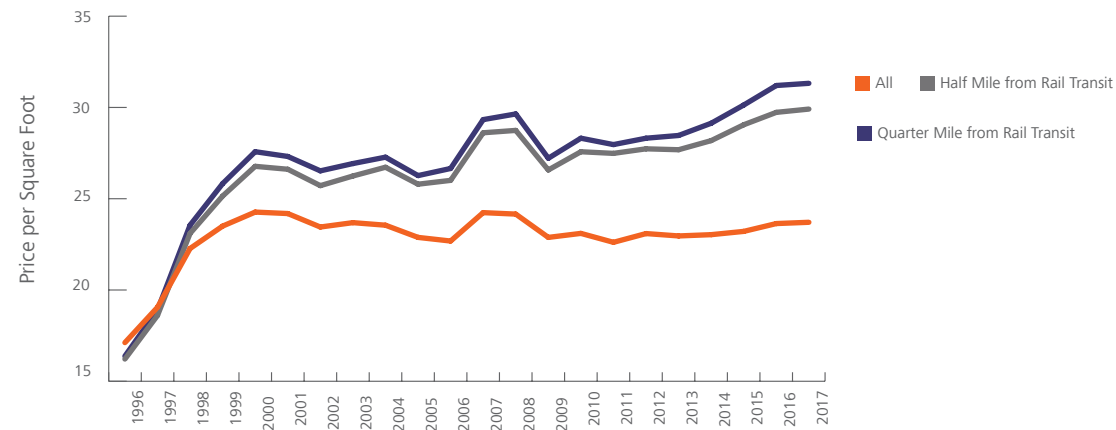
Suburban focus

Chicago's central business district has a strong influence on regional averages, but these patterns largely hold true in the suburbs as well. Removing all data from the City of Chicago and including the last 10 years, we found that office space within a half-mile of rail transit had:

12.5% higher average sale prices, and

10% higher asking rents

Figure 6: Rents Near Transit Reflect Value of Good Access



Average Asking Rent per Square Foot by Proximity to Rail Transit (Source: CoStar)

This trend is true across time at the regional level, but it also manifests at a local level. *Figure 7* compares commercial building sales prices within a quarter mile of certain CTA or Metra rail stations against the real estate submarket they're located in. A submarket is generally defined as a city neighborhood or suburb. In all cases, the locations close to transit outperformed the broader submarket.

Figure 7: Transit Affects Sales Prices at the Local Level



Sale Price Near Rail Stations Compared to Submarket (Source: Cushman & Wakefield)

The following **case studies** tell stories of how companies and institutions in greater Chicago and throughout the state depend on transit for many reasons, including accessing talent, building communities and implementing sustainability policies.





Transit Means Access to Talent: McDonald's

Location: Chicago - West Loop

Employees: 2,000

Relocation Downtown for Access To Talent

In 2018, more than 40 years after leaving Chicago for the suburbs, McDonald's moved its headquarters to Chicago's West Loop. The company is clear about the reason: access to a greater pool of talent.

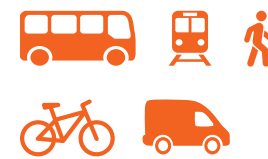
In recent years, the human resources department noted that most job applicants lived in Oakbrook, and McDonald's was not attracting the broader labor pool who live in the city and would not consider commuting to the suburbs. Previous efforts to run a shuttle bus from the Metra station in Elmhurst to the office campus were not enough to entice reverse commutes. Retention was also a problem as it was difficult to retain lower-wage workers whose commutes required two buses. Therefore, the company decided the solution was to relocate to a central, transit-accessible location.

Choosing a Transit-Accessible Location with Shuttles for Station Connections

McDonald's new location in the West Loop is two blocks from the Morgan Green Line CTA station. It is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile (a 15-minute walk or six-minute bike ride) from Ogilvie Metra and just under a mile to Union Station where Metra's south and west side lines and Amtrak operate. McDonald's runs its own fleet of shuttle buses from four Metra train stations in downtown



McDonald's is located two blocks from the CTA Green Line Morgan Street Station and less than a mile from Ogilvie and Union Stations that serve Metra rail. The #20 CTA bus along Madison stops a block away.



Chicago to supplement the CTA fixed route transit system. Shuttles operate every five to seven minutes during rush hour periods so that employees can be in the office within 15 minutes of train arrival. Employees can also walk and ride Divvy bikeshare for the last mile from Metra stations.

Managing a Transition to Transit Commutes

With the previous location quite inaccessible by transit, the vast majority of employees had been used to driving to work. The transition to mostly transit commutes required a major program of education and support. McDonald's has been heavily promoting pretax transit benefits and is paying for the first year of transit fares to facilitate the transition. Prior to the move, McDonald's gave employees free tickets to a neighborhood street festival and encouraged them to try the commute on Metra on a weekend, to get used to riding Metra during a quiet period.

Planning a Transit-Oriented Facility

McDonald's planned only 295 parking spaces in its new building for its 2,500 employees and employees must pay to park. Before the move, employees were encouraged to drive downtown at rush hour one day to experience the commute by car. While before the move only one third of employees planned to ride transit to work, now more than 90 percent of workers arrive via non-auto modes, mostly Metra and CTA.

New Talent Access is Paying Off

Just in the first two months of being in its new location, McDonald's is attracting larger numbers of higher-quality job applicants, given the location is accessible to a larger labor pool. McDonald's notes that the move wasn't only an address change, it was also a culture change.



Bosch Tool HR Partner Antonia Robinson. In fact, several groups of employees take the 40-minute ride together and enjoy the social component of commuting. Bosch actively promotes the pretax transit benefits during the employee on-boarding process and has a significant number of employees enrolled in the program. More than 10 percent of employees ride Metra to work.

Bosch also operates a large internship program, with up to 100 interns working at this location each year. Drawn from universities in Chicago like Loyola and DePaul, interns often ask about the commute and whether they can reach the office without a car. "There is no way we could have a program this big without Metra," noted Robinson. The interns are a critical part of the Bosch recruitment process as the company often seeks to hire them, and the act of recruiting on the college campuses allows Bosch to promote its brand to students as they are making early career decisions.

Additionally, as a global company Bosch will sometimes host high-potential interns from other countries or executives on assignment from other global offices. These professionals who are temporarily located in the area frequently seek to live in downtown Chicago and wish to commute via transit.

Transit Means Access to Talent in the Suburbs: Bosch

Location: Mt. Prospect, IL

Employees: 800

One of the largest privately held companies in the world, Bosch — global supplier of technology and services — employs 18,000 people in the U.S. Located in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, its Robert Bosch Tool Division and the Bosch Information Technology function support its North American operations and employ more than 800 people, including corporate functions, accounting, marketing, sales, programmers, app developers and other IT professionals.

Metra Access is Critical to Attracting Young Tech Talent

The Mount Prospect office is located between the Arlington Heights and Mt. Prospect Metra stops on the Metra UP Northwest Line, and is served by Pace's Central Road bus line. To connect its employees to Metra, Bosch contributes financially to Pace to make a special stop at the office location three times each during the morning and evening rush hours. An adjacent employer, Roland Packaging, also has staff who take advantage of these special Pace pickups and drop-offs.

Bosch has found that having the option of commuting via transit is critical to attracting talent, particularly for early-career professionals. Questions around the transit benefits provided by the company are regularly raised in talent interviews, sometimes as one of the first points in conversations. Human resources specialists have learned that younger professionals want to live in downtown Chicago, and without the option of commuting via Metra, "recruitment would be significantly more difficult," according to



Bosch is located between the Arlington Heights and Mt. Prospect Metra stops on the Metra UP-Northwest line and is served by Pace's service on Central Road.





Transit Means Employees Ride for Free: CA Ventures

Location: Chicago - Loop

Employees: 170

CA Ventures is a privately-held real estate investment management firm headquartered in Chicago with a focus on market-rate student, senior and multifamily assets. Much of the firm's development focus is on transit-oriented sites across the U.S. The firm recently relocated its corporate headquarters to the Prudential building, in the heart of Chicago's Loop.

Transit is a Real Benefit When the Employer Pays Fares

CA Ventures fully supports use of public transportation by covering the costs of all transit (CTA, Metra, and Pace), including Divvy bikeshare memberships, and a majority of the 170 employees take advantage of the transit benefit. While parking is available at its Loop location, the firm does not subsidize parking costs. In fact, this transportation policy was established by the Principals of the company early in its history and has been embraced by senior management. The decision to locate downtown means that the office is very centrally located and near various transit options. While the building is several blocks away from the Metra trains stations, employees can use Divvy, the Loop Link CTA buses in express lanes or pay for rides on the Prudential shuttle offered by the building for the last mile. "The location and funding of transit fares is a selling point when recruiting," notes Carmen Smith, VP of Human Resources.



Located in the Prudential building in the Loop, CA Ventures is accessible via Metra in combination with the CTA Loop Link bus, Divvy or walking, and also near multiple CTA "L" stations and bus stops in the Loop.



Riding Transit is Increasingly Attractive for Workers Who Want Productive Commutes

In recruiting conversations, time spent commuting is a topic that is frequently raised. HR specialists find that employees have a greater tolerance for longer commutes on transit because they can use their electronic devices and be productive. In fact, they find more people want to take transit even if it takes longer due to the advent of mobile technology.

The Market is Demanding Transit-Oriented Properties

In real estate, demographics and trends drive decisions. CA Ventures knows that investments in places with good access to public transit are more in demand, and business and retail are more likely to flourish around transit-oriented sites. In downtown Chicago, buildings are smaller with a focus on density and transit. A recent building at State and Huron, two blocks from the CTA Red Line Chicago stop, has a parking ratio of only .33 (1 space per 3 units) and was fully leased within six months at premium rents. "This project has one of the lower parking ratios in the city, yet has seen some of the strongest demand and rents in the city," notes Bob Flannery, who leads CA Residential, the multifamily platform of CA Ventures.

All three of CA Residential's most recent multifamily developments in Chicago have been located within one to two blocks of rail transit. At the 320-unit, 1140 S. Wabash building, located adjacent to the Roosevelt Red Line Station, TransitScreen, which displays the arrival times of trains at the CTA station, has been installed in the lobby. Eighty percent of the residents in the building work in downtown Chicago and commute via public transit. Demand for parking is very low, with the majority of the property's limited parking spaces leased out to a third-party operator for non-resident use.



Transit Means Education and Chicago Connections: University of Illinois - Urbana - Champaign

Location: Urbana - Champaign, IL

Students and Employees: 56,000

Transit Keeps Large University Campus Moving

The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD) System is extensive, dependable and well-used by University of Illinois students and faculty. In fact, the system serves more than 40,000 students and the broader community, and provides more than 16 million rides annually. Two-thirds of riders on the local transit system are students, faculty and staff.

Over the last 15 years, transit ridership has steadily grown and more riders are expected based on the propensity toward transit in young population groups.¹⁷ High-frequency buses serve both the campus area and the Champaign and Urbana downtowns. Students pay a campus transportation fee of \$62 per semester for unlimited transit use which also funds SafeRides, an MTD demand-response service for late-night travel. A separate budget funds transit on behalf of faculty and staff. Students and faculty can just show their student IDs to ride transit. Because students are not permitted to have cars on campus for their first and second years, and parking is quite expensive, there is high demand for transit by students. The walkability of the community also supports transit use.



The Champaign-Urbana campus is served by a high-frequency local and regional bus system. The campus is also served by Amtrak intercity rail.



Champaign Students and Faculty Rely on Amtrak

Many students take Amtrak to Chicago for weekend trips home or for other leisure travel, and faculty/staff regularly use Amtrak for daytrips for meetings and professional development. The University of Illinois system prefers its employees use Amtrak for travel between Champaign and Chicago. On the Illini and Saluki routes to Carbondale, Champaign is second busiest station after Chicago. On the long-distance City of New Orleans route, Champaign is the fourth busiest station overall.

According to the 2016 Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Coalition (MIRPC) survey¹⁸ of Illinois university and college passengers more than a third (35 percent) said they have taken the train at least once during the past 12 months and a tenth of Illinois respondents said the train is their primary travel mode to/from school and their permanent residence. Half of respondents said they would be more likely to take the train if more frequent service was available; 19 percent would be "much more likely," and 31 percent would be "somewhat more likely" to ride Amtrak.

Public Transportation Is a Factor in Retaining Talent in Illinois

When college students were asked in the MIRPC survey how much access to public transportation will affect a decision to stay in the Midwest after graduating, 46 percent said it would be a factor: 27 percent said "somewhat" of a factor, 12 percent said "quite a bit", and seven percent said "very much".



Transit Means a Last-Mile Connection to Retain Tenants: Hamilton Partners

Locations: Downers Grove and Itasca, IL

Employees: 4,000 (Downers Grove)

Office park developer Hamilton Partners has always focused on bringing amenities to its sites. Daycare, fitness centers and dining options are all located nearby, yet within the last five years, the addition of transit connections has been critical to staying competitive. Leasing agents have found that while real estate costs are lower outside the urban core, if people are not willing or able to travel to a suburban office location, transportation becomes a priority issue.

Established in Downers Grove 28 years ago, Hamilton Partners owns and operates an 80-acre and three-million-square-foot office park known as Esplanade. Located near the critical highway junction of East-West Tollway (I-88), and the North-South Tollway (I-355), it is not particularly close to transit. Travel via Metra from Chicago to Downers Grove takes approximately a half an hour, and prior to 2016 riders then had to take two Pace buses to reach the north end of the park, adding up to 40 minutes in last-mile travel time. The lack of a quick, easy transit connection to the train was affecting recruitment and retention of talent, and tenants were rethinking their locations at the office park. Ultimately, one of the major tenants, which had a managing partner making a reverse commute, demanded a last-mile solution.



The Esplanade location is served by Metra BNSF Line to Downers Grove and Pace Route 465 bus service. The Itasca Hamilton Lakes location is served by Metra Milwaukee District West service with connections via Pace buses or Dash shared ride service. The Pace Route 616 also operates express on I-90 between Itasca and the Rosemont Transit Center.



Developing the Last Mile Solution

To begin to address the last-mile problem, Hamilton Partners surveyed their 4,000 tenants. The results helped them formulate the goal to create a low-or no-cost last mile amenity that would compete with free parking.

Supporting Bus Service

Hamilton Partners worked with Pace Suburban Bus to develop dedicated rush hour bus service. Once a dedicated bus route was in place, the Downers Grove Belmont station became accessible via a direct 4-mile bus ride. After a test period, there were not enough riders for Pace to continue the service at full public cost, but Hamilton decided to subsidize 30 percent of operating costs to ensure its continuation as an amenity. Hamilton tenants are provided a special pass for free bus fare. The Pace bus is also publicly accessible to any other businesses in that development with a Ventra card. People who are interviewing for job can use transit to get there as the public Pace route shows up in transit planning apps (in contrast to private corporate shuttles).

Sustainable Rideshare Solution

At a second location in Itasca, Hamilton Partners took a different approach to the last-mile issue by partnering with Enova EV, a local electric car-share company. While the distance from the Hamilton Lakes office park to the Metra Itasca stop is just under 1.5 miles, the Pace bus connections are often not timed for a reliable connection if the Metra train arrives a few minutes late, and there is still a significant walk to the office entrance from the bus stop. With the Enova service, operated as Dash, up to three small electric vehicles and a Nissan Leaf four-seater with drivers are waiting at the curb when the train arrives. Riders make a reservation using a smartphone app to ensure a vehicle is waiting for them, or can walk up and instantly reserve a ride. The cost per ride is \$3, and riders can purchase monthly unlimited ride cards for \$96, or 23-or 12-ride cards for \$60 or \$30. This is a more affordable solution for regular users than Lyft or Uber, which generally runs more than twice the cost per ride. Choose DuPage, the county's economic development agency, has been supporting advertising of the service since operation began in early 2017.

Transit as a Marketing Tool

When Hamilton Partners shows prospective Downers Grove tenants space, the free bus service is a major differentiator. Now the company looks at improving transit solutions for all its suburban office parks. "Companies moving downtown has been a major wake-up call to suburban property owners. Talent is the first concern for businesses, and real estate is second," notes Principal Phil Sheridan. While ten years ago this was not an issue, now it is a regular topic of conversation with prospective tenants. "For tech companies, transit access is one of the top three questions," says Sheridan.



Transit Means Growing Entrepreneurs: The Hatchery

Location: Chicago - East Garfield Park

Members: up to 100

Entrepreneurship Hub to Open Adjacent to CTA Rail Station

The Hatchery Chicago is a non-profit food and beverage business incubator that enables local entrepreneurs to build and grow successful businesses. Those successful businesses, in turn, create economic growth and new job opportunities in their communities.

Accion Chicago, the city's largest microlender, and Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago (ICNC), which runs one of the largest business incubators in the country, are the lead nonprofit partners developing the Hatchery project. The 67,000 square-foot facility, currently under construction, will provide space for up to 100 entrepreneurs adjacent to the Kedzie Green Line CTA station in Chicago's East Garfield Park neighborhood.

Transit Will Provide Access for Urban Entrepreneurs

The Hatchery's location next to transit is critical: Food and beverage businesses are ideal for low-income entrepreneurs who are seeking a path to self-sufficiency, yet many individuals may not have reliable access to car. A major focus for ICNC in selecting a location for the Hatchery was having rail access that will be provided by the Kedzie Green Line CTA station.

Since the 1980s ICNC has been running its Make City incubator in the Kedzie Industrial Corridor where 100 entrepreneurs with 550 employees undertake light industrial manufacturing and food production and develop products that are too expensive to import from overseas. Because many



The Hatchery is located adjacent to the Kedzie Green Line CTA station and also served by CTA buses along Kedzie Avenue.



clients are downtown, these companies choose to stay close to the Loop, and most employees live nearby and take non-auto modes of transportation to work. The current ICNC space is adjacent to the CTA Green Line, yet is more than a half-mile away from a station. After years of advocacy, a new Green Line station at Damen is under development and will be built by 2020. Decades of yearning for an adjacent station has made investors highly sensitive to the importance of rail transit access at the Hatchery, so they made that a priority in selecting a site.

Transit Access Enables Training for a New Generation of Chefs at the Hatchery

The Hatchery is committed to ensuring diversity in the next generation of food entrepreneurs. The new facility will house a cooking school targeting youth aged 18 to 24. Students, primarily from the South and West Sides of the city, will access the three-month cooking school program via the Green Line. Led by Rick Bayless, celebrity chef of Frontera Grill, the curriculum will be co-created and co-taught by Bayless along with many of Chicago's top chefs. The restaurant community will then give students who graduate one-month internships in a restaurant, and if they succeed, will hire them full time.

Local Market will Gain Space Adjacent to Transit Station

An emerging retail enterprise in the community is a neighborhood market. When the new Hatchery building opens, this neighborhood market will be housed on-site, adjacent to the CTA station. Customers will be able shop there and at any of the entrepreneurs who sell their products directly to the public. With a focus on health, the market takes advantage of more than 30 local community gardens. The market takes place two times a month and shoppers can use their LINK card and other discount cards to help with affordability. Proceeds from sales support the gardens, funding materials such as fencing, mulch and irrigation. In addition to produce, several vendors sell prepared foods, including a bakery that is a member of the Hatchery. Increasingly budding entrepreneurs are looking at this neighborhood market as a place to sell products.



Transit Means Access to Tech Talent: PowerReviews

Location: Chicago - Loop

Employees: 160

Transit Matters to Tech Employees

If you have written a review for a product you bought online, chances are you have interacted with PowerReviews' technology. Founded in 2006, PowerReviews is a global technology leader in reviews and user-generated content for more than 1,000 brands and retailers. The company recruits software engineers, user experience professionals, product technology experts, designers, data scientists, sales people and client success pros who coach brands and retailers on how to leverage their technology to increase website traffic, improve sales conversion and reduce product churn. Clients span industries including apparel and shoes, health and beauty, food and beverage, plus home and garden. Their roster notable client brands includes Lucky Brand, Crocs, Wrangler, Skechers, Ulta, Estee Lauder, Aveda, MAC, Hershey's, Teavana, Dean and DeLuca, Room and Board, iRobot, and World Kitchen

In technology, especially SAAS, talent is key. PowerReviews notes that transportation is a critical consideration among candidates at all levels, from executives to entry-level staff. The company actively promotes its transit accessibility, and this continues to be a selling point for employees. In fact, 95 percent of PowerReviews' 160-person staff ride Metra and CTA. The company makes riding transit as cost-effective as possible by providing pre-tax transit benefits for transit or parking at the Metra station. The company promotes transit accessibility along with other amenities including daily ping-pong tournaments, standing/treadmill desks, and a wifi-enabled rooftop deck.



PowerReviews is located steps away from all the CTA rail lines in the Loop as well as multiple CTA bus routes. The office is served by the Metra rail stations in combination with the CTA Loop Link buses, walking or Divvy bikeshare.



Transit is a Major Location Factor for Tech Companies

The company is now located at 1 N. Dearborn. Among the top priorities when considering this location was transit access. At the onset of their search for this location, PowerReviews asked its real estate broker to analyze employees' home addresses and the modes of transportation that were available at potential locations. The close proximity to both CTA Red and Blue lines, as well walkability to Metra, were key determining factors in choosing the current location.

Transit Helps the Company Do Business Daily

The Loop Location matters not only to staff but also to contractors that travel to PowerReviews' offices to provide services. When consultants or remote workers from out of town travel to Chicago they appreciate that PowerReviews' office is a direct train ride away on the Blue Line from O'Hare Airport.



Transit Means Economic Development: Revolution Brewing

Location: Chicago - Logan Square

Employees: 80

Revolution Brewing is a Chicago-based brewery that opened its first location at 2323 N. Milwaukee in 2010 adjacent to the CTA Blue Line California stop. In its original business plan, owner Josh Deth included a transit map, so transit was always a key factor in selecting locations near rail and bus. In 2011, Revolution added its second floor Brewer's Lounge at the brewery. Before ride-sharing, this was a difficult location to hail a taxi, yet even so, Deth was committed to limiting the number of drivers and built zero parking for the site. The production Brewery and tap room at the second location on Kedzie Avenue opened in Spring 2012.

Transit Access is Important for Patrons to Access the Brewery

Given that people who are drinking beer should not be driving, an important benefit of Revolution's location near the California Blue Line stop and on three bus lines is safe transportation for their customers and those of the food and entertainment district that has sprouted up around them. A former executive director of the Logan Square Chamber of Commerce, Deth is a big proponent of bringing along neighborhood retail, and Revolution Brewing was a catalyst for attracting other entertainment and food and beverage retail. The Blue Line's 24-hour operation means that transit is an option any time of day, even at Revolution's 2 a.m. closing time. The high level of pedestrian traffic around the station means that the environment feels safe for patrons in the evening.



Revolution Brewing at 2323 N Milwaukee Avenue is adjacent to the CTA Blue Line's California stop and also served by multiple bus routes on Fullerton, California and Milwaukee Avenues. The 3340 Kedzie location is near the Belmont Blue Line CTA stop and served by buses on Belmont Avenue.



Transit Access to O'Hare Airport is Important for Growing Company

Now that Revolution employs 20 salespeople who travel regularly to market the product in eight states, and a leadership team that travels to conferences and for other business reasons, the company especially values its Logan Square location on the Blue Line, just a 30-minute ride from O'Hare.

Urban location near Transit is Critical for Good Access by Employees

Many of the 80 employees choose to live in the neighborhood and want a job close to their homes for an easy commute. A high percentage of employees take public transit, bike or walk to work, especially since the Milwaukee Ave. location has no parking. A number of employees have chosen to live along the Blue line for easy work access. The brewery on Kedzie is open 24 hours a day and some employees who work the night shift use transit. Revolution provides pre-tax transit benefits for employees to incentivize transit use by employees.

Active Transportation is Part of the Brand and Culture

Revolution has created a brand highly associated with active transportation and targets marketing dollars toward this segment. In fact, Revolution was the first business in Chicago to pay to build a bike corral in front of the brewpub on Milwaukee, for both employees and patrons to use along this heavy cycling corridor. There is a bike rack inside the tap room at the Kedzie location. The company also sponsors nonprofit organizations that promote transit, biking and walking.



Transit Means Sustainability: University of Illinois - Chicago

Location: Chicago - West Loop

Students and Employees: 40,000

University Location is Embedded in the Transit System

The University of Illinois Chicago, located just west of downtown, is served by multiple CTA buses and trains, including the CTA Blue and Pink Lines. The East Campus is located three quarters of a mile from the two Metra West Loop commuter rail stations.

UIC Policies Foster Transit Use

UIC participates in the U-PASS Program, which, for a modest fee, provides full-time students with unlimited access to CTA. For Metra riders, the UPASS program provides a LinkUp pass so they can transfer to a CTA bus for free. The university also provides annual Divvy bikeshare memberships discounted to \$75 for all UIC students, faculty and staff to facilitate transit connections, and offers pre-tax transit benefits to all employees.

UIC Collaborates with CTA and IDOT to Make Transit Stations Attractive and Accessible

UIC worked closely with transportation agencies on improving the nearby transit stations to make them more appealing to riders. For example, at the Peoria Street station UIC collaborated on design; to increase the station's attractiveness, UIC added green landscaping and increased safety of pedestrian road crossings. Campus leaders also worked to increase room

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO



The UIC campus is served by multiple stops along the CTA Blue and Pink Lines and multiple CTA bus routes. The campus is less than a mile from Ogilvie and Union Stations, from which Metra trains operate. Pace bus route 755 connects the campus with stops along the I-55 corridor including Plainfield and Bolingbrook.



for the Divvy station to reduce consumption of sidewalk real estate. Part of the improvement to an Interchange Project required IDOT to plant trees in the project area. UIC worked with IDOT to identify sites on campus to plant approximately 80 trees per year over the course of the five-year project, which will increase the appeal of walking to transit.

Transportation shifts to Transit are Key Aspect of Implementing Climate Change Plan

UIC is one of 600 colleges and universities that have committed to making their campuses carbon neutral. The university has added climate resilience planning to its efforts, and is one of two schools in the Chicago region with that level of commitment. To guide its actions UIC developed a Climate Action Implementation Plan, and one of six core strategies is: Reduced Transportation-Related Emissions.

UIC periodically conducts transportation studies, partly to document greenhouse gas emissions, which the campus has reported publicly since 2008. The only way to document the emissions footprint for transportation is to survey students, faculty, and staff on commute patterns. A study completed in May 2018 showed that while most students use transit, the majority of faculty and staff drive alone. Commuters driving to UIC are responsible for 27,166 metric tons of CO2 emissions from automobiles, which comprises 77 percent of the university's transportation emissions from commuting.

UIC Seeks to Continue to Increase Use of Low-Polluting Transportation Modes

To achieve its goal of being carbon neutral by 2050, UIC is committed to increasing the share of non-polluting modes. The commuting study identified strategies for improving the climate profile of student and employee travel modes. While the rates at which survey respondents take public transportation is relatively higher than the average rate of Chicago residents, the school still seeks to increase use of transit, biking and walking further to reach sustainability goals. This may include adjusting parking costs, which are currently below market values, and not adding to or replacing its parking stock.

While the University does not have much jurisdiction over issues such as expanding CTA and Metra train lines, it can encourage partnerships with transit agencies to make riding transit easier and cost competitive. Many survey respondents indicated their high satisfaction with the CTA/UIC transit pass partnership and would like to see a similar partnership with Metra to expand transit options. To facilitate increased bicycle use, including last-mile rides from transit stations, the university will increase its bike rack capacity, including allocating space for indoor bicycle parking.



Transit Means Community Development: Urban Juncture

Location: Chicago - Bronzeville

Employees: Up to 40

Vibrant communities depend on vibrant commerce. That’s the driving force behind Urban Juncture, a Bronzeville community developer that leverages cultural assets to create enterprises that employ residents, provides quality goods and services to locals and host events to attract visitors. Their goal: revitalize communities by reinvigorating local commerce. Food — in particular black cuisine — is a focus at Urban Juncture because President Bernard Loyd observed there was a shortage of quality food in the Bronzeville neighborhood and a lack of this type of cuisine in Chicago.

Loyd bought his first commercial building in 2005 at the intersection of the CTA Green Line and 51st Street. “Transit is essential for many folks, and locating commerce here represents a layering of amenities,” he notes. Plus, there is a flow of commuters which represents 1,000 potential customers per day from the train alone. The location on the Green Line also benefits from buses that run along 51st Street, so it’s very well served by transit. The project has been slowly growing over a decade and a half. “This is a community that has suffered disinvestment and depopulation for a half century. Fifteen years seems like a long time, but really, it’s a drop in the bucket,” noted Loyd. “We have a long way to go and need to continue to access capital and work to reshape the image of the neighborhood.”

A half-dozen enterprises are housed within Urban Juncture’s Bronzeville Cookin’ Initiative, including the Bronzeville Incubator, which is an incubation, events and co-working space; Greenline Farm, a rooftop farm; Friistyle a unique local restaurant that combines french fries with a variety of toppings;



Urban Juncture is adjacent to the CTA Green Line 51st Street station and served by buses along 51st Street. A Divvy bikeshare station is located adjacent to the train station.



and Bronzeville Community Garden. In addition, Urban Juncture is developing Boxville, a colorful set of shipping containers that now house a bike repair shop, a mix of mini-food shops and other vendors. Eighty percent of vendors and employees live on the South Side of Chicago, and in the height of summer, up to 40 people can be found working on-site. The development is funded by private capital in Chicago and around the U.S., including a crowdfunding offering. A community development financial institution (CDFI) is also an equity partner. The organization is also certified as 501 (c) (3) to accept charitable donations. While some enterprises at the site will not be profitable, Loyd feels they are important for stabilizing the area.

Businesses Have a Close Relationship to the CTA Green Line Transit Station

One of the more prominent beautification efforts near the station is the Wall of Peace and Love mural, a community initiative led by Urban Juncture that has changed the tone of the area. Located on the east facing wall at the southwest corner of 51st Street and South Prairie Avenue, it covers 2000 sq. ft. and is just 150 feet away from the train station. Urban Juncture has also planted trees near the station, which has improved the look and feel of the corridor.

Both the garden and Greenline Farm were created to improve the vista for people exiting the train. Train riders now see lush green landscape instead of a broken-up roof. The transit platform and Greenline farm are separated by only an 18-foot-wide alley so riders on the platform are just feet away from green.

Urban Juncture facilitated placement of a Divvy bikeshare station near the Green Line stop at 51st and Calumet, which is a last-mile resource for both patrons and staff. The Bike Box, a container-based bicycle shop adjacent to the Divvy station, repairs and refurbishes bikes and also encourages bike use among team members, vendors and patrons.



Transit Means Access to World Class Healthcare: Illinois Medical District

Location: Chicago - West Loop

Employees and Visitors: 80,000 daily

Medical Hotspot has Huge Transit Access

The Illinois Medical District (IMD) is a special-use zoning district located two miles west of Chicago's Loop, consisting of 560 acres of land, with four anchor hospitals, medical research facilities, labs, a biotech business incubator, two medical universities and more than 40 healthcare related facilities. Daily, the district welcomes 80,000 people: 30,000 employees and 50,000 patients, students and visitors.

Fortunately, the area is well connected to transit by both the CTA Blue and Pink Lines and six CTA bus routes. While the mode share for transit in the district is fairly high — 40 percent use transit, 50 percent drive and 10 percent use other modes (carpool, rideshare, bike or walk) — there is still tension over demand for parking and how to create stronger incentives for transit use.

Transportation policies impact commutes

Some institutions within the district have strong policies supporting transit use. For example, the Veterans Affairs hospital pays up to \$130 per month in transit fare subsidy and has the highest transit use of the hospitals — 65 percent of their 2,500 employees take transit.



The District is served by both the CTA Blue and Pink Lines and six CTA bus routes. Pace bus route 755 connects the Medical District with locations along the I-55 corridor including Plainfield and Bolingbrook.



While most hospitals charge for parking, many employers offer free parking. However, businesses and institutions are realizing the area is at a turning point; they will need to charge for parking to make driving less attractive given limited space and expense.

Growing with a Plan for Sustainable Transportation

The IMD has big plans for growth and recognizes that transportation is a major aspect of its sustainability future. The plan notes that future higher-density development will be concentrated around transit stops and major thoroughfares. IMD owns significant developable land in the district, and for prospective tenants, transit access is one of the top three questions.

Getting ahead of future parking demand by improving transit

According to a parking study completed in 2017, there are 21,000 structured and surface parking spaces in the District, and by 2025 there will be demand for 7,000 more parking spaces unless there is a major change in transportation demand management. Each parking spot is estimated to cost \$30,000, and this anticipated demand for parking would result in an infrastructure cost of \$200M. Currently, 25 percent of the IMD is dedicated to parking, which management acknowledges is not the highest and best use of real estate.

To get ahead of the parking issue, IMD started convening a group of hospital and other stakeholders, including Chicago transit operators, to study transportation options. Getting to the IMD is not difficult but getting around within the district on transit can be challenging, and the hospitals currently run their own shuttles within the area.

The transportation study recommended developing and implementing a new public transportation route within the district, connecting riders to major transportation nodes including the Blue and Pink Line stations and off-site parking lots. The IMD has been collaborating with the CTA to implement this new service, which is expected to launch in 2019. IMD plans for various institutions to contribute to the cost of the new CTA service, enabling their employees to ride free, while the service would also be open to the public.



Transit Means A Vital Education Community: Southern Illinois University

Location: Carbondale, IL

Students: 14,500

There would be no local transit in Carbondale without the system provided by SIU

Since 1996, Southern Illinois University (SIU) has leveraged a student transportation fee to fund the Saluki Express, Carbondale’s local fixed-route transit system. While there are county-level transit systems that connect to destinations in Carbondale, Saluki Express is the only one to provide local circulation in Carbondale and helps connect the campus with the surrounding community. Transit provides access to most major destinations such as grocery stores and major retailers, so students and the Carbondale population can reach most key needs. Even if students have cars, with transit they can get dropped off closer to classes than by driving because parking lots are located at the perimeter of campus. The lack of free parking is also an incentive for students to ride transit.

Students Expect and Value Transit

SIU’s Department of Residence Life notes that the availability of transit service is very important to students to get across campus and to apartment complexes east of campus. “The bus serving those areas is always full,” says Student Center Director Tena Bennett. Transit is important to parents because their students can easily attend SIU without a car. Parents also



Southern Illinois University is served by the Saluki Express service funded by the university. The community is also served by county-to-county bus service and Amtrak intercity rail.



like knowing there is a late night bus route, so there is always a safe way for students to get around. Students from Chicago — many of whom do not have driver’s licenses and expect the availability of public transportation — are a major driver for why the campus values transit.

Transit is a large component of the university’s sustainability profile

Southern Illinois University puts a large emphasis on sustainability and is rated silver through the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS). This includes having transit access as well as having programs that encourage transit, biking and walking. No free parking is available on campus; juniors or higher can purchase commuter student parking, which costs: \$140 for a space close to the center of campus or \$60 for parking on the outskirts of campus.

Amtrak Intercity Trains Provide a Critical Connection Between Carbondale and Chicago

More than 80 percent of SIU students live within a 50-mile buffer of the Amtrak rail line to Chicago. Amtrak is a critical service to faculty, staff and students. “On weekends the train is loaded with students from Chicago,” says Kyle Harfst, Executive Director of the SIU Office of Economic and Regional Development. Now there are only two trips per day and SIU would like more frequent trips. Many staff from SIU take the train. While there can be delays due to freight interference, the service is very important economic connection for professionals doing business in Chicago.



Transit Means a Commitment to Sustainability: Method

Location: Chicago - Pullman

Employees: 120

A Sustainable Location Near Transit Was a Priority for the Method Soap Factory

When Method, a manufacturer of soap and cleaning products, was looking for a U.S. factory site location, among their top priorities were 1) creating jobs where people live and 2) locating near transit.

While it would have been much easier to build on undeveloped land far from downtown, Method wanted to be in a place their employees could easily access and chose to build their factory in Chicago's North Pullman neighborhood.

Not only did Method prioritize convenience, the company places a strong value on sustainability, with transportation playing a prominent role. Designated a highly sustainable LEED Platinum facility, the building achieved that status not only because of its brownfield restoration, wind turbine and solar panels, but also because of its location near buses and trains. The door of the factory is located one mile from the Metra 111th Street Station, and the 111A CTA bus runs along 111th Street with a stop at the entrance of the access road to the factory.



Method is located one mile from the Metra 111th Street station and 3.5 miles from the 95th Street CTA Red Line Station. The CTA 111A bus serves the Method factory.



Method Seeks to Boost Transit Usage

When Method constructed the factory, it built limited parking and offered pre-tax transit benefits to increase sustainability of the site and with the intention of having a large share of employees use transit. However it has been a challenge for employees to use transit as a primary mode. When the factory first opened, the company operated a shuttle from the 95th Street Red Line CTA station — the last stop on the line — and from downtown Chicago. Since work shifts start very early in the morning, Method worked to synchronize the shuttle with train schedules to ensure employees could get to work on time. However, due to low usage, Method shifted from its shuttle program to offering a carpool incentive program, providing gas and gift cards.

Part of the challenge to connecting more employees to transit is that workers also live in Indiana or the north and western suburbs and do not live near transit. The company still has a commitment to hire within adjacent zip codes and seeks to promote bus use for as many employees as possible.

The Role of Walkability in Transit Usage

Method funded construction of a sidewalk from the factory entrance to the bus stop on the main road, because pedestrian infrastructure plays a critical role in transit viability. Yet despite this sidewalk, the limited nearby retail and lunch options and overall low walkability of the neighborhood, which is undergoing other industrial and commercial development, means employees rely on their cars if they want to leave the factory for lunch or break.

Future of Transit for Job Access

Both Method and other incoming employers in the Pullman area — like the Whole Foods Distribution Center — seek sustainable transportation options for employees. Therefore, Method will continue to advocate for improvements at the Metra station and other infrastructure to make transit more viable for workers.



About 20 percent of all employees use the pre-tax commuter benefit. The company also has a “Go Green” program to encourage sustainable practices at home and work and will reimburse employees up to \$50 per year for relevant costs, including Divvy memberships. MB Financial invites Pace suburban bus services to come to its offices to present about its ridesharing programs and some vanpools have been formed by groups that live close to each other.

“The commute is very important to new employees, and transit access can be a deciding factor for some,” says Heape. In 75 percent of interviews, candidates ask about location, commute or the option to work downtown.

Transit Means Employees have Options: MB Financial

Location: Rosemont, IL

Employees: 2,200

MB Financial Bank, headquartered in Rosemont, has been in operation for over 100 years. More than 2,200 employees work out of the Downtown, West Loop and Rosemont locations, all of which are easily accessible via CTA, Pace or Metra.

Transit was Key When Establishing HQ Location in Rosemont

When MB Financial located its headquarters office in Rosemont in 2004, a key element of the location choice was proximity to the CTA Blue Line: Chicago-based employees could commute via the Blue Line and clients and executives could easily access O’Hare Airport for business travel. The walk from the train to the MB Financial campus is under 15 minutes. The bank also operates a free shuttle to the train station for door-to-door service. The Rosemont Transit Station is a hub for Pace buses, including the premier I-90 service connecting the Northwest suburbs to Rosemont.

Talent Acquisition Requires Transit Access from Downtown

“Today, many employees want to live downtown, not own a car and use transit to get to work,” says Seth Heape, who leads corporate culture and diversity efforts. Additionally, on days employees are not working directly with customers, they can work out of a newly established “hoteling” office downtown.



MB Financial provides a free shuttle from the Rosemont Transit Center served by the CTA Blue Line and serving as a hub for Pace services. The premier Pace I-90 service connects Rosemont with the northwest suburbs including Schaumburg, Hoffman Estates and Elgin.





Transit Means a Reliable Workforce: Testa Produce

Location: Chicago - Back of the Yards

Employees: 225

Testa Seeks Urban Location with Easy Access

A family-owned, Chicago-based business founded in 1912, Testa Produce employs 226 employees who process and deliver fresh produce. The company has maintained its location in the City of Chicago so that employees have easy access to their jobs. Currently located in the Back of the Yards neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago, the company has always sought locations within the city limits.

The produce business is very time sensitive, with orders being made and filled nearly 24 hours per day “It’s critical that employees can get to work easily and reliably,” says Testa Produce President Peter Testa. “For a company that relies on trucks to ship our produce, we rely on transit to help move our people.” Ensuring staff can make it to their shift is a critical part of providing reliable deliveries to many restaurants in Chicago.

Urban Transportation System Provides Resiliency

Employees are much more likely to come to work — even if weather is bad — if they are close to work and have transit available. While some drive, it is important for the facility to be accessible by transit to provide transportation redundancy so workers have options if a car is not available.

When employees have shorter commutes, it is easier to retain them, notes Testa. Many employees have tight schedules, such as single mothers who work part time, and parents who work opposite shifts from their spouses to ensure continuous childcare. Testa works hard to create a good work environment in order to retain employees for many years, and a transit-accessible location is part of that.



Testa Produce is located a mile from the CTA Red Line’s 47th Street Station, and connections to the facility can be made via buses along 47th Street. The location is also served by buses along South Racine Street.



End Notes

1. Transportation Research Board. Practices for Evaluating the Economic Impacts and Benefits of Transit, 2017.
2. American Public Transportation Association. Economic Impacts of Public Transportation Investment, 2014.
3. Victoria Transport Policy Institute. Evaluating Public Transit Benefits and Costs, 2017.
4. American Public Transportation Association. The Economic Cost of Failing to Modernize, 2018.
5. Chicago Transit Authority. <https://www.transitchicago.com/95thterminal>. Accessed August 23, 2018.
6. American Public Transportation Association. The Economic Cost of Failing to Modernize, 2018.
7. RSG. Regional Transportation Authority 2016 Customer Satisfaction Study, 2016.
8. Transportation Research Board. Practices for Evaluating the Economic Impacts and Benefits of Transit, 2017.
9. Victoria Public Transportation Institute. Evaluating Public Transit Health Benefits and Costs, 2017.
10. Federal Transit Administration. Public Transportation’s Role in Responding to Climate Change, 2010.
11. Chicago Department of Public Health. Healthy Chicago 2.0, 2016-2020
12. American Public Transportation Association, August 2018.
13. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. <https://datahub.cmap.illinois.gov/dataset/access-to-transit-index>. Accessed July 17, 2018.
14. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. <https://datahub.cmap.illinois.gov/dataset/access-to-transit-index>. Accessed July 17, 2018.
15. Cushman and Wakefield, 2018.
16. Cushman and Wakefield, 2018.
17. Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District. Strategic Plan 2014.
18. A total of 3,754 respondents from 10 Illinois four-year schools located near Amtrak stations participated in the 2016 MIPRC Colleges & Universities Passenger Rail Survey. Sixteen percent of respondents reported as staff, and 7.5 percent as faculty.

Report Team and Advisors

MPC staff (bold denotes project leads): Emily Blum • **Jeremy Glover** • **Audrey Wennink** • Shehara Waas

Advisors: MPC’s Regional Planning & Investments Committee, co-chairs Andrew Hesselbach and Michael A. Pagano • CMAP • CTA • Metra • Pace • RTA

Graphic Design: Sarah Sommers Design

Generously sponsored by:



Thank you to our report sponsor



**CUSHMAN &
WAKEFIELD**

Metropolitan **Planning Council**

For more than 80 years, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has made the Chicago region a better place to live and work by partnering with businesses, communities and governments to address the area's toughest planning and development challenges. MPC works to solve today's urgent problems while consistently thinking ahead to prepare the region for the needs of tomorrow.

140 South Dearborn Street, Suite 1400
Chicago, Illinois 60603
312.922.5616

metroplanning.org | [@metroplanners](https://twitter.com/metroplanners)

All image rights reserved. Inside cover photo by Corey Agopian, photo on page 4 by Nonsap Visuals, photo on page 17 by rawpixel.