

# The Importance of Streetscaping and Beautification in an Urban Environment



*The Grant Park Conservancy and Advisory Council*

Presentation: Anthony Pesce

# *Working Together to make Chicago More Livable, Sustainable, and Beautiful*

- I. Streetscaping: A Virtuous Cycle
- II. Current State of Streetscaping
- III. What are the Roadblocks?
- IV. Case Study: Printer's Row and the Wabash Arts  
Corridor
- V. The Sidewalk Planter Initiative
- VI. Applying what we've Learned to Other Areas

# Streetscaping: It Creates a Virtuous Cycle



# Current State of Streetscaping



610 S. Michigan –  
Spertus Institute



520 S. Michigan –  
Congress Hotel



12 S. Michigan –  
Athletic Association

## What Makes this So Bad?

- Overgrown or Missing Plantings
- Not Properly Mulched
- Exposed Wiring
- This is on Michigan Avenue



430 S. Michigan



Outside the Athletic Association on Michigan Avenue



1117 S. Michigan

## What Makes this So Bad?

- Dead Plantings
- Not Properly Mulched
- Tree Root System Damaged
- Exposed Wiring
- No Annuals or Color



820 S. Michigan outside Ebony/Jet

## What Makes this So Bad?

- Dead Plantings
- Not Properly Mulched
- Tree Root System Damaged
- Exposed Wiring
- No Annuals or Color



Planters on Michigan Outside Auditorium



Planter outside Cultural Center  
on Michigan Avenue



Planters outside Athletic Association on Michigan Avenue

# What Makes this So Bad?

- No Perennials
- No Annuals or Color
- This is outside of a Major Downtown Hotel (The Congress Hotel)
- Tourists see this Daily



Planter outside The Congress Hotel on Michigan Avenue



Planters outside the Fine Arts Building on Michigan Avenue

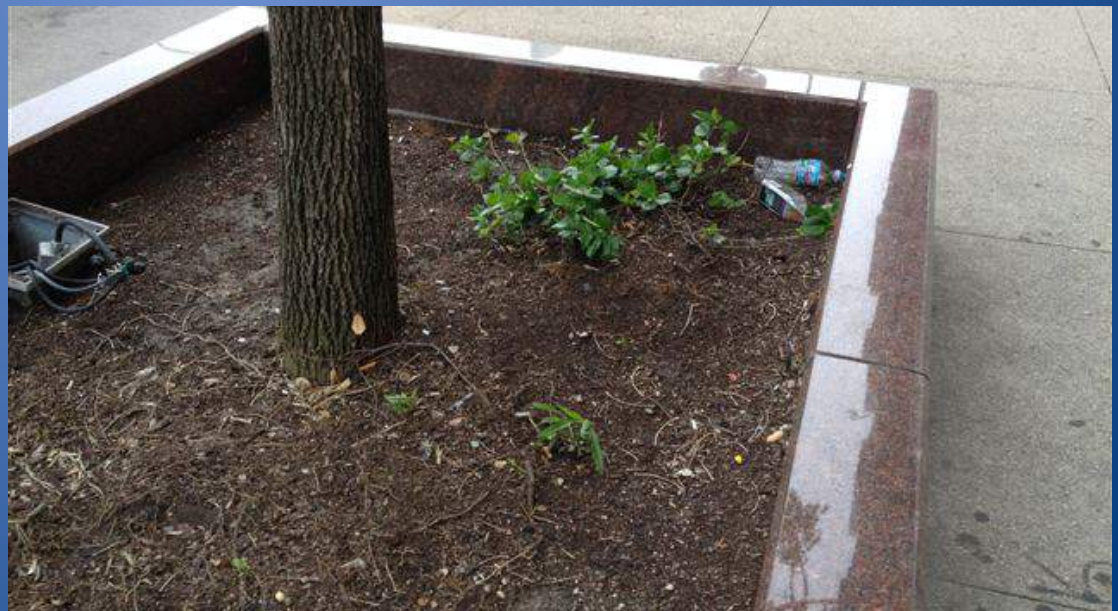




624 S. Michigan – Columbia College

## What Makes this So Bad?

- No Perennials
- No Annuals or Color
- This is outside of a Major Downtown Hotel (The Blackstone Hotel)
- Tourists see this Daily
- Garbage in the Planter



624 S. Michigan – Columbia College

## What Makes this So Bad?

- Dead Plantings
- Not Properly Mulched
- Tree Root System Damaged
- Exposed Wiring
- No Annuals or Color
- Litter in the Planter



1000 S. Michigan

Planter outside the Spertus Center on Michigan Avenue

## What Makes this So Bad?

- Dead Plantings
- Not Properly Mulched
- Tree Root System Damaged
- Exposed Wiring
- No Annuals or Color
- No Color
- Major Tourist Walkway



Planter outside the Spertus Center

Planter outside The Congress Hotel

## What Makes this Ugly?

- Cracked Planter Boxes
- Major Walkway along Michigan Avenue
- Steps from Grant Park



Planters outside The Essex Hotel

## What Makes this Ugly?

- Cracked Planter Boxes
- Major Walkway along Michigan Avenue
- Steps from Grant Park
- Debris on Sidewalk poses Safety Issues



Planter out The Best Western  
on Michigan Avenue

Planter outside The Essex Hotel on Michigan Avenue

## What Makes this Ugly?

- Michigan Avenue
- Exposed Soil
- No Plantings
- Major Tourist Area



1000 S. Michigan Avenue



1014 S. Michigan Avenue

# What Makes this Ugly?

- Dead Trees
- Exposed Soil, Roots, Wiring



Dead Tree on Wabash and Lake



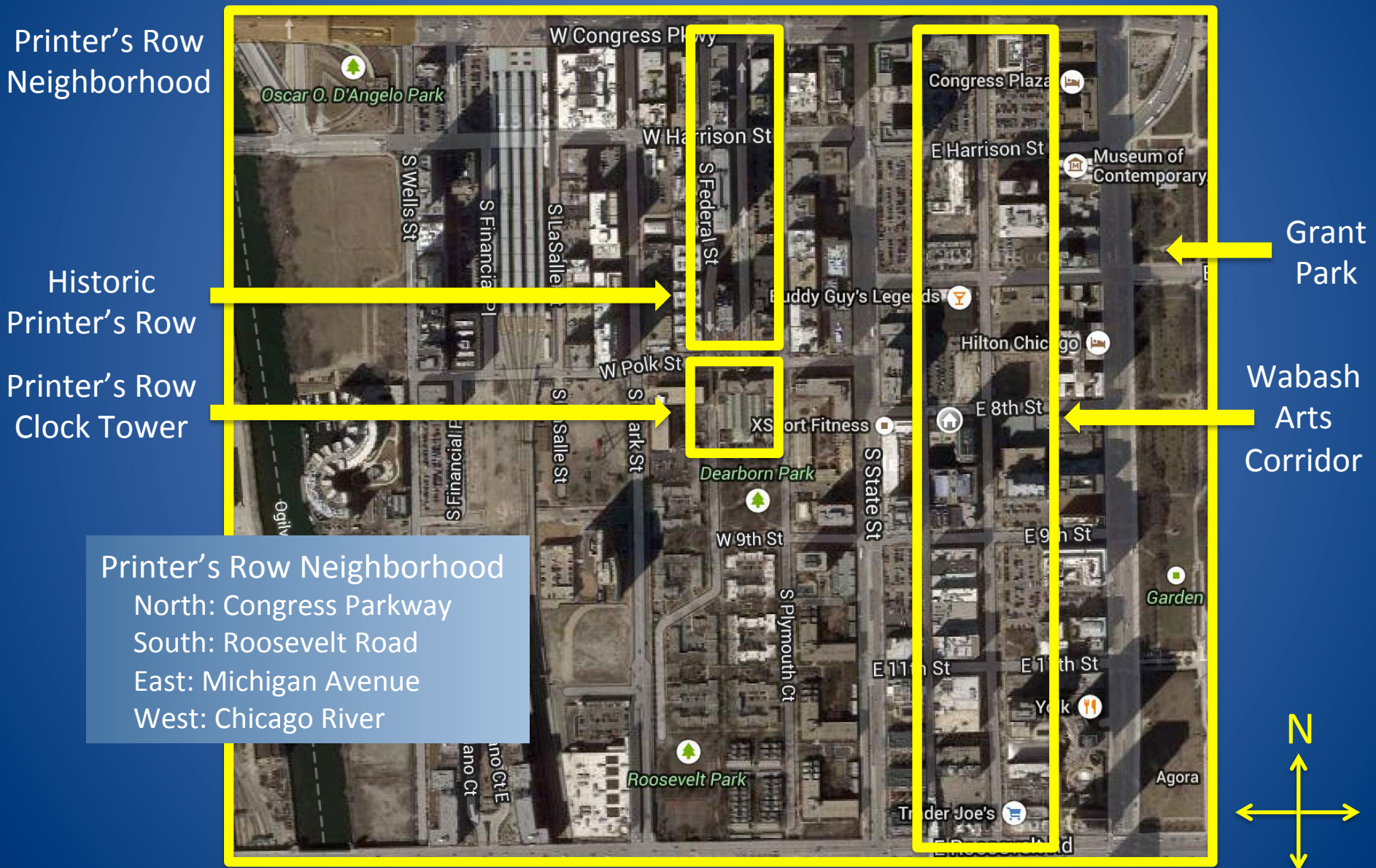
Planters outside Yolk Restaurant on Michigan Avenue



# What are the Roadblocks?

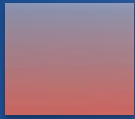
- CDOT made the initial capital investment, but there is no operating budget for “enhanced” maintenance
- The City of Chicago should be initiating maintenance
- The City makes the capital investment, but it’s incumbent on the adjacent property owners to work with the City to make additional improvements – this is not communicated
- A Detached Way of Thinking – Residents think that it is “someone else’s” responsibility to make improvements to the public way
- Overall lack of momentum – “It will always be that way...”

# Case Study: Printer's Row and the Wabash Arts Corridor



# Who is near the Wabash Arts Corridor?

Residents



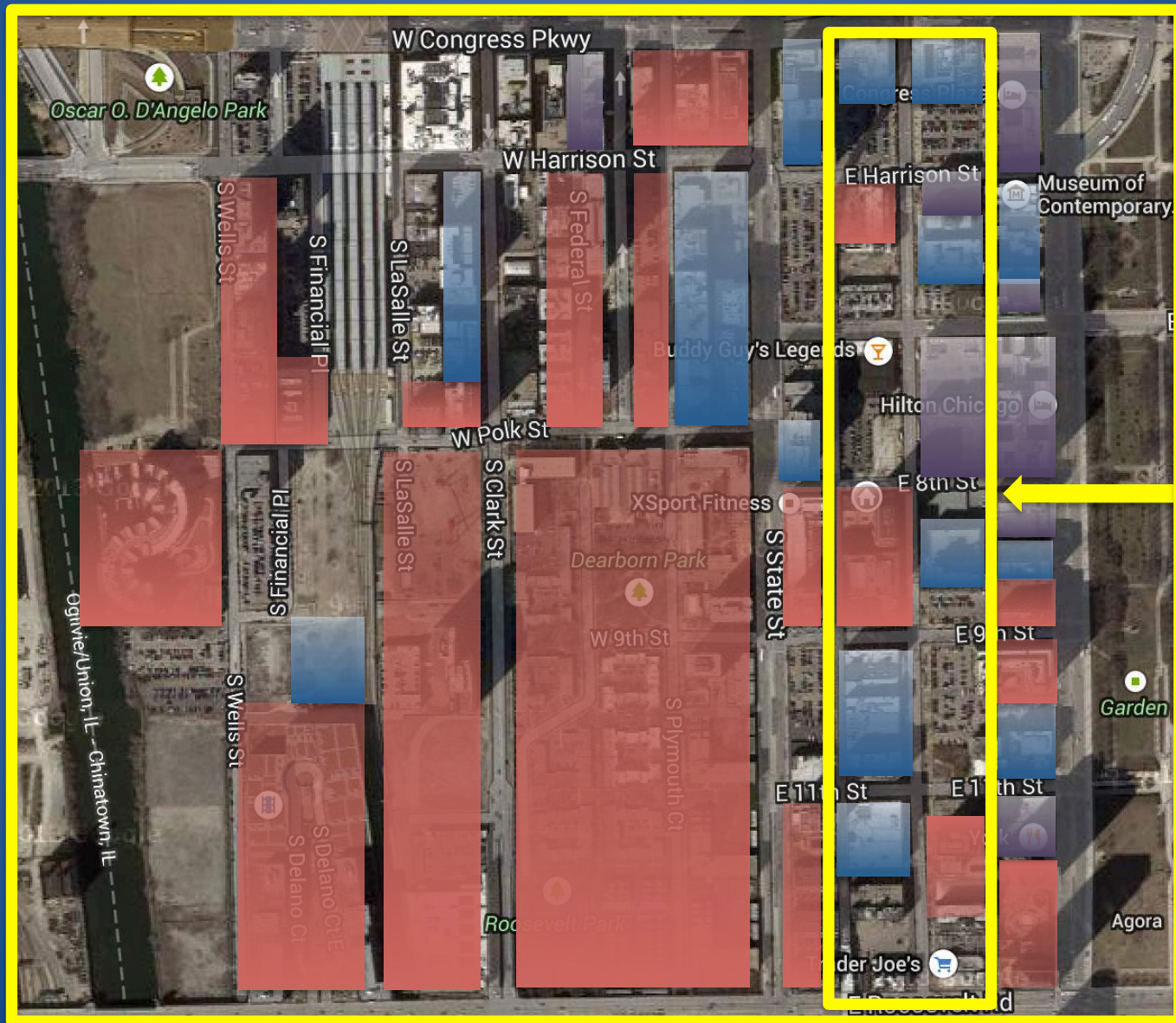
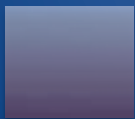
Students

Faculty

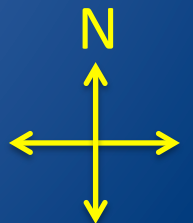
Admin



Tourists



Wabash  
Arts  
Corridor

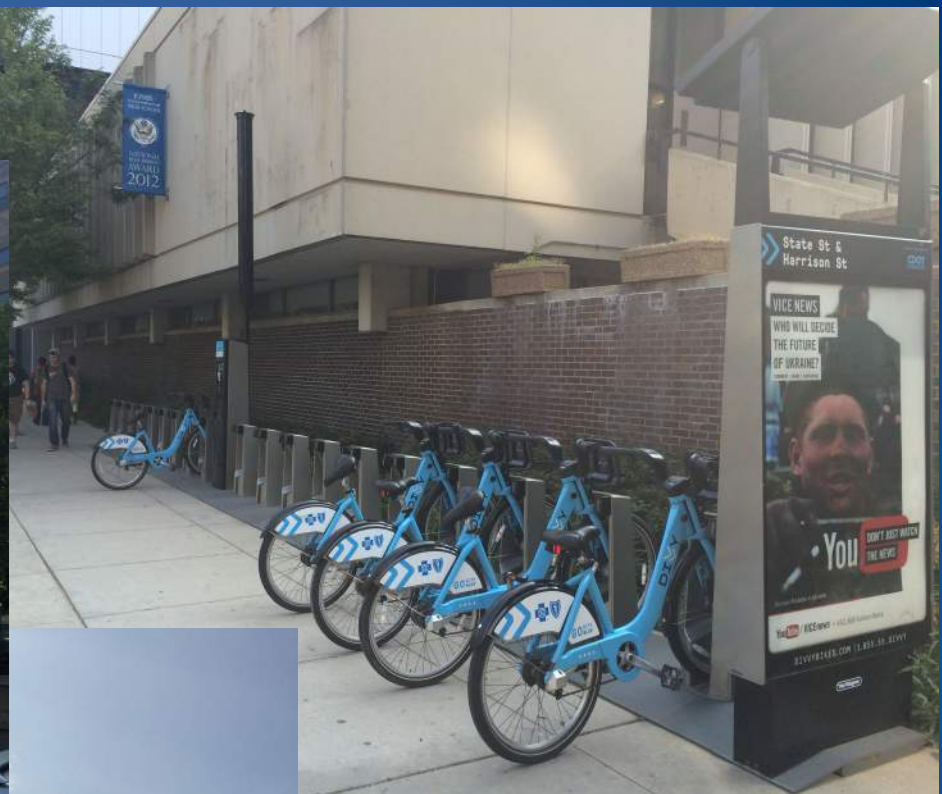


# What makes the WAC great?



Outdoor business seating activates sidewalks with colorful, maintained flower boxes line the seating area

# What makes the WAC great?

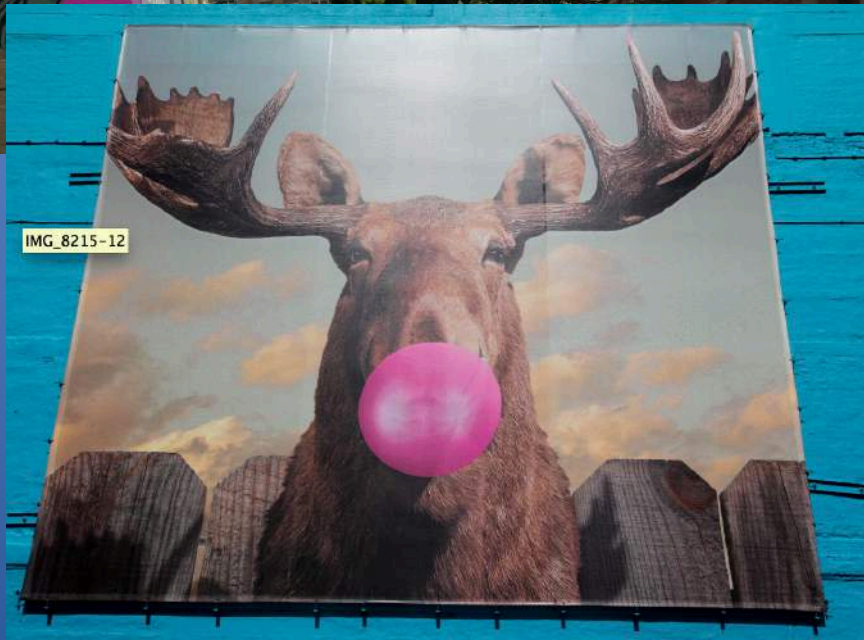


- 3 Divvy bike stations located within walking distance of the corridor
- Public Transportation
- Dedicated bike lanes along Wabash

# What makes the WAC great?



Street art along the corridor gives the street an identity



# What makes this so Bad?

- Broken sidewalk with concrete and glass fragments
- Major bus stop for residents and tourists/conventioners (Hilton Hotel)
- Steps from Grant Park



Corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Michigan outside Kitty O'Sheas

# What makes this so Bad?

- Graffiti



720 S. Wabash



North of Balbo on Wabash, East Side of Street

# What makes this so Bad?



Southeast corner of Harrison and Wabash



Between Harrison and Balbo on State

- Litter and weeds, no tree
- Broken glass on sidewalk
- Leftover food and alcohol left in the planter outside Travelodge, also near Harold's and Dunkin Donuts

## What makes this so Bad?

- Wrought Iron Fencing is Missing
- Properly Mulched
- Gateway to Grant Park via Congress should be Inviting, not Trashy
- A lot of Potential for Activation



887 S. Wabash

# Placement of Planters

Block #	X-Large - A	Large - B	Medium 1 - C	Medium 2 - D	Total
1		1	10	1	12
2	3		6		9
3			3		3
4	3	2		1	6
5	1	1	1	2	5
6	5	3		1	9
7	3	2	1		6
8	3				3
Total	18	9	21	5	53

- Block 1 – Jackson to Van Buren
- Block 2 – Van Buren to Congress
- Block 3 – Congress to Harrison
- Block 4 – Harrison to Balbo
- Block 5 – Balbo to 8<sup>th</sup>
- Block 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>
- Block 7 – 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>
- Block 8 – 11<sup>th</sup> to Roosevelt

DePaul

Parking Lot

Jackson

B  
1

D  
1

C  
1

C  
2

C  
3

C  
4

C  
5

C  
6

C  
7

C  
8

C  
9

C  
10

Van Buren

DePaul

CNA Insurance

DePaul

Property Owner

Property Owner

Van Buren

A  
1

C  
11

C  
12

C  
13

C  
14

C  
15

C  
16

A  
2

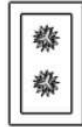
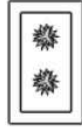
A  
3

Congress

Roosevelt University

**Columbia College**

**Parking Lot**



**Congress**

C  
17

C  
18

C  
19

**Harrison**



**Roosevelt University**

**Parking Lot**

Property Owner

Empty Lot

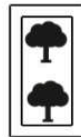
Property Owner

Harrison

Balbo

Travelodge

Columbia College



Property Owner

Parking Lot

Columbia College

Balbo

B  
4

D  
4

D  
3

A  
7

C  
20

Hilton

8th

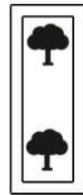
Property Owner

Property Owner

Property Owner

8th

9th



B  
5

D  
5

B  
6

A  
8

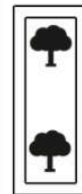
A  
9

B  
7

A  
10

A  
11

A  
12



East/West University

Parking Lot

**Columbia College**

**Property Owner**

9th

11th

A  
14

A  
13

A  
15

B  
8

B  
9

C  
21

**Parking Lot**

**Columbia College**

Columbia College

Property Owner

11th

A  
16

A  
18

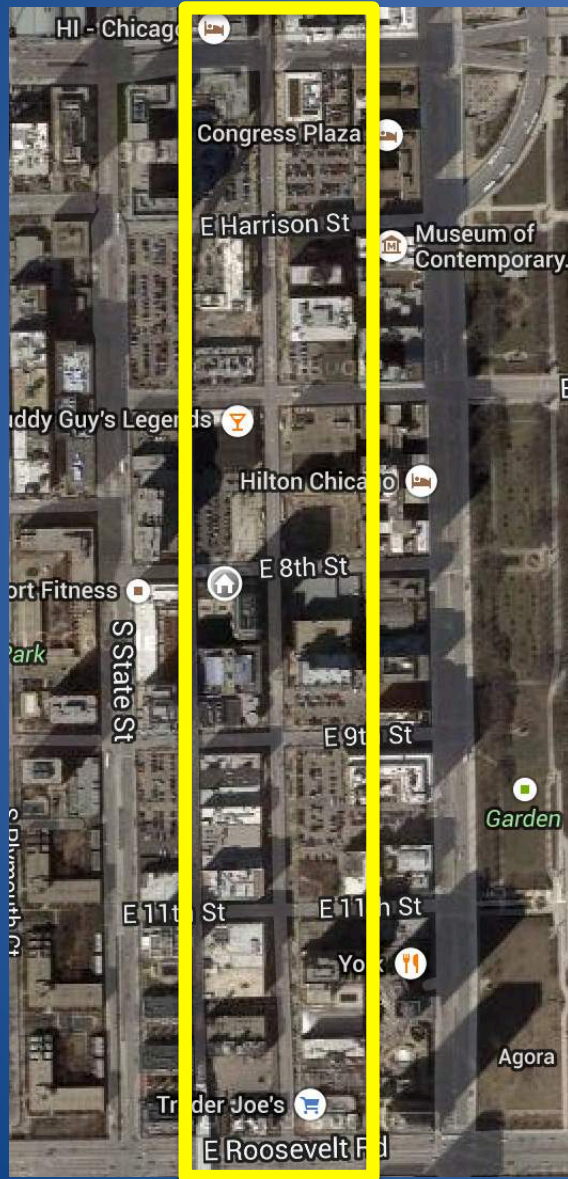
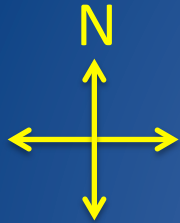
A  
17

Parking Lot

Property Owner

Roosevelt

# Awareness and Fundraising Campaign



- Throughout March 2015 reached out to:
  - Members of the Wabash Arts Corridor
  - Businesses along Wabash
  - Residential Developments (Current and In-Progress)
- Wrote individual letters to property owners
- Followed up with phone calls
- Made several PowerPoint Presentations

# SUCCESS!

- Of the 53 Planters on Wabash from Roosevelt to Jackson, 25 will be sponsored this upcoming year
- Sponsors include:

The Hilton Chicago

Cacciatore Real Estate

Applied Real Estate

The Residences of 41 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street

A Child's Space

Gilbane Development Company

Columbia College Chicago

DePaul University

Draper and Kramer

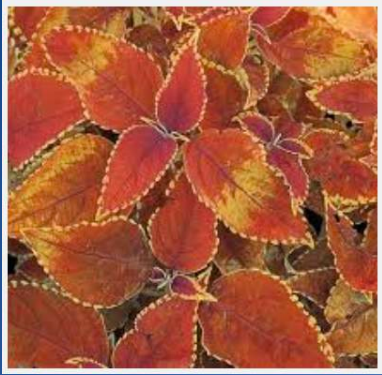
Golub and Company

Crosstown Capital Partners

Includes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ½ Annuals</li><li>• ½ Perennials</li><li>• Fresh Soil and Mulch</li><li>• May Planting</li><li>• Litter Removal and Watering throughout Summer</li><li>• October Cutting</li></ul>

# Types of Plants

## Annuals



Coleus Rustic Orange



Begonia Super Olympia Rose



Helenium Dakota Gold

## Perennials



Allium Summer Beauty



Hosta Patriot



Heuchera Obsidian



Heuchera Palace Purple



Russian Sage Little Spire



Nepeta Walker's Low

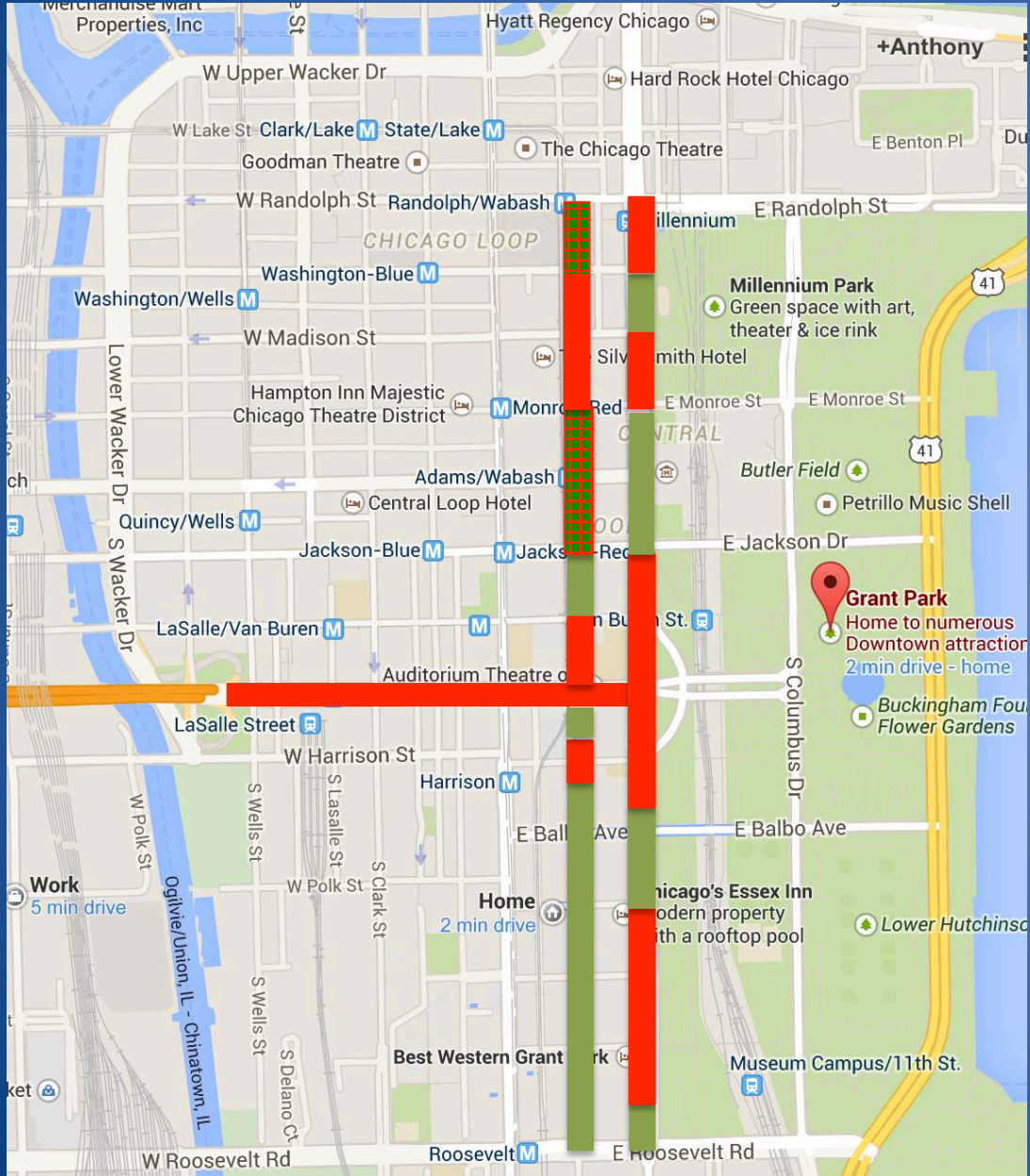


Calamintha Nepeta



Daylily Chicago Apache

# Applying What We've Learned to Other Areas

 Areas in Need of Improvement

## Mixed Results

## Progress Made

# Congress Parkway: The Path to Grant Park



# A Choice: Urban Decay OR.....



# Urban Renewal: Vibrant and Fun Outdoor Spaces



# Urban Renewal: Vibrant and Fun Outdoor Spaces

