

Question & Answer

What is Lincoln Yards?

Lincoln Yards is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform a former industrial site into a vibrant riverfront community. Its impact will be positive for all Chicagoans due to its incredible 20+ acres of open space, massive investment in much-needed infrastructure improvements, and widespread job opportunities, all while generating significant tax revenue for the city.

What are your plans for the site?

Sterling Bay has undertaken a community-driven development process and has met with dozens of local residents and community leaders to discuss how we can improve upon our vision for Lincoln Yards. We worked to improve our plans as a result of these discussions. We have increased the amount of publicly accessible open space from 13.44 acres to 20.88 acres, or roughly 38% of the site. We have also reduced the building heights throughout the development by over 100 stories, aligned infrastructure investments with the development, and provided detail on initial development and infrastructure approach.

How much publicly accessible open space will be available to the site?

We are providing 20.88 acres – or 38% of the site – as publicly accessible open space.

What else is on the site?

Our plans call for a mixed use development of office and residential with ample open space for Chicagoans to live, work and play.

What are the specifics of the planned development?

Currently, there are two planned development applications; one for Lincoln Yards North and one for Lincoln Yards South, totaling approximately 54.51 acres of land.

We envision the following breakdown for the site:

- At least 50 percent commercial and up to 50 percent residential.
- Approximately 5,000 residential units.
- Buildings ranging in height from 25 feet up to 650 feet.
- Tallest building is 650 feet.

The total gross square footage for the site is approximately 12.8 million, exclusive of parking. The market will dictate tenants and usage for the office space. The planned development will act as the master plan for the future development and will outline general development parameters and include design guidelines against which all future phases will be evaluated. Future phases will come back for review by various City departments, then the buildings will be presented to the Plan Commission at a public hearing. The developer and DPD will work with the Alderman at the time of all future phases to address any community concerns or issues as part of that process.

What is the proposed overall architecturally pleasing style that will tie all buildings together?

Lincoln Yards is designed to be a modern Chicago neighborhood while celebrating the site's industrial past. It combines historic elements, such as trussed steel bridges, with contemporary buildings and amenities, including expansive public plazas, and green space. Our plans also connect the Riverwalk to the north and south to create a fluid path.

The design is intended to inspire and uplift the human spirit. Lincoln Yards will prioritize energy efficiency, human health and adaptable systems. The buildings are inspired by the historic legacy of the site's industrial past and designed to put people first.

What actions have you taken to incorporate and preserve the history of the area into your development?

Sterling Bay is a firm believer in retaining the character and authenticity of neighborhoods whenever possible. Thus far, we have identified multiple ways to celebrate the site's industrial past and have incorporated historic elements like trussed steel bridges as part of our design. We have also been studying existing buildings in the area and are committed to restoring and/or incorporating these whenever possible.

Will the Chicago Park District own and operate the open space at Lincoln Yards?

Sterling Bay offered the Chicago Park District the option to operate the open space and they declined the offer.

Sterling Bay is committed to managing and maintaining the public open space for all to enjoy.

The local community has put together surveys and submitted questions for your review. Why haven't these been addressed in your updated Lincoln Yards plan?

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is better suited to address specific school-related questions. We remain in frequent communication to ensure they are kept up-to-date on the plans for Lincoln Yards.

- Transportation and infrastructure benefits
- Economic impact and benefits
- Publicly-accessible open space
- Building height and massing
- Project design, timeline, and building specifics

Will there be another community meeting?

We will continue to have conversations with all relevant stakeholders and keep the community updated on the Lincoln Yards development.

Will you wait until a new mayor has had a chance to review this before proceeding?

Our goal is to continue with our plans, absent politics or elections. We have been working closely with the City, Alderman Hopkins, and local residents on our Lincoln Yards development and will continue to do so to advance the plan to make Lincoln Yards a reality.

Why is a TIF district being proposed?

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has proposed a TIF district for the Cortland/Chicago River area to address the dire infrastructure and transportation needs of the area. After decades of neglect, this area needs new roads, bridges, a revised intersection at Elston, Ashland and Armitage, more east-west river crossings, increased CTA options, and a new Metra station, at least, and this development is a catalyst to spur these vital infrastructure improvements.

Are you in favor of the North Branch Park Preserve?

We support the concept of the North Branch Park Preserve.

What about General Iron? They pollute the air and we have heard you are buying that land?

We don't own that land. As residents like you, we are eager for them to move.

What have you done to ensure a transparent, community-driven public engagement process?

We have been working with Alderman Hopkins and the local community for over a year to discuss Lincoln Yards. Over the past few months, we have held two community meetings with over 1000 people, met with the leadership of various community groups, approximately 100 local residents, and local units of government, transportation agencies, and others to discuss the future of this area.

From these discussions, we have revised our vision for Lincoln Yards and focused on the areas we heard about most from the community: transportation and infrastructure, economic impact, publicly-accessible open space, and building height.

We will continue to have conversations with all relevant stakeholders and keep the community updated on the Lincoln Yards development.

Will this be like a new planned community with sidewalks and a downtown retail district or a college campus?

Ultimately, our goal is to make Lincoln Yards a highly desirable place to live, work, and play. We envision Lincoln Yards to be a new type of urban, mixed-use community that will be walkable and open. Lincoln Yards will be a place that brings Chicagoans together and advances a new model for urban living, work and play. It will have new buildings and public spaces that are known globally and loved locally.

Who will be responsible for the financing and construction of each project?

Sterling Bay will be responsible for the financing and construction of all projects on Sterling Bay-owned properties.

Is there a master plan for the entire site?

Yes. Our master plan was presented at a community meeting in November 2018. The master plan for Lincoln Yards was led by SOM and CBT. The team was selected to develop Lincoln Yards based upon their local, national, and international experience, which also includes some of Chicago's most high-profile developments and recent civic projects.

What comes first – public improvements or commercial development? Will transportation infrastructure lag behind development? If so, for how long? What will be done in the interim?

We anticipate Lincoln Yards to be a 10-year project and are excited to begin work on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform a former industrial site into a vibrant community that will finally connect Bucktown and Wicker Park to Lincoln Park and activate our extraordinary riverfront. Broadly speaking, public infrastructure improvements will occur in tandem with development. We all know that the current transportation and infrastructure in the area is abysmal and we are eager for Lincoln Yards to be the catalyst to spur these vital infrastructure improvements.

Lincoln Park, Bucktown, and Wicker Park are already congested areas. Why do you think increasing the population is a good thing?

They are populated neighborhoods, but the real issue is the inadequate transportation and infrastructure in and between the neighborhoods. Lincoln Yards will be a catalyst to spur these vital infrastructure improvements.

Will you meet ARO requirements (offsite and onsite)?

Yes, we will meet or exceed all ARO requirements.

Who is your target demographic to live here?

This site will be a mixed-use development, so our goal is to make the site a highly desirable place to live, work, and play that contributes to the collective vitality of the North Branch Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

How important is open space to your development?

We believe open space that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike is vital to any development, and we have incorporated 20.88 acres of publicly accessible open space into our development plans.

Will you commit to at least 12 acres of active recreational open space?

Yes, we meet and exceed all of the requirements outlined in the North Branch Framework Plan. At Lincoln Yards, we are planning for over 20 acres of publicly accessible open space.

Will an emphasis be placed on pedestrian walkability both within Lincoln Yards and connecting to the surrounding community?

Yes. Lincoln Yards will be a multi-modal development – meaning walking, cycling, and open space will play a central role in our planning. Our goal is to connect this new neighborhood to the surrounding communities by fostering the extension of the 606, expanding the dedicated bike lane network, improving access to the CTA and Metra Stations, and adding new water taxi stops.

Will you have an overall landscape plan to tie all development parcels into a coherent plan?

Yes. We believe open space that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike is vital to any development, which is why we have planned for 20.88 acres of publicly accessible open space and hired James Corner Field Operations to incorporate it into our development plans.

Who will maintain the recreational and natural areas?

Sterling Bay will maintain these areas.

What kind of bold open space solutions will be presented that will engage the community and meet the Framework's vision?

We believe open space that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike is vital to any community, which is why we are going beyond what the North Branch Framework Plan requires and including 20.88 acres of publicly accessible open space in our development plans. We anticipate having the following: the extension of the 606, a dog park, playgrounds, riverfront seating and plaza, ball fields, jogging and walking trails, kayak and boat launches, water taxi stops, drinking fountains, Divvy stations, bicycle parking, ample directional signage, a sledding hill, and equipment rentals.

What is the open space plan and what are its proposed uses? Will it be publicly or privately-owned? How will public use and access be ensured?

We are going beyond what is required in the North Branch Framework Plan and adding 20.88 acres of publicly-accessible open space. We anticipate having the following: the extension of the 606, a dog park, playgrounds, riverfront seating and plaza, ball fields, jogging and walking trails, kayak and boat launches, water taxi stops, drinking fountains, Divvy stations, bicycle parking, ample directional signage, a sledding hill, and equipment rentals.

Ultimately, our goal is to make Lincoln Yards a highly desirable place to live, work, and play. This would not happen without a positive relationship with the local community, which is why we are committed to ensuring public access to our open space at Lincoln Yards.

Will an open space master plan be provided with clear designations for size/use and state whether the access is public/private or some combination of the two?

Yes. We outlined our initial vision for open space at Lincoln Yards at the July 2018 public community meeting. Since then, we've met with the leadership of various community groups, private companies, and approximately 100 local residents to develop more detailed plans based on community and stakeholder input. As a result of those conversations, our current plans have 20.88 acres of publicly-accessible open space.

Why is a stadium being included as part of Lincoln Yards?

The stadium was originally proposed as part of the Amazon pitch. We received really positive feedback on it and decided to keep it as part of Lincoln Yards. One thing we consistently heard was the importance of having – and the desire to have – professional soccer in the city that was easily accessible for families to attend and that is what we aim to have at Lincoln Yards. When the stadium is ready to proceed, a detailed traffic management plan will be prepared and submitted to DPD and CDOT for review and approval prior to permit. This will allow for the traffic management plan to better reflect the current conditions at the time that the stadium is ready to proceed.

What is the proposed seating capacity?

The stadium will have a capacity of approximately 20,000 people and will comply with all current city zoning, curfew, and noise requirements.

Will it be a year-round facility?

Yes.

Will events be coordinated with Metra, CTA, and shuttle schedules?

Yes.

Can the venue be made available for the public school or community events?

Yes.

How many parking spaces will be provided?

Lincoln Yards will contain approximately 6,000 on-site parking spaces. That said, we are developing the site with multi-modal transportation, access and mobility, and pedestrian-scaled streets as core design principles, which would take people out of their cars and through the site via alternate means of transit.

How do you plan to support walking and cycling at Lincoln Yards?

Chicago is a great city for biking and walking, and we intend to integrate cycling and walking paths into our development. Lincoln Yards will be a multi-modal development – meaning walking, cycling, and open space will play a central role in our planning. Further, our goal is to connect this new neighborhood to the surrounding communities by fostering the extension of the 606, expanding the dedicated bike lane network, improving access to the CTA and Metra Stations, and adding new water taxi stops.

Do you plan on extending the 606?

We fully support the extension of the 606 under the Kennedy and over the river and are excited to work with the appropriate entities to make that a reality. It's too early to speak to the exact timing, but we're eager to see this happen.

What are your short and long-term plans to address traffic at Lincoln Yards and the North Branch area?

Congestion is absolutely an issue and it needs to be addressed. We have funded a traffic study which the city is currently reviewing and will continue to work with the city as they assess the infrastructure and improvements that will be needed in the entire North Branch Corridor. The recent TIF meeting also helped define the many infrastructure improvements that are needed for the North Branch Corridor.

Further, we support the realignment of Elston Avenue to relieve congestion at the Elston, Ashland and Armitage intersection as well as a new, relocated Metra station, as indicated in the North Branch Framework and as was supported by DPD in its recent TIF meeting, which would become an accessible multi-modal hub that helps foster improved connections and integrated access to multiple CTA bus and rail routes on this site.

Additionally, we are planning for the addition of four new bridges and working to facilitate the extension of the 606 under the Kennedy and across the river, the addition of multiple water taxi stops, and the expansion of the dedicated bike lane network. Finally, we are extending the Riverwalk, making it accessible to everyone and offering numerous activities including kayaking, boating, walking, and cycling.

Will you agree to help sponsor an overall CDOT managed traffic study for the entire Lincoln Yards/North Branch area?

We have funded a traffic study that CDOT is currently reviewing.

Will you work with CDOT to use the results of the traffic study to determine if streets need to be widened (e.g. Cortland), new and updated computerized traffic signals be installed, and other measures (e.g. extending Armitage Avenue from Racine) to reduce traffic congestion?

Yes.

What will be done to reduce the need for a car during the day?

We envision Lincoln Yards to be a multi-modal site and a fully walkable development, allowing people to take advantage of the riverfront location and green spaces.

Are you planning to add any bridges as part of your plans to address traffic at Lincoln Yards and the North Branch area?

Yes, we are planning for the addition of new bridges and are working with the City to identify available funding sources for their construction, among other needed infrastructure improvements.

Do you plan on refurbishing the Clybourn Metra station and/or building a new Metra station at Lincoln Yards?

We agree about the quality of the Metra station at Clybourn and fully support improvements to the current Metra station and construction of a new station. We also agree with the need for future investment in public transportation to reduce congestion and improve the quality of life for all members of the community. Specific questions as to public transportation routes, services, and programming are better addressed to the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) or the City of Chicago.

What will you do to ensure parking won't become a major issue with thousands of new residents?

Our planned development will include ample parking for workers, residents, and visitors. That said, we are developing the site with multi-modal transportation, access and mobility, and pedestrian-scaled streets as core design principles, which would take people out of their cars and through the site via alternate means of transit.

Will parking be shared by residential, retail, and office?

Yes.

Will you provide car sharing and taxi waiting areas?

Yes.

Where will parking be located?

We are planning to have two shared parking structures; one in Lincoln Yards North and the other in Lincoln Yards South, in addition to parking in various building sites. Commercial office buildings will be parked in shared garages that encourage people to park once and walk, activating the streets and open spaces. Shared garages are centrally located and within a 2-3 minute walk from any building in Lincoln Yards. Residential parking will be provided within each residential building. The shared garage servicing the office in the Dominick Commercial Corridor along the river will have direct access to a future Armitage Bridge and expressway

access. The shared garage on Lincoln Yards South has nearby access to North Avenue and expressway access.

Are you planning to build large parking structures, or will it be street parking?

We are planning to have two shared parking structures in Lincoln Yards, in addition to parking in various building sites.

What will you do to ensure public safety along the major arterial streets through and around Lincoln Yards?

Safety is the paramount factor in our planning. There's been a lack of investment in our roadways and transportation infrastructure for decades, which has led to more dangerous intersections and congestion near the site. Lincoln Yards can jumpstart needed road projects, river crossings and transit services that have been neglected, which will ease congestion, improve everyone's quality of life and enhance the safety of all modes of transportation through the area.

Will the project be certified as a LEED development?

Yes, our goal is for Lincoln Yards to be LEED-ND certified development.

What innovative, environmental ideas (such as, solar energy, geothermal) are envisioned?

Lincoln Yards will have an array of innovative environmental ideas, including rooftop open space, terraces and roofscapes, Illinois-based renewable systems such as wind and solar and advanced sustainable infrastructure through LEED-ND certification.

What environmental work has been completed and what work still remains across all sites?

The former Finkl site and neighboring properties hosted heavy industrial use for nearly a hundred years and it needs remediation, which we are committed to doing. In fact, we have already begun remediation efforts and have voluntarily enrolled in the State of Illinois' Environmental Protection Agency Site Remediation Program, which includes independent, state review and verification of our clean-up efforts.

So far, we have:

- Removed 24,000 tons of environmentally impacted soil on Lincoln Yards North alone
- Remediated 7.2 tons of TSCA hazardous PCB contaminated soil
- Remediated over 200 yards of hazardous lead
- Removed 27 underground storage tanks
- Recycled over 34,000 tons of concrete

What are the environmental issues related to the site and what are the mitigation requirements for the type of development that is planned? What are the sources of funds to address mitigation issues?

The former Finkl site and neighboring properties hosted heavy industrial use for nearly a hundred years and, as a result, the land needs significant remediation. We have already begun our remediation efforts and have removed 24,000 tons of environmentally impacted soil on Lincoln Yards North alone; remediated 7.2 tons of TSCA hazardous PCB contaminated soil; remediated over 200 yards of hazardous lead; removed 27 underground storage tanks; and recycled over 34,000 tons of concrete. To check and verify our work, we have voluntarily enrolled in the State of Illinois' Environmental Protection Agency Site Remediation Program, which includes independent, state review and verification of our clean-up efforts.

Who will fund the clean-up work that is not yet completed?

Sterling Bay.

What kind of actions and assurances will be taken to clean up the river, and who will pay?

Sterling Bay is already working to transform brownfields into green space and adding natural systems to the river which will provide better habitats for fish and wildlife. We have voluntarily enrolled in the State of Illinois' Environmental Protection Agency Site Remediation Program, which includes independent, state review and verification of our clean-up efforts.

Do you think it is safe for children to be playing on a former industrial site and near General Iron, which is still in operation?

General Iron has been a point of contention for residents of this area for many years. While they've announced their intention to move, they have not done so yet and Alderman Hopkins is continuing to voice the concerns of residents about their continued operation.

The former Finkl site and neighboring properties hosted heavy industrial use for nearly a hundred years and, as a result, the land needs significant remediation. We have already begun our remediation efforts and have removed 24,000 tons of environmentally impacted soil on Lincoln Yards North alone; remediated 7.2 tons of TSCA hazardous PCB contaminated soil; remediated over 200 yards of hazardous lead; removed 27 underground storage tanks; and recycled over 34,000 tons of concrete. To check and verify our work, we have voluntarily enrolled in the State of Illinois' Environmental Protection Agency Site Remediation Program, which includes independent, state review and verification of our clean-up efforts.

Do you think there is a market for people to live on former industrial, possibly contaminated land?

Absolutely. This is a great location and prime place to live, play, and work, and we think there will be many people eager to move here. We are going above and beyond in our environmental efforts – which includes working with both the Illinois EPA and the EPA – and are committed to remediating environmentally impacted areas.

What commitment will Sterling Bay make to hire and create jobs for minority-owned, women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises?

Diversity and local hiring are very important to us and we will meet or exceed all City goals for M/W/DBE hiring.

How many children of school age do you anticipate living in Lincoln Yards?

Based on the current estimate of residential units, we anticipate 300 to 375 school-aged children would live in the planned development.

Where will you build a new public elementary and high school to serve your residents and local community residents?

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is better suited to address specific school-related questions. We remain in frequent communication with CPS as they continue to evaluate their need based on projected school aged population.

Who will pay for the schools and when will they be built in the timing/sequence?

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is better suited to address specific school-related questions. We remain in frequent communication with CPS as they continue to evaluate their need based on projected school aged population.

What types of stores and/or retail businesses do you anticipate having at Lincoln Yards?

The market will dictate this, but we are designing Lincoln Yards to be an inclusive destination featuring many small businesses, as well as restaurants and hotels.

Do you propose to bonus up to a blended 6.5 FAR across the site within the PD?

- Lincoln Yards North will be a maximum FAR of 6.5
- Lincoln Yards South will be a maximum FAR of 4.0

Where will the office buildings be located?

The commercial office buildings will primarily be located along Dominick Street in the Dominick Commercial Corridor.

What will be the height, density, setbacks, and architectural style of the office buildings?

Building massing will be varied in height to achieve a distinctive skyline. Ground levels will be reserved for the most active and public functions. Taller buildings will be shaped to allow for light and air, reducing overall bulk and focusing on slenderness of taller buildings setbacks will allow for transition between lower levels of the buildings that reinforce a cohesive urban fabric and the public realm.

Where will residential buildings be located?

The residential buildings are primarily located around the park in Lincoln Yards North.

What will be the height, density, setbacks, and architectural style of the residential buildings?

The residential buildings on Kingsbury will step down in height towards the Lincoln Park community to the east. Residential buildings will emphasize a slenderness and orientation to maximize views and sunlight exposure. Two signature residential sites have been located at the top of the park and the bend in the river. Taller buildings will be shaped to allow for light and air, reducing overall bulk and focusing on slenderness of taller buildings. Setbacks will allow for transition between lower levels of the buildings that reinforce a cohesive urban fabric and the public realm.

Will there be any freestanding retail buildings?

The ground level of buildings will be reserved for the most active and public functions creating vibrant streets and open spaces throughout Lincoln Yards. In Lincoln Yards North, all retail is incorporated into the ground floor of the buildings. In Lincoln Yards South, restaurants and entertainment venues are planned to be lower in height and scale. Areas around the stadium could potentially include food / retail pavilion buildings.

What types of public amenities will be included on your open space and along the Chicago River?

We believe open space that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike is vital to any community, which is why we are going beyond what the North Branch Framework Plan requires and adding 20.88 acres of publicly accessible open space. We anticipate having the following: the extension of the 606, a dog park, playgrounds, riverfront seating and plaza, ball fields, jogging and walking trails, kayak and boat launches, water taxi stops, drinking fountains, Divvy stations, bicycle parking, ample directional signage, a sledding hill, and equipment rentals.