

# Visualizing Urban Decay

The Demolition of the 63<sup>rd</sup> St “L” in Woodlawn, Chicago

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In early 1994, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) announced that it would close the Green Line elevated train service for desperately needed renovation. The “Green Line” had been conceived in 1993 as the combination of the oldest and second oldest lines on the system, the Englewood-Jackson Park Line and the Lake Line respectively. **(Illus. 1)** These two lines badly needed rehabilitation, having been neglected during the continual funding shortages and subsequent ridership decline in the 1970s and 80s.<sup>1</sup> With so few funds available for maintenance and repairs, the security, safety, and functionality of the “L” became notoriously poor in the city of Chicago. This reputation still persists today due to the CTA’s ever-worsening financial situation. As a result of poor security and disrepair, the “L” and its tracks grew to be associated with urban poverty, crime, and gang activity in many parts of the city. By the mid-90s the “L” tracks were a rusty monstrosity, and it is, perhaps, not too hard to see why some people began to blame the “L”, their only source of rapid transit, for the crime and poverty of their neighborhoods. **(Illus. 2)** Controversy, disorganization, and secrecy clouded the 1994 Green Line renovation project from the very beginning as the CTA battled budgetary issues and concerned citizens throughout the two year rehabilitation. Among other hotly contested issues which arose during the renovation, the proposed demolition of the “L” tracks running through the Woodlawn neighborhood was particularly divisive among potential “L” customers. Suggested, to the surprise of the CTA, by the “citizen” organizations of the neighborhood itself, the plan to tear down the “L” stemmed from a belief that not only was the “L” a symbol of crime and vice but also the cause of it. Public support for tearing down the “L” was fomented by powerful community members such as the Rev. Arthur M. Brazier who stood to directly profit from gentrification of the neighborhood. The real impetus behind the demolition of the 63<sup>rd</sup> St “L”, however, was its visual manifestation as an unwelcoming, ugly space which facilitated and encouraged criminal behavior. The municipal neglect which caused the deterioration of Woodlawn in the first place was also to blame for the decrepit “L” tracks. Not surprisingly, however, City Hall reaped the benefits of allowing what should have been

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<sup>1</sup> Chicago-L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/history/CTA4.html> (May, 2007).

a symbol of their neglect to be construed as the cause of social ills in Woodlawn, demonstrating the power of aesthetics in creating and visualizing the space of urban slums.

Woodlawn's struggles against gentrification and "redevelopment" have a long history. The key antagonist through much of this history was the University of Chicago which borders Woodlawn to the north. Before the 1950s, however, these clashes, which mainly stemmed from institutionalized racism, were non-existent. Up until that time, Woodlawn was mostly populated by white, working and middle class families. Situated between 60<sup>th</sup> and 67<sup>th</sup> Streets, north to south, and Jackson Park and King Drive, east to west, Woodlawn and its neighbor to the north, Hyde Park, were very much indistinguishable for a long time. Woodlawn, which had been settled in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century by Dutch farmers, rapidly developed in conjunction with the 1893 Columbian Exposition which was situated nearby on the Midway and in Jackson Park.<sup>2</sup> Businesses of all sorts sprung up to cater to the influx of visitors to the exposition. Hotels, apartment buildings, and entertainment venues sprung up throughout the community. Many of the hotels were later converted to apartment buildings once the exposition had closed, allowing for the settlement of even more new residents. The population of Woodlawn around that era grew to 27,000. The new clean and fast Jackson Park elevated train line had been built especially for the purpose of transporting visitors between the exposition grounds and downtown, and it subsequently also served to transport those new residents settling in the area next to Jackson Park.<sup>3</sup>

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, middle class African-American families began moving in from the nearby Black Belt. Originally, the Black Belt, a narrow corridor between 21<sup>st</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> St, was one of the few places in Chicago where black families were allowed to purchase homes and rent apartments.<sup>4</sup> In the 1920s, E. 63<sup>rd</sup> street, over which the "L" tracks ran, was a booming commercial street and the center of Jazz Age entertainment. **(Illus. 3)** The Tivoli movie theater

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<sup>2</sup> Encyclopedia of Chicago, Online. <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1378.html> (May 2007)

<sup>3</sup> "Woodlawn Revisited: Building Bridges Between Communities." *SSA Magazine*. The University of Chicago. <http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/publications/ssamag/v11n1.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Encyclopedia of Chicago, Online. <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/140.html> (May, 2007).

and ballroom was a grand example of the entertainment venues offered along 63<sup>rd</sup>'s booming business center. **(Illus. 4)** As a 1915 photograph of passengers on the Jackson Park branch of the "L" demonstrates, the main residents and visitors to the area at that time were still mostly white. **(Illus. 5)**

Despite the introduction of restrictive covenants in the Woodlawn neighborhood which established pacts among white residents to keep Woodlawn property out of the hands of African-Americans seeking to move in, the Woodlawn population began to transform from majority white to majority black residents. After the restrictive covenants were officially overturned by the courts in the late 40s, African-Americans moved into Woodlawn in increasing numbers and white flight ensued. These white middle class families were primarily replaced with lower income African-American families.<sup>5</sup> Racial tensions amplified with the civil rights movement in the 1960s, and Woodlawn soon became a leader in the Black Power and black self-determination movements. Due to the inability of blacks to run for positions of political power in the city and increasing neglect from the city on key community attributes such as infrastructure, public services, and education, Woodlawn was growing shabbier. The resident of Woodlawn soon responded and began to organize themselves with the help of local clergy.<sup>6</sup> Even today, the racist belief that these neighborhoods deteriorated and fell into disrepair because of the inferiority of its people's character proliferates when, in essence, an institutionally racist city government ignored the community. Religious leaders, block club leaders, and other organizers combined efforts to form the Temporary Woodlawn Organization (TWO) which later changed its name to The Woodlawn Organization (also TWO) under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Arthur M. Brazier, head of the Apostolic Church of God. Brazier fiercely fought against the University of Chicago plans to expand south of the Midway with middle and upper income housing.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Woodlawn Revisited: Building Bridges Between Communities." *SSA Magazine*. The University of Chicago. <http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/publications/ssamag/v11n1.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Pratt Center for Community Development: Woodlawn. <http://www.prattcenter.net/cdc-two.php> (May, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> "Woodlawn Revisited: Building Bridges Between Communities." *SSA Magazine*. The University of Chicago. <http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/publications/ssamag/v11n1.html>.



One of the plans which were proposed during the 60s but never became a reality, thanks in part to the advocacy and community awareness and outreach programs of TWO, was the 1967 plan for the redevelopment of the area around 63<sup>rd</sup> and Dorchester in Woodlawn. Under the plan, the area was labeled as “Slum and Blighted Area” which would all be razed to the ground. Under the “Land Acquisition” heading of the proposed project, all land was slated for “Clearance and Redevelopment” and it explicitly specified that no land would be slated for “Public Facilities” or “Rehabilitation and Conservation.”<sup>8</sup> (Illus. 6 and 7) Throughout many of the various plans and proposals for the area, little or no consideration was paid to those lower income residents living in the neighborhood already. Despite the many efforts and successes of TWO, Woodlawn fell into deeper decay and disrepair throughout the 1970s and 80s. By the early 1990s, divestment from the community created a proliferation of decaying buildings and empty lots. The once booming businesses of 63<sup>rd</sup> St gave way to liquor stores and crime under the “L” tracks.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout Woodlawn’s post-Columbian Exposition history, the “L” tracks remained and, in many ways, mirrored the decay of the neighborhood as they aged. In one hundred years, the CTA’s oldest line never underwent any sort of major re-haul or rehabilitation. In 1991, the CTA was in desperate need of more funding from governmental tax revenues. Even with service cuts and fare increases, the CTA projected that they would be short between \$51 and \$57 million in the 1992 budget. When 1992 came, the CTA was seriously considering tearing down the Lake St and Jackson Park-Englewood branches of the “L” (the entire Green Line) to cut costs, but they were met, naturally, with furious disapproval and grass-roots community organization. Public outcry against the thought of tearing down the “L” left the CTA no choice but to look for some way to save the “L”.<sup>10</sup> Under intense community pressure, the CTA announced that it would renovate the entire Lake and Jackson Park-Englewood branches of the “L” and began raising grants and funds accordingly. Despite the CTA press department issuing update newsletter to community

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<sup>8</sup> Chicago. Department of Urban Renewal. Redevelopment Plan for Slum and Blighted Area Redevelopment Project 63<sup>rd</sup> – Dorchester. City of Chicago: November, 1967.

<sup>9</sup> “Woodlawn Revisited: Building Bridges Between Communities.” *SSA Magazine*. The University of Chicago. <http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/publications/ssamag/v11n1.html>.

<sup>10</sup> *Institute for Civil Infrastructure Systems: Green Line Case Study* [http://icisnyu.org/assets/documents/case\\_study\\_chicago.pdf](http://icisnyu.org/assets/documents/case_study_chicago.pdf) (May, 2007).

members throughout the two year renovations, very little information of any substance was given to Green Line customers. The CTA did not even announce it was closing the Green Line for renovations until a month before it was scheduled to close.<sup>11</sup> There were no public hearings held over whether the line should be completely shut down or whether the renovations should take place while limited service still operated. Despite this lack of communication, it was probably better that the renovations were organized as they were: spanning two years while the “L” was shut down with a projected cost of \$300 million. If the lines had remained open, the renovations would have lasted eight years and cost a projected \$800 million. Nevertheless, residents were indignant at being left out of the decision and many felt that the CTA was bluffing about the renovations and the lines would never actual reopen.<sup>12</sup> Originally on a budget of \$300 million for the renovations, the CTA went over budget \$110 million for a grand total of \$410 million for the entire project.<sup>13</sup> The CTA also received millions of dollars from the US government, which included stipulations that, if the line were torn down or went out of use in the next forty years, over \$260 million would have to be re-paid to the Federal Transit Authority.<sup>14</sup>

With residents already feeling powerless and voiceless in the decisions the CTA was making regarding their “L” tracks, more controversies arose as the renovations got underway. The first major confrontation between the CTA and “L” riders came with the announcement that over half of the existing 27 stations on the south side could be torn down so that there would only be one station every mile rather than up to three per mile. At a December 1993 meeting, a group of angry citizens met with CTA officials to raise concerns over the proposed station closures. Minnie Gates, a mother and grandmother who was worried about the kids who would have to cross gang territory to get to the next station, stated, “I don’t want these kids out here getting killed for no reason.”<sup>15</sup> Ultimately, 6 of the 16 stations on the south side branch of the Green Line closed

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<sup>11</sup> Chicago L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/history/CTA4.html> (May, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> *Institute*, 10.

<sup>13</sup> Hilkevitch, Jon. “Firm Hired to Oversee CTA Rehab Projects.” *Chicago Tribune*. 5 May 2000: Metro Chicago, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Institute*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> Roberts, Penny. “Anger Boils at Hearing on CTA Line.” *Chicago Tribune*. 10 Dec. 1993: Chicagoland, 3.

whereas only one station was closed on the west branch of the Green Line. The stations closed on the south side of the Green Line were mostly in Englewood and Woodlawn. **(Illus. 8 and 9)** After two decades of divestment from these south side neighborhoods, the CTA station closures served to further illustrate how little the city of Chicago cared about its south side residents and their vital infrastructure. Further controversy sprung with additional service cuts after the line had been renovated and the stations had been closed. Under the Booze-Allen Hamilton Service Plan in April 1998, Owl Service (24-hour service) was officially discontinued on the Green Line.<sup>16</sup>

The most contentious controversy to arise immediately following the Green Line renovation was the issue of whether or not the 63<sup>rd</sup> St. elevated tracks should be renovated and re-opened or torn down. The key figure who appeared as the leader of the movement to tear down the “L” was none other than Arthur M. Brazier who fought so hard in the 1960s for black self-determination and defended Woodlawn against university and city developments which might have pushed the black residents of Woodlawn out of the neighborhood. In 1969, responding to Edward N. Kelly of Baird and Warner regarding the redevelopment of South Commons, the neighborhood between 31<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> St, Brazier stated:

Yes, urban renewal at South Commons is a success for those whose primary motivation is to make the world nice and comfortable for the middle classes. But what about the blacks who once lived there, the blacks who had no voice in the development of their community?<sup>17</sup>

At that time it appeared that Brazier was a man very much aware of the effects of gentrification and “redevelopment” on poor communities. It was this stance of Brazier’s throughout his early involvement in Chicago politics that makes his actions in the early 90s so shockingly hypocritical.

Although Rev. Brazier seemed to convince his congregation at the Apostolic Church of God that the “L” was the cause of the crime and poverty in the neighborhood, the stench of corruption

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<sup>16</sup> Chicago L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/operations/lines/jacksonpark.html> (May, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Williams, Eddie, N., ed., Rev. Arthur M. Brazier, et. al. *Delivery Systems for Model Cities: New Concepts in Serving the Urban Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969.

clouded the whole situation. In fact, Brazier was the chairman of the powerful non-profit group, the Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corporation (WPIC), which stated that it was redeveloping the buildings along 63<sup>rd</sup> St for low-income residents.<sup>18</sup> In reality, most of the developments sponsored by Brazier's group were expensive luxury town houses and condominiums from which Brazier benefited personally. In February 1999, Mayor Daley made an appearance in Woodlawn during a groundbreaking for town homes starting at \$200,000 at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Blackstone. Speaking to a majority African-American audience, Daley stated that we have "finally broken down the barriers" among races and ethnic groups. In the pre-election season, these sentiments may have sounded good, but the reality of the matter was that Daley wasn't interested in giving homes to poor black people. He was interested in middle and upper class gentrification of the neighborhood. Additionally, Brazier also profited from the real estate deals, not just through land acquisition and developments but also by offering second mortgages through the WPIC and his Apostolic Church of God.<sup>19</sup> **(Illus. 10)**

Despite the influential position of Arthur Brazier in the Woodlawn community and their trust in his judgment, no rational person would support the demolition of their rapid transit system, especially the lower income residents who might not have other means of getting around the city. The image and meaning of the "L" on 63<sup>rd</sup> St, however, had become an indisputable symbol of urban decay. One primary reason for this image was the rusty, precarious physical presence of the tracks over 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. Instead of a tree-lined, open street space that the redevelopers imagined, 63<sup>rd</sup> lived under the shadow of the rusting hulk of the "L" tracks. It may have seemed like this shadowy street was the physical embodiment of the seedy drinking, gambling, prostitution, drug dealing, and gang activity which took place underneath it. In defending his position to tear down the tracks, Brazier stated, "With that 'L' there, 63<sup>rd</sup> Street from Cottage Grove east to Dorchester will not be rehabilitated. We cannot build housing along there because of the noise. 63<sup>rd</sup> is just a glorified

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<sup>18</sup> Novak, Tim and Annie Sweeney. "Troutman Dad Got Rehab Deal—Father of Indicted Alderman Received \$500K Loan to Redevelop Apartments." *Chicago Sun-Times*. 23 Apr. 2007: 23.

<sup>19</sup> Almada, Jeanette. "Woodlawn Buyers Return to their Roots." *Chicago Sun-Times*. 7 Feb. 1997: Homelife, 7.

alley.”<sup>20</sup> One of the benefits of rehabilitating the tracks, however, would have been that quieter tracks and train wheels might have been utilized and the neighborhood would still have rapid transit. Additionally, many of the most desirable neighborhoods on the north side of Chicago have “L” tracks running amongst expensive real estate on the Brown Line and the Red Line. The key element of Brazier’s statement, however, is his demarcation of 63<sup>rd</sup> as a “glorified alley”. The image of 63<sup>rd</sup> as a dingy alleyway devoid of activity and commerce appeared to resonate with at least a portion of the Woodlawn community. City planning initiatives, such as the recent Millennium Park in Chicago, are often criticized for their attempt to improve cities through aesthetics, parks, and public art rather than adequate housing, functional and up-to-date infrastructure, clean streets, and better policing. In the case of the Jackson Park branch of the Green Line, however, it’s obvious that aesthetics at the local level can overpower a community’s ability to differentiate between the imagined evils of the blight and slum enabling “L” and its actual function as a benefit for communities at every economic level.

Another contributor to the image of the “L” as the cause of crime, prostitution, and violence was the lack of security on the train lines and in the stations themselves. Although the “L” undoubtedly had a reputation and image as an unsafe and crime-ridden rickety old rail, that stigma might have been turned around had the CTA and other government agencies invested the money for the upkeep and renovation of the Green Line. If impressions are made easily based on aesthetic considerations, they can theoretically be changed just as easily by “beautifying” stations and tracks. Additionally, greater numbers of workers and police or security presence on the trains would help prevent crime and promote safety. Although it seems like funneling more money into the system is the simple and obvious solution, the lack of funding itself stems from a cultural disinterest in public transportation. If community members mobilized to advocate for more public transportation, perhaps the government would listen. As things are, Chicagoans seem to aspire to car ownership rather than public transportation improvement.

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<sup>20</sup> McRoberts, Flynn. “The ‘L’—Scourge or Savior? 2 Green Line Areas See it Differently.” *Chicago Tribune*. 30 May 1995: Chicagoland, 1.

In 1991, not long before the Green Line renovations began, a University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) research project titled *A Difficult Future for Public Transit: The Chicago Transit Authority Besieged*, reported on the causes for divestment from public transportation, current attitudes, and what is necessary to revitalize public transportation in the future. The report states that:

The lack of commitment to public transit in the United States has been vividly demonstrated in the last few months: cuts in state and federal support for mass transit proposed by the Bush and Edgar administration would have forced the CTA's 1.9 million daily riders to cope with a 20 percent increase in fares in 1991, as well as elimination of numerous subway stations and bus routes, loss of discounts for students, elimination of discounts for the elderly and disabled during rush hours, and reduced security. As passed, the state budget gets about \$6 million less than the CTA said it needed to avoid any cuts in service.

The report argues that cuts in service have a snowballing effect of discouraging even more riders which results in even more funds lost.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the research presents a number of opinion polls showing that CTA riders do not feel safe and do not feel the system is clean or comfortable, factors which point to the social interaction and the aesthetic experience of riding the CTA. The paper states:

The reasons people dislike the CTA are not hard to discover. Based upon the CTA's own polls.. riders feel unsafe from crime and dislike the lack of comfort and cleanliness provided on the buses and trains. The CTA's greatest appeal is its cost. The only clear advantage that citizens who use autos to commute see are the high cost and lack of parking where they go by car.<sup>22</sup>

It's obvious that greater financial investment would alleviate many of the aesthetic and social concerns of the CTA riders. These riders, however, perhaps can never imagine what clean and safe transportation might look or feel like, as they've never seen it in their lifetime while living in Chicago. Greater public support and mobilization would turn the tide on the constantly floundering

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<sup>21</sup> Simpson, Dick and Gary Snyderman. *A Difficult Future for Public Transit: The Chicago Transit Authority Besieged* (Chicago: UIC Office of Publication Services, 1991) 1.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 5.

CTA, but the image of the hulking, shadowy, crime-ridden tracks is perhaps too deeply embedded to overcome for many people.

Despite the community suggestion, support, and eventual realization of the Green Line demolition project, many community members were against the project but were all but ignored by the powerful political leaders of Woodlawn. Many Woodlawn residents expressed a kind of resignation to their own impotence in the situation. It's ironic that the empowerment against ruling-class white politicians that Brazier's black self-determination movement in the 60s tried to instill is undermined now by black leaders selling out their constituents for monetary and political gain in the corruption of the Chicago political machine. Henry Bass, a resident of Woodlawn for more than 40 years, watched as demolition day came for the Jackson Park "L". In the secrecy of the morning and with less than 24 hours notice to the residents, the city vehicles seemingly snuck into the neighborhood and began dismantling the "L" tracks on September 27, 1997. Bass responded, "The city had plans for this area. So it really didn't matter who fought or how long they fought. They were going to tear the tracks down anyway. Why feel sad about it? It's hard to fight City Hall." Additionally, Frank K. Watson, another long-term resident of Woodlawn stated, "It's all about politics in this area. I don't depend on the train to get around. But I know the so-called leaders in this case are involved for their own reasons. This is not just about the average person." Yet another resident, Charles Maxie, was quoted as saying, "There had to be a better way than to tear down the tracks. People relied on this service to get back and forth to work. Now they are going to have to continue to catch a bus and then transfer to the train."<sup>23</sup>

Politics was indeed involved in the entire affair, in April 2007, more than 10 years after the real estate deals went down, Alderman Arenda Troutman was indicted for favoring her father to receive a \$500,000 redevelopment fund from the city. Brazier is directly connected to the scandal in that he and Antoin "Tony" Rezko's company received state and city loans to take over and redevelop seven buildings with the exception of Troutman's father's building. Brazier later utilized

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<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, Sheryl. "Neighbors Hail, Rail 'L' Demise: Pulling Tracks Seen as Boon or Mistake." *Chicago Tribune*. 28 Sept. 1997: Metro Chicago, 1.

his clout in another group, the Fund for Community Redevelopment and Revitalization, to get Troutman's father the \$500,000 loan to rehabilitate his building as well. Alderman Troutman would not comment on whether she backed Rezko and Brazier's projects to get funding for her father's building, but she received more than \$20,000 in campaign contributions from Rezko and his family and business associations. Although all the redevelopment buildings were proposed for low income residents, records show that Troutman allowed at least one family member to live in the building, taking housing away from low-income residents.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the corruption involved and its disclosure over ten years later, Woodlawn today is considered one of the hot new areas for real estate investment. Without a doubt, more and more lower income residents are being pushed out of the neighborhood, if not because their homes were leveled to make way for higher income residents then because the higher property values are pushing up the rents of lower income neighboring buildings. In a recent search of newly build real estate in the Woodlawn neighborhood, one single family home was selling for \$657,500.

**(Illus. 11)** Another condominium development had a starting price per unit of \$400,000. **(Illus. 12)** For even the lower middle class residents of Woodlawn, not to mention the poor, these prices are beyond reach even with a second mortgage. In the end, tearing down the "L" was a loss both for the displaced poor who lived in Woodlawn and the new, rich residents who have helped improve the image and the property value of the neighborhood. As Jackie Leavy, project coordinator for a community redevelopment group, said in 1996, "I think it was an act of cannibalism. They are eating up their own rapid-transit infrastructure... In 10 years, when the Woodlawn community repopulates, those householders are going to be asking why they don't have clean, quiet rapid-transit service."<sup>25</sup>

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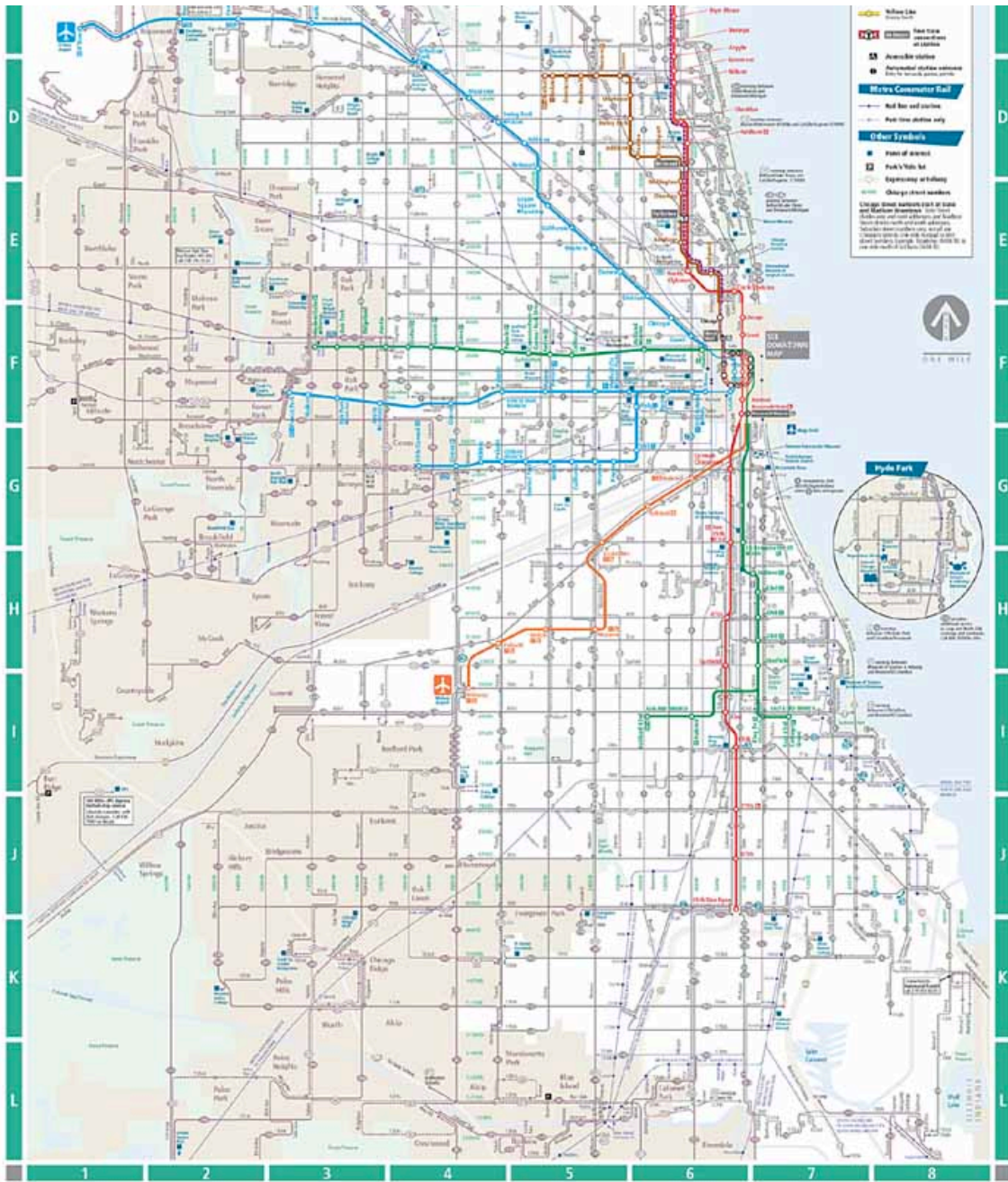
<sup>24</sup> Novak, Tim and Annie Sweeney. "Troutman Dad Got Rehab Deal—Father of Indicted Alderman Received \$500K Loan to Redevelop Apartments." *Chicago Sun-Times*. 23 Apr. 2007: 23.

<sup>25</sup> Washburn, Gary. "CTA Board Backs Demolition of Green Line Woodlawn Leg." *Chicago Tribune*. 6 June 1996: Metro Chicago, 3.



Woodlawn residents lost their neighborhood through their need to believe that the “L” tracks were the cause of their problems. This community seemed to be desperately hoping that very complex socio-economic conditions stemming from historical and institutional racism could be easily solved by merely destroying one of the many public spaces that these social problems were enacted. The public space of the “L” lent itself well to becoming Woodlawn’s scapegoat due to its aesthetic of urban decay—the same urban decay caused by racist and classist municipal neglect. None of Woodlawn’s problems were solved by gentrification, which is the main fallacy and deception involved in redevelopment projects. Woodlawn is not the same Woodlawn it was, and therefore no problems have been solved. There have been no “benefits” and “rebirth” of Woodlawn because the people who lived there are not the same people who were experiencing the social problems the neighborhood had before. The poor of Woodlawn have been displaced and their situation has undoubtedly deteriorated rather than improved by their forced uprooting. The tragedy of the demolition of the Jackson Park “L” is more than just another story of the corruption of Chicago politics. More than politics, the demolition of the “L” dealt with urban aesthetics and the disconnect between the city of Chicago’s role in exacerbating urban decay and its concurrent implication that the moral and social inferiority of the lower income citizens of Chicago are responsible for their crumbling, neglected neighborhoods.

Illus. 1



Source: Chicago-L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org>

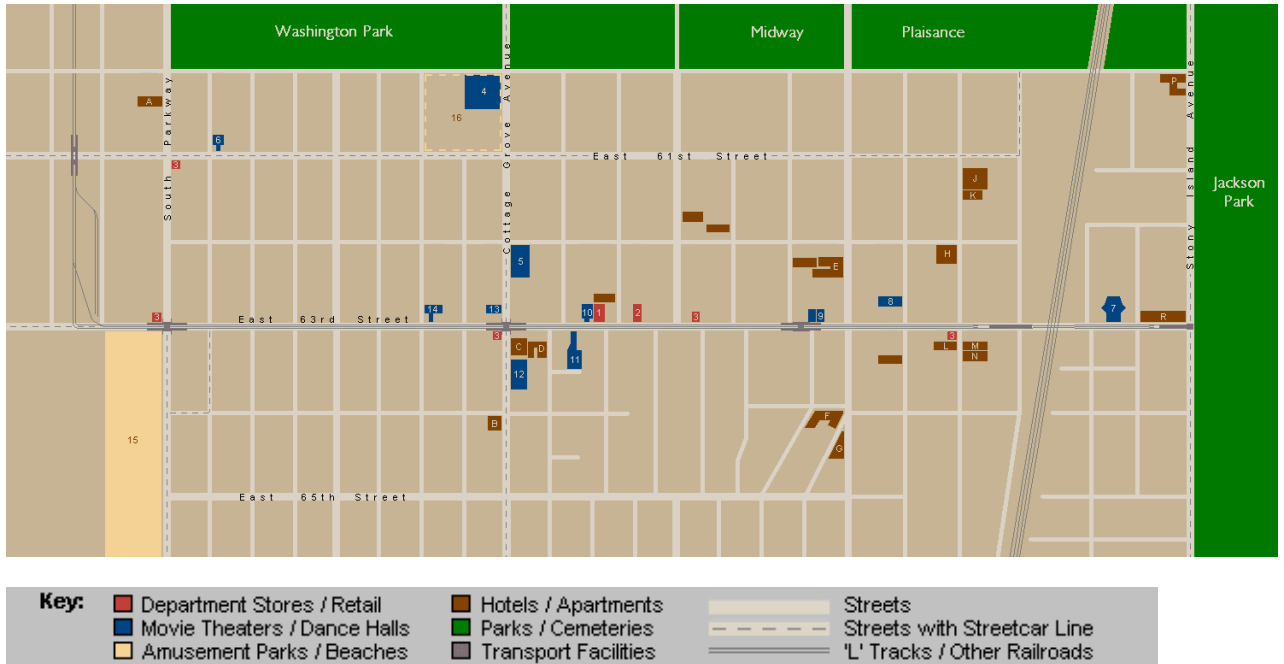
**Illus. 2**



Jackson Park branch of the Green Line at Ellis Ave and 63rd, 1996

**Source:** Chicago-L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/history/CTA4.html> (Photo by Chris Walker for the Chicago Tribune)

Illus. 3



Woodlawn Map during the 20s and 30s highlighting major businesses along 63<sup>rd</sup> St.

Source: Jazz Age Chicago, Chicago History <http://chicago.urban-history.org/district/woodlawn/woodlaw2.htm>



Illus. 4

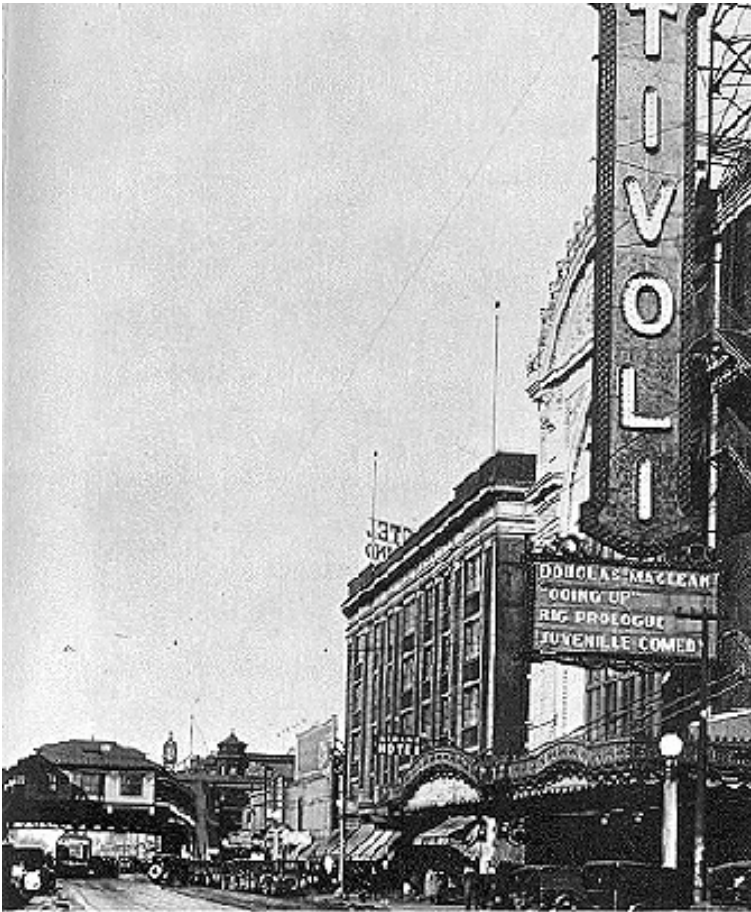


Photo from the Krambles-  
Peterson Archive

[www.Chicago-L.org](http://www.Chicago-L.org)

1924 Cottage Grove station and Tivoli Theater

Source: Chicago-L.org <http://www.chicago-l.org>

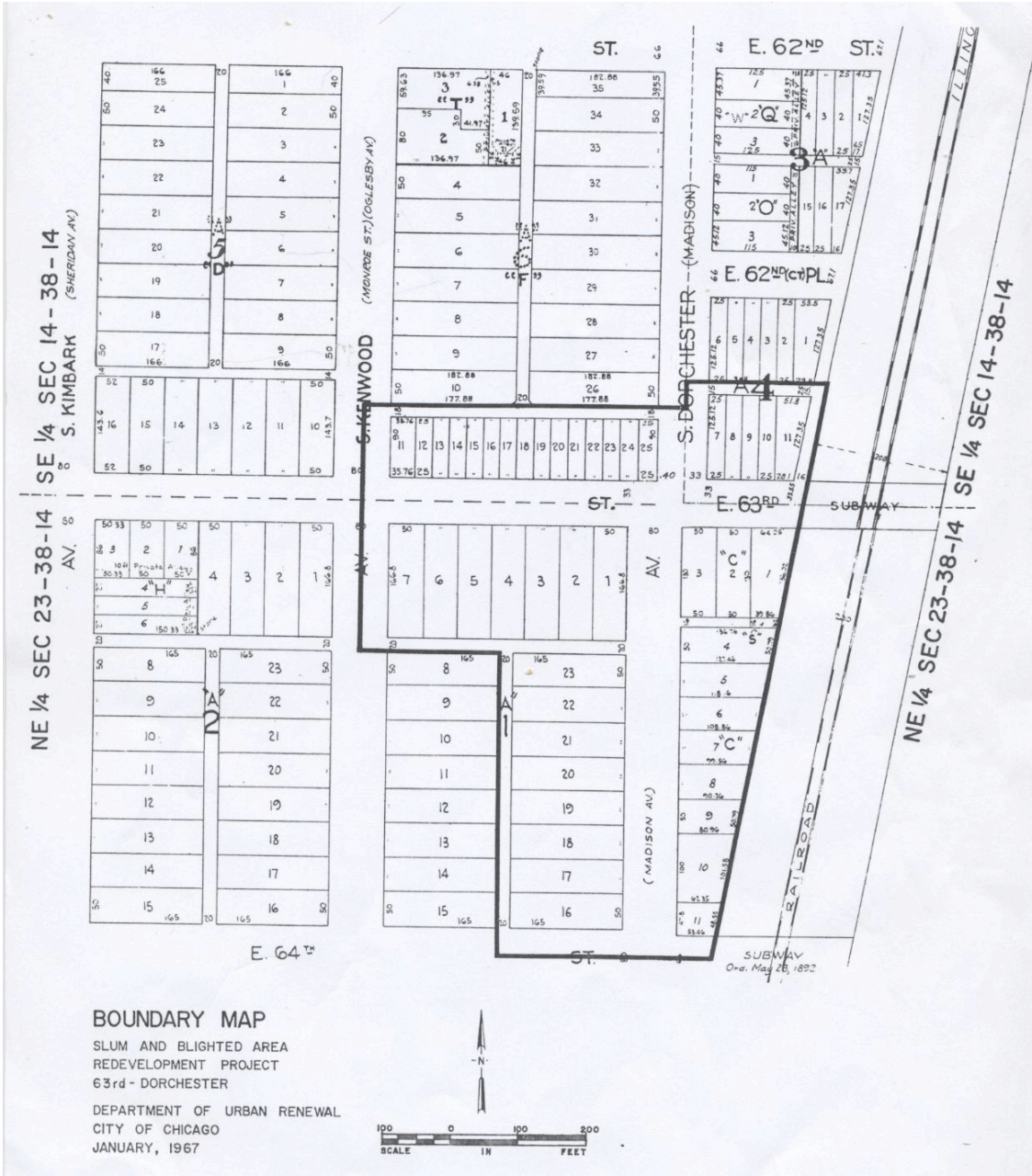
Illus. 5



Passengers on Jackson Park branch of "L" looking out window, 1915

Source: Jazz Age Chicago, Chicago History <http://chicago.urban-history.org/scrapbks/elevated/south1.htm>

Illus. 6

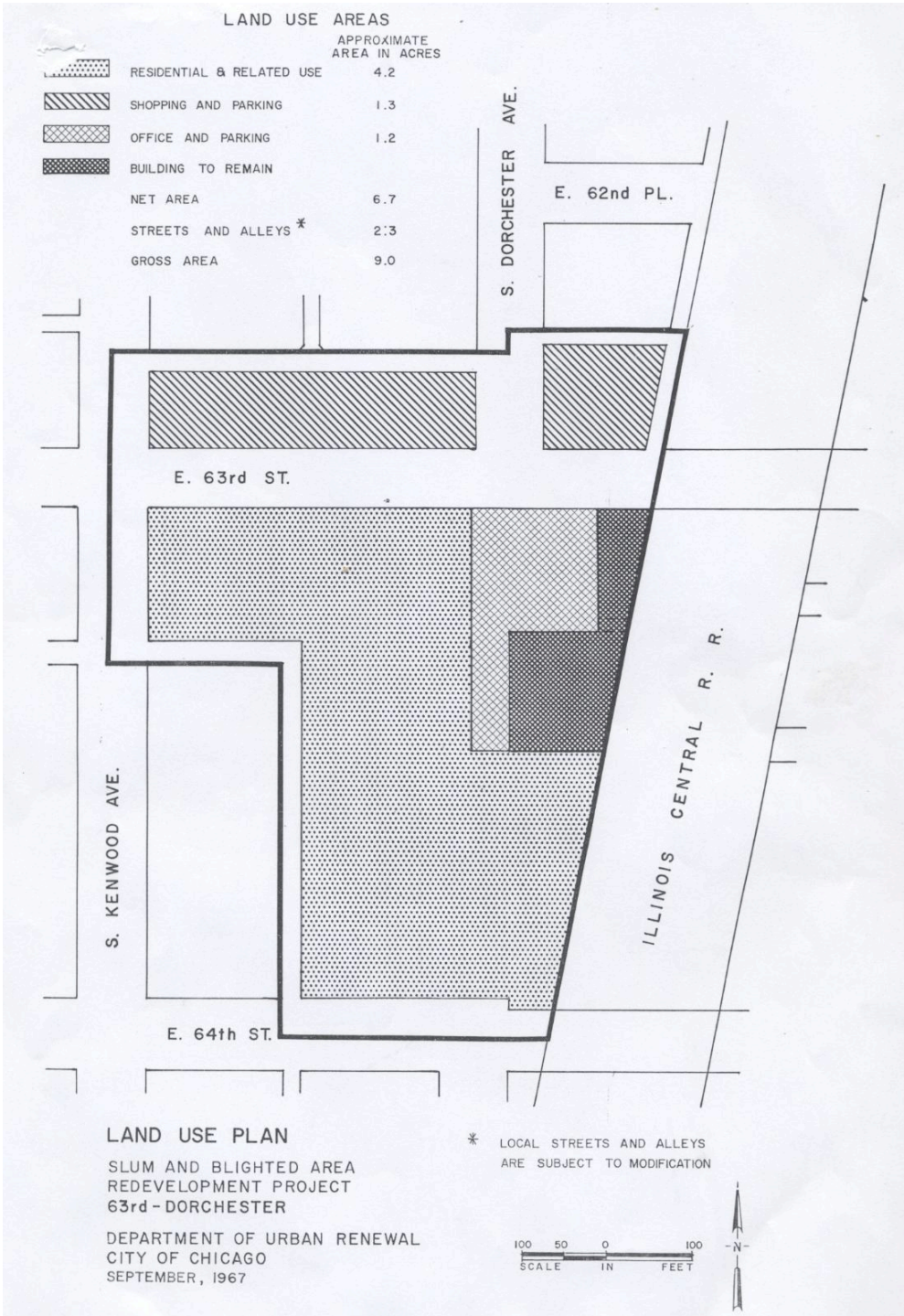


Plan for Dorchester and 63<sup>rd</sup>, 1967

Source: Chicago. Department of Urban Renewable. *Redevelopment Plan for Slum and Blighted Area Redevelopment Project 63<sup>rd</sup> - Dorchester.* City of Chicago: November, 1967



**Illus. 7**

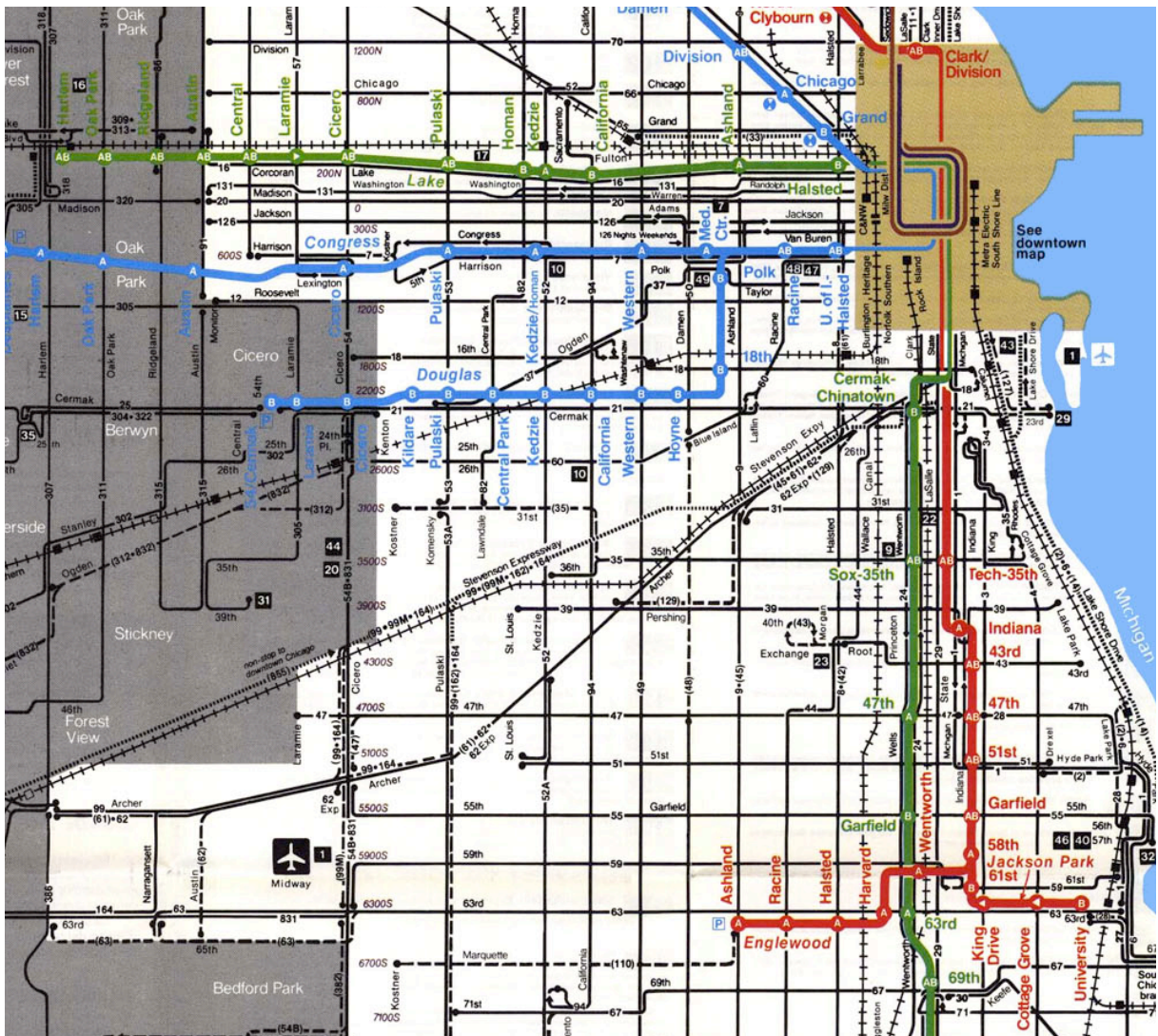


Plan for Dorchester and 63<sup>rd</sup>, 1967

**Source:** Chicago. Department of Urban Renewable. *Redevelopment Plan for Slum and Blighted Area Redevelopment Project 63<sup>rd</sup> - Dorchester.* City of Chicago: November, 1967



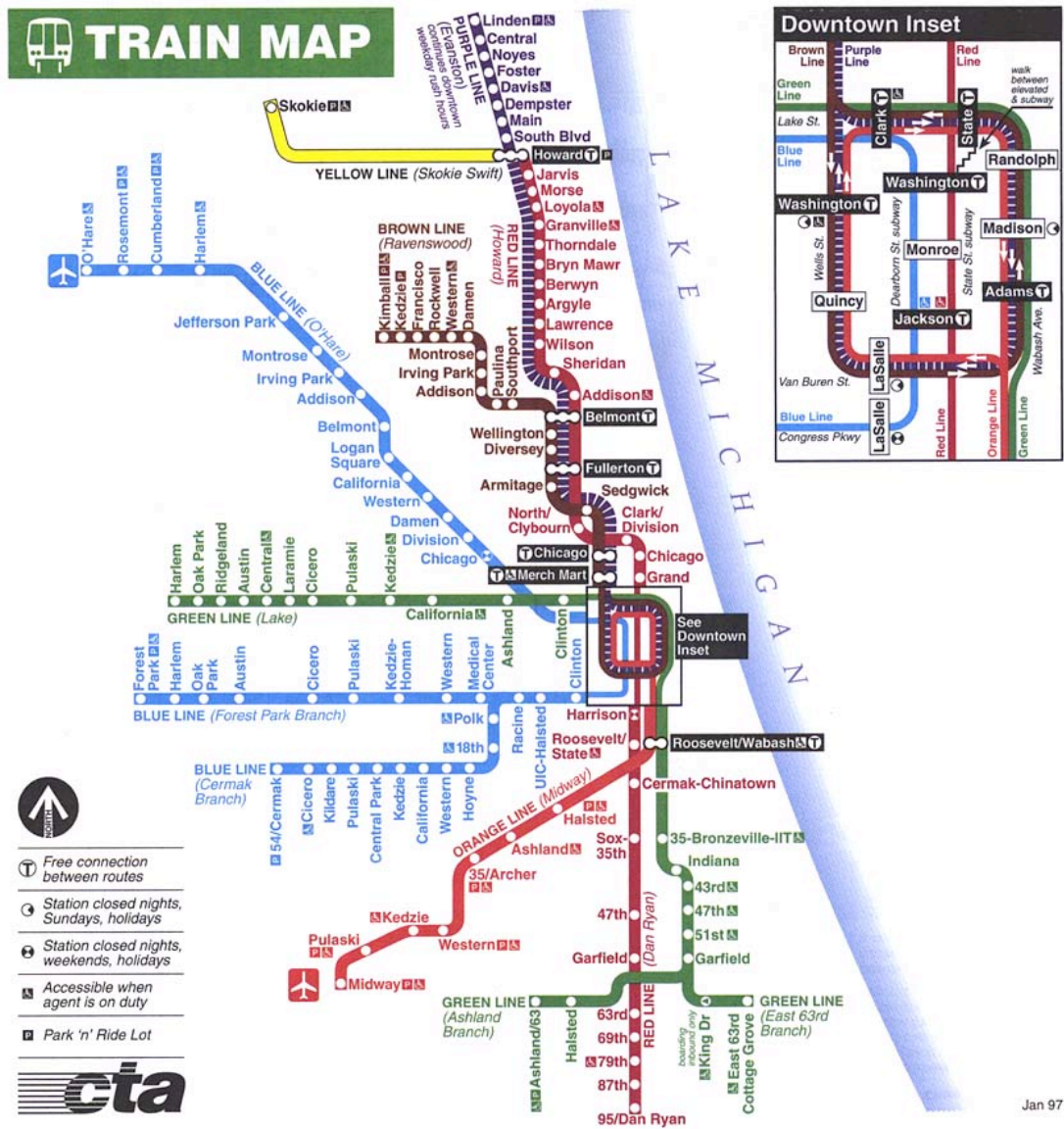
Illus. 8



CTA "L" system map, 1991 – Before renovations, notice how many stations run through Englewood and Woodlawn on the, then, south side Red Line

Source: Chicago-l.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/maps/index.html>

Illus. 9



CTA "L" system map, 1997. Notice subsequent station closures on south branch of Green Line

Source: Chicago-l.org <http://www.chicago-l.org/maps/index.html>



Illus. 10



Arthur Brazier outside The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) in 1963 and in front of a new development in Woodlawn (right)

Sources: Encyclopedia of Chicago, Online, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/11137.htm> and New Communities <http://www.newcommunities.org/news/articleDetail.asp?objectID=295>

**Illus. 11**



Newly built single family home in Woodlawn selling for \$657,500 as of May, 2007

**Source:** Buyer's Utopia: Chicago [http://www.buyersutopia.com/mls/woodlawn\\_single\\_family\\_homes\\_frame.htm](http://www.buyersutopia.com/mls/woodlawn_single_family_homes_frame.htm) (May, 2007)

**Illus. 12**



New building of condos in Woodlawn, starting at \$400,000 as of May, 2007

**Source:** Buyer's Utopia: Chicago [http://www.buyersutopia.com/mls/woodlawn\\_condo\\_frame.htm](http://www.buyersutopia.com/mls/woodlawn_condo_frame.htm) (May 2007)

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