



Media Relations  
567 West Lake Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60661-1498  
TEL 312 681-3090  
ctamedia@transitchicago.com

For Immediate Release

May 24, 2024

**Nature Play Areas, Community Plazas and Outdoor Fitness Spots:  
CTA Reveals Community-Driven Development Plans for Under L Tracks in Edgewater,  
Uptown as Part of Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) Phase One Project**

*Residents spoke and CTA listened: Agency unveils block-by-block concepts and layouts for 10 blocks between Lawrence and Ardmore avenues and seeks input on various features*

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) this week unveiled the preliminary design concepts between Lawrence to Bryn Mawr stations under new Red and Purple Line tracks that are being constructed as part of the historic \$2.1 billion Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) Phase One Project. During community meetings held in Edgewater and Uptown May 22-23, CTA also asked neighbors and transit customers for the types of community features including they would like to see on each block.

More than one mile of new, open space under the L tracks became available in a first-of-its-kind community transit project for CTA to the community as part of the RPM project. RPM is a transformational project that is replacing aging infrastructure, expanding CTA's capacity to increase train service as needed and improving rail service for customers with more reliable, comfortable service. It is CTA's largest capital investment project under way.

"CTA has this historic and rare opportunity to both build brand new track structures and modern, accessible rail stations, and at the same time serve as catalyst for new, community-friendly development under the new L tracks," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. "People told us what they wanted to see and we listened. We're excited to bring these concepts to life as well as bring our customers improved, modern rail service that is more reliable and comfortable."

CTA last year removed the 100-year-old embankment that had been part of the old Red and Purple line track structure to create new, open spaces that would be activated as part of the RPM project goals of improving customer experience and supporting economic and community development.

CTA has partnered with Site Design Group, a Chicago-based, nationally award-winning landscape architecture, urban design and architecture firm in this effort to guide the development of a block-by-block plan. CTA with Site Design has now held two series of public meetings in January and May 2024 to gather feedback on what residents and transit riders wanted to see under the L tracks in their neighborhoods.

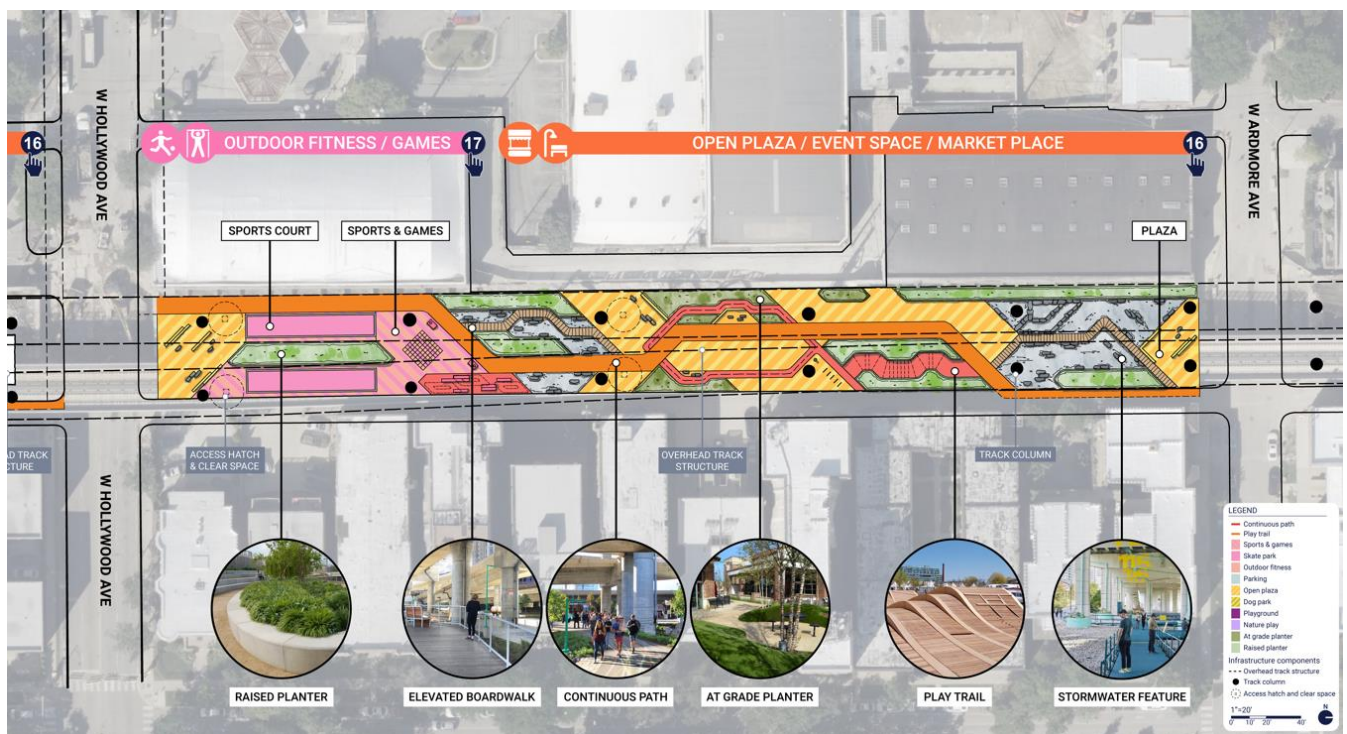


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**Ardmore to Lawrence: Block-by-block concepts**

(Note: Hi-res versions can be found [here](#))



**Ardmore to Hollywood**

*Highlights: Smaller plaza spaces with a play trail and parking*

The block would offer a park-like setting with a play trail and stormwater feature that would collect and filter the rainwater collected from the track above. Play trails could include undulating topographies and mounds, adding vertical interests to the site, as well as providing an alternative route to traverse through the space. At the southern end of the block would be an area for ground-play sports & games. The block may include planters, anchored by site furnishings of the community's choosing.

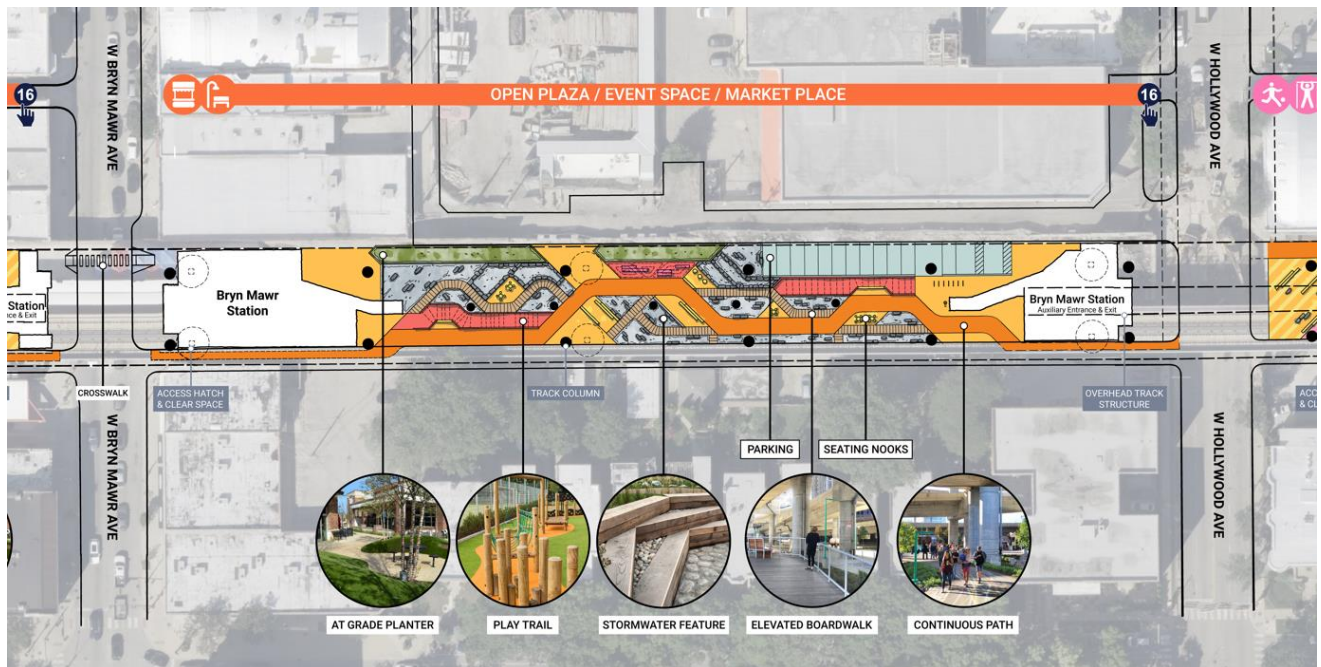


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### Hollywood to Bryn Mawr

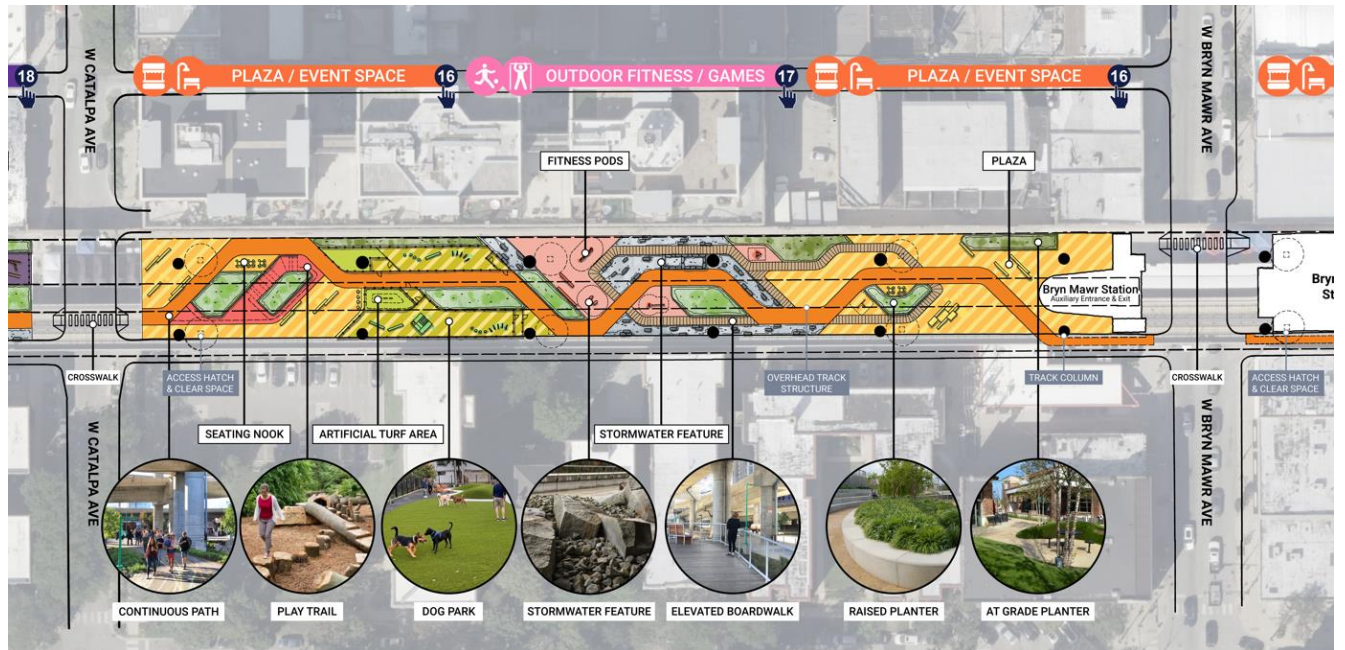
*Highlights: Open plaza and event spaces with a play trail and parking*

The block would include open, flexible spaces that could be used by various events in Edgewater, such as Edgewater Monday Market, EdgeFest etc. Various seating nodes would be provided throughout with parking spaces included along the west alley. Stormwater features and play trails would zigzag through the space to create additional visual interest.



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### Bryn Mawr to Catalpa

*Highlights: Open plaza spaces for vendor events, outdoor fitness area and dog park*

Located south of the Bryn Mawr auxiliary station, the programming of this block would make a connection with the Bryn Mawr retail corridor with open plazas next to the station that would be suitable for vendor events and market space. To the south, there would be an outdoor fitness space and dog park. A secondary boardwalk path could weave between different programs, creating various pedestrian experiences.

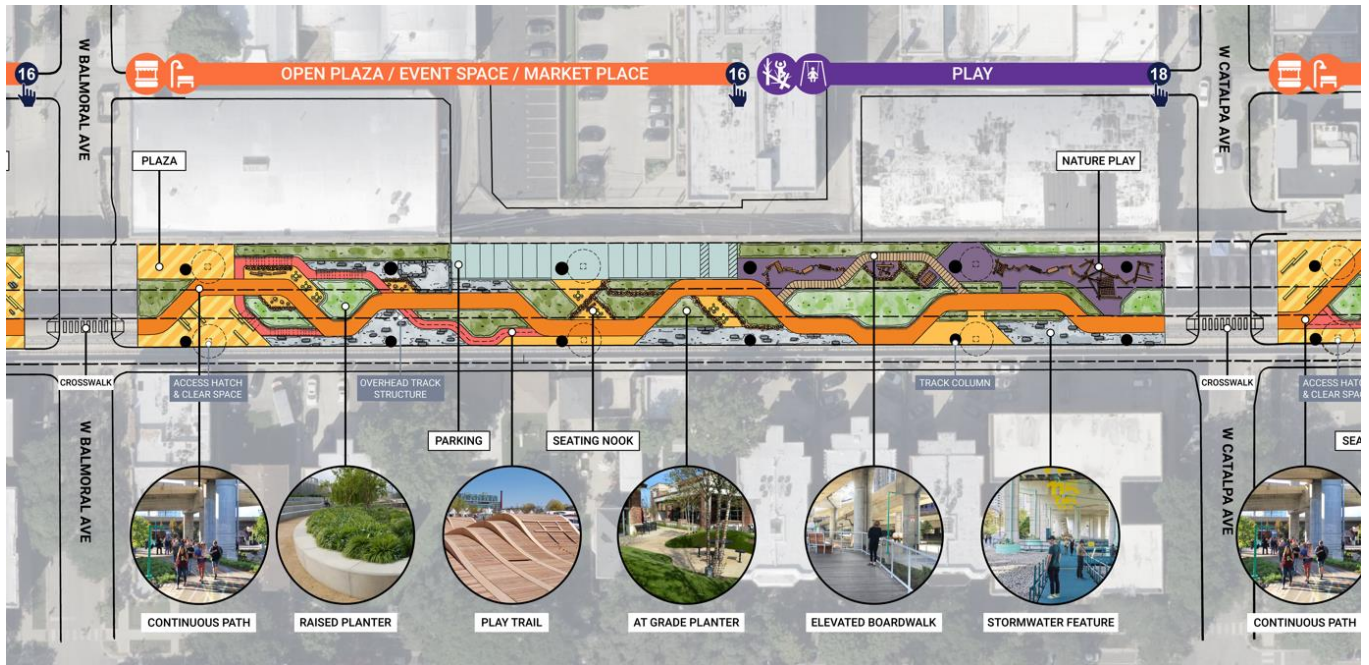


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**Catalpa to Balmoral**

*Highlights: Nature play, park space and seating nooks scattered throughout*

This block would feature a nature play area and significant green space. Buffered by planting, there would be some parking stalls in the middle of the block. There would also be a nature play area, offering a palette of nature materials with a pop of color -- play equipment and play features made of wood with trails meandering through planted areas. Different seating nooks would be located in the park space. The south end of the block could include an entry plaza that would be characterized by colorful pavement and pockets of greenery and natural materials.

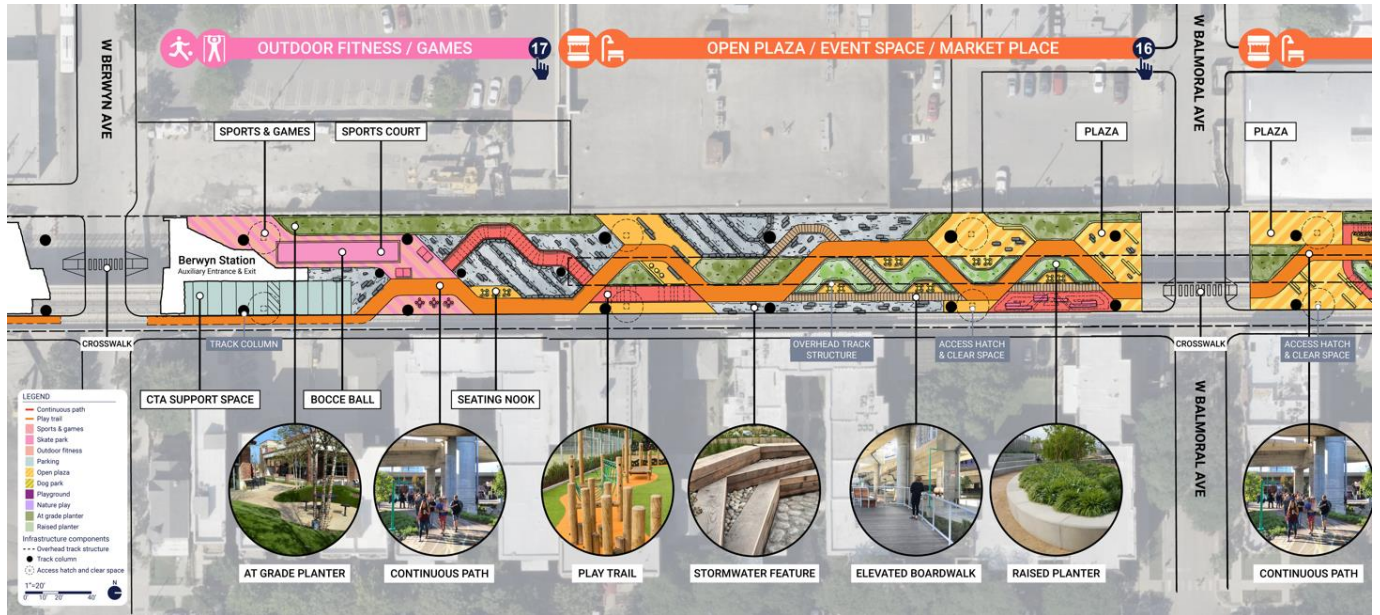


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**Balmoral to Berwyn**

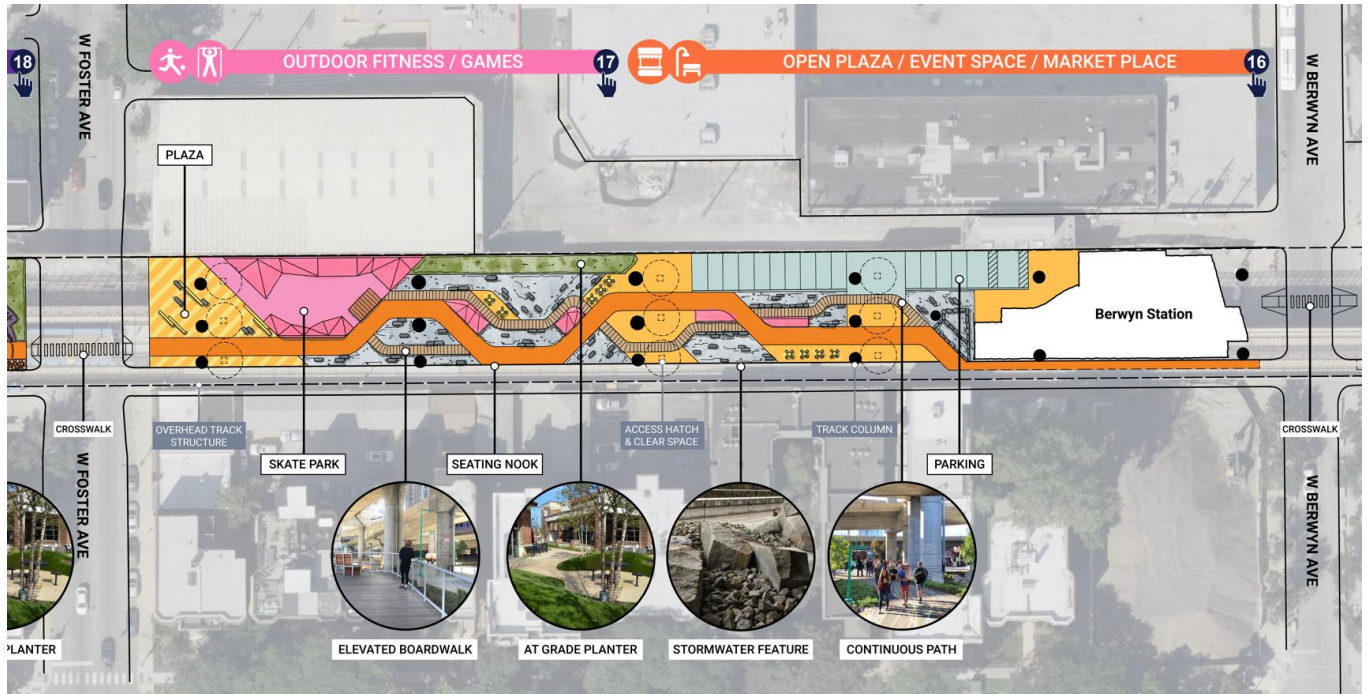
Highlights: Small scale plaza spaces with an area for sports and games

Located north of Berwyn auxiliary station, the block’s design would consist of planters on the north end and a sports & games area on the south. Similar to other planted areas throughout the site, there would be planters located where plant growth is optimal. Greenery would create a naturalistic canvas and provide borders for seating areas, paths and trails. Within the outdoor fitness and games area, games and equipment would be informed based on the community feedback received.



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**Berwyn to Foster**

*Highlights: Skate park and small plaza spaces alongside parking*

A skate park would be located on the south side of the block to allow for activation highly visible to Foster Avenue. Small plaza spaces with parking available to serve the adjacent commercial corridor could be situated on the north side of the block, south of the Berwyn station.

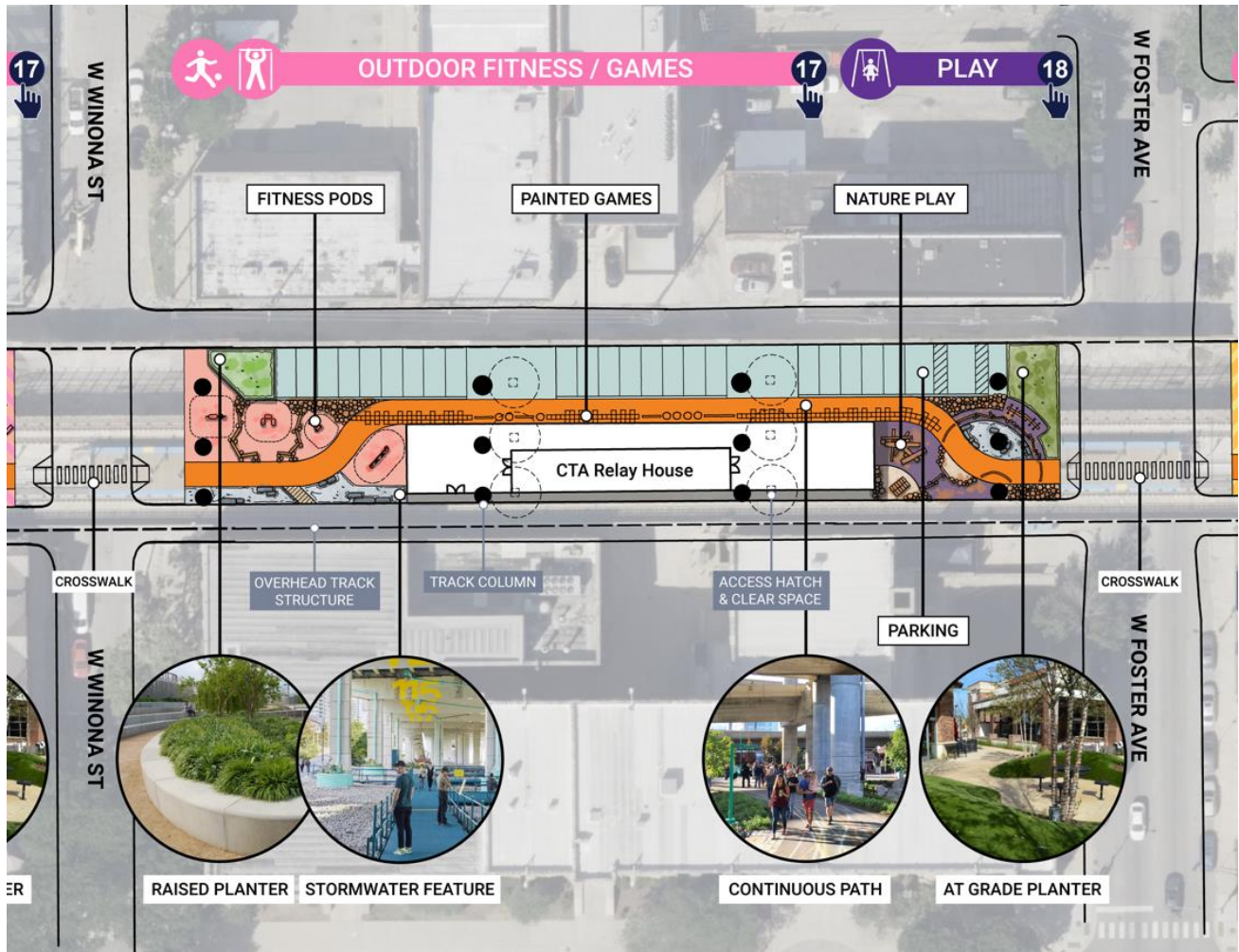


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**Foster to Winona**

*Highlights: Dedicated to play and well-being given proximity and connection to the two elementary schools*

South of Foster, this block would be dedicated to play and well-being, programmatically tied to William C. Goudy Public School on the east and the Bridge International School across the street. There would be a nature play area north of CTA's relay house, and to the south, an outdoor fitness area.



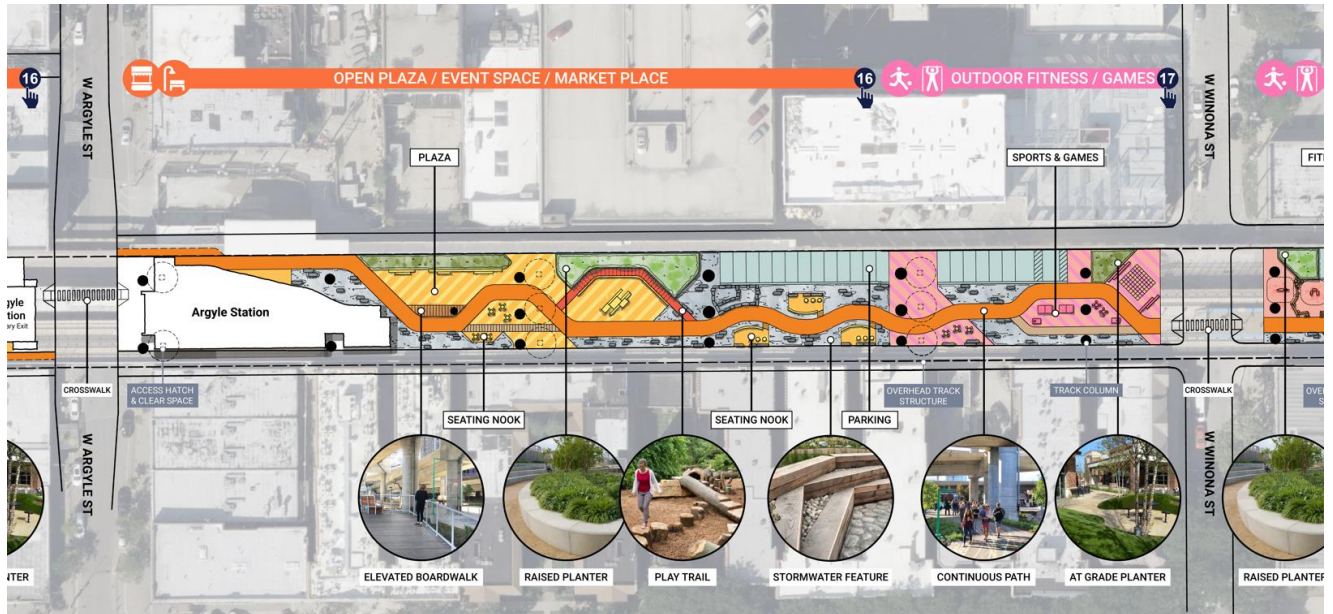


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**Winona to Argyle**

*Highlights: Open plaza spaces and sports and games area*

Making connections to the Argyle retail corridor, this block north of Argyle Street would include an open plaza behind the station that would provide flexible space for events like the Argyle Night Market and other vendor programs. North of the plaza space, an area would be dedicated to ground sports and games buffered by stormwater gardens that showcase sustainable design and the flow of water through the garden. There would be some parking spots along the west alley to supplement the available commercial street parking.

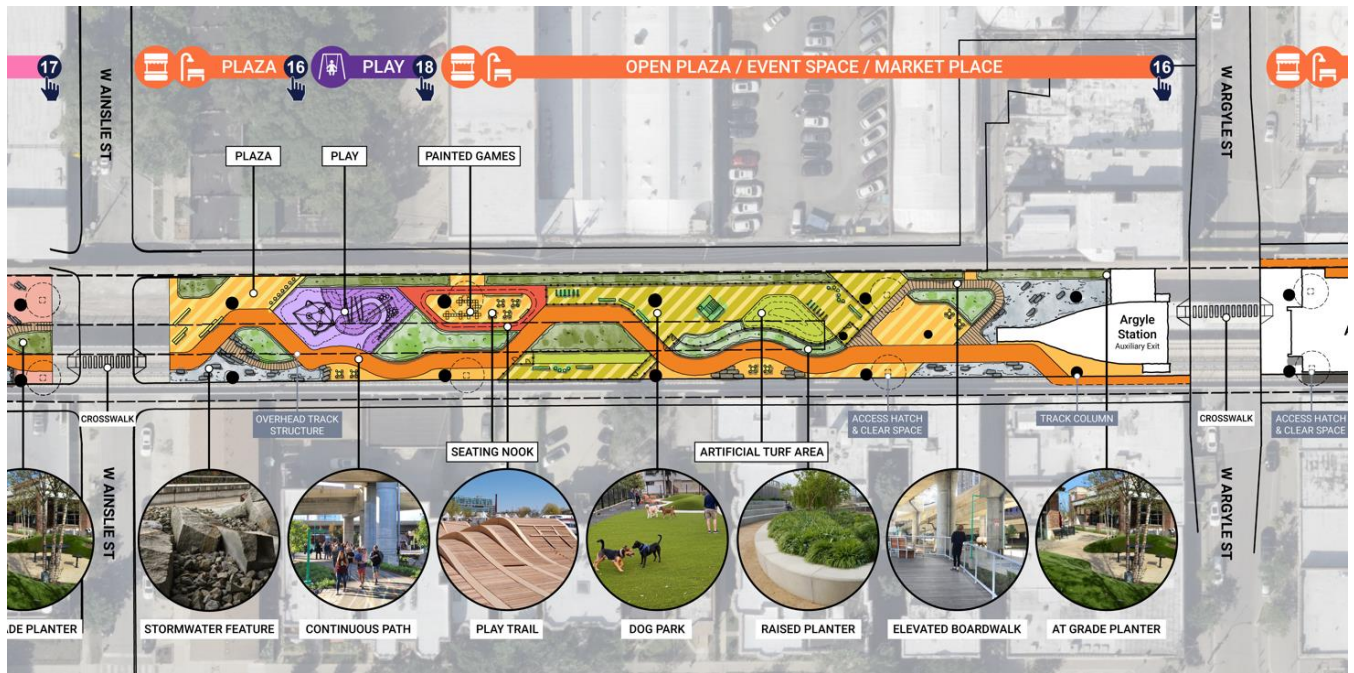


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**Argyle to Ainslie**

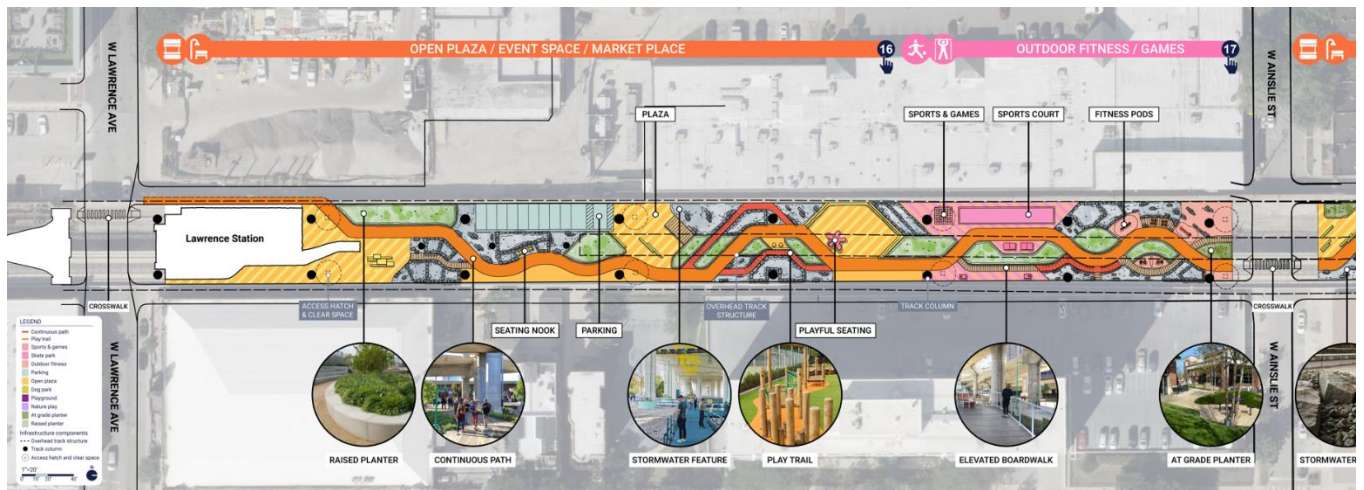
*Highlights: Open plaza space for events, dog park and playground*

Open flexible plaza spaces would be created to support neighborhood events. A dog park would serve daily community activities. Responding to the community's preferences, a playground would also be located this block.



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**Ainslie to Lawrence**

*Highlights: Open plaza areas and active areas*

Similar to the north end (Ardmore to Hollywood), wCTA would provide open flexible spaces to accommodate Uptown’s neighborhood events, as well as public space next to Aragon Ballroom to support additional queuing space during events. Other programs such as sports and games and outdoor fitness would anchor the north end of this block.

**Support transit with welcoming public spaces**

CTA solicited opinions and feedback from residents and transit customers at public meetings in January and May, as well as from requests and comments provided to CTA by phone, email and in the field. At the May meetings, neighbors and transit customers were asked for their opinions on the options for block features they would like to see in four categories, including but not limited to:

- Identity. Residents were asked what elements within their community they would like to highlighted within the activation through wayfinding signage, lighting, murals and color.
- Play elements. Residents were asked to choose their top three preferences when considering play sculptures and structures, repurposed natural materials and striping for school yard games
- Fitness and games elements. Residents were asked to choose their top three preferences when considering floor games and outdoor gym equipment
- Plaza space. Residents were asked to choose their top 3 preferences when considering seating types, open market space and public sculptures/art.



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**Public meetings series #3: Final activation public meetings – Anticipated late summer 2024**

CTA will share the final block concepts and the construction plan.

**RPM Phase One Lawrence to Bryn Mawr Modernization work: Project status**

CTA continues to make significant progress in the final major stage of construction (“Stage B”) of the Lawrence to Bryn Mawr portion of RPM. Stage A, which was completed in July 2023, rebuilt the northbound Red and Purple line track structures between Lawrence and Bryn Mawr.

Stage B, now under way, is rebuilding the southbound Red and Purple Line track structures and building four new, fully accessible Red Line stations at Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr. Work on the new stations began in early 2024, with expected completion in late 2025.

For more information about the RPM Phase One project, visit [transitchicago.com/RPM](https://transitchicago.com/RPM) or follow @CTARPM on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and X.

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