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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Chicago Loop Alliance announces inaugural Strategic Action Plan**

### **Initiatives include transformation of Wabash Avenue and expansion of Special Service Area (SSA) #1**

CHICAGO (November 11, 2013)—**Chicago Loop Alliance's (CLA) Board of Directors** announced today the organization's inaugural [Strategic Action Plan](#), which articulates focus and direction for CLA activities over the next five years. CLA's mission—creating, managing and promoting high-performing urban experiences that attract people and investment to the Loop—is supported by the plan's four catalytic initiatives: **enhancing hospitality** through the previously announced [Street Team Ambassador](#) program; **creating a more robust business district** through the expansion of Special Service Area (SSA) #1; **activating places** through CLA projects such as [The Gateway](#) public plaza; and **transforming Wabash Avenue** into a must-see destination that celebrates the iconic Chicago "L." These catalytic initiatives fall within CLA's ongoing key project areas, respectively: beautification and enhanced services; planning and advocacy; placemaking and management; and economic development. A full copy of the 2013 Strategic Action Plan is available at [www.LoopChicago.com/plan](http://www.LoopChicago.com/plan).

"Our leaders and stakeholders have identified a bold new vision of the Chicago Loop as a vibrant global business center and recognized world-class destination," said **CLA Executive Director Michael Edwards**. "The Strategic Action Plan provides a detailed series of concrete objectives, plus corresponding projects and programs for realizing these objectives. Our catalytic initiatives will enhance the experience of all Loop workers, visitors, residents and students for years to come."

In February 2013, the CLA Board of Directors began a process to develop the Strategic Action Plan in anticipation of the 2016 renewal and possible expansion of Special Service Area (SSA) #1. CLA is hired by the City of Chicago as the sole service provider for SSA #1, a business improvement district that includes all property on both sides of State Street from Congress Parkway north to Wacker Drive. This SSA contract provides the majority of CLA funding for the services, programs and events CLA delivers along the State Street corridor; however, CLA activities, projects and programs are scalable to a larger geographic area in the Loop.

Accordingly, CLA's Strategic Action Plan is informed by extensive outreach to a large collection of public and private Loop stakeholders, including: interviews with government officials and CLA partner organizations such as Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) of Chicago, Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), Greater North Michigan Avenue Association, World Business Chicago and Choose Chicago; organized meetings with retailers, educational leaders, theater professionals, building owners, residents and transportation officials; and an economic data update

identifying ten economic drivers affecting downtown Chicago. Subsequent CLA Board and Executive Committee meetings were held to refine the ideas illuminated during the strategic planning process and establish challenging yet achievable actions. The CLA Board adopted the new Strategic Action Plan in October 2013.

**Chicago Loop Alliance** (CLA) creates, manages and promotes high-performing urban experiences, attracting people and investment to the Loop. For more information, please visit [www.LoopChicago.com](http://www.LoopChicago.com).

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