

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:

Resolution No. 16-R-0028 – Contract Award - A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Railings Project

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8.I.

COMMITTEE AGENDA DATE: May 5, 2016

COUNCIL AGENDA DATE: May 16, 2016

STAFF REVIEW: Robert E. Flatter, P.E., Director of Public Works

SIGNATURE 

APPROVED BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Michael L. Guttman

SIGNATURE _____

ITEM SUMMARY:

The A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Railings Project consists of removal and replacement of bridge fence railing, installation of ornamental railings, replacement of chain link fencing, and other related work as further shown on the project plans and as detailed in the project's Technical Specifications.

Plans and bid specifications were prepared by Strand Associates, Inc. and the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Painting Project was advertised in the Daily Herald on March 31, 2016 and bids were opened on April 26, 2016. There were twelve plan holders and the City received one bid. Fence Masters of Chicago Heights, Illinois submitted the lowest and only bid of \$413,906.54. Strand's engineer's estimate of probable construction cost was \$425,247.00 (see attached bid tabulation sheets for additional clarification).

Although Fence Masters has not worked for the City of West Chicago previously, Strand did check references on Fence Masters and all agencies contacted provided positive comments and satisfactory references. Fence Masters has performed satisfactory work for similar bridge rehabilitation projects for the Illinois Department of Transportation and has completed a railing project of the Village of Flossmoor.

The cost of this project will be paid using Capital Projects Fund (08-34-53-4892) where \$1,300,000.00 has been budgeted for the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge improvements in 2016.

It is staff's recommendation that a contract be awarded to Fence Master of Chicago Heights, Illinois, for the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Railings Project, in an amount not to exceed \$413,906.54.

It should be noted that during construction Wilson Avenue, between Spencer Street and Main Street, and its adjacent sidewalks may be closed to all traffic. The railings contractor is strongly encouraged to work under the road closure planned for the concrete and deck overlay project. However, if the railing contractor chooses to utilize its own road closure detour, the detour shall be limited to 7 consecutive calendar days, and the roadway shall only be detoured during daily hours between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Traffic will be detoured over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks using Wood Street and Washington Street. Pedestrian traffic will be detoured thru the Main Street Tunnel on Turner Court. If Wilson Avenue is to be closed, detoured, or experience temporary lane closures with flaggers during dates when school is in session at West Chicago Community High School, the roadway or lane closures may only occur between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., so that school traffic is not affected by the closure.

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

ACTIONS PROPOSED:

Approve Resolution No. 16-R-0028 authorizing the Mayor to execute a Contract with Fence Masters of Chicago Heights, Illinois, in an amount not to exceed \$413,906.54 for the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Railings Project.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Infrastructure Committee voted 5-0 for approval.

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:

Resolution No. 16-R-0029 – Contract Award – Strand Associates, Inc. for Professional Engineering Construction Oversight Services for the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Rehabilitation Projects

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 8.J.

COMMITTEE AGENDA DATE: May 5, 2016

COUNCIL AGENDA DATE: May 16, 2016

STAFF REVIEW: Robert E. Flatter, P.E., Director of Public Works

SIGNATURE 

APPROVED BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Michael L. Guttman

SIGNATURE _____

ITEM SUMMARY:

In the Capital Projects Fund, identified as a FY 2016 project, is the rehabilitation of the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge. The rehabilitation project has been separated into three construction projects, all bid separately but designed to be constructed simultaneously: Bridge Painting, Bridge Railings, and Concrete and Deck Overlay. In March 2016 the City hired Strand Associates, Inc. (Strand) to prepare engineering plans and project specifications, and the projects were bid and opened on April 26, 2016.

With an award of construction contracts pending Infrastructure Committee and City Council approval, City staff approached Strand and requested a cost proposal to perform engineering construction oversight services for all three bridge projects. Strand's proposal is for a not to exceed amount of \$111,000.00.

Adequate funds have been budgeted and are available in the Capital Projects Fund to cover this engineering construction oversight services expenditure.

Construction is scheduled to occur during the months of June, July and August 2016, with an anticipated substantial project completion date of August 31, 2016 and an anticipated final completion date of September 30, 2016.

ACTIONS PROPOSED:

Approve Resolution No. 16-R-0029 authorizing the Mayor to execute a Contract with Strand Associates, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$111,000.00, for professional engineering construction oversight services related to the A. Eugene Rennels Bridge Rehabilitation Projects.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Infrastructure Committee voted 5-0 for approval.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-R-0032

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ADOPT THE WEST
CHICAGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of West Chicago, in regular session assembled, that it hereby adopts the West Chicago Strategic Plan, in substantially the form attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit "A".

APPROVED this 16th day of May, 2016.

AYES: _____

NAYES: _____

ABSTAIN: _____

ABSENT: _____

Mayor Ruben Pineda

ATTEST:

City Clerk Nancy M. Smith

WEST CHICAGO STRATEGIC PLAN

MAY 2016



WORKING
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INTRODUCTION

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West Chicago is a hometown community embodied by images of Main Street parades, local high school sports, hardworking families, and knowing your neighbors. With its roots in the 19th Century and one of the longest traditions of Latino immigration and diversity in Illinois, West Chicago's history predates much of DuPage County and more closely resembles other Fox River railroad cities and other manufacturing towns throughout the Midwest.

West Chicago possesses a strong community fabric and is home to a wide range of strategic strengths and assets. But much of the strategic planning discussion about West Chicago's place in the 21st Century appears captured by constant comparisons to its immediate neighbors, such as Wheaton, St. Charles, Geneva, and Naperville, for example. These comparisons seem to be focused on what West Chicago lacks in contrast to these other towns, although these other communities share little in common with West Chicago's history and are more reflective of 1990s, auto-oriented, suburban DuPage County expansion. Simply, much of the discussion appears to assess what West Chicago thinks it lacks, instead of what is fundamentally unique and advantageous about who it is.



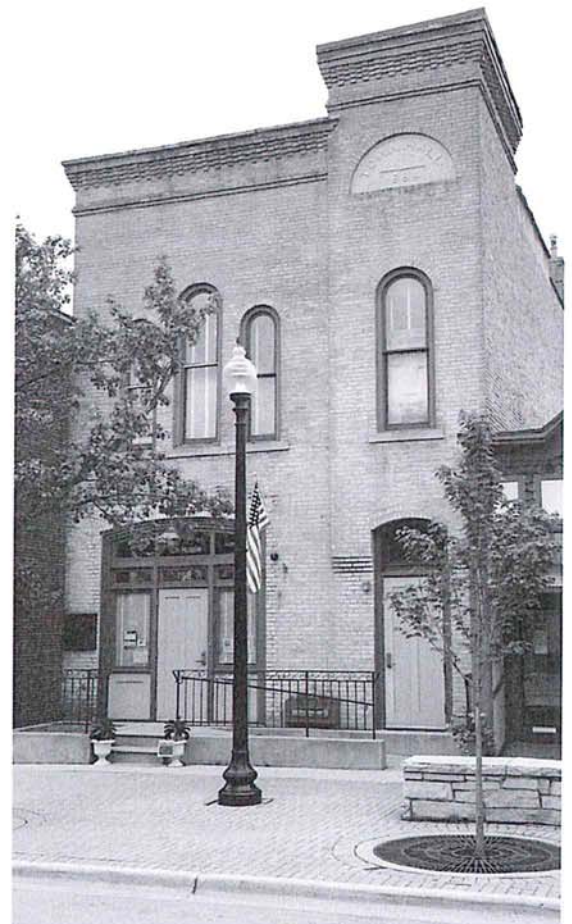


The central question for this strategic planning effort appears to be how does West Chicago take its century-old history, traditions, and successful community model and adjust, adapt, and modernize it for continued prosperity in the 21st Century?

A central component to that answer must be defining success for West Chicago. How does the town modernize strategically, but do it in a way that's appropriately "West Chicago" in character. West Chicago's definition of success should not be based on comparing itself to arbitrary benchmarks from its immediate neighbors because it is convenient. Success will be determined by achieving West Chicago's own vision and goals, which must carry an appreciation for the distinctive community it already is today.

As an established community West Chicago already has the foundations of any successful community – attractive neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces; quality schools; community facilities and special events; a robust transportation network; and multiple business districts and major employers. But West Chicago is also faced with some unique challenges. The City is hemmed in by a variety of unique land uses, ranging from the DuPage County Airport, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, and a collection of County forest preserves, and land conservancies, all of which isolate West Chicago from the rest of the suburban landscape. Further complicating planning efforts and public sector budgets is the fact much of this acreage does not pay any property taxes, which places additional burden on homeowners and working families.

That said, the opportunities are clear. West Chicago is at a juncture where there is growing interest from younger generations that see the community for its strengths and its distinctiveness. The City needs to build from this foundation of strengths and assets but do so in a way that modernizes and updates the community to meet the needs, desires, and preferences of the next generation. This will occur slowly over time and be incremental in nature. But taking those first small steps will be more effective with an eye on the long-term destination. The West Chicago Strategic Plan contains a vision and set of guiding principles that work to navigate the community through this transition.





WHAT IS THE WEST CHICAGO STRATEGIC PLAN?

The West Chicago Strategic Plan charts a new course for the West Chicago community. It is not an internal, municipal document. It is a collective vision for the entire community and details a variety of actions that can be implemented by everyone to improve their community -- from neighborhood groups to business leaders, other taxing bodies to religious organizations. Input was solicited and received from dozens of partner entities as well as hundreds of residents.

Although this is a community plan calling for community leadership in a number of key areas, the plan is ultimately still the outcome of a planning process initiated and led by the City of West Chicago. Throughout the document, goals, objectives, and action items are noted when it is intended for the City to play a leadership or contributing role, but where it cannot necessarily "own" an idea from this plan. Jurisdictional authority is an important dynamic for implementation, and ultimately the City can only do so much. Being a community plan this document identifies opportunities to solve community issues through community partnerships. However, an appropriate and realistic role for the City of West Chicago as a municipality is noted, when appropriate.

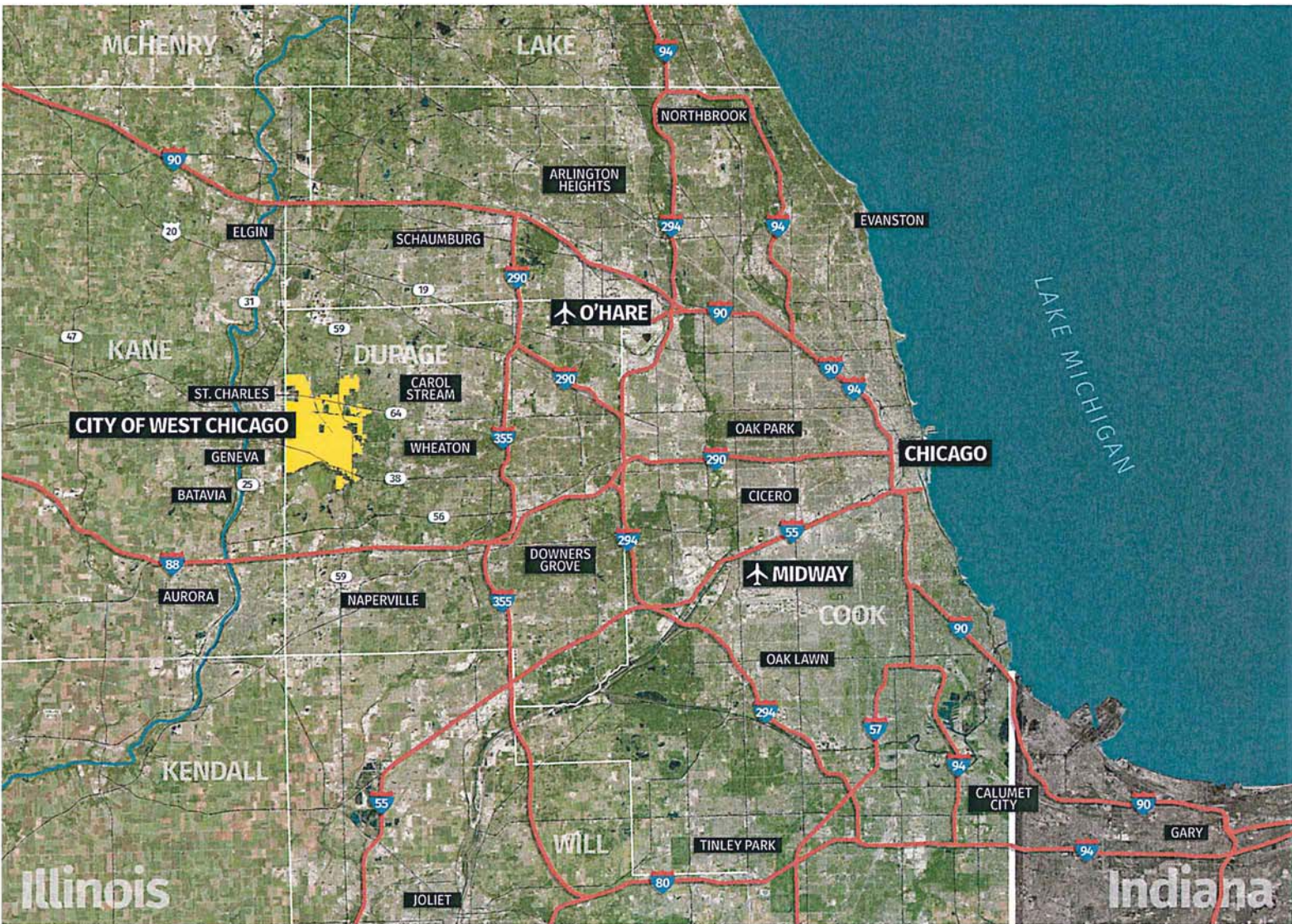
WHAT DOES THE WEST CHICAGO STRATEGIC PLAN DO?

The Strategic Plan DOES...

- ◆ Establishes a shared vision for West Chicago's future
- ◆ Focuses resources and efforts on four big topics: Economic Development, Community Image, Intergovernmental Partnerships, and Celebrating Diversity (One West Chicago)
- ◆ Serves as a forum for cross-jurisdictional and cross-discipline partnerships
- ◆ Changes the conversation on West Chicago for the better

The Strategic Plan DOES NOT...

- ◆ Dictate to other organizations or taxing bodies how they should spend their money
- ◆ Override internal strategic plans or documents produced by other organizations
- ◆ Force any participating entity to relinquish its jurisdiction or authority



A Small Town in the Suburbs

West Chicago sits within DuPage County, roughly 30 miles west of Chicago's Loop. More than 750,000 people live within a 10 mile radius of Downtown West Chicago.

West Chicago is a suburb of Chicago, but not by its own making. Founded as a railroad town in 1855, the community is a distinctive small-town with historic roots that sits in the midst of newer western suburbs.

While West Chicago has seen suburban style development patterns in the northern part of the community, the City has preserved a "town-like" sense of place and identity, with historic homes, tree-lined streets, community events, and a central Main Street.

Residents see West Chicago as a microcosm of 21st century America: racially and ethnically diverse, primarily middle-class but with a range of income levels, and possessing eclectic housing inventory that ranges from small starter homes to historic homes to large suburban style homes.

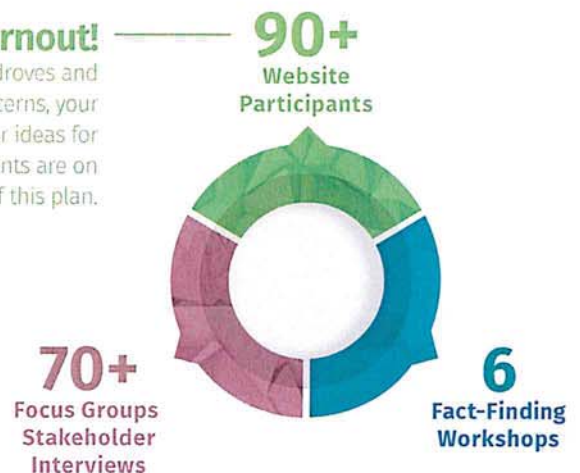


You Spoke. We Listened.

Over the course of nine months, the planning process for the West Chicago Strategic Plan engaged residents from all walks of life. Special emphasis was placed on reaching traditionally underrepresented groups, including youth and Latinos. From the beginning, it was recognized that all residents should have a voice in the process.

Fantastic Turnout!

You came out by the droves and shared your concerns, your aspirations, and your ideas for change. Your fingerprints are on every page of this plan.



OUTREACH TIMELINE



WHAT WERE THE **BIGGEST TAKEAWAYS?**

- ◆ Residents cherish its historic character, railroad ties, mom-and-pop businesses, and sense of community.
- ◆ Generally residents were proud of living in West Chicago. However, constant comparison to wealthy neighboring communities saps the community's many positives and distinctive characteristics.
- ◆ A sizable gap exists between what residents see in West Chicago and what others say about it.
- ◆ Residents see a divide between White and Latino populations. It is not perceived to be a result of disinterest or hostility, but more of an uncertainty of how to engage and interact with one another in the face of different customs and languages.
- ◆ Latinos are underrepresented in West Chicago's civic life.
- ◆ West Chicago's diversity is one of the community's greatest assets. Many also believed the community is "afraid to say it's our strength" and promote it.
- ◆ People want to see Downtown serve as a classic community center, but there is frustration that it has not materialized. The overall development vision is for a walkable, mixed-use district like many other downtowns anchored by a Metra station, and there is a sense of urgency that the City needs to be more assertive in pursuing and incentivizing that vision.
- ◆ Due to the timing, there was a lot of concern expressed about losing General Mills. However, it appears the general sentiment with this particular example captures a bigger picture concern that West Chicago's past success has been partially grounded in having a balance of residential areas and industrial employment areas. For some residents they feel the long-term viability of these plants is unsure.
- ◆ Residents cited the hundreds of undeveloped acres and infill redevelopment sites in proximity to the CN and UP railroads as well as the airport as key growth opportunities.
- ◆ West Chicago's local business community is generally strong and small restaurants and retailers thrive, however, it is believed that many if not most tend to cater to the Latino community.
- ◆ West Chicago is seen as a "pass through" community, meaning that although it has three major highway corridors, motorists tend to be traveling from Point A to Point B, with West Chicago rarely a destination. This undermines the market's interest in development of new retail or restaurant square footage.
- ◆ Although not accurate, a common opinion expressed was that the City of West Chicago has been passive and unengaged in economic development activities.
- ◆ The Metra station is a significantly underutilized asset in West Chicago.
- ◆ Walking in West Chicago can be very difficult for pedestrians.
- ◆ West Chicago is not commonly viewed throughout the region as a recreational bicycling hub, but it should be due to its strategic location and trail access.
- ◆ Some participants reported that the ideas and solutions in West Chicago are clear, but that the community's elected officials are generally conservative and somewhat risk adverse, and as a result few new projects are actually pursued and fully implemented.
- ◆ West Chicago offers its students a quality education, however, a stigma about the public schools dominates the conversation, particularly in surrounding communities.
- ◆ Intergovernmental coordination in West Chicago is very important because the community is fragmented by a number of public agencies and school districts. Further, participants expressed a desire to see more creative public-private partnerships and community-based initiatives supported by these formal government entities. The general sentiment appears to be that although all of the agencies and entities agree that improved coordination is a goal, it is not as frequently executed.
- ◆ The existing parks and recreation offerings within West Chicago are viewed positively. Residents perceive three specific opportunities to increase recreational opportunities within West Chicago: more soccer fields, more trails and paths, and the addition of smaller "pocket parks".
- ◆ One of the most universal sentiments expressed throughout the four month outreach process was the desire for more community festivals and events. Such programming could serve multiple purposes: attract positive attention to the community, provide a social space to "bring the community together," promote small businesses, and draw people to Downtown.

THE PLAN

Our Strategic Vision

After more than a century, West Chicago's roots and community foundations are still solid and the community is well positioned for the future. The central challenge for West Chicago over the next ten years is beginning to take the actions and make the investments needed to modernize and update the community to meet the needs of the next generation. That means some things will change. But West Chicago still should build on its existing strengths and remain true to its heritage. There are core values and guiding principles that define who West Chicago is as a community, regardless of era – past, present, or future.

Many of these first steps have already been taken by the City of West Chicago, and residents did recognize many of those efforts. Progress is underway. Outreach participants acknowledged how far the West Chicago community has come in 20 years. However there is an emphasis on pushing further and envisioning who and what West Chicago could be 20 years into the future.

West Chicago does feature certain constraints, limitations, and unique conditions, such as being surrounded by so much land that cannot be developed or taxed, but it still has untapped potential and clear opportunities. One of the fundamental elements of taking this strategic approach is acknowledging the best benchmarks and recognize that genuine comparable communities are probably not West Chicago's neighbors. West Chicago needs to understand its local complexity, its history, and model efforts off of best practices from small, traditional cities that more closely reflect the town's experience. Success will be determined by achieving West Chicago's own vision and goals, which must carry an appreciation for the distinctive community it already is today.

That said, the opportunities are clear. Looking forward West Chicago needs to strategically plan for the modernization and reinvestment of its Downtown, its readily available office, industrial, and employment parks, its major highway and shopping center corridors, its historic neighborhoods, and its community facilities and parks, while diversifying its local employment base with new, smaller, and entrepreneurial businesses in emerging sectors. It must do so by forging a collaborative network of government agencies, community institutions, and local businesses and developers all focused on a clear set of strategic priorities.

From there, West Chicago actually presents a community well-suited for the next generation and aligned with emerging consumer trends. Its historic, walkable core anchored by a traditional, transit-fed Downtown, wrapped by a wide range of affordable housing and vintage, leafy neighborhoods, supported by a diverse, multi-generational community appears to serve a large segment of the population and provide the attributes an increasing number of families are seeking, particularly among Millennials.

Our Plan

This is where the rubber meets the road: the plan itself. West Chicago's Strategic Plan focuses on four big ideas: taking a more proactive approach to economic development, owning our community character and promoting our successes to improve our image in the Chicago region, launching a new era of continued and elevated intergovernmental collaboration, and embracing our diversity in new ways that brings the West Chicago community together like never before.

We must be realistic – achieving our ultimate goals may take decades. But this Strategic Plan creates a framework of actions, policies, investments, and recommendations that can be implemented to move the needle **starting tomorrow**. This plan is action-oriented, measurable, and built around clear near-term outcomes. The plan is structured around near-term actions with an eye towards the long view.

Our Priorities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Elevate West Chicago's competitive position as one of the prominent commercial centers and major employment hubs within DuPage County and the suburban Chicago region.

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COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Enhance West Chicago's image within DuPage County and the suburban Chicago region including elevating its distinct sense of place and community character.

PAGE
44

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Maximize the community's public resources by elevating the intergovernmental partnerships among stakeholders in West Chicago.

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ONE WEST CHICAGO

Broaden participation in community leadership and invest in relationships to form partnerships with all members of the community to reinforce that there is One West Chicago, made stronger by its diversity.

PAGE
66

Our Values

Take Pride. Be an ambassador for this community. Take pride in West Chicago for everything it is, stop focusing on what it isn't, and let's tell our story to the Chicagoland region.

Embrace Diversity. West Chicago has always been a diverse community and that is part of what makes it unique and so great. Embrace our cultural diversity and celebrate our distinctiveness.

Target our Strengths. We can't fix every problem, as much as we may want to. West Chicago needs to be strategic and play to our strengths through targeted actions and maximize our potential.

Commit to Cooperation & Collaboration. We can address our issues more effectively as a big team than we can individually. Continue our commitment to working together in proactive cooperation and collaboration across West Chicago.

The Smalltown in the Suburbs. West Chicago is not a traditional suburb and we do not want to be. We're a classic Main Street hometown with a rich history and established local culture. Own who we are as West Chicagoans and recognize why it stands out in Chicagoland against its peers.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Elevate West Chicago's competitive position as one of the prominent commercial centers and major employment hubs within DuPage County and the suburban Chicago region.

WORKING
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Economic Development

1

Invest in and launch a robust, proactive economic development program, led by the City, that partners with the business and real estate development community to promote West Chicago as a place to invest in a range of commercial and industrial uses, and build an entrepreneurial spirit.

2

Establish targeted investment and economic development strategies for each area of the City's five defined business districts, tailored to corridor and site-specific conditions.

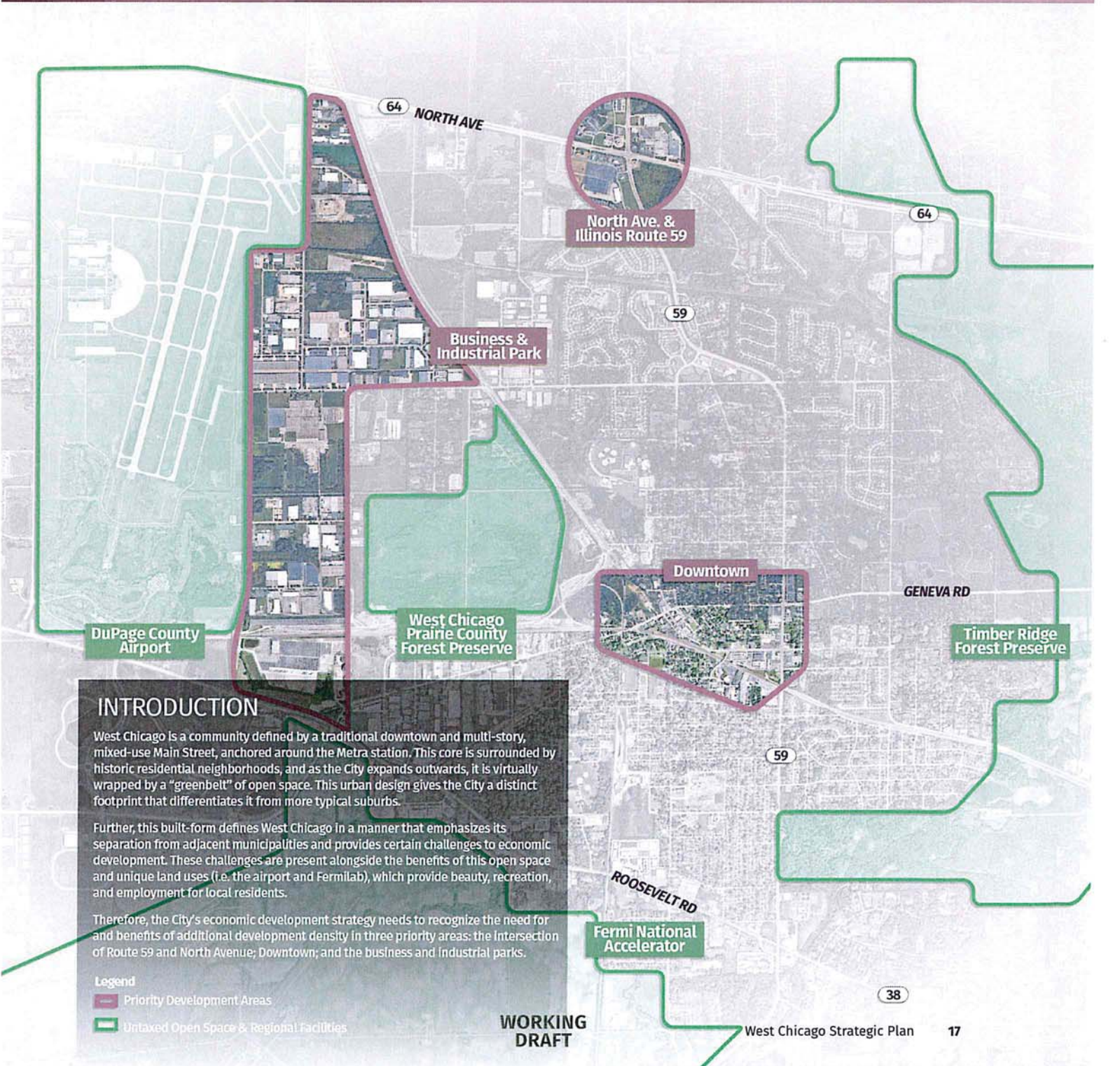
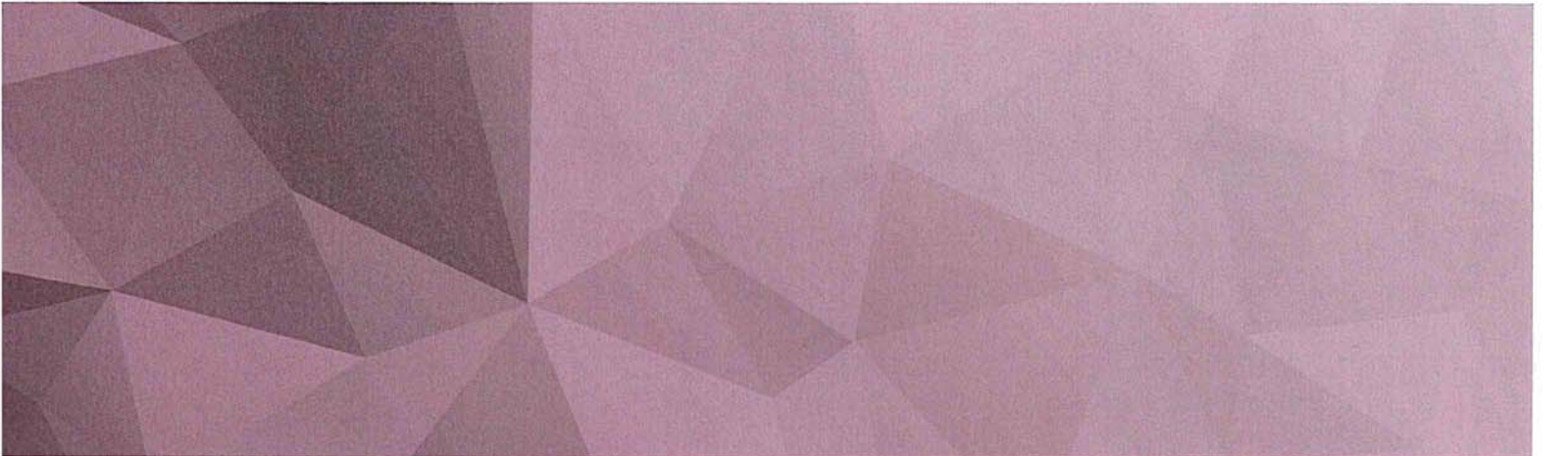


Introduction

West Chicago has a diverse, complex local economy matched by a diversity of business districts. The City features a traditional Downtown, three commercial corridors along major highways, and a series of office and industrial parks. West Chicago has historically been a hub of employment anchored by its historic Main Street and it remains competitive today. However, despite featuring a number of retail nodes and corridors, the City has struggled to support this type of development in recent years. The City is at a crossroads where a high-level economic development strategy is needed, but which should be deployed through a series of corridor and site-specific investment strategies.

West Chicago is a unique community because although it is centrally located and adjacent to a lot of suburban population density (and some of the highest disposable incomes in the Chicago region), its local development pattern has inhibited some economic stability. The community's trade area is limited because West Chicago is largely surrounded by forest preserves, Fermilab, and the DuPage County Airport. Although this "greenbelt" of open space presents the community with benefits, West Chicago lacks the population density within this sphere to exclusively support its own businesses; and unfortunately West Chicago residents ultimately fall within the trade areas of adjacent and neighboring business districts, such as Randall Road, that siphons economic activity away from the heart of West Chicago. Although challenging, this dynamic is not insurmountable.

The City of West Chicago is at a point in its history where a focused, 5-year economic development strategy will effectively reposition its real estate to be the most economically competitive it can be over the next generation. This strategy needs to contain a series of programs that address both how the City of West Chicago adds resources to its economic development efforts, as well as targeted physical improvements and infrastructure investments. The strategy is both policy-oriented and site-specific. And both components should be implemented in partnership with the business community.



INTRODUCTION

West Chicago is a community defined by a traditional downtown and multi-story, mixed-use Main Street, anchored around the Metra station. This core is surrounded by historic residential neighborhoods, and as the City expands outwards, it is virtually wrapped by a "greenbelt" of open space. This urban design gives the City a distinct footprint that differentiates it from more typical suburbs.

Further, this built-form defines West Chicago in a manner that emphasizes its separation from adjacent municipalities and provides certain challenges to economic development. These challenges are present alongside the benefits of this open space and unique land uses (i.e. the airport and Fermilab), which provide beauty, recreation, and employment for local residents.

Therefore, the City's economic development strategy needs to recognize the need for and benefits of additional development density in three priority areas: the intersection of Route 59 and North Avenue; Downtown; and the business and industrial parks.

Legend

- Priority Development Areas
- Untaxed Open Space & Regional Facilities

WORKING
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1 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Invest in and launch a robust, proactive economic development program, led by the City of West Chicago, which partners with the business and real estate development community to promote West Chicago as a place to invest in a range of commercial and industrial uses, and build an entrepreneurial spirit.

The Approach

The City of West Chicago should position itself as more proactive in terms of business recruitment, retention, and expansion as part of regular operations. This approach will require clear roles and responsibilities for City staff, elected and appointed officials, business association groups, and appropriate chamber of commerce. This new model will function, in effect, as a “West Chicago sales force,” and will be most effective through iterative collaborations that leverage the strengths each sector brings to the table.

The most effective foundational approach to establishing municipal economic development activities is creating and managing an ongoing business recruitment, retention, and expansion program. Recruitment activities can vary based on a variety of factors, but retention and expansion programs (B|R+E) tend to be more consistent.

B|R+E Programs

Business retention and expansion programs begin with the recognition that as high as 86% of new jobs and capital investment is generated from existing employers, and likewise in many cases, new retail and restaurant activity directly stems from local business expansion. The importance of ongoing, institutionalized retention and expansion programs cannot be understated, and in many cases they are staffed and led by municipalities in their respective communities.

Business retention and expansion programs generally aim to manage seven core goals:

- ◆ Build strong relationships between public officials and business leaders.
- ◆ Demonstrate the support and commitment of public agencies towards the local business community and establish active collaboration.
- ◆ Identify problems impacting the business community.
- ◆ Identify specific problems impacting an individual business or commercial/industrial property.
- ◆ Identify business sectors and specific companies at risk of downsizing or closing entirely.
- ◆ Identify business sectors and specific companies with the need or potential to grow and expand in the existing municipality.
- ◆ Help facilitate ongoing land use, development, and growth management planning.

What is an Economic Development Task Force?

An Economic Development Task Force is an advisory body that contains not only City of West Chicago staff and officials, but also a purposeful mix of private sector actors, including developers, property owners, business owners, realtors, listing agents, banks, university employees, various association representatives, and others. They are sometimes also called the Mayor's Council of Economic Advisors.

This group meets regularly to act, in effect, as local economists who are experts on West Chicago's development trends and potential. Further, the group can assist in identifying priorities and advising on what course of action the City should take, if any at all. These entities can be an important part of monitoring and managing a municipal-led economic development program by regularly tapping into the experience, expertise, and real-time knowledge of the community's business and development leaders.

1 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Who (or what) Are The IEDC/ICSC?

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a membership-based non-profit organization that helps developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities. They aim to create retail and expand jobs to facilitate growth and provide a stable tax base in communities across the world.

The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) is a trade organization for the international shopping center industry. The organization aims to advance the shopping center industry by providing educational programs and publications in all aspects of shopping center development, conducting meetings, collecting and disseminating information, developing and maintaining professional certification programs, advocating the interests of the shopping center industry, and publicizing to the general public.

These goals are achieved through what is known as a “data-to-action” approach, anchored by three key functions; these functions must be institutionalized, resourced, and managed as part of regular, ongoing municipal operations. Those functions are (1) regular business site visitation meetings, (2) the collection and examination of standardized survey-generated data that is fed into a business monitoring and tracking system, and (3) the use of these efforts to make strategic decisions, overseen by an Economic Development Task Force and executed by municipal staff.

Retention and expansion efforts can also directly inform business recruitment activities as well as City policy, land use planning, and capital infrastructure programming more broadly as part of general municipal strategic planning. These efforts represent the “heart and soul” of municipal-led economic development programming.

West Chicago has a vibrant local economy and has been a center of employment for decades. These local jobs help support the City’s housing market, its retail and restaurant businesses, and lessens the tax burden on homeowners. A critical strategic priority for West Chicago is continually modernizing its competitive position in the regional economy. Entrepreneurship and small business startups are an important economic development goal for the community.

There is often a lot of focus on attracting a big company to the community, but most job growth actually occurs through the expansion of local, existing businesses. West Chicago has long featured major industrial employers, particularly in manufacturing, but it needs to diversify its local economy to remain competitive. Growth industries and sectors can initially be captured by small companies and new startups. West Chicago needs to identify ways to attract and support these entrepreneurs.

Action Items

1. The City should consider drafting and adopting a formal 5-year economic development strategy, including evaluating policy statements on the use of a variety of public incentives and development tools.
2. The City should continue to actively participate in the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and the City could consider encouraging at least one member of municipal staff to become a Certified Economic Developer (CECd).
3. The City should establish a formal business retention and expansion program that provides adequate municipal resources and staffed by City personnel, in partnership with elected and appointed officials and business leaders through an Economic Development Task Force.
4. The City's business retention and expansion program should directly include the Economic Development Task Force, which should be responsible for coordinating with staff on tracking, monitoring, and evaluating the information collected as part of activities. Teams of community representatives, including staff, elected and appointed officials, and business customers, should develop a routinely structured series of business visitation meetings that utilize a standardized survey tool.
5. The City should consider working with the business community to create a dedicated business and development website.
6. The City should continue to partner with existing property and shopping center owners, as well as interested developers, to promote the community through the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) to recruit new retail and restaurant users to the community.
7. The City should continue to directly partner with the DuPage Business Center developer to assist in marketing the development and recruiting users to the employment park.
8. The City should continue to engage with existing local and regional organizations, such as the Small Business Development Center, to formalize and refine entrepreneurship and new business support programs as a component of the City's economic development programming.
9. As part of a long-term employment and development strategy, the City should partner with local and regional organizations, including the College of DuPage Small Business Development Center and Center for Entrepreneurship, Rev3 Innovation Center, along with major economic development entities like Choose DuPage and the DuPage County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to support businesses in emerging employment sectors.

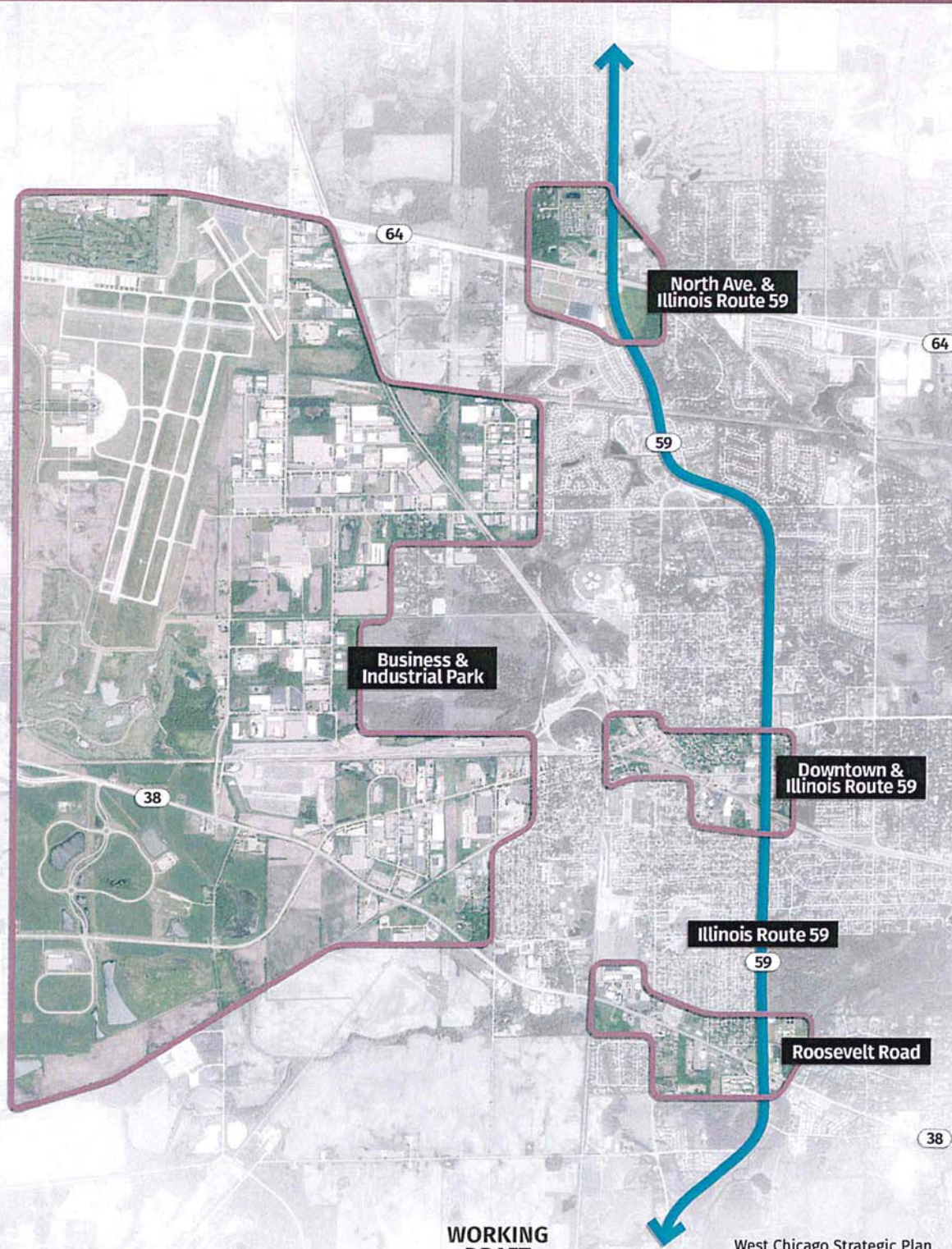
2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Establish targeted investment and economic development strategies for each area of the City's five defined business districts, tailored to corridor and site-specific conditions.

The Approach

The City of West Chicago's business community is defined by five distinct areas. These business districts shape the City's built-form and West Chicago largely functions as a series of five commercial neighborhoods. Each commercial area features its own set of conditions, ranging from urban design elements to real estate economics to business mix.

The City should develop detailed implementation strategies to competitively position each of these five areas for development, redevelopment, and new investment. Through those efforts each commercial area should be reinforced as a distinctive business district that aligns land use planning, zoning, infrastructure investment, corridor branding, and urban design character in a manner that differentiates the district from other parts of West Chicago, as well as other parts of suburban Chicago.



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2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

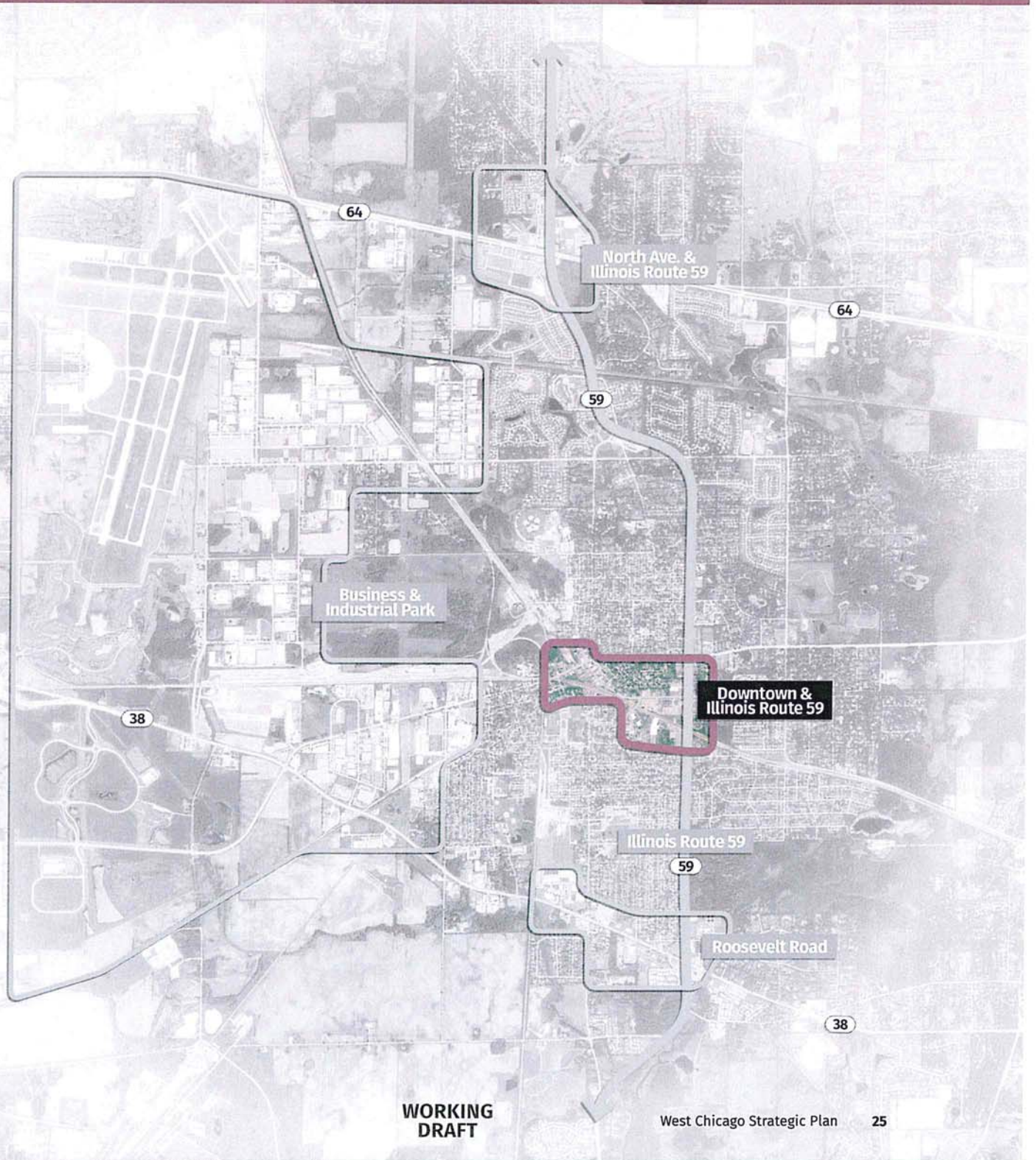
Downtown

West Chicago is not just another suburb – it is a city and a hometown. As a result, its historic central business district – Downtown – is the traditional heart and soul of the community. However, in the 21st Century the community is fragmented, and Downtown no longer serves a role in the lives of West Chicago residents; in fact, some residents prefer to travel to St. Charles, Geneva, Wheaton, and even Naperville when they want to visit a historic, walkable, mixed-use dining and entertainment district. West Chicago's downtown has been characterized as overwhelmingly Hispanic in character, and furthermore, others only see it as a local neighborhood business district – not the central gathering place for the community as a whole. That must change.

Downtown West Chicago is unique because its Main Street is not a U.S. or Illinois highway – this means the City has far greater control over its urban design than most suburban communities. The potential exists to add iconic signage and other streetscaping elements that would really differentiate the area, add a unique sense of place, and create a memorable destination –

but would never be approved by IDOT. Further, in contrast with the ubiquitous nature of riverfront downtown districts in the western suburbs, West Chicago is unique because of its terrain, grade change, and railroad heritage. Furthermore, the community's Latino culture adds another unique, differentiating characteristic that makes it clear a visitor is in a distinct place. West Chicago needs to capitalize on these attributes.

Downtown West Chicago also features a Metra station and some initial, suburban-style transit-oriented development (TOD). However, the potential exists to push this style of infill development even further. There is an increasing interest in the suburban Chicago housing market in traditional, walkable neighborhoods in close proximity to the corner business district, the local park, and community landmarks, while still featuring attractive but affordable housing – and West Chicago clearly has that to offer. The potential exists to invest in a few signature projects over the next 5 to 7 years to serve as catalyst for a generation of downtown investment in West Chicago.



2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

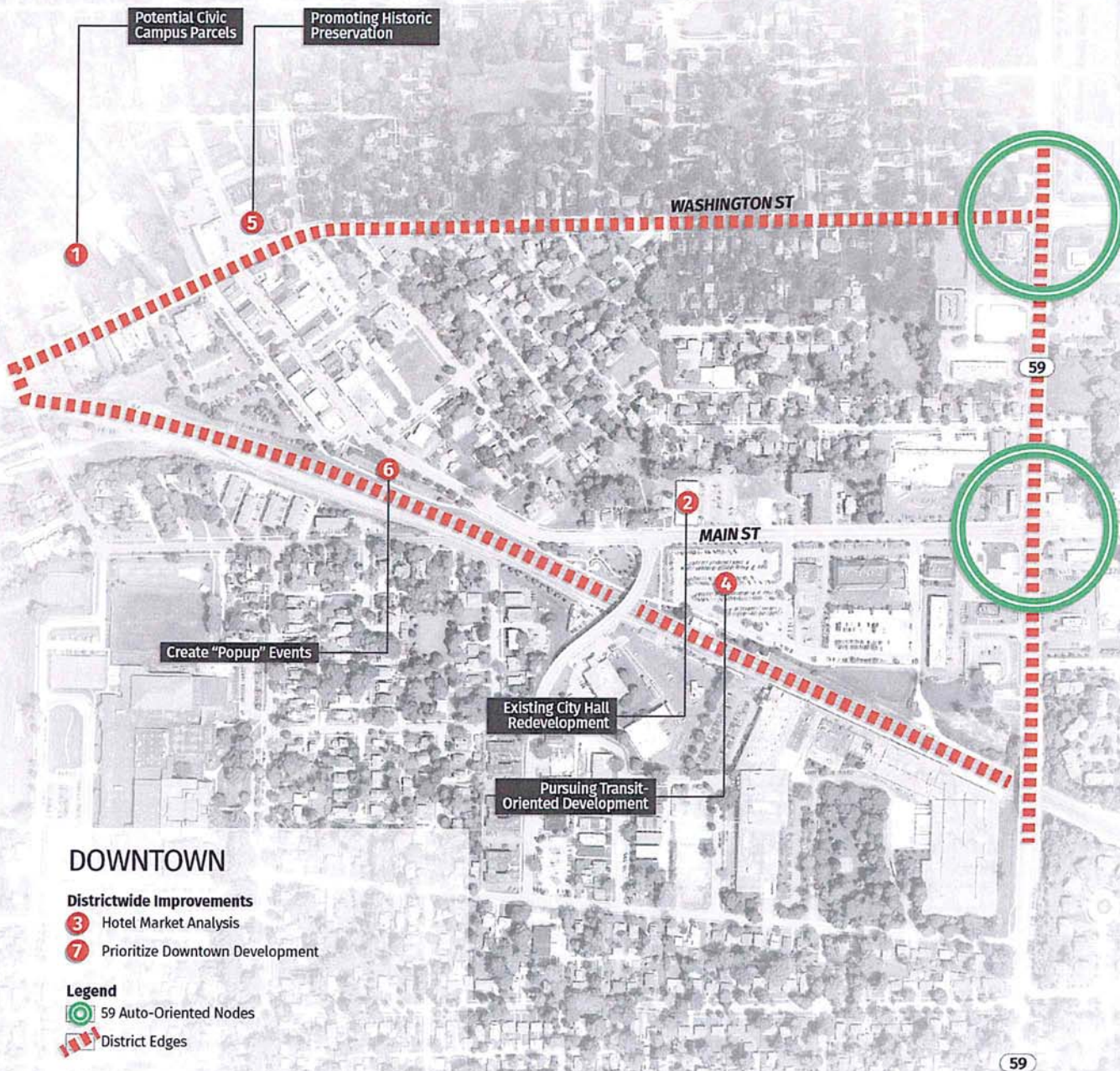
What are popup events and tactical urbanism?

Tactical urbanism is a term used to describe low-cost, temporary changes to the built environment intended to improve local neighborhoods and gathering places. They can activate a space and bring together the community around a one-time event. Examples of types of interventions include: better block initiatives, guerilla gardening, PARK(ing) Day, Depaving, food carts/trucks, open streets, and many more.

The City of Chicago, for example, provides its community with the "Make Way for Play Guide" that was developed in 2013 to help give Chicagoans the tools to maximize the use of the public way and promote active living.

Action Items

- 1 The City should make a final determination on the real estate it owns in Downtown West Chicago; the City could consider selling a portion to a private developer, and/or it build a new, civic campus as a foot traffic anchor for the district. Such a facility should act as more than a traditional 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. government offices building and offer dynamic, flexible public facility space that helps activate downtown 7 days a week during both business hours and at night.
- 2 Should the City vacate the current City Hall, the site should be prioritized and incentivized for infill redevelopment, across from the Metra station, to add greater density to the Downtown neighborhood.
- 3 The City should study the market potential for a small, business-oriented hotel that caters to local employers and the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory located within an infill redevelopment project.
- 4 The City should continue supporting the downtown as a TOD hub by partnering with Metra and other property owners to maximize the available real estate, including parking lots. The City should also consider implementing a bikeshare program and density bonuses to promote West Chicago as one of the most competitive communities on a Metra line in the Chicago suburbs for new infill construction.
- 5 The City should continue to enforce the adopted design guidelines and work to integrate the role of the Preservation Commission with future public improvements.
- 6 The City should work with private local entities to coordinate the creation of a series of tactical urbanism or "popup" events to activate Downtown West Chicago and demonstrate its market viability and character to a wider population.
- 7 The City should target-market Downtown to comparable business districts in its business recruitment and economic development efforts.



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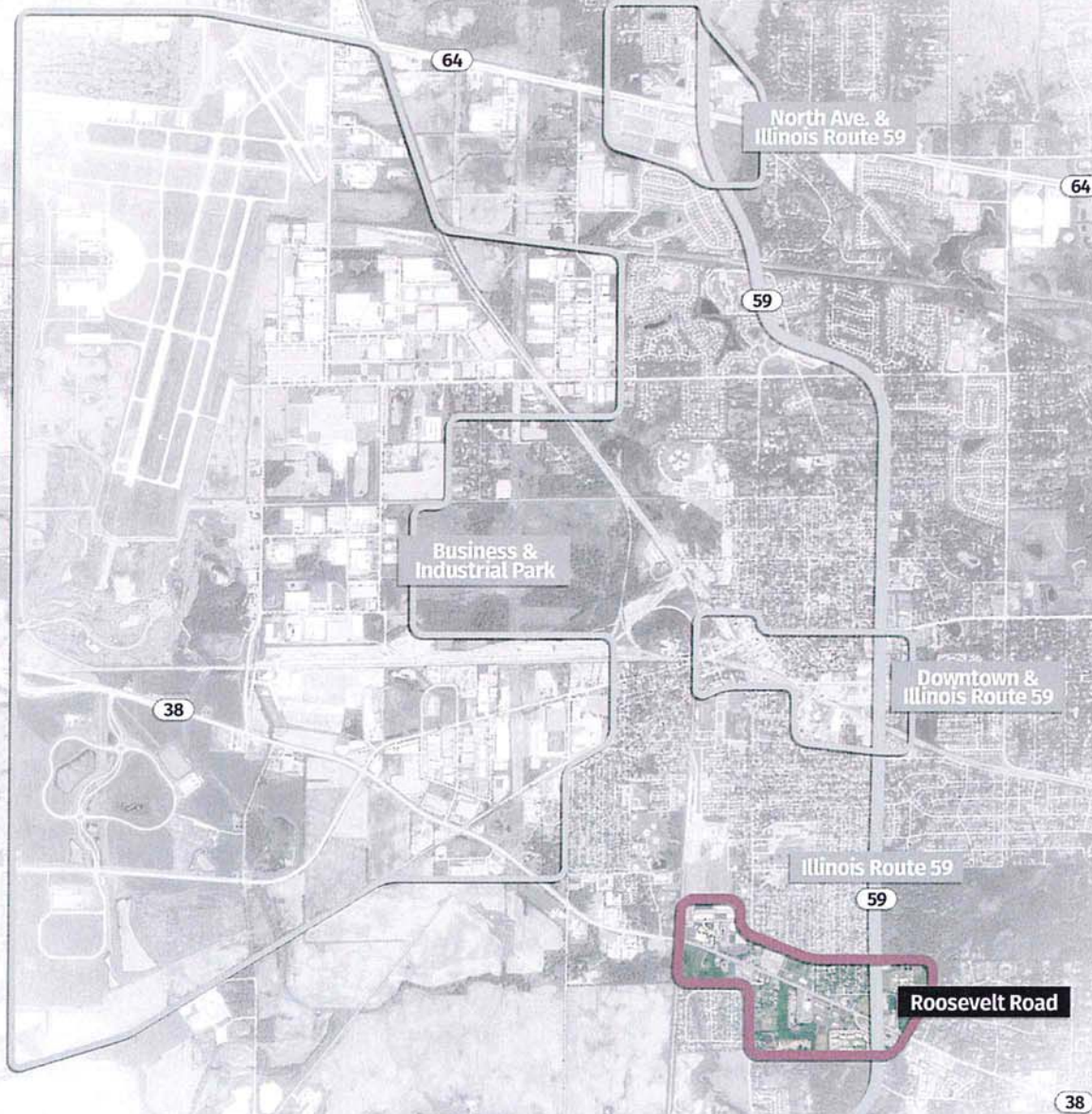
2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Roosevelt Road

Roosevelt Road is Illinois Route 38 and acts as a major arterial highway that connects Glen Ellyn and Wheaton to Geneva and the Fox River Valley. As a result, the corridor is designed to move traffic safely and efficiently throughout the Chicago region; within West Chicago, the business district is largely defined by a substantial interchange and viaduct structure at Illinois Route 59. The Roosevelt Road corridor transitions into a midcentury-style strip retail district before it transitions into a more modern office park at approximately Town Road.

The district still features prominent anchors, such as Jewel-Osco and Haggerty Ford, but it has also experienced disinvestment in recent years and shows signs of aging and obsolescence. Ultimately the Roosevelt Road corridor business district competes for many of the same consumers as Downtown. Although Roosevelt Road features high traffic counts, traveling east and west features limited population density. Roosevelt Road's primary market in the future will likely be motorists as well as business park users to the west, as far as Kirk Road.

The City needs to thoroughly evaluate redevelopment strategies for Roosevelt Road and proactively incentivize infill reinvestment in the corridor. The recently completed roadway improvements on multiple streets in the area provide an opportunity to stimulate new investment, but an economic development vision and strategy for this corridor needs to be determined and established. If West Chicago features a surplus of commercial and retail square footage, it may be more competitive to concentrate such uses at the 59 and Joliet Street intersection, while transitioning mid-block properties to mixed-use, office, and residential uses. Further, many of the existing buildings are set far back from the right-of-way and feature large parking lots; the potential to add outlot buildings and/or increase development density in the corridor may be beneficial.



2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

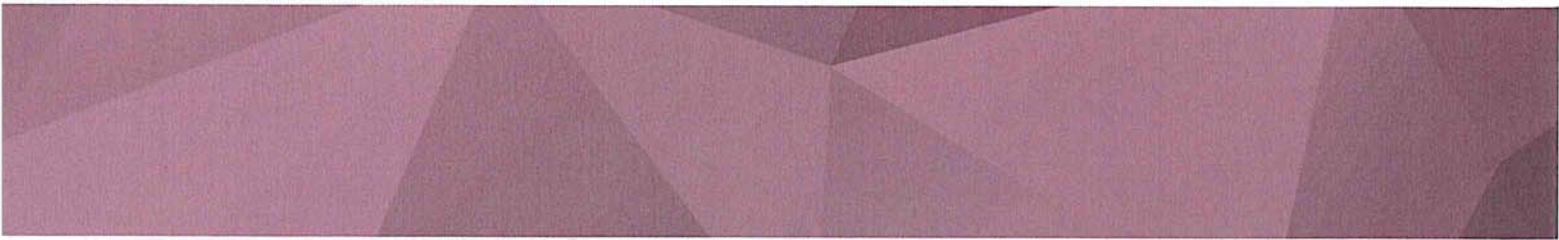
The Benefits of Flexible Parking

Flexible parking improves traditional, “mandatory-minimum” parking requirements based on access to transit, the presence of nearby complementary destinations within walking/biking distance, the potential for shared parking, auto ownership rates of the community, and implementation programs to reduce demand for parking, such as car sharing. Conventional parking requirements have often produced an over-supply of parking, which tends to be dedicated to one individual parcel.

The advantage to setting out these criteria specifically, and allowing these reductions, is that developers will know up front how many spaces they will be expected to provide.

Action Items

- 1 Create and adopt a formal Roosevelt Road corridor Development Plan that details the community’s vision for the area, addresses public infrastructure improvements, and provides subarea and site-specific detail on infill redevelopment strategies.
- 2 Identify certain mid-block parcels and existing buildings that could potentially be targeted for infill redevelopment to transition part of the corridor to a mixed-use, office, and residential land use.
- 3 Examine parking mandatory-minimums and existing businesses in the corridor and identify opportunities to allow for the construction of new outlots on existing sites.
- 4 Examine the potential use of development incentives and special revenue districts to stimulate private investment in the Roosevelt Road corridor.
- 5 Consider establishing a Roosevelt Road corridor overlay district that permits flexible parking and density bonuses in exchange for achieving other redevelopment goals in the corridor.
- 6 Consider working with I-DOT to explore the possibility of investing in a district-branding strategy based on streetscaping that differentiates the established Roosevelt Road business district from the industrial and business park properties that begin west of the BNSF railroad tracks.



2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

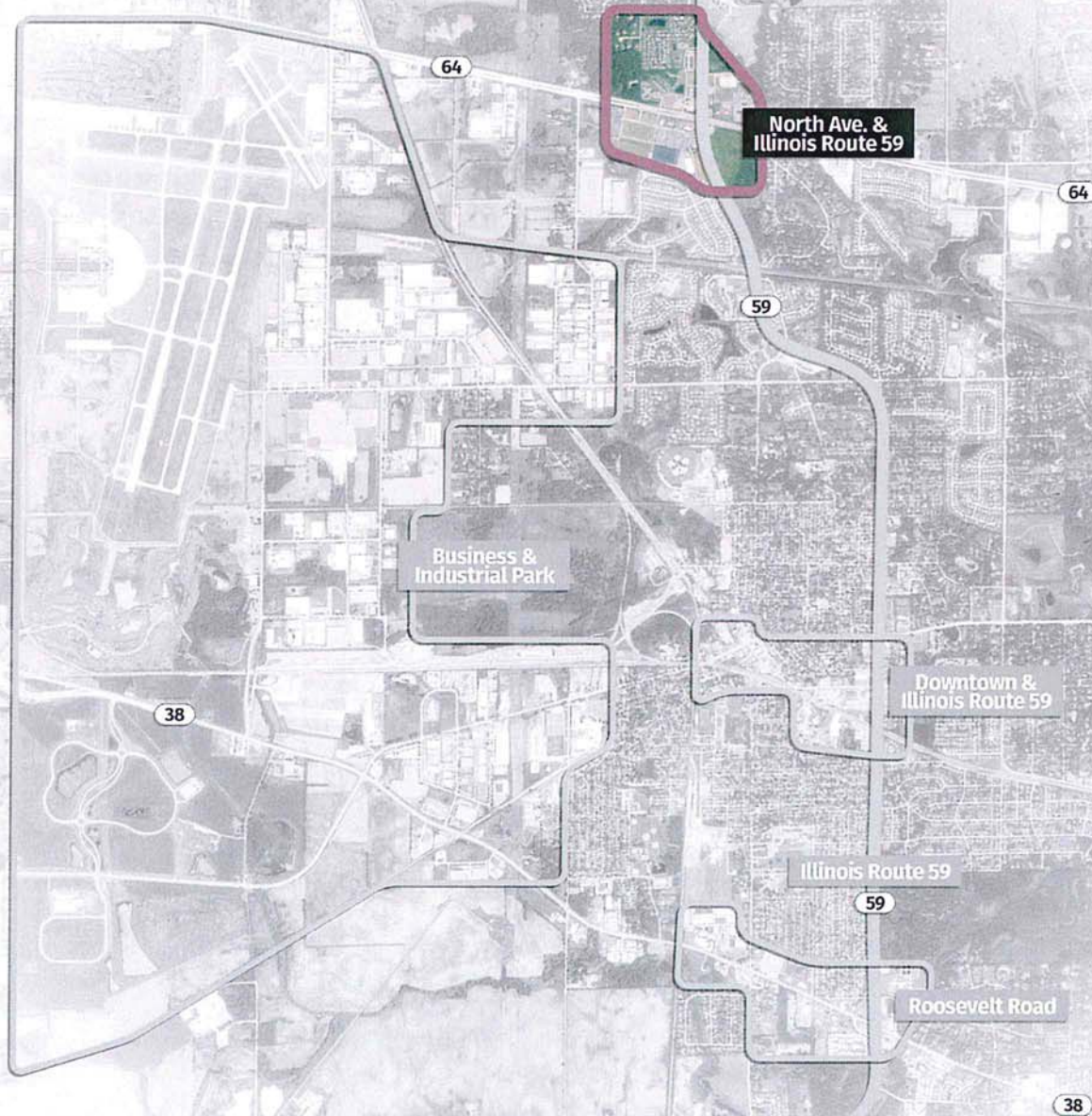
North Avenue

North Avenue travels from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River and locally connects suburbs like Elmhurst and Carol Stream to St. Charles and the Fox River Valley. The roadway is designed as a major, arterial state highway intended to move a high volume of traffic at high speeds. The corridor cuts through the very northern portion of West Chicago, acting as a critical business district for the City, while also somewhat separating the residential areas to its north from the historic core of the community. North Avenue's intersection with Route 59 anchors a major retail node, which is east of the former Charlestowne Mall site and Pheasant Run Golf Course.

North Avenue has somewhat struggled as a business district within West Chicago and features vacancy and less-than-A-quality retail lease tenants. The recent losses of Hobby Lobby and Fox Valley Volkswagen add to existing vacancy. This commercial area is fragmented and generally developed piecemeal around a major signalized intersection; typical for its era, these properties must be redeveloped, repositioned, and reinvested to be competitive in the future.

These types of shopping centers face challenges in reinventing themselves and competing over time in virtually any community, but the intersection of North Avenue and Route 59 is further emphasized because, despite high traffic volumes, it does not anchor a major node of population density. To the east, the corridor is primarily industrial uses and designed around very low-density businesses.

The Mosaic Crossing Shopping Center is the clear catalyst opportunity. The site is very large, the existing buildings are set very far back from right-of-way, and the visibility into the development from the roadways is poor. Further, there are some site access and circulation issues. In general, this is a challenging development that features certain signs of obsolescence. This real estate represents one of the most critical opportunities for West Chicago's economic development efforts, particularly in terms of maximizing retail sales tax potential.



2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Action Items

- 1 Formalize a long-term economic strategy for this business district, in partnership with existing property and shopping center owners.
- 2 Consider the potential of conducting a detailed retail and restaurant market assessment that captures the maximum potential of this commercial area node; balance that market potential against concept scenarios that may introduce mixed-use, office, medical, hotel, and housing uses to the district.
- 3 Conduct a rapid-succession series of business retention meetings, involving shopping center managers and property owners, to determine the stability of the business district over the next two years.
- 4 Continue to engage the current property owners of the Mosaic Crossing Shopping Center to discuss the potential for a public-private partnership to redevelop this site, including adding density and mixed-use components as part of a long-term master plan. A redesign of this site could potentially include a mix of residential, office, medical, and hotel uses, alongside retail and restaurant businesses. By adding a mix of uses and greater density in the area it would increase daytime populations and generate more local demand. Such a project will likely require public incentives.
- 5 Examine the remaining vacant parcels for potential outlot development and/or beautification projects.