



Comprehensive Plan Update

City of Des Plaines, Illinois



August 2005

Inventory and Analysis Memorandum

DRAFT



In association with GOODMAN WILLIAMS GROUP

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Des Plaines, Illinois has initiated an update of its Comprehensive Plan. This Inventory and Analysis Memorandum Report is a summary of existing conditions, and the issues and opportunities potentially affecting the future of Des Plaines. The Comprehensive Plan is the City's official policy guide to future land use, development and conservation within the community, and also provides guidance with regard to transportation and community facilities. The update process will address these issues from a city-wide perspective, while also placing emphasis on land use, transportation and urban design issues within the downtown, unincorporated and gateway sub-areas.

It is important to emphasize that a Comprehensive Plan is a *policy guide*. Unlike other City codes and ordinances which are adopted as enforceable law, a Comprehensive Plan is an advisory tool to be consulted and considered by the Plan Commission and City Council and other officials when land use changes and capital facilities are proposed. It is long-range in orientation and intended to express general community aspirations. Yet, it is specific enough to guide day-to-day activities of the Plan Commission, City Council and City Administration.

The update to the Comprehensive Plan is in compliance with the Local Planning Technical Assistance Act (May 2002). The act accomplished four significant updates to the State of Illinois' planning legislations:

- It provides the first definition in state law of what a comprehensive plan is;
- Allows several state agencies to give preferences in funding programs to communities that have passed comprehensive plans in accordance with the legislation;
- It creates a Local Planning Fund to make technical assistance grants for planning and development;
- Declares that local government's land-use actions should be consistent with their comprehensive plans.

A. NEED FOR AN UPDATED PLAN

Des Plaines was established in the 1850's by the Illinois and Wisconsin Land Company, a group of land speculators engaged in building a railroad from Chicago to Janesville, Wisconsin. Des Plaines was incorporated as a village in 1869 and within one year the population was recorded as 800 people. Des Plaines was officially organized in 1874 with the election of the first village board. Frank Whitcomb, a local brick manufacturer, was the first Village President. It was later incorporated as a city.

The City's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1995. To support planning and design in the downtown, a downtown Sub-area Plan was adopted on August 7, 1995.

While the current Comprehensive Plan has provided useful direction to the City in the past, changing community and economic conditions warrant a re-examination of planning factors affecting the future of the community. Further, combined with an understanding of community attitudes and aspirations, the new Plan will reflect the basis of current community aspirations.

Reinvestment and redevelopment within the downtown has caused a need to establish current policies to direct future growth and design. The beginning of "teardown" single family residential redevelopment and the subdividing of lots is also affecting

residential areas of the City. In addition, significant parcels of land either within or adjacent to unincorporated areas of Des Plaines may experience changing conditions for which the City should be prepared. For all of these reasons, the City has undertaken the development of an updated Comprehensive Plan that will take into account the changed conditions in and around the City and provide effective policy guidance into the future.

B. THE PLANNING PROCESS

The update of the Comprehensive Plan is being guided by a Steering Committee comprised of City staff and officials, a representative of Oakton Community College, and key community leaders (refer to the Appendix for a complete list of Steering Committee members). The planning process is being facilitated by HNTB, a Chicago-based urban planning and design firm. HNTB is assisted by Goodman Williams Group for demographic and market assessment considerations. This report culminates the first major step in the Comprehensive Plan process, summarizing the results of background research on existing community conditions, and a summary of key "issues and opportunities". After review and discussion of this report with the Steering Committee and interested members of the public, the consulting team will develop preliminary planning goals and objectives, and physical planning concepts for both the City as a whole and the sub-areas. The alternative plan concepts and precedents will be reviewed and discussed by the Steering Committee, and presented to interested members of the public for review and comment. The Steering Committee will select a preferred concept and authorize the consulting team to prepare a complete draft Comprehensive Plan.

After review and approval of the draft Comprehensive Plan by the Steering Committee and the community, it will be forwarded to the Plan Commission for review and comment at a Public Hearing. After refinement, based upon Plan Commission and public comments, the final Comprehensive Plan will be sent to the City Council with a recommendation for adoption. Once adopted by the City Council, the Comprehensive Plan becomes the *policy guide* for the City with regard to land use and development issues.

Community Involvement to Date

Meetings have been held to date to solicit input regarding general planning issues and opportunities within the City, including those found below. Additional public and Steering Committee meetings will be held during the Plan process.

- Key Person Interviews - June 6 and 7, 2005
- Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting - July 27, 2005

Comments received during these meetings have been recorded and summarized for future reference. The main "issues and opportunities" identified during the meetings are included in the Appendix to the report.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report includes four sections, as follows:

- I. The *Physical Planning Context* section describes: the locational framework of the City's existing land use and conditions; transit, circulation and parking facilities; streetscape and urban design amenities and preferences; and community facilities and resources.
- II. The *Planning Policy Context* section provides a background summary of relevant pre-existing planning policies, a description of current development regulations, and a discussion of economic development programs and tools.
- III. The *Market Assessment* section provides a summary of the preliminary market analysis released concurrently by Goodman Williams Group. The full Market Assessment report, released under separate cover, contains a general socioeconomic and demographic overview of the City and a preliminary analysis of the competitive position of the City with regard to commercial and residential development trends.
- IV. The *Issues and Opportunities* section summarizes the consulting team's preliminary analysis of the key planning issues the Plan must address, and the key planning opportunities the Plan can build upon, based upon the background research and input summarized elsewhere in the report.

The *Appendix* contains several important pieces of information. It includes identification of the Project Steering Committee guiding the work of the process. It also includes a list of Key Person Interview invitees and the summary of key Issues and Opportunities discussed within the Steering Committee workshop and key person interviews.

I. PHYSICAL PLANNING CONTEXT

A. LOCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Vicinity Map shows the City of Des Plaines, along with surrounding communities and regional access routes, and establishes the regional context within which the City of Des Plaines is located. The City benefits from excellent regional access via major expressways, along with significant recreational amenities within close proximity provided by the Cook County Forest Preserve District. These beneficial aspects of the City are discussed in more detail in later sections of this report.

The City is surrounded by stable upper middle income communities, including the predominantly residential communities of Park Ridge to the east and Mount Prospect to the west, and the hotel and commercial center of Rosemont to the south. Unincorporated areas border Des Plaines on the north, northeast and the southwest. These areas are within the City's 1 & 1/2 mile planning jurisdiction and will be a focus in the Comprehensive Planning process. Unincorporated Areas are displayed in *Figure 2*.

B. EXISTING LAND USE AND CONDITIONS

The City of Des Plaines is a mature "built-out" community with an existing land use pattern that is well established. It is 14.6 square miles in area. A mixed-use downtown is the City's hub of activity with retail, services, offices, residential, and public uses. Any land use changes will relate to redevelopment efforts, such as Metropolitan Square or the Des Plaines Public Library. The City also contains concentrations of commercial land uses along Lee and Oakton Streets, Elmhurst Road, and the "Five Corners" area, as well as office concentrations near Interstates 90 and 294. The majority of the City's residential neighborhoods are mature and well-maintained, with minor redevelopment occurring on a lot-by-lot basis. The City also maintains concentrations of industrial and institutional uses, as well as public open space. To determine the type and location of the City's existing land uses, field surveys were conducted in May 2005. Land uses observed at the time of the surveys were recorded and mapped. The following summary describes the City's existing land uses, which are highlighted on *Figure 3a and 3b: Existing Land Use*. *Figure 4* displays Existing Land Use for the Downtown Business District. *Table 1* also depicts the percentage of land uses with the city; land use types are ranked in order of percentages.

FIGURE 1

VICINITY MAP

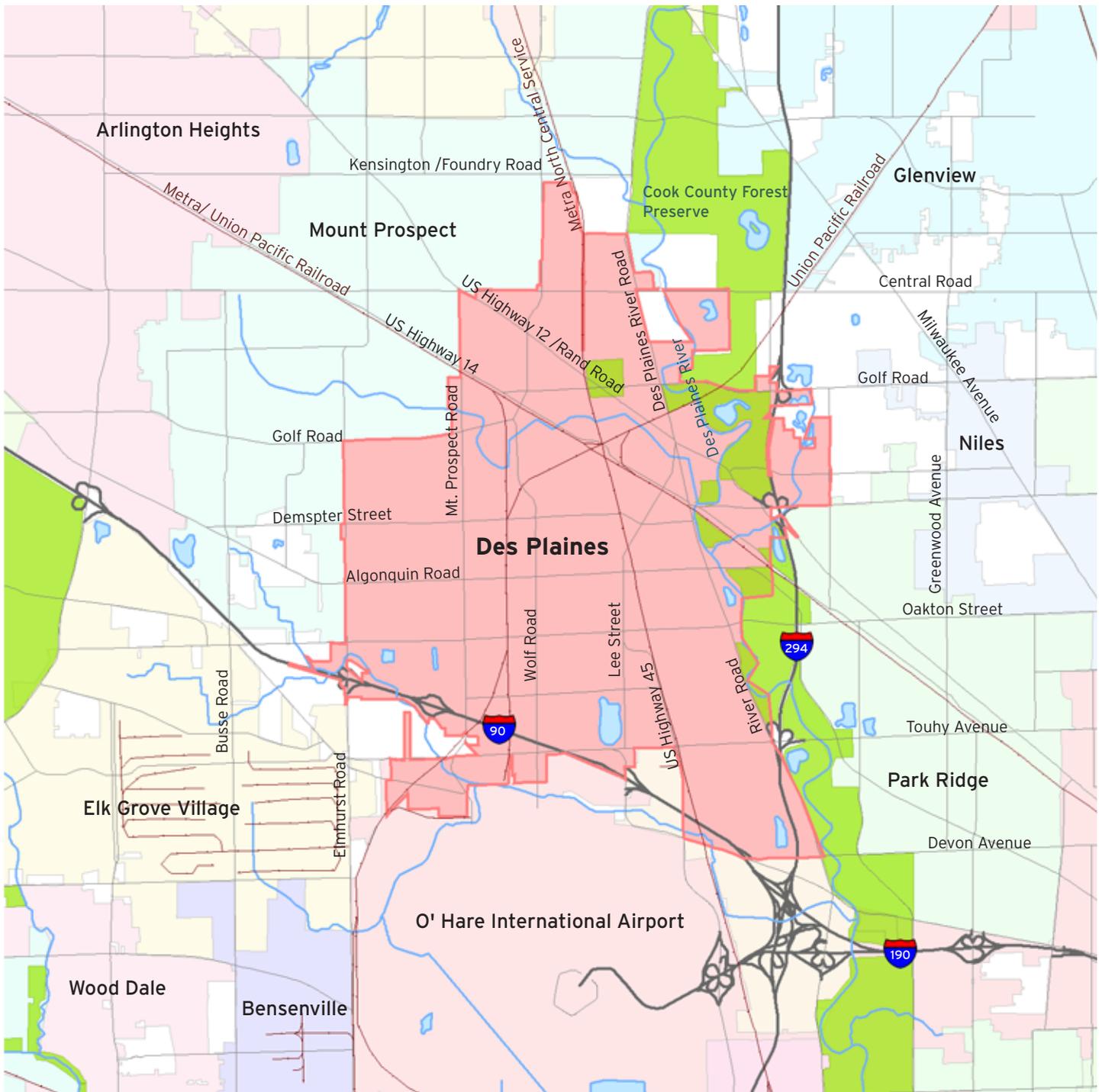
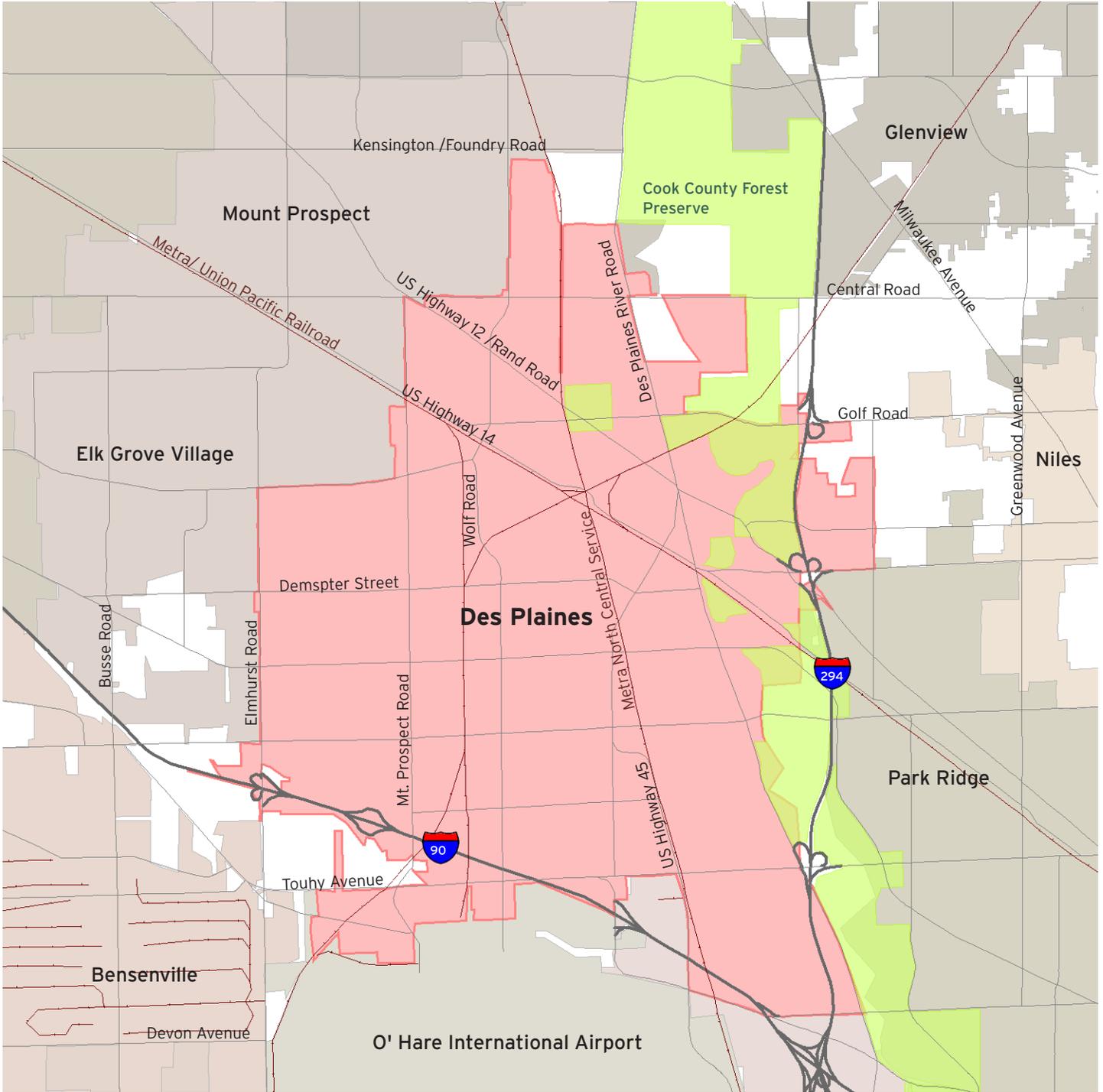


FIGURE 2

UNINCORPORATED AREAS



-  Unincorporated Areas
-  City of Des Plaines
-  Cook County Forest Preserve



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

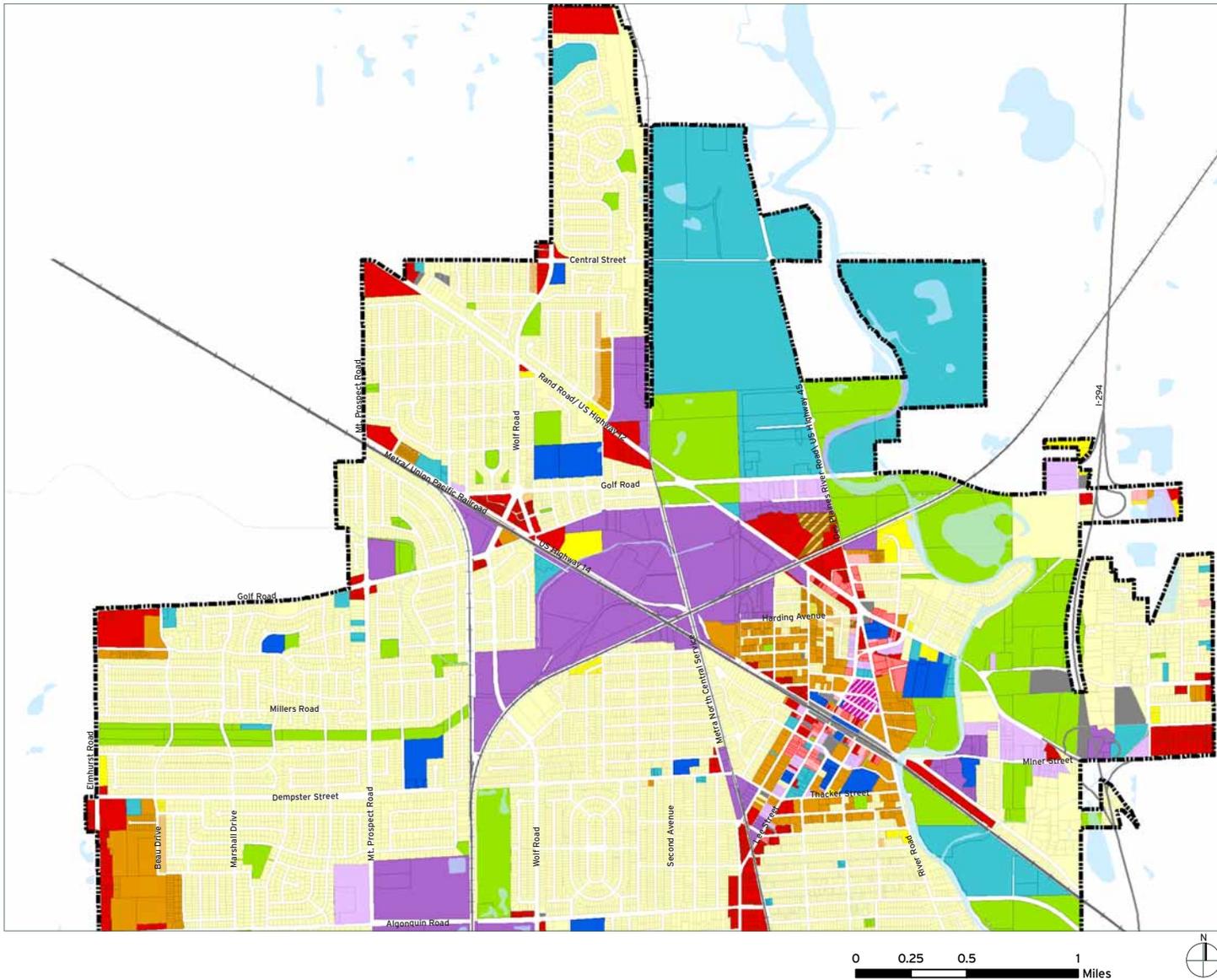


FIGURE 3a

EXISTING LAND USE

North of Algonquin Road

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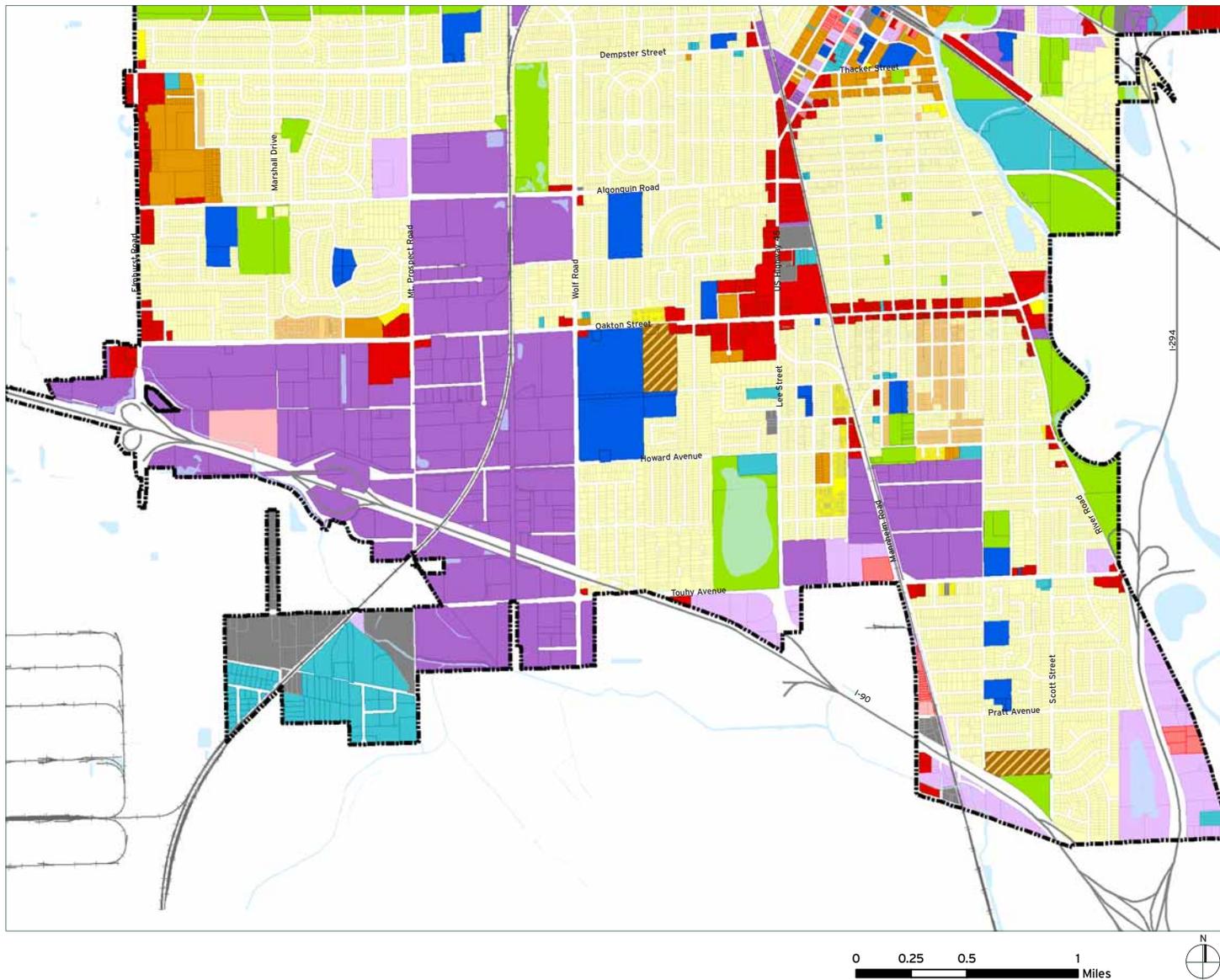


FIGURE 3b

EXISTING LAND USE
South of Algonquin Road

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Table 1: Existing Land Use by Type Ranked by Percent

| Land Use Type | Acres | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Single Family Residential | 3,172 | 42% |
| Industrial | 1,352 | 18% |
| Institutional | 781 | 10% |
| Parks/Open Space | 744 | 10% |
| Retail Commercial | 359 | 5% |
| Office Commercial | 245 | 3% |
| Multi Family Residential | 213 | 3% |
| Public | 227 | 3% |
| Vacant/Parking Lots | 135 | 2% |
| Two Family Residential | 53 | 1% |
| Townhouse Residential | 66 | 1% |
| Mobile Home Residential | 42 | 1% |
| Service Commercial | 39 | 1% |
| Mixed Use | 7 | less than 1% |
| Restaurant/Entertainment Commercial | 33 | less than 1% |
| TOTAL | 7,468 | 100% |

Conditions within various land-use areas of the City are discussed below. Also, key observations of potential planning implications of various land uses have been made. Some of these planning implications are supported by the findings of the Market Assessment conducted by the Goodman Williams Group. A summary of the Market Assessment is found in Section III. The full report is under separate cover.

- **Single-Family Residential:** Single-family residential represents 42% of the land uses within the City. The age, size, and architectural style of homes vary according to neighborhood. There is some redevelopment or “tear-downs” occurring on a lot-by-lot basis, with some newly-constructed homes that at times are incompatible with adjacent homes. With the exception of a few isolated properties, single-family homes are very well maintained.

Key Observation: It is expected that the “tear down” phenomena will continue in the older single family residential areas. Issues associated with this phenomena to date have included the subdividing of lots, increases in lot coverage, and increases in height. As this continues to occur, it is important to make sure development controls are in place and enforced to appropriately address the influx of new housing and to ensure that new development is sensitive and compatible to existing uses. In addition, if the City’s goal is to maintain a variety of housing types to address the different populations in town, then a policy of preserving and potentially increasing the amount of “workforce” single family housing for the working class population should be adopted.

- **Two-Family Residential:** This category includes buildings that contain two dwelling units, either side-by-side as a duplex or one above the other as a “two-flat.” Two-family homes are mainly concentrated in the neighborhood bounded by Mannheim Road, Oakton Street, Des Plaines River Road, and Howard Avenue. Two-family homes are also found intermingled with single-family homes in a few locations. These residential areas are generally well maintained.
- **Townhouse Residential:** This category includes buildings that contain multiple dwelling units in a single structure, located side-by-side with individual unit entrances. Townhouses are found in a few isolated locations within the City.

These residential areas are generally well maintained. except for the area around Apache Park

Key Observation: The bulk regulations for two family residential (R-2) and townhouse residential (R-3) allow for 2,800 square feet per unit for the minimum lot area. For example, the Apache Park area which is bounded by Howard Avenue on the north, Fargo Avenue on the south, Ash Street on the west, and Chestnut Street on the east, is zoned R-3. Many of these townhouses were constructed in the 1950's for airport personnel. The area has an overall gross density of approximately 14 units per acre or 3,100 square feet per unit. This neighborhood, however, appears to be overcrowded and ill kept. Buildings are located much closer together than in other areas of Des Plaines and there does not appear to be adequate open space. In an older two family residential neighborhood (R-2) bounded by Sycamore, White, Prospect and Riverview the densities are similar, approximately 3,000 square feet per unit. These blocks appear to have more open space than in the Apache Park area, most likely due to greater front yard setbacks, but still appear to be dense. Given existing conditions in both of these neighborhoods, it may be appropriate to re-examine the bulk regulations to ensure that future R-2 and R-3 developments provide adequate open space and appropriate densities.

- **Multi-Family Residential:** This category includes buildings that contain multiple dwelling units, such as apartments or condominiums, and share common lobby entrances and hallways. These buildings may or may not provide off-street resident parking. The City has a significant amount of multi-family surrounding the downtown core: west of Lee Street and north of Miner Street; along River Road, Ashland Avenue, and Graceland Avenue; and, above commercial storefronts. The City also has a small concentration of multi-family east of Elmhurst Road, north of Algonquin Road and south of Dempster Street. Otherwise, small pockets of multi-family uses may be found throughout the City, typically near commercial uses.

Key Observation: The Market Assessment study has indicated that there is continuing market for condominium development. The location, densities, and adequate parking for these buildings are important aspects to consider during the planning process.

- **Mobile Home Residential:** This category includes manufactured homes that are typically sited together within a "mobile home park." The City contains mobile home parks in the following areas: adjacent to I-90 at Scott Street and Nimitz Drive; adjacent to Maine West High School on Oakton Street; and, adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad on Rand Road. These residential areas appear to be appropriately screened although tend to be crowded with little open space.

Key Observation: Although this land use category provides affordable housing for some city residents, an examination of the appropriateness of a mobile home community within a commercial area needs to be addressed when planning for the redevelopment of the Rand River corridor.

- **Mixed Use:** This category has been created for the Metropolitan Square development, a mixed use retail and residential development in the downtown.
- **Retail Commercial:** This category includes businesses selling consumer goods on-site. Downtown Des Plaines contains a diversity of retail businesses, mainly along Miner, Ellinwood, and Lee Streets. Beyond the downtown, the City contains retail concentrations along Lee and Oakton Streets, along Elmhurst Road, and at the

“Five Corners” area. There are also retail pockets at prime intersections throughout the City. Although the majority of the City’s retail businesses are well maintained, the retail corridors along Lee and Oakton Streets have buildings and streetscapes that require maintenance and urban design enhancements.

Key Observation: Per the Market Assessment study, downtown Des Plaines has the potential to support more convenience and specialty retail to serve the growing base of downtown residents, commuters and workers. Metropolitan Square is adding 100,000 square feet of retail space to address this demand. This space along with some of the vacancies or underutilized store fronts along Miner Street is more than sufficient to satisfy the unmet retail demand in such categories as restaurants, specialty shops, accessories and gift shops.

The commercial corridors of Lee Street, Oakton Street, Rand Road, and Elmhurst Road are in need of updating, with regard to physical appearance as well as the business mix. Concentrations on keeping the strip centers leased, redevelopment of outdated and obsolete stores, inappropriate residential uses along these corridors, as well as implementing the Business District Design Guidelines, will encourage these corridors to once again be vibrant commercial areas. In addition, there is a lack of “big box” retail within the City. These type of uses may be most appropriate along the Rand/River Road corridor as the market analysis suggest that 200,000 to 300,000 square feet of retail could be supported.

- **Service Commercial:** This category includes personal, banking or other services provided to customers. Service commercial uses are service uses in storefronts located throughout the downtown. Although these businesses are non-retail operations, they typically generate customer traffic throughout the day.
- **Office Commercial:** This category includes all professional, technical, and medical offices that are within free-standing buildings. The majority of office buildings are located in downtown Des Plaines and may also be found along the Lee Street business corridor. Also, free-standing office buildings are adjacent to the Northwest and the Tri-State Tollway exit locations: Rand Road at I-294; River Road at I-294; and, Touhy Avenue at I-90.

Key Observation: The existing market for office space in the O’Hare area is relatively stagnant, with high vacancy rates. The current occupancy rate within the Des Plaines office market is 81.2%. Many of the existing office buildings in Des Plaines are not considered to be the newest or highest quality buildings. With the completion of Metropolitan Square, downtown Des Plaines will be adding 22,000 square feet of new office space. This new space is likely to meet any new demand for quality local space in the community for the foreseeable future.

- **Restaurant/Entertainment Commercial:** This category includes businesses selling food and beverages for on-site consumption, as well as entertainment establishments such as movie theatres or bowling alleys. These businesses typically generate more traffic and pedestrian activity at night. The majority of sit-down restaurants and entertainment businesses are located in downtown Des Plaines. Some fast-food style restaurants are located on Lee and Oakton Streets and Elmhurst Road.
- **Industrial:** This category is the second largest land use category in the City representing 18% of the land. It includes manufacturing, processing, packaging,

distribution, and warehouse or storage facilities. The largest industrial area is located north of O'Hare Airport, south of Oakton Street, and west of Wolf Road. However, some industrial properties have been purchased for O'Hare Airport's proposed expansion. The City also contains industrial concentrations near Mannheim Road and Touhy Avenue, and along Northwest Highway and First Avenue north of the Union Pacific Railroad. The City's industrial properties are relatively well maintained and appropriately screened.

Key Observation: Overall, demand for industrial space in the O'Hare area has been weak. This is partially due to the fact that mature, land locked markets do not tend to expand greatly in size. However, it is important to maintain the existing uses and expand where appropriate.

The northern industrial area along Northwest Highway provides challenges to firms located there since access to area expressways is less convenient and narrower arterials pose a problem for truck traffic. In addition the recent redevelopment of two former industrial sites into townhouse developments has set a precedent for more residential conversions, with the potential for incompatible uses adjacent to each other. However, existing industrial uses tend to be satisfied with their convenient locations. As the need arises, the City should assist in onsite expansion or relocation efforts within the City.

The southwest industrial area, including the area south of the I-90 Tollway continues to be the best area for future industrial redevelopment. The industrial area enjoys convenient access to I-90 and O'Hare Airport. O'Hare Airport has recently added a new cargo entrance on the north side proximate to the Des Plaines industrial area. This convenience to O'Hare lends itself to the potential for an increase in new logistics and distribution type facilities that require proximity to the O'Hare air-cargo and air-freight facilities.

- **Public:** This category includes all public schools and municipal facilities. The Des Plaines City Hall, Police Station, and Public Library are located downtown, while its fire stations and public schools are located throughout the City. All public buildings and properties are very well maintained.

Key Observation: Both the Fire Department and Police Department have initiated facilities plans in order to determine their future needs. These findings will be integrated into the comprehensive planning process as they become available.

- **Institutional:** This category includes all churches, private schools, and non-profit organizations, such as Holy Family Hospital, Maryville Academy, and Oakton Community College, which are located in the northernmost portion of the City along Des Plaines River Road. Private churches and schools are located throughout the City. The Des Plaines Methodist Camp, a national historic landmark, is located on Algonquin Road. All institutional properties are very well maintained.

Key Observation: Two of the larger institutional properties are currently in flux and may allow for future site redevelopment.

- **Parks/Open Space:** This category includes public parks and open space for active and passive recreation. Specifically, this category includes all properties managed by the Des Plaines Park District and the Mount Prospect Park District which are

located throughout the City. The park system is very well maintained. Cook County Forest Preserve District property located along the Des Plaines River is also included in this category.

Key Observation: The Des Plaines Park District has recently completed a Comprehensive Master Plan identifying the need for additional parkland. This information will be used in the Comprehensive Planning process to identify potential open space and parkland areas.

- **Vacant/Parking Lots:** This category includes vacant lots, public parking lots and parking structures. There are a few isolated vacant lots throughout the City, which may be available for redevelopment purposes.

C. TRANSPORTATION

This section of the report summarizes the vehicular circulation, parking facilities and public transit within the City. *Figure 5a and 5b: Transit, Circulation and Parking* graphically depicts circulation, transit routes, and parking lots throughout the City. *Figure 6* depicts the same information for the downtown Business District.

1. Bus and Rail Services

Two public transit carriers currently serve the City of Des Plaines: the Metra/Union Pacific Northwest Line (commuter rail), and Pace Suburban Bus. Metra has two stations in Des Plaines, the Des Plaines Station located at 1501 N. Miner Street in downtown Des Plaines, and the Cumberland Station at 475 N. Northwest Highway, located west of the downtown. Pace bus routes operate throughout Des Plaines.

Metra/Union Pacific Northwest Line (UP-NW) Commuter Rail Service

The Metra/Union Pacific Northwest Line originates at downtown Chicago's Ogilvie Transportation Center. Des Plaines' two stations along the Metra/ UP Northwest Line are the 10th and 11th stations outbound from downtown Chicago, following Clybourn, Irving Park, Jefferson Park, Gladstone Park, Norwood Park, Edison Park, Park Ridge, and Dee Road. There are several more stations west of Des Plaines with the line ending in Harvard, IL. There have been some preliminary discussions to extend this service further northwest to the communities of Johnsburg and Richmond.

The travel time from Ogilvie to Des Plaines is approximately 25 to 37 minutes, depending on whether the train is an express train or makes all the intermediate station stops.

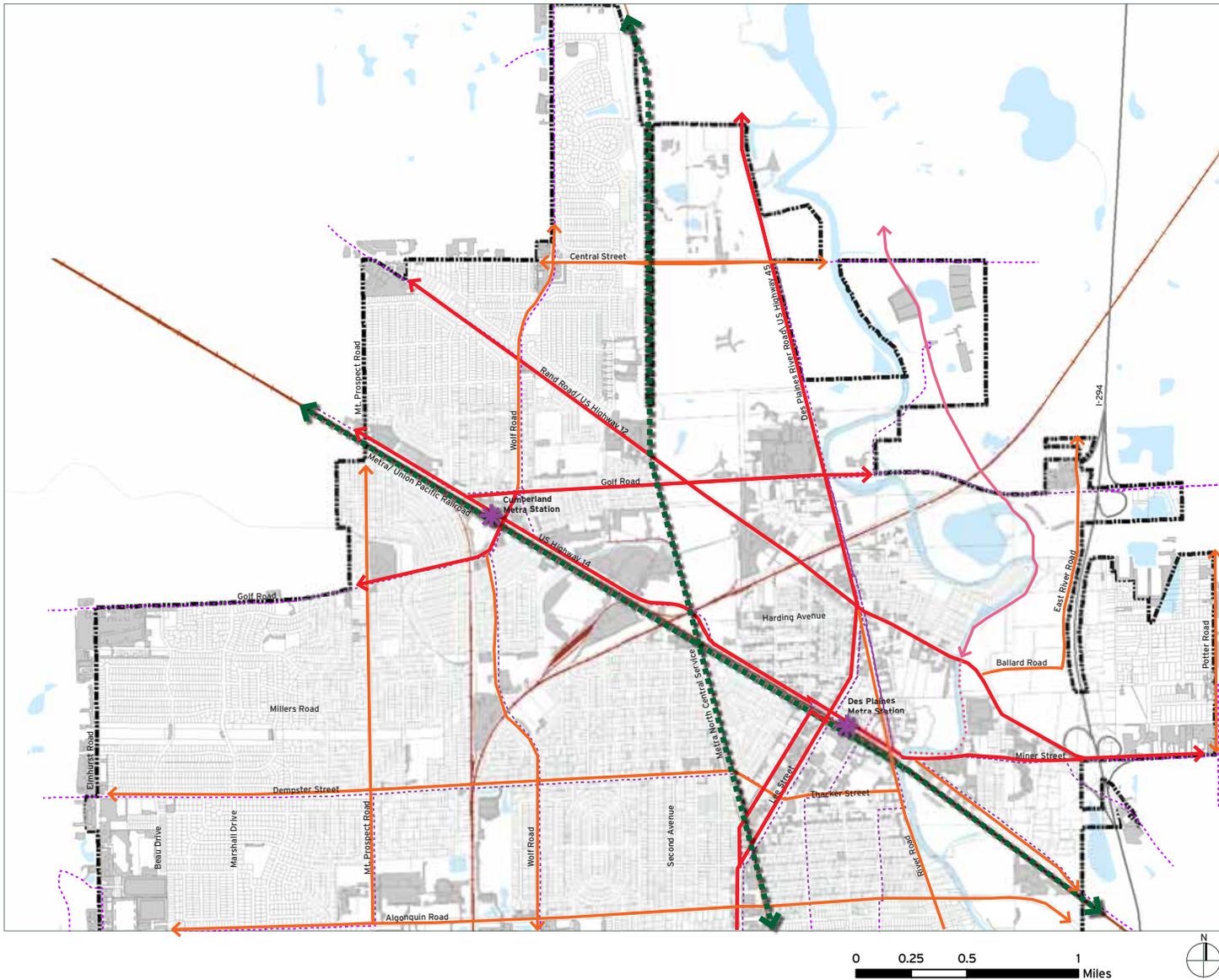
Twenty seven inbound trains to Ogilvie stop at the Des Plaines Station on weekdays, between 5:29 am and 12:54 a.m., of which twelve provide service during the peak hours of 5:29 am and 8:14am. Twenty six outbound trains from Ogilvie stop at the Des Plaines Station on weekdays, between 6:29am and 1:04am, of which six are during the peak hours of 5:08 pm and 6:24 pm. On Saturdays, twelve inbound and twelve outbound trains stop at the Des Plaines Station, between the hours of 6:58 a.m. and 1:04am. On Sundays, seven inbound and eight outbound trains stop at the Des Plaines Station providing service every two hours starting at 9:44 a.m. inbound and with the last outbound train service at 1:07 a.m. Except in a couple of situations, trains that stop

FIGURE 5a

TRANSIT, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

North of Algonquin Road

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- Metra Station
- City Boundary
- Passenger Railroad
- Regional Through Route
- Key Access Route
- Pace Bus Route
- Existing Bike/ Pedestrian Trail
- Proposed Bike/ Pedestrian Trail
- Parking Lot

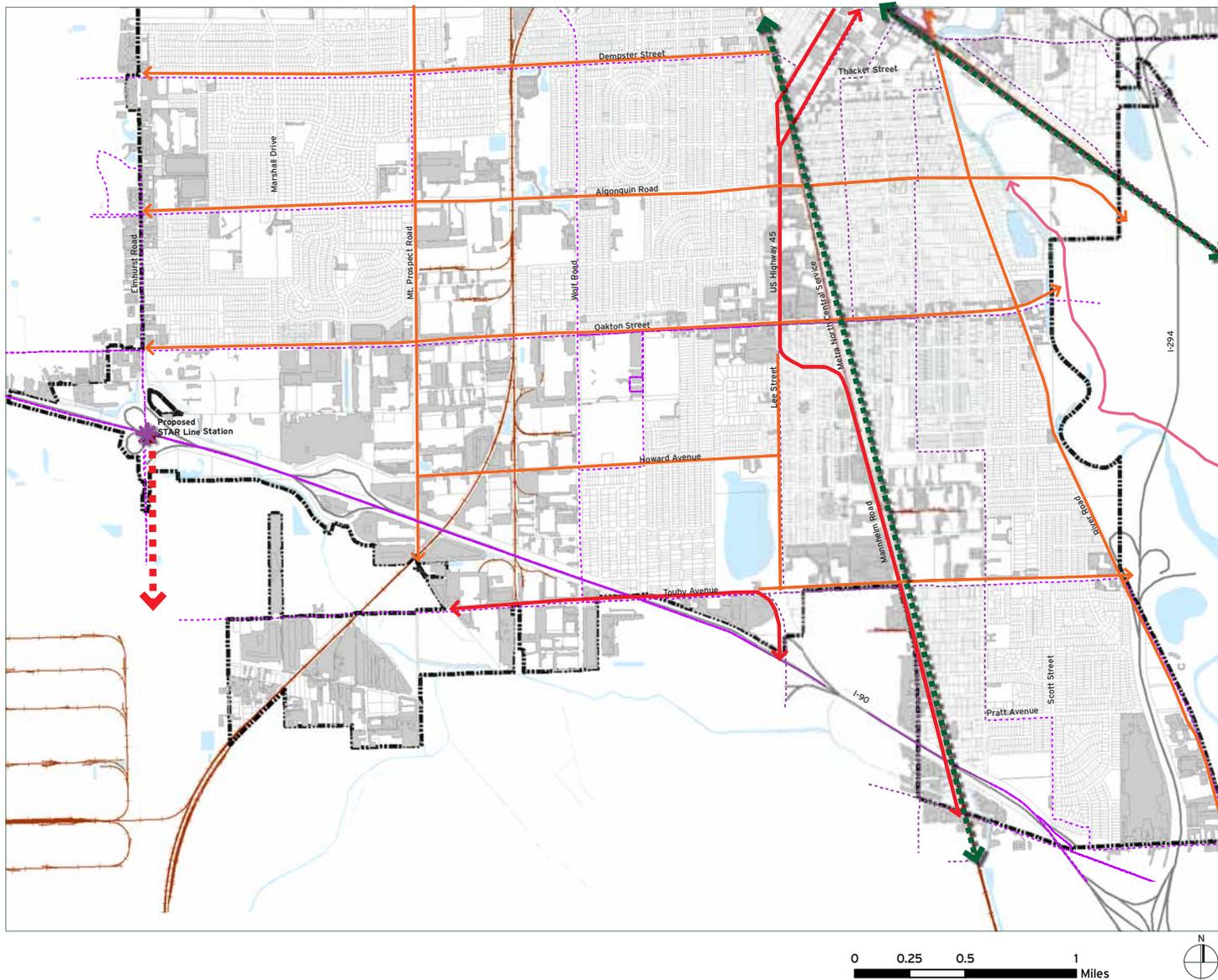


FIGURE 5b

TRANSIT, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

South of Algonquin Road

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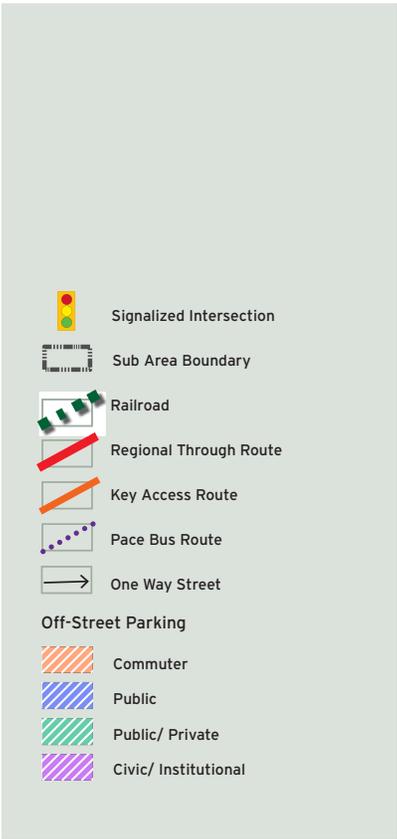
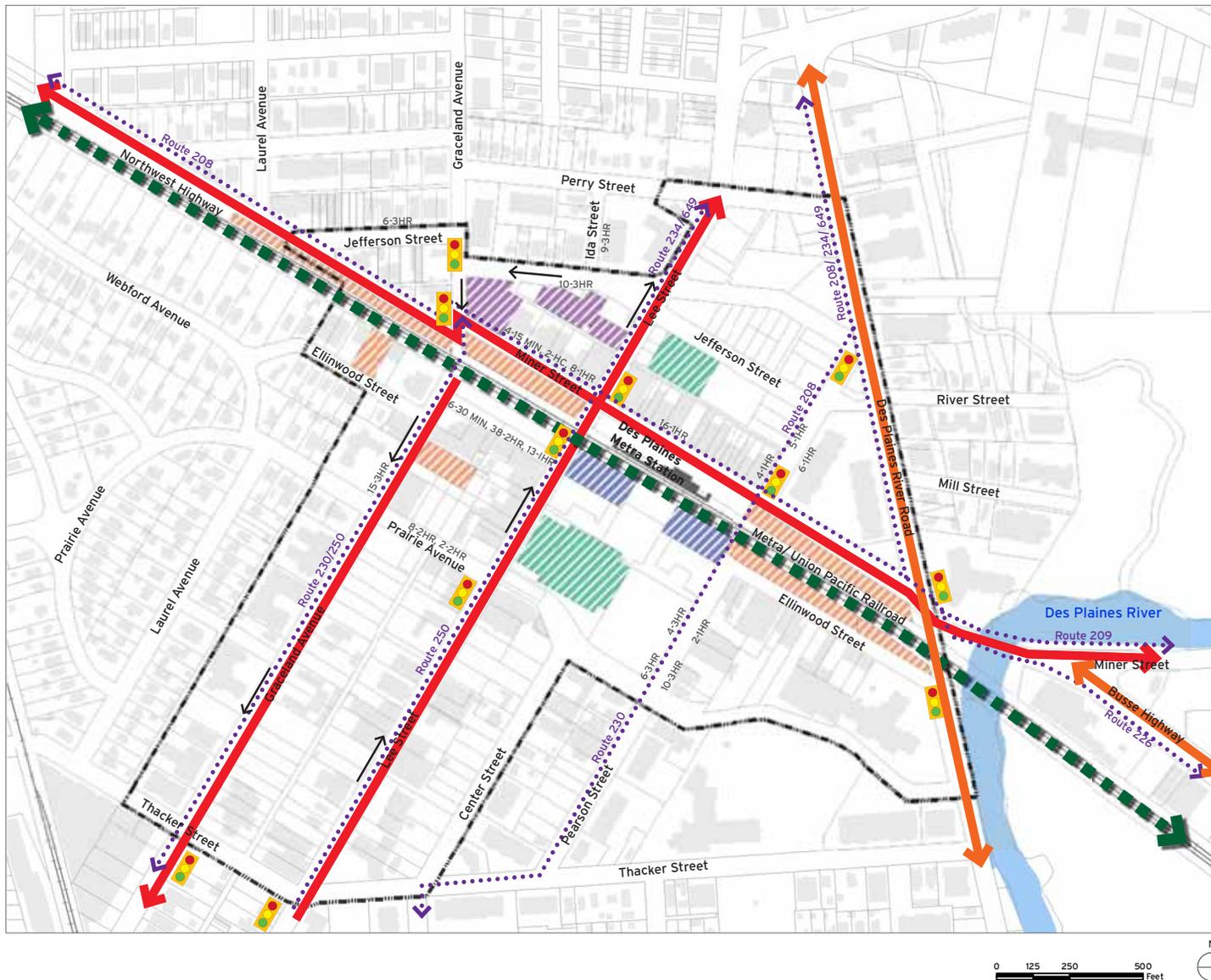


- Metra Station
- City Boundary
- Proposed Western O'Hare Bypass
- Passenger Railroad
- Regional Through Route
- Key Access Route
- Pace Bus Route
- Existing Bike/ Pedestrian Trail
- Proposed Bike/ Pedestrian Trail
- Parking Lot



FIGURE 6
TRANSIT, CIRCULATION
AND PARKING:
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

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at the Des Plaines Station stop at the Cumberland Station located to the west. There is a four minute difference in the times of the trains.

At the Des Plaines Station, the station building is located mid-block between Lee and Pearson. The station has a ticket agent booth, indoor waiting areas, restrooms and a coffee vendor. Covered arcade areas at each end of the building provide weather protection. Bike racks are also located at the station. Inbound passengers typically board trains from the north platform. The asphalt platform in front of the station is in good condition. Outbound passengers board trains on the middle platform, which is in very poor condition. There is a weather shelter also on the center platform. To get between the two platforms, pedestrian utilize the cross streets at either end of the platform.

At the Cumberland Station, the station building is located on the south side of Northwest Highway, west of Wolf Road. The station is limited in size and does not provide any amenities such as a ticket agent or food vendor. Inbound passengers board the northbound platform and outbound passengers board the center platform. Neither platform is in good condition. A pedestrian crosswalk to cross Northwest Highway is located at the east end of the station.

A vast majority of riders using the Metra rail service from the Des Plaines Metra stations travel at peak times, into downtown Chicago during the morning rush hour and returning from downtown Chicago during the evening rush hour. On October 30, 2002, weekday boardings totaled 991 at the Des Plaines Station and 393 at the Cumberland Station. Of the total at the Des Plaines Station, 817 were inbound (toward Ogilvie) and 174 were outbound (toward Harvard). Of the 817 inbound boardings 614 (or 75 percent) occurred during the morning peak period. Of the total at the Cumberland Station, 364 were inbound (toward Ogilvie) and 29 were outbound (toward Harvard). Of the 365 inbound boardings, 279 (or 76% percent) occurred during the morning peak period.

Table 2: Weekday Boardings Over Time highlights weekday boarding trends at the Des Plaines and Cumberland Metra stations every two years between 1987 and 2002. During this time period, boardings varied year to year with a drop in ridership at both stations in 2002.

Table 2: Weekday Boardings Over Time- Metra/UP-NW Line

| Station | 1987 | 1989 | 1991 | 1993 | 1995 | 1997 | 1999 | 2002 |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Cumberland | 546 | 604 | 537 | 559 | 543 | 520 | 523 | 393 |
| Des Plaines | 1,159 | 1,252 | 1,146 | 1,237 | 1,117 | 1,111 | 1,148 | 991 |

Source: Metra

A systemwide on-board passenger survey was conducted by Metra in the Fall of 2002 that asked train riders the "mode of access" they used to arrive at their Metra station. At the Des Plaines Station, 40% walked or biked to the station, and 37% drove alone or in a carpool. 17% were dropped off and 4% used public transit. Over half the riders (53%) lived within one mile of the station. 43% lived between one and six miles, and 3% lived greater than six miles from the station. The mode of access to the Cumberland Station differs. 56% drove either alone or carpooled, 23% walked or biked, 21% were dropped off and 1% rode public transit. A little over one third (35%)

lived within one mile of the station, 62% lived between one and six miles from the station, and 2% lived greater than six miles from the station.

Key Observation: The train station in downtown Des Plaines is an asset as it provides an important “captive market” for the downtown businesses. Forty percent of the commuters walk to the station, passing by storefronts on a daily basis. Providing the right mix of retail uses near the train station in order to capitalize on this market should be a goal.

Given its location and difficulty in access, the Cumberland Station area provides an opportunity for a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) district. Successful TOD developments incorporate mixed uses and varied housing types. Integrating retail, commercial, office and residential uses in close proximity to a transit use provides a synergy between uses, reduces vehicle trips generated within the area and allows for compact development.

STAR Line

In the future, Des Plaines could also be served by a proposed new Metra rail service called the STAR Line. The STAR Line will become the first commuter rail line in northeastern Illinois designed specifically to address suburb-to-suburb commutes. The STAR Line would utilize the existing EJ& E railroad corridor to provide north-south service to a direct connection to the northwest suburbs and other existing Metra commuter lines. Running along the Northwest Tollway from O’Hare Airport west to the Prairie Stone development in Hoffman Estates, the STAR line will provide a direct connection between Arlington Heights, Chicago, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Hoffman Estates, Mount Prospect, Rolling Meadows, Rosemont and Schaumburg. From Hoffman Estates, the STAR line will follow the EJ& E south to directly connect Aurora, Bartlett, Elgin, Joliet, Naperville, Plainfield and West Chicago with the Northwest Corridor. With regard to a future station location in Des Plaines, there have been discussions about a proposed station at Elmhurst Road and I-90. Refer to *Figure 5b*.

Key Observation: A future train station at Elmhurst Road and I-90 does not lend itself to a traditional transit oriented development. The proposed site is surrounded by industrial uses. Easy ingress and egress as well as room for adequate parking and station facilities is the objective for future planning for this new facility.

North Central Service

Metra operates the Metra North Central Service, a commuter rail service between the City of Chicago and Antioch, Illinois. This service operates on the Wisconsin Central Railroad tracks which bisect the City of Des Plaines west of the downtown (see *Figures 5a and 5b*). There are no station locations in Des Plaines. Stations proximate to Des Plaines are the O’Hare Transfer Station located on airport property and the Prospect Heights Station located at 55 South Wolf Road. At one time, there was discussion to locate a station immediately west of the Des Plaines Station at the point the Wisconsin Central tracks bisect the Metra/UP Northwest Line tracks. This location is no longer considered feasible.

Key Observation: At this point in time there are no plans for a North Central Service station in Des Plaines. However, the planning process should take into consideration the potential for a station and appropriate surrounding land uses in the event a Des Plaines Station is reconsidered.

Pace Suburban Bus Service

Pace has eleven fixed bus routes that service the Des Plaines area: Route 208-Golf Road, Route 209-Busse Highway, Route 221-Wolf Road, Route 223-Elk Grove-Rosemont CTA, Route 226-Oakton Street, Route 230-South Des Plaines, Route 234-Wheeling, Route 250-Dempster Street, Route 272-Golf Mill, Route 606-Northwest Limited, and Route 649-Des Plaines Metra-Aon. *Table 3: Average Daily Ridership- Pace Bus Routes* details the average daily weekday ridership on all routes since 1990. Results indicate that ridership has continued to decrease over the years until the year 2003 when ridership appears to be stabilizing or increasing. Between 2003 and 2004, only in few cases has ridership declined less than 1%. The greatest increase in ridership occurred on Route 272, service to Golf Mill Shopping Center. Note that the figures above reflect ridership along the entire bus route; boarding and alighting data specific to the stops within Des Plaines for each route was not collected by Pace.

Table 3: Average Daily Ridership- Pace Bus Routes

| | | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2003 | 2004 | % Change 2003-2004 |
|------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| Route 208 | Weekday | 1,275 | 1,076 | 1,014 | 927 | 893 | -0.04 |
| | Saturday | - | - | - | 454 | 462 | 0.02 |
| | Sunday | - | - | - | 176 | 170 | 3.40 |
| Route 209 | Weekday | 2,449 | 1,860 | 1,698 | 1,437 | 1,362 | -0.05 |
| | Saturday | - | - | - | 898 | 933 | 3.80 |
| | Sunday | - | - | - | 493 | 528 | 6.60 |
| Route 221 | Weekday | 997 | 851 | 958 | 778 | 787 | 1.16 |
| Route 223 | Weekday | 2,148 | 2,410 | 2,581 | 1,802 | 1,836 | 1.88 |
| | Saturday | - | - | - | 455 | 488 | 7.25 |
| | Sunday | - | - | - | 257 | 262 | 1.95 |
| Route 226 | Weekday | 1,783 | 1,092 | 1,022 | 795 | 802 | 0.01 |
| Route 230 | Weekday | 756 | 599 | 688 | 466 | 460 | -0.13 |
| Route 234 | Weekday | 595 | 542 | 448 | 371 | 401 | 0.81 |
| | Saturday | - | - | - | 140 | 112 | 0.20 |
| Route 250 | Weekday | 3,114 | 2,634 | 2,575 | 2,230 | 2,255 | 0.11 |
| | Saturday | - | - | - | 1,157 | 1,189 | 2.77 |
| | Sunday | - | - | - | 768 | 797 | 3.78 |
| Route 272 | Weekday | n/a | n/a | n/a | 314 | 493 | 57.00 |
| | Saturday | n/a | n/a | n/a | 142 | 189 | 33.10 |
| Route 649 | Weekday | n/a | n/a | n/a | 26 | 24 | -0.77 |

- **Route 208 - Golf Road** is an east-west arterial route providing weekday and weekend service from downtown Evanston to the east to the Northwest Transportation Center in Schaumburg. Service stops at the Metra Des Plaines Train Station and provides access to shopping centers including Woodfield Mall, Westfield Old Orchard and Golf Mill.
- **Route 209 - Busse Highway** provides weekday and weekend service between the Harlem Avenue CTA Station in Chicago and the Des Plaines Metra and Cumberland Stations.
- **Route 221 - Wolf Road** is a service between north Prospect Heights and the Rosemont CTA Station. The bus provides weekday rush hour service to the Cumberland Train Station stopping at the Allstate Arena, Maine West High School, and the Rand Business Center.

- **Route 223 - Elk Grove-Rosemont CTA** provides weekday and weekend service between the Elk Grove Industrial Park and the Rosemont CTA Station. Within the City of Des Plaines, busses travel down Touhy Road.
- **Route 226 - Oakton Street** provides weekday service to places including the Jefferson Park CTA Station, the Des Plaines Metra Station, the Edgebrook Metra Station, the Jefferson Park Metra Station, Niles West High School, Oak Mill Mall and Oakton Community College.
- **Route 230 - South Des Plaines** provides weekday service connecting the Rosemont CTA Station to the Des Plaines Metra Station, and southern Des Plaines. Stops include Maine West High School, Prairie Lakes Park Community Center, Salvation Army Headquarters and Elmdale Apartments. Certain rush hour trips serve the O'Hare Lakes Office Complex.
- **Route 234 - Wheeling** provides service between Wheeling and downtown Des Plaines, including Randhurst Mall and the downtown Des Plaines and Cumberland Stations. Service is provided weekdays and on Saturdays.
- **Route 250- Dempster Street** links downtown Evanston to the Des Plaines Metra Station and then south to the O'Hare Airport "Kiss-n-Fly" drop-off. Route 250 provides weekday and weekend service to landmarks including Lutheran General Hospital, Maine East High School, and Notre Dame High School.
- **Route 272 - Golf Mill** provides weekday and Saturday service between Golf Mill Shopping Center and Westfield Shoppingtown Hawthorne operating down Milwaukee Road in Des Plaines.
- **Route 606 Northwest Limited** has weekday and weekend service serving the Hyatt Regency Woodfield, Illinois Department of Employment, United Airlines Headquarters, Woodfield Corporate Center and Woodfield Mall.
- **Route 649 - Des Plaines Metra-AON** connects the Des Plaines Metra Station with the Aon Service Corporation during morning and evening rush hours only. There is no Saturday, Sunday or holiday service.

2. Transportation Services for Senior Citizens and People with Disabilities

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Pace also provides paratransit services within the City of Des Plaines for those people who are disabled. It is a "curb to curb" service. Passengers must register for the trip 24 hours in advance. They can travel anywhere that Pace fixed route bus services go within the six county region. There are no restrictions on the type of travel.

Additionally, the City offers reduced taxicab rates to City residents, 65 years and older, and/or handicapped residents, who commute within the corporate city limits.

3. O'Hare Airport

O'Hare International Airport is located to the south of Des Plaines. It is the world's busiest airport, with 23 domestic carriers, 23 international carriers and 732,000 take-offs and landings annually.

The O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) will reconfigure O'Hare Airport's intersecting runways into a more modern parallel layout. The OMP will also bring a new western terminal facility with more airline gates and parking. The modernization program will take place in three phases. The first phase is to build and open the far north-runway. The second phase is to extend an existing runway, to build and open a second new runway and to close an existing north south runway. The final step is to extend another existing runway, to build and open two new parallel runways and to close another two existing runway.

The modernization program has direct effects to Des Plaines. The airport has acquired ten parcels of land along Old Higgins Road and Armstrong Court. This land is within the industrially zoned area in southwest Des Plaines, south of I-90 (Northwest Tollway). In addition, the modernization program will also require the relocation of Mount Prospect Road within the airport property. This relocation will create a new cargo entrance on the north end of the airport, close to the Des Plaines industrial area. There is also the discussion of a western bypass which is later in this section.

4. Roadway Access and Circulation

Regional access to and from the City is provided by I-294 (Tri-State Tollway) and I-90 (Northwest Tollway). I-294 is located to the east with access to and from Des Plaines at Golf Road, Dempster Street, and Touhy. I-90 is located to the south of Des Plaines and provides access to Des Plaines at Elmhurst Road and Lee Street. Convenient access to Chicago's Loop and O'Hare Airport, and major employment centers north of Des Plaines is provided via these routes.

There are three U.S. Highways, which are under state jurisdiction, traversing the City: Manheim Road (U.S. Route 45), Northwest Highway (U.S. Route 14) and Rand Road (U.S. Route 12). U.S. Route 45 provides service in a north south direction through the City serving the downtown. U.S. Route 14 provides access in a northwest to southeast direction paralleling the Metra-UP NW Line through the downtown. U.S. Route 12 runs parallel to U.S. Route 14 approximately one mile to the north. These roads are maintained by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

There are several major roadways which provide access throughout the City and serve to collect and redistribute traffic from local residential streets onto more major roadways. These include the east-west arterials: Central Road, Dempster Street, Algonquin Road, Oakton Street, Howard Avenue, Golf Road, and Touhy Avenue. North south arterials include Elmhurst Road, Mount Prospect Road, Wolf Road, a portion of Lee Street, a portion of River Road, Bender Road/East River Road and Potter Road.. Algonquin, Oakton, Golf, Touhy, Elmhurst and Lee, and River Road are under the jurisdiction of IDOT. Potter, Dempster and Mount Prospect Roads are under the jurisdiction of Cook County Highway Department.

The other roads within the City are considered local roads and are under the jurisdiction of the City of Des Plaines who is responsible to maintain them.

Recent information regarding traffic volumes on major roadways within and near the City is available on the Illinois Department of Transportation's website. Available average daily traffic (ADT) figures are summarized in *Table 4: Average Daily Traffic Counts*.

Table 4: Average Daily Traffic Counts

| Routes | Vehicles |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| IL Route 45 | |
| North of Golf Road | 15,300 |
| South of Northwest Hwy | 6,500 |
| Rand Road | |
| West of Manheim Rd. | 28,300 |
| West of Golf Road | 26,900 |
| East of Elmhurst Rd. | 29,400 |
| Northwest Highway | |
| West of Golf Road | 18,200 |
| East of Elmhurst Road | 15,300 |
| West of Manheim | 19,300 |
| East of Manheim | 22,600 |
| Elmhurst Road | |
| North of Rand Road | 19,800 |
| North of Northwest Hwy | 20,700 |
| North of Golf Road | 18,500 |
| South of Golf Road | 31,100 |
| Golf Road | |
| West of Elmhurst Road | 32,800 |
| East of Elmhurst Road | 25,300 |
| East of Manheim Road | 35,200 |
| East of I-294 | 42,900 |
| I-294 | |
| North of Golf Road | 124,100 |
| North of Northwest Hwy | 107,400 |
| South of Northwest Hwy | 149,900 |

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation (website); 2003-2004 data

5. Bicycle Paths

The Des Plaines River Bike Trail, South Branch, is a dedicated gravel trail extending from the Village of Maywood north to the City of Des Plaines. The trail is within the Cook County Forest Preserve District which forms the eastern edge of the City of Des Plaines. The trail terminates at the Camp Ground Road Woods at Algonquin Road and then picks up again north of Rand Road. See *Figure 5a and 5b*.

A new multi-use path is proposed as part of a flood control project along the Des Plaines River. A 12-foot multi-use path is proposed on the Des Plaines River side of a new floodwall extending from the Cook County Forest Preserve District's property line at Rand Road north to the Union Pacific Railroad bridge. Additional detail on this project is located later in the report.

The Northeastern Illinois Greenways and Trails Implementation Program developed by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) and Openlands Project Plan suggests a proposed bike trail through Des Plaines on street in the vicinity of Central Road that would connect the Ned Brown Woods in Schaumburg with the Cook County Forest Preserve District on the eastern edge of Des Plaines. The plan also shows an extension of the existing trail in the Forest Preserve District extended to the north to connect with an existing trail in Lake County, north of IL Route 22. A separate agency, the Northwest Municipal Conference, has stated a goal of having planned connections

of various bike paths between several northwestern suburb locations including the City of Des Plaines.

The City of Chicago, Department of Aviation, is also in the planning stages of working with the communities surrounding O'Hare Airport to locate on street and off street bike paths to be used by O'Hare Airport employees who want to bike to work. The bike paths would lead from the surrounding communities to a bike path along Bessie Coleman Drive on airport property. Devon Avenue on the south side of Des Plaines was originally under consideration but is now considered infeasible due to roadway width.

6. Traffic Congestion/Pedestrian Access Issues

Freight crossings cause the most havoc within the City of Des Plaines. There are numerous at-grade freight crossings which cross throughout the City causing traffic backups and barriers to reach certain parts of the City.

Vehicular traffic is most cumbersome in the downtown area at the intersection of River Road and Route 14/Miner Street. The Metra/UP train tracks intersect at this corner. Train traffic, particularly in the morning and evening rush hours, cause traffic to back up several blocks on either side of the tracks, and is particularly problematic on the north side. Traffic congestion is expected to get worse on the north side of the tracks once Metropolitan Square development is fully operational.

Another area of reported vehicular conflict occurs at Potter and Dempster. Potter Road is about to be reconstructed and widened so it is anticipated that traffic issues will improve.

One way streets within the downtown area can cause some confusion for new visitors to the downtown. Lee Street, one way northbound is paired with Graceland, one way southbound. Jefferson Street, between Lee and Graceland, is one way east bound. This traffic pattern can cause some access issues to businesses located along these streets.

Some pedestrian concerns exist in the downtown for those pedestrians wanting to access the north side of Miner Street. Miner Street/Northwest Highway is a busy road and although there are sufficient traffic signals, at times it is difficult to cross.

Access to the Cumberland Station is somewhat cumbersome for bicyclists and pedestrians due to its location along a busier section of Northwest Highway across from a commercial area. Although there is a marked crosswalk, crossing Northwest Highway during peak hour traffic in order to access the station on foot is a safety concern. Also, vehicle traffic is only able to access the parking lot in front of the station when traveling eastbound, making access for those commuters heading westbound on Northwest Highway cumbersome.

7. Roadway and Transit Improvements

The following roadway improvements are reflected in the *FY 2005-2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* produced by the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS). The TIP is the five year agenda of surface transportation projects developed for northeastern Illinois and includes projects in all of Cook, DuPage, Kane, McHenry, Will, and a portion of Kendall counties. The following projects in *Table 5* are for roadway segments within or near the City of Des Plaines.

Table 5: Proposed Roadway Improvements

| Roadway Segment | Project Scope | Funding Year |
|---|---|---|
| US 12/45 (Lee/Manheim) from Algonquin Road to Prospect | Signals- Interconnects and timings | Construction - 2005 |
| Us 12/45(Lee Manheim) from Higgins Road to I-90 | Roadway Widening | Engineering -2005 |
| I-294 from Dempster to Russell Road | Reconstruct in kind and bridge replacement | Engineering - 2005 Construction - 2007 |
| I-294, from Dempster to Balmoral | Widening | Engineering -2005 |
| I-294 at Devon Avenue | New Half Interchange | Under consideration |
| I-90, Elgin Toll Plaza to I-294 | Widening | Under consideration |
| US 14 from Wisconsin Central RR to UP RR | Lane widening under bridges | Construction - 2007 |
| US 45/DP River Road from Holy Family Hospital to Camp McDonald Road | Signals-Interconnects and timings | Construction - 2005 |
| Des Plaines River Road from US 12/Rand Road to Devon Avenue | Signals- Interconnects and timings; roadway reconstruct and widening; sidewalks | Construction -2007 |
| Mount Prospect Road from Algonquin Road to Oakton Street | Sidewalks along Mount Prospect Road, Algonquin Road and Oakton Street | Engineering/r.ow. acquisition - 2005 |
| Potter Road from Dempster Street to Golf Road | Reconstruct and widen 2 lanes to 3 lanes; bridge replacement; signals-interconnects and timings | Construction -2005 |

In addition, the City of Des Plaines 2005-2009 Capital Improvement Program indicates a variety of capital improvement projects programmed throughout the City. The projects include street rehabilitation, storm/drainage improvements, water main improvements and alley improvements. Street improvement projects for major streets include rehabilitation of Lee Street between Howard Avenue and Oakton Street programmed for 2006, and rehabilitation of Lee Street between Touhy and Howard Avenue programmed for 2007. The City of Des Plaines has also notified the Illinois Toll Highway Authority that they would like full interchanges at Golf Road/I-294 and Dempster Road/I-294.

Western O'Hare Bypass

A study by the Illinois Tollway Authority is underway to provide a bypass that would loop around O'Hare Airport on the west, providing a new connection between I-294 and I-90. Although not defined, the proposed bypass is in the vicinity of Elmhurst Road as show on *Figure 5b*.

Metra/UP Railroad Improvements

Metra and the Union Pacific Railroad are in the process of studying the relocation of the platforms for the downtown Des Plaines Station. The purpose of the study is to determine if relocating the platforms further west will allow for the crossing gates across Des Plaines River Road to be raised when a train is in the station, thus helping to alleviate some of the traffic congestion. Currently, the inbound platforms are located between River Road and Pearson Street. The study will examine the relocation and extension of the platforms from Lee Street to west of Graceland Avenue.

8. Parking

Two types of parking are discussed below: commuter parking in the Metra/UP Railroad Corridor and Central Business District parking for shoppers and employees. Parking locations are highlighted in *Figure 5a and 5b: Transit, Circulation and Parking*.

Commuter Parking

Commuter parking at the Des Plaines Metra Station is provided through daily and permit surface parking lots that parallel the railroad tracks between west of Graceland Avenue and Des Plaines River Road, as well as on level four of the Metropolitan Square public parking deck. There are 178 daily spaces in surface lots, 140 daily spaces in the parking deck, and 61 permit spaces. The permit spaces are available by monthly permits administered by the City. Handicapped spaces are present in lots 2 (2 spaces), 3 (2 spaces), 4 (2 spaces) and 7 (1 space). Metra parking counts conducted on June 9, 2004 indicated that lots 2, 3, 4 and 10 were at 100% capacity, lot 5 was at 25% capacity, and lot 12 was at 80% capacity. Permit lot 7 was at 46% capacity and permit lot 11 was at 7% capacity. The Metropolitan Square parking deck is not represented in the capacity status numbers.

Commuter parking at the Cumberland Station is provided via two surface lots. Lot 1 located parallel to the tracks on the north side has 30 daily spaces. Lot 2 located to the south of the tracks has 229 daily spaces. There are 2 handicapped spaces in lot 1 and 7 handicapped spaces in lot 7. On June 9, 2004, lot 1 was 100% filled and lot 2 was 83% filled.

Central Business District Parking

Parking for shoppers and visitors to the Central Business District is available through a combination of on-street parking and within two parking decks. Within the new Metropolitan Square parking deck, there are four levels of parking; level 4 contains 102 parking spaces with a twelve hour limit (commuter parking). Level 1, level 2 and level 3 contain a total of 179 spaces with a three hour time limit. The garage also has 190 leased spaces for a total of 427 spaces. Within the library plaza deck, there are 66 spaces available for shoppers; an additional 344 spaces are leased.

North of the tracks, on-street parking is located on Miner Street, on Jefferson Street on Ida Avenue, and on Pearson Street. Parking at these locations is limited to 15 minutes to three hours depending on the location. South of the tracks, there is parking within lots running parallel to the railroad tracks between just west of Graceland up to River Road. There are also separate parking lots located just off of Graceland and Prairie. On street parking is provided on Graceland, Prairie, and Pearson allowing between 1 and 3 hours of parking depending on location. Refer to Figure 6 for the location of parking in the downtown.

Employee parking for the civic center is provided within a parking deck immediately behind City Hall and around the corner on Lee Street next to the Choo Choo

Restaurant. In addition at the corner of Graceland and Miner, there is a parking lot for police vehicles.

The parking availability in the downtown area has been reported to be somewhat limited and not proximate to the places where shoppers want to go. Parking for City Hall visitors is particularly problematic. This problem is somewhat alleviated by the new Metropolitan Square parking deck. The City is in the process of hiring a consultant to conduct a traffic and parking study in the downtown area which will report on existing conditions and make recommendations for any necessary improvements. The findings and recommendation will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan update as they become available. Future redevelopment within the Central Business District will create additional parking demands that will need to be carefully considered and provided for.

Parking for residential uses in the downtown district does not appear to be problematic for the most part. Vehicles are allowed to park overnight on street unless otherwise posted. Parking requirements for condominium buildings is 1.5 spaces per unit; for those units who have at least two vehicles, parking in proximity to their residence might be an issue.

City -Wide Parking

Throughout the remainder of the City, parking is generally not a concern, with a few exceptions. Previously there were parking issues on Des Plaines streets that are near the Allstate Arena, an entertainment venue located on Manheim Road in Rosemont. Visitors to the Arena would park on nearby local streets. This problem seems to have been alleviated due to a recently constructed sound wall that cuts off access into the surrounding residential Des Plaines neighborhoods.

Parking for employees in the Golf/Des Plaines Road (U.S. 45) area along Redecker Road has been reported as problematic. Redevelopment of that area could help alleviate any parking issues.

D. URBAN DESIGN

Business District Design Guidelines were adopted by the City of Des Plaines in March 2005. The design guidelines are to be applied to the downtown area, Lee Street between Oakton and downtown, and Oakton Street, between Manheim and Des Plaines/River Road. The purposes of the guidelines are to facilitate the revitalization and enhancement of these areas. The guidelines focus on both the short-term and long-range development needs. For the short-term, they provide idea for improving existing buildings and streetscape. For future development, they provide a framework for quality building and site design and will be applied to new or renovated buildings within these districts. The guidelines are recommendations only and are intended to supplement the City's codes and ordinances regarding development. They address architectural style and building materials, scale, massing, articulation, setbacks, landscaping and signage.

E. GATEWAYS

Figure 7 shows primary and secondary gateways into the City. Urban design and land use concepts will be developed for a typical gateway as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

F. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The availability of adequate community facilities and services is necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of Des Plaines residents. As new growth occurs due to redevelopment efforts, the City will be faced with additional demands on community facilities, especially from higher residential densities. The existing conditions summary of community facilities is based on previous and current plans, and interviews with key personnel within the City. The following summary highlights major community facilities infrastructure, and any issues that will need to be addressed. Refer to *Figure 8a and 8b* for a map of community facilities.

1. Municipal Services

City Administration, Public Works, and Utilities

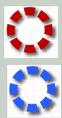
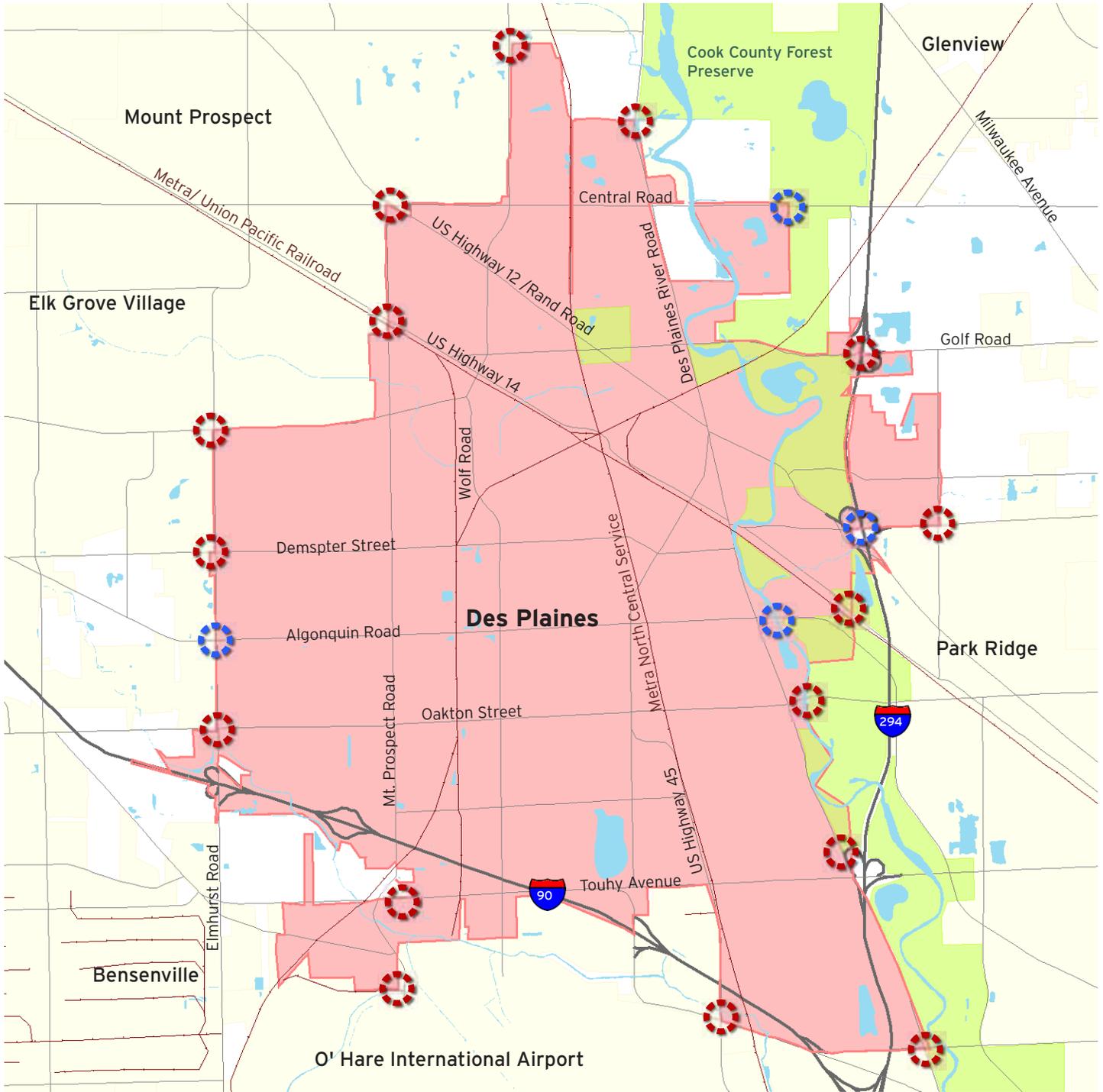
City Hall is located at 1420 Miner Street in the downtown district. The building houses the Administrative, Finance, Community and Economic Development, Engineering Departments, and the 9-1-1 Center. The building was constructed in 1974, and although architecturally out of place in a traditional downtown setting, the building is in relatively good condition and adequate in size. The biggest concerns are a lack of parking for employees and visitors and no dock facilities. No expansion or relocation is anticipated.

The Public Works campus is located at 1111 Joseph Schwab Road. The Public Works department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the City infrastructure, property and equipment. Divisions include Buildings and Grounds, Forestry, Keep Des Plaines Beautiful, Sewers, Street Maintenance, Street Special Services, Water Maintenance, Water Meter, Water Treatment and Pumping, and Vehicles Maintenance. The buildings located on site are dated from the 1950's. In order to accommodate the need for more space, individual metal maintenance sheds have been erected throughout the grounds. Ideally, these functions should be centralized in an expanded building or buildings. At this time there are no plans to expand or significantly rehabilitate this campus. On site is also the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) building and the Police Departments' shooting range.

The water plant is located at 2555 Maple Avenue. There is one pumping station located at 1000 E. Central. Overall, water distribution and storage capacity is good. The City is currently undertaking a water systems study to determine future requirements or improvements needed. With regard to sewers, the majority of Des Plaines have separate storm and sanitary sewers. There is a small area of combined sewers in the older part of town. The sewer system is adequate throughout most of Des Plaines except in the neighborhoods that are within the Des Plaines River floodplain and who experience frequent flooding.

FIGURE 7

GATEWAYS



Primary Gateways



Secondary Gateways



Forest Preserve

City of Des Plaines

Other Incorporated Areas

Unincorporated Areas



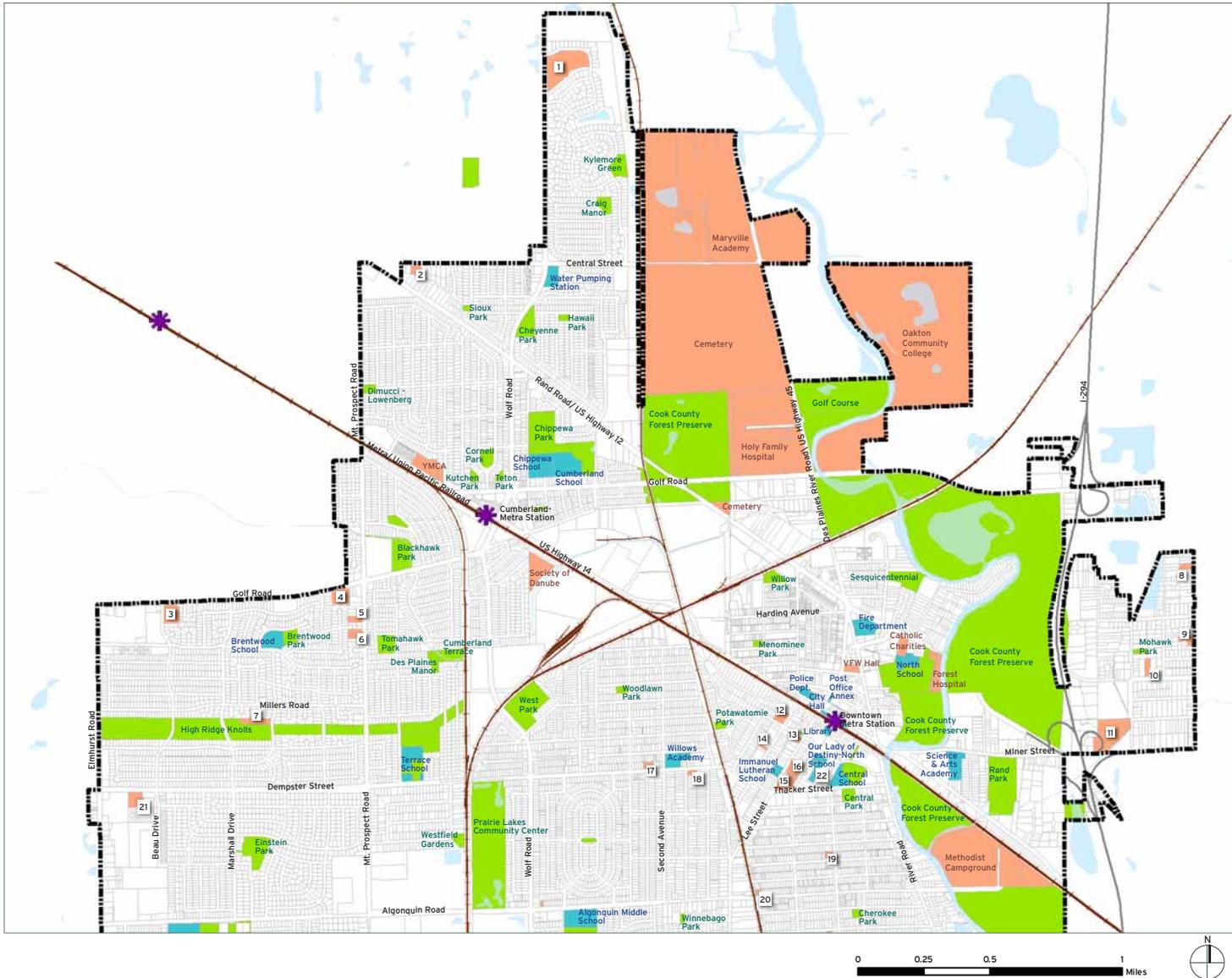


FIGURE 8a
COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 North of Algonquin Road

DRAFT

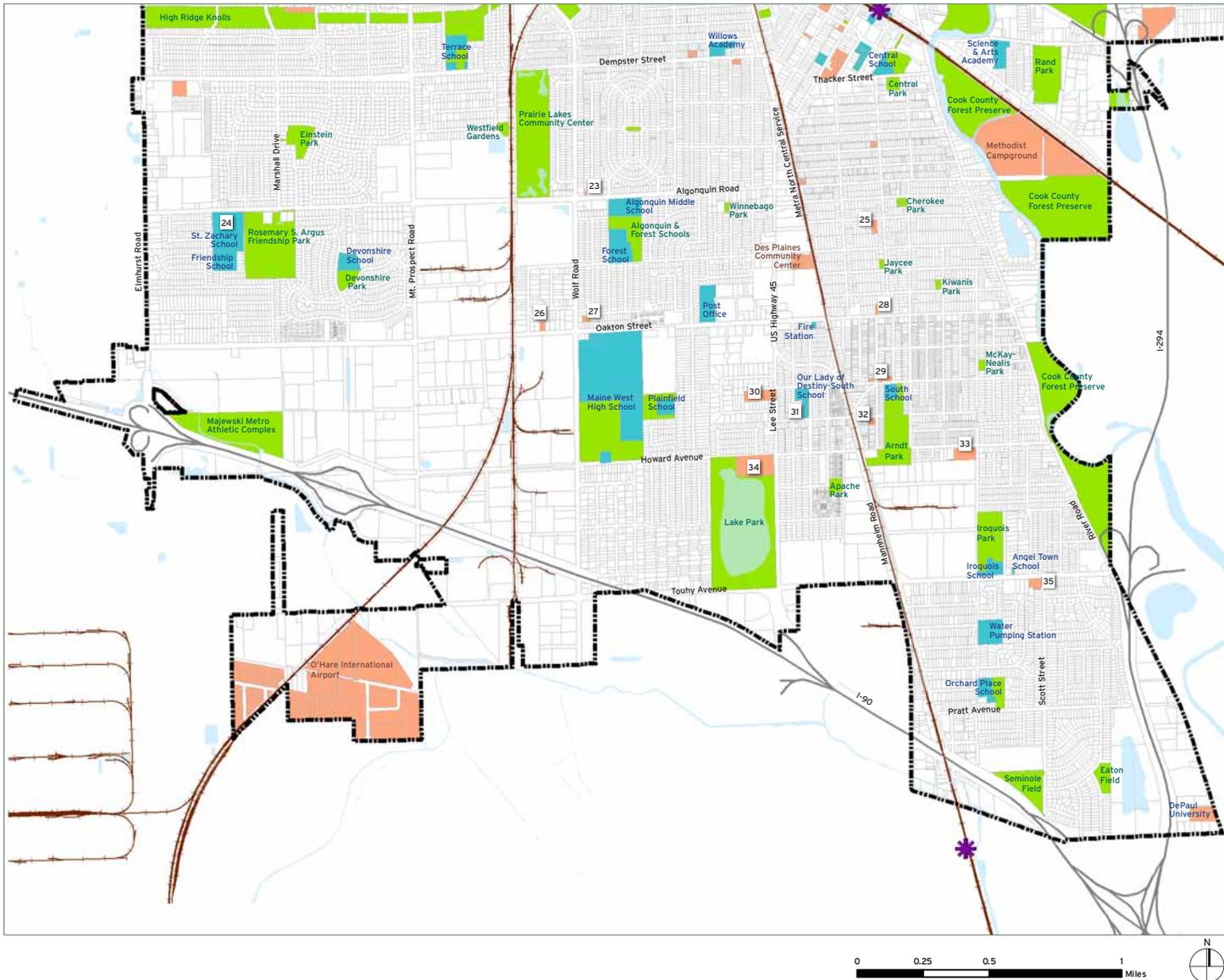
- # Places of Worship
- 1: St. Chong Hasang Catholic Church
 - 2: Unity Northwest Church
 - 3: Golf Road Baptist Church
 - 4: Evangelical Free Church
 - 5: Jehovah Witnesses Church
 - 6: Faith Alliance Bible Church
 - 7: Brentwood Baptist Church
 - 8: Chicago Marthoma Church
 - 9: UNK
 - 10: New International Pentecostal
 - 11: St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
 - 12: First United Methodist Church
 - 13: Christian Science Center
 - 14: First Congregational Church
 - 15: Immanuel Lutheran Church
 - 16: Good News Christian Church
 - 17: Des Plaines Bible Church
 - 18: St. Martin's Episcopal Church
 - 19: Christ Church
 - 20: Bethesda Worship Center
 - 21: Sae Khwang United Presbyterian Church
 - 22: St. Mary's Church
- Metra Station
 City Boundary
 Public
 Institution
 Parks and Open Spaces



FIGURE 8b

COMMUNITY FACILITIES
South of Algonquin Road

DRAFT



- # Places of Worship
- 23: Trinity Lutheran Church
 - 24: St. Zachary Church
 - 25: Hahna Korean Presbyterian Church
 - 26: Taiwan Korean Presbyterian Church of Greater Chicago
 - 27: Calvary (Korean) Baptist Church
 - 28: Bulgarian Evangelical Church of God
 - 29: Church of Christ of Des Plaines
 - 30: Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral
 - 31: St. Stephen Catholic Church
 - 32: Phai Bao Buddhist Temple
 - 33: First Presbyterian Church
 - 34: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
 - 35: Korean Phillippi Presbyterian Church

- Metra Station
- City Boundary
- Public
- Institution
- Parks and Open Spaces



Police Services

The Des Plaines Police Department currently has 103 police officers, plus 25 support personnel. The Department is divided into three divisions: Operations, Investigations, and Support Services. The Operations Division includes uniform patrol and marked police vehicles. The Investigations Division is responsible for adult and juvenile crime investigations, as well as drug and gang related activity. The Support Services Division includes crime statistics, community service responses, and crime prevention programs, such as: the Drug Awareness and Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program; Crime Stoppers; and, Neighborhood Watch.

The Police Department also operates numerous community programs that help build a cooperative relationship between police officers and citizens. The Reserve Police Force, operating for over 59 years, consists of trained volunteers that assist police officers, make arrests, and carry firearms. The "Citizens on Patrol" program involves trained volunteers who perform non-emergency duties such as traffic direction, motorist assistance, and parking violations enforcement. The Boy Scout "Explorers" Program involves young adults with law enforcement aspirations, who receive classroom and field training that includes investigating traffic accidents, handling domestic disputes, and processing crime scenes. In addition, the Department offers many youth programs, such as an athletic club, rifle club, and weightlifting club. Lastly, the Neighborhood Resource Center (1928 E. Touhy Ave.) provides a wide range of community services, including: elderly or special needs assistance; domestic violence services and intervention; and, the mobile public library.

The biggest issue facing the Police Department is the need for a new police station. The current station next to City Hall was built in 1975, and encompasses 20,000 square feet. Due to the Department's growth over the years, a 60,000 square foot building would be necessary to handle their current staff size. To accommodate a new building, parking, and future expansion, a three-acre site is needed ideally within or adjacent to downtown Des Plaines. The Department estimates that it would cost \$23 million for a new building at its current location, or \$14.5 million plus land costs for a new location. Recently, City Council voted to allow the Department to study facility options. A recommendation is expected in Fall 2005, about the same time a study is expected to recommend a new fire station.

Fire Services

The Des Plaines Fire Department has a paid staff of 92 firefighters and paramedics, who operate from three stations. Each station encompasses a first response area, as well as a second response area. In addition, Des Plaines has "automatic aid agreements" for fire services with neighboring towns, including: Park Ridge, Rosemont, Mount Prospect, and unincorporated Maine Township. Des Plaines is looking to expand these agreements to allow other towns to serve more areas of the City, which would help with future manpower issues. In 2004, the Fire Department responded to 6,762 calls within the City and assisted 317 times outside the City.

The Fire Department is divided into four Divisions: Emergency Services, Fire Prevention, Emergency Management Agency, and Administrative. The Emergency Services Division is the Department's major division and is staffed with 84 officers, firefighters, engineers, and paramedics. This division includes a hazardous material response team that can handle local industrial hazards and transported freight hazards. In addition, an above and below grade rescue team is specially trained for

unique rescue operations. The division also includes a specially trained underwater scuba team to handle water rescues. The Fire Prevention Division reviews construction plans for hazards, presents education programs, and inspects homes, businesses and institutions. The Emergency Management Agency is federally-mandated to coordinate all emergency services in case of disaster. Lastly, the Administrative Division provides planning, coordination, and control over the Department.

The Fire Department recently started a master planning process to assess aging facilities, response time, station location, rolling stock, and future demands due to projected growth. The fire station at 130 E. Thacker is a 55-year old building, which was expanded two years ago. The station at 1313 Oakton Street is a 45-year old building that needs repair and upgrades. The station at 405 S. River Road is a 34-year old building that floods frequently and may need to be relocated. Due to growth in Des Plaines, the Fire Chief believes that a fourth station may be needed. The rolling stock – fire trucks and ambulances – is currently sufficient at each station and gets replaced as necessary. Overall, the Department's facility needs in the future may be influenced by more freight trains which affect response time, higher residential densities, more senior citizen facilities, and flooding issues. The master planning process is expected to be complete by year's end.

Public Library

The Des Plaines Public Library is a centerpiece of downtown Des Plaines' revitalization efforts. In April 1998, the City Council approved a redevelopment project that included a new 80,000 square-foot library. Located at 1501 Ellinwood Street across from the Des Plaines train station, the four-story building opened in August 2000. It offers more than 200,000 publications, videos, audio books, compact discs, and art works, as well as reading clubs, children's programs, and lectures. The new library not only created more pedestrian activity for businesses, but also signaled a new architectural direction for downtown development.

2. Recreation and Open Space Facilities and Resources

Parks and Recreation

Two park districts operate facilities within the City of Des Plaines: the Des Plaines Park District and the Mount Prospect Park District. The Des Plaines Park District operates all facilities within the City boundaries east of Mount Prospect Road. The Mount Prospect Park District operates though facilities west of Mount Prospect Road.

The Des Plaines Park District employs 43 full-time staff and about 700 seasonal, part-time staff in order to manage 53 parks and recreational facilities on approximately 400 acres. In addition, the District offers over 300 recreational programs. Although these public facilities and services are extensive, the Park District does not meet the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. However, if the easily-accessible Cook County Forest Preserve along the City's eastern border was considered a community asset, Des Plaines' residents would enjoy much more open space than the NRPA standard. Nevertheless, the Park District's goal is to have a park within five blocks of every resident.

Lake Opeka is the Park District's signature park and includes 73 acres for fishing, boating, picnicking, golfing, a fitness center, and a bandshell. Lake Opeka offers indoor and outdoor activities year round. It is located in south central Des Plaines. The Prairie

Lakes Community Center, located at Dempster, west of Wolf Road, is the District's premiere indoor facility and community center, encompassing 80,000 square feet. The Center includes a fitness center, racquetball courts, indoor running track, community theatre, and the Des Plaines Senior Center. Located on the same park grounds as Prairie Lakes, the Mountain View Adventure Center offers miniature golf, a skate park, a BMX park, and batting cages. Another major recreational facility is the Mystic Waters Family Aquatic Center, on Busse Highway which provides pools, water slides, and picnic areas. The Park District also operates the Iroquois and Chippewa pools, which offer swimming lessons.

In June 2002, a Comprehensive Master Plan was completed for the Des Plaines Park District. The Master Plan provides a framework for upgrading existing parks and developing future parks, and includes a "compatibility matrix" to identify park expansion options and future park sites. The Plan also provides guidelines on funding, property development, and inter-governmental cooperation.

Some of the overall recommendations include:

- Alter existing park uses to accommodate deficiencies, such as soccer fields
- Establish working relationship with Cook County Forest Preserve District
- Foster new partnership use agreements with neighboring park districts
- Identify and develop parks within area bounded by Dempster and Oakton Streets, and River and Wolf Roads
- Work with City of Des Plaines to adopt developer impact fees for park contributions
- Continue annual park condition assessment and maintenance programs
- Replace and/or install consistent park identity signage
- Identify and acquire parcels which are contiguous to existing parks where possible.

The Master Plan also divides the City into five assessment areas, Areas A-E, and provides specific park recommendations for each area, most of which require property acquisition

- Planning Area A is located in northern Des Plaines, north of Golf Road. This area is deficient in parkland according to State standards by 25%. A recommendation to acquire residential, commercial, and or industrial property in this area for three neighborhood parks and one community park to satisfy the State standard is recommended. Note that Area A contains significant institutional property, including Maryville Academy and Holy Family Hospital.
- Planning Area B is bordered by Golf Road on the north, Algonquin Road on the south, the Canadian National Railroad on the east, and the City boundary on the west. This neighborhood already contains two premiere park sites, West Park and Prairie Lakes Park. The area could support three additional neighborhood parks.
- Planning Area C is immediately to the east of Area B. This area has over 30% of the District's overall population, yet offers the least amount of available park space compared to other sections of the District. The downtown is located in this area. Since this area is 83% deficient in terms of park land, it is recommended that the District establish a partnership agreement with the Cook County Forest Preserve District in order to

maximize full advantage of the preserve property to the east. Also, a community park bordering the southwestern section of this Planning Area should be considered.

- Planning Area D is located in southwest Des Plaines, bordered by Algonquin Road on the north, the City boundary on the south and west, and Canadian National Railroad on the east. It contains both industrial and residential areas. This area contains the signature park, Lake Opeka. This area is also deficient in parkland and the District should consider the location of a future community park within the northeastern portion of the Area. Also, three additional neighborhood parks totaling 20 acres are needed to meet standards.
- Planning Area E is immediately east of Planning Area D and covers the remainder of Des Plaines. The area is 68% below the state standards for parkland with a need of 67 additional acres of parkland.

The Mount Prospect Park District operates six park facilities within Des Plaines as described below:

- **Brentwood Park** - This park contains a baseball diamond and playground.
- **High Ridge Knolls** - This is a ComEd easement that is leased to the Park District and contains two baseball diamonds, a playground, and a one mile walking path.
- **Einstein Park** - This park facility contains two baseball diamonds, a basketball court, a playground, and a shelter.
- **Rosemary S. Argus Friendship Park**- This facility contains a conservatory, greenhouse and meeting rooms, as well as three baseball diamonds, a playground, ice skating pond, four tennis courts, a football field, and a one mile walking path.
- **Devonshire Park**- Devonshire Park contains one baseball diamond and two playgrounds.
- **Majewski Metro Athletic Complex**- This is a private tournament facility not opened to the public. It contains outdoor soccer and softball fields.

In the next five years, the Mount Prospect Park District proposes to add one playground and two basketball courts to the High Ridge Knolls facility. Also, Einstein Park will be renovated in kind. Other than these improvements, there are no planned improvements or expansions to park facilities within the City of Des Plaines.

Natural Resources

Although not located within the boundaries of the City, the Cook County Forest Preserve District's Des Plaines Division and Indian Boundary Division extends along the entire length of Des Plaines on the east and provides significant recreational assets within close proximity to the City. The Des Plaines River meanders through the Forest Preserve. The Des Plaines Division includes Lion Woods on the north at Golf Road, Big Bend Lake recreation area to the east of Lion Woods, Belleau Lake recreation area just south of Dempster near I-294, Northwestern Woods just south of Northwest Highway, Camp Ground Road Woods just south of Algonquin Road and adjacent to the Methodist Camp Ground, Algonquin Woods just south of Oakton, and Iroquois Woods just north of Touhy. The Indian Boundary Division contains the Axehead Lake recreation area and Chippewa Woods, near Devon Avenue. The Forest Preserve also owns a parcel of land at the corner of Rand and Golf called Harry H. Semrow D. R. Woods. Recreational amenities along the Forest Preserve corridor include picnic shelters, foot paths and

developed trails, shoreline fishing and wildflowers. Within Iroquois Woods, there is a low dam with a ramp for canoes and rowboats to enter the river. Proximate to Big Bend Lake is a historical archeological site of an Indian Village.

Wetlands and Floodplain areas are shown on *Figure 9a and 9b, Environmental and Natural Features*. Flood plain areas are located along the Des Plaines River, as well as along Weller Creek which meanders through the City of Des Plaines in an east west direction. The floodplain along the Des Plaines River extends to Des Plaines/River Road and in some locations to Manheim Road/U.S. 45. The land uses affected by the floodplain areas are single family residential and the downtown business district. In order to control flooding in this area, the Rand Park Flood Control and Multi-Use Trail project was proposed. This project is the first of six flood control projects along the Des Plaines River. The project will be designed and constructed in three phases. The first and second phases have already been constructed and consist of installing a 48' culvert under the Union Pacific Railroad, construction of a gated closure structure and pump station on Farmers' Creek immediately upstream of the UP Railroad, a floodwall between the railroad and Dempster Avenue, and environmental mitigation. Phase 3 includes floodwalls, levees and a multi-use trail.

Wetlands are located in various places along the Des Plaines River. These wetlands vary between Palustrine and Riverine classifications.

3. Educational Services

Public Elementary and High Schools

Public schools are the foundation of a successful and vibrant community. The City of Des Plaines' public education system is serviced by three elementary school districts: Community Consolidated School District #62; Community Consolidated School District #59; and, River Trails School District #26. In addition, Des Plaines' students attend high schools in the Maine Township High School District #207 and the Elk Grove Township High School District #214. The children of Des Plaines' residents attend the following schools. Refer to Figure 8a and 8b for the location of all schools.

Community Consolidated School District #62

- Central Elementary School (K-5), 1526 Thacker Street, Des Plaines
- Forest Elementary School, 1375 S. 5th Avenue, Des Plaines
- North Elementary School, 1789 Rand Road, Des Plaines
- Cumberland Elementary School, 700 East Golf Road, Des Plaines
- Plainfield Elementary School, 1850 Plainfield Drive, Des Plaines
- Orchard Place Elementary School, 2727 Maple Street, Des Plaines
- South Elementary School, 1535 Everet Street, Des Plaines
- Terrace Elementary School, 735 Westgate Road, Des Plaines
- Iroquois Community School, 1836 East Touhy Avenue, Des Plaines
- Algonquin Middle School, 767 E. Algonquin Road, Des Plaines
- Chippewa Middle School, 123 North 8th Avenue, Des Plaines

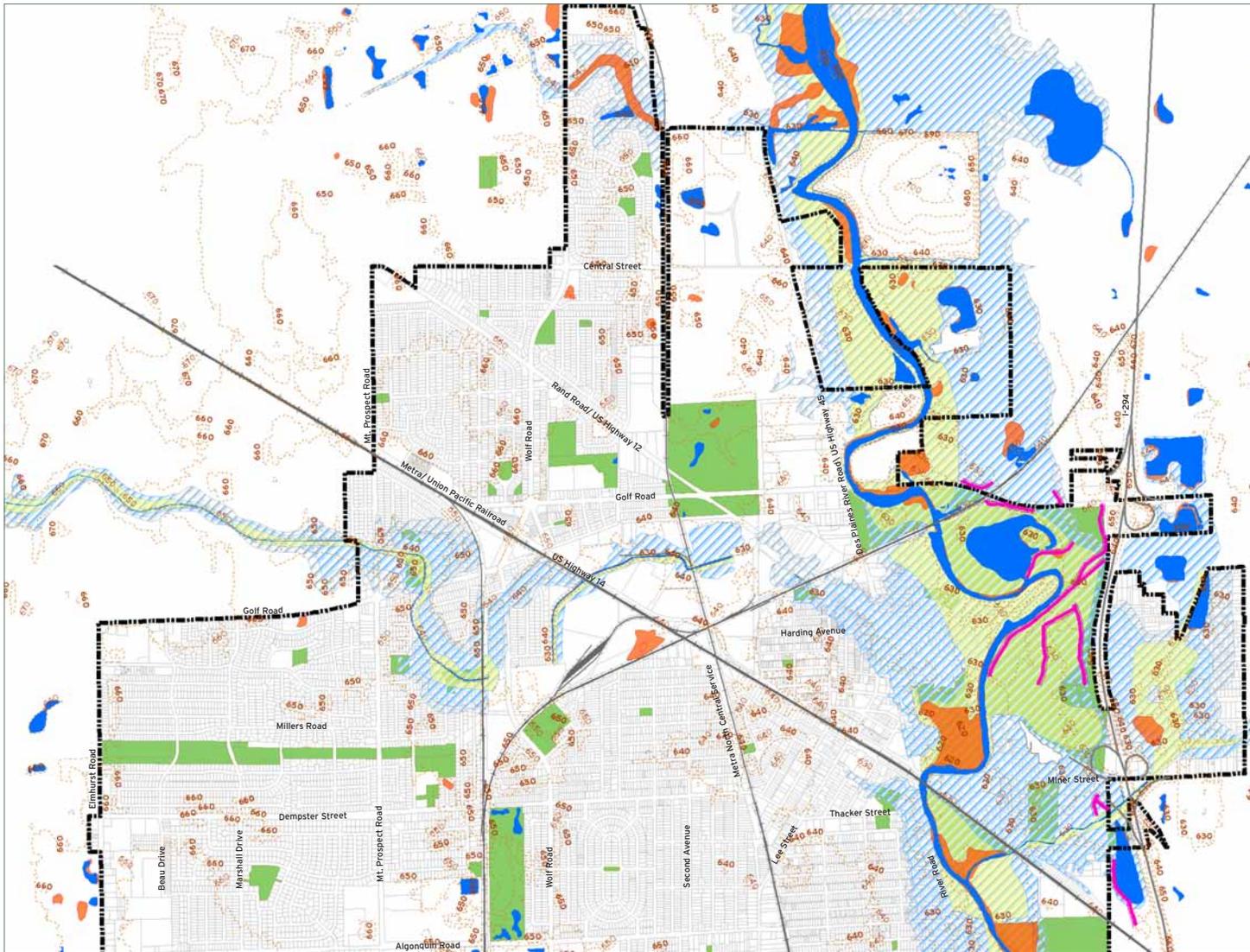
Community Consolidated School District #59

- Brentwood Elementary School, 260 Dulles Road, Des Plaines
- Devonshire Elementary School, 1401 Pennsylvania, Des Plaines
- Friendship Junior High School, 550 Elizabeth Lane, Des Plaines

FIGURE 9a

ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES North of Algonquin Road

DRAFT



Data Sources
Floodway and Floodplain, Contour Lines, Parks and Open Space, Water Bodies - City of Des Plaines
Wetlands - Illinois Natural Resources Geospatial Data Clearinghouse

- City Boundary
- Trails
- Contour Lines
- Water Bodies
- Wetlands
- Floodway
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Parks and Open Space



CITY OF DES PLAINES, IL

August 2005

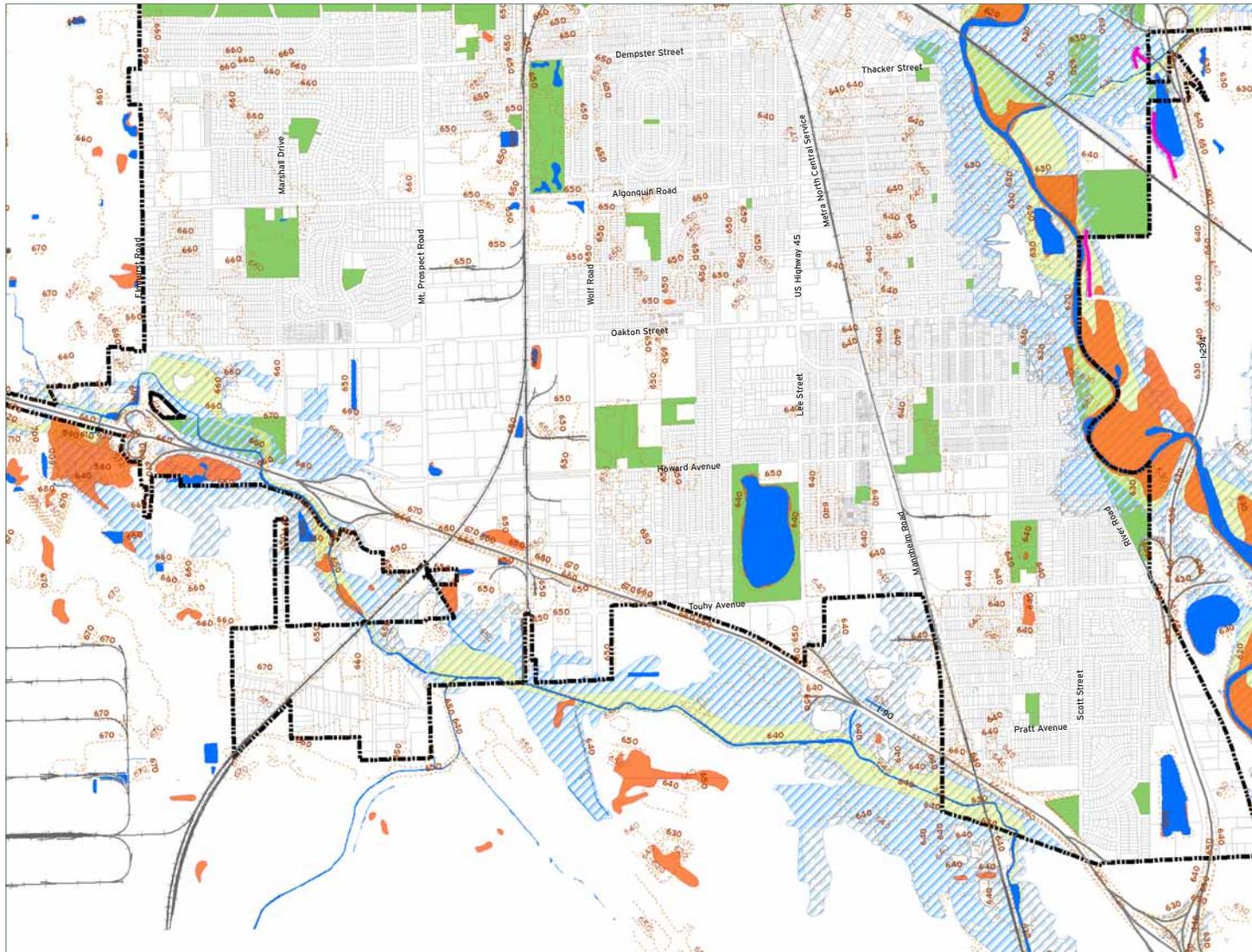


FIGURE 9b

ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES

South of Algonquin Road

DRAFT



- City Boundary
- Trails
- Contour Lines
- Water Bodies
- Wetlands
- Floodway
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Parks and Open Space

Data Sources
Floodway and Floodplain, Contour Lines, Parks and Open Space, Water Bodies - City of Des Plaines
Wetlands - Illinois Natural Resources Geospatial Data Clearinghouse

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles



CITY OF DES PLAINES, IL

August 2005



River Trails School District #26

- Euclid Elementary School, 1211 N Wheeling Road, Mount Prospect
- Indian Grove Elementary School, 1340 Burning Bush, Mount Prospect
- River Trails Middle School, 1000 N. Wolf Road, Mount Prospect

Maine Township High School District #207

- Maine East High School, 2601 Dempster Street, Park Ridge
- Maine West High School, 1755 S. Wolf Road, Des Plaines

Elk Grove Township High School District #214

- Elk Grove High School, 500 W. Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove Village

Public school testing provides an indication of a community's overall progress relative to other schools in the State. In 2003, Illinois approved a new accountability system that integrates federal standards for "Adequate Yearly Progress." Adequate Yearly Progress is defined by federal and state laws, and includes standards for state assessment participation, reading and math targets, and attendance and graduation levels. The new system is the State's response to the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001, which requires all states to adopt a single assessment system to establish uniform achievement standards and measure each school's progress accordingly. The goal of the new system is to ensure that all students will meet or exceed state standards by 2014.

As of 2004, the children of Des Plaines' residents attended schools that qualified for Adequate Yearly Progress, except for the following schools:

- Orchard Place Elementary, Community Consolidated School District 62
- Euclid Elementary, River Trails School District 26
- Chippewa Middle School, Community Consolidated School District 62
- Algonquin Middle School, Community Consolidated School District 62
- Maine West High School, Maine Township High School District 207
- Maine East High School, Maine Township High School District 207
- Elk Grove High School, Township High School District 214

The middle and high schools listed above also received "Academic Early Warning Status" designation, which means that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years. As such, these schools are eligible for state sanctions and intervention, such as a revised school improvement plan, an external support team, and school and district analysis.

Colleges and Universities

Des Plaines is home to Oakton Community College, a commuter college, located at 1600 East Oakton Street. Oakton was established in 1969. The college provides associate degrees and certificates and continuing education classes.

DePaul University's O'Hare campus has a satellite campus at 3166 South River Road. The curriculum offered at this location includes certificate programs, courses and degree programs. This campus was opened in 1977.

Private Schools

There are a five private elementary or high schools within the City limits:

- Immanuel Lutheran School was organized in 1871 in affiliation with the Immanuel Lutheran Church. It is an elementary school located at 832 Lee Street.
- St. Zachary School, located at 567 W. Algonquin Road, is a Catholic elementary School.
- Our Lady of Destiny is the parish school of the St. Mary and St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic church. It is an elementary school located at 1880 Ash Street.
- The Science and Arts Academy offers a gifted program for students ages 3 to 14. It is located at 1825 Miner Street.
- The Willows Academy is an all girls Catholic elementary and high school The Willows is located at 1012 Thacker Street.

4. Historic Resources

The Historical Society and Museum is located in the 1906 Benjamin F. Kinder House at 789 Pearson Street. It was established in 1967 and has a membership of individuals, families, and businesses interested in the preservation of local history.

Historical Landmarks

Des Plaines has one landmark registered on the National Register of Historic Places. The Des Plaines Methodist Campground, which began hosting religious meetings in 1865, was listed on the Register in June 2005. The Methodist meetings on site in the 1860s were designed as a rebellion against British culture. The meetings and prayer services attracted people from the city and brought them to an outdoor, rural setting.

Although not listed on the National Register, there has been a movement to add the Des Plaines Theater located in downtown Des Plaines to the Register. The theater was built in the 1920's and hosted a variety of live entertainment including WLS radio broadcasts, an indoor circus, and Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. The theater has been classified as "eligible" for placement on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Although not designated as such, the Moehling Farm, located on Rand Road can be considered as a historic or cultural landmark.

II. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Relevant policies from previous planning documents are summarized below, along with a brief description of current zoning policies regulating land use within the City. This section of the report then concludes with a section discussing economic development policies, partners and tools that are currently in place in the City.

A. PREVIOUS PLANNING POLICIES

The City has relied on two planning documents for guidance in recent years: the *City of Des Plaines Comprehensive Plan*, and the *City of Des Plaines Downtown Sub-area Plan*, both adopted in 1995. Highlighted below are several policies contained within the plans yet to be implemented, to facilitate discussion as to whether they are still relevant policies that merit being brought forward in a new plan, in either original or revised form.

Recommendations from the *1995 Comprehensive Plan* merit mention:

- A gradual phasing out of single family residential land uses on major arterial streets not conducive to residential access;
- Redevelopment of two of the three mobile home parks located in commercial zones of the City;
- Oakton Street improvements should include reducing the number of access drives in the corridor, restricting the number of cross streets in the corridor, reconfiguring the location and placement of parking in the corridor, encouraging the consolidation of lots to facilitate redevelopment to accommodate more contemporary building designs, and allowing flexibility of setback requirements to better accommodate structures, parking areas and landscaping;
- The triangular area bounded by Manheim, Higgins and the Canadian National Railroad would be appropriate for commercial and industrial redevelopment due to its proximity to O'Hare Airport.
- Touhy Avenue is composed of a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses which is inappropriate and does not take full advantage of the areas; there is not a clear image or established land use policy for the area.
- The Golf/Rand/River Road area has a mix of land uses that contributes to the area's unattractive appearance. Rezoning of certain parcels and redevelopment would enhance the area and limit the expansion potential of some of the industrial uses in the area.

The *1995 Downtown Subarea Plan* focused on, among other issues:

- A cultural arts center could act as a focal point for the downtown
- The entertainment function of the downtown is one of its strengths but needs expansion
- Downtown planning must recognize and provide for the needs of the residential component living in the downtown.
- A unified design approach should apply to the downtown to best enhance the existing downtown character and unify the diverse development.

B. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The land use map within a Comprehensive Plan represents the community's desired development pattern for the future. A key implementation mechanism used to achieve the desired development pattern is the City's zoning ordinance which is directed by the community's future land use map. The City of Des Plaines currently utilizes several zoning designations that are briefly summarized below. The City's current zoning map is graphically depicted in *Figure 10a and 10b*.

For the most part, Des Plaines' existing land use pattern reflects the current zoning map, with the exception of some individual parcels throughout the City. Exceptions include the following:

- A Walgreens store on Wolf Road, north of Dursey Lane is within a R-1 single family district;
- A new townhouse residential development (Concord Commons) on Northwest Highway is zoned C-3 General Commercial/Planned Unit Development;
- A proposed senior citizen development along Oakton Street, just west of Lee is zoned C-3 General Commercial/Planned Unit Development;
- An office use and retail use in an area along Golf Road east of I-294 is zoned R-3 Townhouse Residential;
- Two single family homes along Ballard Road, just west of Potter are in a C-1 Neighborhood Shopping Zone;
- Five multi family buildings and two single family houses on Oakton Street, west of Maple Street are in an area zoned C-3 General Commercial.
- There are a few single family homes in the area zoned R-2, Two Family Residential, south of Oakton and west of Orchard Street.

As the planning process proceeds, the need may arise to analyze key areas in more detail, to determine whether text or map amendments will be appropriate to facilitate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The allowable mix of uses and/or allowable development density may need to be adjusted in some areas to more closely align development regulations with the policy intent of the Plan.

Single Family Residential Districts

Des Plaines has one single family residential district, R-1. This district is intended to provide for and preserve single family residential environments at the lowest density within the City. The classification requires a minimum lot size of 6,875 square feet for an interior lot and 8,125 square feet for a corner lot. The permitted uses include accessory uses and structures, forest preserves and parks, public libraries, public and private schools, small residential care homes, and home occupations. Conditional uses include places of worship and large residential care homes. Bulk regulations allow for a maximum height of 35 feet, a minimum front yard of 25 feet, a minimum side yard of 5 feet, and maximum building coverage for an interior lot of 30% and corner lot of 35%. The majority of the City has a single family residential zoning classification.

Multiple-Family Residential Districts

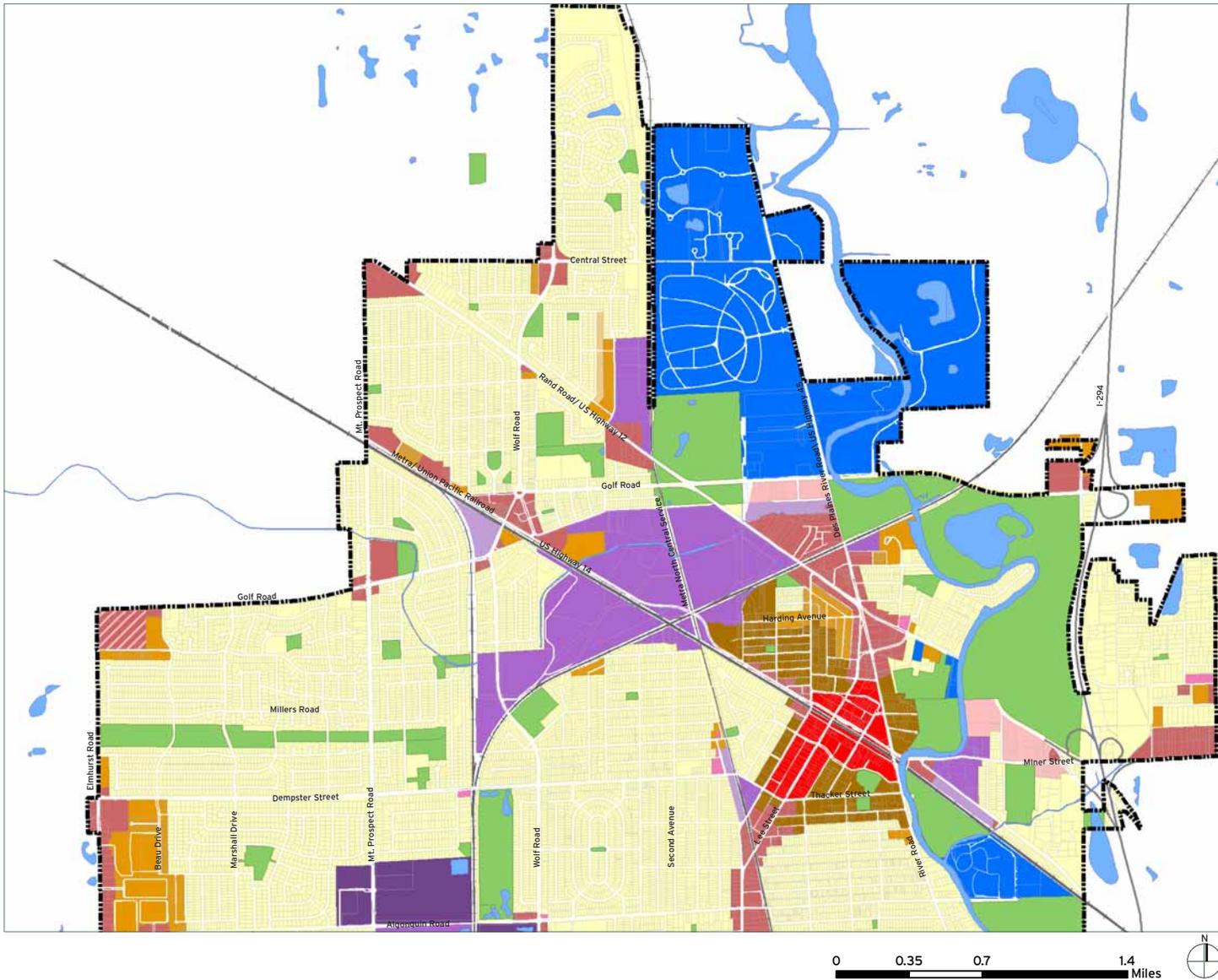
Des Plaines has four multiple family residential districts: Two-family (R-2), Townhouse (R-3), Central Core Residential (R-4) and Mobile Home (M-H). The purpose of the R-2, Two Family Residential is to provide a residential environment for small lots and

FIGURE 10a

EXISTING ZONING

North of Algonquin Road

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- City Boundary
- Water
- Recreation Areas
- Zoning Classifications
 - R1 - Single Family Residential
 - R2 - Two Family Residential
 - R3 - Townhouse Residential
 - R4 - Central Core Residential
 - M-H - Mobile Homes
 - C-1 - Neighborhood Shopping
 - C-2 - Limited Office Commercial
 - C-3 - General Commercial
 - C-4 - Regional Shopping
 - C-5 - Central Business
 - I-1 - Institutional
 - M-1 - Limited Manufacturing
 - M-2 - General Manufacturing
 - M3 - Special Manufacturing

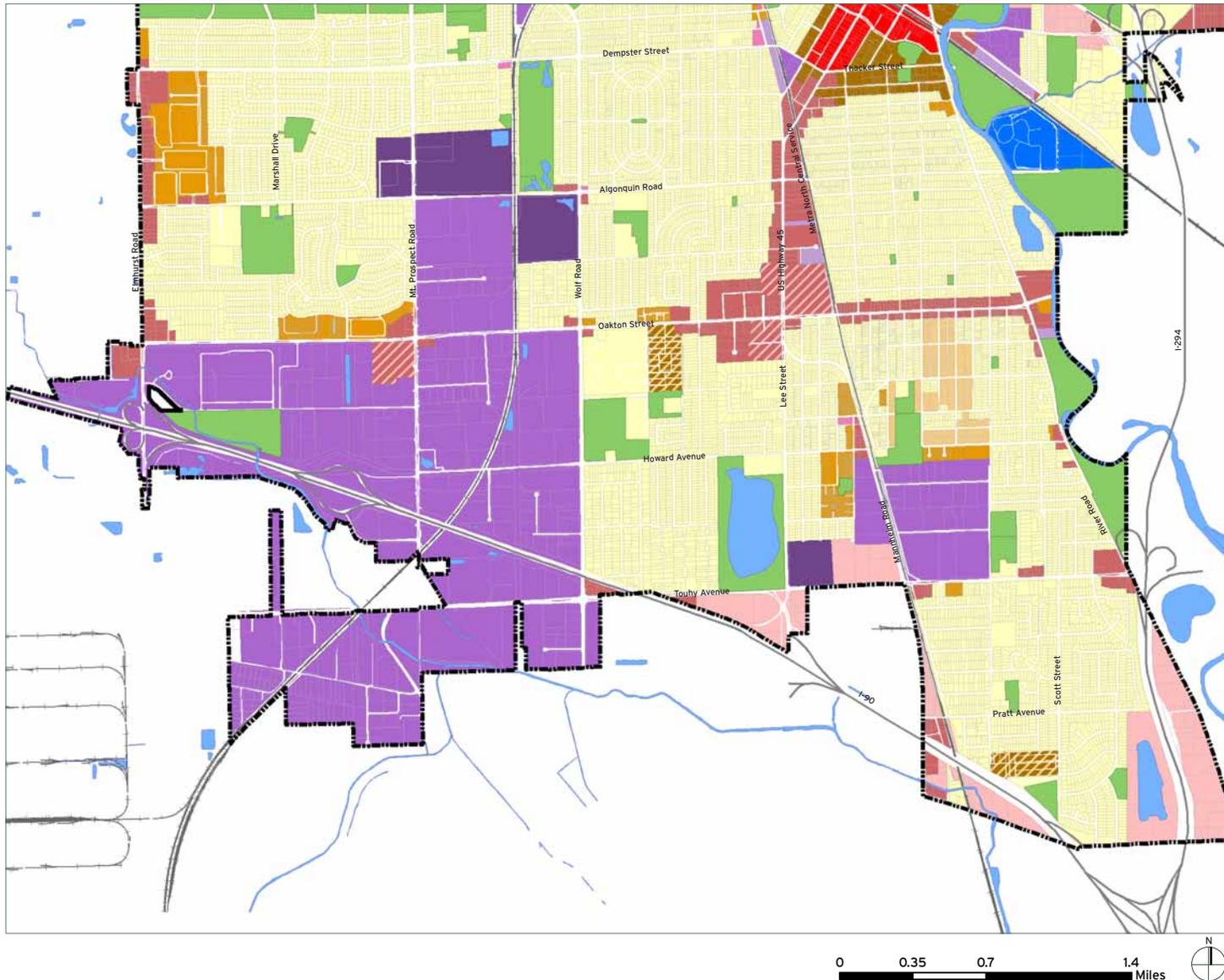


FIGURE 10b

EXISTING ZONING

South of Algonquin Road

DRAFT



- City Boundary
- Water
- Recreation Areas
- Zoning Classifications**
- R1 - Single Family Residential
- R2 - Two Family Residential
- R3 - Townhouse Residential
- R4 - Central Core Residential
- M-H - Mobile Homes
- C-1 - Neighborhood Shopping
- C-2 - Limited Office Commercial
- C-3 - General Commercial
- C-4 - Regional Shopping
- C-5 - Central Business
- I-1 - Institutional
- M-1 - Limited Manufacturing
- M-2 - General Manufacturing
- M3 - Special Manufacturing



buildings. The purpose of R-3 Townhouse Residential is to provide a residential environment for townhouses and multiple family dwellings. The purpose of the R-4 Central Core Residential is to provide a location for high density multiple family dwellings in and near the downtown.

Permitted uses within the R-2, R-3 and R-4 are generally similar and include accessory uses and structures, forest preserves and parks, home occupations, libraries, public and private schools, and small residential care homes. Permitted uses allowed only in R-2 and R-3 include private country clubs. Permitted uses allowed only in R-3 and R-4 include bed and breakfast establishments, places of worship, and large residential care homes.

Conditional uses for all three categories include planned developments. Conditional uses in the R-2 and R-3 district include community centers and convents, parish houses and rectories. Assisted living facilities are considered to be conditional uses in the R-3 and R-4 districts.

District standards vary between the three multi-family categories. The maximum height of R-2 buildings is 35 feet. For R-3, it is 45 feet and for R-4 it is 80 feet. Minimum front yard requirements for R-2 and R-3 are 25 feet, and for R-4 it is 12 feet. Side yards vary by classification. Maximum coverage for R-2 buildings is 30% for interior lots and 35% for corner lots.

R-2 Two Family Residential, is primarily located in an area bounded by Oakton on the north, Howard Avenue on the south, Illinois Street on the west and Sycamore Street on the east. R-3, Townhouse Residential, uses are primarily north and west in the area bounded by Algonquin on the south, Dempster on the north and Beau Drive on the east. They are also located around Apache Park near Lake Opeka.

The R-4 residential district falls within the downtown business district and surrounds the downtown on all sides. Primarily, R4 is located to the north and south within the downtown Business District.

The Mobile Home Park District (MH-1) provides appropriate locations for individual mobile/manufactured homes in a park like setting which are adequately served by public utilities. Parks, churches, forest preserves, and mobile and manufactured homes are permitted uses. The maximum height of any mobile home is 14 feet. The minimum mobile home slip size is 1,500 square feet per unit, and the minimum open space per mobile home park is 250 feet per unit. 50% is the maximum building coverage for the entire park. There are two MH-1 districts in the City. One mobile home park is located along Nimitz Road at Scott Street, near Seminole Park. The other mobile home park is located next to Maine West High School on Oakton Street. A third mobile home park is located along Rand Road, adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad, but this area is zoned C-3, General Commercial.

Commercial Districts

There are five commercial districts within the City of Des Plaines: C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, and C-5. The purpose of the districts when taken together are intended to permit a broad range of commercial development necessary to serve the citizens of Des Plaines and the neighboring areas.

The C-1 Neighborhood Shopping District is to accommodate convenience businesses in locations close to residential neighborhoods. Permitted uses are generally limited and include accessory uses and structures, convenience retail store, public libraries, parks, pharmacies and drug stores, small residential care homes, retail service establishments, specialty food stores, and artist and dance studios. The maximum height of these buildings is 35 feet. No individual use in the C-1 district is to exceed 7,500 square feet. This designation is found in only a few areas of the City including on the east side of town along Ballard Road at Potter, along Miner Road just east of the downtown, at Thacker and First Avenue, and along Prospect at Bittersweet Court.

The C-2 Limited Office Commercial District is intended to preserve existing office development and provide locations for the development of the new office locations. These uses are found throughout the City including at Golf and Des Plaines River Road across from Holy Family Medical Center; along, Rand Road just east of the Des Plaines River; along Touhy Avenue, east and west of Lee Street; within the Manheim/Higgins triangle; the O'Hare Lakes Office Complex; is located as well as Des Plaines River Road/Devon Avenue area. Permitted uses in the C-2 are accessory uses and structures, libraries, media print establishments, government offices, offices, public utilities, specialty food stores, and art and dance studios. Parking is limited to the rear yard. Height restrictions are 45 feet except along Touhy Avenue, from Greco Avenue to Scott Avenue where there is a special overlay district allowing 35 feet maximum. Front yard, side yard and rear yard setbacks are established by adjacent residential districts or are 5 feet if it is a non-residential adjacent district.

The purpose of the C-3 General Commercial District is to accommodate a variety of businesses in locations to serve the community of Des Plaines. The C-3 district represents the largest class of commercial. C-3 is located along primary arterials including along Northwest Highway west of the downtown; along Lee Street, Rand Road and Des Plaines River Road north of the downtown; along Oakton Street, east and west of Lee Street; as well as in other areas in all parts of the City. Permitted uses include one residential dwelling unit on the second floor of buildings. Other permitted uses include animal clinics, auto service stations, commercial indoor recreation, retail stores, financial institutions, hotels, libraries, drug stores, post offices, public transportation centers, restaurants, schools, taverns and lounges, and art and dance studios. C-3 maximum height restrictions are 45 feet.

C-4 Regional Shopping Districts are located in a few areas in the City. The purpose of the C-4 district is to accommodate shopping centers in a location to serve the general public. The district is designed to permit uses commonly associated and concentrated within a commercial shopping center. C-4 permitted uses are more restrictive than C-3 and include auto service stations, commercial indoor recreation, commercial shopping centers, retail stores, financial institutions, public libraries, motor vehicle sales, parks, drug stores, post offices, restaurants, retail stores and taverns and lounges. C-5 zoning is present at the corner of Elmhurst Road and Golf, Oakton and Mount Prospect Road, and Lee and Oakton Streets. Maximum height restrictions are 45 feet. Minimum front yard requirements are 150 feet, and side yard and back yard are 25 feet. Since more than one structure is allowed per lot, setbacks are applicable for each lot and not to individual structures.

The C-5 Central Business District allows only those uses in the downtown that are appropriate to the downtown character and bulk standards. Off street parking and

loading spaces may be located only in the rear yards in the C-5 District. Multiple family dwelling units are permitted above the first floor. The C-5 district is bounded by Thacker Street on the south, Euclid Avenue on the west, Jefferson Street on the north, and Des Plaines/River Road on the east. Permitted uses include auto service stations, child care centers, commercial indoor recreation, parking lots and garages, retail stores, multiple family dwellings, financial institutions, funeral homes, grocery stores, hotels, libraries, government offices, offices, parks, drug stores, churches, public transportation centers, restaurants, retail goods and services, art and dance studios and taverns and lounges. There are supplemental parking requirements for the C-5 district. As part of the requirements, there is a parking bonus of 2,500 square feet meaning that no off-street parking shall be required for the first 2,500 square feet of a use. Parking requirements in the C-5 are as follows:

Table 6: C-5 Supplemental Parking Requirements

| Uses | Parking Requirements |
|--|--|
| Multiple Family Dwellings | 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit |
| Offices | 1 space per 500 sq. feet of floor area |
| Retail Goods and Services Establishments | 1 space per 300 sq. feet of floor area |
| Medical and Dental Clinics | 1 space per 300 sq. feet of floor area |
| Taverns and Lounges | 1 space per 100 sq. feet of floor area |

Manufacturing Districts

There are three manufacturing districts, M-1, M-2 and M-3. The purpose of the manufacturing districts is to protect the stability of manufacturing activities in the City and to encourage the development of new manufacturing activities by providing adequate and appropriate space within the City.

M-1, Limited Manufacturing District, allows for locations for light manufacturing uses and associated services. Permitted uses include auto shops, light manufacturing, office parks, research and testing industries, commercial schools, and trade contractors. Maximum height for the M-1 district is 50 feet. Front yard, side yard and rear yard setbacks are 60 feet. Maximum building coverage is 75%. M-1 uses are located in a few places including a triangular lot bounded by Golf Road on the south, freight tracks on the west and the Metra/UP tracks on the north; a strip of land on the south side of Redeker Road at Des Plaines/River Road; along Busse Highway just east of the Des Plaines River; and in two location near Forest Avenue and Lee Street.

The M-2, General Manufacturing District, allows for a location for general manufacturing uses and related uses. Permitted uses in the M-2 areas include animal hospitals, auto service stations, auto sales, commercial storage, distribution facilities, heavy and light manufacturing, recycling centers, salvage yards, warehouses, and wholesale goods establishments. Maximum height in a M-2 is less than in a M-1, 40 feet. Minimum front yard adjacent to manufacturing uses is 50 feet but is greater adjacent to other uses, 65 feet. Minimum side yard and rear year is 50 feet when adjacent to uses other than manufacturing. Maximum building coverage is 70%. M-2 district is the primary manufacturing district. The large manufacturing area in southwest Des Plaines, the area at the crossroads of the Metra/UP Railroad and the Canadian National Railroad, and the area to the south east of the City north of Manheim and Touhy are all M-2 districts.

The purpose of the M-3 Special Manufacturing District is to provide locations for light manufacturing, distribution, office and research related facilities. There are a few

permitted uses in M-3 including distribution facilities, light manufacturing, office parks, and research and testing industries. Height restrictions are the most liberal in the M-3; maximum height is 50 feet. Front yard, side yard and rear yard setbacks are all the same: 60 feet. Maximum building coverage is 75%. M-3 uses can only be found in three areas, on the north end of the large manufacturing district, in the southwest part of the City, and one location at Touhy and Lee, across from Lake Opeka.

Special Districts

There is one Institutional District, I-1, that is designed to recognize the public or semi-public uses and to provide guidelines for their continued use and future development. In the I-1, off-street parking is not permitted in any front or side yard, and the parking areas can not extend closer than five feet to the rear property lines. Other restrictions in this district include the fact that no more than one principal building may be placed on a lot less than 4 acres in size; on lots of more than 4 acres in size, more than one principal building may be located but 2 acres of land area is required for each principal building. Maximum height of buildings in this district is 100 feet if the property is adjacent to nonresidential uses. If adjacent to residential area the maximum height is 45 feet with height bonuses given for additional setback. Minimum front yard and rear yard setback is 50 feet. Minimum side yard set back is 25 feet. Maximum lot coverage is 40%. Among the permitted uses are assisted living facilities, cemeteries, colleges and universities, congregate housing, forest preserves, government offices, hospitals, institutions, offices, parks, churches, and schools.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Due to its convenient distance to downtown Chicago, O'Hare International Airport, and all modes of transportation, the City of Des Plaines offers a very desirable location for residential, commercial, and industrial development. However, since it is a mature "built-out" community with little vacant land, the City of Des Plaines is keenly focused on revitalization and redevelopment efforts to maintain vibrant business and industrial districts and offer a diversity of housing choices. This section briefly describes the City's existing partners, mechanisms, and tools that are in place to assist in their economic development efforts.

1. Business Development Organizations

Des Plaines Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Founded in 1934, the Des Plaines Chamber of Commerce & Industry is a member-based organization that seeks to enhance the local business climate and promote growth for new and existing enterprises. Currently, the Chamber contains over 600 members that include retailers, industries, and service providers. The Chamber promotes new business relationships through its membership directory, business support programs, networking events, and monthly newsletter "The Business Advocate." The Chamber is not an arm of the government but a non-profit organization that serves the interests of its members.

Des Plaines Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission serves as an advisor to the Des Plaines' City Council in order to maintain a favorable business environment. Thirteen

commissioners representing various businesses in Des Plaines meet on a regular basis to discuss revitalization, redevelopment, and business formation. The City's Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development serves as a resource for the Commission, as well as acting as a conduit for potential developers. Working with the City Administration, the Economic Development Commission is dedicated to proactively seeking business opportunities for Des Plaines.

2. Economic Development Tools

Façade Rehabilitation Program

The Economic Development Commission designed a façade rehabilitation program to help improve commercial storefronts throughout the City. The program encourages improvements by offering grants to property owners or tenants for 50% of project costs, up to a maximum of \$5,000 per storefront. If visible from main shopping streets, the rear and sides of commercial buildings also may be eligible. The program may be used for minor repairs or complete renovations, such as signage, window/door replacement, and architectural restoration, as well as for professional design or permit fees. Significantly, the City offers detailed design guidelines to provide storefront improvement ideas. All façade improvement proposals must be reviewed and approved by the Economic Development Commission.

Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Districts

Tax increment financing is a tool authorized by the State over 20 years ago to help municipalities with economic development efforts in problematic or slow growth areas. By creating a TIF district, municipalities can encourage new development by allowing the tax revenue to be generated by that development to stay in the district for public improvements, such as new streets and sewers. The tax revenue collected during the year prior to district creation is the "base" amount that continues to be distributed as before; the additional revenues generated within the district are the "increment" set aside for district-specific initiatives. The presence of a TIF district may aid in securing developer interest and investment in future projects likely to be identified during the planning process, as well as the implementation of public realm improvements that the Plan may identify as high priority.

In 1983 Des Plaines created its first TIF district to encompass the Central Business District (TIF District #1), which helps the City proactively encourage revitalization and redevelopment projects. The Heritage, an assisted living facility at River Road and Ellingwood Street, was the first project to use TIF benefits. The new public library and related development also benefited from the TIF district. Most recently, the City created District #5 as supplement to District #1 in order to facilitate the proposed Metropolitan Square development, which will include new retail, office space, grocery store, condominiums, and parking garage. Clearly, the TIF districts have helped with the resurgence of downtown Des Plaines.

In 2000, the City created TIF District #3 along Willie Road in its industrial zone bordering I-90 and O'Hare Airport. TIF District #3 is facilitating industrial warehouse development, including over 400,000 square feet in the initial phase. The second phase will offer approximately one million square feet. In 2001, the City created another district adjacent to I-90, TIF District #6, for the Mannheim/Higgins Road gateway area. The target developments for this area include hotels, a restaurant, and

retail. Lastly, the City is now studying the potential for a TIF district for the Rand/River Road area near downtown Des Plaines.

Cook County Tax Abatement Program (6b)

Cook County offers a tax incentive program, known as the 6b program, to stimulate industrial development. Types of properties eligible for this program include new construction, expansion and substantial rehabilitation of manufacturing, warehousing and distribution facilities. In order to be eligible for the program, Cook County applies the “but for” test to each application. Under that test, assessing officials must be reasonable certain that the proposed project will not become a reality “but for” the existence of tax incentives. If the subject property qualifies, the building portion of the assessed valuation will be assessed at 16% during the first 10 years, 23% during the 11th year, and 30% during the 12th year.

3. Capital Improvement Program

The City recognizes that an important component of economic development is the maintenance and upgrade of its existing infrastructure. The City’s Five-Year Capital Improvement Program includes \$14.7 million for infrastructure projects in 2005. The following projects and proposed funding levels are recommended for 2005:

- Sewer and drainage system improvements (\$9.5 million)
- Street rehabilitation (\$3.5 million)
- Water system improvements (\$906,500)
- Sidewalk, curb, and alley improvements (\$810,000)

The revenue for these improvement projects comes from the City’s General Improvement Fund, Motor Fuel Tax Fund, and Water Fund. The City’s Engineering Department is responsible for annually updating the Capital Improvement Program, and for implementing the program’s projects through design plans, construction, and management.

III. MARKET ASSESSMENT

A. MARKET CONDITIONS - KEY FINDINGS AND SYNTHESIS

This section provides a summary of the market assessment prepared by the Goodman Williams Group. The full report, entitled Market Assessment, City of Des Plaines, has been published under separate cover and should be reviewed in its entirety. The full report contains pertinent demographic data for the City of Des Plaines.

1. Background to the Assignment

HNTB has been retained by the City of Des Plaines to update its Comprehensive Plan. As part of this planning process, HNTB has contracted with Goodman Williams Group to assess the current and future development environment in Des Plaines and identify opportunities and areas that may be subject to development pressure or land use changes. This report presents the results of the first phase of our work: overviews of the residential, retail, entertainment, industrial, and office markets.

2. Methodology

As part of these market overviews, Goodman Williams Group completed the following tasks in Summer 2005:

- Interviewed more than a dozen downtown business owners, civic leaders, and representatives of the real estate industry.
- Participated in various workshops organized by HNTB
- Analyzed current demographic and household characteristics as well as population and employment projections to gain an understanding of future demand for various land uses.
- Visited residential, retail, entertainment, industrial, and office developments in Des Plaines and surrounding communities to determine their competitive market positions.

3. Summary of Findings

Residential

Despite the fact that Des Plaines is a mature, built-out community, opportunities for additional residential development are numerous, as described below. New residential developments in first ring suburbs with good expressway access and transit options will continue to attract buyers. With varying product being planned, no single segment of the market is likely to be overbuilt in the foreseeable future.

- ***Condominium development.*** Despite some concerns that this market may be saturated, there is ample market support for an additional 100 units a year on average. Increasingly, new condominium developments may have to distinguish themselves from existing projects by including a higher level of amenities or through more distinctive architectural character. Providing adequate parking for residents and guests will help address the concern of existing residents as well as insure the marketability of the units. Additional residential developments for seniors are also likely given the demographic trends of Des Plaines.

- ***Townhouses.*** Townhouses will be an increasingly popular choice to attract younger residents into the community. This housing type is particularly appropriate on infill sites or former commercial or industrial areas in need of redevelopment. One or two projects per year adding 75 to 100 new units could be supported in this market.
- ***Single-Family Homes.*** Des Plaines is a predominantly single-family community, and this remains the preferred housing choice of most area residents. New single-family homes will continue to be built on individual lots, replacing older less functional homes. Regulating these “teardowns” will insure that they do not overwhelm or compromise existing neighborhoods. In addition, if land were to be made available, the market would support a new high-end residential subdivision of single family homes. Maryville Academy’s acreage has been mentioned as one possible site for future redevelopment.

Retail

Opportunities for new retail development in Des Plaines exist in the downtown, in the Five Corners Area north of downtown and along the major commercial arteries.

- ***Metropolitan Square and Downtown Retail Opportunities.*** Downtown Des Plaines has the potential to support more convenience and specialty retail to serve the growing base of downtown residents, commuters, and workers. In addition to the 40,000-square-foot Save & Shop Marketplace, Metropolitan Square is adding 74,000 square feet of retail space. This space, along with some of the vacancies or underutilized store fronts along Miner Street, is more than sufficient to satisfy the unmet retail demand in such categories as: restaurants, specialty shops selling apparel, accessories, or small household items, and gift shops.

Current leasing efforts at Metropolitan Square are being hampered by the appearance of the Miner Street frontage, which serves as the “front door” to Metropolitan Square. As construction is completed and Metropolitan Square is leased out, attention must be paid to upgrading the appearance and functionality of the commercial spaces on Miner Street.

- ***Larger Format Retailing in the Five Corners Area.*** Currently, the so-called Five Corners Area north of downtown is being studied to determine if it is TIF-eligible. As planning commences for its eventual redevelopment, consideration should be given to promoting large-format retail development. Our market analysis suggests potential support for 200,000 to 300,000 square feet of retail space that might include the following types of stores: electronics, home improvement, pet supply, books, office supply, crafts, housewares, and home furnishings. Planning for this area should address the traffic and circulation along the major arterials: Rand, Golf, and River Roads. In addition, this area must be appropriately tied into Metropolitan Square as well as the residential buildings along River Road.
- ***Commercial Corridors: Lee Street, Oakton Street and Elmhurst Roads.*** Des Plaines’ major commercial corridors are in need of updating, both in terms of their physical appearances and the mix of businesses. The City should work with existing shopping center owners to help market the strip centers and keep

them leased. In areas where the retail and businesses are spotty, consideration should be given to clustering the retail around the key intersections and allowing mixed-use buildings with residential components in the mid-blocks.

Entertainment.

Creating additional entertainment venues would be a positive addition to the residents of this community. It would also give Des Plaines a more prominent identity by drawing visitors into the community. Among the ideas worth pursuing are:

- ***The Des Plaines Theater.*** A decision needs to be made on the future of the Des Plaines Theater. Significant public investment will be needed to insure quality restoration and programming that serves all segments of the community. The theater occupies one of the most prominent corners in downtown Des Plaines, and potentially could become once again a focal point of downtown Des Plaines.
- ***New Construction Cineplex.*** A multi-screen movie theater would need a large site (in excess of ten acres) that could accommodate the required parking. Discussions with those knowledgeable about film distribution zones could help determine the feasibility of locating a new Cineplex in Des Plaines.
- ***Golf Course.*** If adequate acreage could be found, a public course would be a welcome amenity to this community.

Industrial.

Des Plaines has a large and diversified base of manufacturing and distribution firms. Retaining existing manufacturing firms will prove increasingly challenging in coming years, as buildings become obsolete and land prices escalate. Pressure will increase to rezone individual properties for residential or retail uses, particularly along Northwest Highway and in other scattered industrial areas. While maintaining Des Plaines' industrial base is an important goal, selective rezonings in the northern portion of the city should be considered in the context of the new Comprehensive Plan.

Des Plaines should also embrace the growing demand for logistics and distribution space that can best be accommodated in the southwestern portion of the city, nearest to O'Hare and the expressways. Demand for large sophisticated distribution facilities, like the 411,000 square foot building recently completed in Willie Road TIF District #3, should increase in the coming decade, in response both to changes in the logistics industry and improvements to the airport and its cargo operations.

Office.

Located within the O'Hare office submarket, Des Plaines has a competitive office inventory of 13 primarily Class B and C buildings with a total of 2.5 million square feet of space. The O'Hare submarket, as well as the other office submarkets in metropolitan Chicago, have been suffering through a period of high vacancy rates and modest demand for new space. Recovery is projected to be slow, and no new investment-grade office buildings are likely to be built for the foreseeable future.

Des Plaines also has a sizable inventory of smaller office buildings and commercial spaces occupied by medical, dental, legal, real estate, insurance, and other

professional service firms that primarily serve the local population. Downtown Des Plaines will be adding 22,000 square feet of new office space with the completion of Metropolitan Square. This new space is likely to meet any new demand for quality local space in the community for the foreseeable future, particularly if 640 Pearson remains in office use.

IV. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues and opportunities were generated from key person interviews and from Steering Committee members are listed in the Appendix. From these issues and opportunities, key planning considerations were generated to be placed under consideration as the Comprehensive Planning process moves forward. These planning considerations broken into different categories are as follows.

General

- ✓ The downtown redevelopment effort, including the library plaza and Metropolitan Square, has made a positive impact to date. It is critical to keep a momentum going by establishing sound planning and development goals.
- ✓ There is a need to improve the City's image and to create a unique and distinctive identity.
- ✓ It is important for existing and future retail, service, and recreational opportunities to address the needs of the changing population including income, age, and cultural diversity.
- ✓ Implementation of recommendations developed in the Comprehensive Plan is important.

Land Use and Economic Development

- ✓ As the single family residential areas experience teardowns and rebuilding, there is a need to make sure controls are in place to address issues such as height, site coverage, and the inappropriate subdividing of lots.
- ✓ Large scale properties, such as the Maryville Academy and Holy Family Medical campuses, may one day exceed their useful life causing a need for the City to be proactive in planning for future development of these sites.
- ✓ Redevelopment of large vacant retail sites, such as abandoned shopping centers, is critical for the City.
- ✓ A variety of land uses and a balance between service and retail uses in the downtown is important and will keep the downtown vibrant.
- ✓ Commercial corridors, including Rand Road, Oakton Street, Lee Street, and Elmhurst Road are in need of updating, both in terms of their physical appearances as well as the mix of businesses along these corridors.
- ✓ Flood control is a major concern for properties on the east side of the City and until resolved, will affect the quality of life for residents.
- ✓ The City is surrounded by unincorporated areas on the north, northeast and southwest. Planning for the future and potential annexation of these sites is an integral part of the Plan.
- ✓ There is a lack of big box retailers in town. Planning for these types of stores should address traffic and circulation along the major arterials. Creating an entertainment venue would be a positive addition to the community and a draw for visitors.
- ✓ There has been a decline in the manufacturing base due to several factors including obsolete facilities, high land prices, and high county taxes. Maintaining and potentially expanding this tax base in appropriate areas of the city should be a consideration. Capitalizing on the proximity to O'Hare Airport and the demand for large logistics and distribution space is appropriate.

- ✓ Open space provides a valuable amenity to residents. Multi-use bike and pedestrian trails that provide a connection with residential and commercial spaces provide not only recreational benefits but economic benefits as well.
- ✓ The continued emphasis on a variety of housing types and working class housing is important to the community.
- ✓ The City's proximity to O'Hare Airport is both an asset and a liability. Planning for the future use and connectivity of industrially zoned land to the southwest of the City in light of the recent airport acquisition is critical.

Urban Design

- ✓ High quality new development is an important goal.
- ✓ Transitions and buffers between different land uses must be improved.
- ✓ Implementation of the design guidelines for the downtown and along Oakton and Lee Streets is critical to successful redevelopment.
- ✓ Primary and secondary gateways into the City need to be determined and appropriate design and land use criteria developed.
- ✓ A variety of building types is important to an attractive downtown. Sensitive integration of older buildings with new construction is appropriate.

Community Facilities and Services

- ✓ In order to maintain the City's quality schools, there is a need for additional financial resources.
- ✓ In order to maintain the existing, and in many cases, older infrastructure, there is a need to generate more revenue.
- ✓ The City is benefited by the presence of Oakton Community College, a new library, and excellent park district, among other excellent facilities.
- ✓ New Police Department and Fire Department facilities may cause to redevelop their existing facilities.

Transportation, Access, and Parking

- ✓ There are many major high profile regional corridors in the City including Rand Road, Des Plaines River Road, Elmhurst Road, Northwest Highway, Oakton, Golf and Touhy.
- ✓ Metra and Pace provide an important asset in town. The Metra/UP Des Plaines Station is a focal point in the downtown and provides an important "captive market" for downtown businesses.
- ✓ A redevelopment of the Cumberland Station as a transit oriented development (TOD) could provide easier access to that station and create potential new retail and residential uses in that area.
- ✓ Parking is problematic in the downtown. Parking for the City Hall and other businesses is something that should be addressed.
- ✓ One way streets in the downtown could be causing some difficulty in accessing specific businesses as they cause some confusion for visitors.
- ✓ Railroad crossings in the downtown and throughout the City increase traffic congestion. Taking this into consideration when planning new developments is important.

APPENDIX

Steering Committee Members

Tim Angell, Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development
Tom Becker, Alderman
Trudy Bers, Oakton Community College
Tim Bleuher, Director of Community & Economic Development
Barry Collins, Economic Development Commission
Carl Kowalski, Plan Commission
David Niemeyer, City Manager
Rick Ornberg, Des Plaines Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Ramon Sanchez, Community Representative
Arnie Seegers, Zoning Board of Appeals

Key Person Interview List

Bruce Adriani, Norwood Builders
Tom Becker, Alderman and Broker
Peg Blanchard, PB Blanchard and Associates
Jim Egeberg, Finance Director
Bob Fink, Joseph Freed
John Heavey, Fire Chief
John Hecker, Des Plaines Park District
Fred Heichman, Tucker Development
Jeff Hitz, Concord Homes
Mike Johan, School District 63
John La Berg, Engineering
Mary Maconi, Littelfuse
Dan Pontirelli, Pontirelli Builders
Jim Prandini, Police Chief
Fred Reynolds , Centerpoint
Paul Saletnik, Des Plaines Theater
Sharon Smith, Des Plaines Senior Center
Bill Vausone, Colliers, Bennett, and Kahnweiler

Summary of Issues and Opportunities

Summary of Issues

Land Use and Development

Annexation issues
Comprehensive Plan implementation
How to plan for/handle residential teardowns
Flood control-implementation and lack of funding
Balance between retail and service
Future of Holy Family Hospital and Maryville Academy
Retain control of future development
Grayfields/vacant shopping centers

Transportation, Access, and Parking

Traffic congestion and flow
Freight traffic/at grade crossings are problematic
Need for better transportation coordination and train/bus connection
Need for additional parking in Downtown

Urban Design

High quality new development
Transitions between different land uses
Integration of older commercial buildings with new construction
Preservation of green space

Community Facilities and Services

Existing infrastructure in need of improvement
Financial strength of school districts

Economic Development

Need for additional retail
Need for entertainment for all ages
Decline in manufacturing base/retention of manufacturing
Obsolete warehouse/manufacturing space
Outdated commercial buildings
City revenues/how to generate more money
High Cook County commercial and industrial tax rate
Lack of pro-active economic development planning
High industrial land prices prohibiting future industrial development
Need for improvement along Oakton-Lee retail center

General / Quality of Life

Lack of affordable housing for workforce
Higher unemployment rate than state average
Necessary to serve diverse population
Need to deal with O'Hare expansion
Availability of social services for lower income population
Age diversity/change in population
Need for community leadership
Need to improve Des Plaines "image"

A-4

Summary of Opportunities

Land Use and Development

Affordable housing
Development opportunities
Land Use diversity
Good housing stock

Transportation, Access, and Parking

Excellent location
Public transit availability
Easy access to national and state highway system, rail and air
Close to City of Chicago

Community Facilities and Services

Excellent schools
Oakton Community College
Great Park District
Beautiful new library
Proximate to forest preserves

Economic Development

Good population base to support local retailers and businesses
Large workforce
Great Chamber of Commerce
Major employers in town

General / Quality of Life

Diverse population