

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE TOWN OF CICERO, ILLINOIS

ADOPTED 6-27-2017



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Report Acronyms

ADT - Average Daily Traffic	GIS - Geographic Information System
ARRA - America Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009	HUD - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
BNSF - Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad	ILDCEO - Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
CDBG - Community Development Block Grant	IDOT - Illinois Department of Transportation
CDC - Center for Disease Control and Prevention	IEPA - Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
CIP - Capital Improvements Plan	IHDA - Illinois Housing Development Authority
CLG - Certified Local Government	IHPA - Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program	LTA - Local Technical Assistance Program
CMAQ - Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning	LTS - Level of Traffic Stress
CM2020 - Chicago Metropolis 2020	MFT - Motor Fuel Tax
CNT - Center for Neighborhood Technology	MWRD -Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
COD - Cargo Oriented Development)	PDA - Priority Development Areas
CTA - Chicago Transportation Authority	PUD - Planned Unit Development
DOJ - U.S. Department of Justice	RTA - Regional Transportation Authority
EECBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant	TIF - Tax Increment Financing
FAR - Floor Area Ratio	TIP - Transportation Improvement Program
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency	SRTS - Safe Routes to School
	TOD - Transit Oriented Development

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Part 1: Setting the Stage

Cicero will be the model for a 21st century integrated, inclusive and connected community.

Cicero will be a community with an active local economy and united families.

— Vision statements taken from Cicero residents during the March 5, 2015 community speak-out session.

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Chapter 1. Plan Introduction

In 2014, the Town of Cicero, in collaboration with Cicero citizens and stakeholders, initiated a year-long process to create its first Comprehensive Plan since 1974. The new Comprehensive Plan comes at a time when the Chicago metropolitan region is emerging from one of the more significant economic recessions in recent decades with many inner-ring suburbs like Cicero seeking ways to enhance the quality of life in their communities while addressing the challenges of limited financial resources, changing populations, and aging infrastructure.

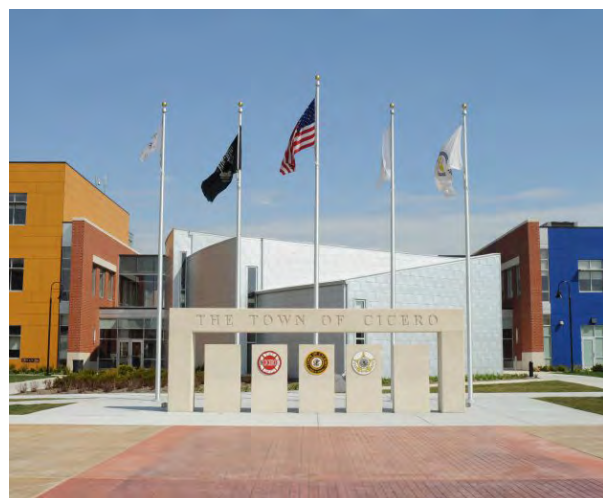
This Comprehensive Plan is being created to provide a new strategic vision and direction for Cicero – one that capitalizes on its existing assets, including its housing stock, manufacturing base, schools, and community services. The Plan also incorporates planning strategies for improving the appearances and vibrancy of its residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, diversifying its industrial and employment base, and adding new recreational and open space amenities where needed and appropriate. Furthermore, the Plan was prepared with extensive community participation. Specific questions were asked of Cicero residents stakeholders: What makes Cicero a good place to live and work? What parts of Cicero should be preserved, protected or changed? What amenities in the neighborhoods, commercial districts or parks should be enhanced or added? What makes up Cicero’s future industrial and manufacturing base? What should be Cicero’s image and brand identity within the region?

Cicero is known in the Chicago area for its stable neighborhoods and vibrant commercial areas, its thriving industries, good schools, access to public transit and Interstates 290 and 55, and close proximity to Midway Airport. Its location adjacent to Chicago and other suburbs also provides access to the region’s employment centers, recreational and natural resource amenities, and other educational institutions and cultural attractions.

However, like many of Chicago inner-ring suburbs, Cicero has changed significantly since the end of World War II. Prior to the 1950s, Cicero was a manufacturing hub with industries that employed residents from the adjacent bungalow and two-flat neighborhoods; nearby commercial districts provided the goods, services and entertainment venues within walking distances of those neighborhoods. However, the loss of some industries and the shift of retail activity to strip centers from Cermak Road and other

traditional commercial corridors over the decades pose both new challenges and opportunities to diversifying and expanding Cicero’s economic base, given a largely built-out development pattern. The shift in Cicero’s population base has been the most dramatic. From a predominant Eastern European population make-up to one that is mostly Hispanic and Mexican American, this transformation has allowed Cicero’s neighborhoods and commercial areas to remain stable and viable for future reinvestment and revitalization.

Cicero’s 21st century challenges require new approaches to community planning and redevelopment. Maintaining the vibrancy of Cicero’s traditional neighborhoods and commercial corridors should focus on efforts in encouraging and facilitating private-sector investments in buildings and businesses along with Town-initiated efforts in enhancing the streetscape, infrastructure, and public space environments. New housing and mixed-use developments in targeted locations can add people and businesses while also broadening housing choices for existing residents. Small



business development efforts should build on the fledgling clusters of independent stores and the entrepreneurial spirit of the Hispanic and Mexican-American community. Focusing development and investments in the neighborhoods and shopping districts can also help to promote a more unified and appealing image of Cicero as a place to live and work. More importantly, the Cicero community will need to explore new partnerships and creative organizational structures so that it can attract private sector and community involvement, investment and commitment for its future. Forging new partnerships can also enhance the capacity of the community to accomplish more.

The Town of Cicero has made significant strides in recent years to update its many community facilities, plan for future development and enhance its municipal services to better meet the quality of life needs of its residents. Cicero stakeholders recognize that in order to adequately address the issues that matter the most to them, the Cicero community must continue to explore all opportunities for growth and development that build on its existing assets, including its people, businesses, and institutions.

With these opportunities and challenges in mind, the Town of Cicero understands that a new Comprehensive Plan can serve as the roadmap for undertaking new initiatives and in coordinating the efforts and activities of other key partners, such as the School, Park and Library districts, business and property owners, local industries and other organizations, agencies, and entities. A fully up-to-date Comprehensive Plan can also help to make more informed decisions on critical issues related to land use, transportation, and capital improvements, issues that can have significant impacts on how the Town develops in the future. Change will always occur – a Comprehensive Plan that responds to local conditions effectively can help address the challenges that change always presents.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

In the years ahead, as the Cicero community seeks to explore new development opportunities along with the revitalization and enhancement of its neighborhoods and commercial areas, a well-defined vision and planning framework is needed to help guide local decision-making, especially in regards to land use, economic development, transportation, open space, housing and neighborhoods, commercial corridors and districts, and infrastructure and capital improvements. A Comprehensive Plan should serve as a “guidebook” for elected officials and Town staff, residents, business owners, and potential investors, allowing them to make well-informed decisions based on community needs, existing assets and conditions, and on future economic and social trends.

Most importantly, decisions will be based on the community’s future vision –for what it would like to become over the next 10 to 25 years. The time horizon for implementing a Comprehensive Plan and working toward its community vision is 10 to 25 years, although the Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years to address local needs, issues and opportunities, and changing trends. The Plan should be used on an on-going basis to assist the community in making land use or development decisions.

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan serves several key purposes:

Land Use Framework. The Plan provides a land use framework and strategy that seeks to promote the highest and best uses of land while reducing land use conflicts and increasing the benefits the land can provide in terms of employment, transportation, clean water and recreation. Benefits must also be enduring and sustainable so that current and succeeding generations of Cicero residents can enjoy an enhanced quality of the life. In addition, the Plan sets forth broad development and revitalization strategies that can be used to review and refine current and on-going community improvement and economic development projects, as well as adjust zoning and development regulations to ensure that such projects are in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

Public Investment Guide. The Cicero Town Board should use the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision-making regarding investments in infrastructure, community facilities, and other capital improvements. The Plan can also be used in seeking grants at the regional, state, and federal levels.

Private Investment Guide. Developers, industries, entrepreneurs, and others interested in investing in Cicero can use the Comprehensive Plan to gain insight into the Town's development and land use policies. Such investors also view sound comprehensive planning as critical to ensuring the viability and long-term success of their investments in the community.

Community Engagement Tool. The process in creating this Comprehensive Plan provided opportunities for local leaders, stakeholders and residents to understand and evaluate community strengths and weaknesses, and to craft strategies and recommendations for addressing critical planning issues. Future implementation and planning efforts for Cicero's residential, commercial, and industrial areas as recommended in this Comprehensive Plan will also provide additional opportunities to engage Cicero's stakeholders on important development and revitalization issues.

Future Vision. This Comprehensive Plan serves as an important document in informing current and future community stakeholders about Cicero's long term vision. Above all, preparing the Comprehensive Plan represented a collaborative process between the Town and its citizens in determining Cicero's future.

Implementation Strategy. The implementation strategy included in the Comprehensive Plan prioritizes specific planning actions, outlines roles and responsibilities between the Town of Cicero and other agencies, organizations and entities, and identifies other stakeholders and groups that could participate in implementation efforts now and into the future.



A fully up-to-date Comprehensive Plan can also help to make more informed decisions on critical issues related to land use, transportation, and capital improvements, issues that can have significant impacts on how the Town develops in the future.



Comprehensive Plan Organization

This Comprehensive Plan is organized into two parts with nine separate chapters. The first part, *Setting the Stage*, provides an overview of community planning issues, along with existing conditions and land use trends. The second part, the Comprehensive Plan, includes a more in-depth discussion of Cicero planning issues and summarizes specific planning goals, policy statements and strategies. In detail, the parts and chapters in the Cicero Comprehensive Plan include:

Part 1: Setting the Stage

Part 1 consists of the following three chapters:

Chapter 1: Plan Introduction – provides an overview of key community planning issues, Comprehensive Plan organization, and, a summary of planning policies and priority planning initiatives.

Chapter 2: The Community Speaks – summarizes the community engagement program and outreach activities undertaken during the existing conditions analysis and community planning phases of this comprehensive planning process.

Chapter 3: General Characteristics and Land Use Trends – summarizes Cicero’s socioeconomic and demographic trends, land uses, building and environmental conditions, previous plans, and zoning and land use regulations.

Part 2: Comprehensive Plan

Part 2 consist of the following chapters:

Chapter 4: Future Vision and Land Use Strategy – outlines a Cicero Vision Statement for 2040 and recommends a comprehensive land use strategy that guides future investment and development in Cicero along with suggested changes and additions to Cicero’s zoning and land use regulations.

Chapter 5: Livable Neighborhoods – summarizes the communities housing stock and characteristics and provides planning goals, policies and strategies for Cicero’s residential neighborhoods.

Chapter 6: Prosperous Town – provides an overview of Cicero’s commercial and industrial districts and recommends a series of planning polices and strategies for strengthening the community’s economic base and promoting vibrant and resilient commercial and industrial districts.

Chapter 7: Sustainable Systems provides an overview of Cicero’s community facilities and transportation and infrastructure systems, and recommends a series of planning goals and strategies related to capital improvement programming, public facilities, flood mitigation, and enhancing mobility and transportation options.

Chapter 8: Stewardship and Implementation – summarizes key comprehensive plan implementation actions and strategies.

Relationship to the GO TO 2040 Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the official regional planning organization for the northeastern Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. CMAP developed and now guides the implementation of GO TO 2040, metropolitan Chicago’s first comprehensive regional plan in more than 100 years. To address anticipated population growth of more than 2 million new residents, GO TO 2040 establishes coordinated strategies that will help the region’s 284 communities address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality of life issues.

The Town of Cicero Comprehensive Plan aligns with the regional planning goals represented in GO TO 2040 and takes into account the larger regional economic and social changes and forces that may have an impact on Cicero’s future. GO TO 2040 states that *“municipalities are critical to the success of GO TO 2040 because of their responsibility for land use decisions, which create the built environment of the region and determine the livability of its communities. The most important*

thing that a municipality can do to implement GO TO 2040 is to take this responsibility very seriously.” By developing a new comprehensive plan, Cicero takes responsibility for guiding its future and demonstrates its commitment to helping shape the future of the region as well.

Planning Process

In June 2014, the Town of Cicero, along with community stakeholder groups and residents, initiated an 18-month planning process to create the Town of Cicero Comprehensive Plan. The creation of the Cicero Comprehensive Plan was funded through CMAP’s Local technical Assistance Grant Program. To facilitate the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Cicero engaged a multi-disciplinary planning team that included the following firms:

- The Lakota Group (*Planning, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Landscape Architecture, Community Relations*)
- Goodman Williams Group (*Economic Analysis and Real Estate*)
- TY Lin International (*Transportation and Mobility*)
- Duncan and Associates (*Zoning and Regulatory Systems*)
- Christopher B. Burke Engineering (*Infrastructure and Flood Mitigation*)

A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, representing a broad-based segment of community stakeholders, including local property owners and residents, Town leaders and officials, industries and business owners, civic institutions and other organizations and governmental agencies, was formed in July 2014 to help guide the Plan’s development.

The comprehensive planning process involved three distinct phases: a “State of the Town” phase where an assessment of existing conditions was conducted by the planning team and a State of the Town Report prepared; a “visioning” phase where preliminary

comprehensive planning strategies and concepts were developed and presented for community feedback; and, a final plan-making phase in which planning goals, strategies and implementation action steps were developed by the planning team in collaboration with the community, and accepted and adopted by the Town. The last phase of the planning process was completed in January 2016.

Phase 1: State of the Town Phase (July 2014 – January 2015)

The first phase, initiated in July 2014, comprised a comprehensive assessment of Cicero’s existing conditions in the following areas: land use, transportation, infrastructure, parks and open space, community facilities, neighborhoods and housing, and commercial and industrial areas. The planning team also reviewed relevant planning documents and policies, assessed the community’s existing demographics and economic development activities and, defined challenges and opportunities on achieving short and long-term planning and

The Town of Cicero Comprehensive Plan will align with the regional planning goals represented in GO TO 2040 and to take into account the larger regional economic and social changes and forces that may have an impact on Cicero’s future.



revitalization goals. Phase 1 also included various focus group and stakeholder interview sessions to gain public input and insight regarding critical planning issues. Field work activities were also conducted. Field work, document analyses, and review of interview and focus group session proceedings were incorporated into this State of the Town Report. The Report was reviewed by the Steering Committee with final draft delivered to the Town of Cicero in mid-January 2015.

Phase 1 included the following specific activities:

Project Start Meeting (June 25, 2014). A meeting with Town staff and members of the Steering Committee was conducted to initiate the planning process and to discuss specific items related to the overall project schedule, and the scheduling of stakeholder and focus group interview sessions.

Previous Plans/Studies. A review of previous comprehensive plans, planning reports, facility studies, demographics, and local development regulations was conducted by the Planning Team. These reports and studies are summarized in the Existing Conditions Report.

Stakeholder Interview Sessions (November 5-6, 2014). Several interview and focus group sessions were conducted over a two-day period with various community stakeholders, including Town officials and department heads and the local schools. Subsequent to the visit, the planning team conducted telephone interviews with other key stakeholders that could not participate in earlier on-site sessions.

Team Fieldwork. The planning team visited Cicero several times during the months of July, August, September, and October 2014, to observe and assess existing conditions within the community.

Community Workshop. A workshop was organized and conducted on November 19, 2014 to solicit feedback through interactive exercises from the community on critical community planning issues. Approximately 60 people attended the workshop.

Project Website. A website was created to promote the comprehensive planning process, post planning documents and to solicit comments from Cicero residents on community planning issues.

State of the Town Report. Following the assessment and analysis of planning issues, the Planning Team prepared a State of the Town Report, which summarized Cicero's key strengths, challenges, and opportunities for its long-term development and growth.

After the State of the Town Report was delivered and feedback received from the Steering Committee and the Cicero community, the following two phases were undertaken to complete the planning process:

Phase 2: Community Visioning (January – May 2015)

The second phase of the planning involved the creation and development of specific planning concepts and land use strategies that enhance Cicero's physical appearance, transportation and infrastructure options and overall economic environment. As part of the visioning process, planning strategies were presented during a community workshop held on March 11, 2015 at the Cicero Community Center, and additional stakeholder interviews for discussion and consideration. Afterward, planning concepts were refined into a Draft Comprehensive Plan.

Phase 3: Final Comprehensive Plan (May 2015 – February 2017)

The final phase of the planning process involved the refinement of preliminary planning concepts and implementation strategies into a Final Comprehensive Plan document. Specific site studies and illustrations were also prepared for feasible development sites within Cicero. A third community workshop was conducted on October 28, 2015 to present the planning concepts and strategies and a mock "vote with your dollars" exercise that required workshop participants to rank by priority key planning strategies for implementation. The Final Comprehensive Plan was prepared and delivered to the Town of Cicero in February 2017.

Key Planning Issues

The following are key planning issues facing the Cicero community. As mentioned previously, Cicero, like many inner-ring Chicago suburbs, is emerging from the impacts of the economic recession of 2008, which resulted in a high number of home foreclosures and the loss of some retail businesses and industries. However, Cicero's neighborhoods have remained stable and continue to experience overcrowding; new industries and brand name and big box stores have opened in recent years. The following key planning issues are not meant to be an exhaustive listing and examination of all issues facing Cicero, but rather a snapshot of conditions as observed and assessed by the planning team with input from community stakeholders. These issues shape and inform the Cicero Comprehensive Plan vision and plan framework.

Neighborhoods and Housing. The brick bungalows, two-flats, traditional apartment buildings, and post-World War II Ranch homes that comprise Cicero's residential neighborhoods represent a solid housing stock that continues to serve the housing needs of young and established households and families. The housing stock also contributes to Cicero's sense of place, design quality, and authenticity that is not often found in other Chicago suburbs. While the foreclosure crisis is abating in Cicero, the community still faces challenges in overcrowding, housing vacancy and housing stock maintenance.

Beyond the existing housing stock, there is a demonstrated need for new multi-family housing development in Cicero, especially given the fact the Town's senior population is expected to account for 70 percent of the Town's population growth over the next five years.

Traditional Commercial Corridors and Neighborhood Districts. Cicero's traditional commercial corridors and districts are relatively vibrant with a mix of small businesses, brand name stores and various service-related enterprises. However, local stakeholders are concerned with increasing vacancies along certain corridors – especially Cermak Road, storefront conversions to residential units, and the lack of visual appeal in the

streetscape and public spaces. It is also unclear what local efforts are being undertaken to spur small business development in the commercial districts.

Transit and Cargo-Oriented Development Opportunities. Previous planning studies have concluded that Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Cargo-Oriented Development (COD) opportunities exist near Cicero's Pink Line and Metra transit stations and in select industrial areas where land is being actively cleared and redeveloped. Clearly, TOD is feasible given the market need for different types of residential, retail, and commercial uses other than the big-box format; new multi-family residential that can also provide a source of rental and senior housing in Cicero. However, one significant challenge to pursuing COD is the lack of available industrial land, which has decreased over the years due to the redevelopment of former industrial land into commercial, and the gradual transition of the BNSF Intermodal Facility between 26th Street and Ogden Avenue in future years to a switching/classification yard. Therefore, what potential industrial development sites remain may be more suitable for warehousing and manufacturing that is more dependent on accessibility to the nearby interstate highways than rail access. New policies and zoning provisions are needed to protect industrial land from conversion to commercial use, which has been occurring in certain areas of Cicero over the last several decades.



Community Workshop #1 participants discussing issues and providing their thoughts to members of the project team.

Parks and Open Space. Although stakeholder input and anecdotal information has indicated that Cicero is under served in parks, more study and analysis is needed to determine what specific park and recreation needs are in the community. There also appears to be no master plan for Cicero's parks and recreation facilities. In addition, several stakeholder groups have raised the issue of whether Cicero would be better served with one park district rather than two.

Community Design and Physical Appearance.

Cicero stakeholders have expressed the need to enhance the visual appearance of the community's traditional commercial areas and neighborhoods through streetscape and public realm improvements, including new trees and landscape treatments, street lighting, banners, public art, parking lot screening, and crosswalk paving.

Zoning and Land Use Regulations. In general, Cicero's current zoning needs to be revised and updated to address some of its cumulative aspects that may be counter to the community's long-term planning and economic development goals. More

specifically, the Town's industrial zoning permits a variety of commercial uses, which in turn works to reduce the amount of available industrial land. There is also a need for more design-based elements that can guide new development design, especially in the traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas where new development should be compatible in form, scale and building materials.

Public Schools. Both public school districts have made investments in new buildings in recent years to accommodate a growing student population and planning is ongoing for new school facilities. The move to neighborhood-based schools may also help bind the local schools to their neighborhoods more closely than in the past. However, finding appropriate locations and land for new schools will always be problematic given the built-out nature. Securing monies and resources for new schools is also an ongoing challenge.

Community Facilities. The Town of Cicero has made significant strides in the last decade to construct new facilities and enhance the delivery of services. New facilities might be needed to expand services related to the Youth Commission and the Senior Center. Police and Fire facilities are currently adequate.

Community Institutions. Churches and religious institutions support a strong network of social ties within Cicero, as well as provide meaningful services that support both individuals and families. In terms of community and economic development, there are few, if any, organizations and entities that work to enhance the quality of life in Cicero beyond what religious institutions and the Town of Cicero already provide. A new Chamber of Commerce could potentially fill some community development roles as it relates to the commercial and industrial sectors.

Infrastructure Needs. The Town relies on a yearly schedule or budget to determine capital improvements. Currently, there is no comprehensive multi-year program in place to address future infrastructure needs. The development of a capital improvement plan (CIP), which involves a short-range plan with a four to ten year outlook that identifies capital projects and funding sources, is needed. In addition, a local government will want to develop



Community Workshop #2 participants providing feedback through a Visual Preference Survey.

basic policies for funding and implementing the plan. A review of the Town's current finances to fund future capital improvements would be critical component of the program.

Automobile Parking. Utilization of on-street parking is very high on some streets in Cicero, resulting in apparent parking shortages. This is due in large part to housing occupancy and proximity to commercial corridors and neighborhood shopping districts.

Pedestrian and Mobility Enhancements. The roadway network is used for multi-modal purposes (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and vehicle). How the roadway network is used changes over time. It needs to adapt to the changing desires of the community. In recent history, the roadway network has seen an increase in vehicle use. This Plan will address how the Town should improve the roadway network for bicycling, walking, and transit use.

Pedestrian safety should be of utmost importance. Pedestrians are overrepresented in fatal and injury crashes in Cicero. Traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements are needed to reduce traffic speeds, improve visibility, and improve the safety of the pedestrian environment. Pedestrian improvements are most needed on Cermak Road, Cicero Avenue, Laramie Avenue, 16th Street, 26th Street, 35th Street, and Pershing Road. Pedestrian safety is a major concern in Cicero. In a Town well covered by sidewalks and narrow, low-speed, residential streets, the high crash levels on major roadways indicates that more study into



Cicero's traditional two-flat housing stock.

the contributing factors of crashes is needed. A comprehensive plan in regards to pedestrian safety and infrastructure should be addressed. In addition, as bicyclists are overrepresented in fatal and injury crashes, there is a need to accommodate and improve the safety of the transportation network for existing bicyclists. Adding bike lanes and the installation of pavement markings and directional signs can help enhance mobility and transportation choices for Cicero residents.

Priority Planning Initiatives

The planning agenda for Cicero to 2040 includes the several key initiatives related to Cicero's housing and neighborhoods, commercial corridors and shopping districts, parks and open space, industrial areas and community design and appearances. These initiatives all serve to enhance community quality-of-life and economic competitiveness, build social capital, civic spirit and community cohesion.

Housing and Neighborhoods. Establish both public and private initiatives that focus on maintaining and rehabilitating Cicero's older housing stock of bungalows, two flats, and apartment blocks. This housing stock can continue to meet the future housing needs of Cicero's diverse populations and households. The Town has implemented efforts over the years through its CDBG and housing inspection programs to encourage housing rehabilitation and the construction of new affordable housing units. The Town could be aided in this effort with involvement from non-profit housing groups that can provide a number of other services from homebuyer counseling to rehabilitation and new construction financing. Initiatives to rehabilitate and maintain the bungalow and two-flat housing stock could be modeled after bungalow preservation initiatives in Chicago and neighboring Berwyn.

Strategic Housing Development. New housing should strive to meet the needs of Cicero's growing senior population and working class families. Neighborhood housing redevelopment will be long-term given that current price points for single-family homes and rental units accommodate the modest incomes of most Cicero households. New

multi-family development could take place as part of mixed-use developments near transit stations, near neighborhood commercial districts on available land, or in neighborhoods as infill development opportunities.

Revitalized Commercial Corridors. Promote Cicero's traditional commercial corridors, such as Cermak and Roosevelt Roads, and smaller neighborhood shopping districts as transit-oriented, mixed-use places that support small businesses and the entrepreneurial and creative uses of buildings and spaces.

Cicero as Regional Retail Center. With its large format retail cluster, maintain the Cicero Avenue commercial corridor as an important tax base for the community by encouraging appropriate redevelopment on remaining parcels and by implementing needed urban design and streetscape improvements to unify Cicero Avenue's physical appearance.

Industrial Redevelopment. Reserve existing industrial land for future redevelopment opportunities, especially along the southern industrial portions of Cicero Avenue and the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor, so that Cicero can reposition its industrial base to attract warehousing uses, smaller manufacturing enterprises and other industries that have less environmental impact on neighboring residential areas.

Community Appearances. Improving and enhancing the appearance of Cicero's commercial corridors and shopping districts should be a high priority. Such improvements can make the neighborhood and commercial districts more inviting and comfortable for pedestrians, increase sales for merchants, as well as support more street activities such as outdoor dining, festivals, and public events. Such improvements can also help to "placemake" Cicero in that opportunities to add public art elements in the streetscape can help distinguish, brand and identify Cicero to visitors, shoppers and investors. It also encourages local artists and residents to participate in streetscape and public improvement efforts. Other enhancements are needed along the Cicero Avenue corridor in particular and in the neighborhoods where they can help to promote safe walking environments for pedestrians. Historic

preservation should also be considered a key element of maintaining and enhancing community urban design and appearances.

Neighborhood Appearances. Undertake parkway, road, and urban design improvements in Cicero's neighborhoods that enhance livability and walkability, visual appearances, and promotes distinct neighborhood identities.

Industrial District Design. Implement new design and site design requirements and features that screen new industrial development from residential and commercial areas; incentives and tools should also be used to facilitate building and landscape improvements for existing industrial uses.

Connectivity and Mobility. Connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, commercial districts, civic uses, and other areas of the community by installing new bike lanes and other transportation improvements. Such improvements provide more transportation and mobility options for Cicero residents.

Parking Management. Study parking needs in individual commercial districts and neighborhoods so that tailored parking management strategies and programs can be implemented to balance revitalization and redevelopment projects with existing and future parking needs. Parking management is especially needed for Cicero's commercial corridors and smaller neighborhood shopping districts.

Transit Station Improvements. Undertake various physical improvements to CTA and Metra transit and bus stops, such as crosswalk and pedestrian enhancements, new bus stop shelters, wayfinding signage and bike corral installation, as a way to promote and increase transit ridership.

Capital Improvements Planning. Create a capital improvements plan (CIP) that outlines future investments in streets and infrastructure according to priority and need in neighborhoods and the commercial and industrial districts. The CIP process should begin with a system-wide evaluation of the Town's infrastructure. An important element of this evaluation is a life cycle analysis that determines the

age of infrastructure elements, its condition and useful or remaining life. For example, a water line is 40 years old and in fair condition with 20 years remaining. The analysis would help the Town to identify potential problems before they occur and rebuild the infrastructure based on a life cycle analysis.

Stormwater Management and Flood Mitigation.

Facilitate public and private-sector stormwater management initiatives that incorporate a combination of green design alternatives and infrastructure upgrades to reduce the impacts of significant rain and flooding events. Flood mitigation measures should be considered in future infrastructure enhancements and capital improvements planning.

Parks and Institutional Uses. Conduct a joint Clyde and Hawthorne Park District parks and open space planning process to consider upgrades to existing parks and possible development of new parks and recreational facilities. New parks were also proposed as part of the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*, adopted by the Cicero Town Board in November 2014.

54th Avenue Institutional Campus. Create an institutional campus along 54th Avenue between 16th Street and Cermak Road that incorporates new educational, open space and recreational facilities.

Community Services. Work to expand and enhance Town services, especially to Hispanic, youth and senior populations.

Zoning. Cicero's current Zoning Ordinance is in need of general update and revision in alignment with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. There is also a need for new zoning classifications for institutional uses, schools and community facilities in order to plan for the development of such uses more efficiently and to reduce land use conflicts between such uses and those of a higher development intensity. Design-based zoning tools, such as a form-based code that has been adopted for Roosevelt Road, could be considered for Cicero's commercial corridors.

Improving and enhancing the appearances of Cicero's commercial corridors and shopping districts should be a high priority. Such improvements can make the neighborhood and commercial districts more inviting and comfortable for pedestrians, increase sales for merchants, as well as support more street activities such as outdoor dining, festivals, and public events.



Roosevelt Road commercial district at Austin Boulevard



Pedestrians at the intersection of Cicero Avenue and Laramie.

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Chapter 2. The Community Speaks

One of the primary goals of a comprehensive planning process is to engage community residents and stakeholders on the issues and priorities that matter to them, especially those stakeholders that do not ordinarily participate in community planning activities. A successful comprehensive planning process must include a multi-faceted stakeholder engagement approach to ensure there are different ways and means in which stakeholders can participate in the process, which can lead to a more thorough understanding of community concerns and desires for Cicero's future and long-term community support for Comprehensive Plan implementation.

Community Engagement Activities

The Comprehensive Plan's community engagement program included a series of stakeholder interviews, community workshops, online surveys, and community presentations. Additional interviews and focus group sessions provided input throughout the process. A Steering Committee comprised of various Cicero stakeholders and stakeholder groups was formed in June 2014 to help guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

Project Start Meeting/Steering Committee Meeting #1

A project start meeting with the Steering Committee was conducted on June 25, 2014 to introduce members of the planning team to the Steering Committee and to review the overall project schedule and planning process.

Stakeholder Interviews

One-on-one and small group meetings with Town staff and department heads provided an opportunity for the planning team to understand key issues facing Cicero. Interviews with Town staff also provided insight into key planning issues related to commercial and industrial areas, housing and neighborhoods, local schools and parks, transportation, and Town infrastructure and capital improvement needs.

MindMixer Website

In July 2014, the planning team launched a project website based in a MindMixer platform. MindMixer is an interactive internet-based community engagement tool that allows community residents to post ideas, suggestions and comments. MindMixer also allows

the planning team to directly communicate and send updates and messages to those that have registered to participate on the MindMixer site. To date, there have been more 1,189 unique visitors to the site with 3,686 total views. In addition, 76 ideas and comments have been posted to MindMixer since its launch. The website also included general information about the planning process and has been used to send periodic updates to registered participants of the website.

Steering Committee Meetings

During the course of the planning process, the planning team met with the Steering Committee to review proceedings from stakeholder engagement activities and community workshops, as well as drafts of the State of the Town Report and Comprehensive Plan.

Community Workshops

Two community workshops were conducted in order to gather community input on key planning issues and initial comprehensive planning strategies. The workshops were organized as "drop-in" open houses that allowed Cicero residents to attend and leave the meetings at any time; the workshops were also formatted with a variety of interactive exercises rather than formal lectures and presentations. A third community workshop is scheduled for September 2015 to obtain stakeholder feedback on implementation programs and initiatives.

Community Workshop #1. The first community workshop was held on November 19, 2014 at the Cicero Community Center on West 23rd Street and South 49th Avenue to gather community input on key issues and concerns through a series of interactive exercises. The workshop was promoted through the Town of Cicero’s website, cable channel and Facebook page, e-mail invitations, as well as through the Comprehensive Plan MindMixer site. A total of 58 people attended the workshop. Workshop materials were translated into Spanish.

The workshop’s interactive exercises included a “where you work” and “live” map where participants placed colored dots on a Cicero map; a short retail services questionnaire; and, a issues and opportunities map where workshop attendees placed red stickers on a Cicero map to point out the location of specific concerns and blue dots in areas that could be considered opportunities for improvement and redevelopment. Participants also filled out comment cards describing their thoughts in more detail on issues and opportunities. A “visioning” exercise was also included as part of the workshop – attendees were asked to describe in three words or less how they would describe Cicero today and 10 years into the future. Results of these exercises are explained in detail on the following pages.



Attendees at Community Workshop #2.

Workshop #2. A second workshop was conducted on March 11, 2015, held again the Cicero Community Center, with a specific focus on presenting preliminary planning strategies for neighborhoods, industrial and commercial districts, parks and open space, environmental issues and community appearances. Like the first workshop, planning strategies were presented through interactive exercises designed to determine the level of support for particular strategies versus others. Maps were also used to pinpoint areas within Cicero where specific planning strategies should be implemented. More than 60 people attended the workshop, which was promoted through the Town’s website, the local newspapers and cable station, and e-mail invitations to registered participants of the MindMixer website.

Workshop #3. On October 28, 2015, a third workshop was conducted at the Cicero Community Center to present the Draft Comprehensive Plan and key planning strategies related to housing and neighborhoods, commercial district revitalization, green infrastructure improvements, transportation, parks and open space, and industrial development. Following the presentation, a “vote with your dollars” exercise with workshop attendees was conducted to rank by priority key comprehensive plan strategies for future implementation. Attendees voted on 11 plan strategies with each strategy assigned a relative cost amount to implement ranging from one to four dollars. Voting results ranked the bungalow rehabilitation and neighborhood marketing strategies as the highest priorities along with a commercial district façade improvement program and green infrastructure improvements. Concepts for developing the 54th Avenue Institutional Campus and the 35th Street/ Cicero Avenue Industrial Redevelopment Site were also presented during the workshop but were not included as part of the voting exercise.

Online Survey

In addition to the workshops, an online survey was prepared in order to garner additional stakeholder feedback regarding planning issues and potential strategies. The survey was created through SurveyMonkey and promoted through both the Town of Cicero’s and the MindMixer websites. Approximately 121 respondents had taken the survey since the second community workshop. The following page lists some representative questions and comments from the workshops and online survey.

1. What types of housing and housing strategies would be most needed in Cicero?

- “Mixed use residential and commercial developments needed around transit stations.”
- “Some neighborhood have become run-down particularly in the North.”
- “We need higher income housing to attract more professionals and entrepreneurs and also to encourage our homegrown professionals to continue to live in our community.”
- “Larger housing units may add to more parking and noise problems.”
- “Housing rehabilitation – new uses for old buildings.”
- “Make Cicero pedestrian and environmentally friendly with fewer parking lots and more vertical housing options for millennials seeking to move out of the parent’s home and into affordable housing.”

2. What improvements should be implemented in Cicero’s commercial districts?

- More mixed use development and parking options as well as more entertainment and music venues.”
- “Provide incentives to business owners to improve their storefronts and building facades.”
- “Target closed storefronts as locations for new businesses – bring back small businesses and Cicero’s small town feel.”
- “A physical transformation of blighted commercial areas paired with a campaign designed to attract residents to patronize local businesses would be effective.”
- “There is a need for safe and clean streets and better lighting.”

3. Describe any environmental issues within the Town of Cicero.

- “The distance between industry and local schools (Unity and the Freshman Center is alarming.”
- “There are certain areas in Cicero where there is significant noise and air pollution – areas that need to be high priorities.”
- “The air by the border of Stickney and Cicero is terrible and can’t be healthy.”

4. Describe what type of activities and amenities are most lacking in Cicero’s parks?

- “Gardens, art work and food stands.”
- “Cicero needs to build a youth center complex that includes fields for football and soccer, baseball and softball, batting cages and splash park.”
- “More parks and landscaping is needed in general.”
- “Expand soccer fields and improve all neighborhood parks – they all need to be updated.”
- “Parks need additional programming and activities along with concession stands and bathrooms.”

5. What type of transportation and parking improvements should occur in Cicero?

- “An active transportation plan should be developed that includes areas for new bike paths and bike routes.”
- “There needs to be better parking management when neighborhood festivals and events occur.”
- “Providing more transit options should be another choice.”
- “Zone-specific parking restrictions are a terrible idea.”
- “Every Cicero neighborhood has a parking problem, mainly due to overcrowding.”

6. What other types of development and planning issues should be addressed by the Town of Cicero?

- “Flooding is a critical issue since big rain events are happening more frequently.”
- “Land is under-used in Cicero – therefore there must be an effort to make more efficient use of land through new development, especially around the transit stations.”
- “Cicero needs to encourage young people to invest and live in the community.”
- “As a homeowner, I would love help in improving my property through technical assistance.”
- “We have some great housing stock, but some areas are lacking maintenance for lack of budget, expertise and neglect due to the foreclosure crisis.”

Community Engagement Summary

The collective engagement work conducted thus far in the planning process has shown that a number of planning strategies and initiatives resonate with Cicero stakeholders and should be considered high priorities for the Cicero community:

- Reducing the vacancy rates in Cicero's commercial districts and enhancing the appearance of buildings and streetscapes.
- Facilitating new mixed use development where needed and feasible to catalyze investment near transit nodes, commercial areas and in certain neighborhood districts.
- Embracing the community's ethnic and cultural diversity, especially its Hispanic population and youth, as a strategic advantage for Cicero in creating new businesses and strengthening commercial districts and neighborhoods.
- Providing new recreational facilities and venues for youth sports and other outdoor activities, and create new parks wherever feasible.
- Encouraging more senior housing given Cicero's aging population and the number of potential opportunity sites around the community.
- Addressing overcrowding and the long-term maintenance and stability of the housing stock since the inner-ring suburbs were especially hit hard during the foreclosure crisis.
- Encouraging cycling and alternative forms of transportation within the community so that residents can reduce their reliance on the automobile to travel within Cicero. Young adults are not buying cars like they were in the past and would prefer using bikes to get around community.
- Maintaining and managing the parking supply more effectively and efficiently so that parking is not a deterrent to reinvestment in Cicero's commercial areas and neighborhoods.
- Engaging the private sector and other non-profit partners and organizations to participate in planning and economic development efforts.
 - Retaining existing Cicero industries but plan for industrial area redevelopment in order to attract new types of industrial and manufacturing uses.
- Improve the overall pedestrian environment so that there are safe and comfortable places to walk between neighborhoods and schools, commercial districts and industrial areas.
- Promoting the health and well-being of Cicero citizens by ensuring environmental safety and quality between existing industries and adjacent neighborhood areas.
- Building a new Cicero brand image that captures the essence of Cicero today – its diversity and strengths and assets – and promotes a positive, unified identity for the community.



View west down 25th Street toward the Cicero Fire Department.

Chapter 3. Community Characteristics and Land Use Trends

Regional Context

Cicero is one of 284 municipalities that comprise the Chicago metropolitan region — a region that extends geographically over seven counties and includes a population of approximately 8.3 million people. Cicero is located directly west and adjacent to the City of Chicago just south of the Interstate 290 Expressway (Eisenhower) and north of Interstate 55 (Stevenson). Its corporate boundaries include Lombard Avenue to the west, West Pershing Road (39th Street) to south, and Roosevelt Road to the north, and Cicero Avenue to the east.

In addition to its close proximity to the two Interstates, Cicero is located near Chicago's region's two airports, Midway International (3.6 miles) and O'Hare International (21 miles). Cicero is well served by public transit, including two Pink Line stations operated by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and one Metra commuter rail station at South 49th Avenue and 25th Street. By car or by public transit, Cicero is also within 15 minutes of the Loop. Its many transportation options and connections to other parts of the region makes Cicero easily accessible and attractive for prospective businesses and residents to locate in the community (see Figure 1.1 - Cicero Regional Context Map on following page).

Today, Cicero encompasses approximately 5.87 square miles of land area and is bounded not only by the Chicago neighborhoods of Austin and North and South Lawndale on the north and east respectively but also the suburbs of Berwyn, Oak Park and Stickney to the west and south. As of 2013, Cicero's population according to the U.S. Census was 84,103, of which 88 percent is of Hispanic origin. It is the tenth largest municipality in Illinois and the only incorporated Town in Cook County.

Town Governance

The Town of Cicero is currently governed by a Town President and Board of Trustees, all serving four-year elected terms. The Town President, who serves as the Town's Chief Executive Officer, and the Town Clerk, responsible for managing Town elections and various permitting activities, are non-voting members of the Town Board. In addition to the Town President and Town Clerk, there are three Town Board Trustees with administrative posts, including the Office of the

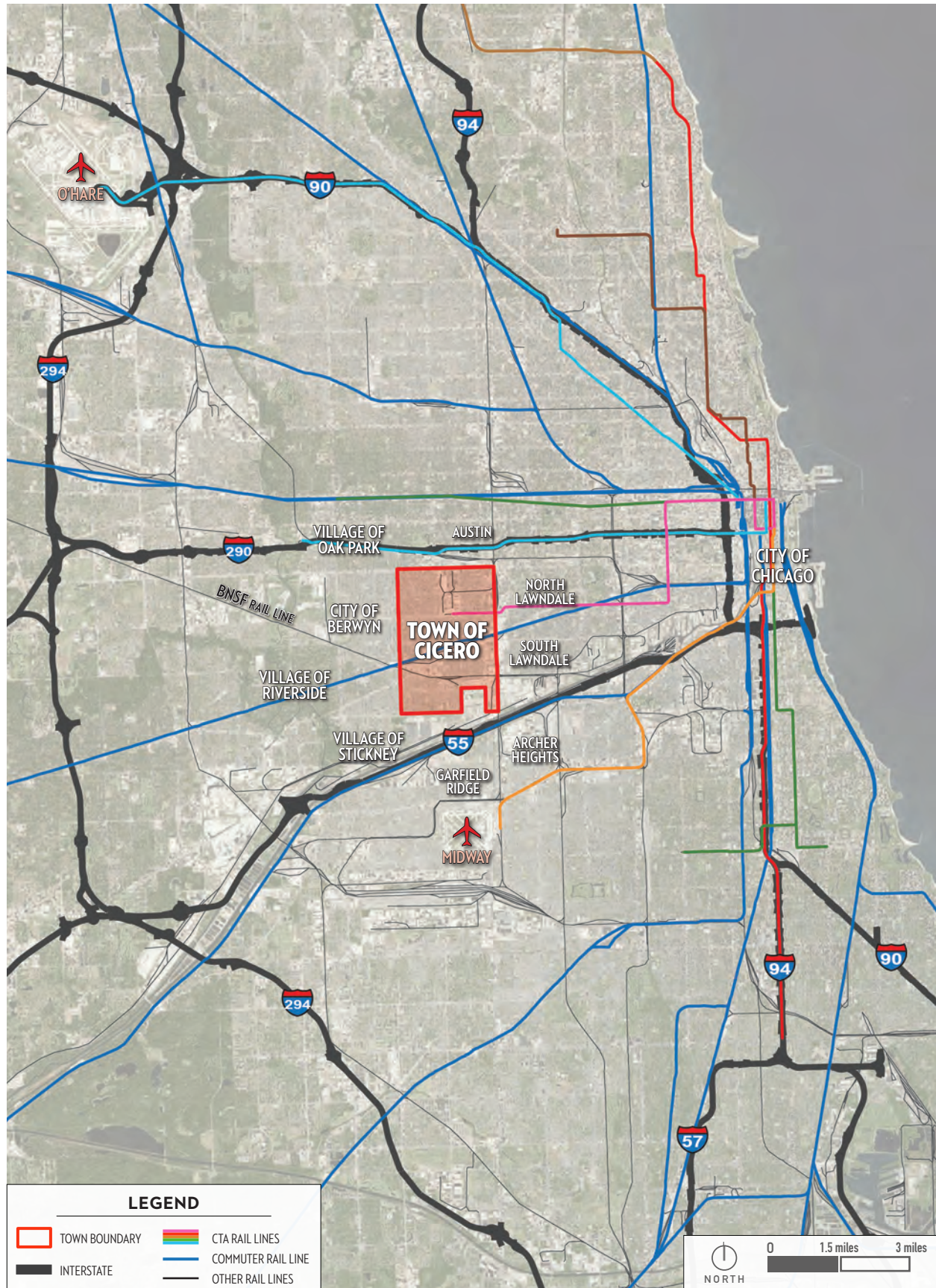
Town Supervisor, the chief elected official of Cicero Township, the Township Assessor, which administers the property tax assessment system for the Township's taxing bodies; and, the Town Collector, responsible for the collection of revenues and permitting fees to the Town of Cicero. Four other Town Trustees hold non-administrative positions.

Other administrative staff posts and departments include the Office of Project Management, the Police and Fire Departments, Animal Welfare, Human Resources, Public Works, Health and Housing Departments, Buildings, Legal, Senior Services, Business Licenses, Water Department, Emergency Management Services, the Cicero Public Library, and Community Affairs and Special Events. There are also several boards and commissions. The Town's planning and economic development activities are managed through the Town President's office in collaboration with the Housing Department.



Typical bungalows on a residential street in Cicero.

Figure 1.1 – Cicero Regional Context Map



Tax Increment Financing Districts

The Town of Cicero has established four Tax Increment Financing districts to help stimulate redevelopment activity within the community. Revenues from TIF can be used for the cost of studies and plans, property acquisition and rehabilitation, and various infrastructure and public improvements.

Cicero's TIF districts are generally located in the Town's eastern half along its most important commercial and industrial corridors. A summary of Cicero's TIF districts is provided below (see Figure 1.2 - Cicero TIF Districts Map on following page). The Town of Cicero TIF established in 1986 encompasses the Cicero Avenue commercial and industrial corridor along with the northern commercial strip along 16th Street, portions of Cermak Road to 54th Avenue and segments of Laramie Avenue and West 25th Place to 50th Avenue. The main purpose of the Town of Cicero TIF (TIF #1) is to facilitate redevelopment of former Hawthorne Works and other industrial and commercial land along Cicero Avenue to new uses. This TIF district is predominately commercial and industrial and includes many of the community's "big-box" stores such as Walmart, Menards and Home Depot, as well as significant industries such as United Scrap Metal and Terrace Paper Company.

The Laramie Avenue TIF District (TIF #2), established to stimulate new commercial and small-scaled industrial development, comprises much of the commercial and industrial blocks along Laramie Avenue from Cermak Road south to 33rd Street with significant extensions along the 25th Street commercial corridor and the north side of 33rd Street freight rail yard. The 54th Avenue TIF District (TIF #3), incorporates the industrial land along the 54th

Avenue corridor between 55th and Laramie Avenues and from Roosevelt Road south to 21st Place. This TIF was formed principally to stimulate industrial redevelopment. The Town Square TIF District (TIF #4) is generally located between 33rd and 35th Streets where the former Sportsman's Park is located with an extension along Laramie to 38th Street. The purpose of the Town Square TIF district was to spur the redevelopment of former Sportsman's Park race track and adjacent land to the west. Two new TIF districts are being proposed for Roosevelt Road both east and west of the existing 54th Avenue TIF District.

Demographic Trends

The following section is a summary of Cicero demographic characteristics, including population and households, income levels and employment trends.

Population

The population of Cicero remained steady throughout much of the latter half of the 20th century, with approximately 65,000 residents. Driven by an influx of Hispanic residents, the Town's population grew by 26.9 percent between 1990 and 2000, reaching 85,616. While the overall number of households declined during this 10-year period, the number of family households increased and the median age fell, indicating that the population increase was comprised primarily of families with young children. For comparison purposes, Cook County's population grew by only 5.3 percent during that decade.

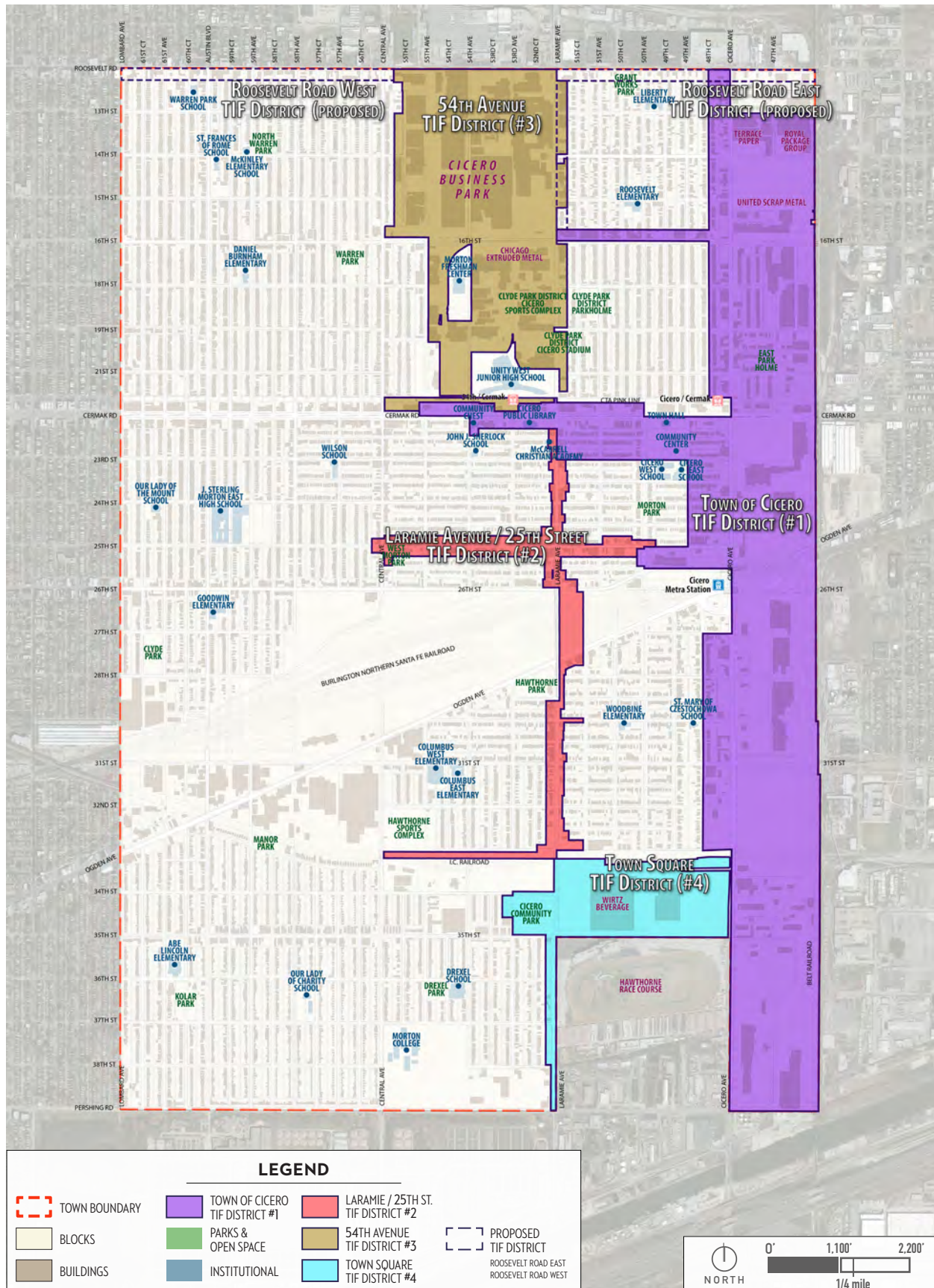
During the decade from 2000 - 2010, Cicero's population is reported to have declined slightly to 83,891 residents. Based on interviews with Cicero

TABLE 1.1 – CICERO TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS (2013)*

TIF Districts	Year Established	2012 Revenues	2013 Revenues	% Difference
Town of Cicero TIF District (TIF #1)	1987 (since renewed)	\$10,607,846	\$10,141,572	-4.40%
Laramie Avenue TIF District (TIF #2)	2003	\$57,227	\$0.00	-100.00%
54th Avenue TIF District (TIF #3)	2004	\$234,522	\$385,906	64.55%
Town Square TIF District (TIF #4)	2008	\$568,530	\$998,868	75.69%

*Source: Cook County Clerk's Office

Figure 1.2 – Cicero TIF Districts Map



officials, the 2010 Census counts are thought to have significantly under-counted the Town's population. Current projections from ESRI Business Analyst indicate modest population growth through 2019. However, since these estimates are based on the most recent Census counts, they too may be conservative. Some officials estimate that the actual population of Cicero likely exceeds 100,000.

Age Distribution

The median age increased slightly over the last decade, and is now estimated to be 27.9 years. This is well below the median age of Cook County residents, which is estimated at 35.9 years. The younger median age reflects Cicero's attractiveness to families with young children.

Household Incomes

The estimated median household income for the Town of Cicero in 2014 was \$41,302. For comparison purposes, the 2014 median household income for the City of Chicago was \$44,353, and \$52,909 for all of Cook County. In Cicero, nearly 42 percent of all households have annual incomes ranging from \$35,000 - \$75,000. A relatively high percent of households (13.8 percent) have annual incomes below \$15,000. At the other end of the spectrum, the Town has few high-income households.

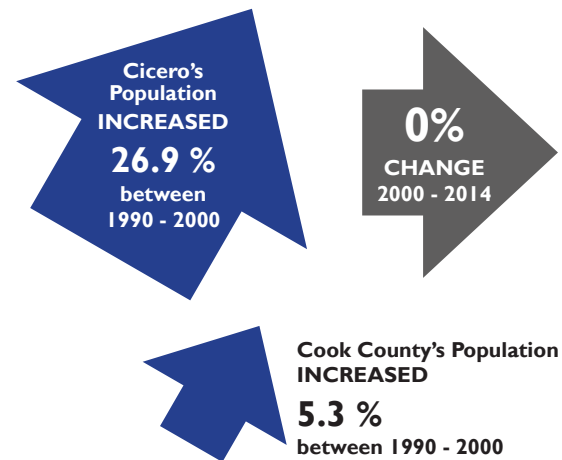
Employment Trends

Private-sector employment in Cicero fell during the recession years of 2008 - 2009, but has been rising since 2010. The most recent data indicate 15,429 private-sector jobs in the Town, still below the high in 2001 when 19,000 workers were employed in Cicero. The major private-sectors employers in Cicero are in the following industries:

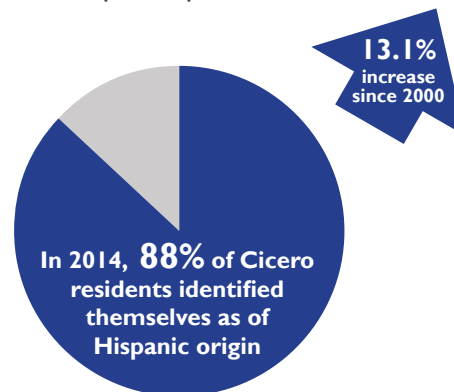
- Manufacturing
- Administrative/Support/Waste Management and Remedial Services
- Retail Trade
- Healthcare/Social Assistance
- Accommodations/Food Services.

Since 2001, there has been a decline of 2,000 manufacturing jobs in Cicero. In contrast, the Service and Healthcare/Social Assistance industries have reported an increase in private sector employment.

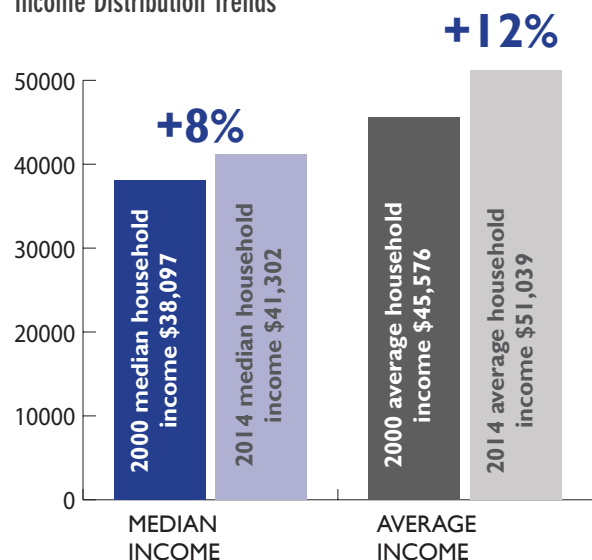
Cicero's Population Change



Cicero's Hispanic Population



Income Distribution Trends



Land Use and Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing land use conditions within Cicero. The description provides a specific focus on the types of uses that exist in particular areas, its relevant zoning and the overall quality of the built environment and surroundings. Land use is typically the central element of a comprehensive plan since it establishes the community's overall urban form, including where specific land uses are located and how transportation and infrastructure systems are designed and instituted to support those land uses. Cicero's land use pattern and the physical conditions in which those uses are found serve as the basis point for determining a future land use map and land use policies that will guide both public and private users of the land. Cicero's land use is summarized in Table 1.2 below and in Figure 1.3 on the following page.

Residential Land Use

Cicero's residential areas total approximately 1,981 acres of land, which represents 52.79 percent of Cicero's total land area. Cicero's neighborhoods contain a mix of traditional single-family homes and two-flats that are well-maintained and contribute significantly to the community's overall design character. They also provide an affordable housing stock to young households and families seeking access to good schools and public transit.

TABLE 1.2 – CICERO LAND USE		
LAND USE CATEGORY	ACREAGE	PERCENT
Residential	1,980	52.86%
Commercial	390	10.40%
Industrial	964	25.70%
Community Facilities and Parks	200	5.40%
Transportation**	379	10.10%
Vacant Land	220	5.90%
Total	3,755	100.00%

Source: CMAP

*Note: Existing land use figures are based on CMAP's 2005 *Land Use Inventory*; **Note: Transportation is defined as streets and rail facilities.

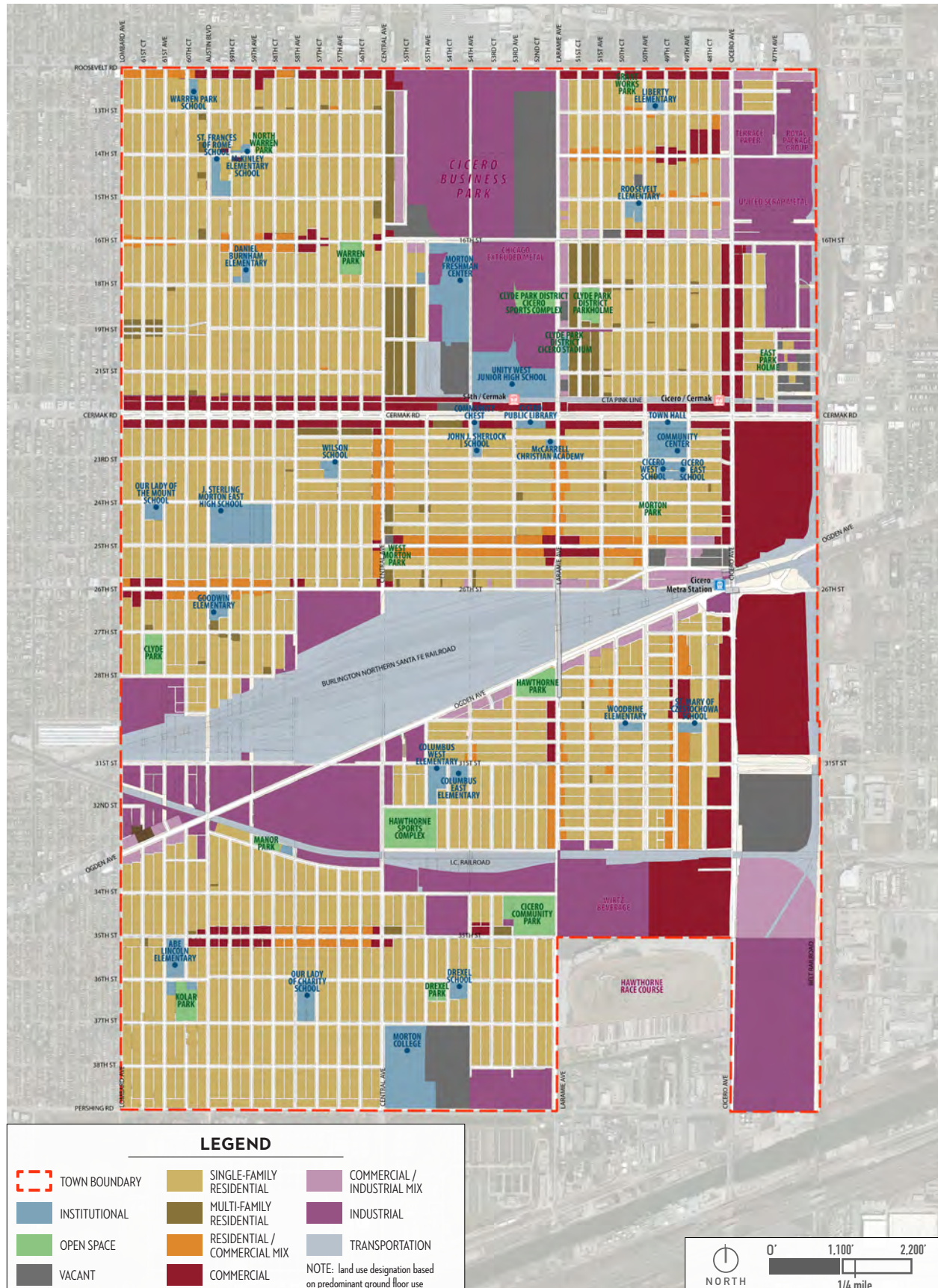
Traditional Single-Family Residential. Cicero's traditional single family housing stock represents the Town's most significant land use in terms of acreage. Generally, the majority of the single-family housing stock in Cicero was constructed between the 1890s and the 1950s on small narrow lots that are largely reflective of the lot and block development patterns found in nearby Chicago neighborhoods and other adjacent inner-ring suburbs. Traditional single-family neighborhoods located both north and south of Burlington Northern rail yards were constructed between 1900 and 1930 and consist of the classic, low-slung brick Chicago and Romanesque Revival-styled bungalows. South of the Burlington Northern rail yards, the housing stock is characterized as mostly post-World War II cottages and Ranch homes simpler in design and ornamentation than their counterparts north of the rail yards. Other single family neighborhoods, especially in Cicero's northeast quadrant, consist of worker cottages and houses dating from the 1890s and 1900s. The single family housing stock is in mostly good condition, although some of the older housing units have been modified or re-sided with different materials. In the northeast quadrant, alleys are mostly absent, unlike in the areas further west that comprise Cicero's bungalow belt.

Traditional Flats and Courtyard Apartments. In addition to Cicero's bungalow belt and other single family neighborhoods, significant blocks and areas in Cicero are also lined with the two and three flats that are typical of the multi-family housing constructed in Chicago and the inner-ring suburbs during the first two decades of the 20th century. Two-flat districts are largely concentrated in Cicero's eastern neighborhoods between Laramie and Cicero Avenues and 16th Street and Cermak Road, and along Austin



Cicero's traditional housing stock

Figure 1.3 – Cicero Existing Land Use Map



Boulevard north of Cermak, although two flats are interspersed within much of the single-family gable-front and bungalow neighborhoods. More modern-styled-two flats and duplexes constructed after World War II are also found along Austin Boulevard and in select locations within the housing blocks to the southern portions of Cicero. Larger multi-flat and courtyard apartments providing four or more housing units in one building and also constructed during the 1900s to the 1920s can be found mostly on blocks and corner lots located near Cicero's commercial corridors and neighborhood commercial districts above 26th Street. Again, like the single-family residential areas, the two and the three flats and the apartment blocks remain in good condition with a number of structures needing exterior maintenance and rehabilitation.

Modern Multi-Family Residential. Although multi-family residential is mostly characterized as the older courtyard apartments in Cicero, there are a number of more modern multi-family apartment complexes developed in the 1960s, 70s and 80s but not in defined multi-family districts. Multi-family apartments can be found in a few select locations along Ogden and Cicero Avenues, Roosevelt Road, and 16th, 25th, 26th, and 35th Streets where "California"-style courtyard apartment complexes popular in many Chicago inner-ring suburbs during the 1950s and 60s are prevalent. There is a lack of senior housing complexes although there are short and long-term care facilities and retirement apartments located along Ogden Avenue and Roosevelt and Cermak Roads. Apart from the traditional two- and multi-flat apartments in the built-out areas of Cicero, and some scattered apartment complexes along several corridors, there appears to be a shortage of new apartment developments that could be a source of additional housing in the community.

Streetscape and Urban Design Conditions. The streetscape appearance in Cicero's residential neighborhoods are characterized by well-maintained parkways and sidewalks with mature trees, although maintenance and replacement of carriage walks, dying trees, sidewalks curbs and alleys are ongoing needs for the Town of Cicero. Neighborhood streets are also mostly lighted by sodium vapor cobra-heads. Overall, the tight housing development pattern, the mature parkway landscaping and street canopy, and the relatively narrow street widths make for an intimate neighborhood environment that is often characteristic of traditional urban residential areas.



Cicero's traditional single-family housing stock - gable-fronted housing (top), Chicago Bungalows (second from top), two-flats (second from bottom); courtyard apartments (bottom).

Commercial Land Use

Cicero's commercial areas total approximately 391 acres of land, which represents 10.4 percent of Cicero's total land area. Cicero's commercial land uses are largely classified into the traditional neighborhood commercial corridors that are often extensions of the corridors emanating from Chicago, and the strip commercial and "big-box" retailers that are mostly found along Cicero Avenue between Roosevelt Road and 31st Street.

Traditional Commercial Corridors. Cicero has several significant commercial corridors that are largely defined by traditional single or multi-story commercial buildings that front the sidewalk with parking supplied as on-street spaces or off-street parking lots. The majority of buildings along these corridors were constructed from the 1890s to the 1930s and are expressive of the vernacular commercial styles prevalent in Chicago and other inner-ring suburbs during this time period. Traditional multi-story commercial buildings are also characterized by glazed storefronts and recessed entrance ways, and offices and apartments occupying the upper floors. Historically, hotels and entertainment halls once occupied the upper floors as well. Today, the upper-floors are an important source of Cicero's rental housing supply. Buildings along these corridors were built next to each other to reinforce the commercial district's pedestrian character and to define a continual street wall from block to block. Cicero's traditional commercial buildings are distinctive architecturally and serve as a critical supply of economical commercial space

for Cicero's small businesses. Cicero's traditional commercial corridors and neighborhood districts are relatively vibrant and are home to the community's strong stock of small businesses. In some traditional commercial areas, storefronts have been converted to residential uses, thus limiting opportunities for small start-ups to find adequate and affordable rental space.

The major traditional commercial corridors in Cicero include Cermak Road, Roosevelt Road from Lombard and Central Avenues, 25th Street from Laramie to Central Avenue, and 35th Street from Austin Boulevard to 57th Court. Smaller neighborhood districts, although more fragmented in development than the major corridors, can also be found along 14th Street between 48th and 51st Court, 16th Street between 50th Avenue and 50th Court, and 16th Street between 59th and 57th Court. Pockets of traditional commercial fabric also exists along Cicero Avenue from Roosevelt Road to Cermak. Small commercial nodes consisting of one or two commercial buildings at a given intersection also exist within Cicero's many neighborhoods. Along the 25th Street business district and in some of the smaller commercial nodes, a number of storefronts have been converted to residential apartments – some converted without permits. Vacant lots and storefront vacancies are also prevalent. Diversifying the retail and service offerings and enhancing the streetscape and physical realm within Cicero traditional commercial corridors have been expressed as key priorities going forward by many community stakeholders.



Cermak Road commercial corridor.



Traditional corner commercial building located within a residential neighborhood.

Cermak Road Corridor. Cermak Road is Cicero's most significant traditional commercial corridor and its commercial character extends, with some exceptions where residential flats are inserted along various blocks, from Cicero Avenue on the east to Lombard on the west. Cermak Road is unique in its setting given the many majestic traditional commercial buildings that line the sidewalks and its boulevard roadway design that provides ample space for on-street diagonal parking. Given the age of the buildings and nearby competition from the Cicero Avenue retailers, the Cermak Road traditional commercial corridor appears to be relatively vibrant, although local stakeholders are concerned that vacancy rates are rising and that the corridor's general appearance could be improved.

Destination Shopping Districts. Apart from the traditional shopping districts, Cicero has two major shopping areas that accommodate larger-scale, destination type retailing services. Destination shopping areas are primarily located along the east and west sides of Cicero Avenue from 16th to 35th Streets.

Cicero Avenue Commercial Corridor. Cicero Avenue has developed over recent decades as the location for Cicero's strip commercial and big-box retailers, such as Walmart, Target, Home Depot, Menards and Sam's Club. Much of the retail development along Cicero Avenue has been largely due to the change in land use over time from industrial to commercial. Other commercial uses beyond the big box stores, include restaurants and fast food drive-throughs, banks and financial institutions, gas stations, currency exchanges, gyms and physical fitness centers, a movie theater complex, auto part stores, and other smaller retail and commercial service establishments. Further south towards 35th Street are a number of small and large-scale commercial uses, including driving schools, truck sales and a vacated lumber yard. Despite the vitality of the corridor, the visual appearance of the Cicero Avenue commercial areas is fragmented with no unifying streetscape character. Given the concentration of big-box retail, the Cicero Avenue commercial corridor generates the significant portion of sales tax revenues for the Town.

Other Commercial Areas

In addition to the traditional commercial and destination shopping districts, some commercial activity exists along Ogden Avenue west of Cicero

Avenue. However, the land use pattern in this area alternates between commercial, open space, industrial and residential to Lombard Avenue. The majority of commercial uses are auto-related, including auto body and part shops, tire stores, sales lots and car washes. There appears to be low vacancy of the commercial structures located along this corridor, although the overall streetscape character and physical environment can be improved.

Industrial Land Use

Cicero's industrial areas total approximately 964 acres of land, which represents 25.7 percent of Cicero's total land area. Cicero has been an industrial center since the Township's founding. In Cicero, industrial land is largely located along northern and southern portions of Cicero Avenue, the 54th Avenue industrial corridor at Roosevelt Road and along Ogden Avenue. Other small and large scale industries are located along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific rail yards, which by themselves are also significant industrial-freight transportation anchors within Cicero.

Cicero Avenue Industrial Corridor. Historically, much of Cicero's industrial base developed along Cicero Avenue where ample land was available and an agglomeration of industries concentrated near the Western Electric Hawthorne Works complex at Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue. Today, much of this land has been converted to commercial with some of Cicero's largest industrial uses concentrated north of 16th Street and south of 35th Street east of Cicero Avenue. Along Cicero Avenue north of 16th Street, industrial uses include the Terrace Paper Company, and the Royal Group Packaging Company.



Kropp Forge complex along 54th Avenue.

South of these industries is the United Scrap Metal Company, which encompasses two blocks bounded by Cicero Avenue and 14th and 16th Streets to house its outdoor scrap and storage yard, which is well-screened from Cicero Avenue with fencing and landscaping treatments.

South from 16th Street along 46th Court is a number of industries with both external and internal storage yards, including the Churchill Cabinet-Chicago Gaming Company complex and AMD Industries, a manufacturer of retail display units. Located south of 35th Street is the large Citgo Petroleum lubricants manufacturing plant and its associated truck storage yards. Industrial uses along the Cicero Avenue corridor are serviced not only by Cicero Avenue but also by the railroad lines and spurs directly east and abutting Chicago, lines that are currently operated by the Chicago Belt Railroad.

54th Avenue Industrial Corridor. The 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor is centered along 54th Avenue south from Roosevelt Road toward Cermak and bounded east to west by Laramie Avenue and 54th Court respectively. In the quadrant north of 16th Street between Laramie Avenue and 54th Court are a number of light and heavy industries, several of which have existed in this location for many decades, including Kropp Forge, Harris Steel, Diecrafters, and Circle Gear and Machine. In recent years, portions of this quadrant have been redeveloped with new, more modern industrial and warehousing buildings, including the Cicero Business Center at the northwest corner of 16th Street and 54th Avenue constructed in 2009. Towards the eastern side of the quadrant along Laramie Avenue, a recently cleared 34-acre site is being marketed for additional industrial development. The quadrant had been served by rail spurs emanating from the Chicago Belt Railroad from the east, although it appears that one or two spurs had been removed in recent years.

The quadrant south of 16th Street has smaller-scaled industries mainly located along the east sides of 54th and 55th Avenues with the Morton Freshman Center and the J. Morton Sterling Alternative Schools occupying sites along the western side of 54th Avenue. The Unity West Junior High School and the CTA Pink Line rail yards located at the southern edge of the corridor just north of Cermak Road. Industries in this quadrant include the United Gasket Corporation, Chicago Extruded Metals, Electric

Plating Services, and Safe-Air Dowco industrial louver company. Athletic fields and parking lots are also interspersed between the schools and the industries, as well as vacant industrial land, including the lot at 1829 54th Avenue, once occupied by a facility owned by Central Steel Fabricators and destroyed by fire in 2014. Although the industries along 54th Avenue in this quadrant do not involve heavy manufacturing, and storage and parking areas are mostly screened from the right-of-way, the truck traffic generated from the industries pose some conflict with the adjacent schools. Street and sidewalks are also in poorer condition than those found in the northern quadrant.

28th and 31st Street/Ogden Avenue Industrial Corridors. A number of warehousing and distribution companies are located along 28th and 31st Streets, both north and south of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Intermodal Facility respectively. Ogden Avenue from 55th Avenue to Austin Boulevard also contains a number of industrial establishments. There is a mix of heavy and light industrial along these streets, most with some sort of outdoor storage lots; light industrial uses can mostly be classified as distribution facilities. A small number of industrial buildings in this quadrant are vacant and it is unclear how many of these industries use the Burlington Northern Intermodal Facility other than the Corey Steel Company located just north of the Facility.

Other Industrial. In 2012, the Wirtz Beverage Corporation constructed a new 605,000 square foot distribution and warehousing facility at South Laramie Avenue and 35th Street that consolidated existing facilities located in Schaumburg, Wood Dale, Bensenville and Elk Grove Village. The warehouse, which employs 1,000 workers approximately, was constructed on 32 acres that comprised a portion of the former Sportsman Park grounds. The facility also incorporates 100,000 square feet of office space for Wirtz's corporate headquarters. Additional outlots adjacent to the Wirtz complex totalling 3.5 acres are also available for industrial development.

Brownfields. In 2004, the Town of Cicero received a \$350,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct Phase I and II brownfield site assessments. A brownfield is a former industrial or commercial site where future use is affected by real or perceived environmental contamination. The majority of these properties are

located along Cicero Avenue south of 33rd Street and Laramie Avenue between 18th and 19th Streets. Contamination of these sites are mostly related to petroleum and hazardous substance production that occurred on the sites in the past. In most cases, the Laramie Avenue sites have been remediated with buildings and sites cleared and topped with new uses such as open space and parking lots; the majority of Cicero Avenue sites continue to be used for industrial-commercial uses. If industrial redevelopment of this area is pursued in the future, brownfield clean-up and remediation will be a significant element of the redevelopment process.

Institutional and Community Facilities

Cicero's community facilities total approximately 200 acres of land, which represents 5.4 percent of Cicero's total land area. Cicero's community facilities largely consist of the Town of Cicero and other government offices, local schools, institutions, and Morton Junior College.

Civic. Constructed in 2007, Town Hall Center, the Town of Cicero's administrative complex, occupies a 7.5 acre site along Cermak Road between 50th and 49th Avenues. The Town Hall Center complex includes three buildings housing the Town Board chambers, executive offices, and Police Department headquarters. The complex also includes the Cicero Community Center, which has a health clinic, classroom spaces, and a multipurpose gymnasium available for community use. The former Town Hall at 50th Avenue and West 25th Street is currently vacant and being marketed for future redevelopment.

Other Town of Cicero facilities include the Town's Public Works Department and Garage within the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor at 1620 South Laramie Avenue; the Water Department located in the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor at the southwest corner of Laramie Avenue and Roosevelt Road; and, Fire Department offices and stations at 5303 25th, 5410 34th, and 1601 Central Avenue. The Cicero Public Library is located along Cermak Road between Laramie and 53rd Avenues. The Library has been expanded over time to accommodate new and expanded services to Cicero residents; it is considering a reconfiguration of its existing spaces to accommodate smaller community meeting

rooms. Other than Town of Cicero facilities, other government-owned and managed buildings include the U.S. Post Office along Laramie Avenue between 24th Place and 25th Street.

Schools and Higher Education. Cicero is home to two school districts and one community college. School District 99 currently operates 15 K-6 elementary schools and one junior high with school facilities located in almost every Cicero neighborhood. Many of the school facilities are of newer construction; the District is currently in the later planning stages for a new school in Cicero's Warren Park neighborhood at Roosevelt Road and Austin Boulevard. The J. Sterling Morton School District 201 oversees three facilities in Cicero, Morton East High School at Austin Boulevard and 24th Street, and the Morton Freshman Center and Alternative Schools along 54th Avenue between 16th Street and Cermak Road. The total combined enrollment of the two school districts is 17,500 approximately. In addition to Cicero, School District 201 serves the communities of Berwyn, Lyons, Stickney, McCook and Forest View.

Morton College, established in 1924 and the oldest operating community college in Illinois, is located at Pershing Road and Central Avenue on a campus of five separate academic buildings. The College has an enrollment of 7,750 approximately; employs 445 full and part time faculty, administrators and other support staff; and, services a districts that includes Cicero, Berwyn, Lyons, Stickney, Forest View, Riverside, McCook and other near western suburbs. The College is currently constructing a new 15,000 square foot classroom facility.



Lincoln Elementary School at 36th Street and 61st Avenue.

Open Space. Cicero is currently served by two park districts: the Hawthorne Park District, which manages five parks in Cicero's southern half below the Burlington Northern Intermodal Facility, and the Clyde Park District, which oversees 14 park sites, Cicero Stadium at 1909 Laramie Avenue, and facilities in the Town's northern half. The Hawthorne Park District also manages two recreational buildings, one at 5202 West 29th Street and one at 3545 South 54th Avenue. Combined both districts provide playgrounds, swimming pools and ball field and court venues for a variety of team sports from baseball, football and soccer to tennis and floor hockey. An ice rink was added to Cicero Community Park in 2011 as part of the TIF deal involving the construction of the Wirtz Beverage Distribution Center. This park along with Andy Lopez Memorial Park, Town Hall Plaza and the Cicero Walking Park are owned and managed by the Town of Cicero. It has been recognized that additional park space is needed, especially along the Town's northeastern quadrant.

Historic Resources. Historic buildings, sites, and structures are important elements to revitalizing neighborhoods and traditional commercial districts and help to define and inform a community's image and brand identity. In Cicero, the Morton, J. Sterling, High School East Auditorium is currently the only property that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this nation's official list of buildings, sites, and structures that are worthy of preservation. The National Register of Historic Places is a program of the National Park Service, authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and administered in the State of Illinois by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA).

Listing in the National Register does not impose restrictions on the use of private property but does provide tax credits for the rehabilitation of income-producing buildings and other incentives. Commercial and income-producing buildings listed in the National Register would be eligible to receive the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit, which can be a significant incentive in facilitating the rehabilitation of some of Cicero's more significant historic resources, especially along the community's commercial corridors. Residential buildings within National Register districts also qualify for the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze program, which allows a homeowner to take an eight-year tax assessment freeze for a qualified rehabilitation of the property.



Cicero Community Park.



Town Hall Plaza/Community Recreation Center

Presently, there are no National Register Historic Districts in Cicero. The Illinois Historic Structures and Landmarks Surveys, undertaken by the State of Illinois from 1970 to 1975, identified the Saint Francis of Rome School at 1401 South Austin Boulevard as eligible for listing. An additional 88 buildings and sites were also identified as potentially eligible for the National Register; although, since the survey was undertaken more than 39 years ago, and buildings may have been altered in that time, additional consultation with IHPA would be needed to receive more current determinations of eligibility.

The Town of Cicero is not currently a Certified Local Government (CLG), a program managed jointly between the National Park Service and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Certified Local Government status provides opportunities to receive grants to conduct preservation planning activities, such as surveys and National Register nominations.

Zoning

The current Cicero Zoning Ordinance represents the community's existing development pattern for the most part, although there are no zoning classifications for public and institutional uses. The existing zoning classifications and their respective height and bulk standards are summarized as follows (see Figure 1.4 - Cicero Existing Zoning Map on the following page).

- R-1: Single and Two-Family Residential
- R-2: Multiple-Family Residential
- R-3: Residential-Commercial
- R-4: Apartment-Commercial
- C-1: Neighborhood Commercial
- C-2: Central Commercial
- M-1: Wholesale and Warehouse
- M-2: Light Manufacturing
- M-3: General Manufacturing
- RR: Roosevelt Road Form-Based District

Cicero's zoning districts provide basic land use requirements for what is permitted or not permitted in certain land use zones. The zoning districts are also regulated for lot size, building placement and bulk. Some modifications to the existing zoning and the introduction of new zoning mechanisms will likely be required to implement aspects of this Comprehensive Plan. Potential changes could include consolidating zoning districts, or creating additional districts to allow a range of uses in appropriate locations. Adding design requirements and flexibility regarding building design and massing, landscape and streetscape, and signage will also be important considerations.

Residential Zoning

There are four residential zoning districts in Cicero as described and analyzed below:

R-1: Single and Two-Family Residential. The R-1 Single and Two-Family zoning districts mainly encompass the residential neighborhoods of single family homes and two-flats, the predominate residential development form throughout Cicero. Other permitted uses in the R-1 districts include civic and institutional uses, such as parks, police or fire stations, and churches and schools. Small-scale grocery stores, art galleries, boarding homes, gas stations, hospitals and libraries and classified and special uses. It is further noted that most of the

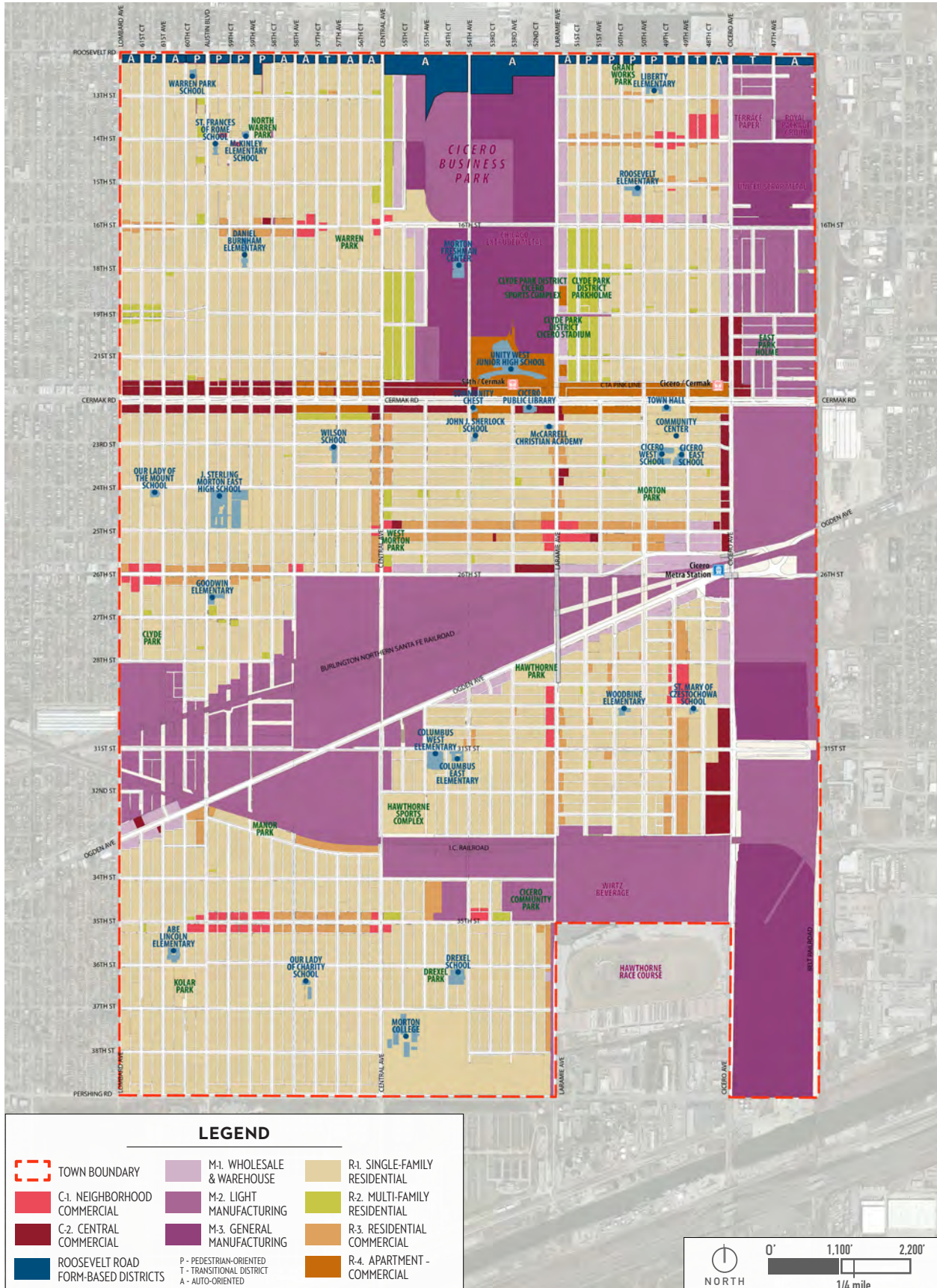
significant institutional uses, including the schools and Morton College are zoned in R-1 districts.

R-2: Multiple-Family Residential. The R-2 Multiple-Family Residential zoning districts are located on blocks just east and west of the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor north of Cermak Road, 18th and 19th Streets between Lombard Avenue and 61st Court, 22nd Place between Central and 58th Avenues, and various blocks along Central Avenue south of 24th Street. This zoning district has most of the same lot requirements as the R-1 zoning district although it permits multiple units with additional square footage requirements for one, two, and three bedrooms per residential unit. This classification accommodates the traditional multi-family buildings that may be located within the single-family and two-flat neighborhoods.

R-3: Residential-Commercial. The R-3 Residential-Commercial districts are generally located along several major arterial streets, including portions of Central, Laramie and 49th Avenues, and 25th and 26th and 35th Streets. Lot and use requirements are generally the same as the R-1 and R-2 districts and is meant to accommodate the traditional mixed-use building with commercial uses allowed on the first floor with upper-story residential. Permitted commercial uses are those that are allowed in the C-1 Commercial zoning district, including specialty retail, restaurants, banks and professional services. Small-scale apartment buildings less than two-and-a-half stories in height are also permitted.

R-4: Apartment-Commercial. The R-4 Apartment-Commercial zoning district is mostly located along Cermak Road on blocks consisting of some of Cicero's larger-scale mixed-use buildings. The purpose of the zoning district is to permit mixed-use developments on lots over 15,000 square feet with density bonuses permitted for open space, bike paths, courtyards or plazas and school sites if provided as part of the development plan. Although only a small number of blocks along Cermak Road are zoned R-4, the R-4 district is meant to be applied for areas near the Metra and CTA stations to encourage TOD opportunities; the zoning designation could potentially be applied to other areas along Cicero Avenue and Ogden Avenue to accommodate higher density development near shopping and employment centers.

Figure 1.4 – Cicero Existing Zoning Map



The residential zoning districts mostly reflect the residential land use characteristic in Cicero neighborhoods. The R-3 Residential-Commercial zoning classification largely accommodates the mixed-use nature of Cicero's traditional commercial districts; perhaps, this classification would be better named as a "mixed-use" zoning category.

Commercial Zoning

There are two commercial zoning districts in Cicero as described and analyzed below:

C-1: Neighborhood Commercial. The C-1 Neighborhood Commercial zoning districts are mainly along several of Cicero's smaller neighborhood commercial districts at 35th Street, Laramie Avenue at 25th and 31st Streets, 26th Street at Lombard Avenue and 14th Street at 48th Court. Permitted uses in the C-1 districts include neighborhood retail stores, personal services, and banks and financial institutions. All uses permitted in the R-1 to R-3 zones are also permitted in the C-1 districts with the exception of ground-floor residential. Single-family homes are also permitted. Gas stations, drive-through facilities, hardware stores, small groceries, theaters and medical facilities are classified as special uses.

C-2: Central Commercial. The C-2 Central Commercial districts allow for all uses permitted in the C-1 districts along with the larger-scale commercial establishments such as hotels, hospitals and retirement homes, garden supply stores, bowling alleys and private gyms. The C-2 Central Commercial districts are located along portions of the Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue commercial corridors. The required FAR of 0.60 may not be sufficient to encourage the type of dense "streetwall" commercial development that would be suitable along Cicero's traditional commercial districts such as Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road. The current FAR would be suitable for Cicero's big-box commercial areas west of Cicero Avenue and south of Cermak Road.

Generally, the commercial zoning districts lack design criteria and standards for development character, including standards for storefront treatment and configurations, appropriate materials and site layout for on-site parking. The Roosevelt Road Form-Based Code provides an example for Cicero on managing new development design more effectively,

especially in traditional commercial corridors where appropriate pedestrian-oriented development can help strengthen and enhance the visual environment as well as enhance the attractiveness and walkability of the commercial districts.

Industrial Districts

There are three commercial zoning districts in Cicero as described and analyzed below:

M-1: Wholesale and Manufacturing District. The M-1 Wholesale and Manufacturing districts are mostly located in discrete areas along the half-blocks surrounding the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor north of Cermak Road, along the west side of Cicero Avenue north of 19th Street and along 26th Street from Cicero Avenue west to Central Avenue. The M-1 districts permit small-scale manufacturing and fabricating, and wholesaling and warehousing operations on lots not less than 50 feet in width. A number of commercial uses are also permitted, including gas stations, open sales lots, and green houses, lumber yards, animal hospitals, machinery sales, and currency exchanges. Some permitted wholesaling, manufacturing, and commercial uses could conflict with the adjacent residential neighborhoods in terms of both their development character and in the performance of manufacturing processes – whether such processes emit noise or odors.



Industrial zoning districts along Cicero Avenue, near 13th Street, looking south. M-1 districts shown on the right, M-2 districts on the left.

M-2: Light Manufacturing District. The industrial land located east of Cicero Avenue and along the 54th and Ogden Avenue Industrial Corridors are zoned M-2: Light Industrial Manufacturing, which permits all uses in the M-1 Districts, railroad terminals and facilities, and larger-scale manufacturing and warehousing. Shopping centers and public facilities, such as police and fire stations, are also permitted. The M-2 districts do prohibit certain manufacturing uses that have the potential to emit noise and pollutants. Currently, the M-2 districts functions essentially as the zoning for the larger-scale commercial, big box areas along Cicero Avenue. All of the commercial activity along Cicero Avenue with the exception of a few blocks is currently zoned M-2.

M-3: General Manufacturing District. The M-3 General Manufacturing districts are located within the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor and along the east side of Cicero Avenue south of 35th Street. The M-3 classification does permit all industrial and manufacturing uses permitted in the M-1 and M-2 districts, although the M-3 district does not expressly outline what types of specific industrial uses are permitted in the M-3 districts as opposed to the other industrial districts.

In general, the manufacturing and industrial zoning districts do not adequately define the types of industries permitted per industrial zoning classification, as well as any performance standards related to those industries. In addition, a wide spectrum of commercial uses are permitted, which could promote the conversion of existing industrial land, thus limiting opportunities for maintaining or even expanding Cicero's industrial base.

Roosevelt Road Form-Based District

In 2006, the Town of Cicero adopted a Form-Based for the Roosevelt Road Corridor. The form-based code classifies different portions of Roosevelt Road into character zones depending on the predominate type of development design found in those zones - whether buildings front the sidewalk (Pedestrian Zone), set-back with parking lots between the building and the sidewalk (Auto-Oriented Zone) or a "Transitional Zone," which is largely characterized by a mix of auto-oriented and pedestrian-oriented development.

The following table summarizes the lot standards for each zoning district.

TABLE 1.3 – CICERO ZONING AND LOT STANDARDS

Zoning District	Maximum Height	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width	Front Yard Setback	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
R-1	35 feet	3,500 sq. feet (standard) <3,500 sq. feet (non-standard)	25 feet	Not < 15 feet Not > 25 feet	1.00
R-2	35 feet	3,500 sq. feet	25 feet	Not < 15 feet Not > 25 feet	0.65
R-3	35 feet	3,500 sq. feet	25 feet	Not < 10 feet	0.80
R-4	140 feet	15,000 sq. feet	-	-	5.00
C-1	35 feet	-	-	Not < 10 feet	0.80
C-2	140 feet	-	-	-	0.60
M-1	-	-	50 Feet	Not < 5 Feet	0.90 one-story 1.80 two-story
M-2	-	-	-	-	2.0
M-2	-	-	-	-	2.0
M-3					2.0

Source: Cicero Zoning Code

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Part 2: Comprehensive Plan

The community is known for its beautiful bungalows and established neighborhoods.

A physical transformation of commercial areas paired with a campaign designed to attract residents to patronize local businesses would be effective.

- Cicero Residents

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Chapter 4. Community Vision and Land Use Strategy

Succeeding chapters of this Comprehensive Plan describe specific planning goals and policies related to housing and neighborhoods, commercial districts, transportation, parks, schools and institutions, and open space and industrial areas. This chapter provides an overview of the Comprehensive Plan's recommended land use objectives that serve to achieve a higher quality physical environment and a suitable balance between residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and open space uses within Cicero. The land use strategy should also serve as a guide for future planning and revitalization initiatives and for revising and updating the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Cicero Vision for 2040

The following Vision Statement outlines a "snapshot" of the community's aspirations and sense of identity going forward over the next 10 to 25 years. The Vision Statement also reflects community desires and consensus for what should change in Cicero and what should not, how community residents are involved in the process of change, and what types of living, working, and cultural and recreational opportunities will exist for Town residents. The Statement is also the definitive benchmark and for implementing the various strategies and recommendations made in this Comprehensive Plan.

Twenty-first century Cicero is a prosperous, resilient suburban community comprised of livable neighborhoods and walkable environments - a community that has invested in its assets and

pursued its opportunities for enhancing its traditional commercial corridors and neighborhoods, schools and institutions, parks and recreational amenities, and for broadening housing choices for a range of household incomes. Cicero also has a diversified and balanced economic base with thriving industries, destination retail businesses and a supportive climate for small businesses to grow and prosper. Cicero stakeholders continue to strengthen and improve the Town to meet the needs of current and future residents within the context of the Town's traditions, institutions and built environment. Cicero's traditional neighborhoods include a mix of well-maintained and preserved single-family bungalows, two-flats and apartment blocks as well as new housing developments that provide a diversity of living options and are served by attractive retail in nearby commercial districts.



Cicero Vision for 2040 continued

Cicero is committed to making Cermak Road, Roosevelt Road and Cicero Avenue the community's premier commercial corridors with a vibrant mix of businesses, institutional uses and cultural and entertainment venues along with a streetscape and urban design environment that attracts shoppers, residents and visitors alike. New transit-oriented development near the Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue CTA Pink Line stations will not only help to add new business and commercial uses but will also improve access to jobs and economic opportunity, as well as enhance mobility and reduce transportation costs for Cicero residents. Cicero's smaller neighborhood commercial districts will continue to provide neighborhood-serving retail and business services while providing new opportunities for small business start-ups, live/work spaces, artist studios, restaurants and cafes and "pop-up" stores as incubator spaces.

Cicero has a mix of land uses that promotes a strong, stable and resilient tax base, including the preservation of its industrial sector, which employs workers in warehousing, manufacturing, and other innovative industries and enterprises.

Cicero is well-connected with a well-planned and maintained system of roadways, pedestrian links, public transit and bicycle routes that all serve to promote transportation choices within Cicero and to the larger Chicago metropolitan region.

Cicero is investing in its parks and recreational facilities to provide a broad range of opportunities for local residents to participate in physical activity, have contact with nature and increase social interaction between residents of different neighborhoods. In the end, parks and open space serve to promote public health and cultural programs, expand Cicero's green infrastructure, and facilitate neighborhood revitalization.

Cicero is implementing a well-funded and coordinated program of infrastructure improvements that support the broader land use and economic development goals of thriving industrial areas, neighborhoods and commercial districts. Infrastructure investments incorporate a variety of approaches to managing stormwater and mitigating the impacts of future flood events.

Cicero is working in partnership with its local schools and other community institutions to provide support for better learning environments, facility development and expansion, as well as initiatives that enhance the role of local schools in strengthening Cicero neighborhoods.

Cicero is providing and delivering a high level of community services to its residents, especially its youth and seniors, as a way to support and enhance the local quality of life, public health, community engagement and social cohesion and interaction.

Cicero has become a community united in its diversity by embracing its different ethnic and racial populations as a means for cultural expression, improving economic conditions and strengthening local neighborhoods and institutions.

Cicero has become a 21st century suburban community that is forward thinking, celebrates its diversity and offers a set of attractive amenities — from shopping districts to parks to good schools to neighborhoods.

Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy of this Comprehensive Plan defined below is depicted in the following Figure 2.1 – Proposed Future Land Use Map. The land use strategy is the overall framework for the preferred pattern of development going forward for the Town of Cicero and should help in community decision-making regarding revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and for assessing the appropriateness of a particular land use at a specific location within Cicero.

Traditional Neighborhood (TN). The traditional neighborhoods located north of Cermak Road between Laramie and Central Avenues and in areas south of Cermak to Pershing Road contain a mix of historic bungalows and two-flats, Cape Cod cottages, Colonials, and raised Ranches that define Cicero's predominate housing stock. This housing stock also provides housing opportunities for working and middle-class families seeking to live near neighborhood schools and commercial districts, other shopping areas, employment centers in Cicero and elsewhere, and local transit and interstate highways. The principal objective of this land use category is to promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock and the careful redevelopment of available lots and parcels that respect the architectural scale and design character of these neighborhoods. Implementing specific housing rehabilitation initiatives, where they entail current or new efforts, and conducted by both the private and public sectors, should be the primary planning emphasis. While these neighborhoods may contain a mix of historic single family and historic and newer multi-family apartment blocks, the primary residential character will remain single-family.

Neighborhood Infill (NI). The residential neighborhood bounded by Roosevelt Road to the north, the Chicago Trunk Railroad to the east, Cermak Road to the south, and Laramie Avenue to the west also contains a mix of traditional bungalows, two flats, apartment blocks and gable-front cottages. The predominate character of this neighborhood will remain single-family with select opportunities to build a mix of single and two-flat housing that is within scale and character of the adjacent housing stock. Property rehabilitation will also be strongly encouraged. Vacant lots that may be too small to developed as infill could remain as expanded side yards for adjacent properties or as new pocket parks or expanded park space

where feasible. Multi-family housing and apartment blocks are also encouraged where sufficient lot sizes are available, especially if such lots are located near Roosevelt and Cermak Roads, Cicero Avenue and 16th Street. It should be noted that redevelopment activity in Neighborhood Infill areas are long-term given that current market demand is slack for new and higher-density residential development. However, redevelopment for affordable housing opportunities maybe more feasible given the desire to reduce overcrowding in Cicero.

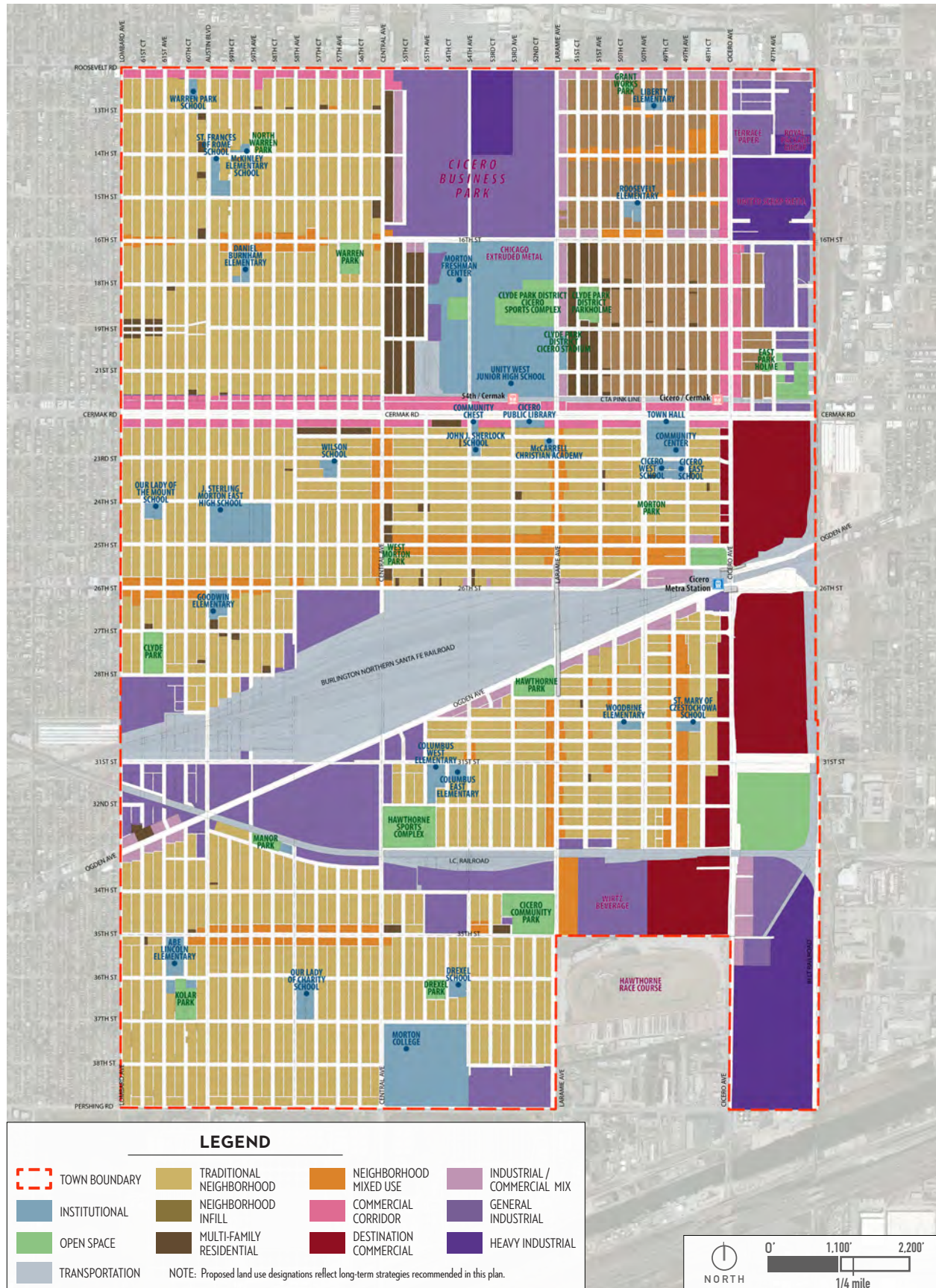
Multi-Family (MF). While traditional two-flat and apartment block buildings already exist in Cicero's traditional neighborhoods, additional multi-family development in select locations can help to add new housing units, especially near transit facilities. New multi-family construction can also take advantage of available lots and existing infrastructure, as well as support the revitalization of Cicero's commercial districts, especially the Cermak Road commercial corridor. These areas are generally located just east and west of the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor and along Laramie and Central Avenues.

Commercial Corridor (CC). The traditional commercial corridors of Roosevelt and Cermak Roads and the western blocks of Cicero Avenue north of Cermak will be the focus for both new development and the rehabilitation and reuse of traditional commercial and mixed use buildings. With their zero set-backs, open storefronts and upper-stories used for both offices and residential



Traditional two-flats are an excellent building type for neighborhood infill areas, providing flexibility while maintaining the existing character.

Figure 2.1 – Proposed Future Land Use Map



uses, traditional commercial buildings define the predominant development patterns within these corridors; therefore, new development design should respect the existing character, scale, and massing of the existing building fabric. In particular, the Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue corridors should incorporate the recommendations of the *RTA Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*, where new commercial and mixed use developments on identified opportunity sites near the CTA Pink Line stations at Cicero and 54th Avenues should be pursued to add new commercial and residential density. In turn, the preservation, rehabilitation and enhancement of existing buildings, commercial storefronts and signage, as well as the streetscape environment, should also be a high priority for improving corridor visual appearance, business environment, and overall image.

Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU). The smaller neighborhood commercial districts provide opportunities for independent businesses to serve the needs of local residents; creative uses of ground floor commercial storefronts for new restaurants, live/work arrangements, coffee shops and galleries and artist spaces, should also be encouraged. The rehabilitation and reuse of the traditional commercial building fabric in these districts should be a priority along with new infill development, although such opportunities may be constrained due to the limited number of opportunity sites. However, where such opportunities exist, new development should respect the commercial district's design character, height and scale. Opportunity sites fronting corner lots should be mixed use in order to better define corner locations and intersections as important nodes of commercial activities. In the smaller neighborhood commercial districts, many traditional commercial buildings have been converted to ground-floor residential use; future conversions may be permitted as long as the storefronts can be converted back to future commercial use if market factors warrant. The Neighborhood Mixed Use districts are located along 14th, 16th 25th, 26th and 35th Streets and along portions of Laramie and South 49th Avenue.

Destination Commercial (DC). Portions of Cicero Avenue south of Cermak Road are classified as Destination Commercial given the significant concentration of larger-sized big box and strip center retail developments that attract a more regional customer base. This classification also reflects the particular design characteristics of

these developments, which require deep setbacks and large parking areas. While the Destination Commercial areas have been mostly developed, there are potential opportunities for new developments south of 31st Street and for out-lots along Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road as suggested in the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*.

Industrial-Commercial (IC). This land use classification reflects the mix of commercial and light industrial uses that exist along several streets and corridors in Cicero, including Ogden Avenue from Cicero to Lombard Avenues and portions of Laramie and Cicero Avenues. Another industrial commercial zone exists along 26th Street between Central Avenue and 49th Court. The primary objectives of this land use classification is to support light industrial and manufacturing and associated commercial and office uses that accommodate a wide range of employment activities. Such uses should also serve as a buffer from the BNSF Intermodal Facility at 26th Street and the adjacent single family neighborhoods. Where feasible and appropriate, adequate screening and landscaping treatments between such uses and their parking, loading and storage areas and the adjacent residential neighborhoods should be pursued for their aesthetic and environmental benefits.

General Industrial (GI). A broad range of industrial, warehousing and manufacturing activities of minimal environmental impact are to be encouraged in General Industrial zones. Such industries can be served by both rail and by truck transportation. This classification is suitable for industrial areas located adjacent to residential districts and neighborhoods. Commercial uses would be restricted in General Industrial zones.



Existing industrial-commercial development on 55th Avenue, near 16th Street.

Heavy Industrial (HI). Manufacturing enterprises with the potential for more significant land use and environmental impacts, and parking, loading and outdoor storage needs, are classified as Heavy Industrial. These districts are located adjacent to other industrial and commercial areas, including the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor and along Cicero Avenue south of 35th Street. Heavy industrial uses can be served by both rail and by truck transportation routes. As with the General Industrial districts, commercial uses would be restricted.

Institutional (I). Local schools, religious buildings, police and fire stations, public works facilities and government buildings are classified in the future land use map as Institutional. The Institutional land use classification would allow the Town of Cicero to plan for the future location and expansion of institutional facilities where needed. An Institutional land use district is suggested for the area bounded by 16th Street, Cermak Road, and 55th and Laramie Avenues to accommodate the potential addition of new educational and civic facilities.

Parks and Open Space (OS). This designation encompasses the park spaces found within Cicero and new parks and park facilities suggested in this Comprehensive Plan and the *RTA Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*.

Future Land Use Changes and Development Objectives

In general, the future land use strategy proposed herein retains Cicero's existing land use patterns with an emphasis on maintaining and rehabilitating the existing housing stock, strengthening the mixed-use character of the Town's traditional commercial areas, and implementing various physical enhancements to public spaces and streetscapes. However, this Plan does propose one area where significant land use change is recommended: the creation of an institutional campus north of Cermak Road within the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor. In other places, zoning changes are needed to reflect more accurately current and projected land use conditions.

54th Avenue Institutional Campus

A major recommendation of this Comprehensive Plan is the creation of an institutional campus between 16th Street and Cermak Road and 55th and Laramie Avenues, an area that has been transitioning from industrial to institutional in recent years with the construction of the Unity West Junior High School, and the Morton Freshman Center and Alternative High School. An institutional campus could help provide additional space for an expansion of the Freshman Center and Alternative High School facilities, and indoor recreational facility, and outdoor playfields, park and open space. An open space element in this location can help provide needed park space in this area of Cicero; new school facilities can help to address space needs in the local school districts. Existing industries would need to be relocated and any remaining brownfield issues would need to be addressed to move forward with the development of the campus. Institutional zoning would need to be adopted to help guide the overall development of the campus.



Heavy industrial uses on Cicero Avenue.



Industrial uses on 54th Avenue – looking north.

Industrial Redevelopment Areas

Industrial redevelopment opportunities are recommended for land north of 16th Street within the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor and along the eastern portion of Cicero Avenue south of 33rd Street. With the exception of the Kropp Forge Company, general industrial uses as suggested in the land use strategy, such as storage, light assembly, and warehousing, are recommended on remaining redevelopment parcels. Such uses would be more compatible to the Institutional Campus proposed to the south of 16th Street. Heavy industrial uses are recommended for the redevelopment area along Cicero Avenue where land could be more intensely developed and existing rail spurs used for cargo-oriented industries. Portions of the land fronting Cicero Avenue could also be reserved for a mix of commercial and industrial-commercial uses. Both redevelopment areas will be long-term priorities and require property assembly and industry relocations, infrastructure and urban design improvements, and possible land cost write-downs to attract new industries.

In addition to the 54th and Cicero Avenues industrial areas, there are smaller, block-sized redevelopment opportunities along the Ogden Avenue industrial corridor and in Cicero's northeast quadrant between Cicero Avenue and 47th Avenue, which is predominately residential but is currently zoned for M-2 Light Manufacturing. These areas could be redeveloped for new industrial uses over the long-term, especially for existing industries looking to expand their operations. Such redevelopment activities should ensure that adequate buffering, landscaping, and environmental safeguards are in place if redevelopment takes place to adjacent residential neighborhoods. Other areas zoned for industrial use, such as the blocks north of the BNSF Intermodal Facility along 26th Street, consideration should be given to changing some blocks from M-1 Wholesale and Warehouse to R-1 single-family zoning. While encouraging new industrial commercial uses along 26th Street is compatible with the adjacent Intermodal Facility to the south, it is unlikely that the single-family residential uses along several blocks of 26th Street will be redeveloped for industrial use in the long-term. The blocks that are industrial-commercial in nature should remain zoned as for industrial-commercial uses.

Commercial and Mixed-Use Redevelopment

The *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan* recommends several opportunity sites for commercial, residential and mixed-use developments along Cermak Road, Cicero Avenue and the former Town Hall site at 25th Place and 50th Avenue. These sites should serve as priority redevelopment initiatives. An alternative scenario for redeveloping the Town Hall site is proposed in this Comprehensive Plan with an emphasis on encouraging new development for industrial-commercial uses – office spaces for businesses and industries or space for retail or other commercial activity. The former Town Hall building, which was identified as architecturally noteworthy by the Illinois Historic Structures and Landmark surveys, could be rehabilitated by the private sector as office or commercial space using the Federal Historic Preservation and/ New Markets Tax Credit programs. New housing development on this site is feasible but any project seeking use of affordable housing tax credits and other public financing programs may be ineligible given the location of the adjacent Intermodal Facility and recognized environmental conditions posed by emissions emanating from the facility.

Zoning Considerations

Zoning and development regulations are among the most effective tools that can be used by the Town of Cicero in implementing this Comprehensive Plan's land use goals and objectives. Continued administration and enforcement of existing zoning regulations will help promote implementation of many of the Plan's recommended land use strategies. However, full realization of some objectives may require updated zoning tools and approaches. This section describes several new and revised zoning concepts that should be considered by the Town.

Review and Update of Zoning and Development Regulations

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan should be followed by a review and update of Town's various development controls including the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. Given the vintage of the current regulations, it would be wise to consider a comprehensive update of at least the

zoning ordinance. However, regardless of whether tackled as a comprehensive overhaul or strategic amendments, it is important that all development regulations be consistent with and help implement the Comprehensive Plan's goals, and objectives. Future reviews and updates should, at a minimum, focus on:

- Allowances for proper use mix and density in transit-oriented areas, Regulations that help preserve the character of neighborhoods and business districts,
- Allowances for proper mix of housing types that support housing choice, accessibility and affordability,
- Promotion of sustainable design and development techniques, and
- Procedural amendments that may streamline the development review and approval process and encourage development and investment.

Cermak Road and other Commercial Corridors

The existing zoning pattern along Cermak Road and other portions of Cicero Avenue and Roosevelt Road is currently a mix of commercial and residential zoning (C-2, R-4 and R-1). The regulations associated with these districts are not entirely adequate to maintain and enhance the type of walkable urban character called for in the Comprehensive Plan's CC (Commercial Corridor) land use designation. As stated in the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*, consideration should be given to rezoning the Cermak Road corridor to C-2 or creating and applying a new zoning designation that would



Cermak Road - look west from Cicero Avenue.

better protect and enhance the area's desired character. Specific consideration should be given to establishment of form-based zoning controls similar to those in place along Roosevelt Road or creation of a zoning district that would "overlay" the expanded C-2 zoned area and establish build-to zone, ground-floor transparency and other reasonable design and building form requirements to supplement existing regulations.

Neighborhood Mixed-Use Zoning

Consideration should be given to creating a new "neighborhood mixed-use" zoning classification, which would help support the Comprehensive Plan's NMU (Neighborhood Mixed-Use) land use objectives. By allowing a broad range of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial uses, such a zoning district might help support efforts to reuse and rehabilitate older commercial buildings, while respecting established neighborhood character. Reduced or eliminated parking requirements could help support small businesses and ensure preservation of the walkable, low-impact character of such areas. The Plan's NMU land use objectives could also be supported by amending the town's residential zoning district regulations to allow reuse of older converted storefront buildings by small neighborhood-serving retail stores, subject to reasonable criteria.

Public and Institutional Zoning

As a means of implementing this Plan's Institutional (I) and Parks and Open Space (O) land use classifications the Town may wish to create and apply one or more new zoning classifications focused on public and quasi-public facilities, such as parks, open spaces, fire stations, schools and similar uses. This type of "Public and Institutional" zoning classification would help to ensure that the Town's zoning map conveys an accurate message about the range of uses and activities that may occur on lands designated for public, quasi-public and civic uses. Moreover, such a zoning district could include lot and bulk regulations that are more accommodating to a broad range of public and civic uses that are now sometimes merely identified as permitted or special uses within existing residential and nonresidential zoning districts. The new district could also include new regulations to help mitigate the impacts of high-intensity public/civic uses on nearby residential areas.

Industrial Zoning

The Town's current "M" (industrial) zoning classifications are highly flexible, allowing a very broad range of industrial, employment, commercial and sometimes even residential uses. While such flexibility may have some attraction for subject property owners, it can result in land use conflicts and pressures (e.g., rising land values and nuisance complaints) that work against the Town's objectives for maintaining and building an industrial base. To address this issue, the Town of Cicero may wish to consider creation of an employment-generating zoning classification that focuses almost exclusively on promotion of and support for industrial and employment-generating land uses.

The strategic zoning actions described above will help advance the Town's land use vision, but it is important to note that the existing zoning ordinance has not been comprehensively revised in some time.

Off-Street Parking

Excessive off-street parking requirements can lead to the over-development of parking infrastructure, which increases impervious cover and stormwater runoff and drives up the cost of development. "Right-sized" minimum parking ratios can help reduce impervious surface coverage, which reduces stormwater runoff and the "urban heat island effect" caused by the sun's heating of large paved areas. Updated parking regulations should be considered as part of any zoning ordinance update. The following specific techniques should be evaluated for use in Cicero:

- Allowing the use of pervious paving materials and bio-retention areas within parking lots;
- Tying minimum parking ratios to defined land uses and reducing minimums for some categories, including retail, administrative/professional offices and restaurants;
- Exploring the use of maximum parking ratios and context-based parking requirements (i.e., variable standards by location);
- Promoting shared parking and allowing greater flexibility for meeting parking and transportation access demands, including minimum bicycle parking requirements; and,
- Incentivizing (motorized) travel reduction strategies.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff that is not properly managed can flow over impervious surfaces and also cause flooding and erosion. Sustainable design approaches to stormwater management—sometimes referred to as green infrastructure—mimic the way nature handles stormwater prior to development. Typical techniques involve disconnecting stormwater flows from storm sewers and directing runoff to natural areas and open spaces, such as rain gardens, bio-swales and landscaped planters or using vegetated green roofs (eco-roofs) to reduce and filter stormwater runoff.

The new zoning and land development regulations should allow for appropriate use of these types of low-impact, sustainable stormwater management practices, provided that they are effective and that long-term maintenance issues can be addressed.



An off-street parking lot under construction on 25th Street.

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Chapter 5. Livable Neighborhoods

The following chapter provides an overview of existing conditions and key planning goals and strategies for Cicero's housing stock and neighborhoods.

Goals and Policies

Goals	Policies for Decision Makers
Cicero neighborhoods have retained and enhanced their character and livability.	• Support home rehabilitation and preservation of Cicero's traditional neighborhoods. • Implement new systems to enhance enforcement of property standards. • Consider design standards and new zoning mechanisms to encourage high quality new design in Cicero neighborhoods.
Cicero provides a wide range of housing choices and opportunities that meet the needs of different household incomes and lifestyles	• Support new housing development on vacant lots and opportunity sites and introduce new housing types such as townhomes, apartment blocks and flats, upper-story units and lofts. • Seek partnerships with different housing organizations and groups to help rehabilitate and construct new affordable housing units. • Support implementation of an affordable housing plan. • Encourage new mixed-use developments that introduce new housing in neighborhoods and on Transit-Oriented Development opportunity sites.

Cicero Housing and Neighborhood Characteristics

Market Overview

Cicero has an estimated total of 25,093 housing units. The Town's housing stock consists primarily of single family homes and low-rise buildings containing two to four units. As shown in Table 2.1 on the following page, 37.2 percent of the units in the Town are single family detached, with another 2.9 percent single family attached. Two flats comprise 29.8 percent of the units while buildings with three to four units total 18.6 percent. Occupied units account for 85.5 percent of all housing units. The distribution between owner occupied and



renter occupied housing units is almost evenly split. Roughly two-thirds of Cicero’s housing stock was built prior to 1939, and another third was completed between World War II and 1960.

Foreclosures. Foreclosures have inhibited Cicero’s housing market from recovering fully. More than 4,750 properties, both single family and multifamily, were foreclosed on from 2008-2013. On a positive note, fewer than 400 properties were foreclosed on in 2013, marking a five year low.

Multifamily Rental Housing. Of the total of 21,465 occupied housing units in Cicero, approximately half are renter-occupied. Cicero has only a few large multifamily rental buildings.

Realtor Data. As measured by the volume of sales and prices, Cicero’s housing market has begun to show signs of recovery. Nonetheless, prices for single family detached homes are nowhere near their pre-recession level. The accompanying graph shows the extent to which home prices in Cicero and neighboring suburbs fell from their peak in 2007. For homes sold

Total Foreclosure Filings in Cicero



Source: Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University

Age of Housing Stock

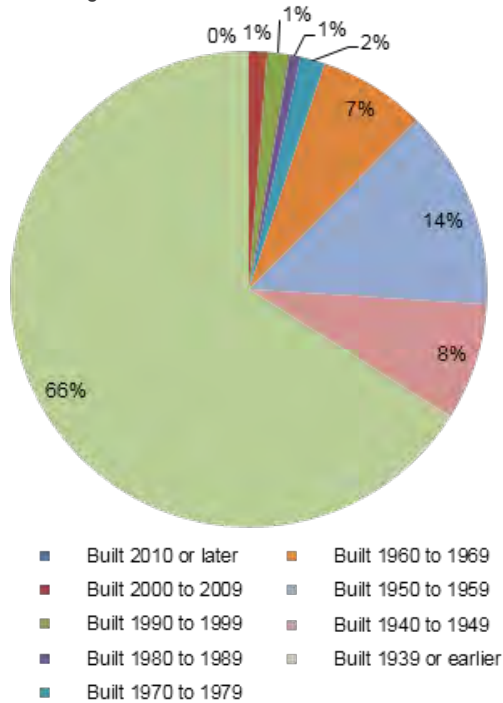


TABLE 2.1 – HOUSING UNITS BY OCCUPANCY STATUS AND TENURE		
	# of Units	% of Units
Occupied Housing	21,465	85.5%
Owner Occupied	10,889	50.7%
Renter Occupied	10,576	49.3%
Vacant Housing Units	3,628	14.5%
By Unit Type		
1-unit, detached	9,325	37.2%
1-unit, attached	728	2.9%
2 units	7,481	29.8%
3 or 4 units	4,658	18.6%
5 to 9 units	1,019	4.1%
10 to 19 units	1,010	4.0%
20 or more units	828	3.3%
Other	44	0.2%
Total Housing Units	25,093	

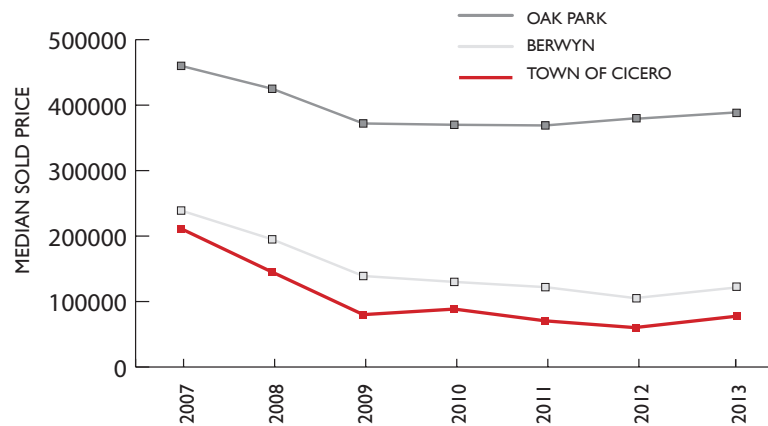
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

by Realtors in Cicero in 2007, the median price was \$211,250. By 2009, the median price had fallen by 62 percent to \$80,000. The median sale price in 2013 was \$74,000. On a more positive note, the number of homes sold increased significantly in 2013.

Attached single family homes include condominiums and townhouses. The median sale price of this housing type also dropped precipitously during the recession, falling from \$128,000 in 2007 to \$26,000 in 2011. The median sale price for 48 attached units sold in 2013 was \$30,050. Prices and sales remain low in Cicero.

Senior Housing. In terms of senior housing developments, the Drexel Horizon, located at 3443 South 55th Avenue, was developed by the Aldan Network in 1997. The independent living facility serves adults age 62 and older. According to administrators of the Senior Services Department, there is a wait list at the Drexel and a need

Median Sold Price for Detached Housing



Median Sold Price for Attached Housing

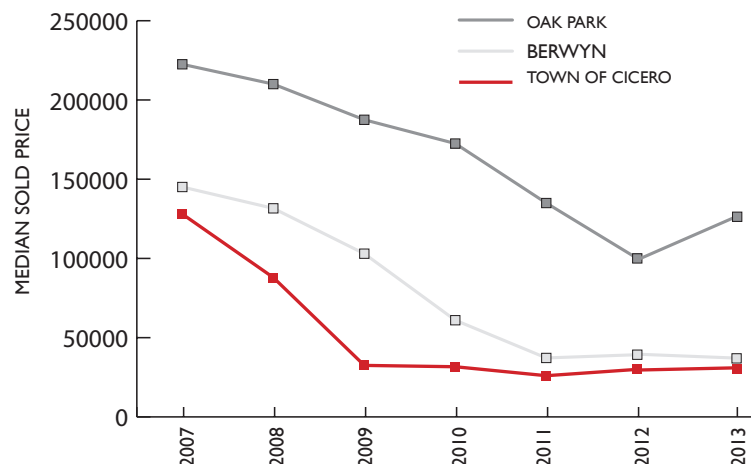


TABLE 2.2 – DETACHED HOME SALES (BY NUMBER OF UNITS)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cicero	212	166	287	351	322	377	481
Berwyn	311	254	344	323	324	440	552
Oak Park	379	331	335	293	299	379	496

Source: Midwest Real Estate Data

TABLE 2.3 – ATTACHED HOME SALES (BY NUMBER OF UNITS)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cicero	22	12	9	20	23	17	48
Berwyn	65	31	33	29	35	46	58
Oak Park	497	251	191	200	188	228	318

Source: Midwest Real Estate Data

for additional residential options. The average size for each living unit is 750 square feet with a total of 71 living units in the complex.

According to administrators of the Town of Cicero's Senior Center and Senior Services, there is growing demand for senior housing in Cicero. Senior households in Cicero who want to move out of their single family homes, yet stay in the community, have few options. Administrators noted the Drexel facility as the only affordable residential option for those who wish to move to senior living facilities.

Residential Opportunities in Cicero

Going forward, the Town should focus efforts on Transit-Oriented Development opportunity sites near the Pink Line CTA and Metra stations, which could provide new housing opportunities. To facilitate TOD projects, the Town could help assemble and write down land costs as well as provide financial assistance through Tax Incremental Financing where and when appropriate.

Future multifamily housing in Cicero could serve the Town's growing senior population. Cicero's 65 and older population is expected to grow by 1,061 between 2014 and 2019, accounting for nearly

70 percent of all population growth in the Town. Demand for independent and assisted living facilities, and memory care units will all increase, generating demand for additional development. Opportunities for new family housing units and those targeting younger working households and multi-generational households are also possible, particularly given the current issue of over-crowding. Yet the price points for new rental and for-sale housing must recognize the modest income levels of most of Cicero households and the comparatively affordable nature of the existing housing stock.



Court Apartments, 2209 South 61st Street

TABLE 2.4 – DETAILED AGE PROJECTIONS

	2014		2019 Estimates		Total Change	
AGE	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19	31,246	36.6%	31,652	36.4%	406	1.3%
20 - 24	7,455	8.7%	7,106	8.2%	-349	-4.7%
25 - 29	6,923	8.1%	7,085	8.2%	162	2.3%
30 - 34	6,811	8.0%	6,835	7.9%	24	0.4%
35 - 39	6,165	7.2%	6,597	7.6%	432	7.0%
40 - 44	5,874	6.9%	5,614	6.5%	-260	-4.4%
45 - 49	4,887	5.7%	5,005	5.8%	118	2.4%
50 - 54	4,237	5.0%	3,963	4.6%	-274	-6.5%
55 - 59	3,596	4.2%	3,586	4.1%	-10	-0.3%
60 - 64	2,858	3.3%	3,079	3.5%	221	7.7%
65 - 69	2,024	2.4%	2,376	2.7%	352	17.4%
70 - 74	1,257	1.5%	1,709	2.0%	452	36.0%
75 - 79	797	0.9%	1,048	1.2%	251	31.5%
80 - 84	571	0.7%	599	0.7%	28	4.9%
85+	648	0.8%	626	0.7%	-22	-3.4%
Total Population	85,349	100.0%	86,880	100.0%	1,531	

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Plan Recommendations

Goal
Cicero neighborhoods have retained and enhanced their character and livability.
Policies
• Support property rehabilitation and preservation of Cicero's traditional neighborhoods. • Implement new systems to enhance enforcement of property standards. • Consider design standards and new zoning mechanisms to encourage high quality new design in Cicero neighborhoods.

Strategies

A. Establish a bungalow preservation and rehabilitation initiative. As noted in this Comprehensive Plan, Cicero's traditional neighborhoods contain a significant concentration of Chicago Bungalows and bungalow two-flats, which remain mostly in good condition despite concerns with overcrowding. Cicero's bungalow neighborhoods are similar to those in Chicago neighborhoods and in adjacent Berwyn and other inner-ring western suburbs in providing a sound housing stock for middle and working class families. To maintain and preserve this housing stock, Cicero should establish a formal bungalow preservation initiative that provides technical support and education and some financial

assistance to property owners seeking to maintain, update and modernize their bungalows to fit their needs. Such an initiative can be modeled after similar efforts in Chicago with the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association (HCBA), established by the City in 2000, and the City of Homes Organization (CoHo) in neighboring Berwyn. Both initiatives are led by non-profit organizations with financial participation by their respective municipalities and private business and corporations. The HCBA initiative offers a series of educational workshops and seminars on topics ranging from roof and window repair to basement flooding and stormwater management to additions and energy efficiency. Small grants are occasionally awarded to owners of historic bungalows for various building improvements and enhancements.

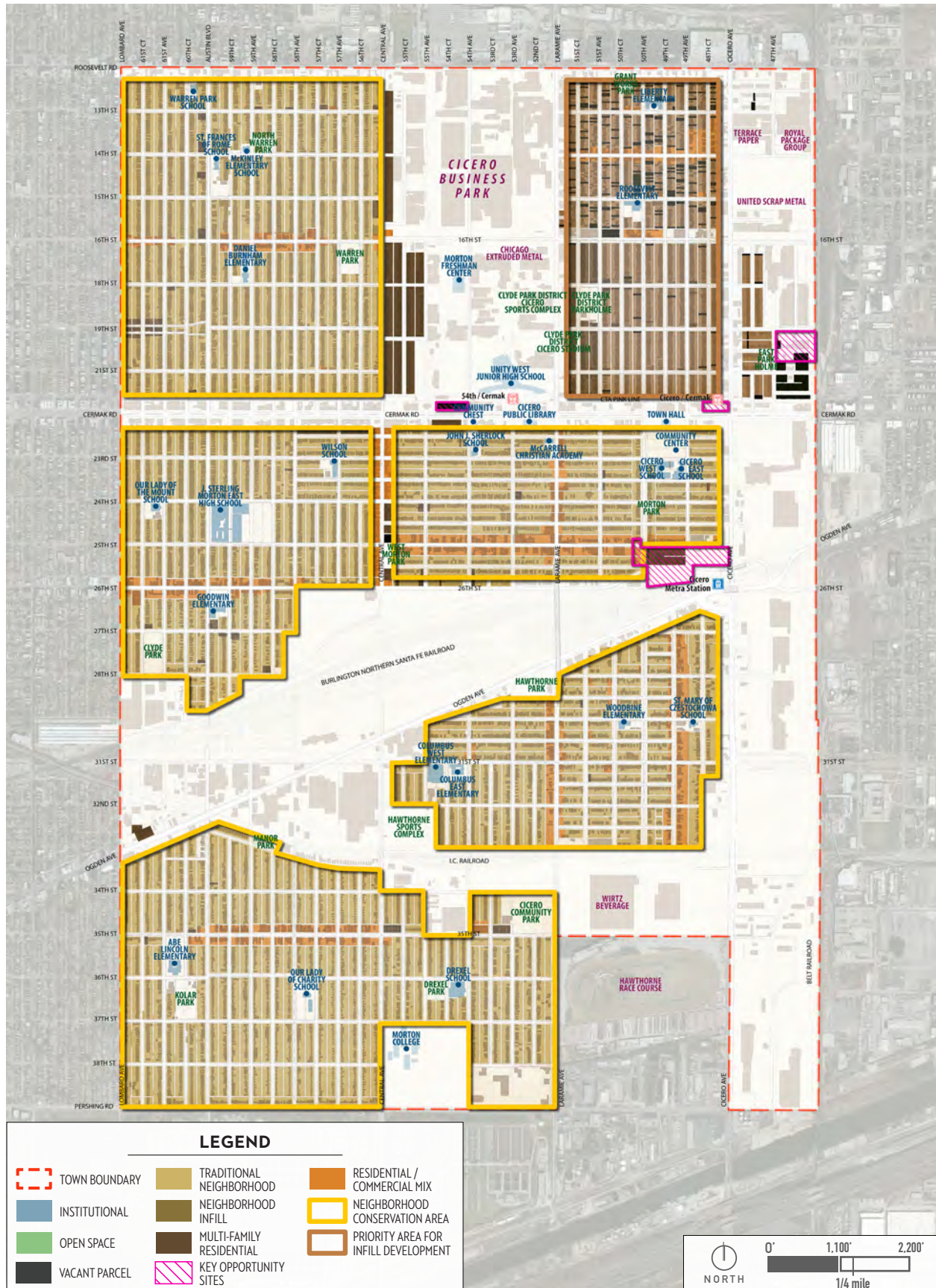
B. Seek additional resources for housing rehabilitation initiatives.

Federal funding for housing programs through CDBG entitlements and other programs have been in decline for some time and there is little prospect for change at least in the near-term. Other sources should be explored to continue Cicero's efforts at providing a small level of financial assistance to property owners who need help in maintaining their homes, especially in targeted areas of reinvestment need, such as in Grant Works. Other sources of funding could come from HOME Investment Partnership monies, municipal general revenues, corporate, non-profit housing organizations, faith-based groups and local and regionally-based foundations, such as the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation for energy-efficiency retrofits. Cook County's HOME Investment Partnership Program, which is funded by the County through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development, can be used for housing rehabilitation in Cicero neighborhoods. While a bungalow-specific initiative could potentially provide a small incentive grant for property owners interested in improving their bungalow homes, a new program could also be offered to other homeowners based on financial need in other Cicero neighborhoods.



Cicero Bungalows

Figure 2.2 – Residential Strategy Map



C. Establish and maintain partnerships with non-profit housing organizations. Private sector housing groups could play larger and more substantive roles in housing rehabilitation in Cicero neighborhoods and help augment the work of the Cicero Housing Department and Housing Authority. Non-profit housing groups can often secure multiple layers of financing in undertaking property rehabilitation projects as well as provide additional services related to property management, homeowner counseling and foreclosure prevention. The Town could support the work of housing non-profits by providing CDBG entitlement monies for specific projects or by selling Town-owned or foreclosed properties to non-profits. The Town of Cicero could work to establish a non-profit housing organization that works exclusively in Cicero or partner with an existing local or regional group with a proven track in housing rehabilitation, such as the Resurrection Project, operating in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, or Neighborhood Housing Services, which could establish a chapter in Cicero.

D. Review building permit requirements. Town Building Department staff have suggested during this planning process that the types of home improvement projects that need building permits should be reviewed and reduced in some way in order to allow staff to concentrate efforts on more significant code enforcement issues and initiatives, including a potential rental registration program.

E. Prepare a neighborhood design improvement manual. A design improvement manual that provides information and guidance on good home rehabilitation practices, such as proper window repair and exterior maintenance, roof replacement and building additions, could be prepared by the Town of Cicero for use in a bungalow preservation initiative, through housing rehab efforts with other housing groups and in general outreach and educational work with Cicero residents. The manual can incorporate line sketches, photos and graphics to illustrate and describe proper home repair and rehabilitation methods.

F. Create design standards for new infill development in traditional neighborhoods.

While the preservation and maintenance of the existing housing stock is the primary land use objective in Cicero's traditional neighborhoods, opportunities will exist for new infill housing, whether single or multi-family. New housing should fit in and be compatible with the height, scale, massing of adjacent housing within the neighborhood block. Design standards could be incorporated within a revised zoning code for traditional neighborhoods whether as part of a form-based system or as an overlay to the existing zoning. Additional design requirements could be considered for any local historic districts that could be established in the future.

G. Establish a rental registration and inspection program.

Similar to the Town's vacant building registration program, landlords of rental properties would pay a fee in support of yearly property inspections to ensure homes and multi-family buildings within Cicero's older neighborhood are properly maintained. Single family homes used as rental property could be exempted from registration.

H. Market and promote Cicero traditional neighborhoods and housing opportunities.

Cicero's existing traditional neighborhood areas contain a well-built, high quality housing stock, mostly constructed in masonry with a design scale characteristic of authentic mature neighborhoods of Chicago and nearby suburbs. These neighborhoods are also vibrant and walkable to schools and adjacent commercial districts. Despite continuing concerns with neighborhood overcrowding and housing vacancies, Cicero's traditional neighborhoods have many assets that should be marketed and promoted to attract new residents and investment to the existing housing stock. Marketing efforts can range from advertising campaigns to a stand-alone neighborhoods website that showcase housing opportunities, social events and neighborhood amenities, such as local schools, parks and nearby shopping districts. A marketing program could be managed by the Town or be the responsibility of a Cicero bungalow initiative or other non-profit housing group.

I. Undertake neighborhood architectural surveys and consider establishing neighborhood historic districts. Since it has been more than 30 years since the State of Illinois landmark and historic structures surveys had been undertaken, a new survey of Cicero's neighborhoods should be considered to determine the potential for designating individual homes or entire neighborhood districts to the National Register of Historic Places. Although National Register designation is honorary and poses no restrictions on the use of property, it does provide one significant benefit – it allows owners of historic single family homes, condominiums and apartments of up to six units access to the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Program. National Register designation also provides a level of prestige and enhances the image of Cicero's neighborhoods, stabilizes and promotes higher property values, and insulates neighborhoods against fluctuations in housing market.

Priority areas for new architectural and historical surveys, including the residential areas bounded by Roosevelt and Cermak Roads between Central and Lombard Avenues and south of Cermak between Cicero and Lombard Avenues. These areas contain the highest and most intact concentrations of Chicago Bungalows and two-flats within Cicero. Architectural and historical surveys can be undertaken at a reconnaissance level, where a basic understanding on the type of historic resources and the potential eligibility to the National Register is sought, or an intensive level survey where more in-depth information on building styles and condition, important architects and builders and other information is gathered to gain a more complete picture of potential National Register eligibility. Surveys can be funded through grants from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency's Certified Local Government Program. Cicero should seek CLG status by reactivating its historic preservation commission and adopting a historic preservation ordinance certified by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

In addition to exploring the possibilities of National Register districts, the Town could consider establishing local historic districts that could provide for more design standards and guidelines for housing rehabilitation, as well as the construction of new buildings. Local districts could control against the unwanted demolition of architecturally and historically significant buildings and structures.

Goal

Cicero provides a wide range of housing choices and opportunities that meet the needs of different household incomes and lifestyles.

Policies

- Support new housing development on vacant lots and opportunity sites and introduce new housing types such as townhomes, apartment block and flats, and upper-story units and lofts.
- Seek partnerships with different housing organizations and groups to construct new affordable housing units.
- Support implementation of an affordable housing plan.
- Encourage new mixed use developments that introduce new housing in neighborhoods and on Transit-Oriented Development opportunity sites.

Strategies

A. Where feasible, support new housing development within the Infill Residential area bounded by Roosevelt Road, Cicero and Laramie Avenues and Cermak Road. New infill single and multi-family housing should be encourage in the neighborhood bounded by Cermak Road on the south, Cicero and Laramie Avenues to the east and west respectively, and Roosevelt Road to the north – and area that is sometimes referred to as Grant Works. This neighborhood includes



Vacant parcel in the Grant Works neighborhood.

a number of vacant lots and existing housing with significantly-sized side lots. Vacant lots should be the focus of new housing development, especially multi-family in locations that support the commercial activities of the Cermak Road and the 16th Street business districts. Parcels with existing housing and large side-lots could also be the focus of housing redevelopment that add density and make use of existing infrastructure; however, it should be noted that not all parcels and side lots will be developable due to market and infrastructure constraints. Some side lots may be more valuable as extended yards for existing homes and for reducing the amount of impervious surfaces in Cicero. Redevelopment of these parcels and lots is a long-term strategy along with concurrent efforts at rehabilitating and maintaining the existing housing stock wherever possible. A priority emphasis on redeveloping vacant lots, especially near commercial areas and the CTA transit stations should be explored first.

The images shown to the right illustrate how vacant lots might be developed within Infill Residential areas, in a manner that adds new housing while maintaining neighborhood character.

B. Introduce new housing types in the Infill

Residential Area. As recommended above, a set of design standards should be developed to guide the design of new infill housing in Cicero's established traditional neighborhoods; it should also guide the design of new housing in the Infill Residential Area where opportunities exist to introduce new housing forms that add housing but within the scale of surrounding homes and neighborhood. Infill parcels and lots present opportunities to develop not only single-family homes but townhomes and two flats compatible with Grant Works existing traditional design character of gable-front cottages, bungalow homes and brick two flats. Parking new housing would be accommodated in detached, alley-facing garages.

Figures 2.3 & 2.4 – Infill Development Prototypes



Typical Existing Condition – single-family homes next to a vacant lot.



Single Parcel Infill Development – new single-family or two-unit home. (adds 1-2 units).



New two-flat infill construction, Chicago.

C. Facilitate new mixed-use developments in Cicero neighborhoods. The Cicero Transit Connections Plan outlines specific strategies for redeveloping opportunity sites along Cermak Road, Cicero Avenue and near the former Town Hall sites for new mixed-use development that introduce new commercial and residential uses in support of nearby CTA and Metra transit stations. These strategies should be pursued by the Town of Cicero as a means of adding and diversifying the housing supply and in providing housing opportunities that might attract young people and workers seeking to live near transit access and to nearby employment opportunities. Such housing may be appealing to seniors who want to age in place in Cicero and be close to shopping along nearby commercial districts and other amenities. Improvements to the transit stations, and nearby streetscapes and pedestrian environment, as well as enhancements to commercial district retail and dining offerings and other amenities, could be the factors that attract both seniors and young adults to live in Cicero.

Beyond the sites recommended in the Cicero Connections Plan, the Town should identify other opportunity sites in Cicero where mixed-use developments could take place, most likely in Cicero's other commercial districts or adjacent land. While mixed-use developments near Cicero's other commercial districts are long-term goals, the Town should identify potential sites and consider a land-banking strategy that holds such sites for future development.



Example of an appropriate mixed-use development in a commercial area.

D. Create an affordable housing plan.

Demographic as well as anecdotal evidence point to an overcrowding issue in Cicero, suggesting that need for additional affordable housing units. While the Town of Cicero principally uses its CDBG entitlement funds in support of its affordable housing initiatives, consideration should be given to creating a broader plan of action by expanding the scope of efforts to include additional public-private partnership initiatives and additional services to new homebuyers and seniors. As with mixed-use developments, the Town should identify Town-owned land and foreclosed properties that could be candidates for new construction and rehabilitation; the Town could also sell or donate land and property to a non-profit or other developer of affordable housing. In addition, as part of the housing plan, the Town should consider offering home buying counseling services if a non-profit sector housing organization is not operating in the near-term. Such services can help guide prospective homeowners on the available housing stock and financing programs, especially those that provide down payment assistance. In preparing the affordable housing plan, the Town could utilize CMAP's Homes for a Changing Region Toolkit, which is a step-by-step guidebook and process for understanding Cicero's housing needs.

The Town of Cicero already provides a significant level of services to senior citizens, much of it geared to transportation services and minor house repair. These services could be expanded as part of the Cicero affordable housing strategy with a goal of helping seniors stay longer in their homes by providing services such as yard work, accessibility enhancements, porch and garage repair, and other home improvements. To expand and underwrite such efforts, the Town could consider creating a "senior's club" with an annual fee to those who want to join and receive the extra benefits that may be above what Cicero seniors already receive from the Town. Town services for the "club" level could be augmented by a volunteer corps that supports Town staff.

E. Develop neighborhood master plans. Previous recommendations outline the need for the Town to identify and reserve potential opportunity sites for new mixed-use and stand-alone residential development within existing neighborhood and adjacent commercial districts. Neighborhood-level master plans can explore the potential for opportunity sites while balancing other issues related to land use and parking. Parking in particular has been identified by Cicero stakeholders as a critical need in both neighborhoods and adjacent commercial districts. However, supplying new parking on lots and parcels could preclude them from being potential redevelopment sites. A neighborhood master plan for the Grants Works neighborhood is recommended given the potential for new infill development.

F. Encourage upper-story redevelopment.

The upper stories of many if not most traditional commercial and mixed-use buildings within Cicero's business districts contain upper-story housing units that should be maintained and a focus of rehabilitation efforts. Upper story housing can become a stable source of rental housing in Cicero, as well as provide opportunities for creating unique living spaces for a broad spectrum of household incomes. Conversion of upper-stories from offices or other commercial uses

to residential should be pursued, especially in the neighborhood commercial districts where upper-story office demand may be weaker than along Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue. An incentive program could be created that provides small grants to property owners seeking to convert and improve an upper-floor space; such a program could be funded through TIF and CDBG monies. Parking management programs for the neighborhood districts would need to be determined to locate sufficient spaces for overnight parking.

G. Use the planned unit development process to address new housing development and environmental issues.

New housing developments near or adjacent to existing or redeveloping industrial areas could be impacted by potential pollutant emissions and other environmental conditions. The Town of Cicero should use its planned unit development process to address how the new development would mitigate against potential impacts.



A mixed-use building on Cermak Road.

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Chapter 6. Prosperous Town

The following chapter provides an overview of existing conditions and key planning goals and strategies for Cicero's commercial districts and industrial areas.

Goals and Policies

Goals	Policies for Decision Makers
Strengthen and enhance Cicero's traditional commercial corridors and neighborhood shopping districts.	• Support the rehabilitation, preservation, and re-use of Cicero's traditional commercial buildings. • Encourage Transit-Oriented Development on identified opportunity sites. • Establish commercial district management programs and organizations. • Facilitate and implement initiatives aimed at supporting small business development. • Consider design standards and new zoning to promote higher quality building design in Cicero traditional commercial areas. • Implement placemaking and streetscaping programs that enhance commercial district visual qualities and appearance. • Require auto-oriented development to locate in destination retail and industrial-commercial areas of Cicero.
Maintain and develop destination shopping areas for large-format and formula retailing.	• Encourage development on available out-lots and available sites for chain store and formula retail where feasible in Cicero's destination commercial areas. • Encourage and facilitate high quality building design and streetscape, site and landscape improvements.
Attract and retain existing and emerging businesses and industries that take advantage of existing transportation networks and infrastructure.	• Implement land use and zoning policies that promote and support a diversity of industries and a stable tax base. • Retain existing industries that remain economically viable and constitute important Cicero employment centers. • Conduct additional planning for the redevelopment of key industrial areas. • Consider public-private partnerships to facilitate appropriate industrial redevelopment on key opportunity sites. • Adjust land use and zoning policies, create formal incentives and an effective marketing program to attract new industries. • Address brownfield and environmental issues for targeted industrial redevelopment sites.
Improve the business environment and enhance access to employment opportunities for Cicero residents.	• Enhance responsiveness to business concerns and streamline business regulatory process. • Strengthen and coordinate efforts between economic and workforce development.

Cicero Commercial and Industrial Characteristics

Employment Trends and Market Overview

Private-sector employment in Cicero fell during the recession years of 2008 – 2009, but has been rising since 2010. The most recent data indicate 15,429 private-sector jobs in the Town, still below the high in 2001 when 19,000 workers were employed in Cicero. The major private-sectors employers in Cicero are in the following industries:

- Manufacturing
- Administrative/Support/Waste Management and Remedial Services
- Retail Trade
- Healthcare/Social Assistance
- Accommodations/Food Services.

Since 2001, there has been a decline of 2,000 manufacturing jobs in Cicero. In contrast, the Service and Healthcare/Social Assistance industries have reported an increase in private sector employment. The latest and largest addition is Wirtz Beverage Illinois, which opened its new facility in Cicero in 2012. Other significant employers include BNSF and United Scrap Metal.

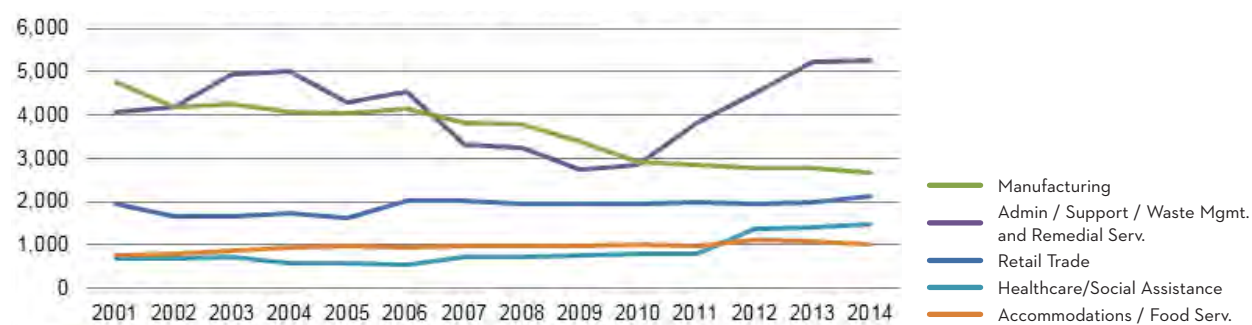
It should be noted that Administration, Waste Management and Remediation Services as listed in Table 2.5 includes recyclers, such as United Scrap Metal. No figures are reported for Arts, Entertainment and Recreation by the State of Illinois.

TABLE 2.5 – 2014 PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Industry	# of Employers
Admin. & Waste Mgmt. & Remed. Svcs.	5,274
Manufacturing	2,667
Retail Trade	2,139
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,497
Accommodations & Food Services	1,018
Wholesale Trade	602
Transportation & Warehousing	390
Finance & Insurance	353
Other Services (Except Public Admin.)	318
Construction	241
Educational Services	196
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	148
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Svcs.	139
Information	78
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	n/a
TOTAL	15,429

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

Top 5 Private Sector Industries in Cicero



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

Retail Market

The Town of Cicero has strong retail corridors along both Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road, as well as some smaller neighborhood shopping destinations. This section examines future retail opportunities in the Town in the context of the larger market area.

West Suburban Retail Trends

A prominent national brokerage firm, CBRE, includes Cicero in its west suburbs submarket, which is bounded by the City of Chicago on the east, Interstate 294 on the west, Interstate 90 and Chicago O'Hare International Airport on the north, and Interstate 55 on the south. The retail market in the west suburbs and throughout metropolitan Chicago continues to improve following the recession. In the west suburbs, the vacancy rate has fallen to 5.1 percent, well below the 9.8 percent average for all of Chicagoland.

Competitive Retail Destinations

Interviews with residents and stakeholders in Cicero indicate that many residents travel west to North Riverside and Hodgkins for major shopping trips. Several shopping centers attract Cicero residents and should be considered as part of the competitive retail market, the River Forest Town Center in River Forest, Downtown Oak Park, Cermak Plaza in Berwyn, North Riverside Mall and Plaza in North Riverside, and Countryside Plaza in Countryside. In addition, the Quarry Shopping Mall in nearby Hodgkins is noted as a preferred shopping destination by Cicero residents due to its convenient location off Interstate 55. These competitor centers and shopping districts comprise more than 2.9 million square feet of retail space.

Retail in the Town of Cicero

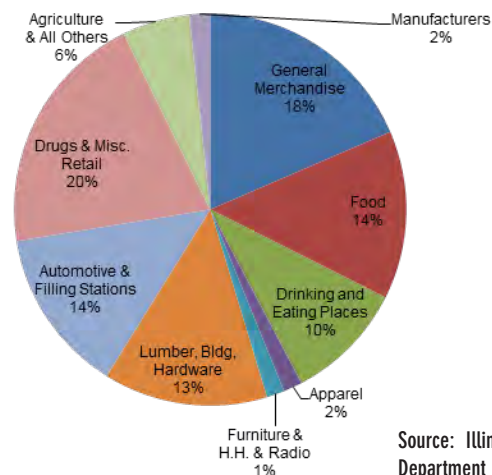
Reflecting its strong retail base, retail sales tax collection in Cicero reached a ten-year high in 2013. Cicero's 2014 retail sales tax will be bolstered by the addition of the Walmart Supercenter which opened in May on Cicero Avenue south of the Cicero Marketplace shopping center. This is Walmart's newest suburban location. The pie chart shows the breakout of retail sales tax in Cicero for 2013. As the data shows, General Merchandise, Drug and Miscellaneous Retail, and Lumber and Hardware account for a combined 51 percent of retail sales tax revenue. Cicero Avenue is the major retail corridor in Cicero. This segment of Cicero Avenue contains an inventory of more than 1.1

million square feet of space between Roosevelt Road and Interstate 55, including the following destinations:

- **Cicero Marketplace** is the largest shopping center in the corridor. Located on Cicero Avenue between 26th and 31st Street, this 660,000 square foot shopping center is anchored by Sam's Club, Home Depot, Target, Food 4 Less, and Ross Dress for Less. Cicero residents identified these retailers as their local shopping and grocery store destinations.
- **Hawthorne Works** is a 289,333 square foot shopping center near the intersection of Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road. The shopping center was developed on the former Western Electric's Hawthorne Works site. Major anchors included AMC Showplace Cicero 14, Cermak Produce, and Anna's Linens. Menards, a 300,000 square foot home improvement store, is located on an out lot.
- **Walmart Supercenter** opened its Cicero Avenue location in May 2014. The 190,000 square foot store was built on the former Sportsman's Park racetrack, extending the retail corridor further south toward Interstate 55.

Cermak Road is another prominent commercial corridor that traverses the Town of Cicero. The street is densely lined with small storefronts, strip shopping centers, and free-standing commercial buildings. The businesses are diverse, ranging from national retailers like Aldi and Walgreens to personal and professional services. Many of the businesses

Cicero 2013 Retail Sales Tax



Source: Illinois
Department of Revenue

are targeting Hispanic customers. Cicero residents mentioned this corridor as a popular location for dining options. Small retailers are also located along 35th Street between Laramie and Austin Boulevard. Walgreens is the largest retailer on this corridor, with a location at 35th Street and 59th Avenue. Overall, the commercial vacancy rate in Cicero in terms of existing buildings is 14.5 percent.

Leakage Analysis

One analytic tool used to identify possible retail opportunities within a market area is calculating the leakage, or gap, between the expenditure potential of households and estimates of actual sales. For the purpose of this study, the retail gap is defined as the difference between the potential demand for retail goods and services from households in Cicero and existing sales from Cicero stores. A negative number suggests that sales (supply) exceed local demand, indicating stores are attracting shoppers from other communities. A positive number indicates that Cicero is losing shoppers to other commercial areas.

In many of the standard retail categories, stores in Cicero are indeed attracting shoppers from outside of Cicero. This is particularly true in the General Merchandise, Building Materials and Supply Stores, Health and Personal Care stores, and Limited-Service eating places categories, where national retailers are drawing shoppers from a large trade area. These 2014 estimates of retail sales do not include the new Walmart, which could add \$75 to \$80 million to the General Merchandise category. In other retail categories, expenditure potential is being leaked to other communities. The largest of such categories is Motor Vehicles and Gas Stations. Smaller amounts are being leaked in other categories that might represent more appropriate opportunities for new retailers in Cicero’s established business corridors. One note of caution in evaluating the demand component of

these leakage calculations. ESRI Business Analysts’ estimates are derived from Census counts of the number of households in Cicero and the expenditure potential of each of these households. If, in fact, the Census under-counted Cicero’s population, then these estimates may underestimate the expenditure potential of households living in the community.

Retail Opportunities in Cicero

The following retail categories present potential opportunities for additional retail development in Cicero:

Grocery Stores. Aldi, Cermak Produce and Food for Less have locations in Cicero, yet demand exceeds sales in this category by an estimated \$8.9 million. Even accounting for the new Walmart, which will sell groceries, this gap suggests the potential for an additional specialty grocery store.

Clothing and Accessories. Cicero has a number of apparel retailers, including Fallas, Foot Locker, and Rue 21. Ross Dress for Less recently opened a location next to Target in the Cicero Marketplace shopping center. Despite the variety in retailers, an estimated \$18.9 million in clothing and accessory sales are being spent outside Cicero.

Full-Service Restaurants. While limited-service restaurants are well-represented in Cicero, additional full-service restaurants represent a potential opportunity. Nearly \$8.6 million is being spent at full-service restaurants outside of Cicero. Residents frequently commented on the desire for more fast casual and healthy eating options in Cicero.

Miscellaneous Store Retailers. An estimated \$7.1 million in miscellaneous retail sales is spent outside of Cicero. These include pet supply stores, office supplies and specialty gift shops. This represents an opportunity to fill vacant storefronts on Cermak and Cicero with smaller specialty retailers.

TABLE 2.6 – CICERO LEAKAGE ANALYSIS			
Industry Summary	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$476,477,001	\$460,372,303	\$16,104,698
Total Retail Trade	\$425,355,692	\$406,569,769	\$18,785,923
Total Food & Drink	\$51,121,309	\$53,802,534	-\$2,681,225
Motor Vehicles & Gasoline Stations	\$41,027,217	\$18,517,840	\$22,509,377

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Industrial Market

The Town of Cicero has a sizable inventory of land in industrial use. The largest and most notable is the BNSF Intermodal Facility, located between 26th Street and Ogden Avenue. Smaller industrial uses are located south of the BNSF facility yard near Ogden Avenue. A cluster of industrial properties is located north of Cermak Road between Laramie and Central Avenues on the north side of town. Overall, in terms of existing buildings, the industrial vacancy rate is 5 percent.

Industrial Market Trends

The brokerage firm CBRE includes the Town of Cicero in the near west suburbs industrial submarket, which is bounded by the City of Chicago on the north and east, Interstate 294 on the west, and roughly Pershing Road on the south. The brokerage firm reports a third quarter 2014 industrial vacancy rate of 5.1 percent, slightly below the 5.9 percent average for the Chicago metro area. Average net asking rents for available properties in this submarket are comparatively low, ranging from \$2.75 to \$5.00 per square foot annually on a net basis. Industrial construction is surging in the metropolitan area, but no industrial property was under construction in Cicero at the time of this Comprehensive Plan's development. The majority of construction activity is occurring in the far west and southwest suburban sites with good freeway access.

Recent Industrial Developments

The two most recent industrial developments built in Cicero are the Cicero Business Center (2008) and the Wirtz Beverage Facility completed in 2012. The Cicero Business Center was developed on "spec" by the Opus Development Company in 2008. The project consists of two buildings (Building I and Building II) with a total of 553,000 square feet of space. The 26-acre center is located on the site of the former General Electric Appliance factory at the intersection of 54th Avenue and 16th Street. Each building has ample truck docks, high ceilings and parking for cars and trailers. Current tenants include Cook County Recorder of Deeds records office and Cloverhill Pastry-Vend LLC, a company that manufactures pastries for vending machines. The Wirtz Beverage Group constructed their \$80 million office and industrial building on 35 acres

of land from the Town of Cicero for \$6.5 million. The company also received \$13 million in TIF financing from the Town of Cicero.

Properties on the Market

Cicero has a number of industrial properties that are available for purchase or lease. The following list of properties identifies industrial land with more than 100,000 square feet currently available for development, the majority located in the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor north of Cermak Road. In total, these properties represent close to 60 acres of industrial development opportunity in Cicero.

Information based on Sources deemed reliable as of October 16th, 2014 by Goodman Williams Group.

- **4701 West 26th Street.** Property size: 8.4 acres; features include truck and trailer loading docks and access to nearby rail spur.
- **1400 South Laramie Avenue/Laramie Business Center.** Property size: 32 acres; features accessibility to interstate highways.
- **4690 West 19th Street.** Property size: 2.25 acres; features accessibility to interstate highways, and on-site truck and trailer storage.
- **4633 West 16th Street.** Property size: 5.5 acres; features accessibility to local highways, and on site truck and trailer storage.
- **1302 South 54th Avenue.** Property size: 1.3 acres features accessibility to interstate highways and nearby rail spurs.
- **1910 - 2100 54th Avenue.** Property size, 8 acres; features high suitability for industrial redevelopment.
- **1323 - 1355 55th Court.** Property size, 138,000 square foot building on 119,610 square foot site; features two-story building with 110 surface parking spaces available and three loading docks.
- **5645- 5649 31st Street.** Property size: two lots totaling 187,000 square feet with 500K square foot building; features: 100 + parking spaces, five exterior loading docks, two interior docks, and four drive-in doors.

Industrial Opportunities in Cicero

Given Cicero's substantial industrial sector, key planning strategies going forward emphasizes maintaining existing employers, filling vacant properties and developing vacant underutilized industrial sites. Industrial users in Cicero are likely to take advantage of the Town's ready and convenient access to the Eisenhower and Stevenson Expressways and its proximity to Downtown Chicago and nearby employment centers like the Illinois Medical District. Therefore, improving infrastructure and enhancing rail and expressway connections are critically important. In addition, most likely, future industrial development may rely more on warehouse and distribution facilities given nearby interstate access; Wirtz Beverage is a good example of the type of industrial use that would be attracted to this market. Land costs, however, may be a significant barrier and future industrial redevelopment may be subject to land cost write downs or other incentives to spur industrial redevelopment.

Cargo Oriented Development (COD) is the concept of "clustering industrial and logistics businesses near multiple freight assets and skilled workers, allowing for more efficient multimodal cargo movements and worker commutes." In 2012, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) published a report on West Cook County COD opportunities, detailing the process communities should take to leverage transportation assets, such as an intermodal freight facility, to recruit new industries and grow the employment base. For Cicero, the BNSF Intermodal Facility could represent such an opportunity in the short-term; however, given that the facility may transition in the future to a rail switching yard, long-term industrial redevelopment efforts should focus more on industries that do not rely on intermodal cargo facilities in Cicero.



A vacant industrial property in Cicero.

Plan Recommendations

Goal
Strengthen and enhance Cicero's traditional commercial corridors and neighborhood shopping districts.
Policies
• Support the rehabilitation, preservation, and re-use of Cicero's traditional commercial buildings. • Encourage Transit-Oriented Development on identified opportunity sites. • Establish commercial district management programs and organizations. • Facilitate and implement initiatives aimed at supporting small business development. • Consider design guidelines, standards and new zoning to promote higher quality building design in Cicero traditional commercial areas. • Implement placemaking and streetscaping programs that enhance commercial district visual qualities and appearance. • Require auto-oriented development to locate in destination retail and industrial-commercial areas of Cicero.

Strategies

A. Pursue building rehabilitation and redevelopment opportunities along the Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue commercial corridors.

Both Cermak Road and the western side of Cicero Avenue constitute Cicero's two major traditional commercial corridors, where the majority of buildings front the sidewalk as the dominate development pattern. Roosevelt Road from Lombard to Central Avenues is also another traditional commercial corridor. It is along these commercial corridors that emphasis should be placed on rehabilitating the traditional commercial building stock along with new development that can spur investment in adjacent buildings and blocks. The *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan* has already identified several TOD sites near the CTA Pink Line stations that could support mixed-use developments. Other

portions of Cermak Road between Central and Lombard Avenues should be a focus of building rehabilitation and storefront improvements.

Along Cicero Avenue, other development opportunity sites may exist and need to be determined by additional study and planning; however, rehabilitation of existing properties is still recommended north of Cermak Road in order to maintain the pedestrian-oriented character of this portion of the corridor. Auto-oriented development can take place along Cicero Avenue south of Cermak where the predominate development character is strip commercial. The focus of retail and commercial development along Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue should focus on both brand name and small businesses, restaurants, services, banks, cultural activities, medical and office, and dining and entertainment. Institutional uses and governmental offices can also be considered for such corridors.

B. Revitalize neighborhood commercial districts for neighborhood-serving retail and other uses that enhance district vibrancy and sustainability.

Neighborhood commercial districts at 14th, 25th, 26th, and 35th Streets should be the focus of revitalization efforts that emphasize building and storefront rehabilitation, small business development, upper-story conversions, and various streetscape and public space enhancements. Small business development efforts in these districts should focus on building a diverse neighborhood-serving retail mix, including convenience and specialty stores, miscellaneous service businesses, small grocers, and restaurants and dining establishments. Efforts should also center on encouraging new and different uses of storefront spaces for artist galleries and live-work spaces for example, office share arrangements, community kitchens and “pop-up” businesses that use ground floors on a temporary basis. Buildings that house pop-up businesses could serve as incubator spaces to help new start-ups grow and develop as full-time operating businesses.

C. Establish a façade and storefront improvement program. Revitalization efforts in both traditional commercial corridors and neighborhood shopping districts usually encompass ongoing and sustained efforts at improving the appearance of building facades, storefronts and signage. Cicero’s commercial corridors and neighborhood business districts

have a significant stock of traditional commercial buildings that are in need of storefront and signage enhancements that can help make the districts more appealing to shoppers and visitors. A formal building improvement program should be established that would offer matching grants to property and business owners willing to undertake such improvements. A façade improvement program could be started first for Cicero’s commercial corridors and funded through TIF, a Special Service Area (SSA) or through other financing programs.

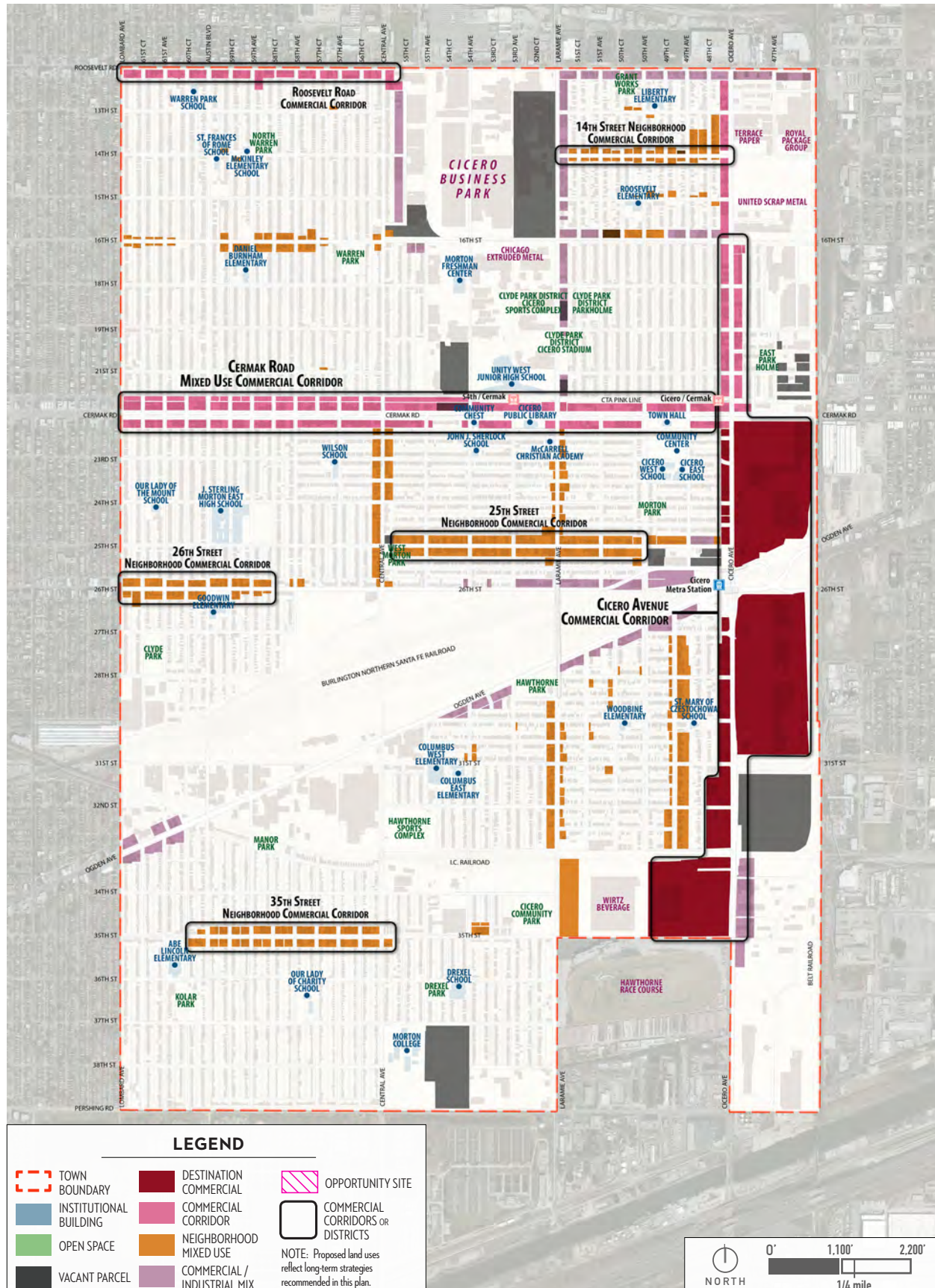
D. Prepare building rehabilitation design guidelines. As part of the façade and storefront improvements program, a design manual or set of design guidelines should be prepared to help educate property owners on proper design, signage and building rehabilitation procedures. The emphasis of the design manual is preservation and rehabilitation, high quality storefront and signage design, and maintaining commercial corridor character.

E. Encourage high quality building design in new mixed-use development. Guiding the design of new mixed-use development in Cicero’s commercial corridors is critical to ensure new buildings are at appropriate densities and integrate housing, transit connections and amenities and neighborhood businesses compatible with the design of adjacent buildings and blocks. When undertaking a Zoning Ordinance revision, new design standards for new mixed use development could be considered and incorporated as part of the new Ordinance. Alternatively, a form-based code similar to what has been adopted on Roosevelt Road could also be considered.



Traditional commercial building along Laramie Avenue.

Figure 2.5 – Commercial Strategies Map



F. Manage commercial building conversions.

Over the last several decades, a number of traditional commercial buildings in Cicero's neighborhood commercial districts have been converted from commercial use to ground floor residential; in some districts, the number of conversions have been significant often resulting in successive rows of commercial buildings with blocked or bricked-in storefronts. Such storefronts negatively impact the appearance and vitality of the district. While it is recognized that not all commercial buildings in the neighborhood districts can or will be used for retail or commercial purposes in the near-term, and that some form of live-work, artist spaces or other flexible use of the ground floors should be encouraged going forward, future residential conversions of storefront spaces should be managed more closely to ensure that they can be converted back to commercial use if market demand for such uses materializes in the long-term. Therefore, the Town should require that in any future residential conversions, storefront glazing and configurations should remain intact. The City of Chicago has adopted residential conversion standards that could serve as a model for Cicero.



An example of an existing bricked-in storefront in Cicero.



A properly converted storefront residential unit in St. Louis, Missouri. Image courtesy of vanishingstl.blogspot.com.

G. Promote and market Cicero's commercial districts.

The goods, services and products produced and sold in Cicero's commercial districts should be marketed and promoted more consistently and cohesively to shoppers, visitors and investors. Marketing efforts should focus on internet and web initiatives, various collateral materials and an ongoing program of special events, festivals and traffic-building events that are designed to bring people into the commercial districts and into the stores and restaurants. Marketing efforts should also highlight the unique assets of the individual districts, whether they be the Olympic Theater for the Cermak Road corridor, an important historic building, or a long-time destination business in one of the neighborhood districts.

H. Survey and inventory commercial district historic building resources.

As with the residential neighborhoods, Cicero's commercial districts should be surveyed to determine if individual buildings or entire districts are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register listing allows commercial buildings to be eligible for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit, which provides for a 20 percent investment credit for substantial rehabilitation projects. Several buildings along Cermak Road and in other districts have already been identified as National Register eligible from the 1970s Illinois Historic Landmark and Structures surveys.



A visualization showing potential streetscape enhancements on Cermak Road. Image courtesy of the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*.

I. Adopt Tax Increment Financing districts along Cicero's commercial corridors. While the existing Town of Cicero TIF District (TIF #1) has been successful over the years in leveraging development and investment activity along Cicero Avenue, extending it along the entire length of the Cermak Road corridor to Lombard Avenue can help provide a source of revenue for funding future streetscape and infrastructure enhancements, and a local building and storefront improvement program. The TIF district could be re-established with a new base year and an expanded set of boundaries; alternatively, a new TIF district could be created for the portion of Cermak Road not included in TIF #1. Tax Increment Financing could potentially be explored for Roosevelt Road revitalization and redevelopment as well.

J. Leverage tax credit or other incentive programs for building and business investments in Cicero's commercial districts. A number of incentives, including the Federal New Market and Historic Preservation Tax Credits, and Cook County's Class L and 7 programs, should be explored and leveraged with local incentives such as Tax Increment Financing as ways to help facilitate key large-scale rehabilitation, adaptive use and investment projects in Cicero's commercial districts. As policy, the Town could require developers to seek the use of such incentive programs first before TIF is used as part of a development project's capital stack. The Town should seek technical assistance from Cook County in regards to property tax incentives and professional development advisors for how the tax credit programs could be used in certain revitalization and redevelopment initiatives.

L. Establish commercial district management entities. Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue are large commercial corridors that warrant a more comprehensive management approach to spurring reinvestment and private sector involvement. Comprehensive management of neighborhood commercial districts encompass several elements, including, among others, devoting full-time staff to managing and implementing various revitalization and redevelopment initiatives, forming a board or commission that would supervise staff and oversee organizational operations, and building a budget sufficient enough to underwrite staff salaries and operational expenses. Revitalization initiatives

undertaken by a management program typically include facilitating façade and building improvements, producing special events and marketing campaigns, organizing small business development efforts, and planning for streetscape enhancements and maintenance projects. Many commercial district management programs in Chicago neighborhoods and nearby suburban downtowns are funded through SSAs, which is a special property tax mechanism voted and approved by property owners within a commercial district. Additional monies could be raised and secured through private sector sources.

Given the size and complexity of revitalization issues for Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue, both corridors should be the focus of one management entity that could work in close collaboration with the Town of Cicero on various initiatives. Establishing SSAs for these corridors would involve building strong property owner and stakeholder support. The neighborhood commercial districts could also benefit from a management approach but may not be able to establish an SSA given the smaller number of properties; rather than establish new management organizations in these areas, the Town could secure additional staff resources to initiate and guide revitalization efforts and activities.



An example of identity signage used by Downtown Evanston's commercial district management entity.

Goal
Maintain and develop destination shopping areas for large format and chain store retailing.
Policies
- Encourage out-lot development for new large format and chain retail where feasible in Cicero's destination commercial areas. - Encourage and facilitate high quality building design and streetscape, site and landscape improvements.

Strategies

A. Maintain portions of Cicero Avenue between Cermak Road and 31st Street for large format, auto-oriented retailing. These areas along Cicero Avenue should be reserved for additional large-format retailing, although the majority of such developments will be for smaller out-lot buildings closer to the road. Empty lots and brownfields sites on the western portion of Cicero Avenue between 32nd and 33rd Street could also be developed for auto-oriented or big box commercial.

B. Improve building appearances in destination retail areas. The Town should establish basic design standards for new development within destination shopping areas through zoning and other building, site and landscape standards. As part of Zoning Ordinance revision, an overlay zone could be considered for Cicero Avenue in guiding future investments in building and urban design improvements.

Alternative Town Hall Site Development Concept

Mixed use and Transit-Oriented Development sites for Cermak Road and Cicero Avenue have been identified in the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan*. A concept for the potential redevelopment of the former Cicero Town Hall complex at 50th Avenue and 26th Street was also presented in the *Implementation Plan* to introduce new housing and mixed-use development adjacent to the Metra station (Figure 2.6 on the following page).

The redevelopment program included five new apartment and townhome complexes along with one new mixed-use building and covered parking spaces incorporated as part of the buildings. A new 3.7-acre park is proposed on partially vacant land to the east along Cicero Avenue and 26th Street.

An alternative development concept for the site is presented in this Comprehensive Plan that emphasizes commercial redevelopment and building adaptive use but no new residential (see Figure 2.7). During the comprehensive planning process, community stakeholders commented that new residential in this location may not be feasible due to its close proximity to the BNSF Intermodal Facility where emissions and noise from the yard could pose future environmental risks, especially if the facility is expected to become a switching/classification yard in the near future. In addition, applications for any affordable housing tax credits to be used on new residential developments in this location would score lower due to an intermodal facility adjacency. A more commercial-oriented redevelopment program could offer both retail and office space – office space that could be used by nearby industries and accessible to workers from the Metra station. Four new commercial buildings are suggested totaling 75,000 to 90,000 square feet. The former Town Hall could be re-used as office space given its potential eligibility to use Federal Historic Preservation and New Markets Tax Credits to finance its rehabilitation.

The park space proposed in the *Transit Area Implementation Plan* is included in this alternative. Although this scenario does not incorporate residential use, the addition of new commercial and office space would attract workers and riders that could board and disembark at the Metra station.

Residential development scenarios for the Town Hall site are presented in the *Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan* should be pursued if there is developer interest. The Town of Cicero may elect to work with residential developers on rail yard emission mitigation measures if the Intermodal Facility has transitioned to a rail switching yard, where locomotive emissions may increase.

Figure 2.6 – 25th Street / Town Hall Site – Transit Area Implementation Plan Concept



An example of a new low-rise multi-family residential building.



An example of a large mixed-use building anchoring an adjacent park.

- A NEW TOWNHOMES (3 STY)**
 - 8 units
 - 2 indoor garage parking spaces per unit
- B NEW TOWNHOMES (3 STY)**
 - 3 units
 - 2 indoor garage parking spaces per unit
- C NEW TOWNHOME DEVELOPMENT (3 STY)**
 - 22 units
 - 2 indoor garage parking spaces per unit
 - 30 surface parking spaces (visitor parking)
- D NEW MIXED-USE BUILDING (4 - 8 STY)**
 - 8 story tower with 7,200 square feet of first floor retail and 95 residential units.
 - 4 story tower with 27 residential units.
 - 115 covered parking spaces (first floor)
 - 20 surface parking spaces
- E NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING (4 STY)**
 - 33 units
 - 45 covered parking spaces (first floor)
 - 46 surface parking spaces
- F NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING (4 STY)**
 - 33 units
 - 45 covered parking spaces (first floor)
 - 35 surface parking spaces
- G NEW PARK (± 3.7 ACRES)**
 - Flexible field / open space
 - Landscaped hill
 - 28 surface parking spaces

Figure 2.7 – 25th Street / Town Hall Site – industrial / Commercial Mix



The former Town Hall.



An example of a low-rise, industrial/commercial building.

- A TOWN PARKING LOT ENHANCEMENTS**
 - Improved parking lot screening and landscaping
 - Corner landmark / gateway element for 25th Street Neighborhood Commercial District (west of area shown)
- B NEW INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT**
 - 2 Stories
 - ± 15,000 square feet
- C ADAPTIVE USE OF FORMER TOWN HALL**
 - 2 Stories
 - ± 40,000 square feet
 - Office, Light Industrial or Service Commercial Use
- D EXISTING INDUSTRIAL / COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**
 - 1 Story
 - ± 13,500 square feet
- E NEW INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - 2-3 Stories
 - ± 30,000 square feet
- F NEW INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - 1-2 Stories
 - 15,000 to 30,000 square feet
- G NEW INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - 1-2 Stories
 - 15,000 to 30,000 square feet
- H NEW PARK (± 3.7 ACRES)**
 - Flexible field / open space
 - Landscaped hill
 - 28 surface parking spaces

Goal
Attract and retain existing and emerging businesses and industries that take advantage of existing transportation networks and infrastructure.
Policies
• Implement land use and zoning policies that reserve existing industrial land and promote their enhancement and redevelopment. • Retain existing industries that remain economically viable and constitute important Cicero employment centers. • Implement landscaping and screening treatments to buffer industrial areas from land uses of a lower intensity. • Address brownfield and environmental issues and conduct additional planning for the redevelopment of targeted industrial areas. • Consider public-private partnerships to facilitate appropriate industrial redevelopment on key opportunity sites.

Strategies

A. Implement screening and urban design improvements where feasible between existing industrial and residential areas. Redeveloping industrial areas provide opportunities to install landscape buffering and screening treatments adjacent to residential neighborhoods or other land uses of a lower intensity. However, in existing industrial areas, there is often a lack of buffering treatments between storage yards, parking and loading areas, and blank building walls next to or abutting residential areas. To address this, the Town should implement an industrial area landscaping program that would underwrite and install landscaping and buffering treatments in exchange for voluntary easements on portions of the industrial parcels the screening would be installed on. Program participation would be voluntary on part of the industrial property owners; it is also recognized that not all existing industrial properties will be able to participate given site and land constraints. The program could be funded through Tax Increment Financing.

B. Install screening and landscape improvements between the BNSF Intermodal Facility and adjacent land uses. Although portions of the BNSF Intermodal Facility are screened by fencing and some landscaping both north and south of the adjacent residential and industrial-commercial areas, additional landscaping treatments should be considered, especially if emissions from the yard increase in the future due to idling train engines as the facility transitions to a rail switching or classification yard. More extensive landscaping and tree installation should be installed wherever feasible next to the BNSF facility and elsewhere both north and south within the public right-of-ways to help absorb emissions and screen the yard more effectively.

C. Prioritize brownfield remediation and clean-up in the industrial zones. The Town should prioritize which brownfield sites in the industrial areas should be the focus of immediate action and remediation in order to prepare such sites for industrial redevelopment. Previously completed brownfield assessments are more than five years old with information that may be considered out-of-date for site clean-up planning purposes. In some cases, the assessments may have to be repeated in order to adequately and effectively plan for site remediation and redevelopment.

D. Target infrastructure and capital improvements in industrial redevelopment areas. Buffering and landscape treatments are one form of urban design improvements that could enhance and improve the compatibility and property values of commercial districts and neighborhoods adjacent to existing and redeveloping industrial areas. Additional urban design improvements, such as gateways and wayfinding, street lighting and banners, and parkway landscaping should be incorporated within plans for redeveloping industrial areas, in particular within the 54th and Cicero Avenue industrial corridors. Such improvements should be considered for the Ogden Avenue corridor as part of an overall streetscaping initiative. Site specific landscaping and design improvements on private industrial land can be required as part of an overlay zoning or form-based code.

E. Create formal incentive programs for industrial recruitment initiatives and the repurposing and reuse of existing industrial buildings. The Town of Cicero has used its Tax Increment Financing district effectively in the recruitment of new industries and businesses and will need to continue to do in the near-term, most likely to write down land costs to facilitate industrial redevelopment. Expanding the use of TIF for rehabilitating and re-using existing industrial buildings should also be pursued as a means to retain more affordable industrial spaces for new start-ups. Landscaping and buffering treatments should also be eligible expenses. Marketing materials and website advertising of a TIF-sponsored industrial incentive program should also be undertaken and developed.

F. Build on existing industrial clusters and establish an industrial incubator or makerspace.

Cicero has a number of industrial clusters related to steel forging, packaging and warehousing, and cabinet and merchandise exhibit-making. This latter cluster, interestingly, is a significant employment base in Cicero and perhaps offers potential for developing and recruiting related industries, such as small piece furniture making or electrical and materials suppliers for the exhibit makers. Such industries could be started in or recruited to Cicero in incubator spaces shared between both start-up and existing manufacturers; in other words, a “makerspace” could be established in one of Cicero’s industrial areas where start-up industries could locate and take advantage of technical support and supply sources from nearby industries.

Makerspaces can also serve as facilities for adjunct vocational training and apprenticeship at nearby colleges, including Morton College. The makerspace could also be located in a new “institutional campus” south of 16th Street as recommended in Chapter 7.

G. Target marketing to other industries where Cicero has competitive strengths and advantages.

Cicero’s existing industrial base and location near several transportation assets are competitive strengths that should serve as a starting point for more extensive marketing of industrial development opportunities. A website, marketing materials and social media tools should be developed to highlight Cicero’s industrial opportunities and target industries. Town officials should also attend state and regional industrial trade shows wherever possible.



Cicero Business Center, 54th Industrial Corridor.



54th Avenue industrial corridor, looking south from Roosevelt Road.

Goal
Improve the business environment and enhance access to employment opportunities for Cicero residents.
Policies
- Enhance responsiveness to industry concerns. - Strengthen and coordinate efforts between economic and workforce development.

Strategies

A. Conduct on-going and regular meetings with local industries to identify needs and concerns.

The Town of Cicero should work closely with private sector partners, such as the newly-formed Association of Business and Commerce of Cicero, on implementing various initiatives that improve communication and collaboration with Cicero industries, including regular meetings to address industry-wide concerns and interests.

B. Establish a formal industrial retention program.

A more formal industrial retention program should be established to monitor local industry needs and to facilitate industrial expansion, relocation and redevelopment issues. The program could be managed by the Town of Cicero in partnership with other private-sector entities, including the Association of Business and Commerce of Cicero, and participation by the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, which administers several incentive programs for industrial development. An important element of the program is to conduct annual or regular meetings with industries and to provide referral, information and direct assistance when needed and feasible.

C. Leverage relationships with local industries to promote local career education and workforce training services. The Town of Cicero should encourage local industries to address their workforce and training needs by partnering with the Cicero Workforce Center, funded through the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership. In addition,

workforce recruitment needs should be linked to vocational and technical training opportunities provided by the J. Sterling Morton High School District and Morton College.

Industrial Development Opportunities

Two industrial redevelopment areas are suggested in this Comprehensive Plan, areas that have the potential to attract new industries, warehousing and light and heavy manufacturing, as well as take advantage of existing infrastructure and nearby transportation networks. One site, located between the Union Pacific Railroad lines at 35th Street and Cicero Avenues north of the Citgo Petroleum Corporation facility, presents a long-term redevelopment opportunity to add new industrial buildings that can access Cicero Avenue and the interstates to the north and south and rail spurs operated by the Chicago Belt Railroad. This is a long-term redevelopment opportunity given the number of small scale industrial-commercial uses existing on the site presently. The second redevelopment area is located within the 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor at the corner of Laramie Avenue and 16th Street. This site is development ready and is being marketed by real estate brokers for warehousing. Please refer to the available industrial sites map on the following page.

35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Redevelopment Site

Long range redevelopment goals for this site at 35th Street and Cicero focus on adding new industrial uses that capitalize on its location near Interstate 55 and along a Manufacturers Junction Railroad-owned spur. This site was originally identified as a redevelopment area in the *West Cook County COD and TOD Report* by the Center for Neighborhood Technology. Two different redevelopment scenarios are suggested for this site (see Figures 2.10 and 2.11 on the following pages), one that emphasizes a warehousing, industrial-commercial and manufacturing; the other, a mix between industrial and commercial fronting Cicero Avenue.

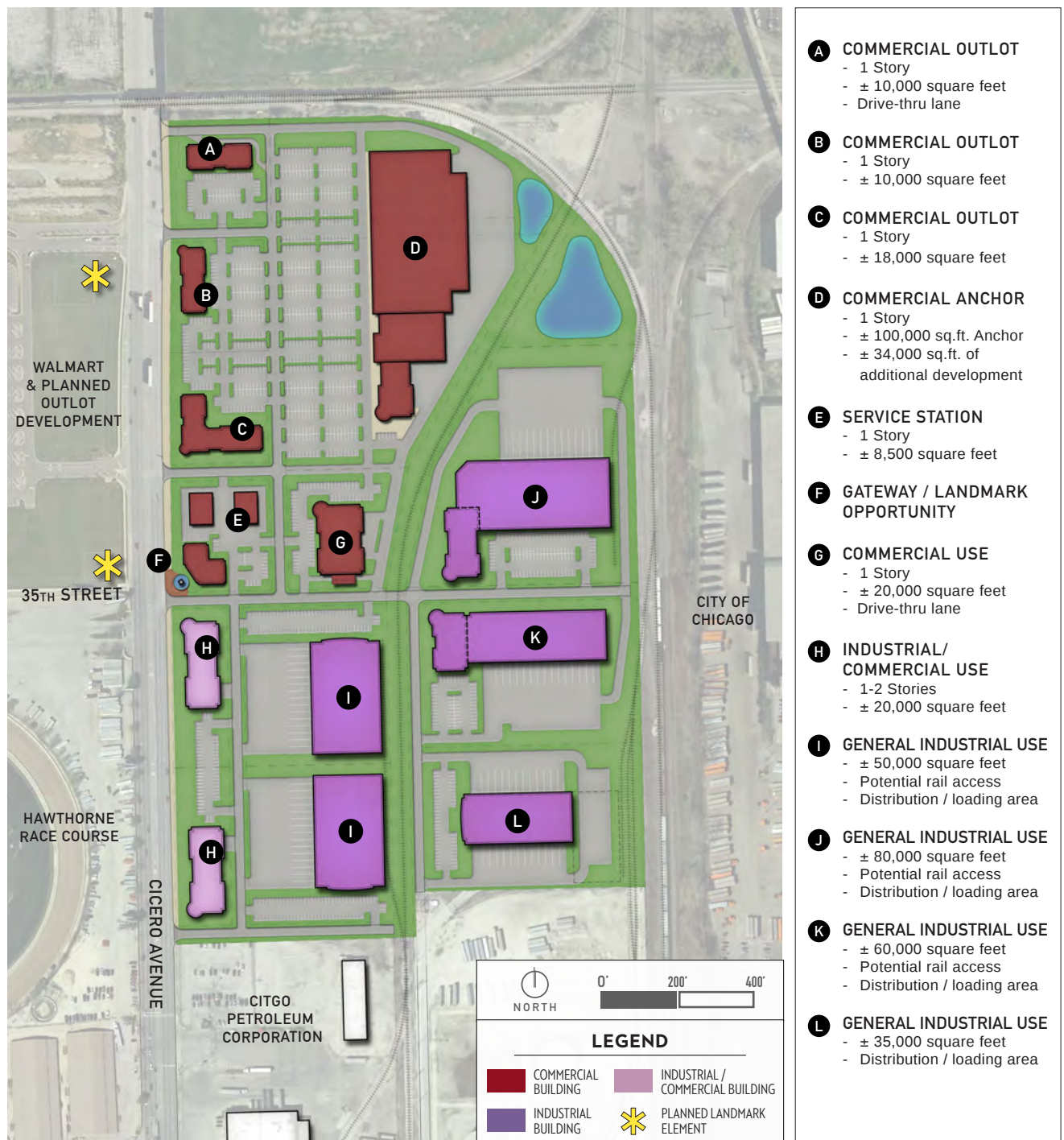
Ultimately, more site-specific plans for this redevelopment area should be prepared outlining infrastructure, roadway, and urban design improvements, as well as specific implementation steps regarding property assembly, relocation of

existing industries and businesses, and possible environmental issues. Planning and implementation could be underwritten through Tax-Increment Financing and other financing programs.

Redevelopment Scenario A

The industrial-manufacturing scenario proposes five industrial-warehousing buildings totaling 281 million square feet of space with the largest building at 80,000 square feet. At least two of the buildings would have access to the rail spur; the other could be designed and sited to gain rail access.

Figure 2.9 – 35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Redevelopment Scenario A



Redevelopment Scenario B

The second scenario proposes four industrial buildings totaling 501,000 square feet of space for manufacturing and warehousing; the largest building would be 295,000 square feet of space. Two of the four industrial buildings could be sited with rail spur access. Along Cicero Avenue, five buildings for

industrial-commercial uses totaling 95,000 square feet of space could be developed. A building of 15,000 square feet at the far northern edge of the site at the Union Pacific rail lines at Cicero Avenue could be built to house an auto dealership or some other type of industrial-commercial use. In place of

Figure 2.10 – 35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Redevelopment Scenario B

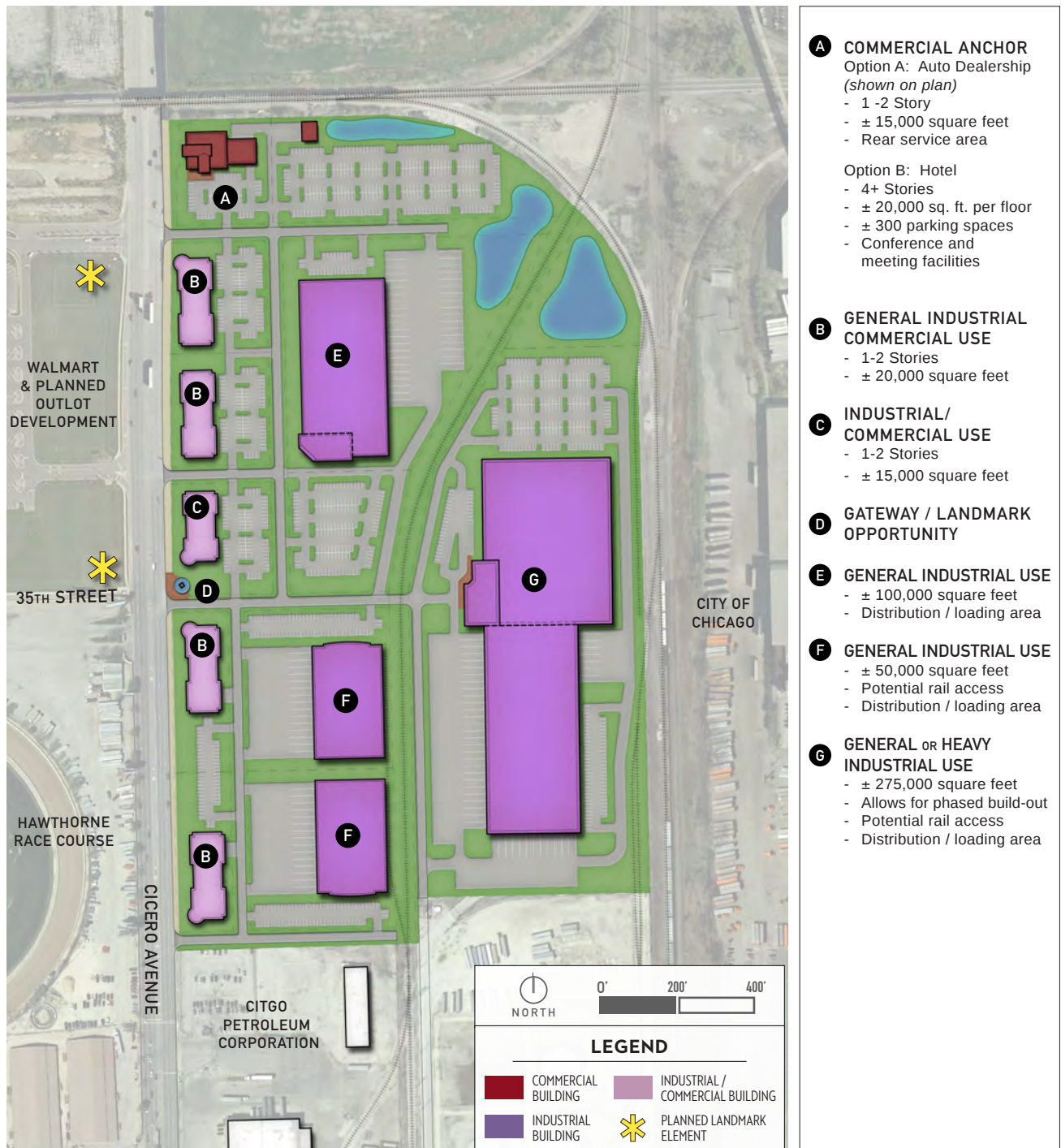


Figure 2.11 – Bird's Eye View of Envisioned 35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Redevelopment Scenario B
(View looking southeast from Cicero Avenue)





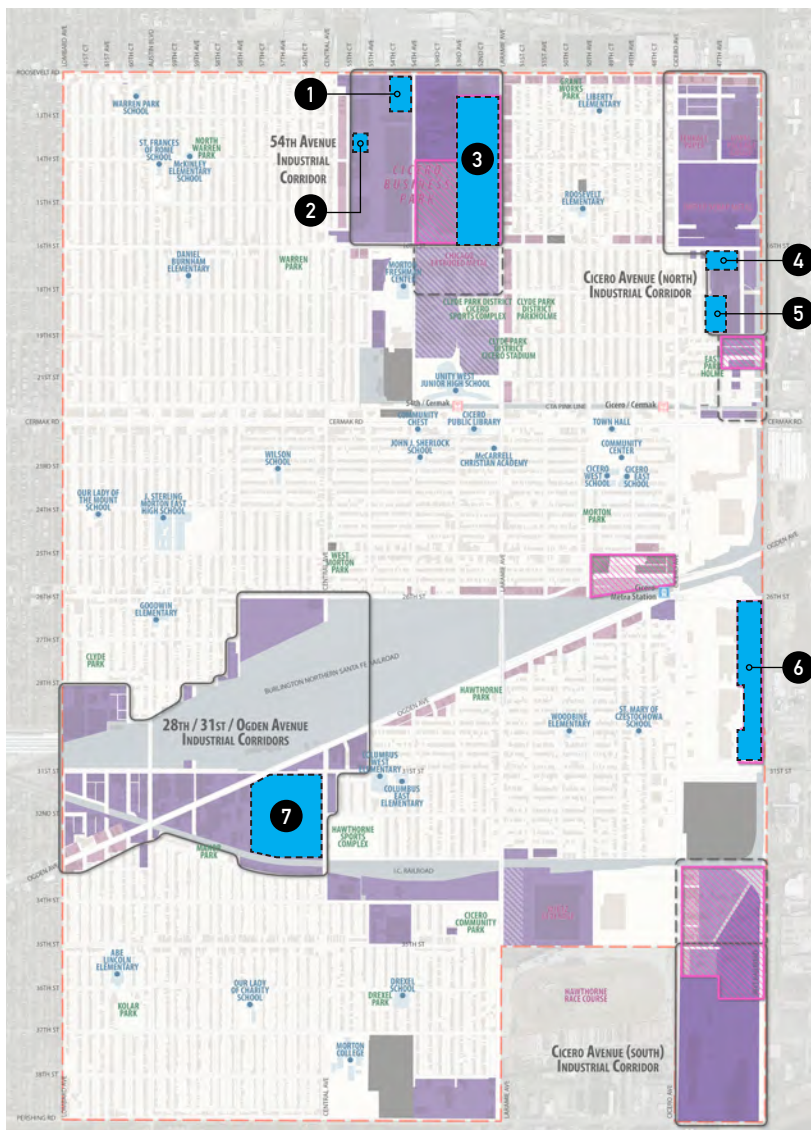
an auto dealership, a hotel with rooms for meetings and banquets could potentially be developed at this location with a base ground floor of at least 20,000 to 25,000 square feet.

Other Industrial Redevelopment Opportunities

Smaller parcels along the Ogden and Cicero Avenue industrial corridors could be the subject of redevelopment, most likely for the expansion

of existing facilities. For example, blocks to the northwest of the Royal Group complex at 47th Avenue and 12th Place could be redeveloped for general industrial use given the prevalence of industrial in surrounding the adjacent blocks. This area is currently zoned industrial but is primarily residential. The prospect of redeveloping this area should be carefully weighed with the need for maintaining housing close to employment centers in this area of Cicero.

Figure 2.12 – Available Industrial Sites Map



Property 1 – 1302 S. 54th Ave.

- 1.3 Acres, Vacant Land
- Two blocks from I-290, near rail.

Property 2 – 1323-1335 S. 55th Ct.

- 138K SF bldg/119,610 SF lot, Industrial Warehouse
- 2 story, 110 surface parking spaces, 3 loading docks, M-1 Zoning, built in 1941.

Property 3 – 1400 S. Laramie Ave.

- Laramie Business Center
- 32 Acres, Vacant Land
- Opportunity for an infill industrial building of 200k to 700k SF, accessible to highways, ideal for manufacturing or distribution, located near I-290 6 miles from the Loop.

Property 4 – 4633 W. 16th St.

- 5.5 Acres, Vacant Commercial
- Paved and Fenced, 1 mile to I-290, M-2 zoning, ideal for trailer/outside storage or truck driving.

Property 5 – 4690 W. 19th St.

- 2.25 Acres, Vacant Land
- Paved and Fenced, 1 mile to I-290, M-2 Zoning, ideal for truck trailer storage.

Property 6 – 4701 W. 26th St.

- 8.4 Acres, Vacant Land
- Ideal for Trans loading, Truck, Trailer and Transportation uses served by Rail.

Property 7 – 5645-5649 W. 31st St.

- 2 spaces totaling 187K SF of 500K SF Industrial Building
- 100+ Parking, 5 exterior loading docks, 2 interior docks, 4 drive in doors.

Chapter 7. Community Systems

This following chapter provides an overview of existing conditions and key planning goals and strategies related to Cicero’s transportation network, infrastructure, and community institutions.

Goals and Policies

Goals	Policies for Decision Makers
Undertake strategic investments in transportation network and related infrastructure improvements and enhancements.	• Conduct regular capital improvements planning that guides investments in community infrastructure. • Implement streetscape and urban design improvements in neighborhoods and commercial districts.
Improve the transportation network and pursue multi-modal transportation and mobility enhancements.	• Ensure all future plans considered and adopted by the Town incorporate strategies and recommendations that accommodate different modes of transportation. • Implement recommendations made within the Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan regarding bus, pedestrian and transit improvements along Cermak Road and the CTA Pink Line stations.
Manage Cicero’s parking supply effectively and efficiently in neighborhoods and commercial areas.	• Assess and analyze parking conditions in neighborhoods and commercial districts before specific parking projects are implemented. • Promote shared access agreements as a method for maximizing the existing parking supply in commercial areas. • Implement parking management initiatives that make more effective use of the existing parking supply; new surface parking lots, especially in neighborhood commercial districts, should be constructed only where and when a true parking demand warrants.
Pursue new infrastructure improvement and stormwater management initiatives to mitigate against flooding events.	• Incorporate flood mitigation infrastructure improvements in Town capital improvements programming. • Support and require both public and private sector flood mitigation initiatives.
Town facilities are modernized, updated and meet the current and future needs of local residents.	• Support continued investment in Town facilities, including fire, police, public works and other departments. • Enhance and continue senior and other community service programs. • Establish programs that help Cicero seniors age in place. • Provide high quality educational facilities.
Maintain an enhanced and well-preserved parks and open space system.	• Promote a broad range of high quality parks and recreational facilities that meet the needs of Cicero residents. • Integrate new park and open space elements wherever feasible into a broader green infrastructure framework.

Cicero Transportation, Infrastructure, and Community Services Characteristics

Existing Transportation Network

Cicero’s transportation network largely comprises the community’s streets, bridges, parking areas, and its public transit facilities. The Town’s street network reflects a traditional grid pattern and an extension of the street networks in neighboring Chicago.

Automobile and Roadways

The primary roadways in Cicero include Cicero Avenue, Cermak Road, Roosevelt Road, Laramie Avenue, 26th Street, Ogden Avenue, and Pershing Road. The Town of Cicero’s transportation network and average daily traffic (ADT) traffic levels are shown in Figure 2.14 – Average Daily Traffic. While the majority of roadways in Cicero are under the Town’s jurisdiction, several major roads in Town, such as Cicero and Ogden Avenues and Cermak and Roosevelt Roads are under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Traffic Projections. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) provides year 2040 traffic projections consistent with the GO TO 2040 Plan, as shown in Figure 2.15 – Year 2040 Traffic Forecast. Peak hour traffic in Cicero is characterized by periods of frequent congestion, particularly along Roosevelt and Cermak Roads, and Cicero and Ogden Avenues. Congestion is particularly noticeable in the vicinity of the CTA Pink Line tracks, which override traffic signals on Cicero Avenue and Laramie Avenue near Cermak Road.

Crash Data. Crash data for the years 2009-2012 for Cicero were collected and analyzed as part of this Comprehensive Plan effort. Roadways with the most crashes include Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road,

which are among the heavily-trafficked roadways in the Town. During this five-year period, there were 7,953 crashes, 16 of which were fatal. Injury crashes are categorized by injury severity. A fatal crash is a crash resulting in the death of one or more persons within 0-30 days of the crash. An A-injury crash is one that involves an incapacitating injury; a B-injury involves an injury apparent to observers at the time of the crash but is not categorized as an A-injury crash; and, C-injury crash is defined as a crash injury that is reported but is not characterized as an A-injury or B-injury crash. Table 2.7 below shows all crashes in Cicero by severity.

Public Parking. On-street parking is permitted on Cicero streets except where posted. Major roadways where parking is prohibited include Cicero Avenue south of 21st Place, Ogden Avenue, and Pershing Road. Cermak Road contains angled on-street parking through most of its length through the Town, as well as off-street lots and strip parking near and along the Pink Line stations and tracks. In addition to this on-street parking, there are several off-street parking lots between the commercial and residential properties north of Cermak Road.

Permit parking restrictions also exist in some residential neighborhoods. During the first community open house, workshop participants cited parking congestion as a concern on some neighborhood streets, even where permit parking has been implemented to mitigate congestion. The average household size in Cicero is 3.79 persons per household, which is higher than the average household size for other nearby Cook County communities – possibly a contributing factor to the higher level of car ownership in some Cicero neighborhoods.

TABLE 2.7 – YEAR 2009-2012 CRASHES IN CICERO BY INJURY TYPE							
	All	Fatal	All Injuries	A-Injury	B-Injury	C-Injury	No Injury
Cicero Crashes	7,953	16	1,197	157	560	480	6,740
% of All Crashes	100%	0.20%	15.05%	1.97%	7.04%	6.04%	84.7%
Cook County	540,879	925	109,370	16,147	70,692	64, 336	431,509
% of Total	100%	0.17%	20.22%	2.99%	13.07%	11.89%	79.76%

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

Pedestrian. The pedestrian transportation network in Cicero is as extensive as the roadway network for automobiles. Sidewalks are provided on nearly all streets, and the street grid supports a walkable environment. In addition to the transportation network, the close proximity of stores, schools, parks, and other destinations to neighborhoods in Cicero make for a walkable environment.

Walkability. Figure 2.13 - Walkability shows the “walkscore” of Cicero, which is a score derived from calculating the average distance to various destinations. Dark green areas indicate highly walkable environments, and red areas indicate automobile-dependent areas. In general, Cicero is quite walkable, especially along Austin Boulevard and near Cicero Avenue and Cermak Road.

Pedestrian Crashes. While pedestrian crashes make up 3 percent of total crashes, they make up 18 percent of injury crashes and 25 percent of fatal crashes. Pedestrians, the most vulnerable of transportation system users, are more likely to be injured when struck. The areas where pedestrian crashes are most frequent are on Cicero Avenue. Table 2.8 below shows pedestrian crashes by injury type, as well as by share of total crashes in Cicero.

Connectivity Barriers. Despite being a walkable community due to a traditional roadway grid network, there are significant physical gaps and barriers that reduce connectivity within Cicero. Figure 2.16 - Roadway Connectivity Barriers display connectivity gaps, which include areas with long uninterrupted stretches of roadway over railroad tracks and complicated intersections that are not comfortable for pedestrians to cross. This figure also helps to illustrate how the transportation network and certain land uses create a series of separate neighborhoods.

Figure 2.13 – Cicero Walkability Map

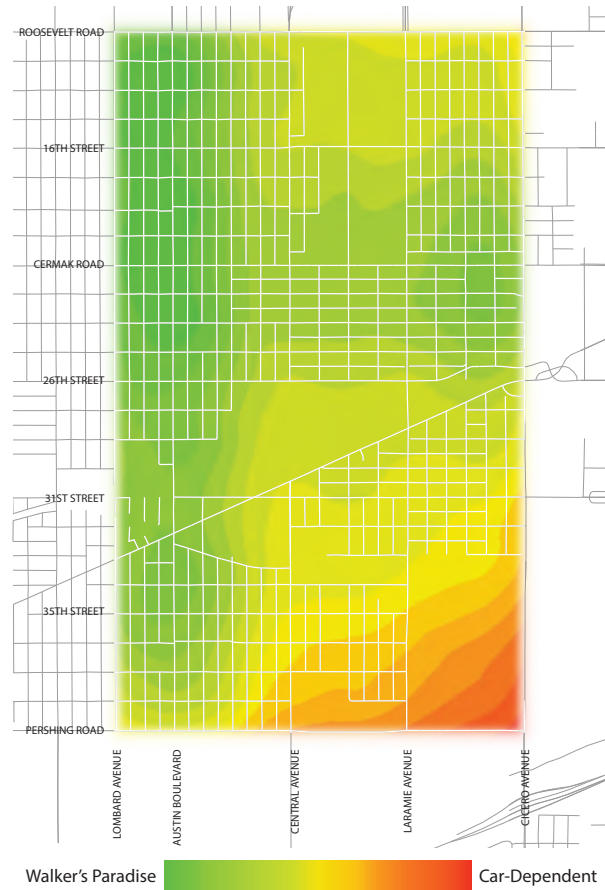


TABLE 2.8 – YEAR 2009-2012 PEDESTRIAN CRASHES IN CICERO BY INJURY TYPE							
	All	Fatal	All Injuries	A-Injury	B-Injury	C-Injury	No Injury
Pedestrian Crashes	233	4	214	42	104	68	15
% of Injury Type	2.9%	25.0%	17.9%	26.8%	18.6%	14.2%	0.22%
% of Pedestrian Crashes	100%	1.72%	91.85%	18.0%	44.6%	29.2%	6.4%
% of All Crashes	2.93%	0.05%	2.69%	0.53%	1.31%	0.86%	0.19%

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

Figure 2.14 – Cicero Average Daily Traffic Map

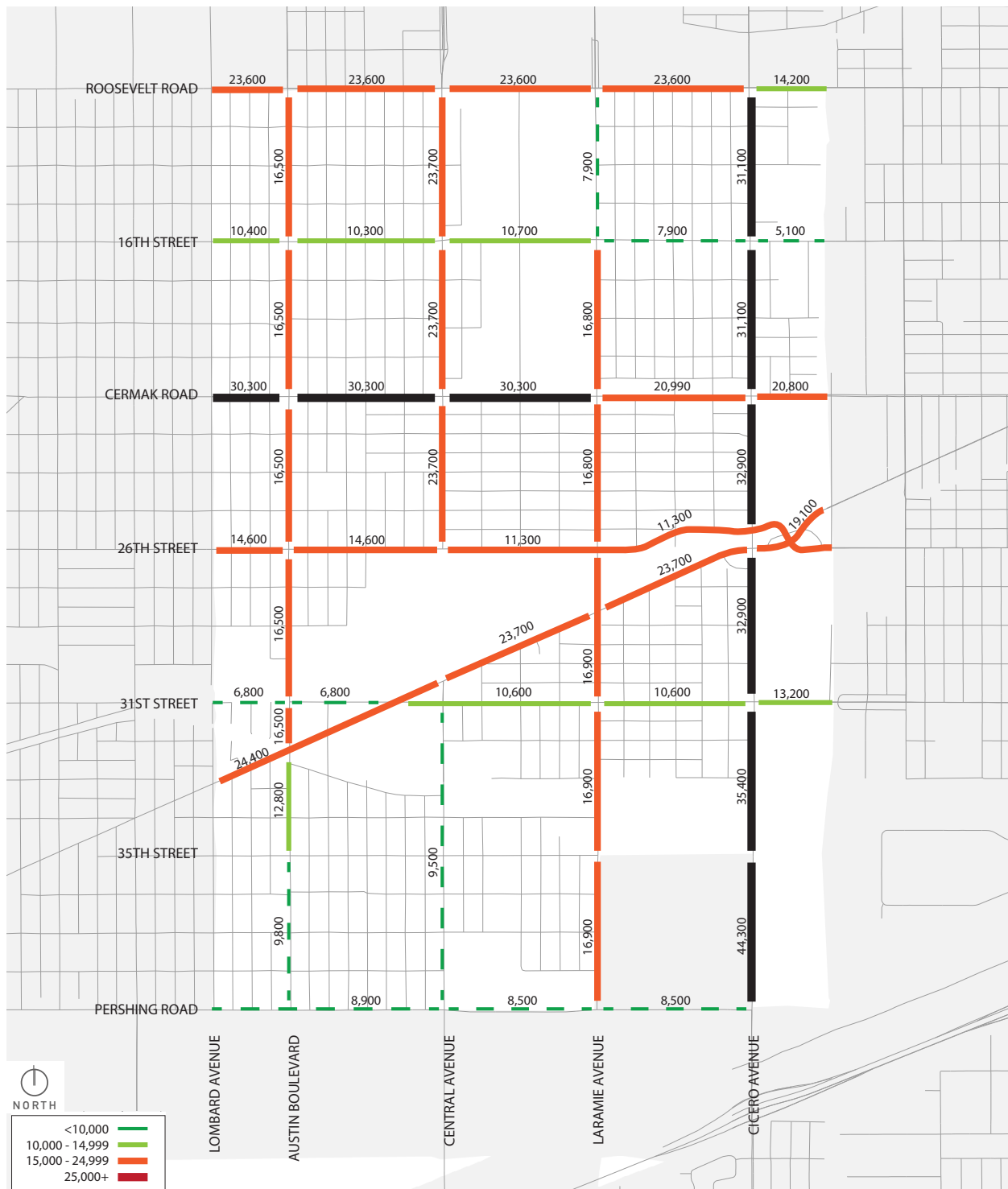


Figure 2.15 – Year 2040 Traffic Forecast

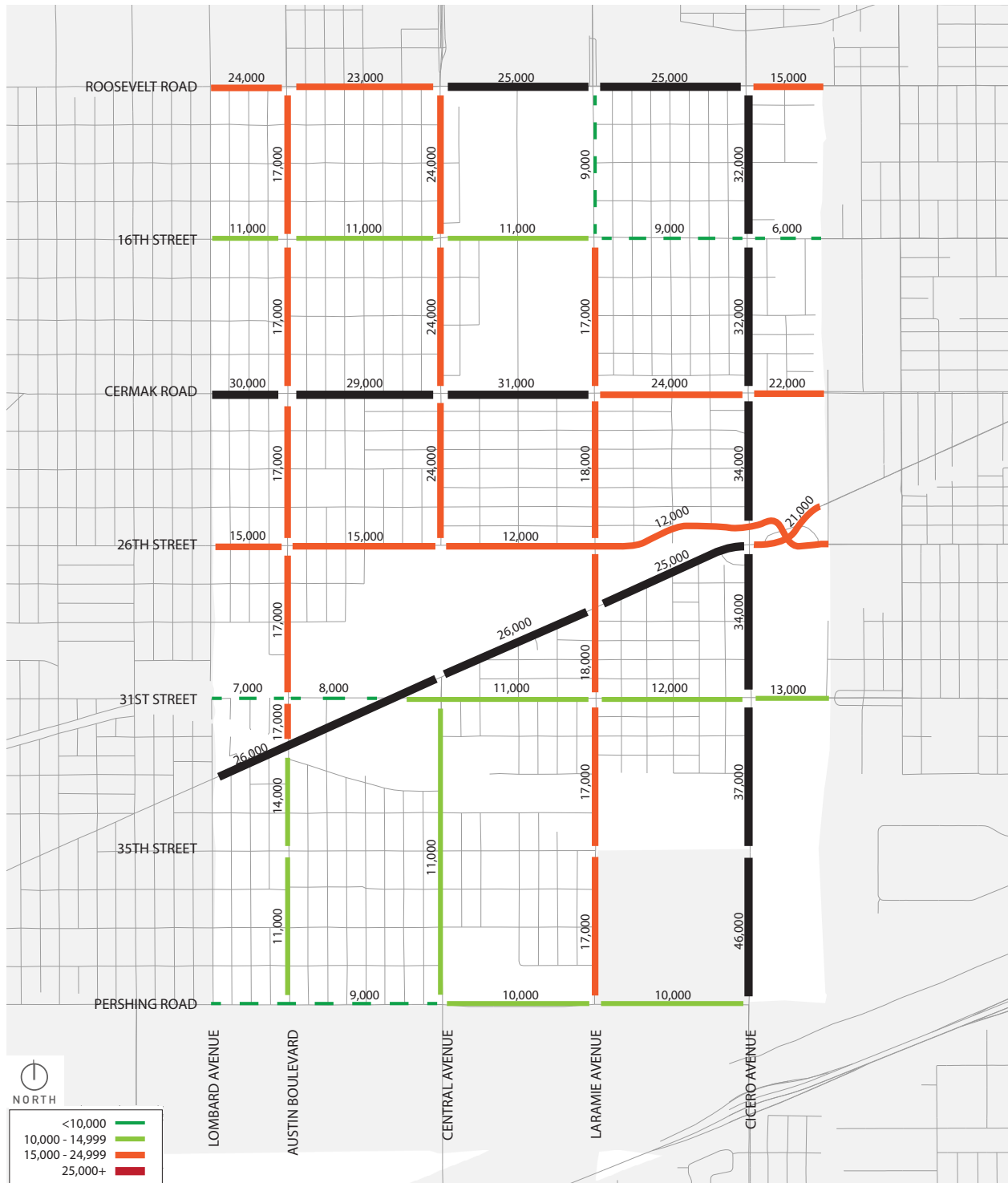
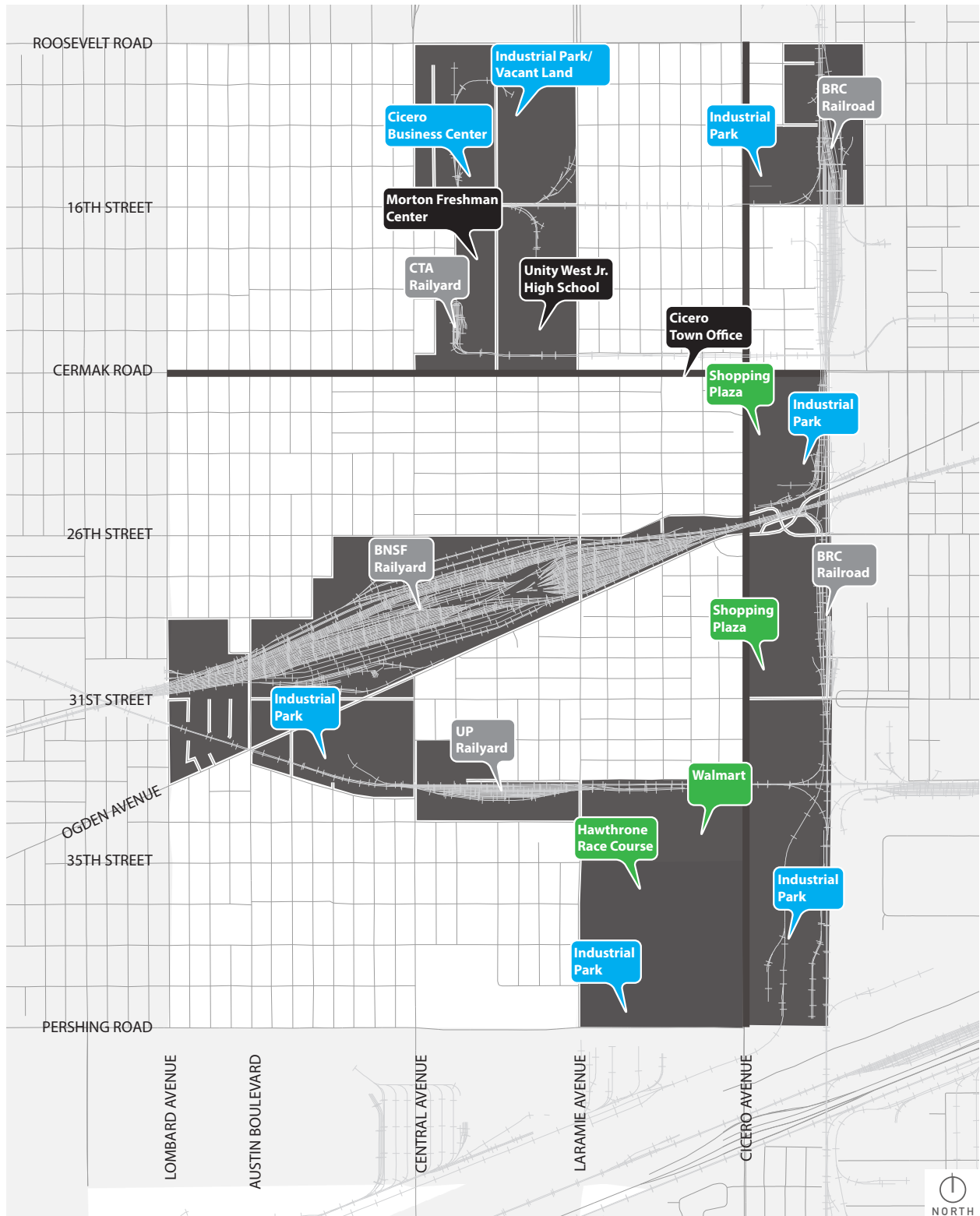


Figure 2.16 – Roadway Connectivity Barriers Map



Bicycle. Currently, Cicero does not have on-street bicycle lanes and other facilities. The existing street network is used by some bicyclists, but other cyclists have been observed using the sidewalk. A Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analysis of Cicero's roads reveal that not many of the Town's major roadways are deemed comfortable for bicycling. The LTS analysis is shown in Figure 2.17 – Level of Traffic Stress on the following page. Therefore, the analysis indicates that many major roads in Cicero act as barriers for cyclists. Bicycle parking is also scarce in Cicero. Bike racks were observed in front of the Town Hall and are located near some schools. However, due to a lack of bicycle lanes and other facilities, bicycle parking is not heavily used. The City of Chicago and the Village of Oak Park have existing and proposed bicycle facilities that could potentially connect with bicycle facilities in Cicero.

Crashes involving bicyclists are shown in Table 2.9 – Bicyclist Injury Crashes. Bicycle crashes comprise 1.4 percent of total crashes, 7.8 percent of injury crashes, and 6 percent of fatal crashes.

Truck. The majority of truck traffic in Cicero travels along Cicero and Ogden Avenues, Cermak Road, Central Avenue, and Pershing Road. Access to Interstate 55 and Interstate 290 is provided via Cicero and Central Avenues. Truck parking and loading zones in Cicero are largely contained within industrial land uses located in the areas as identified in the Figure 2.15 - Roadway Connectivity Barriers. Big box retail stores located along Cicero Avenue are equipped with loading zones. Older, more established retail districts located on Cermak Road, and 26th and 35th Streets have fewer loading zones, but are served by the Town's grid street and alley network.

Transit. Transit service in Cicero is provided by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Pace, and Metra. Figure 2.18 – Regional Transit Network shows existing transit service in Cicero. As shown in the figure, while transit service to and from Cicero is far-reaching, there is no continuous service from one end of the community to the other. The most significant barriers to increased transit use in Cicero are wide crosswalks at major roadways, busy intersections, and traffic congestion.



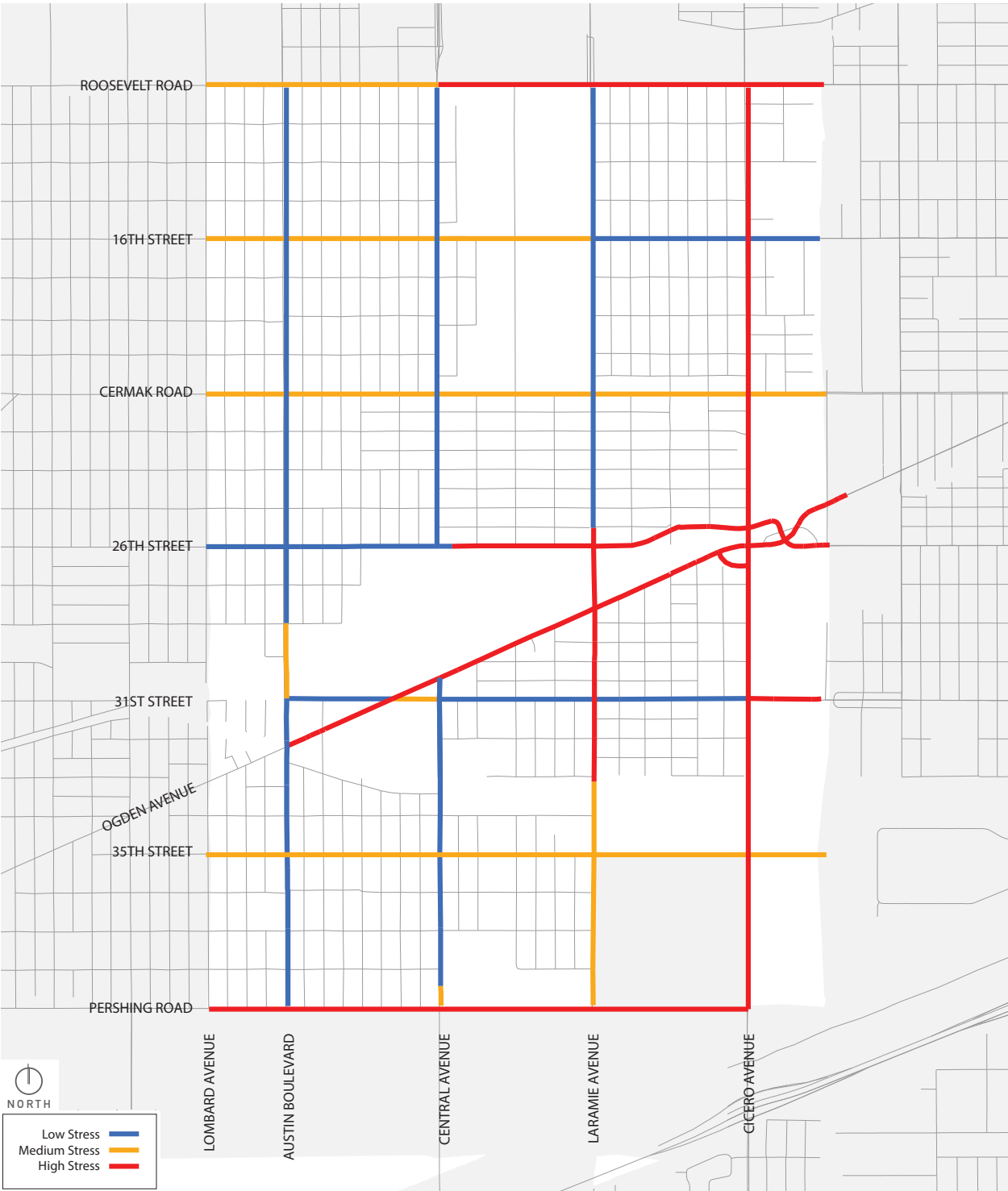
54th Cermak Pink Line Station

TABLE 2.9 – YEAR 2009-2012 BICYCLE CRASHES IN CICERO BY INJURY TYPE

	All	Fatal	All Injuries	A-Injury	B-Injury	C-Injury	No Injury
Bike Crashes	110	1	93	14	42	37	16
% of Injury Type	1.4%	6.3%	7.8%	8.9%	7.5%	7.7%	0.2%
% of Bike Crashes	100%	0.91%	84.55%	12.7%	38.2%	33.6%	14.5%
% of All Crashes	1.38%	0.01%	1.17%	0.18%	0.53%	0.47%	0.20%

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

Figure 2.17 – Level of Traffic Stress Map



Railroad. Cicero is home to a significant amount of railroad infrastructure, due in part to the Town's location in the Chicago metropolitan region. Figure 2.19 – Railroad Network shows the location and ownership of railroad lines in Cicero. The BNSF Railway is the only rail line in Cicero that carries passenger traffic. All other railroads are freight only.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Intermodal Facility.

One of the Chicago region's most significant intermodal rail facilities, owned and operated by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, is located in Cicero between 26th Street and Ogden Avenue. Sometimes referred to as the Cicero or Clyde Yard, the facility currently occupies 80 acres of land. According to 2014 regional intermodal facility lift count estimates provided by CMAP, the Cicero Intermodal Facility had 499,355 total lifts, ranking it eighth out of 18 active intermodal facilities in the Chicago region in terms of volume of freight transfer

activity. Canadian National, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, the Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad (CSS), Amtrak and Metra have trackage rights through the facility.

The Intermodal Facility has been the subject of a recent study by Regional 5 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to determine the levels of diesel soot that may be emitting from the yard to nearby residential neighborhoods. Testing of the rail yard and surrounding neighborhoods revealed that levels of black carbon, an indicator of diesel exhaust, spiked up to 104 percent higher than the norm for urban areas during early mornings and evenings when winds blew across the freight yard toward a residential area north of 26th Street and west of Cicero Avenue. However, the study did note that further research was needed to determine whether diesel soot from Cicero Avenue and nearby expressways also contributed to diesel soot emissions.

Figure 2.18 – Regional Transit Network Map

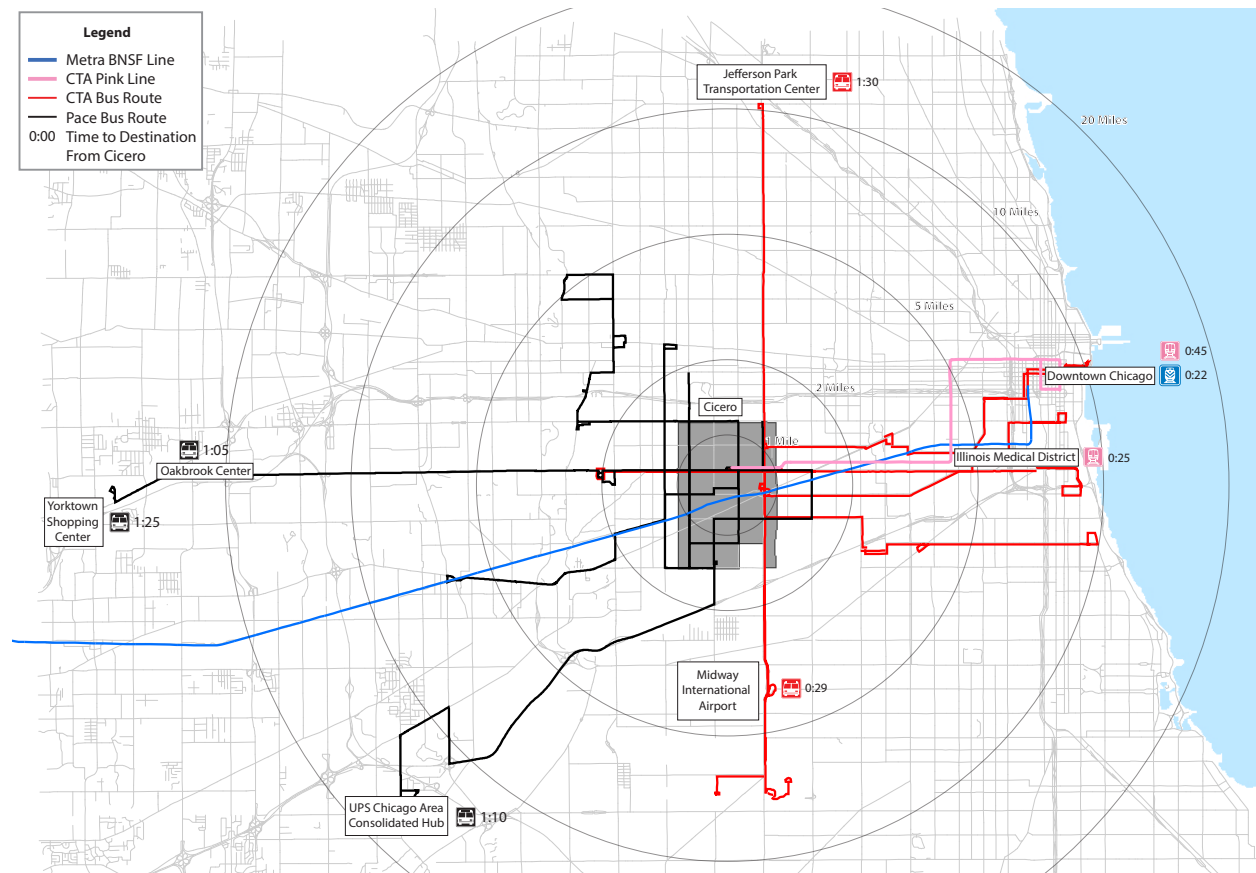
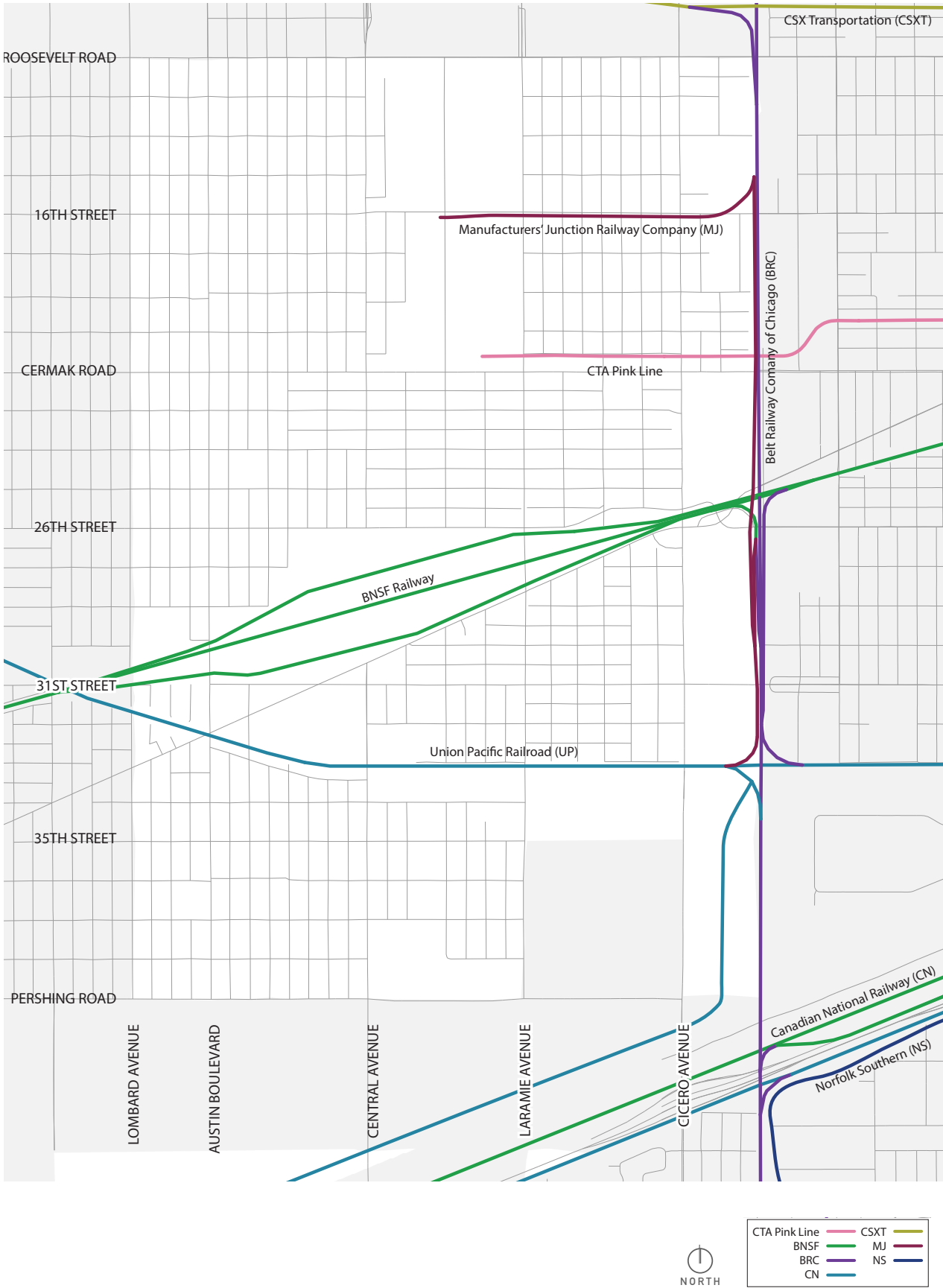


Figure 2.19 – Railroad Network Map



Community Infrastructure

Cicero's infrastructure includes its roads, bridges, parking, water supply, sewers (combined sanitary and storm), streetscape, transit facilities, electrical grid, and telecommunications – the structures needed for the Town to function. Community infrastructure allows commodities and services to be distributed and enable, sustain, and enhance living conditions. An established community like Cicero is more concerned with rebuilding and maintaining existing rather than building new infrastructure systems. Much of Cicero's infrastructure is more than 100 years old and in need of repair or reconstruction.

Street and Alley Network

The Town's Public Works Department spends a significant amount of resources on patching streets, usually with motor fuel tax (MFT) funds averaging \$1 million a year. Motor Fuel Tax funds are provided by the State of Illinois and are awarded to municipalities based on a formula that involves the number of residents and other factors. A few streets have been resurfaced and reconstructed using tax increment finance (TIF) funds in select areas where TIF districts have been established. There are about 896 alleys in Cicero. Public Works reconstructs about four alleys per year, generally using CDBG funds. Drainage is a problem in many alleys and there has been discussion and consideration by the Town of installing storm sewer mains in alleys with the most significant drainage issues.

Sewer and Sanitary Systems

The Town of Cicero has its own water distribution system and is responsible for maintaining the combined stormwater- sanitary sewer system. The



Intersection in need of improvements.

combined sewer system flows to interceptors owned and managed by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD), which discharges the flow to a MWRD facility in Stickney for wastewater treatment. Repairs and upgrades to the local system seem to be performed on an as needed basis. Reportedly, as is common in many inner-ring Chicago suburbs, there are flooding problems, primarily in basements from sewer backup during heavy storm events.

Flooding and Stormwater Management

Land use in Cicero, from a stormwater management perspective, is highly intensive. Commercial and industrial areas, which generally include the highest levels of impervious land coverage, comprise approximately 36 percent of the Town's land area. Residential areas, which account for over half of the Town land use area, generally include more green space. However, residential areas in Cicero have a high density with most single family lot sizes on the order of 4,500 to 4,600 square feet and 60 percent impervious coverage. Community facilities and parks make up approximately 5 percent of the Town, but not all of this area is open space. In total, land use of Cicero is highly impervious, which means that there is very little ground for rainwater to soak into and discharge. When it rains, most of the storm event is converted directly into runoff that the sewer system must handle.

Many combined sewer communities in the Chicago area, Cicero included, suffer from the same common problem: basement backups. When the stormwater enters the system faster than the "free flow" capacity of the sewer pipe, water starts to back up and the sewer system becomes "surcharged" or overburdened. The depth to which water will back up and surcharge the system depends on the amount of runoff and the rate that it enters the system. Since each individual home or business is connected directly to the combined sewer system through its sanitary sewer, they are at risk of backup every time a storm event occurs that surcharges the system. Protection from backups can be provided through overhead sewers or other backflow prevention systems, although most of Cicero's housing stock was constructed years before these systems were commonly constructed.

Community Facilities and Services

The Town of Cicero provides a wide array of community facilities and services from a number of Town departments and other agencies and organizations. In recent years, the Town has upgraded several of its facilities, from its Town Hall Center complex to new parks, and has current plans to add additional services and recreational amenities. This section is an inventory of existing facilities and services to determine if any gaps exist that need to be addressed in the short and long-terms.

Community Facilities

Several community facilities currently service the residents of Cicero, facilities that are operated and managed by different agencies and organizations, including the Town of Cicero, the Clyde and Hawthorne park districts, local school districts and other entities and organizations. A list of community facilities located in Cicero include:

- Town Hall Center
- Town of Cicero Public Works Garage
- Town of Cicero Water Department
- Cicero Public Library
- Town of Cicero Police Department at Town Hall Center
- Town of Cicero Fire Department
- Town of Cicero Youth Commission
- Town of Cicero Senior Center
- Cicero School District 99
- J. Sterling Morton School District 201
- Morton College
- Hawthorne Park District
- Clyde Park District
- U.S. Post Office
- Association of Business and Commerce of Cicero.

A more complete description of these facilities and services is provided on the following pages.

Public Schools. The Town of Cicero has two public school districts and a number of private and parochial schools. The two public school districts, Cicero Public School District 99 and the J. Sterling Morton School District 201 have a combined student enrollment of 18,171. School District 99 has 15 elementary schools and one junior high school with an enrollment of 13,325 students. The average student-teacher ratio is 17.97, which is just under the state average of 18 students per teacher. Four schools, Daniel Burnham, Goodwin, Sherlock, Woodbine and Woodrow Wilson Elementary Schools are above the state average. School District 201, which consists of Morton East High School and the Freshman Center and Alternative Schools, has a combined enrollment of 4,846 students. With the exception of the Alternative School, Morton East High School and the Freshman Center have higher student-teacher ratios than the Illinois average, which is 19 students for every teacher according to the Illinois State Board of Education. The higher student-teacher ratios indicate that expansion of school facilities is needed.

In recent years, both districts have undertaken new school construction projects to modernize and



Morton Freshman Center - 54th Avenue Industrial Corridor

TABLE 2.10 – ENROLLMENT WITHIN CICERO SCHOOLS (2013)			
	# of Schools	# of Students	Student-Teacher Ratio
Cicero School District 99	16	13,325	17.97
J. Sterling Morton School District 201	3	4,846	17.46

Source: Illinois State Board of Education; U.S. Department of Education

enhance classroom facilities and school amenities. Warren Park School is planned to be replaced in 2015 by District 99 in order to accommodate more students in the northwest quadrant of Cicero. An additional school is also being planned for 54th Avenue and Cermak. District 201 is also in need of upgraded and

newer facilities at Morton East. The District also operates an innovative Alternative High School that helps former gang members and emotionally troubled teenagers finish high school. Both school districts have majority Hispanic student enrollment.

TABLE 2.11 – ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL (2013)

	Enrolled Students	Student-Teacher Ratio
Cicero School District 99		
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School	997	17.49
Cicero East Elementary School	860	17.92
Cicero West Elementary School	987	17.95
Columbus East Elementary School	512	16.00
Columbus West Elementary School	943	14.22
Daniel Burnham Elementary School	1,077	18.73
Drexel Elementary School	633	16.97
Goodwin Elementary School	714	18.31
Liberty Elementary School	811	17.63
McKinley Elementary School	286	17.88
Sherlock Elementary School	372	21.88
T. Roosevelt Elementary School	711	17.38
Unity Junior High School	2,719	16.21
Warren Park School	358	17.90
Woodbine Elementary School	442	20.09
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School	903	21.00
District 99 TOTAL	13,325	17.97
School District 201		
J. Sterling Morton East High School	3,535	25.69
J. Sterling Morton Freshman Center	1,269	21.88
J. Sterling Morton Alternative High School	42	4.83
District 201 TOTAL	4,846	17.46

Source: Illinois State Board of Education; U.S. Department of Education

Morton College. Morton College has an enrollment of 7,750 and serves the communities of Cicero, Berwyn, Lyons, Stickney, Forest View and McCook. The College offers associate degree programs in the humanities, arts and sciences, career and technical training, nursing and adult education, including English as a Second Language classes. Technical training opportunities range from automotive mechanics and computer information systems to law enforcement and physical therapy. The College will be constructing a new 15,000 square foot classroom facility in 2015.

Cicero Public Library. The Cicero Public Library currently operates a 29,000 square foot facility at its location at Cermak Road and South Laramie Avenue. The building was first constructed in 1921; and expansion in 2004 added an additional 20,000 square feet to the facility. The Library employs 22 full-time and 12 part-time employees and is a department of the Town of Cicero. The Library provides a variety of services beyond its usual circulation and reference materials, including several special events and art activities, English as a Second Language classes, movie showings, knitting and crochet clubs, and story-time events for children. The Library is currently in the process of preparing a new strategic plan.

Religious Institutions. Cicero residents are served by many churches of different denominations, from Catholic and Pentecostal, to Ukrainian Baptist and non-denominational. In all, there is estimated to be 30 churches and religious institutions in Cicero. Beyond their pastoral ministries, many churches provide a number of services to the community, including food drives and pantries, couples and marriage counseling, health and education services, and language classes. Several Catholic churches, including St. Mary of Czestochowa, Our Lady of Charity, St. Francis of Rome, also operate private grade schools.



Morton College.

Community Services

The Town of Cicero and other agencies offer a number of services to enhance the quality of life for community residents. An inventory of such services is summarized below.

Hospitals and Clinics

Although no hospital is located in the Town of Cicero, the community is in close proximity to several hospitals serving the west side of Chicago and in the inner ring western suburbs. The nearest hospitals are Hartgrove Hospital at 5730 West Roosevelt Road, which provides specialized mental health and psychiatric care, and Loretto Hospital at 645 South Central Avenue in Chicago's Austin neighborhood. McNeal Healthcare Center, a general hospital facility located at 3249 South Oak Park Avenue in adjacent Berwyn, is a 437-bed facility providing general surgery and in-patient services, including specialties in cancer care, rehabilitation, sports and cardiovascular medicine, orthopedics, and state-of-the art radiological services. Additional hospitals within 20 minutes driving time of Cicero include the West Suburban Medical Center in Oak Park; the Loyola University Medical Center and the Edward J. Hines Jr. Veterans Administration Hospital, both in Maywood; and, the Mount Sinai-St. Anthony hospital complex in Chicago's Douglas Park neighborhood. Stroger Cook County and Rush Presbyterian Hospitals and the other affiliated services and facilities of the Illinois Medical District in Chicago's near southwest side are within a 20 minute drive of Cicero.

In addition to the hospitals, a number of smaller clinics in Cicero provide medical services, focusing mainly on family practice, women's health care, diagnostic services, pediatrics and emergency medicine. The Town of Cicero Health Department also operates a



Hartgrove Hospital is located just north of Cicero on Roosevelt Road.

full-service clinic at the Cicero Community Center, providing a range of family medicine and dental services to children, adults and senior citizens.

Cicero Senior Services

The Town of Cicero Senior and Disability Services Department is responsible for providing transportation and home care services to Cicero's senior population, and a senior center, located at 5631 West 35th Street. The Department provides free transportation services to any citizen over the age of 62, or community resident that is handicapped or disadvantaged, to any destination within the Town of Cicero. Free small-scaled home repair and maintenance services are also offered to seniors along with a small \$500 grant program for more extensive repair and home weatherization projects. The Department estimates that 3,000 seniors participate in senior center activities and that there is increasing involvement in Department programs by senior Hispanics. The Department also recognizes that the current senior center facility is not big enough to offer additional activities and that more buses and staff may be needed to accommodate a growing senior population.

Cicero Youth Commission

Since 1993, the Cicero Youth Commission provides a wide-range of recreational and education services and opportunities for the community's youth through junior high school age. The Youth Commission was initiated by the Town to help deter youth from joining organized gangs. Among the services offered



Cicero Youth Choir, Cicero Youth Commission.

by the Commission is the After School Program, which allows local youth to participate in sports, tutoring, and arts and crafts activities at the Cicero Community Center; family movie nights, also offered at the Community Center; father-daughter and mother-son dances; on-going holiday events; an annual spelling bee contest; and, a "safety-town" program at the Cicero Public Safety Building at the Hawthorne Park District. A Breakfast with the President event where local youth are recognized for academic achievement, has been organized recently and draws more than 240 people in attendance. Given the success of Commission programs and events, another community center would be of benefit to expand Commission activities to the Cicero's southern neighborhoods.

Association of Business and Commerce of Cicero

The Association has in the past year been reconstituted after a period of inactivity. In previous years, a Chamber of Commerce had been involved in business development activities, and marketing and promotional events.

Infrastructure Needs

The Town relies on a yearly schedule or budget to determine capital improvements. Currently, there is no comprehensive multi-year program in place to address future infrastructure needs. The development of a CIP, which involves a short-range plan, with a four to ten-year outlook, that identifies projects and funding sources is needed. In addition, Cicero will want to develop basic policies for implementing the plan. A review of the Town's current finances to fund future capital improvements would be a critical component of the program.



Infrastructure improvements should also be targeted in areas for planned redevelopment, including a proposed Institutional Campus.

Plan Recommendations

Goal
Undertake strategic investments in transportation network and related infrastructure improvements and enhancements.
Policies
- Conduct regular capital improvements planning that guide investments in community infrastructure. - Implement streetscape and urban design improvements in neighborhoods and commercial districts.

Strategies

A. Conduct capital improvements planning.

The Town of Cicero currently relies on a yearly schedule or budget to determine what capital improvements should be undertaken. However, there is no comprehensive, multi-year program in place to address future infrastructure needs. The development of a Town CIP, which provides a four to ten year outlook for needed capital improvement needs and an identification of needed funding sources, is strongly recommended. A review of the Town's current finances to fund future capital improvements would be a critical component of the program. In addition, the Town will want to develop basic policies for CIP implementation.

The CIP process should begin with a system-wide evaluation of the Town's infrastructure and a determination of the criteria for the projects or equipment to be included. An important element of this evaluation would be to perform a life cycle analysis. This analysis would determine the age of the infrastructure and its condition and useful or remaining life. The analysis would help the Town to identify potential problems before they occur and rebuild the infrastructure when needed and warranted. The Town has identified a number of infrastructure projects, including an additional pumping station (potable water), roadway and sidewalk rehabilitation, neighborhood parkway improvements, and sewer replacement initiatives. A CIP can also plan ahead for various flood mitigation measures and their financing. Typically, a CIP is planned over a 20-year period and budgeted for five years.

B. Implement streetscape and other public space enhancements.

During the planning process, Cicero stakeholders consistently stated the need to improve the public spaces and streetscape environment in each of the commercial districts, although Cermak Road was singled-out as one corridor where streetscape improvements should be a priority given the conditions of the sidewalks and infrastructure. Streetscape and capital improvements plans should be developed to determine the level of treatments and design elements and their associated costs to be considered for each district. Given their importance as commercial corridors, Cermak and Roosevelt Roads and Cicero Avenue should be considered for more comprehensive streetscaping improvements, including sidewalk paving, lighting, gateway and pedestrian enhancements, landscape treatments and public art. Cermak Road's wide sidewalks provides opportunities for adding public art elements, gateway signage, new pedestrian amenities, and parking and roadway improvements. Neighborhood commercial districts could receive a different level of improvements focused on landscaping and pedestrian and parking improvements.

Public art and other urban design and "placemaking" initiatives, such as sculptures, intersection pavement painting and street signage, should also be encouraged as part of a streetscaping programs. Public art can give an identity to Cicero's commercial districts; they can also serve as a way for local artists to express Cicero's rich cultural diversity.



Crosswalk paving treatments as small-scale "placemaking" improvements.

C. Brand and placemake Cicero neighborhoods.

Cicero neighborhoods were once known by specific names and could be “rebranded” with the older names or new ones as a way to promote a unified, recognizable identity to them. Rebranding the neighborhoods could be accomplished through new street signs and gateway elements that incorporate the neighborhood’s name with a design logo or image. Public art created by neighborhood-based arts groups and other organizations could also be considered and incorporated as a placemaking method. However, neighborhood names that existed in the past may not be relevant today given changes in Cicero’s population over the last several decades. New neighborhood names should be considered as part of a neighborhood planning or branding process. Rebranding, public art and placemaking efforts should incorporate and highlight aspects of Cicero’s history and current ethnic and cultural make-up.



Chicago’s Andersonville neighborhood has used consistent and well executed identity signage to raise its profile.



Streetscape enhancements, public art and interesting storefronts create a unique district identity in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood.

Goal

Pursue multi-modal transportation improvements.

Policies

- Ensure all future plans considered and adopted by the Town incorporate strategies and recommendations that accommodate different modes of transportation.
- Implement recommendations made within the Cicero Connections Plan regarding bus, pedestrian and transit improvements along Cermak Road and the CTA Pink Line stations.

Strategies

A. Create and implement a Complete Streets program.

The Town should adopt a Complete Streets policy that guides the future development of transportation projects and policies within Cicero. Related to the CIP, a complete streets policy will help the Town to consider the needs of all transportation system users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders, when transportation projects are developed.

B. Enhance access to transit services.

The Cicero Connections Initiative proposed several recommendations to improve bus stops, crosswalks, signalized intersections, mid-block crossings and bike parking within the Cermak Road corridor near and around the CTA Pink Line stations. Wayfinding signage to and from the stations and nearby parking areas were also considered. The Town should pursue these recommendations and strive to improve access to all transit stops and stations. Bus stop typologies that were developed in the Cicero Connections Initiative identified three levels of amenities that are recommended for bus stops. The level of amenities provided at each stop were determined based on ridership and number of routes served. Bus stop improvements should also be incorporated into the Town’s Capital Improvement Program.

C. Create and implement a bicycle transportation strategy. The Town should create a plan that identifies major corridors on which to improve bicycling. The bike plan should consider low-stress roadways through neighborhoods, key arterial corridors that could be improved for bicycling, and strategic intersection improvements to help make bicycling safer and more comfortable. Since Cicero has a well-connected grid street network, neighborhood greenways would improve bicycling with minor or low-cost improvements. Neighborhood greenways are streets that have been identified as good candidates for improving bicycling within the community that only need a few strategic traffic calming improvements to reduce traffic stress for bicyclists. The bicycle plan component could be part of an overall multi-modal or complete streets plan for the Town that incorporates pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements within the transportation network. Aspects of the bicycle transportation strategy could be funded and implemented through the Town's Capital Improvements Plan.

D. Improve transportation options to Cicero employment centers. Alternative transportation options such as walking and biking from neighborhoods and commercial districts to industrial employment centers should be considered and implemented.

E. Identify and implement neighborhood pedestrian enhancements. Cicero's neighborhoods represent immediate opportunities for enhancing the pedestrian environment, given the intimate scale of streets, parkways, housing stock and nearby adjacency to neighborhood commercial areas, by identifying areas where connectivity improvement can take place through new sidewalk and intersection improvements.

F. Create a truck access and route plan. A comprehensive truck access plan should be developed that identifies primary arterial roadways best suited for trucks. While local deliveries should still be permitted on local roads, a truck access plan will help Cicero plan ahead for adequate roadway maintenance of truck routes, help to discourage unnecessary wear and tear on local roads, and manage access to commercial and industrial districts within the Town. It should be noted that a comprehensive truck access plan should align with designated local truck routes of neighboring communities and other truck route permitting work being undertaken on the regional level. A truck access plan must also be approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation.



Pink Line tracks cross Laramie Avenue just north of Cermak Road.

Goal
Manage Cicero's parking supply effectively and efficiently in neighborhoods and commercial areas.
Policies
- Assess and analyze parking conditions in neighborhoods and commercial districts before specific parking projects are implemented. - Promote shared access agreements as a method for maximizing the existing parking supply in commercial areas. - Implement parking management initiatives that make more effective use of the existing parking supply; new surface parking lots, especially in neighborhood commercial districts, should be constructed where and when a true parking demand warrants.

Strategies

A. Implement parking management programs in Cicero's commercial areas. Prior to the installation of public parking facilities, the Town of Cicero should conduct parking assessments to determine parking needs for the commercial district being served. Additionally, on-street parking restrictions, including two-hour, three-hour, and overnight parking restrictions should be reviewed as part of the assessment to determine whether restrictions are necessary to manage demand. Once parking assessments are completed, the Town should pursue specific parking management strategies in the commercial corridors and neighborhood commercial districts to ensure that adequate parking is provided for shoppers and visitors. General parking management recommendations in Cicero's commercial areas are provided herewith:

Cermak Road Traditional Commercial Corridor (North, South). The north side of Cermak Road has the benefit of Town-managed off-street parking from Lombard Avenue to 55th Court. The Town may want to consider allowing developers or business owners to pay a fee in lieu of providing off-street parking between Cermak Road. This will help to promote the use of these parking facilities and encourage development. Since there is no public off-street parking provided on the south side of Cermak Road, the Town should look for opportunities to develop parking lots or structures to complement

commercial development and preserve the walking environment, if and only when a parking assessment determines the need for new parking facilities or when parking management initiatives are not feasible. This can be done through the adaptive use of existing buildings with parking lots, shared parking agreements, or construction of new parking lots or structures as part of new developments. The Town also should work to improve pedestrian crossings on Cermak Road so that pedestrians parking on the north side of Cermak Road can shop and do business on both sides of the street.

Cicero Avenue Commercial Corridor. Parking along the Cicero Avenue corridor consists mainly of surface parking lots for commercial land uses on both sides of Cicero Avenue. Retail establishments at the south end of the corridor have large surface lots. The Town should work to implement design guidelines for pedestrian walkways from Cicero Avenue to storefront entrances and landscaping and screening along walkways. The Town should implement guidelines that place parking lots to the center or rear of a new development.

The Town also should develop a strategy to internally connect commercial establishments along Cicero Avenue that will help shoppers, visitors, and employees travel between destinations without having to return to Cicero Avenue for short trips. This also will help improve pedestrian connectivity between commercial areas. To achieve this, the Town could encourage shared access agreements or require internal circulation plans as part of planned developments. They could also be required through new design guidelines or standards.

Roosevelt Road Commercial Corridor. New surface parking lots should be considered only if on-street parking utilization is high and a parking study reveals a need for additional off street parking or other parking management initiatives. The Town should consider shared parking agreements with owners of existing parking lots. The two-hour parking restrictions along Roosevelt Road should also be reviewed to determine if they are compatible with shopper's needs. There are five smaller commercial districts that serve various neighborhoods in Cicero. The following strategies should be considered:

- 14th Street Neighborhood Business District.* On-street parking should be promoted as first priority; off-street parking behind buildings a second priority. Surface parking in general should be discouraged.

- *25th Street Neighborhood Business District.* On-street parking should be promoted as first priority with surface parking discouraged. If additional parking is needed, the Town should work with owners of existing parking lots to develop shared parking agreements or develop a public lot.
- *26th Street Neighborhood Business District.* On-street parking should be promoted as first priority since angled parking on side streets is well utilized in this district. The Town should preserve existing angle parking and encourage it where additional parking is needed. If additional parking is needed, the Town should work with owners of existing parking lots to develop shared parking agreements or a public lot.
- *35th Street Neighborhood Business District.* On-street parking should be promoted as first priority since angled parking on side streets is well utilized in this district. The Town should preserve existing angle parking and encourage streetscape projects that incorporate angle parking if additional parking is needed. Off-street surface parking should be discouraged.

C. Consider a residential parking management initiative.

Vehicle ownership is higher in Cicero today than it has been at any point in the Town's history. Neighborhoods originally designed for households with zero or one vehicle now accommodate three, four, or five vehicles, all without increases to total parking capacity. As a result, some areas are experiencing on-street parking congestion that impacts residents and visitors, and may negatively impact commercial development. As such, the Town should consider a series of strategies to manage residential parking.

Residential on-street parking should continue to be managed through the sale of Town stickers and parking passes. For areas where parking congestion is still a problem, the Town could move to a zone-based parking permit system, so long as public parking is provided nearby as well. Moving to a zone-based system along with public parking would provide flexibility for current residents while also finding ways to accommodate guest and visitor parking. Zone-based parking could be implemented on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis as needed.

Goal

Pursue new infrastructure improvement and stormwater management initiatives to mitigate against flooding events.

Policies

- Incorporate use of best practices, including green design treatments, when feasible, to manage stormwater runoff and mitigate adverse flooding impacts.
- Support public and private sector flood mitigation initiatives and require new developments to meet standards of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's Watershed Management Ordinance.

Strategies

Cicero's combined sewer system was built many years ago and is undersized to handle larger storm events. There are two general types of strategies that can be implemented to address the widespread basement backup problems as part of the Town's capital improvements planning and other initiatives. The first is investment in the sewer infrastructure, for example constructing new or larger sewers to improve capacity. This is often called "gray infrastructure." The second strategy is to utilize techniques that reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the sewer system; these strategies are often called "green infrastructure". Grey and green are complementary and both have a place in the long term planning of Cicero to minimize and mitigate flooding experienced by residents.

A. Pursue "grey" infrastructure system enhancements.

Two principal grey infrastructure improvement strategies should be pursued in Cicero as part of a comprehensive flood mitigation program.

Sewer System Improvement Plan. In recent years, there have been several extremely large storm events in the Chicago area which have exposed deficiencies in sewer systems throughout the region. Many communities have responded by developing community-wide master plans to address flooding. These plans start with an analysis of the existing sewer system with computer modeling software that determines the system's capacity and how it responds to given storm events. With this understanding of

the existing system, an improvement plan can be developed to mitigate specific problem areas. Such a study may identify particular “bottleneck” locations where a relatively small improvement can benefit a large area. Often, a more comprehensive series of improvements is necessary, such as a system of relief sewers or large storage vaults that would work in conjunction with the existing system. In either case, it is impossible to identify and develop the types of solutions needed to address the widespread basement backup problems without a thorough understanding of the existing system. Therefore, it is recommended that a comprehensive sewer study be pursued to determine potential short and long-range sewer system enhancements.

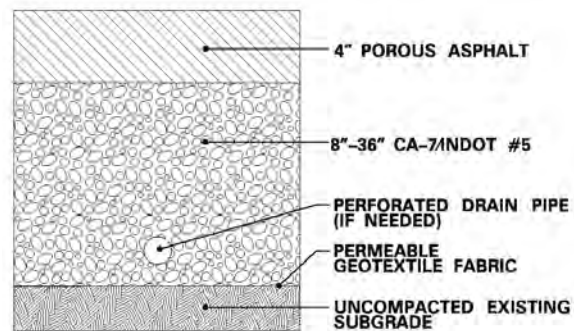
Improve Rebate Program for Homeowner Flood Control Systems. Tackling the widespread improvements that would likely be needed to improve overall system capacity enough such that basement backups are reduced will require a lengthy and costly program. One way that residents can protect themselves from basement backups is by installing flood protection systems on their service line that connects their home to the sewer system. These systems can range from a backflow valve on the service line to a more complex overhead sewer system. These types of improvements occur on private property and are typically not funded by the community.

However, Cicero and many other communities offer a rebate to homeowners who install these systems to protect their homes. The amount of the rebate varies between communities; Cicero offers a rebate of half the installation cost up to \$1,500, and funds this program at approximately \$200,000 annually. These types of rebate programs are great options that give homeowners some control over their backup problems. The Town should expand the program if additional funds can be allocated. One other consideration would be to reconsider the amount of the rebate. Often, the cost of the flood control systems is cost prohibitive even with the \$1,500 rebate. The rebate amount should balance the desire to utilize the full annual budget and to install the maximum number of flood control systems.

B. Pursue “green” infrastructure improvement strategies. Several green infrastructure improvement strategies should be pursued in Cicero as part of a comprehensive flood mitigation program – strategies that emphasize the use of alternative material systems and approaches.

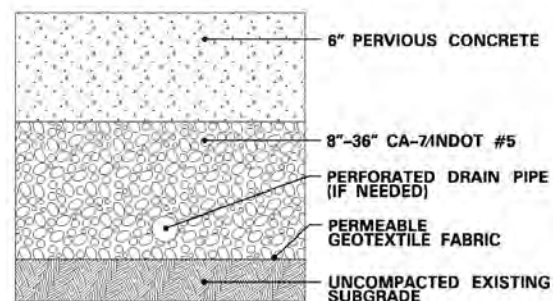
Porous Pavement. In general, porous pavements allow rainwater to infiltrate into and through the surface, contrary to conventional pavement design which is to minimize water infiltration by creating an impervious barrier and diverting the rainfall into a collection system. There are three types of commonly used porous pavements: porous asphalt, pervious concrete and permeable pavers. Porous asphalt is standard hot-mix asphalt with reduced sand or fines that permits water infiltration. Pervious concrete is a concrete aggregate mixture with a reduced amount of fine aggregate that fills the voids between the coarser aggregate in normal Portland concrete mixes. Permeable pavers consist of concrete paver bricks that have gaps that are filled with stone chips which allow for the infiltration of

Figure 2.20 – Porous Asphalt Parking Lot Section



Typical Detail Cross-Section for a Porous Asphalt Parking Lot

Figure 2.21 – Pervious Concrete Parking Lot Section



Typical Detail Cross-Section for a Pervious Concrete Parking Lot.

stormwater into the sub-base. Examples of typical cross-sections for porous asphalt and pervious concrete are provided on the preceding page. Below each of the porous pavement surfaces is an aggregate subsurface which not only provides structural integrity but can also act as a storage space for the infiltrated stormwater. The stormwater can either then be slowly infiltrated into the existing subgrade or if the soil conditions are not ideal, be transported to the sewer system via an underdrain.

Porous pavement is typically implemented in parking lots, walkways and alleys. There have been instances of residential roadway applications, given that the driving surface has been properly designed to handle such loading. Porous pavement is considerably more expensive than normal asphalt and concrete.

Currently in the Chicagoland area porous pavement pricing is anywhere from \$15 to \$18 per square foot whereas normal asphalt is around \$3 per square foot. Given the reality of this price difference it may not be feasible to install entire parking lots or alleys with porous pavement. The following example of the residential alley is a good example of this. Flow from the alley was directed from the outer concrete apron to the permeable paver strip in the middle of the alley. Other examples of optimizing the use of porous pavement may be to incorporate it into the design of crosswalks or to use it only in the parking stalls in a parking lot. Porous pavement is also commonly seen in highly visible areas, such as commercial districts. One reason for this is permeable pavers in particular have an aesthetic value and certain communities have used them to rehabilitate and transform parking areas.



Permeable Paver Application in a Residential Alley Setting.

Alley Program. Alleys represent a significant land area within Cicero and are an opportunity for stormwater management improvements. Most alleys in Cicero are crowned, meaning that the center of the alley is higher than the edges at each property line. This condition often creates ponding of water that is trapped in rear yards by the alley. This ponding, while a nuisance to residents, is beneficial to the sewer system by slowing or eliminating water from entering the system. The City reconstructs four to five alleys a year, and when doing so frequently uses an inverted crown alley which eliminates the ponding.

The City of Chicago initiated a green alley program several years ago and has been developing several alley design types that help mitigate stormwater. Some alleys have been paved with permeable paving, others have been paved traditionally but with a permeable strip in the center of the alley. It is recommended that green alley elements be incorporated in those that the Town reconstructs annually. Expansion of the green alley program would allow stormwater to be managed from greater areas, reducing the load on the sewer system and the potential for basement backups.

C. Implement right-of-way alternatives for flood mitigation. Managing stormwater is challenging when open space is not readily available. As described previously, open space in Cicero is very limited. A review of the overall land use in Cicero shows that 25% of the Town is comprised of right of ways. Although this is certainly not “open space”, rights-of-way represent the best opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure elements to reduce the amount of stormwater entering the sewer system.



Permeable Paver Application in Business District Parking Lot.

An example of converting parkway areas into bio-swales with native plantings would be the highly researched case study in Burnsville, Minnesota. In 2002, the city retrofitted 17 residential parkways into bio-swales and found that the homes with the bio-swales reduced stormwater runoff up to 90 percent. (Burnsville Stormwater Retrofit Study, prepared by Barr, June 2006) Similar to parkway areas, medians can be converted into bio-swales. Special consideration will need to be given to pedestrian access and visibility issues when designing the bio-swales.

D. Require flood mitigation measures in new development. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) recently passed the Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) which not only requires detention be provided but also infiltration for both new development and redevelopment. The infiltration requirement in the WMO mandates that one inch of runoff over the impervious area be infiltrated and treated on-site. This can be achieved through a number of practices including porous pavement and infiltration basins. An infiltration basin is an engineered temporary storage area that allows stormwater runoff to gradually infiltrate through a porous media or gravel stones.

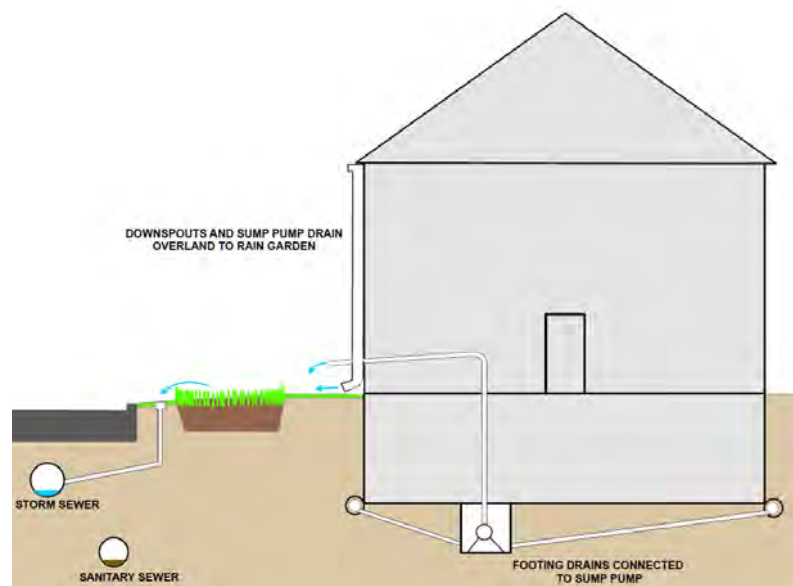
E. Encourage private-sector flood mitigation measures. The Town of Cicero should explore ways in which to encourage residents and business owners to implement or install flood mitigation and “green” design alternatives.

Rainwater Harvesting. Rainwater harvesting has been typically used in areas with water scarcity issues to augment water supply, but it can also be used as a stormwater management technique. In residential settings a 55-gallon barrel is typically used. It should be stated that during a large storm event, a 55-gallon rain barrel will not make a significant difference in rainfall runoff reduction. Rain barrels however can be a very powerful tool in educating homeowners and the

general public about stormwater. Residents can clearly see the amount of rainfall that accumulates even after a smaller storm event. The MWRD has a program to sell rain barrels to all Cook County residents at cost. A number of communities in Cook County have partnered with MWRD to provide residents with free rain barrels. The Town may want to consider implementing a program to provide residents with no-cost or reduced cost rain barrels. The MWRD also has a rain barrel installation and instruction manual available to residents that covers many of the best practices, including overflow and winterizing. (<https://www.mwr.org/irj/portal/anonymous/rainbarrel>)

Rain Gardens. Rain gardens are typically smaller scale bio-swales and infiltration basins - shallow depression areas planted with vegetation to encourage infiltration and evapotranspiration. On private residential properties, a best practice involving rain gardens would be to disconnect the downspout and building drains from the sewer system and direct the flow to a rain garden. The rain garden should be placed at least 15 feet from the building foundation. The rain garden should contain an underdrain connected to the sewer system in case of overtopping during large storm events. An example of this scenario is depicted in the following graphic.

Figure 2.22 – Residential Downspout and Building Drain Diagram



Example of Downspout and Building Drain Connected to Rain Garden
Note: this diagram is provided illustrative purposes and does not reflect Cicero's combined sewer system.

Goal

Town facilities are modernized, updated and meet the current and future needs of local residents.

Policies

- Support continued investment in Town facilities, including fire, police, public works and other departments.
- Enhance and continue senior and other community service programs.
- Establish programs that help Cicero seniors age in place.
- Provide high quality educational facilities.

Strategies

A. Implement an asset management approach to maintaining existing Town facilities and planning for future capital improvements. Many municipalities today employ special Geographic Information Systems-based software programs to help keep track of maintenance and capital improvement planning for all municipal-owned and managed facilities. The software helps communities make more informed and cost-effective decisions on whether to repair, maintain or replace building and facility assets. Municipal facilities are long-term assets that should be managed with life-cycle costs in mind and meeting the desired level of service for the public at a reasonable costs. Purchasing such software, along with its associated training and installation costs, is an investment that can be re-cooped by potential savings in more directed and clearly-defined capital improvement programs for municipal facilities. An asset-management program should be developed for each Town department.

B. Repurpose and rehabilitate existing municipal facilities, if possible and feasible, before considering replacement. Of the older Town facilities that remain in use, an asset management-based approach should be used to determine if the Town's older facilities can be rehabilitated and adapted for continued use. In some situations, rehabilitation and adaptive use may prove less costly than replacement.

C. Incorporate sustainable design features in Town buildings and facilities. Green roofs and alternative energy generating systems, such as highly efficient furnaces, wind turbines and geo-thermal power, can be incorporated as part of existing building rehabilitation and new construction projects for Town facilities. As mentioned previously, permeable pavement can also be considered for municipal parking facilities. Despite initial costs for installation, such systems can significantly lower energy costs. Energy efficiency improvements should also be incorporated as part of the Town's Capital Improvement Program.

D. Explore new services to help seniors age in place. The Town of Cicero should engage the senior population to understand future service needs given that different retirements groups – the Hispanics and Baby Boomer populations – may redefine what types of services may be useful to them. The Town should conduct surveys of its seniors to gain a broader understanding of what would help seniors stay in Cicero and enjoy a higher quality of life.

The Town could consider creating an expanded level of services that help seniors “age in place” in their homes. An expanded service level could include wellness and healthcare, transportation to local shopping trips, home repairs and accessibility alterations, and social events and gatherings. This expanded services level could be partially underwritten through a small membership fee; a discounted fee could be established for lower-income seniors. Alternatively, an aging in place program could be managed through a local non-profit agency in collaboration with the Town Senior Services Department.



Bio-swale retention areas also provide screening.

E. Develop a senior center facility on the Town's north side. Town departmental staff have indicated that a second senior center would be beneficial in serving seniors living on the north side of the community. A second facility should be considered by the Town's Senior Services Department where and when feasible.

F. Determine additional school expansion plans and building reuse needs. As with Town facilities, the local school districts should utilize an asset-based software management system to better understand the life-cycle of use for buildings and facility assets. Doing so allows the school districts to understand the total cost associated with that asset and how it supports the education and learning goals established for each school facility. In turn, asset management software systems can help the district make informed decisions on how existing spaces can be adapted and used more efficiently and where new construction is warranted.



J. Sterling Morton East High School is land locked and in need of modernization.

Goal

Maintain an enhanced and well-preserved parks and open space system.

Policies

- Promote a broad range of high quality parks and recreational facilities that meet the needs of Cicero residents.
- Integrate new park and open space elements wherever feasible into a broader green infrastructure framework.

Strategies

A. Prepare a comprehensive Cicero-wide parks and recreation master plan. The Clyde and Hawthorne park districts should work together to prepare a Cicero-wide parks and recreation master plan that addresses current and future parks and recreation needs. The plan should incorporate several elements in order to gauge community needs and desires regarding parks and recreation facilities; the plan should also consider facilities that may not be owned and operated by the park districts or the Town of Cicero. A park master planning process should incorporate several elements, including surveying park users to determine changing needs and interests; identifying measures that use existing facilities more efficiently; understanding the potential for revenue-producing activities that could help fund higher levels of maintenance, enhanced facilities, more events, and other benefits; and, identifying how the parks and recreation system can be effectively integrated with an overall green system of community infrastructure, environmental health and sustainability.

B. Identify Town and privately-owned parcels of land that could be converted to new parks. A parks and recreation master plan can identify existing parcels for future park spaces. A priority list for acquiring such parcels should then be created and adopted.

C. Pursue new park development opportunities suggested within the Cicero Transit Connections Plan.

The *Cicero Transit Connections Plan* proposes new park spaces at the southeast corner of Cicero Avenue and 25th Street, adjacent to potential Transit-Oriented Development opportunity site at 50th Avenue, and at the southeast corner of Cicero Avenue and 31st Street. Both sites should be evaluated as potential parks spaces as part of a broader parks and recreation planning process.

D. Construct a new park in Grant Works.

Stakeholder feedback during the community workshops suggested the need for additional park space in the Grant Works Neighborhood. A park space could be developed on vacant lots along 50th Avenue north of 15th Street, a half-block north of Roosevelt Elementary School.

D. Incorporate open space and recreation needs in the construction of new school facilities.

Any new school construction or rehabilitation project should include plans for new open space and recreational and playground enhancements that could serve adjacent neighborhoods.

E. Consider low-maintenance and sustainable design in park improvements and maintenance.

Installing sustainable design treatments in Cicero park facilities can help save on short and long-term maintenance costs. Sustainable design treatments include the use of special turf varieties on play and ball fields that require lesser amounts of fertilization and irrigation; recycled materials for walls, paving, and recreational equipment; and, the installation of alternative energy sources in recreational facilities to reduce energy costs over time. Synthetic permeable turf can also be considered for heavily used fields.

F. Enhance connections to neighborhood parks.

Sidewalk improvements and potential bike lanes should be considered as a means of improving neighborhood connections to parks and nearby recreational facilities.

G. Team with private sector organizations and land trusts to fund new improvements.

In 2005 the Clyde Park District teamed with the Trust for Public Land to purchase a parcel for the expansion of Clyde Park at 28th Street and 61st Court. The park districts should continue to explore opportunities with land trusts, non-profit organizations and local businesses and corporations to fund park land purchases and facility enhancement projects.

H. Consider land swaps and other forms of land acquisition to develop new park space.

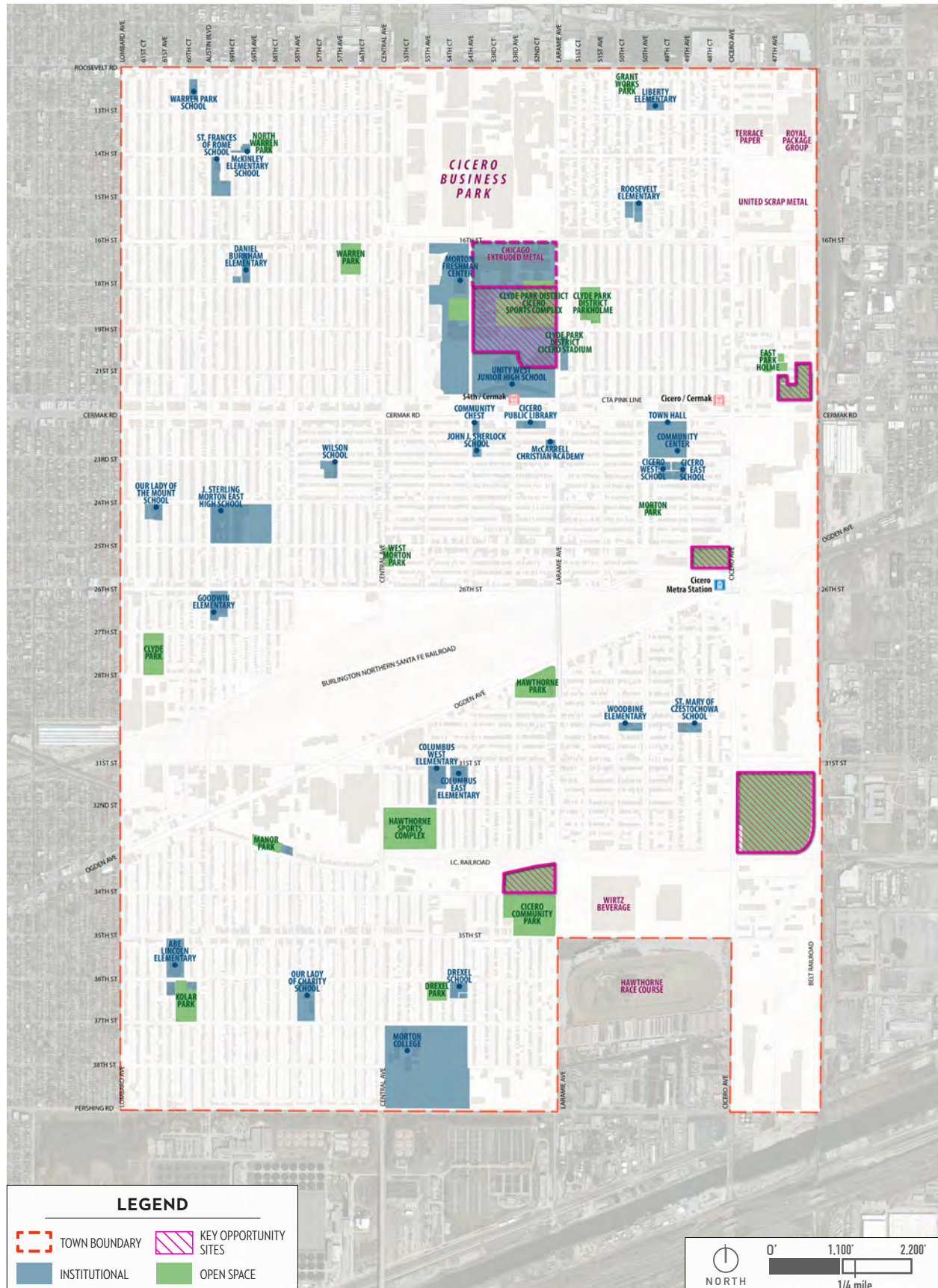
In addition to partnering with land trusts and other non-profit entities, the park districts and the Town of Cicero can collaborate together on seeking land swap opportunities for parcels that have been identified as potential park space in the parks and open space master plan.

I. Improve park district websites. Both the Hawthorne and Clyde park districts should consider developing a joint website that lists all park facilities and programs available to Cicero residents. Currently, information on parks and programs are partially available on the Town and Hawthorne Park District websites. The Clyde Park District's website is currently inactive.

Figure 2.21 – 25th Street / Metra Station Sites Concept – New Park Space



Figure 2.23 – Institutional Strategy Map



Institutional Campus, Open Space and Recreational Facility Opportunities

As outlined in Chapter 4, this Comprehensive Plan proposes the creation of a new institutional campus between 55th and Laramie Avenues and Cermak Road and 16th Street - a campus that can provide needed space for new educational and recreational facilities near and alongside Unity West Junior High School, the Morton Freshman Center and the Alternative School. A more formal campus setting for such facilities could also spur reinvestment and revitalization along Cermak Road, and improve the overall pedestrian and urban design environment in a location that needs better sidewalks and other amenities for students walking to and from the schools to Cermak Road and adjacent neighborhoods.

Three institutional campus development scenarios are suggested: two scenarios that maintain Chicago Extruded Metals as an industrial use fronting the campus at the southeast corner of 16th Street and 54th Avenue along with a mix of new athletic fields and educational facilities at the western edge of 54th Avenue; the third scenario, a new high school complex that takes the place of the Chicago Extruded Metals complex at the southwest corner of 16th Street and Laramie Avenue. Parking for the new high school will be partially accommodated on-site; additional parking will be needed, perhaps in an off-street lot location to the north of 16th Street. In this instance, crosswalks and other pedestrian improvements will be necessary to provide for safe walking route that transverses a railroad spur line. The first scenario retains several existing buildings along 54th Avenue between Chicago Extruded Metals on the north to Unity West Junior High School to the south.

A chart is provided on page 120 that summarizes the elements proposed under each scenario.

Campus Scenario A

In detail, the first scenario (Figure 2.24 on the following page) proposes the construction of an indoor soccer center and outdoor soccer field west of 54th Avenue and south of the current Morton Alternative School. The indoor soccer center would accommodate 676,000 square feet of indoor fields, locker rooms and other amenities; such a facility would respond to strong community demand for hosting winter soccer leagues and other sports tournaments throughout the

year. In addition, a new 44,000 square foot indoor aquatics center is suggested along Laramie Avenue just to the northeast of the existing school bus depot. A park with a fitness trail and a dog-friendly area has already been planned and due to be constructed by the Town on reclaimed industrial land just south of the existing Cicero Public Works facility. Streetscape and landscaping improvements within the campus and along 54th Avenue can enhance the pedestrian environment and provide for a more comfortable and safe environment for students, residents and visitors to walk to campus destinations, Cermak Road and surrounding neighborhoods.

Campus Scenario B

Scenario B (Figure 2.25) largely builds on the campus development concepts presented in Scenario A with the exception of a new school facility of approximately 60,000 to 90,000 square feet in place of several industrial buildings north of Unity West Junior High School and south of Chicago Extruded Metals. The new school may be needed in the event of increased student enrollment in the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, a new soccer or football field would be added to the east of the new school along with a new parking lot north of the building and an east-west street internal to the block. Like Scenario A, streetscape and landscaping improvements are recommended along 54th Avenue and other areas of the institutional campus. Potential brownfield remediation issues may also need to be resolved.

Campus Scenario C

Unlike Campus Scenarios A and B where Chicago Extruded Metals is retained, this scenario (Figure 2.26) proposes a new 350,000 to 400,000 square foot high school fronting 16th Street. This scenario is long term as it would require the relocation of the Chicago Extruded Metals complex; potential brownfield remediation issues would also need to be resolved. Streetscape and landscaping improvements are again recommended along 54th Avenue, around and near the new high school facility and other areas of the institutional campus. As suggested above, adequate parking and pedestrian crossing enhancements for an off-street parking facility north of 16th Street would be required.

Figure 2.24 – Institutional Campus Scenario A

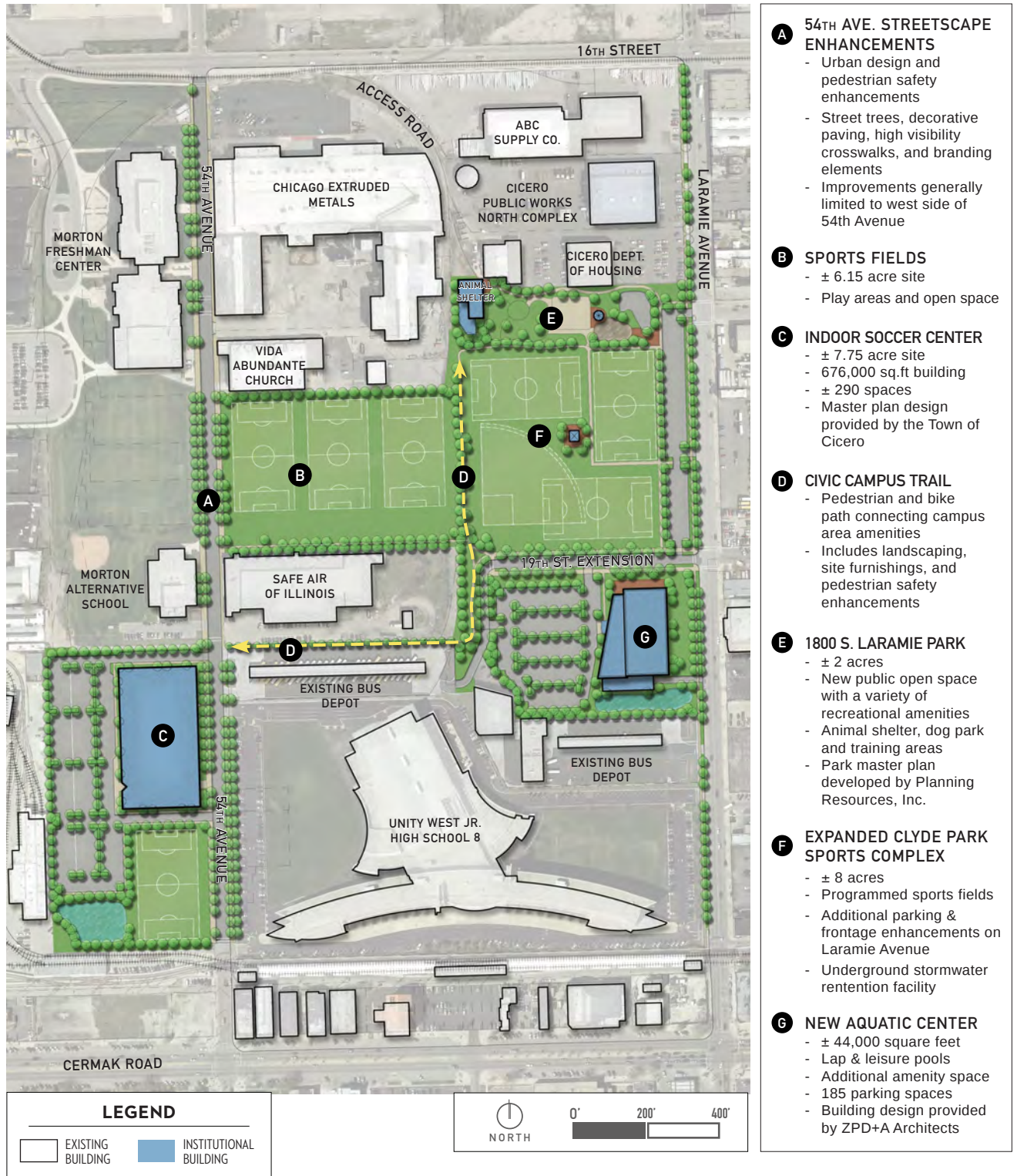
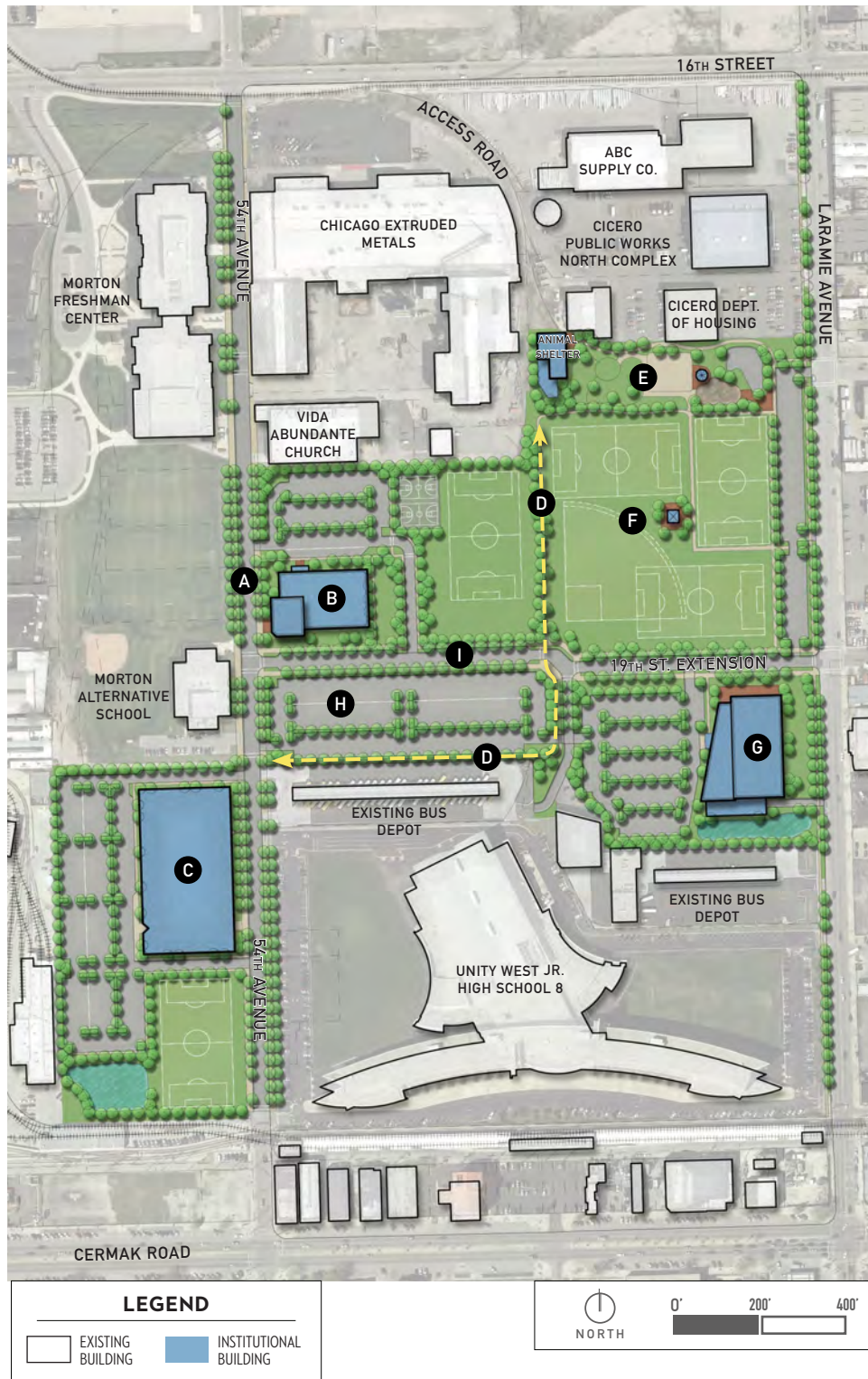
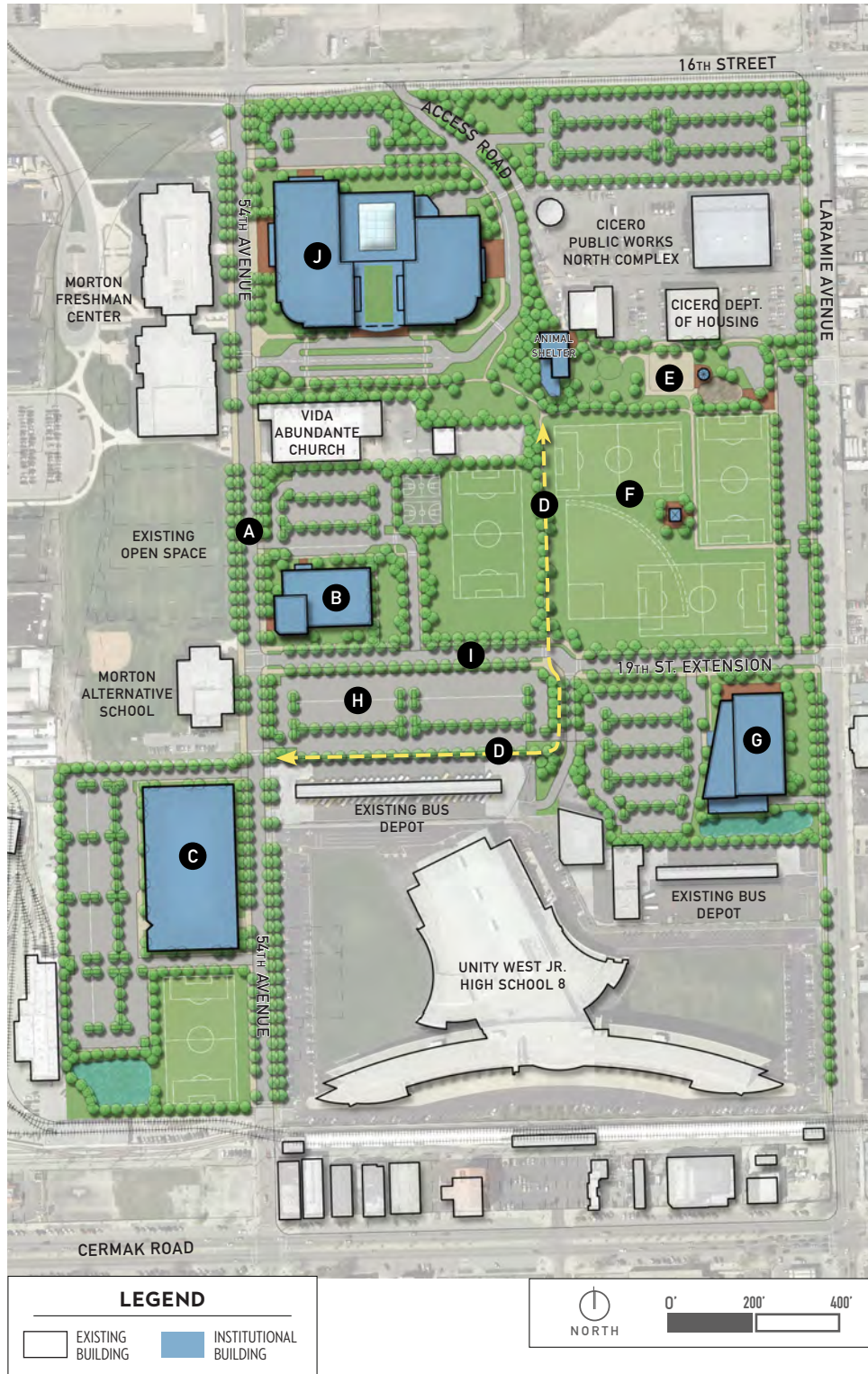


Figure 2.25 – Institutional Campus Scenario B



- A 54TH AVE. STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS**
 - Urban design and pedestrian safety enhancements
 - Street trees, decorative paving, high visibility crosswalks & brand elements
 - Improvements generally limited to west side of 54th Avenue
- B NEW SCHOOL CAMPUS**
 - ± 6.15 acre site
 - 2 - 3 story building
 - 60,000 - 90,000 square foot building
 - Play areas and fields
- C INDOOR SOCCER CENTER**
 - ± 7.75 acre site
 - 676,000 sq.ft building
 - ± 290 spaces
 - Master plan design provided by Town of Cicero
- D CIVIC CAMPUS TRAIL**
 - Pedestrian and bike path connecting campus area amenities
 - Includes landscaping, site furnishings, and safety enhancements
- E 1800 S. LARAMIE PARK**
 - ± 2 acres
 - New public open space with a variety of recreational amenities
 - Dog park with training areas
 - Park master plan previously developed by Planning Resources, Inc.
- F EXPANDED CLYDE PARK SPORTS COMPLEX**
 - ± 8 acres
 - Programmed sports fields
 - Additional parking & frontage enhancements on Laramie Avenue
 - Underground stormwater retention facility
- G NEW AQUATIC CENTER**
 - ± 44,000 square feet
 - Lap & leisure pools
 - Additional amenity space
 - 185 parking spaces
 - Building design provided by ZPD+A Architects
- H NEW CIVIC PARKING LOT**
 - ± 330 spaces
 - School use and neighborhood overflow
- I NEW STREET NETWORK**
 - Extension of 19th Street
 - Wide sidewalks, street trees and pedestrian safety enhancements
 - Parallel parking

Figure 2.26 – Institutional Campus Scenario C



- A 54TH AVE. STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS**
- Urban design & pedestrian safety enhancements
 - Street trees, decorative paving, high visibility crosswalks & brand elements
 - Improvements generally limited to west side of 54th Avenue
- B NEW SCHOOL CAMPUS**
- $\pm$ 6.15 acre site
 - 2 - 3 story building
 - 60,000 - 90,000 square foot building
 - Play areas and fields
- C INDOOR SOCCER CENTER**
- $\pm$ 7.75 acre site
 - 676,000 sq.ft building
 - $\pm$ 290 spaces
 - Master plan design provided by Town of Cicero
- D CIVIC CAMPUS TRAIL**
- Pedestrian and bike path connecting campus area amenities
 - Includes landscaping, site furnishings, and safety enhancements
- E 1800 S. LARAMIE PARK**
- $\pm$ 2 acres
 - New public open space with a variety of amenities
 - Dog park with training areas
 - Park master plan previously developed by Planning Resources, Inc.
- F EXPANDED CLYDE PARK SPORTS COMPLEX**
- $\pm$ 8 acres
 - Programmed sports fields
 - Additional parking & frontage enhancements on Laramie Avenue
 - Underground stormwater retention facility
- G NEW AQUATIC CENTER**
- $\pm$ 44,000 square feet
 - Lap & leisure pools
 - Additional amenity space
 - 185 parking spaces
 - Building design provided by ZPD+A Architects
- H NEW CIVIC PARKING LOT**
- $\pm$ 330 spaces
 - School use and neighborhood overflow
- I NEW STREET NETWORK**
- Extension of 19th Street
 - Wide sidewalks, street trees and pedestrian safety enhancements
 - Parallel parking
- J NEW HIGH SCHOOL**
- 3 - 4 Stories
 - $\pm$ 350,000 - 400,000 sq.ft.
 - 430 parking spaces, with additional parking off-site
 - Gymnasium and theater
 - Green roof open space
 - Drop off / bus lanes
 - Rear service / loading area

Figure 2.27 – Bird's Eye View of Envisioned Institutional Campus Scenario C
(View looking southeast along 54th Avenue from 16th Street)





TABLE 2.12 – INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS SCENARIO COMPARISON

Label	Element	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
A	54th Avenue Improvements	X	X	X
B	New School *(Sports Fields Only)	*	X	X
C	Indoor Soccer Facility	X	X	X
D	Civic Campus Trail	X	X	X
E	Cicero Campus Park	X	X	X
F	Expanded Clyde Sports Complex	X	X	X
G	New Aquatic Center	X	X	X
H	Civic Parking Lot		X	X
I	New Street Network		X	X
J	New High School			X

Chapter 8. Stewardship and Implementation

This following chapter provides a set of goals and policies regarding successful the implementation and stewardship of Cicero’s Comprehensive Plan.

Goals and Policies

Goals	Policies for Decision Makers
Establish a Town of Cicero Plan Commission.	• Maintain a public body the coordinates implementation and periodic review of the Cicero Comprehensive Plan.
Conduct additional planning activities and integrate Comprehensive Plan strategies in the plans of Town departments and other local agencies and entities.	• Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing and adopting other plans and planning activities that achieve Plan goals and policies. • Support changes in the Zoning Ordinance to advance implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
Regularly review Comprehensive Plan implementation progress.	• Establish public processes for reviewing progress in implementing the Comprehensive Plan.
Update the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.	• Institute and formalize a public process that updates and revised the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Many participants of the community planning process believe that the Cicero Comprehensive Plan should function as an implementation guide for future public actions and investments in its commercial districts, neighborhoods, parks, community services and infrastructure. Ultimately, such actions will achieve the long-term vision for Cicero’s future that emerged through this Plan’s community activities encompassing several community workshops, stakeholder and focus group interviews, and other electronic-based outreach efforts. Although this

Comprehensive Plan has 15-year vision, the majority of its strategies and recommendations are primarily focused on implementation over the next five to ten years. This chapter provides additional information and direction on what specific actions regarding plan implementation, as well as methods for incorporating the Comprehensive Plan in everyday decision-making, assessing implementation progress and in determining needed revisions so that the Plan remains relevant.

Successful implementation and stewardship of the Cicero Comprehensive Plan will require effective communication and coordination between different Town departments and commissions, from elected leaders, other governmental agencies, and from private sector partners, organizations and entities. Going forward, it is important that the Town Board become the definitive steward of the Plan and to ensure that systems for measuring and evaluated the progress of Plan implementation are instituted and that the Plan is used and understood by other Town departments. A Plan Commission should also be established to assist the Town Board as Plan stewards and to act as an on-going coordinator of various Plan implementation efforts.

Strategies

A. Establish a Town of Cicero Plan Commission.

As a high priority, the Town Board should establish a Cicero Plan Commission that can perform a number of planning functions and responsibilities, including implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, preparation of additional plans or studies, the revision of Zoning Ordinance, review of development proposals, and overseeing request for proposals for professional planning services. The Plan Commission can also provide advisory recommendations to the Town Board and other Town departments on various community planning and quality of life issues, economic development initiatives and capital improvements planning efforts. Plan Commission membership can range from seven to thirteen commissioners who are appointed by the Town President for three-year terms subject to confirmation by the Town Board. Prospective commissioners should include Cicero citizens that have a strong interest in serving the community, are willing to attend and be prepared for monthly commission meetings and trainings, have good analytical and communication skills, and be representative of Cicero's demographic and professional diversity. In addition, rules of procedure that govern commission operations and record-keeping should also be adopted.

Goal

Establish a Town of Cicero Plan Commission

Policies

- Maintain a public body the coordinates implementation and periodic review of the Cicero Comprehensive Plan.

B. Hire professional planning staff. Several inner-ring Chicago suburbs of similar size to Cicero, including Oak Park, Evanston, Blue Island, Park Ridge, Skokie, and Oak Lawn maintain professional planning staff to support Plan Commission operations and to bring expertise to a variety of tasks such as providing staff reports to the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, guiding developers through the development review process, orienting and training new Plan Commission members, and managing administrative review for various planning and zoning permits. A professional planner should be retained by the Town of Cicero to take on such responsibilities and to coordinate the work of various departments and outside agencies and entities in the implementation of Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies.

C. Establish a Geographic Information System (GIS) program for the Town of Cicero.

Going forward, Town government should consider establishing its own GIS program, which allows for the digital display and analysis of information, including parcels and assessor data, rights-of-way, infrastructure systems, zoning and land use, crime statistics, transit stations and bus stops, and parks and community facilities. For most communities, a GIS program is an invaluable modern planning tool that allows for better decision-making, more accurate information, and savings in time and cost: positive returns on investments from the initial outlay for software, data and staff. In addition, many communities are implementing web-based versions of their GIS for access by local citizens. Alternatively, the Town could collaborate with other government entities to establish and utilize a GIS program.

Goal
Conduct additional planning activities and integrate Comprehensive Plan strategies in the plans of Town departments and other local agencies and entities.
Policies
- Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing and adopting other plans and planning activities that achieve Plan goals and policies. - Support changes in the Zoning Ordinance to advance implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Strategies

A. Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing annual departmental work plans and budgets. Many cities and communities around the country use their comprehensive plans to prepare annual departmental work plans and budgets as a way to build understanding of Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies and how the Plan is being implemented. In some communities, work plans and budgets include statements on how departmental projects and budgets reflect, impact or achieve Comprehensive Plan strategies or priorities. In that regard, the Town of Cicero should consider adopting new systems that require such statements in annual work plan and budget documents and how departments can assess how their work is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan on a regular or daily basis.

B. Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing HUD Annual and Five Year Consolidated Plan documents. Going forward, future HUD Consolidated Plan documents should be consistent with the land use and policy recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, a statement on how the Consolidated Plans support the Comprehensive Plan should be included in each Consolidated Plan document.

C. Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing future capital improvement plans. The need for capital improvements planning to guide community infrastructure enhancements has been described in earlier sections of the Comprehensive Plan. As with other department work plans and planning documents, future capital improvement plan should consider and in alignment with the goals and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, especially in regards to flood mitigation measures, urban design and streetscape initiatives and infrastructure upgrades needed to facilitate redevelopment activity.

D. Publicize actions and initiatives that implement the Comprehensive Plan. Initiatives that implement the Comprehensive Plan should be routinely publicized through the Town's press releases, newsletters, and the cable channel so that Cicero citizens are aware of local success and progress. An annual "State of the Town" address by the Town President could be created to provide Cicero residents an update on Comprehensive Plan implementation.

E. Identify Comprehensive Plan-related actions on the agenda of the Town Board and the Plan Commission. To promote a broader awareness of Comprehensive Plan implementation, items on Town Board or Plan Commission meeting agendas should highlight in some way, perhaps through some identifying note or heading, implementation activities that is being considered or adopted.

F. Update the Town's Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. A series of recommendations regarding potential Zoning Ordinance changes is presented in this Comprehensive Plan; future changes and modifications should be consistent and compatible with the Comprehensive Plan's land use strategies and policy recommendations. The community has the option on pursuing zoning changes by district, corridors, or land use, such as it did with the Roosevelt Road Form-Based Code, or a more comprehensive revision of the Zoning Ordinance. If zoning is revised by district or area, a schedule for when zoning changes and updates will take place should be developed, and undertaken when the Plan Commission has been formally established.

Goal
Regularly review Comprehensive Plan implementation progress.
Policies
Establish a public process for reviewing progress in implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Strategies

A. Conduct an annual public hearing to review Comprehensive Plan implementation. The Town Board or the Plan Commission should schedule an annual public hearing or meeting to discuss how various elements of the Comprehensive Plan have been implemented, implementation successes and challenges, how the Comprehensive Plan is being used by the Town and other entities, and if there are new trends, threats or opportunities that may affect implementation efforts. Such a process will keep the Plan current, as well as suggest any needed changes or amendments to the Plan and its recommendations.

B. Publish a Comprehensive Plan annual report.

Annually, a report describing the progress being made in implementing the Comprehensive Plan should be prepared and posted to the Town's website and distributed to the community as part of the Town's newsletter or other publications.

Goal
Update the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.
Policies
Institute and formalize a public process that updates and revised the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

Strategies

A. Develop a schedule and process for updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years. Even with the Comprehensive Plan's 15-year time horizon, the Plan should be updated every five years to take into account new threats or opportunities to Cicero's local economic climate or quality of life. The update should include a public process that encompasses stakeholder interviews and focus groups, community workshops and neighborhood meetings, and web-based and other electronic engagement tools. The Plan Update should review and revise the Town planning goals and policies, the overall land use strategy, and consider additional areas for investment and redevelopment.



Photo courtesy of MWL Architects

Key Implementation Actions

Key planning priorities are presented in the Community Vision and Plan Overview in Part 1 of this Comprehensive Plan (pages 15-17), priorities that range from promoting housing opportunities in Cicero's neighborhoods to undertaking various initiatives in managing stormwater and improving community infrastructure. In-depth discussion of these planning initiatives are included in various Comprehensive Plan chapters.

On October 28, 2015, the Cicero community was provided an opportunity to comment on these planning priorities and to participate in a mock "vote with your dollars" exercise that required workshop participants to rank by priority key planning strategies for future implementation. Maintaining and revitalizing Cicero's bungalow housing stock, marketing the Town's housing opportunities, promoting safer streets, enhancing the appearance of Cicero's traditional commercial districts, and implementing "green" infrastructure improvement projects were the highest "vote-getters" by workshop attendees among all planning priorities. This section provides additional guidance on key implementation actions related to the most important planning priorities as considered by the Cicero community.

Housing and Neighborhoods

The Comprehensive Plan includes several strategies for maintaining and enhancing Cicero's existing housing stock, including a bungalow preservation initiative, and to market neighborhoods and housing opportunities to new residents. Implementing such efforts could be undertaken by the Town of Cicero or through a non-profit housing corporation, which could raise monies through the private-sector to establish operations. An existing non-profit housing group from adjacent areas in Chicago and the western suburbs could also be considered; however, a Cicero-based housing organization would also be able to focus its efforts exclusively on Cicero neighborhoods. Funding for a non-profit organization could come from local banks and financial institutions, business and corporations, community or area foundations, as well as contributions from the Town and other government agencies.

Community and Neighborhood Appearances

Enhancing the visual appearance of neighborhoods and commercial districts have been consistently cited by Cicero stakeholders as important priorities throughout the comprehensive planning process. Implementing such improvements will require additional planning, especially for larger-scale streetscape projects for Cicero's commercial corridors and neighborhood districts. Prioritization of which areas should be improved first is also needed. Special Service Areas, Tax Increment Financing and other federal and state funding sources can be used for streetscaping and urban design initiatives.

An incentive program should be established to spur improvements to buildings, storefronts, business signage and sites along Cicero's commercial districts. This initiative could be underwritten by Special Service Areas, Tax Increment Financing and other funding sources, and could be managed by the Town, perhaps in partnership with a commercial district management entity. Elements of the program could include building assessments and design assistance to property and business owners, and design drawings for visible building walls/facades by an architect, and matching grants/rebates for completed brick and mortar projects. Approximate operating costs for establishing a site/building improvement program may range from \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually, which could provide \$20,000 in assistance for up to five buildings or sites.

Placemaking opportunities that incorporate public art and other features in commercial areas and neighborhoods can also be pursued; such opportunities can be determined through the creation of a placemaking plan that outlines what types of public art could be installed and in what locations. A placemaking plan could also explore options for branding commercial areas and neighborhoods.

Specific recommendations for improving the areas around Cicero's transit stations are provided in the Cicero Connections Transit Area Implementation Plan and should be referenced when considering and planning such improvements.

Stormwater Management and Flood Mitigation

Stormwater management in Cicero can be approached by several means: updating zoning regulations to permit, low-impact, sustainable stormwater management practices in new development, installing such practices in infrastructure enhancements, and providing incentives for local homeowners to install new flood control systems. Incorporating stormwater management practices in public infrastructure could focus on public parking lots and in alleys; consideration of “green alley” installations should be completed on an annual basis during capital improvements planning. Outside grant funding such as the Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program offered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, can help to fund some sustainable design initiatives; the program has funded green alley projects in nearby Oak Park and River Forest.

Redevelopment Areas

Although not rated as highly as other planning priorities during the community workshop, the 54th Institutional Campus and the 35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Area remain important redevelopment opportunities that could provide additional recreational venues, school facilities, and long-term economic development. In addition, several portions of the 54th Institutional Campus have already received some level of initial planning and site studies by the Town.

35th Street/Cicero Avenue Industrial Area. Two redevelopment scenarios are presented in this Comprehensive Plan, one that emphasizes a mix of industrial and commercial uses and one that incorporates mainly new industrial development (pages 82-83). Given that both scenarios envision a complete redevelopment of the area, implementation actions would most likely require existing parcels to be assembled; relocation of existing businesses; improvements in streets, signage, branding and infrastructure; and, remediation of any environmental issues. A more detailed redevelopment plan for the area would also have to be prepared. In the near-term, the Town should pursue a proactive approach in involving area business and land owners in future planning; existing businesses could be potential tenants of new developments or developers of

specific parcels. Land acquisitions by the Town may be necessary to assemble parcels, which could, in turn, be repurchased by a master developer. A fee developer arrangement could also be pursued. Early discussion with the Manufacturers Junction Railroad is recommended to determine what improvements/investments may be necessary to extend spurs to new parcels. Marketing materials can also be prepared once the redevelopment plan is in place to help in business recruitment and attraction.

Institutional Campus. Three redevelopment scenarios for an the 54th Avenue area south of 16th Street and north of Cermak Road are presented with an aim to add new open space, and recreational and school facilities in an area that has already been transitioning in recent years to institutional use rather than industrial. Implementing Scenario A (page 113) would require no property assembly given that locations for new recreational facilities are already in Town ownership. Scenarios B and C (pages 114-15) would necessitate property assembly by the Town and/or Park and School Districts, and relocation of existing businesses; site preparation and potential remediation of any remaining environmental issues would also be needed to transform these sites to open space/playfields or for new facility development. Additional planning for internal pedestrian/automobile circulation and parking is highly recommended to ensure new roadways within the campus are aligned with the intersections of adjacent roadways, that alleviate potential traffic congestion points around the campus and that provide multiple access points to parking areas. A streetscape plan should also be prepared with special focus on enhancing the pedestrian realm along 54th Avenue. Various state-level funding sources are available for land acquisition related to open space and park development and are discussed in the following section on finding programs.

Local Funding Sources

The following are several major sources of locally-based funding that can be used implementing various elements of the Comprehensive Plan:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing is a State of Illinois authorized program administered by a municipality that allocates future increases in property taxes from a designated area for improvements dedicated to that area. Under TIF, the property taxes due to an increased value from new development, increases in new assessment due to rehabilitation or improvement or tax rate changes, are allocated to the municipality in a Tax Increment Allocation Fund to be used for various redevelopment activities within the designated area. Other taxing districts continue to receive property taxes at the same level as before the TIF district was instituted. Cicero has four TIF districts currently and in the process of creating two new ones. Tax Increment Financing can support several Comprehensive Plan initiatives, including infrastructure enhancements, streetscape design and construction, building/façade improvement program, code revisions and design guidelines, wayfinding signage design and installation, and loans as part of a development financing package.

Business Improvement District (BID)

A BID is a State authorized financing program that municipalities can establish for improving infrastructure and attracting new commercial growth in a designated business improvement district. A BID is adopted by ordinance and is funded by small increments added to local sales or hotel taxes. Sales taxes can be used for several revitalization or redevelopment activities allowed under the BID statute; however, hotel taxes must be used for tourism and convention related activities. A BID remains in place for 23 years and revenues collected within it are placed in a Business District Tax Allocation Fund. One significant advantage of a BID is the flexibility and wider range of activities in which BID monies can be used as opposed to a TIF district or Special Service Area. A BID can underwrite Comprehensive Plan initiatives similar to TIF, as well as business retention/attraction efforts and salaries related to implementation activities.

Special Service Area (SSA)

A Special Service Area is a State authorized financing program that can be administered by the Town or by a designated service provider agency, to deliver a wide range of additional services and physical improvements in a defined geographic area such as a central business district or commercial area. An SSA is funded by a special tax assessment paid by the property owners in the designated SSA district and can finance a variety of commercial district management activities, including marketing and special events, branding efforts, trash and snow removal, and sidewalk/public space maintenance. Special Service Areas can also underwrite infrastructure and building improvements and staff salaries related to implementation activities.

Although a municipal government is required to pass an ordinance to adopt the SSA, a separate service provider, such as a business association or separate community development entity. The Association of Business and Commerce of Cicero could potentially be a service provider agency. The process for establishing an SSA requires obtaining support from property owners and taxpayers within the proposed SSA district. An overall strategy for organizing stakeholder support is important, along with determining the SSA's governing structure, level of services to be provided, and annual budget and boundaries. The municipality and service provider agency are required to hold a hearing to discuss the benefits of an SSA with local stakeholders. A 60-day waiting period after the public hearing is required before adoption of the final SSA ordinance. If 51 percent of registered voters and property owners of record within the proposed SSA district boundaries file a petition to oppose adoption, the ordinance cannot be approved. The entire process to establish an SSA can take between six and 12 months.

General Revenue Bonds

The City may investigate the ability of long-term bonds for specific portions of the Comprehensive Plan in order to facilitate revitalization and redevelopment activities. Bonding for public infrastructure, open space or streetscape improvements, or site acquisition, are some of the key catalytic Plan elements that may be considered.

Motor Fuel Tax

Although collected by the Illinois Department of Revenue, motor fuel tax revenues distributed to the Town of Cicero can be used for a number of transportation and road improvement projects, including streets and street extensions, alley enhancements, traffic control and school crossing signals, street lighting systems, sidewalks and pedestrian paths, and bicycle signs, paths, lanes, or bicycle parking facilities. Revenues are generated from a portion of the state tax levied on the purchase of motor fuel in the state.

Venture Fund/Community Supported Financing

Establishing a venture or equity fund for small business capitalization and expansion in Cicero should be explored. This might take the form of a small group of investors pooling funds to create one or more needed businesses, such as a local restaurant or grocery store, or a venture fund capitalized by private corporations and local and regional foundations and government grants. Community financed businesses can also be structured as cooperatives or as local stock corporations, which could be a realistic solution for starting a new downtown grocery or apparel store. Additionally, customer-owned cooperatives and community-owned stores structured as local stock corporations have become increasingly common in starting new grocery stores in underserved markets.

State and Regional Funding Sources

The following are several major sources of state and regional based funding that can be used in implementing various elements of the Comprehensive Plan:

Water Pollution Control Loan Program

Administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, this Program provides low interest loans to local governments for stormwater management projects, including replacement and construction of water mains and stormwater sewer systems. Engineering and construction costs are eligible expenses. Municipalities must provide design plans as well as documentation of adequate sources of revenue and security for loan repayment. Potential uses of the Loan Program for Comprehensive Plan implementation include road/streetscape design and construction, infrastructure improvements for development sites, and various stormwater management projects.

Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program

The Illinois EPA manages a Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program that helps local communities identify and prioritize brownfields sites, investigate and determine remediation objectives, develop remedial action plans, and fund eligible cleanup activities. The maximum grant amount is \$240,000.

Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program

Similar to the Water Pollution Control Loan Program, the Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program can help underwrite projects related to stormwater management projects that incorporate “green” design elements, such as permeable pavements, rain gardens, and bio-swales, among other sustainable design treatments.

Open Space and Land Acquisition Program (OSLAD) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The Open Space and Land Acquisition Program offers grants to municipalities for the acquisition and development of land for open space, parks and bike paths. Funding assistance is awarded on a 50 percent matching basis with grant awards up to \$750,000 for land acquisition and \$400,000 for development and renovation. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources administers this program along with the Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federally funded initiative that also provides 50 percent matching grants for park and open space projects that meet the recreational needs of local communities. Both programs encourage best practices in land management and sustainability. Eligible Comprehensive Plan implementation activities include park and open space acquisitions and improvements.

Park and Recreational Facility Construction Program (PARC)

Administered by IDNR, the Park and Recreational Facility Construction Program provides grants to eligible local governments for various park and recreation construction projects, including the acquisition of land for open space purposes and the construction and rehabilitation of recreational facilities and buildings. All properties acquired with PARC assistance are required to have a covenant placed on the deed at the time of the recording that stipulates the property must be used in perpetuity for indoor/outdoor recreational purposes. Eligible Comprehensive Plan implementation activities include park and open space acquisitions and improvements.

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

Administered by IDOT and funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), the ITEP provides grant funds to underwrite projects that expand transportation choices and enhance the overall physical environment and transportation experience. Eligible projects include streetscape improvements, provision of pedestrian, and bicycle facilities, environmental mitigation due to highway run-off and pollution, control and removal of outdoor advertising and rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings

and facilities. Projects may receive up to 80 percent reimbursement for project costs with the remaining 20 percent paid by the local government or sponsoring agency. Average grant awards range from \$700,000 to \$900,000. Eligible Comprehensive Plan implementation costs include: signage design and installation, road/streetscape design and construction, trail linkages and improvements. This funding program is part of the IDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program.

Illinois Safe Routes to School Program

The Illinois Safe Routes to School Program provides financial support for various initiatives that encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk or bicycle to school. Eligible initiatives include the planning, development and implementation of projects that will improve safety and reduce traffic such as sidewalk and pedestrian crossing improvements, traffic calming and diversion mechanisms as well as the installation of bicycle facilities. The program will also underwrite educational activities to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety. Projects are funded at a 100 percent level with no local match required, although a School Travel Plan developed by the local school community is required to receive funding. The program is administered by IDOT with funding through the Federal Highway Authority. This funding program is part of the IDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) grant program underwrites various transportation improvements that help improve air quality and mitigate against traffic congestion. Eligible projects include pedestrian and bicycle facility projects, as well as transit enhancements. Requests for funding are submitted through CMAP.

Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit

The Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit program provides donors to qualified non-profit affordable housing sponsors a credit in their Illinois income tax

equal to 50 percent of the donation value. Eligible donations may include money or securities, or real or personal property, and may not be less than \$10,000 in total value.

IHDA Tax Exempt Bond Programs

The Illinois Housing Development Authority offers several tax exempt bond programs for financing housing programs in conjunction with the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

DCEO Participation Loan Program

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Participation Loan Program provides funds for small businesses, including working capital, land/equipment purchase and building construction/rehabilitation. The Program works through local banks to provide loans ranging from \$10,000 to \$750,000. Eligible expenses include building improvements and business development activities.

Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program

Owner-occupied residential properties listed in the National Register individually or as part of a district, or a locally landmarked or contributing building to a local district, are eligible to participate in the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The program freezes a property's assessed valuation for a period of eight years after which the valuation is raised in steps to its actual market value over a period of four years. In addition, to qualify, a property owner must spend an amount equal or exceeding 25 percent of the fair cash value of the house as determined by the local assessor on a qualified rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Review of the projects seeking to qualify for the program are conducted by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

Illinois Certified Local Government (CLG) Grants

Administered by IHPA, CLG grants are meant to partially underwrite a number of preservation activities, including survey and documentation, National Register nominations, historic preservation plans, design guidelines, and various education and outreach activities. Such grants require a 30 percent local match.

Federal Funding Sources

The following are several major sources of federal-based funding that can be used in implementing various elements of the Comprehensive Plan:

Brownfield Assessment Grants

Administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Brownfield Assessment Grants provide funding for the inventory and assessment of local brownfield site contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, including petroleum. Grant awards vary from \$100,000 to \$350,000.

The 20 Percent Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit (HPTC) lowers the amount of federal taxes owed on building rehabilitation expenses. The National Park Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior administers the program in cooperation with Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The 20 percent Rehabilitation Tax Credit is available for depreciable properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental residential purposes, but it is not available for properties used exclusively as an owner's private residence. In addition, a property must have been determined eligible by IHPA for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or must be located in a locally certified historic district or in a historic district that is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. An application to receive the tax credits must be submitted to IHPA and work must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit

Established as part of the U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1986, the Low- Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program provides a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for investors in affordable housing projects, investors who usually provide equity to housing developers as part of a syndication process. The credit is allocated in Illinois through the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) as part of an annual or semi-annual competitive application process. Claimed over 10 years, the LIHTC can be used to construct new or rehabilitate existing rental buildings.

Community Development Block Grants

Funds from Cicero's CDBG entitlement grant are programmed through the Five Year Consolidated and Annual Action Plans, monies that are mostly used for housing development – demolition, and new construction, as well as property rehabilitation – and other economic development needs. Future CDBG spending priorities will continue to support these activities in Cicero.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides funds on an annual basis through its Hazard Mitigation Assistance program to help local communities implement measures to reduce or eliminate risk of flood damage to buildings insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Eligible expenses include small-scale local flood reduction projects, flood-proofing of historic residential buildings, and property acquisition for flood mitigation initiatives.

Surface Transportation Program

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that is used by states and localities on any Federal highway, bridge project or transit capital projects, and bus terminals and facilities. Such funds can be used for bicycle and/or pedestrian projects or elements of projects. Application for funding must first be sought and approved by the West Central Municipal Conference; all selected projects must then be submitted to CMAP for inclusion in the region's Transportation Improvement Program.

