

University Park

Comprehensive Plan



April 2014

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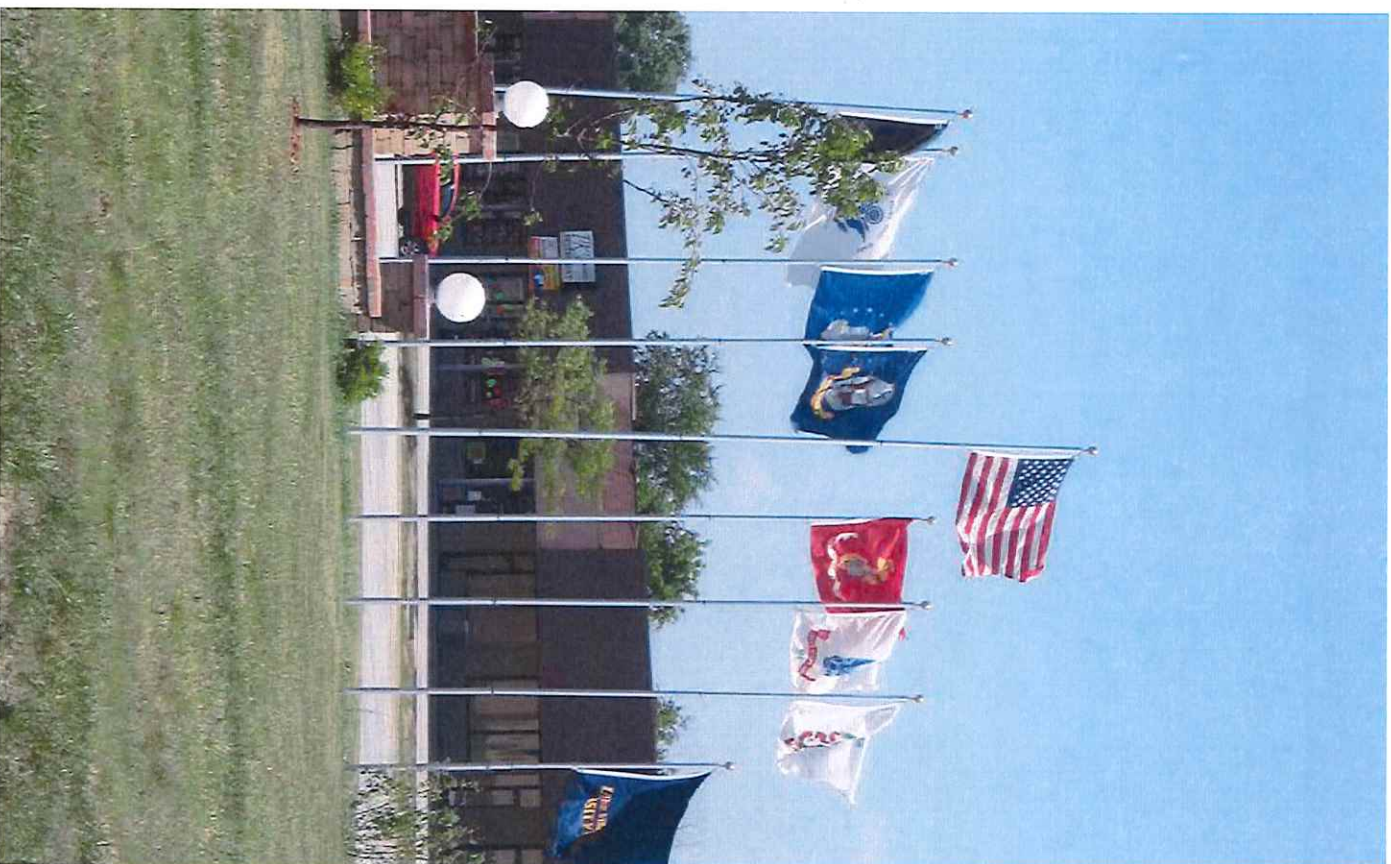


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1 Introduction

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

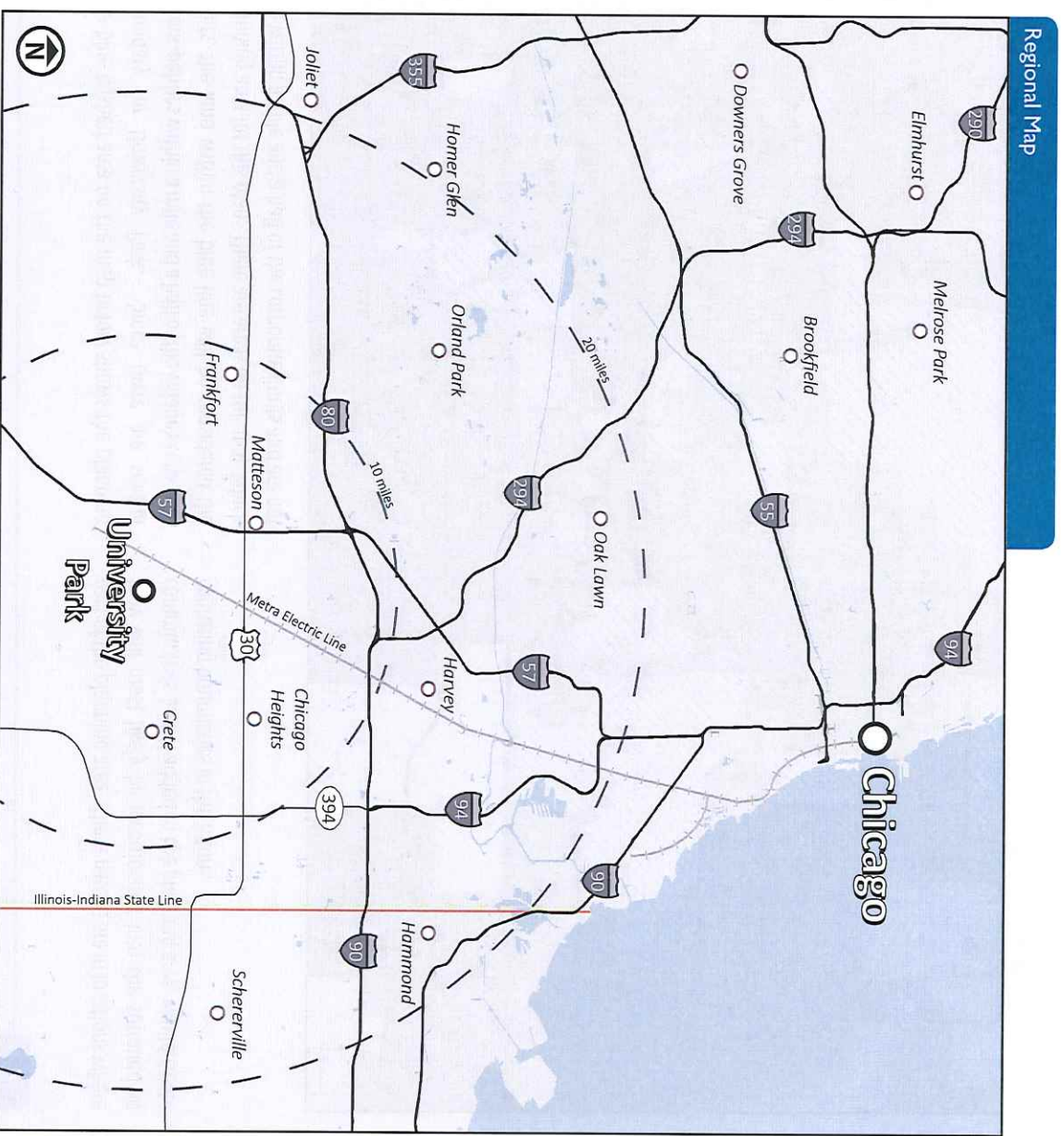
A Comprehensive Plan outlines the Village's vision for the future and a clear path to achieve that vision. It is built based on understanding current conditions and trends, extensive community input and professional planning expertise. The Village should use this plan as a tool to guide its current development decisions and to prepare for the future. The plan is a long-term vision, looking out 10 to 20 years or more into the future.

LOCATION

Located about 31 miles south of downtown Chicago, the Village of University Park consists of 10.84-square miles of land primarily along the east side of Interstate 57. This interstate access offers residents and businesses excellent access to Chicago and the region as a whole. Also, Lincoln Highway (Route 30) to the north and Illinois Route 394 to the east offer citizens in the area access to the surrounding suburbs.

University Park lies in the northeastern part of Will County and has a small portion of its boundaries located in southern Cook County. The Village is bordered by Richton Park and Park Forest to the north, Crete to the east, Monee to the southwest, and Frankfort to the west. Other than land within the Village of Monee, most of the area due south of the Village is unincorporated land. This is true for parcels directly west of Interstate 57 as well.

University Park is a unique community that maintains its rural and residential beauty while its great accessibility allows for successful industrial business.



Introduction

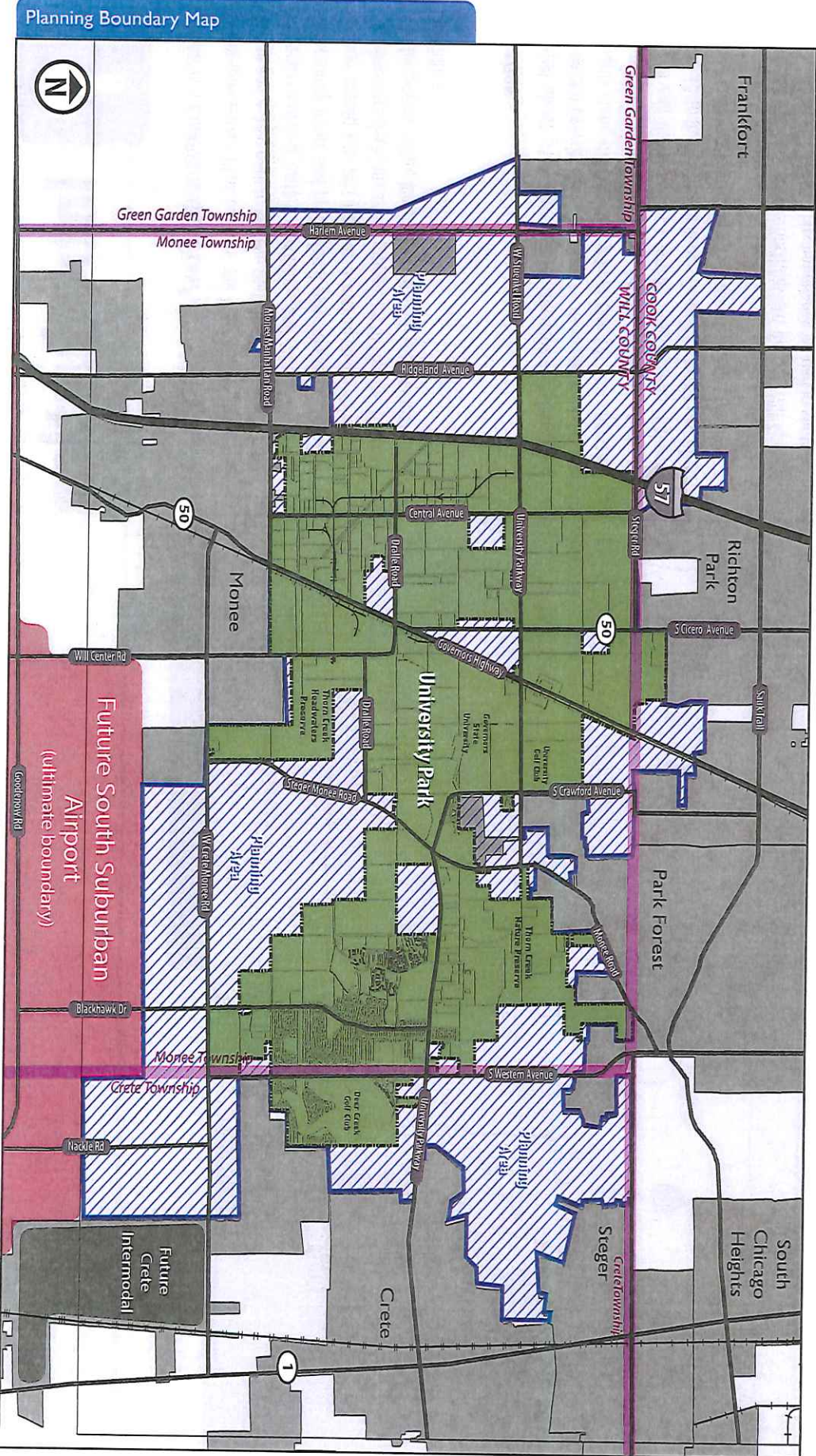
THE PLANNING AREA

The state of Illinois allows municipalities to plan for future land uses outside of their incorporated boundaries. Land which is within one and a half miles of the current municipal boundary are considered within the **planning jurisdiction**. This area allows the municipality to identify key future land uses, review plans for unincorporated parcels, and preserve open spaces.

The blue hashed area on the map below shows the planning boundary for University Park. Since there are several municipalities within a mile and a half of the Village's corporate limits, the land within the blue line will be considered the planning area for this plan. There are areas on this map which are within a mile and a half of the corporate limits and are not

part of the planning area. These parcels are in locations where they will most likely be incorporated into the surrounding communities and, if added to the planning area, would create confusing boundaries in the future.

1



THE VILLAGE'S STORY

University Park's beginnings start in the late 1950's when Woodhill Enterprises, a real estate developer, purchased land south of Park Forest, Illinois to create a large subdivision. Building of the residential units began in the early 1960's but did not develop as quickly as the plan projected. By the mid 1960's, there were only 240 homes built in the area. The residents in these homes created a homeowners association which fostered a community identity and they named the area Wood Hill.

In 1966 Nathan Manlow, a successful developer from Park Forest, started to purchase land around Wood Hill. He and his son, Lewis, had a vision for the area and wanted to build a whole new town. A year later, they supported the incorporation of the area to become Park Forest South. The town was established as a planned community and was projected to have 100,000 residents. One of the main goals of this new community was to promote racial integration and equality.

In the early years of Park Forest South many amenities were established in the Village. Governors State University opened in 1969 and the Illinois Central Railroad extended commuter service to the area. With passion and creativity driving village leadership, there were high hopes for the town. Unfortunately due to an economic downturn and a lack of financial resources, development was postponed indefinitely in 1974. For the next few years, public and private interests worked to solve these problems and Park Forest South adapted to a slow growth model. The community was now projected to grow to around 20,000 residents.

While this population has not been reached, the Village is still considered a success story for planned communities. It became a diverse community that offered its residents unique

features such as the Manlow Sculpture Park and the Governors Gateway Industrial Park. In 1984, the Village changed its name to University Park to create a distinct identity from Park Forest. It chose this name because of the strong ties it had to Governors State University and its importance to the region. University Park still strives to be the diverse and exceptional community that it was originally planned to be.

PLANNING HISTORY

The Village of University Park is a well planned community. The Village has consistently developed plans to guide future growth and development. This Comprehensive Plan replaces a plan adopted in 2007. The 2007 plan was a good document, but major shifts in the economy since that time suggested a need for this update. The Village also completed a Transit Oriented Development Study in 2002, which was funded by the Regional Transit Authority (RTA). This study looked at opportunities for mixed use development within walking distance of the University Park Metra Station. While many of the key concepts outlined in this plan area still valid, changing market conditions also suggest a fresh look which is addressed in this 2014 Comprehensive Plan.



Riegel Farm was a personal home and barn built in 1924 from a Sears Catalog Kit.



Governors State University
Entrance Feature



UNIQUE FEATURES

University Park's character and sense of place is derived from the distinct amenities the Village offers. The following features are a few of the things that make University Park special.



Governors State University

Founded in 1969, the campus sits on 750 acres of land centrally located in the heart of University Park. The University's original goal was to offer upper level undergraduate courses and masters programs to older adults and those underserved by other colleges. They provide on campus child care and offer classes during the day, night, and weekends. In 2014, Governors State University will welcome its first official freshman class as the school has now become a four year accredited college.

The University houses its own performing arts center which presents more than 50 performances annually. The state of the art facility seats 1,171 patrons offering diverse, high quality and affordable cultural and arts education experiences.



Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park

Set within the wild prairie swells of Governors State University lies the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park. The first sculptures were developed right after the foundation of the University and now the collection consists of 28 works of art. The park provides tours of the area and focuses on providing educational outreach programs to build appreciation for contemporary art.



Recreation

University Golf Club and Conference Center

This championship golf course is owned and operated by the Village. It is a symbol of community pride and offers 18 beautiful holes that wind around water, sand, and trees. Updated in 2004, it also includes the "Urban Room" restaurant and a banquet hall that can hold up to 200.

Deer Creek Golf Club

This privately owned golf course is located on the east side of town. This course offers 18 holes with views of natural vegetation and lakes. It also has a driving range, putting and chipping green, and an outdoor patio area that can hold up to 400 people.

Forest Preserves

Both Cook County and Will County offer extensive Forest Preserve holdings in University Park. Thorn Creek Nature Preserve is the main preserve within the Village. It offers a variety of walking/hiking trails for residents and there is a nature center which holds programs throughout the year.

Riegel (petting zoo) Farm

Operated by the Village Parks Department, the petting zoo has a diverse group of animals. Birthday parties, tours, and horse rides are available. The farm is an ideal location for hosting company picnics, family reunions, birthday parties, and other events.

Hickok Aquatic Center

This newly renovated aquatic facility features a zero to five foot depth pool, water structures, and a 100 foot water slide.

1

There is a sand volleyball court and concession stand at this facility as well. During the summer the center is open for public swimming, private lessons, parties, and promotional nights.

Pine Lake

A 10 acre site with beautiful views and open spaces for a multitude of activities. Pine Lake includes two bodies of water where fishing is encouraged and the grounds have several shelters for parties. During the summer Pine Lake is used to host many special events.



Interstate 57 Industrial Parks

On the west side of town there are several Industrial areas which are home to offices, warehouses, and industrial centers that sit adjacent to I-57. The Governors Gateway Industrial Park has over 60 manufacturing and service businesses including Federal Signal Company, National Tube Supply, and Anvil International. The Commerce Center of University Park is a master-planned industrial center that boasts a number of businesses including the 910,000 square foot Solo Cup Regional Distribution Center. The University Park Rail Center is also located in this region and offers surrounding industries access to a Class A rail line.



Cable Studio

The Village is home to its very own cable television studio. This public access station was created to promote and develop community involvement in the use of cable television for cultural, educational, health, social service, community and

other non-commercial. WUPC TV Channel 4 Cable Television Station is a non-profit organization that administers the use of the public access channel in the South Suburbs. The station teaches individuals the basics of the television industry while reporting community news and events.



Metra Train Station

There is a Metra passenger train station located in University Park off of Governors Highway and it is a terminus for the Metra Electric Line. This line travels through other south suburbs such as Matteson, Homewood, and Olympia Fields. The other end of this line is located at Millennium Station in downtown Chicago. Ridership from the University Park Station has increased over the years with approximately 1,250 weekday boardings in 2006.

Introduction

"Paul" at the
Nathan Manlow Sculpture Park



THE PLANNING PROCESS

1

Steering Committee Formation

- A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was formed at the onset of the project. This committee was a collection of Village Staff, Commissioners, and the Mayor and representatives from other local government agencies. Representatives of the business community were also invited to participate.
- After the initial meeting, the Steering Committee was joined with University Park's Plan Commission to increase the amount of input involved. The formation of this joint committee was to get those with a vested interest in the community to discuss the plan on a regular basis during the plan's development.



2

Project Website

- A project website was created to keep everyone in the community involved in the planning process.
- The website contained documents from meetings, a schedule of important events, and a comment section for residents to voice their concerns. The site was updated periodically throughout the process and gave updates on the process as it progressed.



3

Public Outreach

The planning process included the following public participation components:

Community Survey

A community survey was distributed throughout the Village which asked residents what were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the community. It was mailed out to all residents and was available to be completed online.

Community Meetings

Two public workshop meetings were held for this plan. The meetings consisted of a presentation on the current progress of the plan and interactive mapping discussions on key topics. These topics included flooding issues, economic development, community character, and special area plans. Both meetings were taped and aired on the University Park cable station.

Key Person Interviews

People with knowledge of the Village's current state and how growth would affect the community were interviewed during the process. These interviews gave insight to the most pressing issues for the community including, economic, safety, and growth issues.

Community Events

The plan utilized other public events to get input from residents. One of these events included a Martin Luther King celebration event at Governors State University where a table was set up to help promote the plan and the upcoming public meetings.

COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

Public participation is vital to any successful planning process. A survey was created to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the community. This survey was distributed throughout the Village by mailings, special community events, and at religious institutions. There was also an online version linked from the project website where residents could complete the survey.

The survey was targeted towards all 2,416 households in University Park. Out of those households, a total of 169 responded by hard copy and online. This total represents about a 7% response rate, which is good for this type of survey.

When analyzing the results, it is important to understand how significant the results are and how accurately they represent the entire community. A confidence interval is used to indicate the reliability of the survey results, and the margin of error determines the sampling error. For this survey, with a confidence interval of 95% (meaning the results are 95% accurate) the margin of error for each result is $\pm 7.5\%$. This means that actual results may be 7.5% higher or lower than the shown answer.



Survey Results

1

When asked about residents' favorite things about University Park, those who completed the survey felt the geographical location was the Village's best feature. Some other highly ranking features were the ability for residents to be close to friends/family and the proximity to Governors State University.

2

When asked about the biggest challenges facing the Village, the respondents expressed the lack of shopping opportunities as a major drawback. High taxes and the lack of good paying local jobs in the area were also discussed as challenging issues.

3

Regarding economic development a majority of the respondents felt that the Village should focus on bringing in shops and restaurants, which is consistent with the previous question. Many felt there should be a focus on creating a downtown near the current Village Hall as well.

4

A majority of people responded that they have not experienced flooding problems over the past five years (77.6%). Those who did have flooding issues usually described minor amounts of damage and low levels of water.

5

Some other issues that residents would like to see improved or added to the Village are:

- Improving roads, water systems, and sewers
- Improvements to parks and open spaces
- More bicycling options
- The addition of a recreational/community center (mainly for kids and teen use)
- Expanding bus services at night and on weekends

COMMUNITY MEETINGS SUMMARY

- The community meetings were an opportunity for the consultants and steering committee to interact with the public and keep them up to date on the planning process. A presentation on the current state of the plan was given at both meetings.

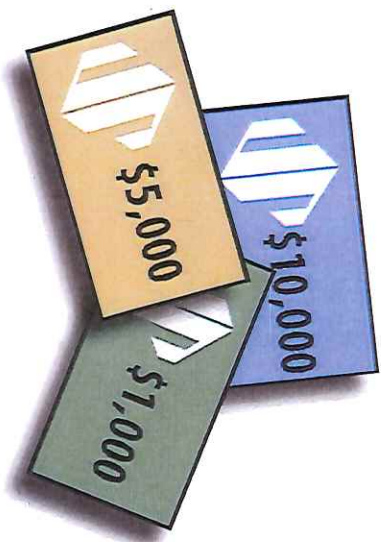
Before, during, and after the presentation, audience members were encouraged to express their ideas and concerns. Several topics were covered and addressed including:

- Housing issues (especially foreclosures)
- Industrial Park and TIF issues
- Safety issues (especially at University Parkway & Governors Highway intersection)
- Development opportunities near new University Parkway interchange
- Transportation issues (bike trails, roadway improvements)



Workshop Activities

The following interactive activities were conducted at the community meetings:



University Park's Implementation Priorities

Participants were each given \$20,000 in hypothetical "University Park Dollars" and were asked to invest their money on a number of key issues. This activity allowed participants to prioritize what they felt were the Village's most pressing problems. The total amount was tallied and the results were as follows:

Community Mapping Exercises

Large aerial maps of different key areas around the Village were shown to participating residents. Residents and consultants discussed future development opportunities, current issues, and key strategies for these areas. The areas included the Town Center, Metra Station region, and the industrial parks. The comments made during this exercise helped form the strategies and solutions documented in this plan.

South Suburban Airport Land Use Impact Survey

The proposed South Suburban Airport will be located directly south from the Village. The ultimate boundary for this airport will come within one mile of Cete Mornee Road. This is adjacent to the comprehensive planning boundary for the Village and may cause some land use issues. At a community meeting participants were asked to decide what land use should be used near the airport boundary. Participants chose between agricultural, residential, and industrial. The results were equally divided among the three choices.

Item	Cost	Dollars Spent	% of Cost
Overpass over Governors Highway and railway	\$5,000,000	\$42,000	1%
A new community/recreational center	\$300,000	\$27,000	9%
Upgrades to Pine Lake	\$50,000	\$26,000	52%
University Parkway trail upgrade	\$100,000	\$21,000	21%
Hickok Aquatic Center upgrades	\$50,000	\$19,000	38%
New planning staff member	\$10,000	\$16,000	160%
Enhancing Pace bus service	\$10,000	\$16,000	160%
Improve existing trails	\$100,000	\$9,000	9%
Upgrade existing fire station	\$75,000	\$4,000	5%

Note: Costs listed are roughly proportionate, but actual costs are likely 10 times or more of given amount.

2 Regional Context

University Park is just one community in the larger southland region and the planning that is done within its borders will affect the surrounding area. Likewise, the planning done outside of its borders will affect University Park. Regional plans and improvements will help keep the Village connected and consistent with the surrounding communities.

This section covers the **GO TO 2040** plan developed by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the **Will County Land Resource Management Plan**. Along with these plans, major **regional improvements** in the area are examined.



GO TO 2040

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has developed a master plan for the entire Chicago Metropolitan Region titled GO TO 2040. This plan aims to help all the counties and communities (including University Park) within the metropolitan region to plan for a sustainable future. CMAP believes implementing the GO TO 2040 plan is the region's best chance to set the stage for economic prosperity through the mid-century. The plan draws upon several themes which relate to University Park:

- **Liveable Communities** – Addresses the factors of what attracts people to a certain community
- **Human Capital** – Focuses on workforce development and economic innovation
- **Efficient Government** – Addresses the need for an efficiently run government that is accountable and transparent
- **Regional Mobility** – Focuses on how the transportation system increases the quality of life for residents

University Park already has many features that follow these themes. For example, the wide range of open spaces make the Village a very liveable community and the industrial parks offer the community a strong opportunity for local employment. While these factors are already in place, there is room for improvement pertaining to all the GO TO 2040 themes. The community could have better access to the region as a whole and needs to find a way to foster commercial growth. Also,

while the Village has a strong industrial base, there needs to be more emphasis on job training within the community to employ residents instead of people from outside the community. Adapting CMAP's themes to the University Park Comprehensive Plan will help the Village grow and will allow the surrounding communities in the region prosper together.

Will County Land Resource Management Plan

- The Will County Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) sets a framework for how development should occur within the county. This plan includes guiding principles, goals and implementation strategies for future growth. It also covers concepts on how future developments and opens spaces should be laid out throughout the region. Adopted by the County in 2002, the plan was updated in 2011 with a new section titled "The Airport Environs Element" to establish basic land use and design criteria for the South Suburban Airport (next page).

- This plan will be a guidebook when making decisions about future land uses and conceptual designs within University Park. For example, the plan gives detailed instructions on how new interstate access points should be designed and laid out. As discussed later in this document, there are opportunities and plans for new access points to be added along Interstate 57. The LRMP may be used as a resource when the area around the new interchange is developed. This will give the area the best opportunity for sustainable growth while keeping consistent design throughout the County.

Regional Context

Regional Improvements

Regional improvements are large scale projects which will impact the surrounding communities in several ways. There are currently three different regional improvements that will affect how the Village develops over time:



The Illiana Expressway

www.illianacorridor.org

The vision for the Illiana Expressway dates back to the early 1900s when Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett were planning the Chicago and northwest Indiana region. The plans called for an "outer circle" road to service those outside of Chicago. Since then, many studies and concepts have been designed over the years. The current study is examining the benefits and consequences of building this expressway to connect Interstate 55 in Illinois with Interstate 65 in Indiana.

The main benefits it would provide the region, including University Park, would be to alleviate traffic on the Interstate 90/94 corridor and Interstate 80 corridor, as well as serve as a bypass for truck traffic around the more congested urban highways. If the South Suburban Airport is completed, this expressway will also help relieve traffic issues brought upon by that development.

The study has examined several alternative routes and has identified the route that provides the best balance between serving transportation needs, minimizing environmental impacts, and incorporating community input and values. The route shown on the Regional Improvements Map is the

current proposed plan for the new expressway. Construction of the Illiana would provide enhanced access to industrial development in University Park near I-57.



The South Suburban Airport


<http://www.southsuburbanairport.com/>

The idea for an airport in the region dates back several decades. Although it has always been a concept, it seems as if the construction of an airport in the area is becoming more of a reality. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have worked with local stakeholders to prepare a master plan and an environmental impact statement for the development. The master plan contains information regarding existing conditions, forecasts, a demand and capacity analysis, facility requirements, layout plans, financial analysis, and an environmental review.

The proposed airport will be located south of University Park with its northern most boundary ultimately being located along Olendorf Road. IDOT has already acquired many of the necessary parcels it needs to build the initial facility. Presently, the airport is being designed to support mainly cargo shipping planes. This may have a positive impact on current industrial companies and may bring more businesses to the area.


Studies being conducted for both improvements

2






ILLIANA
CORRIDOR
PLANNING STUDY

October 2012



Illiana Corridor | PHASE 1





SSA
South Suburban Airport

**South Suburban Airport
Project Status Update**

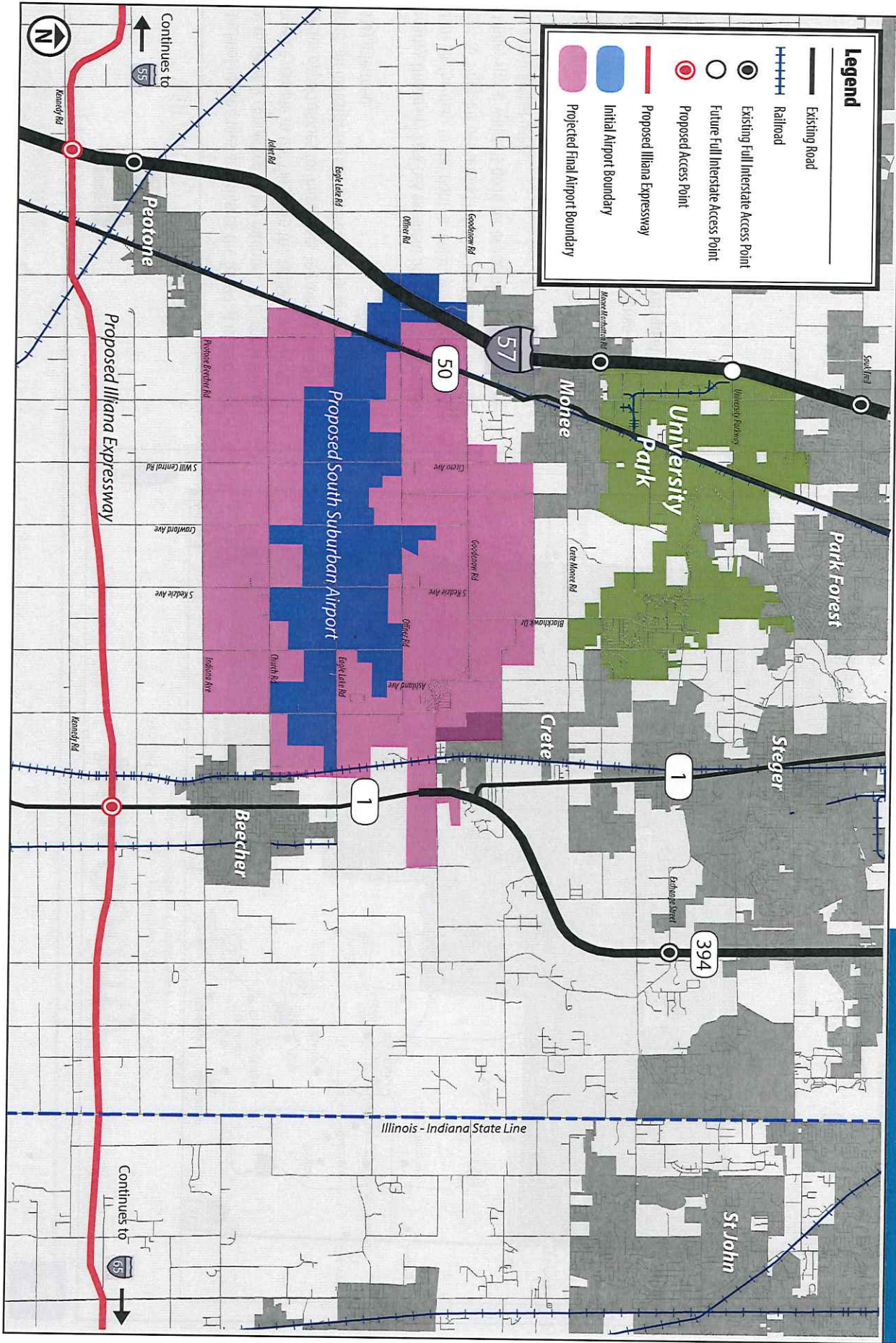
Meeting for Community Leaders

Illinois Department of Transportation
Division of Research

January 13, 2014

www.SouthSuburbanAirport.com

Regional Improvements Map





Will County Broadband

As technology changes and shapes the future, it is becoming vital to be well connected to the internet. It is important to connect everyone in the Village to the global community. It provides opportunities for businesses to connect to a larger market, for industries to run more efficiently, and for residents to stay informed.

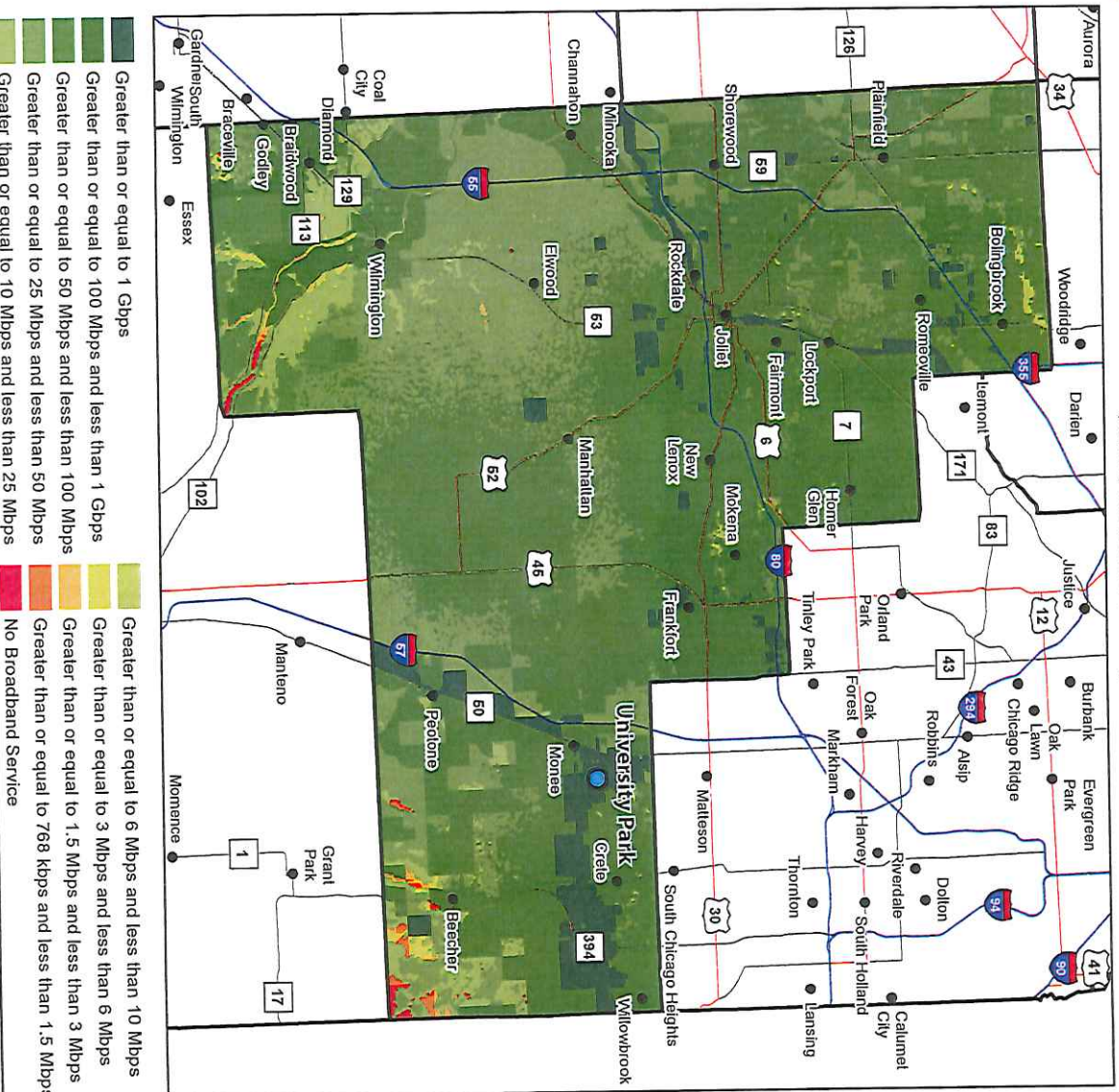
Currently, University Park has excellent broadband service. As shown on the map to the right, a majority of the Village has access to 1 gigabit per second internet speeds. This is a very fast fiber speed which is good for economic development as well as residential users.

In addition to the already excellent connections, there is a South Suburban Mayors and Management Association fiber optic line along Interstate 57 that will be active within the near future. This will offer the community even greater access than it already has to the world wide web.



Will County

Round Eight - Data Current as of June 30, 2013
(excluding Satellite and Cellular Data)



3 Demographics

Knowing the characteristics of the population within University Park is integral in the long term planning process. The following section will cover how the **population** has changed over the years as well as how **employment, income, and poverty** has affected the community. Also in this section covers the typical **age** range is for residents and what **race and ethnicity** they belong to. Finally, the **education** of citizens will be examined.

Population

University Park has not seen much fluctuation in its population over the past 30 years. Since 1990, the community has only grown by about 400 people every decade. While this is the case, CMAP predicts that the Village will grow to hold around 35,000 people by 2040 (see chart). This drastic change can be contributed to many factors. The population growth for the entire region is inevitable, University Park's vast amount of ready to develop land inside and outside the community make it a strong candidate for growth. The Village's access to Interstate 57, the Metra passenger train station, and the expansion of Governors State University are also key factors in the future population growth. While the predicted number may seem high, University Park is definitely in the position to grow.

With the extension of the Illinois Central's commuter rail line in the 1970s, University Park's population was expected to reach 100,000. This larger figure was modified to an estimated 25,000 by the late 1970s. Current projections reflect more modest growth but also ensure that University Park's strengths, such as open space and recreational uses, can be sustained as the Village grows over time. Current population

projections from the U. S. Census Bureau and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) are shown in the population change graph.

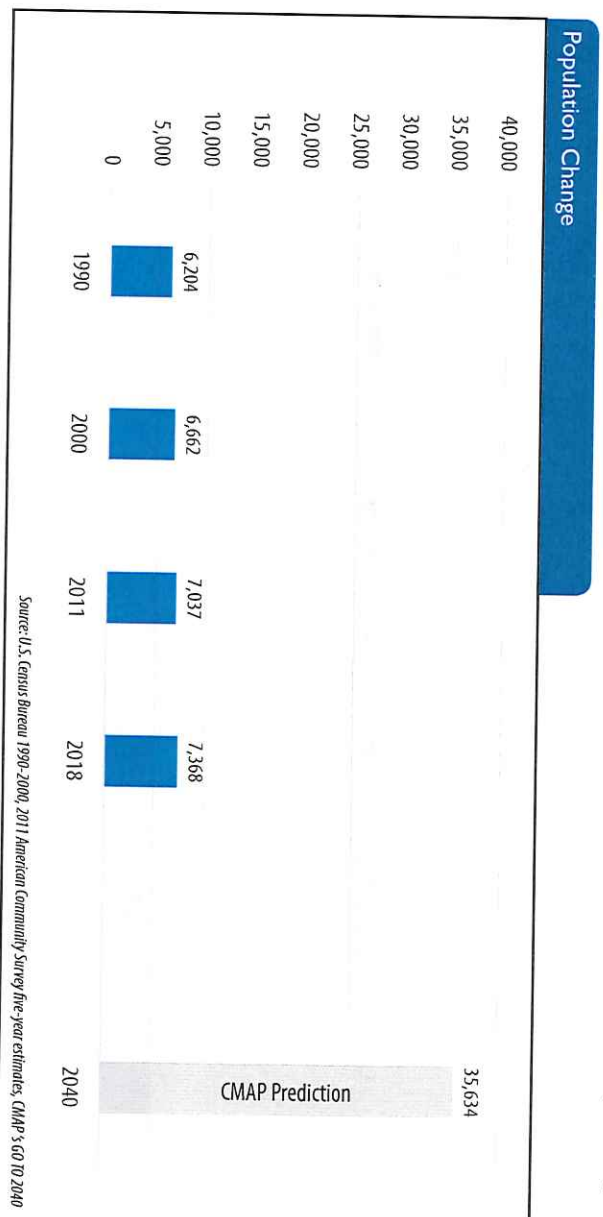
EMPLOYMENT, INCOME, AND POVERTY

Despite a well-educated work force, University Park suffers from a relatively high unemployment rate. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), in 2012 unemployment was at 21.2% in University Park vs. 9.1% in Will County and 10.5% in the CMAP region. The ACS data is based on survey samples. Perhaps a more accurate measure of unemployment would be information from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). Unfortunately, they do not track unemployment for communities of less than 25,000. For smaller communities, they suggest using the County wide statistics, which was 9.1% in 2012. Whichever figure is used,

this figure is higher than the 8.1% rate for the United States as a whole in 2012. Not surprisingly given this unemployment information, 21% of University Park residents were living below the poverty line in 2012 compared to 13.7% in Illinois overall (ACS). A little over 25% of University Park households had less than a \$25,000 income in 2012 (compared with approximately 13% in Will County). Given these issues, it will be important for the Village to work closely with local employers, Governors State University, Prairie State College, and School District 201-U to identify skills gaps and appropriate training to reduce the local unemployment rate.

Age

Understanding the age of the citizens is important when making decisions on future housing developments, services and other amenities. The population median age has slightly



Demographics

3

decreased from 29.8 years in 2000, to 27.5 years in 2011. This compares with a median age of 35.5 in Will County overall. It is possible that the population might become even younger due to the expansion and growth of Governors State University which is likely to bring in a younger demographic.

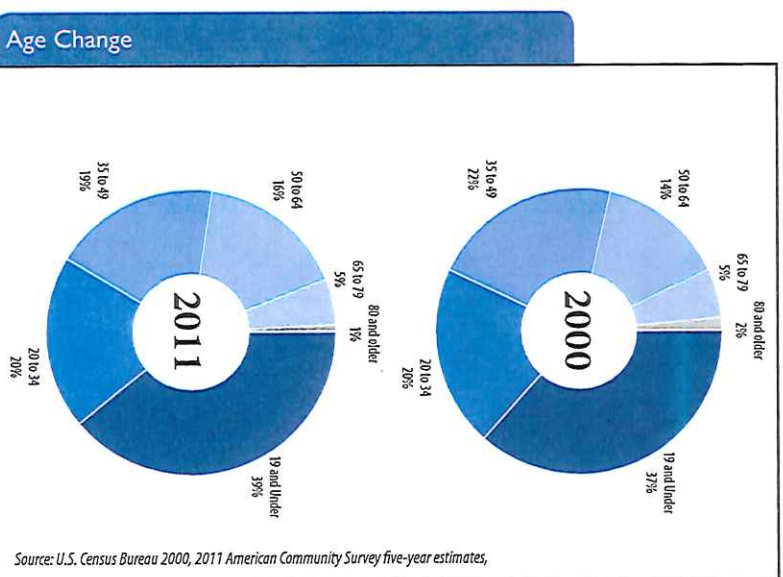
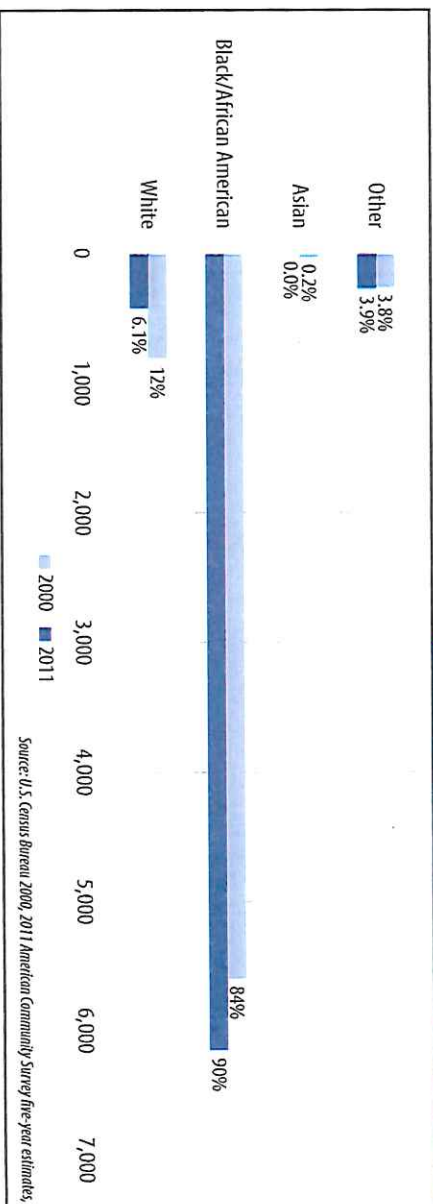
Overall, University Park's population is young. U.S. Census data indicate that 39% of the Village population is under 20 years of age while only 6% of the population is over the age of 65. As illustrated in the charts below, the age of the population has been constant over the past decade.

RACE & ETHNICITY

With respect to race and ethnicity, University Park is predominately an African American community and has become less diverse over time. Over the past decade, the community has seen a drop in Caucasian residents by 6% and has seen an equal rise in African American residents. All other races, including the Hispanic population (2.5%), are limited within the Village.

EDUCATION

The type of education residents have received is important due to the impact it has on the job market. It will determine where people are qualified to work and where companies may choose to locate. Almost all adults in the Village have attained at least a high school education. The majority have some type of experience in college but do not have a degree. This compares well with State of Illinois averages, with over 74% of University Park residents having completed at least some college compared with only about 60% for the State as a whole.



Educational Attainment

	University Park	Illinois
Less than 9th grade	0.9%	5.8%
High School (no Diploma)	3.3%	7.3%
High School Graduate	21.6%	27.2%
Some College (no Degree)	39.3%	21.3%
Associate's Degree	11.2%	7.4%
Bachelor's Degree	16.7%	19.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	7.0%	11.8%

4

Community Vision

Founded in 1967 as a planned community, University Park was designed for quality of life. University Park boasts a championship golf course, a 30-acre lake, a community pool, a petting farm, a TV/Cable Studio, variety of churches, hiking trails, a thriving industrial park, and is home to Governors State University.

With a new interchange, a growing student population, and a wonderful natural environment, University Park has much to be enthusiastic about. And in the more distant future, the potential for the South Suburban Airport and the Illiana Expressway just south of the Village offer even more reasons to anticipate good things in University Park's future.

Based on input from residents provided through a community survey and through participation in public meetings, the following vision statement summarizes how the Village wants to be viewed in the future.

University Park...

- ... is an exceptionally pleasant place to live. We feature broad mix of housing including single family residential, condominiums, townhomes, and apartment complexes. University Park features hiking trails, parks and open space in a relaxing and tranquil environment.
- ... is business-friendly, offering clear policies and regulations, a streamlined development review process, and excellent communication and coordination between the private and public sector.
- ... is home to major corporations that enjoy proximity to Chicago via I-57, 394, and Metra commuter rail, and access to the world through fiber optic connections to high speed broadband.
- ... is the gateway to the new South Suburban Airport, providing an ideal location for logistics and other industrial users and quality hotels, restaurants, and services for travelers.
- ... is well connected by a series of bike trails both within the community and throughout the region connecting homes, businesses, parks, schools and the train station.
- ... is a community offering residents quality education, affordable homes, and a close-knit, active community
- ... is home to a top-notch park and recreation system with well-maintained facilities, a community center, and park space within an easy walk of every resident.
- ... is known for quality public services like water, sewer, garbage, etc.
- ... is home to a thriving transit oriented development near the Metra station that provides opportunities to live, learn, work, shop and dine without having to set foot in a car.
- ... is a safe and quite community, and a perfect place to raise a family.
- ... is a community that takes pride in its environmentally sustainable practices.

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Economic Development

University Park has multiple economic opportunities that can increase the Village's economic strength incrementally over time. In building on existing strengths and actively pursuing local and regional partnerships, University Park can supplement its resources to both grow and sustain the community's current quality of life.

This section will cover economic issues related to **current conditions in retail, municipal sales tax, employment, real estate, tax increment financing and economic implementation strategies.**

CURRENT CONDITIONS

University Park's opportunities for growth are both short-term and longer term. Residents and officials appreciate the community's open spaces and family orientation and note both attributes as important to local quality of life. University Park's history places it among America's most important planned communities of the 1960s. From a commercial perspective, University Park's large industrial sector near Interstate 57, the growth of Governors State University (GSU), and the impending interchange at Stuenkel Road/University Parkway and Interstate 57 represent competitive strengths, now and in the future. They also present opportunities for growth in local employment, population, and ultimately, increased interest for retail and restaurant development that will serve University Park residents and enhance the community's quality of life. Broader regional development projects, such as the proposed airport in nearby Peotone, can only serve to accelerate University Park's local growth opportunities.

RETAIL

Demographics and consumer expenditures for selected retail categories for University Park markets are shown below. The center point for these markets was University Park's Village Hall address (698 Burnham Drive).

The markets shown below include:

- Community, or Affiliated: Successful retail centers, regardless of size or mix, often define the character of a

- Pedestrian, or 1-Mile Radius: Residents living within one-mile of any retail center are particularly active users and can walk to that area. Their proximate location results in

Demographics and Consumer Expenditures						
	University Park	1 Mile Radius	3 Miles Radius	5 Minutes Drive	15 Minutes Drive	
Population	7,172	4,661	39,683	7,162	116,626	
Households	2,476	1,704	16,051	2,404	43,643	
Average Household Size	2.90	2.74	2.47	2.98	2.67	
Median Age	31.6	30.6	36.4	31.5	38.0	
Population Density (per Sq. Mi.)	1,112.28	2,044.35	1,574.82	1,273.45	804.7	
Employees	2,572	680	7,774	1,251	36,994	
Jobs per Household	1.04	0.40	0.48	0.52	0.85	
Average Household Income	\$65,622	\$61,741	\$62,212	\$65,692	\$71,827	
Median Household Income	\$54,305	\$50,283	\$49,3288	\$55,244	\$56,451	
Per Capita Income	\$22,737	\$22,612	\$25,287	\$22,066	\$27,027	
% with Bachelor's Degree or Higher	26.3%	26.4%	24.5%	25.8%	25.9%	
Estimated Consumer Expenditures: Total	\$60,506,631	\$38,557,004	\$356,293,678	\$59,762,959	\$1,108,660,947	
Estimated Consumer Expenditures: Groceries	\$8,932,789	\$5,884,662	\$60,231,538	\$8,734,549	\$172,597,044	
Estimated Consumer Expenditures: Eating & Drinking	\$5,574,209	\$3,635,119	\$36,670,564	\$5,464,600	\$107,562,974	

frequent trips, which in turn, adds vitality to that retail area. Consequently, this market is more important to the success of retail centers than its spending power often suggests.

- Traditional Developer, or 3-Mile Radius: The demographics for this 3-mile market have been traditionally used by the retail development community as an important indicator of a suitable trade area for a successful business location, particularly for regional or national chain retailers. As these larger retailers increasingly use data analytics to precisely target new and existing customers, the importance of these market characteristics will likely diminish.

- Convenience (also Bicycle Convenience), or 5-Minute Drive: When a consumer can drive to make a needed purchase within five-minutes, that location becomes the routine choice to meet every day needs, assuming the quality and variety of goods. Convenience shoppers represent the core market for most retail centers or clusters. This five-minute drive time market also represents a ten-minute bike ride by local residents to the retail center.

- Destination, or 15-Minute Drive: Businesses gaining smaller percentages of their sales from the local or convenience market are typically considered a destination business. For retail centers, destination retailers and restaurants offer unique goods or services that attract shoppers and diners from a larger geography. Customers from this larger destination trade area generate sales for adjacent businesses. Those businesses attracting destination customers also give the retail center a distinctive character that differentiates that center from other shopping and dining options.

Overall, University Park's markets are thin in both population and employee numbers. Markets with sufficient population

and daytime employment attractive to retail or restaurant developers are the developer and destination markets, as described above. The 3-mile radius and the 5-minute drive time, include areas with greater population and density to the north. The southern area within these same markets lack density and population. Incomes and education levels are generally satisfactory and consistent across markets. The average household size exceeds 2.5 in most markets, reflecting the presence of younger families with young children. Related to this household size is the low median age of the population in the smaller markets, at 30 and 31, respectively.

Consumer expenditures estimates, including groceries and the eating and drinking category, again reflect the thin markets noted. The 3-mile market indicates just over \$60,000,000 in grocery spending. A typical grocery store in the Chicago area market has gross annual sales of \$20-\$25,000,000. Eight major grocers, regional and national, are located along the higher traffic corridors to the north and east, on Sauk Trail, Cicero Avenue, Chicago Road, 14th Street/Lincoln Highway, and in Crete. All are located between 3 and 5 miles from University Park's Village Hall, and all are outside of the existing Village limits.

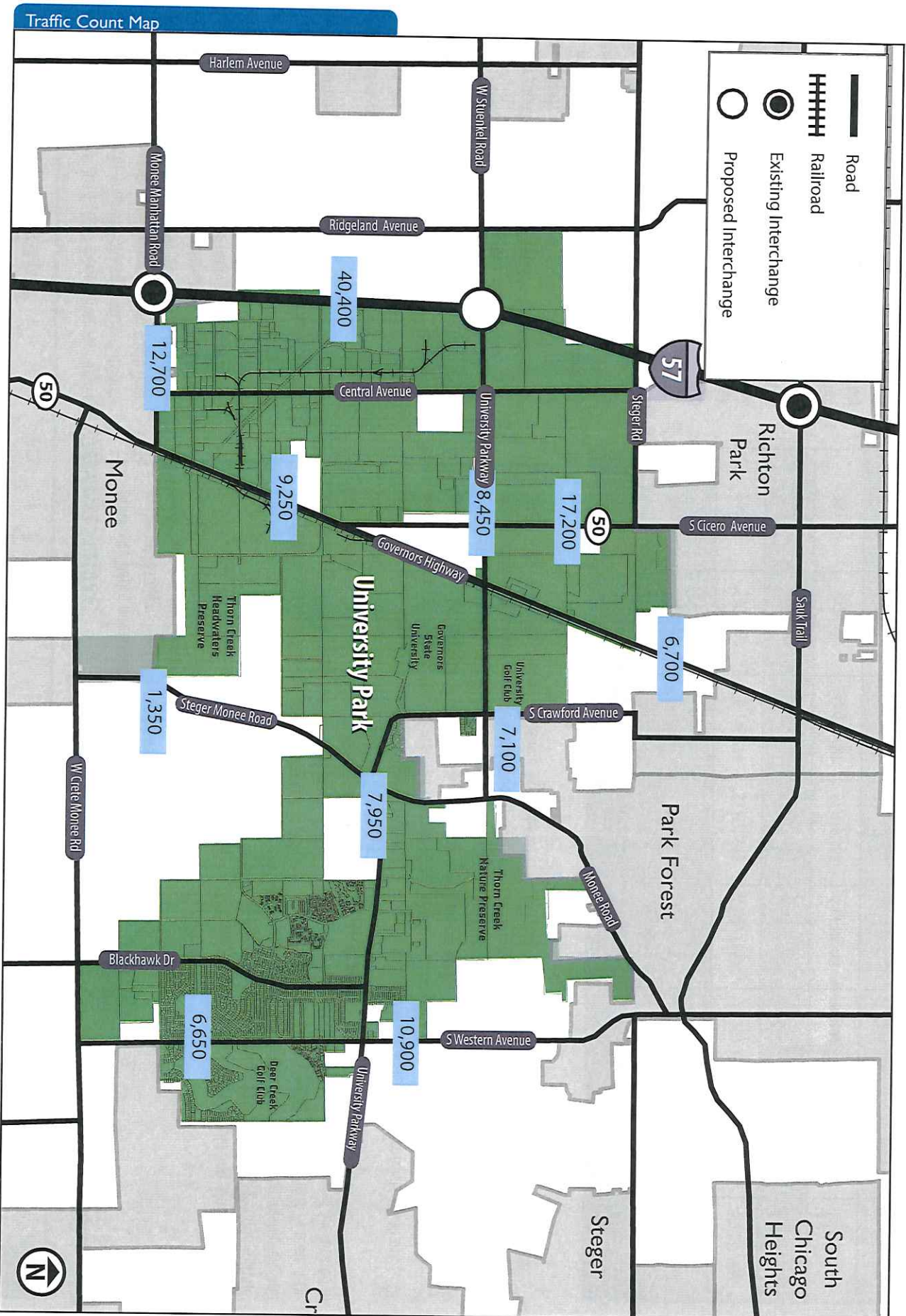
Using data obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS), certain census tracts near University Park's Village Hall meet the department's original criteria for a 'food desert' (defined as 1 mile from an accessible supermarket for urban residents and 10 miles for rural residents). This is shown in the illustration below. This definition has evolved to include census tract level data about family incomes, poverty rates, household access to a vehicle, and distance in miles from a supermarket. For University Park, identifying interim strategies to assist residents with food access issues will provide greater understanding of the Village's evolving retail needs. These strategies should

include working with local social agencies and neighboring communities to support transport, grocery deliveries, or healthier food options at convenience markets. This kind of strategy can be incorporated into any future update to the businesses and small retail center at University Parkway and Western Avenue.

University Park's traffic counts are shown in the illustration on the following page. The Average Daily Traffic (ADTs) on Interstate 57 north of Monee-Manhattan Road is 40,400. On University Parkway, east of the planned new interchange and approaching Governors State University, ADTs increase to 8,450 from 100 to the west on Stuenkel at Harlem Avenue. ADTs on Cicero Avenue are 17,200. Governors Highway counts increase from 6,700 in the northern section of University Park to 9,250 approaching the municipal boundary with Monee. With the exception of the interstate counts, the ADTs in and near University Park would be generally perceived as adequate to low by retail developers.

In addition to vehicular traffic, University Park's commuter station on the Metra-Electric Main line has exhibited strong and growing ridership in past data. (The station is the terminus for the line and attracts commuters from surrounding communities without commuter rail stations. The most recent available Regional Transit Authority Mapping and Statistics (RTAMS) ridership statistics (2006) shows weekday boardings and lightings of 1,243 and 1,217, respectively for the University Park station. These numbers represented a 23.8% increase in ridership from the previous survey (2002). Metra ridership surveys will again be conducted within the next two years.

Governors State University represents one of University Park's most important traffic generators. GSU currently has nearly 7,800 students, including about 5,200 graduate and



doctoral students. As of 2014, GSU moves from an upper division university to a four-year with the admission of its first freshman class. This expansion will ultimately add 4,000 new students to GSU's current student body. Part of this transition includes the opening of GSU's first resident halls. These initial 296 units of student housing with the likely addition of future student housing will bring a new population to University Park. In addition, GSU's Center for the Performing Arts maintains a full schedule of music, dance, and theater events, attracting patrons from throughout the region.

Given overall market characteristics, larger retail development will likely occur over the long-term as University Park's populations-resident, and employee, or daytime—grow. The Village's most recent retail success was the opening of Family Dollar, just east of Village Hall. Village officials have approved a TIF district encompassing the current Town Center. Any significant retail development at Town Center remains unlikely, given the lack of traffic, visibility, and nearby population density. A small number of businesses supplementing a successful Family Dollar's product offering presents a potential intermediate opportunity to create a minor neighborhood serving cluster.

With an interchange at University Parkway, retail and restaurant development could occur between the interchange and GSU. University Park has the opportunity to affect the type and quality of future development in this location in response to the community's desire for greater access to retailers and restaurants. For this future development east of the interchange, GSU could prove to be an important partner to the Village. Retail or restaurant options appealing to both University Park residents and to GSU's faculty, staff, and growing student population may provide increased market support for these new uses.

MUNICIPAL SALES TAX

- University Park's municipal sales tax history is shown in the table below. This table combines sales tax data from Cook and Will Counties. Data was obtained from the Illinois Department of Revenue. The figures for 2013 include the first three (3) calendar quarters for that year.

The Automotive and Filling Station category is the strongest producer of sales tax for the Village. Sales tax generated in retail categories, specifically food, eating and drinking, and drugs and miscellaneous retail categories, have declined over the period shown and continue to reflect the community's market characteristics. In addition to Automotive, sales tax revenues generated by two categories, Agriculture and Manufacturers, are have increased dramatically since 2009. Both categories represent taxable business-to-

business sales generated by University Park's commercial and industrial businesses.

EMPLOYMENT

The most common industries employing University Park's residents are located outside of the Village and include: Educational Services; Health Care; Public Administration; and Finance and Insurance. (Sources: U. S. Census Bureau, city-data.com) Few of these office-based industries are located in University Park.

University Park's employment base consists of about 2,600 employees, representing 1.04 jobs per household (see Demographics and Expenditures Table). GSU currently employs just under 1,000 (413 faculty and 569 staff members), according to the GSU website. City-data.com indicates 171 of University Park's residents work in the Village--about 7%.

Municipal Sales Tax							
Year	Municipal 1% Tax	Total Taxable Sales	Food	Drinking & Eating Places	Drugs & Misc. Retail	Automotive & Filling Stations	Business Related
2013	\$361,467	\$36,146,714	\$5,951,936	\$1,499,864	\$1,261,336	\$17,436,362	\$9,392,569
2012	\$479,774	\$47,977,370	\$7,434,173	\$1,538,927	\$1,758,807	\$23,514,848	\$13,351,256
2011	\$436,557	\$43,655,687	\$7,975,558	\$1,610,317	\$2,172,851	\$22,269,827	\$9,073,462
2010	\$400,217	\$40,021,707	\$6,353,792	\$1,792,127	\$2,235,665	\$20,768,541	\$8,071,478
2009	\$322,564	\$32,256,397	\$3,549,698	\$1,430,186	\$2,547,268	\$18,015,297	\$5,540,320

Illinois Department of Revenue. 2013 sales tax data is for first three (3) calendar quarters of the year.

In addition to GSU, other major employers include:

Employer	# of Employees
Governors State University	1,000
Federal Signal Corporation	750
Applied Systems	600
Commonwealth Edison	375
Continental Refrigerated	200
Bimba Manufacturing	160
Bluelynx	150
Solo Cup	125
Reinhart Foods	120

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Community Profile for University Park 2012.

Future industrial and related employment growth remains an important opportunity for University Park. All three (3) existing ITFs are located within the Village's industrial area. Local officials have indicated a desire to increase the numbers of residents employed by the Village's commercial and industrial businesses. Partnerships between the Village, its employers, and regional resources, such as Prairie State College, can initiate workforce development programs offering and developing the necessary industrial training and skills to increase the local workforce numbers at University Park's employers.

REAL ESTATE

Housing

Like many south suburban communities, University Park's residential market was adversely affected by the recent

economic downturn. The median sales price for a University Park home was about \$75,000. This represents an increase of 10.3% over the previous year. Overall sales prices have appreciated by 15.8% over the last five (5) years. An estimated 163 homes, or 11.3% of the Village's 1,441 owner occupied housing units, are bank-owned or in foreclosure. Greater participation in regional housing initiatives, as described elsewhere in the Plan, will allow University Park to mitigate some of the negative consequences of the recent housing market crash.

Listings for residential rental properties were limited; most properties available for rent were single-family homes. Other rentals, mostly in Brittny Woods apartments and Thornwood House apartments, were available at \$1.10-\$1.25 PSF.

Commercial and Industrial

The overall view of the industrial market in the Chicago region is positive. Third quarter 2013 data from CBRE Global Research indicates the market current has an availability rate of 8.5% (the sum of the vacancy rate and sub-leasing vacancy). This rate is the lowest since the same quarter in 2007. Larger leasing deals were fewer in 2013, but renewals by major industrial tenants throughout Chicago's regional market have increased by 1/3. Overall net absorption was nearly 4,000,000

Square Feet (SF), with 5,500,000 SF under construction. In the South Suburbs market (including University Park), the availability rate is 10.1%. Average asking rents are in the \$2.85-\$3.50 range in this same market.

According to LoopNet and Co-Star, industrial space available for lease in University Park generally ranges from \$3.75 to \$4.50 per Square Foot (PSF) on a net rent basis. Several properties are currently available for sale or lease. The listed sales prices are typically \$35-\$40 PSF; the current rents noted for these same listings are in the \$2.00-\$4.00 PSF range. In general, current asking rents in University Park are slightly higher than the South Suburbs market. This market strength indicates that fostering industrial growth through the addition of new businesses and future annexations west of Interstate 57. Structuring any future incentives to enhance growth to benefit both the Village and these new businesses will ensure that one of University Park's major advantages remains competitive.

Available retail space for lease is limited, given what currently exists in University Park. The current asking rents for retail space is \$12.00 PSF. CBRE Global Research indicate that third quarter retail average asking rents range from \$10.78 to \$16.50 PSF.



Economic Development

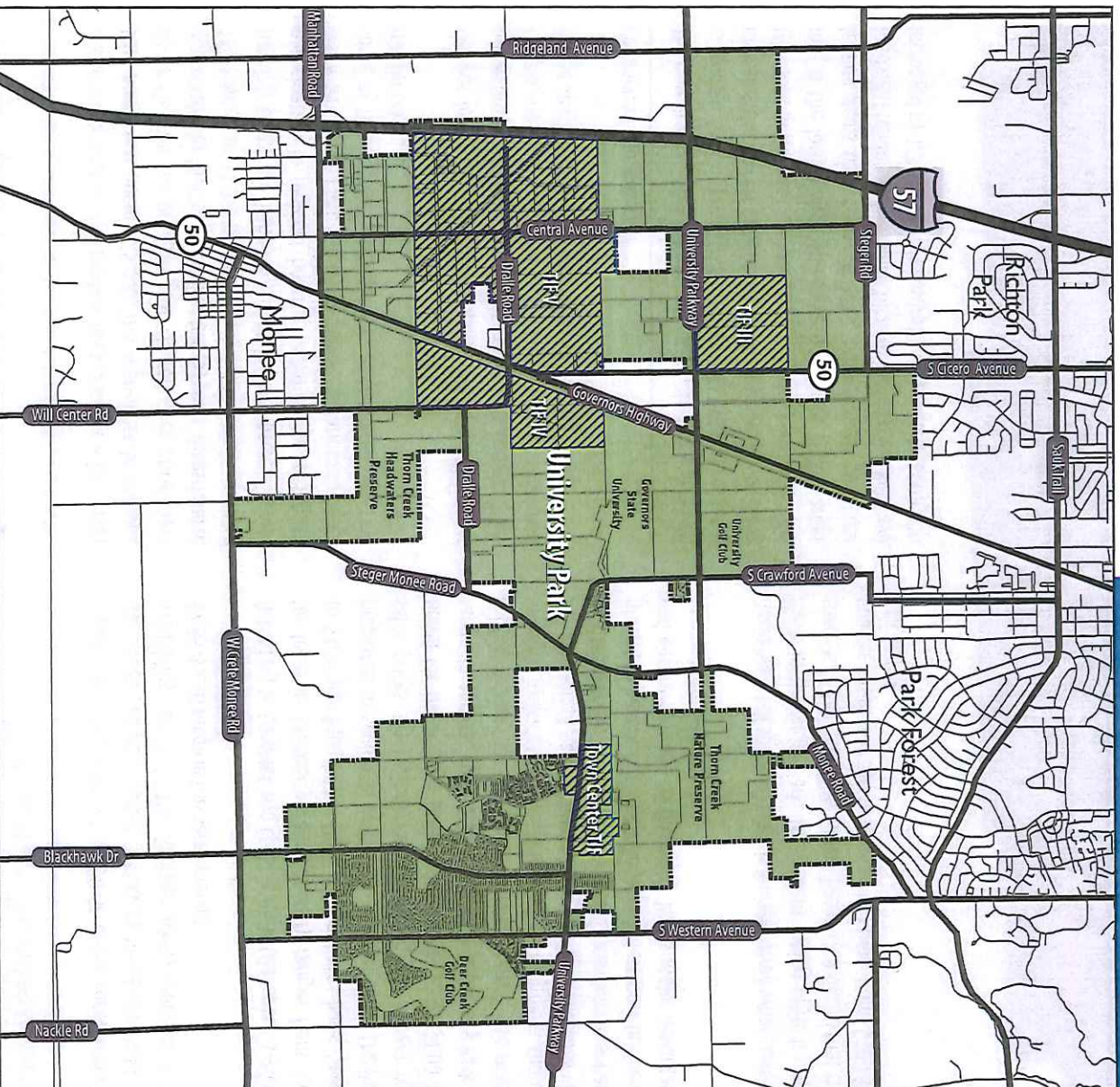
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Tax Incremental Financing

To promote economic development, the Village of University Park has created several Tax Incremental Financing Districts (TIF). These special districts capture the property tax from a defined redevelopment area and reinvest those funds into encouraging development through assistance with specific development related costs (defined in Illinois Statutes) including such things as land acquisition, public infrastructure, building renovation, and job training. TIF is one of the more widely used incentives to partner with the private sector to spur new development. There are over 1,000 such districts in the state.

There are four active tax incremental financing (TIF) districts.

- **TIF III** which expires in 2017 and consist entirely of Applied Systems;
- **TIF IV**, which expires in 2019 and consist of Blue Lynx and the McIntyre Group,;
- **TIF V** which expires in 2024 and consist of Commerce Center, Reinhart Food Service, Dart Container Company (formerly Solo Cup Co.), Midwest Custom Case, the Exeter Property Group, (which consist of three properties between 300 Central and 500 Crossing), the Avatar Corporation, Principle Financial, and the Clorox Company.
- **Town Center TIF**, which expires in 2037. The purpose of this TIF is to facilitate the rehabilitation of existing properties, encourage the construction of new commercial, civic/ cultural and recreational facilities and to foster the replacement, repair and construction of public infrastructure.

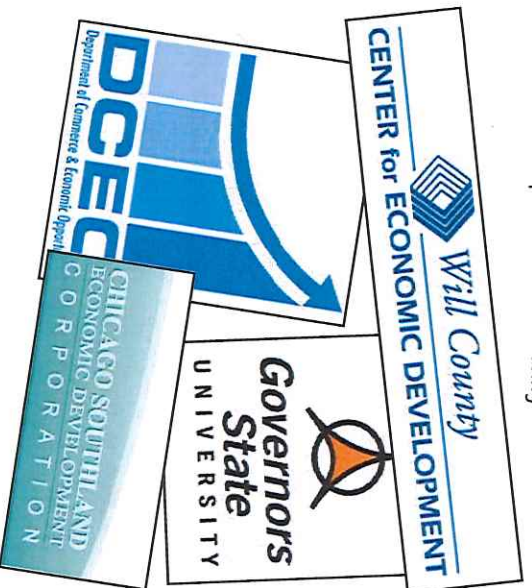


Approximate TIF Locations

ECONOMIC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

A key component in the effective implementation of the Comprehensive Plan over time is the implementation of an effective economic development plan. The University Park Comprehensive Plan identified three key priority areas which will shape the economic development initiatives and opportunities in University Park in future years. These key priority areas are:

- Capitalizing on economic development opportunities which are available in the short (1-3 years), intermediate (3-6 years) and long term (6+ years):
 - The Industrial Park
 - Governors State University
 - Retail/Commercial and TOD Development
 - Development of New Housing



- Capitalizing on economic development opportunities which are available in the short term (1-3 years), intermediate term (3-6 years) and long term (6+ years)*

- Ongoing municipal policies, procedures and outreach to embrace potential emerging economic development opportunities

University Park has two very strong economic development assets which are performing very well at present and which represent growth opportunities in the short, intermediate and long term.

The Industrial Park

University Park has helped develop a very successful Industrial Park at the western border of the community along I 57. The success of the Industrial Park is due to a variety of factors:

- The geographic positioning of the south suburb region overall with proximity to interstate transportation corridors, rail and in many areas barge traffic.
 - The recognition of the I-57, I-55, I-80 and I-88 corridors as the four strongest distribution/manufacturing transportation corridors in the region.
 - The immediate proximity of rail corridors to I-57.
 - The long term acceptance of industrial development in the south suburbs.
 - The quality of the regional labor force to service this industry.
 - The availability of vacant land along the corridor for industrial development.
- In the case of University Park, the location of the I-57

- The proximity of the Monee-Manhattan interchange to the Industrial Park.

- The proximity of the money-Mannhattan interchange to the Industrial Park.
- Again in the case of University Park, the willingness to develop a public-private partnership to develop the park particularly with the establishment of a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) district to support development.

The Industrial Park is viewed as a success at the present time. Major industries are located in the park, thousands of jobs are involved, and the primary TIF is very successful with another 10 years of TIF life remaining. However, multiple discussions with industrial developers, brokers, and regional economic development entities (South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) and Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (CEDC)) indicate that additional success can be achieved in the immediate future:

- Industrial development runs in cycles. Following the depressed times during the recent Great Recession, developers and brokers predict a five year cycle of development with emphasis on high asset corridors such as I-57.
- The development community has noticed the success of the University Park's industrial parks and the successful public-private partnership which has been developed. Their interest will be further focused on University Park.
- The University Parkway interchange is estimated to be opened in 2015 and this interchange will draw traffic from the Monee-Manhattan interchange and enhance the function of the park overall.
- The broadband initiative of SSMMA/CSEDG along I-57 will be completed in the second quarter of 2014 providing

enhanced broadband/fiber optic access to businesses along the corridor.

- While a more intermediate and long term opportunity, it is estimated that the primary function of the South Suburban Airport (if developed) in the early years will be cargo oriented and therefore Cargo Oriented Development (COD) will be a prime opportunity. Given that the southern edge of University Park is only a mile north of the northern edge of the proposed South Suburban Airport and given the aforementioned assets of the I-57 corridor and University Park's industrial parks, University Park should be very well positioned to attract COD sites should the airport become a reality.

- The current head tax is viewed by the development community as a major hindrance to attracting new industrial development. As soon as other revenue sources can be identified, this tax should be eliminated.

Given these growth opportunities, University Park can take a variety of initiatives to protect and enhance the village's opportunity to capitalize on this economic development initiative:

- Closely monitor the TIF and the funds available in the TIF. Assure that the funds used in partnership are well underwritten with an objective of a satisfactory return to the village for the use of its funds. Excess funds could be very valuable to the village's overall operating funds and the TIF funds will be a significant boost to the village once the TIF has expired.
- Closely monitor the development of the University Parkway interchange with IDOT in order to be fully prepared once it is on-line.
- Learn more about the broadband initiative in order to understand how it may enhance the park.
- Aggressively reach out to SSMMA/CSEDC which has become the center point of all regional economic development issues in the southland. SSMMA/CSEDC represents a resource, potential grant funds, potential access to key decision makers and perhaps even staff support for special projects which should be capitalized on.
- Develop a marketing package relative to the current and future park and develop a strategy to aggressively reach out with this package to potential developers, brokers

Applied Systems



- and tenants as well as public sector entities that would be involved with the South Suburban Airport.
- Consider annexation of the unincorporated land west of I-57 to expand the size and long term impact of the Industrial Park.
- Communicate the performance and strategy of the Industrial Park to University Park citizens and stakeholders in order that the overall value of the park to the long term success of the village will be well understood.

Governors State University

Few communities have an educational institution of the size of Governors State University within their borders. Governors State has demonstrated steady growth over the years and the recent announcements concerning becoming a four year institution and the addition of housing units for students suggests continued growth in the future.

Governors State represents many things for University Park:

- A steady and growing stream of students and staff who will enter and leave the community on a daily basis. While "commuters" focus on a more limited set of daily purchasing potential they nevertheless represent an asset for retail/food and beverage growth for the village.
- A recognized center of culture and learning which will draw other visitors to the community through concerts, events, forums, etc.
- A proximate "people center" to the University Park TOD which will enhance the ongoing ridership at the Metra station.
- An opportunity for new uses related to the mission of the university which would also bring more people with spendable income to University Park.

- As the university's role as a four year university matures, it is likely that demand for proximate housing will increase although how much and at what pace is difficult to predict.
- The university has expertise in various areas which could assist the village in other areas of economic development such as the SBDC International Trade Center and the university's workforce training.
- Finally, the mere presence of the university could be helpful to the village when seeking various grants which may be available. Grant decision makers who see that grant funds can impact a community overall as well as a four year university may determine that the "bang for the buck" is a strong reason to invest in University Park.

Given the asset represented by Governors State University, University Park should conduct a variety of initiatives to capitalize on this asset:

- Conduct regular meetings with the university to communicate village priorities and activities and to learn the same about the university.
- Stay advised relative to student and staff population growth as well as annual events which bring people to the campus.
- Understand land ownership along University Parkway such that when retail commercial growth may become possible it can be coordinated with the growing asset at the university.
- If a unique university priority were ever to become a reality consider working with the university to partner in the retail/food and beverage opportunities that may also become available.
- Keep the university advised relative to the changes/opportunities on the University Parkway/corridor from

the new interchange to Governors Highway which may become available in the years after the interchange is opened.

- Work with IDOT relative to signage which clearly identifies University Parkway in order to enhance the brand represented by Governors State/University Park.
- Seek specific university partnering opportunities in areas of mutual interest such as workforce development (i.e. high tech manufacturing), broadband and other synergies which may exist with Industrial Park companies.
- Encourage the university to get as involved as their resources will allow in the regional initiatives of SSMA/CSED.

Metra Train Station



Capitalizing on economic development opportunities which are available in the intermediate (3-6 years) and long term (6+ years)

There are two areas of economic development which due to a variety of market conditions are not ready to become a reality in the short term but which should receive much attention over the near term to prepare for opportunities which may come in the future:

Retail/Commercial and TOD Development

Four areas have been discussed in University Park relative to retail/commercial development:

- The Town Center next to the municipal center.
- The small cluster on the eastern edge of the community at University Parkway and Western.
- The area around the Metra station both on the west side of Governors highway and the east side of Governors Highway.
- University Parkway corridor once the new interchange is opened at I-57 from the interchange west to Governors Highway, particularly the University Parkway/Cicero intersection.

Town Center

The village owned Town Center is an older facility with poor contemporary retail space and a very limited number of rent paying tenants. In addition, the Center is located far off the road (University Parkway) and the traffic counts (7,950/day) along the road are very low by retailer standards. In addition, the population densities in proximate drive times are also very low by retailer standards.

All of these factors suggest that any significant retail/commercial development at this site will be very difficult in the foreseeable future. Also, in terms of the return on the investment of time and money, it does not appear that this site represents the best short-intermediate return to the village for retail/commercial development. Other options may be available as discussed later.

The Small Cluster at University Parkway and Western Avenue

This cluster consists primarily of a small convenience food store on the northwest corner and a strip center on the southwest corner which is hard to see due to the pitch of the terrain. The strip center exhibits some vacancies and relatively undercapitalized tenants. As discussed later, efforts to improve the appearance of the strip center and possible re-tenanting are the best approaches to this site.

The Area Around The Metra TOD Both East And West Of Governors Highway

Plans for retail/commercial and housing as part of the TOD area have been developed for land primarily on the western side of Governors Highway and in the last few years a developer proposed a potential development on the eastern side of Governors Highway on land near the Metra parking facilities. Neither plan has moved forward due to multiple market realities that preclude new housing coming out of the Great Recession (housing is discussed later) and many of the same market factors which preclude retail/commercial development at the Town Center as discussed earlier. However, the growth of Governors State in future years, the ongoing increase in ridership of the Metra and, most importantly, the opening of the University Parkway interchange to the west make this site a possible secondary development site in the mid to long term.

The University Parkway Corridor

Once the interchange at I 57 is opened in 2015 it is expected that, over time, the interchange and the University Parkway corridor may represent the best opportunity for some retail/commercial/food and beverage development.

- The Monee-Manhattan exit is relatively congested and it is expected that some traffic will begin using the University Parkway interchange.
- It is expected that the Industrial Park will continue to grow adding to the traffic at the interchange.
- It is expected that many Governors State University students and staff will begin using the new interchange as their primary avenue to the university.
- Moving east from the interchange it is only a short distance to the north-south traffic counts on Cicero Avenue and then a similar short distance to Governors Highway where the traffic from the Metra Commuter Station is located as well as the traffic counts on Governors Highway.
- This corridor of increased traffic from the interchange to Governors Highway represents increased opportunity and probably the best opportunity for the village in the intermediate and long term. The pace of potential development will be dependent upon the marketplace. It is probable that the first type of development along the corridor will reflect the potential customers representing the traffic counts (gas/convenience/food and beverage).
- It is also possible the highly visible pads on the west side of the interchange will also be viable for auto oriented development and perhaps a "mid-priced" hotel site.

The following implementation strategies are suggested relative to these four areas with the early emphasis on the area with the highest potential (University Parkway interchange):

- Work closely with IDOT concerning the timing and land use issues associated with the interchange.
- Develop a land use/control plan for the opportunities around the interchange and then on the University Parkway corridor to the east. This could include annexation plans for pads on the west (as part of the overall annexation plan for the Industrial Park as discussed earlier) as well as developing a full understanding of the land use/control issues on the north and south side of University Parkway/Stuenkel Road.
- Develop a preliminary marketing piece which discusses the interchange's potential opportunities in the future and be able to put the marketing piece side-by-side with the existing TOD plan in order to provide developers/brokers/tenants with a long term "birds eye" look at this sector of the community.
- As a secondary priority, understand the land use/control issues east of Governors Highway primarily just east of the Metra parking facility in the event another developer views this area as a potential development site.
- As mentioned earlier, stay in close communication with Governors State University relative to the University Parkway corridor in order to find areas for mutual benefit.
- Concerning the cluster at University Parkway and Western Avenue, work with ownership in three separate areas:
 - Reasonably enforce codes and regulations to maintain an acceptable appearance and safety level.
 - Determine if the ownership may be open to a public-private façade improvement initiative and whether adequate funding from both ownership and the village is appropriate and available.

- Work with ownership to determine if a re-tenanting initiative driven by ownership with some village support could be conducted over the next 6-12 months.
- Concerning the Town Center before an extensive re-tenanting or façade improvement program is pursued the following should be considered:
 - Improvements to the site for retail/commercial use would be very expensive and there are legitimate concerns about the market viability of the center. It may be a very worthwhile effort to retain an experienced broker to do an analysis of the utility of investing in this property for retail/commercial use.
 - While it is not clear that another unique use such as the Dollar Store can be duplicated it may be productive to determine what caused the Dollar Store to locate at this location and whether Dollar Store has other "co-tenant" examples at their other sites which may apply to this site. At the very least, it would be good to understand why (no matter how successful Dollar Store may appear to be) Dollar Store located in a new building along University Parkway as opposed to leasing space in the existing Town Center.
 - The Dollar Store appears to be also functioning as a very limited convenience grocery outlet. A prior "co-op" grocery store in the Town Center was unsuccessful. Currently, residents drive to a smaller independent chain in Crete or larger chain outlets in Matteson or elsewhere. It is difficult to predict success in recruiting a grocery store at this site. The best option in the short term would be to reach out to some independent chains to learn more about their site selection criteria.
- The village has discussed the need for a community center. A large percentage of the current Town Center is municipal use. The village has also suggested that there have been some conversations with two hospitals relative to a satellite facility in the village. As a side-by-side review with the broker analysis of the Town Center, the village should do an analysis as to its municipal needs or potential health care delivery needs. Both uses would seem to be appropriate to consider for this location given proximity to residents and availability of space.
- Before any significant funds are invested in this site, a full analysis should be completed and a strategy should also be developed.
- It is important to note that if any element of a retail/commercial strategy is considered, marketplace analysis is clear that the center cannot be successful without an anchor that draws customers and then in-line tenants can benefit from the traffic. The failed co-op grocery store was to fill this role. It is not clear at all that an independent or chain grocery store would choose this site due to all the market reasons cited earlier. In any event, the center cannot be successful without an anchor.

Development of New Housing

The Great Recession has devastated the housing market over the last 6-7 years and only recently is a small amount of recovery being noticed. The majority of this recovery relative to new construction has been in highly dense areas which can support "market rate rental" and the young professionals who support this market. Limited multi-family equity development (condo and townhome) has been almost solely in highly urban areas with proximate public transportation, jobs and high levels of entertainment resources with a heavy

emphasis on multiple food and beverage selections. The market describes this as places where "there is a lot of there, there." Single family home development is still an extremely thin market if it exists at all. Finally, the best markets for development are where the majority of the foreclosure and short sale issues have been worked through and where property taxes (while high throughout the entire Chicago metropolitan area) are a reasonable value relative to the market value of the housing unit.

At the present time, none of these factors work to the benefit of University Park. In the long term, the beauty of the community, the park resources, the schools, the proximity to expressways, Metra and Governors State University will be the best supportive selling points for University Park. These selling points would be on top of the obvious long term benefit of available land compared to "land-locked" communities.

To begin planning for long term opportunities, the village should consider the following:

- Work closely with SSMA/CSEDC relative to the various regional programs that have been developed relative to foreclosures.
- Continue to enforce codes and regulations to maintain the existing housing stock.
- Closely monitor Aqua Illinois, the private company that provides water to the community, such that adequate and quality resources will be available when the market allows.
- Closely monitor multiple transportation infrastructure issues (roads and rail) such that this infrastructure will continue to progress over the years.
- Continue to partner with Governors State University in

support of programming which will be an attraction to future homeowners.

- Pursue the highest potential retail/commercial opportunity (University Parkway Interchange) in order to begin developing a "there, there"
- Continue to work with Metra in order to develop the best possible train service/infrastructure.
- Maintain existing park and recreation facilities while also pursuing outreach strategies relative to a community center and a satellite health facility.
- Reach out to regional housing developers on an annual basis to assess their level of activity and their overall interest in University Park.
- Reach out to understand the goals and objectives of the



Ongoing Municipal Policies, Procedures and Outreach to Embrace Potential Emerging Economic Development Opportunities

land owners where residential development would most likely be in the long term.

In addition to the government led initiatives that have already been outlined, the following on-going government initiatives are suggested in the overall implementation of the

Comprehensive Plan:

- Utilize the Comprehensive Plan to develop a year-to-year action plan that requires elected officials and staff to work together on behalf of the community. Consider a consultant/team builder to facilitate this process.
- Examine the performance of each TIF. In particular, analyze the performance of the TIF V Dralle Industrial Park TIF. Determine cash flows and also determine the future role of incentives vs. the overall positive outlook for the park. A potential goal is to drive as much surplus revenue as possible to the general operating fund of the village and other taxing bodies in advance of the TIF termination in 2014.
- Assure that any future TIFs (i.e. Town Center) have a reasonable and predictable opportunity to drive increment based upon the proposed business model.
- Consider training or consulting assistance relative to the proper underwriting of the use of municipal funds when the private sector requests TIF subsidies.
- Review the performance of the golf course. Consider a consultant review if appropriate. Set a goal to make the golf course as marketable and profitable as possible.
- Maintain the positive image of community security.
- Develop a communication program with University Park residents relative to the contemporary employer demands for entry level employment with emphasis on the type of positions located in the Industrial Park. Work with Governors State University and other regional initiatives (SSMMA/CSED) which are developing training programs in this regard.
- Continue to work with the railroad and IDOT relative to the transportation/safety issues associated with the rail/Governors Highway corridor.
- Keep current on the proposed high speed rail corridor and determine if there is any significant impact on University Park.
- Continue researching the option of creating a 501 c 3 foundation for the sole purpose of facilitating funding options for Parks and Recreation in University Park.
- In addition to University Park priorities, continue to be part of "regional priorities" as outlined in the CMAP 2040 Plan.
- Communicate the results of Comprehensive Plan implementation to citizens and stakeholders in a formal manner on an annual basis.
- Continue to jointly promote regional opportunities, such as the joint effort University Park is doing to promote retail opportunities in the South Suburbs (www.SelectChicagoSouthland.com).

6 Land Use

Long term planning for University Park requires an understanding of how the land within its borders is currently being utilized and how the land is being used regionally by surrounding municipalities.

Like many of its neighboring communities, University Park is a smaller community with lots of unincorporated land surrounding it for potential growth. Unlike many adjacent municipalities, the Village supports a large industrial zone along Interstate 57, a centrally located University, and many high density housing options for its residents. These features separate the Village from other communities which gives University Park a unique identity and it should be the basis on how future land use decisions are made.

The following section describes the **existing land uses** within the Village's corporate limits and the comprehensive planning boundary. It also describes **existing zoning** regulations and how **neighboring communities** are planning the region for future growth. Finally, this section will describe strategies for **future land use** and **key development opportunities**.

Existing Land Use

Understanding existing land use patterns is vital when making decisions for the future. The following descriptions are a brief overview of what types of land uses are found in the Village and within the planning area.

Residential

Within the Village, most of the residential options are located on the east side of town. There is a balanced mix between single family detached housing, apartments, condominiums and townhomes.

Outside of the Village boundaries, there are single family detached homes located near the eastern edge of the Village (east of Western Avenue and north of University Parkway). Also, there is a subdivision of large single family home located to the west of the Village along Ridgeland Avenue.

Commercial

Commercial businesses are sparse inside University Park and in nearby areas. There are a few commercial developments located along University Parkway on the east side of town.

Industrial

The majority of University Park's industrial land uses are located on the west side of the Village. These industrial

developments have great connections to the region with access to Governors Highway, Cicero Avenue, and Interstate 57. The industrial land uses make up approximately 16% of University Park's total land area.

Agricultural

There is a large amount of land dedicated to agricultural uses inside and outside the community. The majority of farms and crops within the Village are located near the Industrial parks and Governors State University. About 36% of the land within University Park's planning boundary is used for agriculture.



Institutional

The institutional land use includes publicly and privately owned facilities that serve the public good. Some examples include Village Hall, schools, police stations, fire stations, airports, and cemeteries. Governors State University is the largest institutional use which is centrally located within the Village. Other institutional land uses, like churches, are spread throughout the community.

Open Space & Parks

There are a variety of open spaces and parks located throughout the community. The Thom Creek Nature Preserve gives residents access to wooded hiking trails. The two golf courses are assets that provide entertainment to everyone within the region. There are also many parks with playgrounds, playfields, and unique recreational attractions such as Riegel Farm which has its own petting zoo and Pine Lake which offers fishing.

Vacant

There are a few non-agricultural vacant parcels located within the Village. These areas are mainly located in the industrial parks and around the town center area. Vacant lots have no current function and these parcels provide opportunities for future development.

Existing Land Use Percentages

The following data is for parcels within the University Park planning boundary:

Land Use	Percentage
Low Density Residential	3.9%
Medium Density Residential	0.2%
High Density Residential	1.7%
Commercial	0.3%
Industrial	16.2%
Agricultural	36.1%
Institutional	12.3%
Open Space & Parks	24.9%
Vacant (not farmed)	4.4%





Land Use

6

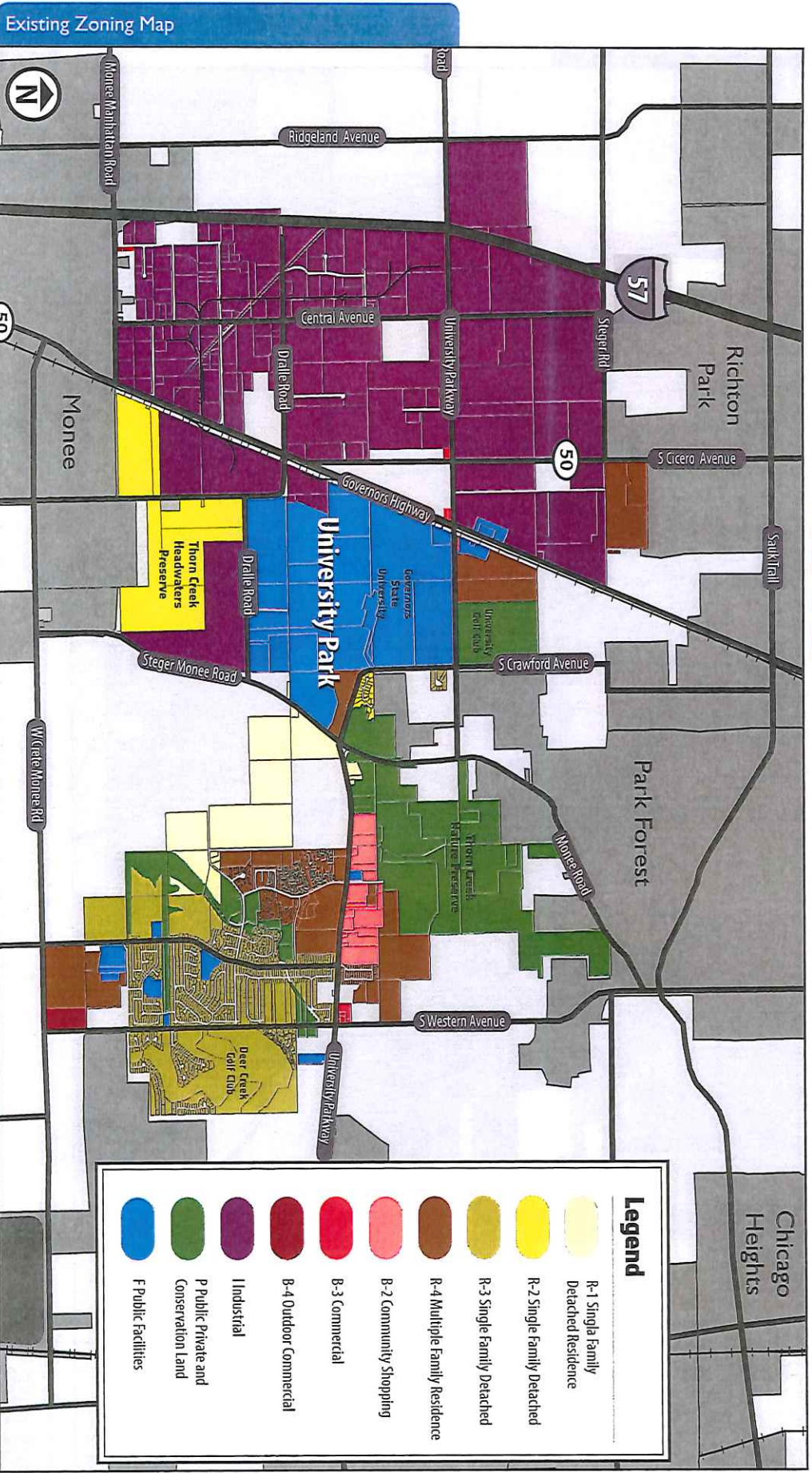
EXISTING ZONING

Zoning is used as a tool by communities to develop orderly growth. Also, it is used to separate conflicting uses from one another and to control densities of certain types of uses. It ensures residents that the nearby areas will remain stable over the course of time.

The Zoning Map shows University Parks individual zoning districts.

These districts include six residential districts (nothing currently zoned R1A or R5), four commercial districts (nothing currently zoned B-1), one industrial district, one open space district, and one public facilities district. Generally, districts with a high number allow more intense use of the property. See the zoning ordinance for specific zoning categories. The code can be accessed from the economic development tab on the Village's website (www.university-park-il.com).

Zoning differs from the existing land use because it does not actually show what type of use is located on the property but what uses are permitted to be developed based on the Village's current zoning regulations. For example, there are many parcels on the west side of University Park which are zoned for industrial use, but there are actually agricultural uses on site. The zoning shows that if these properties change or develop, they must become an industrial uses by regulation.



NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

Future land use and annexation decisions will be influenced by the surrounding communities future plans. A review of comprehensive plans from the surrounding municipalities show that each community has an idea for how the unincorporated land around them should be developed.

Park Forest

The Village of Park Forest finalized their strategic plan in 2009. This plan outlines a key growth area along Western Avenue. If annexed into Park Forest, the area is planned to contain a mix of commercial, employment/business and both low and high density residential uses (see illustration).

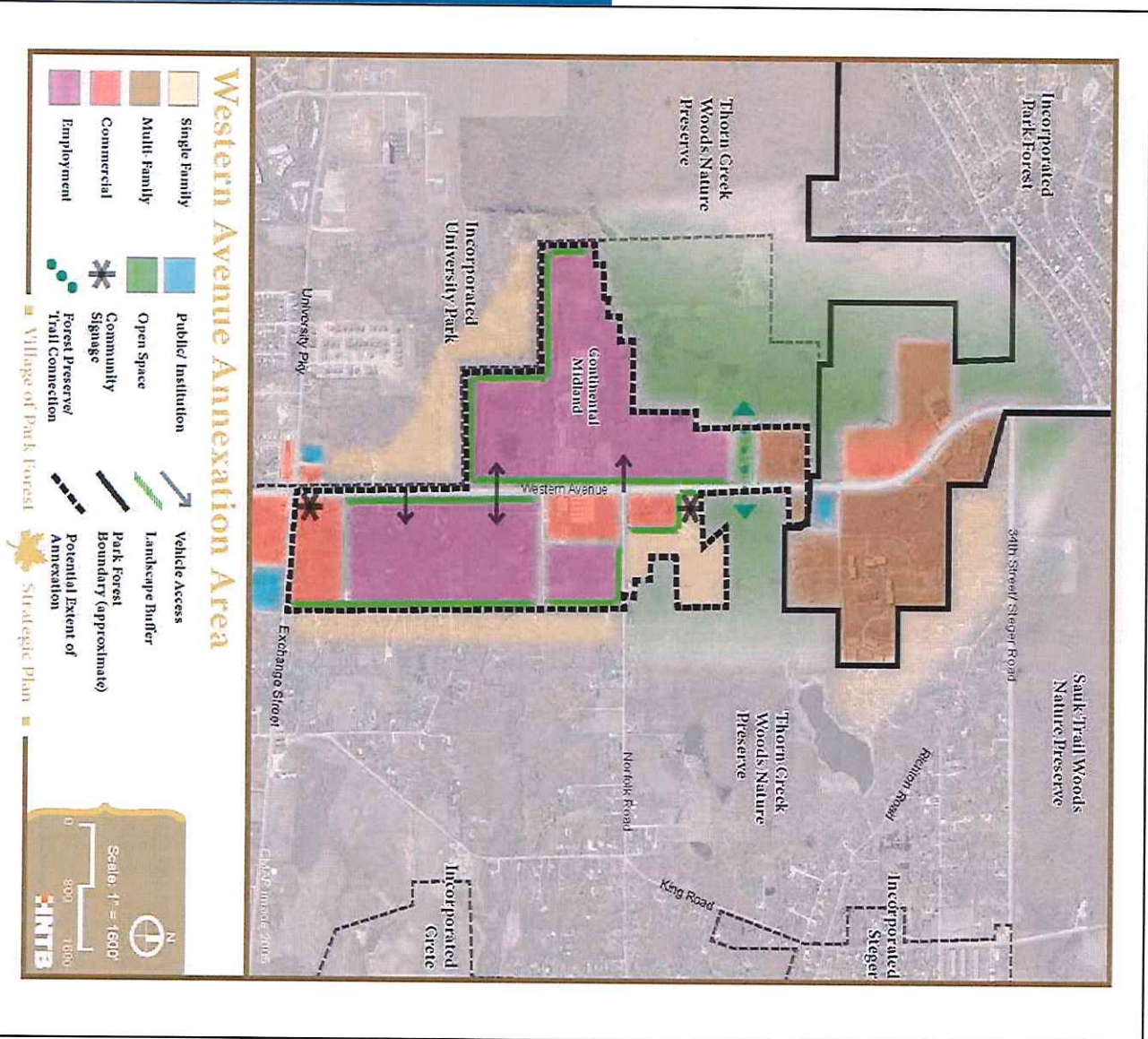
Crete

Crete's last comprehensive plan was completed in 1997. The Village plans to update their plan in 2014. Since the plans for the South Suburban Airport were in the preliminary stages, Crete made two separate land use plans depending on if the airport was ever built. The plan which involved the airport being a reality involved the Village expanding its borders to the west to about University Park near the Deer Creek Golf Course. The plan calls for mainly commercial uses surrounded by residential homes.

Frankfort

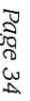
The Village of Frankfort's comprehensive plan was recently updated in 2010. The plan indicates that most of the land to the west of University Park should be industrial uses along Interstate 57 which then transitions into business parks and residential uses. The plan incorporates a large amount of land within University Park's planning boundary.

Park Forest Strategic Plan

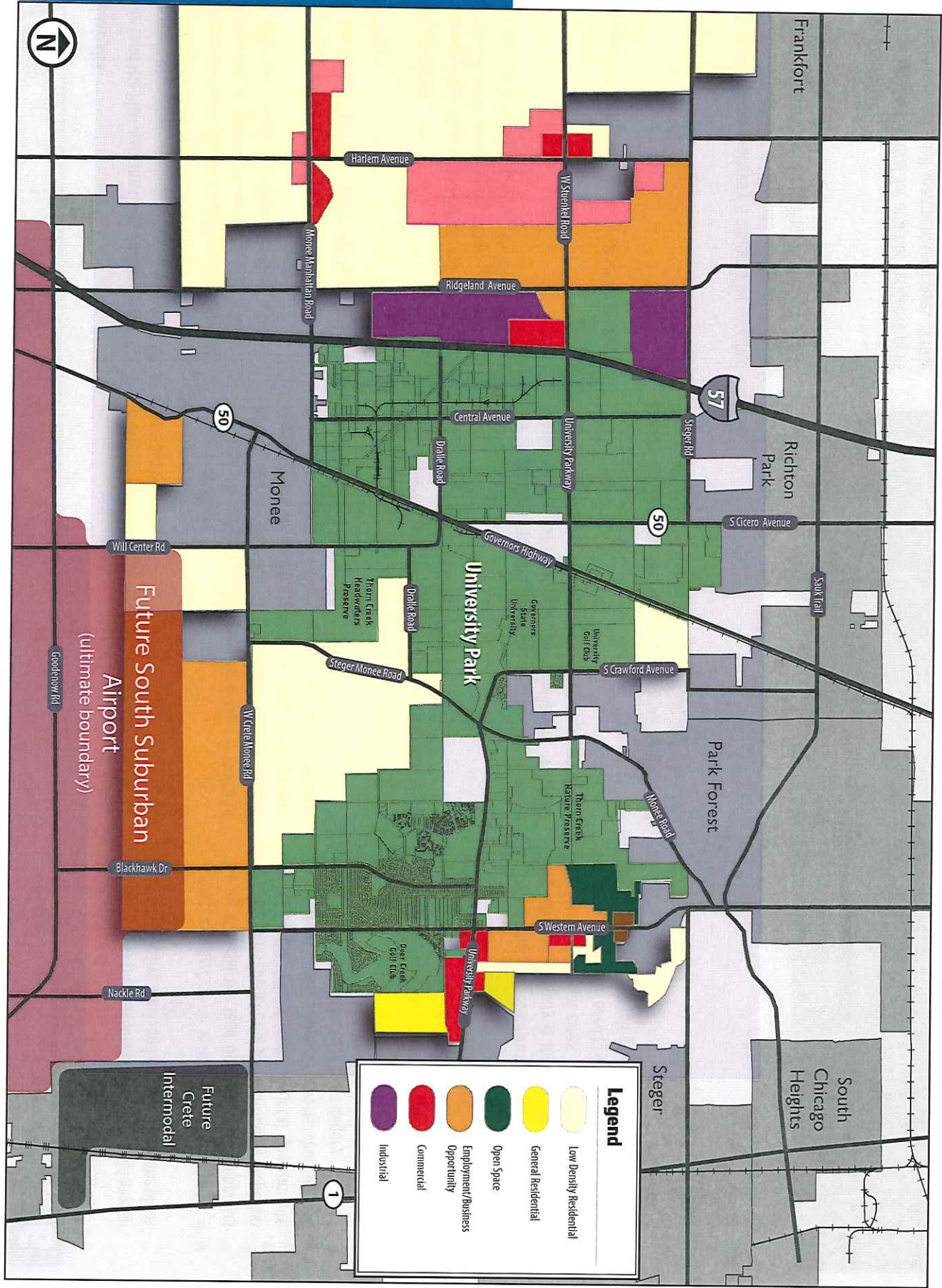


Richton Park

Richmon Park is currently in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan. Once completed, this section of the plan should be updated and amended to reflect their planned development.



Neighboring Communities Future Land Use



Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan accommodates a range of uses that meet the needs of residents and businesses in a pattern which is both economically viable and functionally compatible. While reviewing this plan, it is important to note that the uses shown are general in nature. On certain parcels, it may be appropriate for exceptions to be made to this plan.

In addition to the basic overall land use plan, there are 5 separate key development areas which will be discussed in this section.

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map shows the desired arrangement of land uses within the planning boundary. The following is a short description of what is expected in each land use category:

Agricultural

Land reserved for farming operations including raw crops and farm animals.

Residential

Single Family

The single family land use category is designed for detached housing. The Village has 3 separate zoning districts to accommodate this land use depending on the size of the structure and parcel.

Medium Density

This land use category is ideal for attached residence units such as townhouses and small apartment complexes. It may also accommodate detached housing on smaller lots. This

denser form of residential use should also be accompanied by shared open spaces.

High Density

This land use category provides housing options in the form of multi-family structures. Large apartment complexes and condominiums are ideal for high density uses. Opportunities for shared parking and shared open spaces should be taken advantage of in this category.

Commercial

The Commercial land use category is intended to provide for retail, office and service related business.

Industrial

The Industrial land use category includes areas where manufacturing and warehousing are appropriate. This area may also include business parks for industrial companies.

Mixed Use

The mixed use category is designed to provide buildings and areas with a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses.

The purpose of this category is to provide residence an opportunity to live, work, and shop all in the same place.

Institutional

The Institutional Use land use category encompasses the lands which benefit the public including properties owned by the federal, state, or local governments. Uses such as public or private schools, churches, and cemeteries are also included in this category.

Parks

This land is designated for private and public recreational uses. This may include but is not limited to parks, pools, golf courses, and recreational centers.

Conservation & Open Space

This land use category is intended to provide open space around natural areas. It is important to keep these spaces undeveloped to maintain the communities natural beauty and to mitigate stormwater runoff.



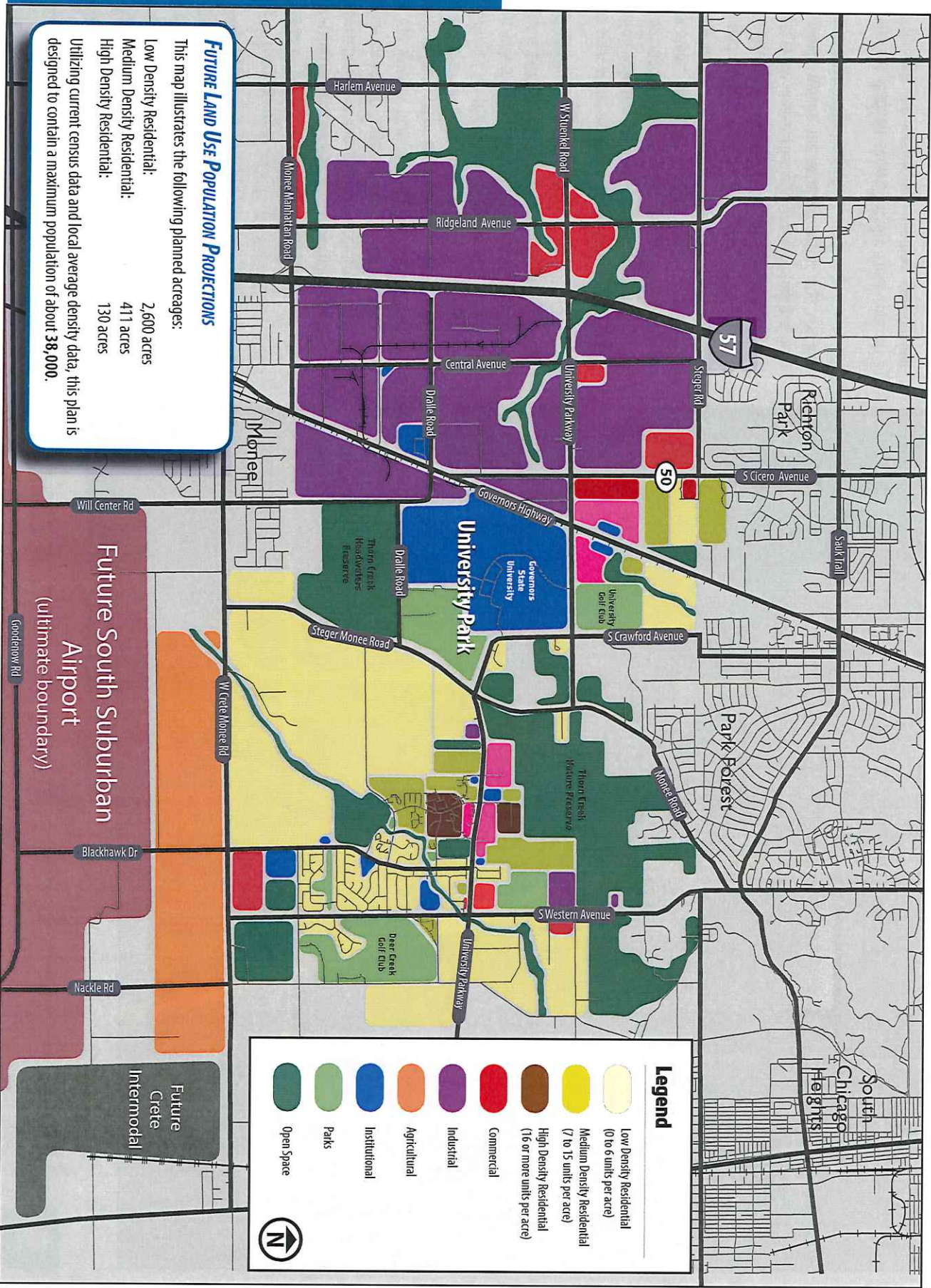
Future Land Use

Future Land Use Population Projections

This map illustrates the following planned acreages:

- Low Density Residential: 2,600 acres
- Medium Density Residential: 411 acres
- High Density Residential: 130 acres

Utilizing current census data and local average density data, this plan is designed to contain a maximum population of about 38,000.



Key Development Opportunities

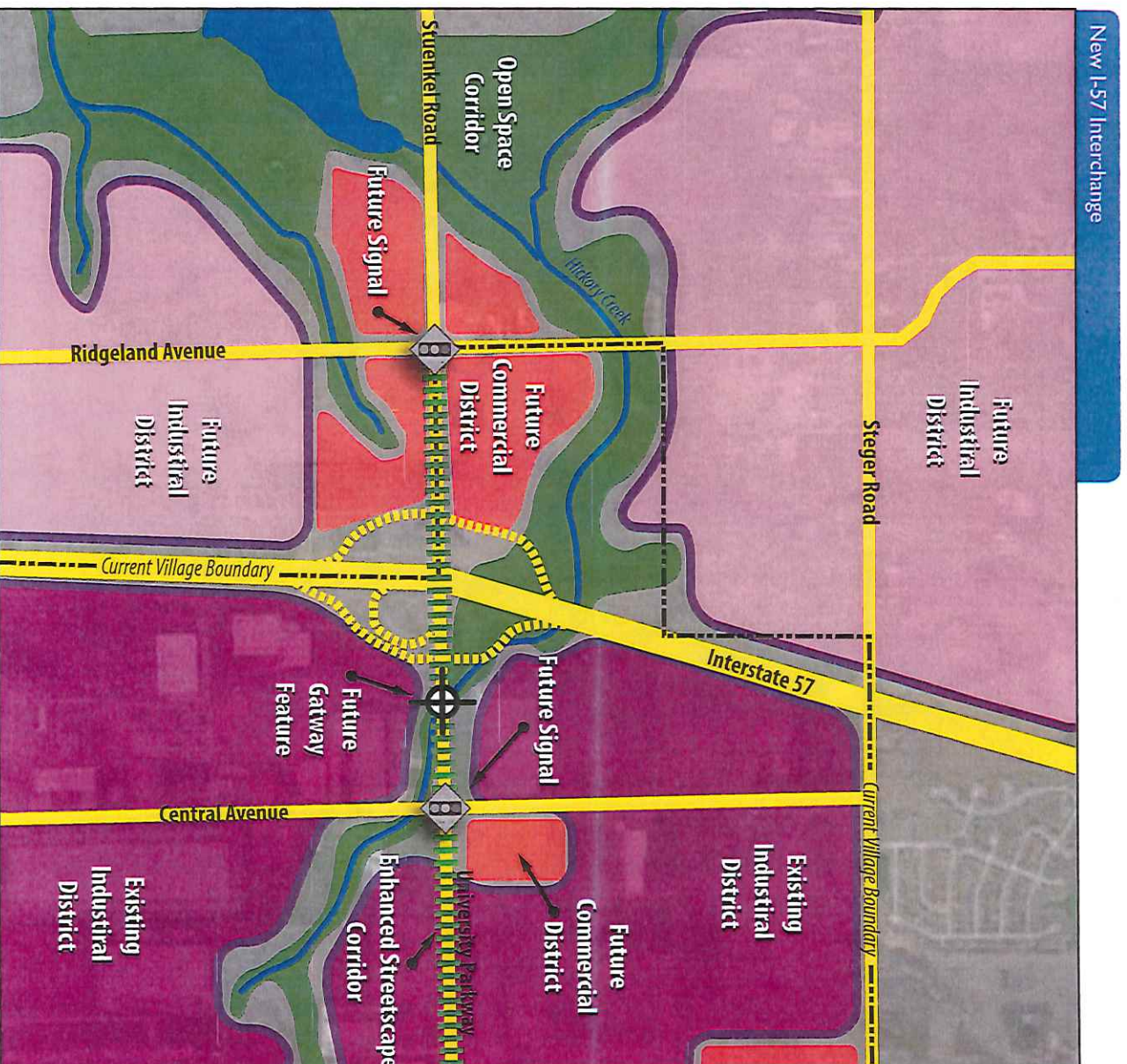
The Village has several key potential development sectors that warrant additional discussion. These areas address areas that either have significant market potential within the next 10 years, or are strategically located at prominent locations within the Village.

New I-57 Interchange at University Parkway

As noted in the transportation section, the Illinois Department of Transportation is in the process of constructing a new interchange on I-57 in University Park. This interchange will become the Village's front door offering new commercial opportunities (both retail and industrial), more convenient interstate access to both residents and businesses, and the opportunity for the Village to enhance its identity. In interviews with commercial brokers in the area, it is clear that the market is excited about the opportunities offered by this new interchange.

As can be seen at the existing Monee-Manhattan Road exit to the south, interchanges offer obvious opportunities for highway oriented businesses such as restaurants, gas stations and truck stops, and hotels. All of these uses would be appropriate in this area, generally along University Parkway between and adjacent to Central Avenue to the east and Ridgeland Avenue to the west. Retail uses may also be appropriate in this area, particularly large scale 'big box' uses, which typically require the excellent access and visibility offered by an interchange location.

As the adjacent diagram shows, Hickory Creek runs on a diagonal through the interchange, limiting development in some areas given the associated flood plain. This creek provides some natural buffers to future retail/commercial properties to the north and west.



Land Use



Bridge Enhancements: Ornamental Railings, Decorative Panels, Welcome Signage

- 
- A photograph of the Gateway Monument, a tall, tan-colored stone structure with a blue-tinted top section. The base of the monument is inscribed with "CITY OF GALELAND". The monument is situated on a paved area with some greenery and a building in the background.



A photograph of the Gateway Monument, a tall, tan-colored stone structure with a blue-tinted top section. The base of the monument is inscribed with "CITY OF GALELAND". The monument is situated on a paved area with some greenery and a building in the background.



A photograph of the Gateway Monument, a tall, orange-brown stone structure with a blue-tinted top section. The base of the monument is inscribed with "CITY OF" and "GALLUP". The monument stands on a paved area with some greenery and a building in the background.



Gateway Landscaping

Land Use

In addition to the retail/restaurant potential, the new interchange should also help to spur additional industrial park development. This includes both additional development on the west side of I-57 as well as opportunities to the west along Ridgeland Avenue.

Urban Design Framework

The Urban Design Framework illustration highlights how to capitalize on this new 'front door' to the Village. Highlights of this concept include:

- Creating an attractive, landscaped streetscape along University Parkway with new lighting, street trees, and a bike path along University Parkway
- Creation of a gateway/identity feature near between Central and the new off-ramp.
- Working with IDOT on the Stunkel Road/University Parkway bridge to provide a clear identity through signage and rail/embankment treatments

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) near Metra Station

The Village completed a detailed plan for the area around the Metra Station in 2002. This plan featured a dense, walkable design with buildings pushed to the street, realignment of Governors Highway, and a central park. While many of these elements are desirable today, the realities of the market, recognition of the environment, and sound traffic planning principals suggest some modification to these concepts.

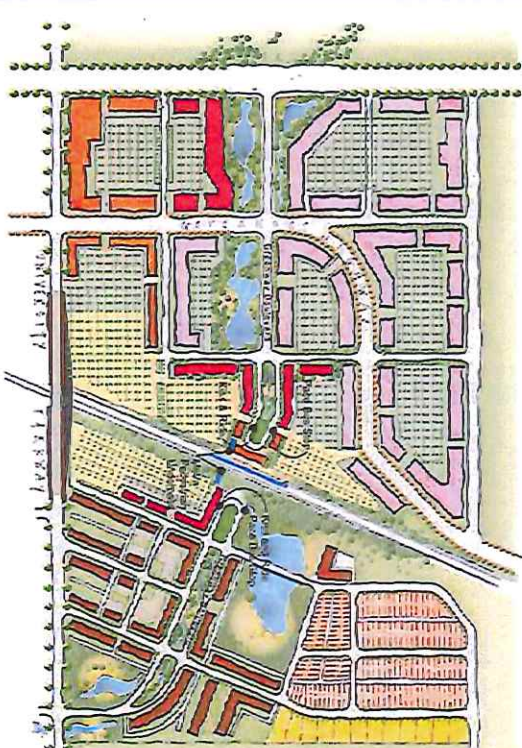
The updated concept for the TOD area includes:

- Big Box commercial use at the key Cicero/University Parkway intersection
- Potential realignment of Governors Highway to intersect

with Cicero Avenue, eliminating the difficult intersection where University Parkway crosses both Governors Highway and the CN Railroad within a few feet of each other. The prior plan had this realignment occurring, with a connection to X Street. However, this would increase traffic on the existing roadway to the south, and would not provide adequate spacing of a major intersection on University Parkway.

- Mixed Use areas in proximity to the train station that could include a variety of medium to high density residential, office, and retail/restaurant uses.
- Areas for townhome development that would provide housing options near the commuter station, GSU, and future shops and restaurants.
- Opportunities for single family homes, particularly north of the golf club. Open space corridors connect future residential areas with the station and providing for stormwater management needs.

Original TOD Land Use Plan (2002)



LAND USE AREA	LEGEND
53.90 Employment Center	[Pink Box]
15.03 Mixed Use Development	[Orange Box]
7.68 Retail Development	[Yellow Box]
52.31 Housing	[Green Box]
17.26 Medium Density Residential Development	[Light Green Box]
34.12 Other Parking (Unimproved)	[Light Blue Box]
37.00 Parks & Open Space	[Dark Green Box]

URS

CERC

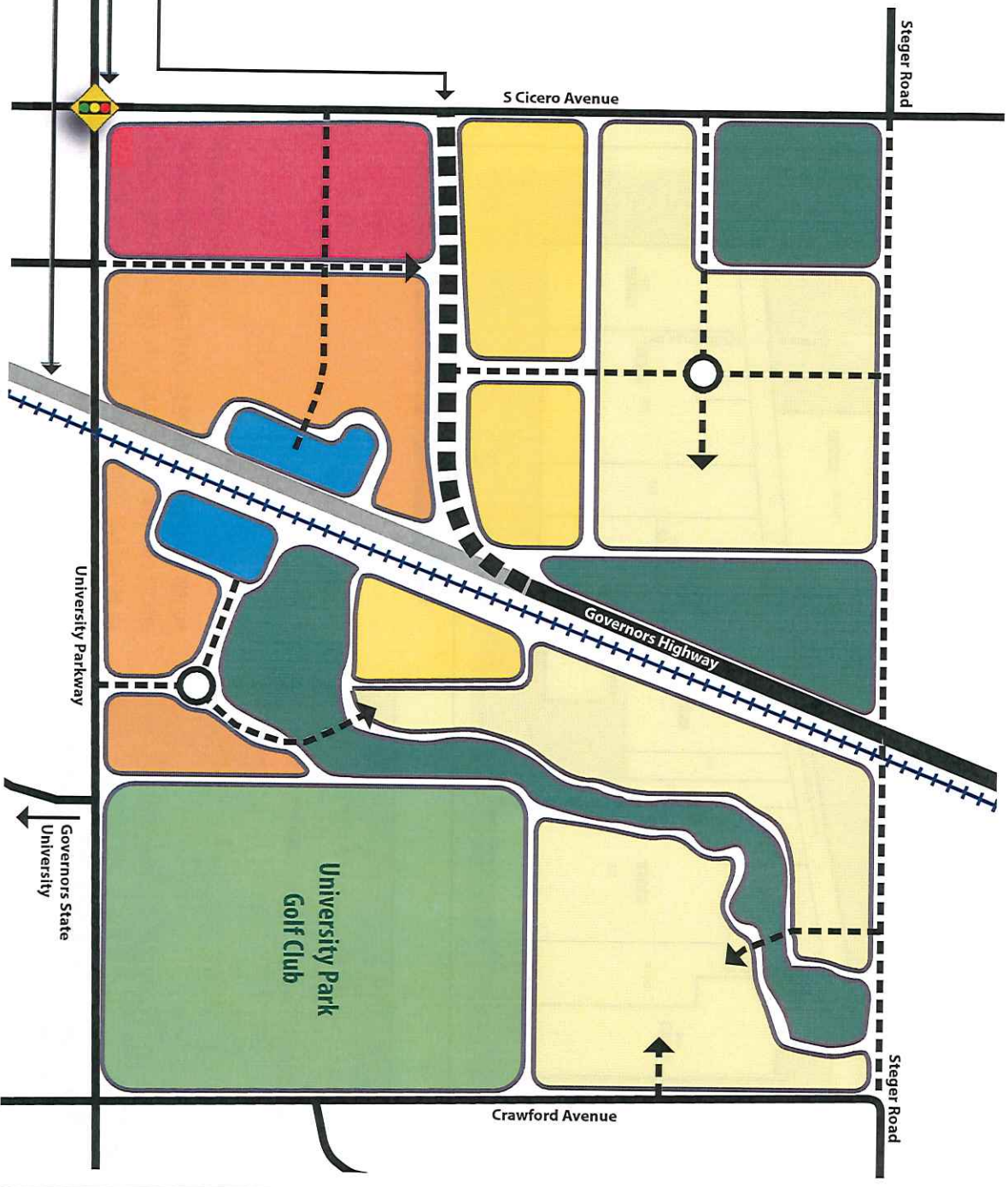
University Park

STATION AREA MASTER PLAN-FINAL PHA



Legend

- Existing Road
- Proposed Local Road
- Existing Rail
- Proposed Traffic Circle
- Existing Metra Station
- Single Family
- Townhomes
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Conservation & Open Space



Land Use

Town Center

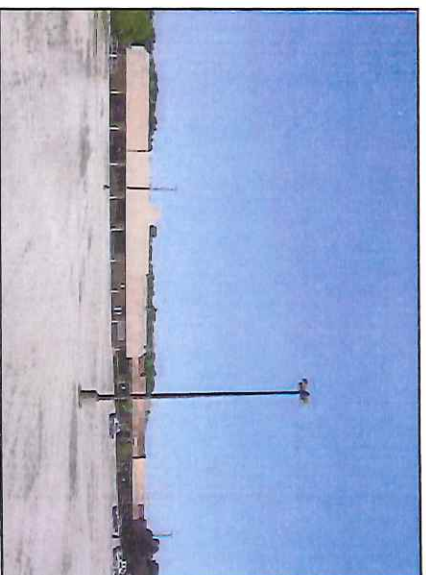
The Town Center area is located along University Parkway near Village Hall and the Town Center Shopping Plaza. This area is just north of University Park's main residential areas. Western Avenue is the areas eastern boundary, with Old Monee/ Steger Road serving as the western limits. Thorn Creek Nature Preserve forms the areas northern boundary.

The area features a new Family Dollar Store, Thornwood Towers, the Village Hall/Main Fire Station and the Police Department. The Town Center Shopping Center, which is owned by the Village, currently contains a variety of small restaurants, a daycare business, and meeting space used by the Village for a variety of function including Village Board meetings. The Village recently created a new Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) within this area. The goal of the TIF Redevelopment Plan is to "establish the area as a vibrant commercial mixed-use district." The plan promotes a mixture of commercial (retail/office/service), institutional (public facilities, hospitals, social services), and residential uses.

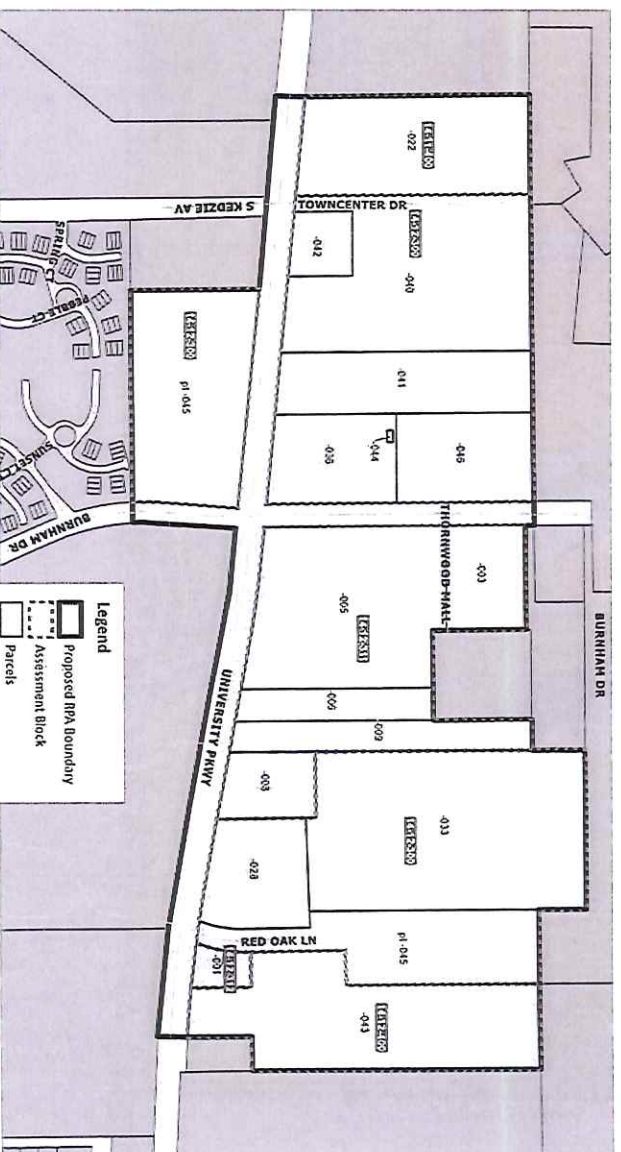
Given relatively low traffic counts (approximately 8,000 vehicles per day), this area currently has limited commercial potential. The plan shows additional opportunities for new housing in the area in a range of densities. This increased population will help to build support for future businesses that could take advantage of the walkable population within the area (similar to what the Family Dollar Store has done).

The plan suggests maintaining this area as the civic core of the community, with Village Hall and the Police Station. As noted in the community facilities section, the Village Hall will need to be expanded or replaced at some point given limited space for meetings and offices. Another need expressed by a number of residents was for a community center. This area would be ideal for such a facility.

All new development should be designed with the pedestrian in mind, with good sidewalk connectivity, integration of transit (Pace Route 367 runs through this area), and bicycle accommodations (bike racks and perhaps a bike repair station with air and tools).



Town Center TIF Boundary



Proposed Town Center RPA Boundary

PROPOSED TOWN CENTER TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT
VILLAGE OF UNIVERSITY PARK, IL
OCTOBER 2013

Legend
 Proposed TIF Boundary
 Assessment Block
 Parcels
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*Southern Growth Area/
Crete Monee Road Corridor*

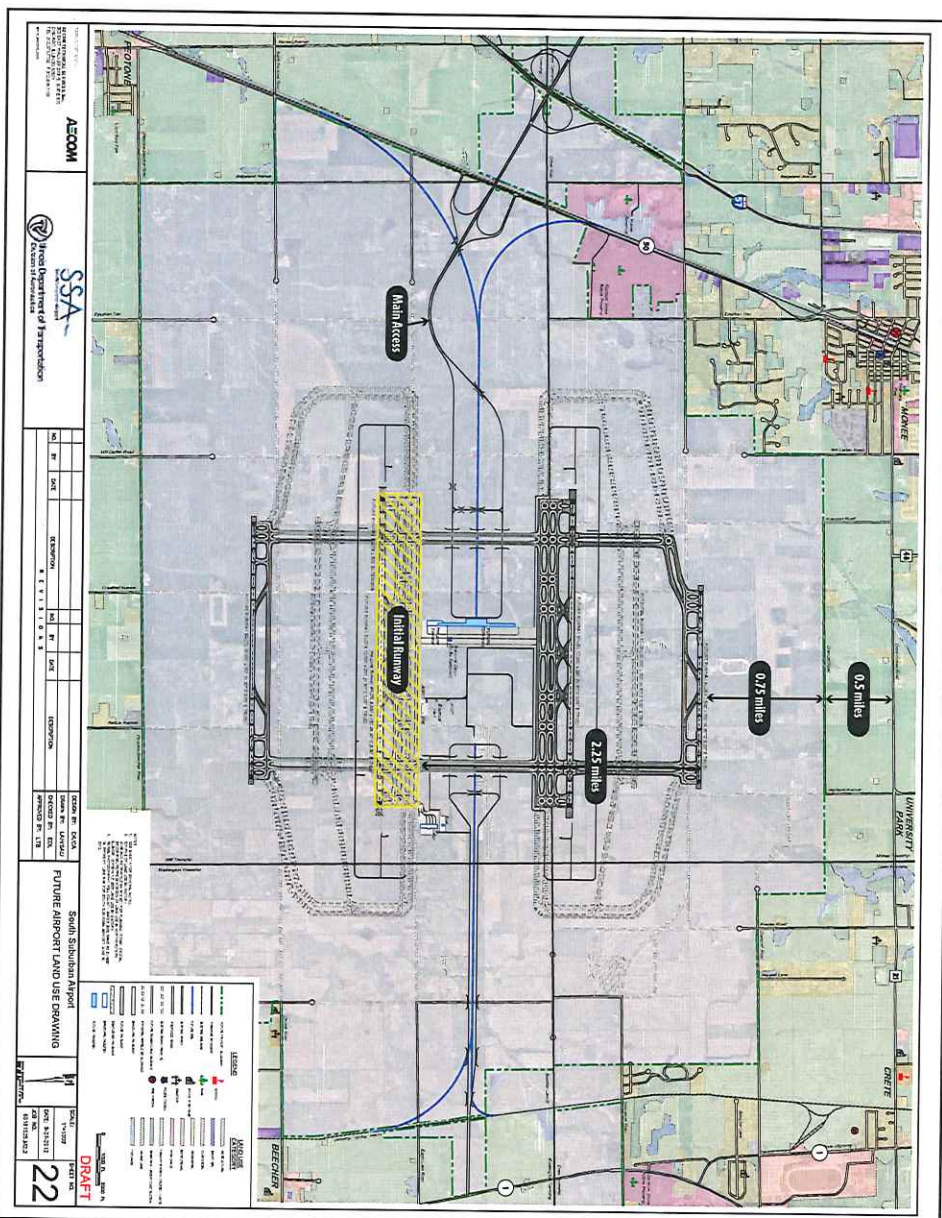
The proposed South Suburban Airport has been a topic of conversation within the region for a number of years, and remains so today. The airport is proposed just south of the Village, with the ultimate border proposed approximately one mile south of Crete Monee Road. The airport, if developed, will limit University Park's future growth to the south. Primary access into the airport will be from the west, initially from Cicero/Route 50 and ultimately from a new interchange at I-57.

The challenge for University Park is what land use to plan along Crete Monee Road given the uncertainty of the airport and its future expansion potential. The initial runway will be 3.5 miles south of Crete Monee Road, with an ultimate northern runway approximately 1.25 miles south of the roadway. All proposed runways run east-west, which should be good for University Park as it will limit, and perhaps completely avoid, airplanes flying over the community.

Given the unknown resolution of the airport, it is recommended that the Village plan for agricultural use south of Crete Monee Road at this time. This will:

- Promote compact, contiguous growth of existing and future residential neighborhoods to the north.
- Keep the land open for future development should the airport ultimately come to pass.
- Help to preserve the open space/rural nature of the Village.
- Provide a buffer to potential noise from aircraft related operations.
- Once plans for the airport are confirmed, this plan should be re-examined and adjusted as appropriate.

South Suburban Airport Ultimate Land Use



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Housing

It is important to understand the types of housing options within a community in order to make appropriate decisions for the future. This section will cover the typical **housing age, housing types and styles, housing densities, and affordability** of all the residential uses within the Village as well as provide a **housing plan** which will provide specific policies the Village should consider enacting.

Housing Age

Housing in the community is somewhat older than housing options in the county. As shown in the chart below, about 85% of the homes built in University Park were constructed over 15 years ago with the median year built being 1976. Homes in the surrounding Will County communities have a tendency to be built more recently with over 27% of homes being built since 2000. Since the community has been growing very slowly over the past decades, there has not been a high demand for new housing options.

	University Park	Will County
Built 2000 or Later	14.6%	27.1%
Built 1970 to 1999	59.2%	46.0%
Built 1940 to 1969	22.8%	19.4%
Built before 1940	3.4%	7.5%
University Park Median Year Built	1976	
Will County Median Year Built	1990	

Source: 2011 American Community Survey, five-year estimates

Housing Types & Styles

The type and style of housing options within a municipality help establish the character for the community. The following residential opportunities are available to University Park citizens:

Single Family Homes

The majority of homes in the community are built on smaller lots (under 1/4 acre) ranging from one-story ranch houses to split-level or two-story homes. These homes are built with a variety of materials and usually offer a driveway that connects to either an attached or detached garage. In smaller pockets throughout the Village, such as homes adjacent to Deer Creek Golf Course, there are larger homes on larger lots. These homes are typically brick and have attached multi-car garages.

Townhomes & Duplexes

Most of the existing townhomes and duplexes are typically two story buildings built out of brick with shingled mansard roofs and no garages. There are a few parcels which contain new modern town homes, which are two stories with attached garages.

Apartments & Condominiums

The apartment and condominium complexes within the Village vary in the way they are built and the amenities they offer. There are no "typical" complexes due to this variety. The only consistent feature of these housing types is they are usually grouped together and have separate subdivision labels assigned to each group.



Housing Density

Housing density refers to the number of dwelling units on an acre of land. The following are the types of housing densities located in University Park:



Low Density Residential

0 to 6 units per acre

- Low density housing options within the Village are typically single family detached homes. The majority of these homes are located on the east side of the Village south of University Parkway. These homes are primarily built on lots under one quarter (1/4) of an acre. The low density residences are adjacent to several open spaces and are near parks and schools.



Medium Density Residential

7 to 15 units per acre

- Medium density housing options within the Village include multi-family townhomes and duplexes. These buildings usually house 2 to 4 families and are located on the east side of town south of University Parkway. These types of structures have a tendency to be spread out on larger lots and utilize surrounding open space. The townhomes and duplexes tend to have shared parking lots and other facilities to accommodate the larger number of residents in the area. It is unusual for any of these buildings to be more than two stories tall.



High Density Residential

16 or more units per acre

- High density housing options within the Village include multi-family apartment complexes and potentially condominiums. Like all the other housing options in the Village, the majority of high density housing is located on the east side of the Village. Almost all of these housing options are between three to five stories and one apartment complex even rises to fourteen stories. All of these structures are accompanied by shared parking lots for residents.



Affordability

The Illinois General Assembly passed the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act (AHPAA) (310 ILCS 67) in 2003 to address the lack of moderately-priced housing that exists in many communities. Growth in home values continues to outpace growth in household incomes throughout the Chicago region and many people who are vital to local economies and who provide critical community services cannot afford to live in or around the places they work. This act establishes a minimum threshold of 10% of the housing units in a community should be affordable. Communities that do not meet this minimum threshold must prepare an affordable housing plan. As used in the act, "affordable housing" means housing that has a value or cost or rental amount that is within the means of a household that may occupy moderate-income or low-income housing. In the case of owner-occupied dwelling units, housing that is affordable means housing in which mortgage, amortization, taxes, insurance, and condominium or association fees, if any, constitute no more than 30% of the gross annual household income for a household of the size that may occupy the unit. In the case of dwelling units for rent, housing that is affordable means housing for which the rent and utilities constitute no more than 30% of the gross annual household income for a household of the size that may occupy the unit.

The 2013 Report on Statewide Local Government Affordability prepared by the Illinois Housing Development Authority notes a 56.2% affordable housing share for University Park. These relatively high number suggests that University Park is not required to prepare an Affordable Housing Plan.

However, housing costs are only one part of the affordability picture. The Center for Neighborhood Technology has developed the H+T Index to help evaluate the affordability of

living in a particular area. The "H" represents housing costs (including mortgage and taxes), while the "T" represents transportation costs. The following table compares University Park to the rest of Will County and to the greater Chicago Metropolitan Area (7 County CMAP region). The standard threshold of affordability is equal to 30 percent for housing costs and 45 percent for housing and transportation costs combined. From this table, it appears that University Park's housing costs are generally affordable for most residents, but the higher transportation costs are likely putting a strain on household budgets.

	University Park	Will County	CMAP Region
Housing Cost	26.1%	33.1%	29.3%
Transportation Cost	25.3%	25.2%	21.5%
Total Cost	51.4%	58.3%	50.8%

Source: CMAP calculations of Center for Neighborhood

Technology DataPublic transportation typically has a lower cost than the use of private automobiles. By promoting transit oriented development including new housing near the existing University Park Metra Station, the Village can provide opportunities for future residents to reduce their transportation costs. In addition, continuing to expand the local employment base can help to provide jobs closer to home for residents – thus also reducing transportation cost.

Housing Plan

The Housing Plan provides guidance to the Village of University Park in developing appropriate plans and policies which demonstrate the Village's commitment to meet identified and projected deficits in the supply of housing. In addition, this Plan intends to develop alternative housing policies and strategies for coordinating a wide range of public and private

Housing

sector programs to meet the Village's current and future housing needs.

According to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), as of 2013 56% of the housing in University Park was deemed affordable. In 2013, affordable per the IHDA definition would result in a home in the Chicago land region of \$147,000 or less for a 3 person family or a two bedroom apartment for \$994 a month or less (these numbers are based on a household income of \$53,000 or 80% of Area Median Income). Illinois communities with less than 10% affordable housing must prepare an affordable housing plan.

Housing Goal

To facilitate the provision of decent, safe, sanitary, healthy and affordable housing in suitable neighborhoods to meet the needs of the present and future residents of the Village, while preserving and enhancing the community's physical and social fabric, and cultural diversity.



Housing Quantity

The Village has identified housing needs for the residents of University Park. The Village must diligently work with the private sector and provide sufficient incentives to encourage the delivery of the varied housing residents need.

Objective 1

The Village shall provide technical and financial assistance to the private sector to provide dwelling units of various types, sizes and costs to meet existing and future housing needs.

Policies

Policy 1: Provide information, technical assistance, and incentives to the private sector to maintain capacity sufficient to meet the required production.

Policy 2: Develop working relationships with developers and home builders to improve the efficiency and expand the capacity of the housing delivery system. This includes pro-active outreach to the residential development community to explore market opportunities.

Objective 2

The Village shall provide new housing opportunities that area consistant with the Village's overal vision.

Policies

Policy 1: Encourage medium density residential development, including combinations of new construction, in-fill development and rehabilitation.

Policy 2: Provide strategic Village investments in public infrastructure to promote residential development, e.g., parks, streetscape improvements, sidewalks, and utilities.

Policy 3: Review ordinances, codes, regulations and the permitting process for the purpose of eliminating excessive and overlapping requirements and resolving conflicting requirements, and amending or adding other requirements in order to increase private sector participation in meeting housing needs, while continuing to insure the health, welfare and safety of the residents.

Housing Conservation & Rehabilitation

The majority of the Village's housing stock is in sound condition requiring only minor maintenance. It is critical to ensure that the Village's housing remain in a sound condition. Strategies and programs need to be developed, implemented and coordinated to conserve and rehabilitate the Village's housing.

Objective 1

The Village shall help conserve and extend the useful life of the existing housing stock and shall implement neighborhood planning programs.

Policies

Policy 1: The Village shall review and amend where necessary the Village housing and health codes and standards relating to the care and maintenance of residential and neighborhood environments and facilities.

Policy 2: The Village shall schedule and concentrate public infrastructure and supporting infrastructure and supporting facilities and services to upgrade the quality of all existing neighborhoods.

Policy 3: The Village shall encourage individual

Policy 3: Stimulate the production of new housing for all incomes, ages, and family types, including mid and upper incomes

Policy 4: Promote safe, attractive, livable neighborhoods that will attract new homeowners

Policy 5: New subdivisions should be interconnected by open spaces, sidewalks, and roadways.

homeowners to increase private reinvestment in housing by providing information on technical and financial assistance program.

Policy 4: The Village shall maintain the Certificate of Inspection (CI) Program to promote housing code compliance.

Objective 2

Upgrade and maintain public services.

Policies

Policy 1: Maintain a leadership attitude which delivers responsive public actions in ensuring personal security, code enforcement, and other public services

- Maintain a strong code enforcement program
- Establish programs to protect personal security
- Maintain effective crisis response
- Improve neighborhood/police relations
- Develop effective neighborhood crime defense mechanisms

Policy 2: Improve the visual quality of residential areas where needed.

- Accent viewsheds in the design of residential areas
- Identify and establish view corridors along residential street
- Advocate for the undergrounding of utilities

Policy 3: Promote social interaction as well as neighborhood identity and initiatives

Policy 4: Encourage walk-ability within neighborhoods

Objective 3

Ensure coordinated, effective planning and management of housing programs and development issues

Policies

Policy 1: Improve certainty in development regulations to the extent they are consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare.

Policy 2: Provide an expedited permit process.

Policy 3: Promote intergovernmental cooperation to achieve Village Housing Goals

- Seek to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with Will County to foster implementation of affordable housing goals
- Seek cooperative relationships with other agencies such as SSMMMA to encourage appropriate housing development.



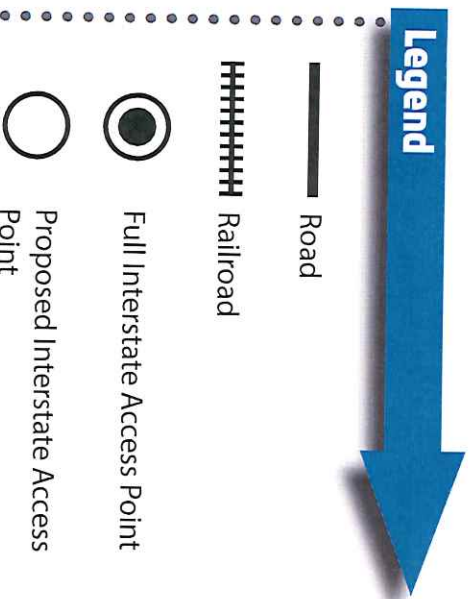
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Transportation

A well rounded transportation network can improve a municipality's environmental and economic sustainability. Allowing the people within the Village to move to, from, and through the community efficiently can improve the quality of life for all.

This section will cover how University Park's transportation system works by evaluating the **traffic counts, truck routes, public transit, existing bicycle and pedestrian routes.** This section will then address how University Park should handle transportation issues in the future by incorporating the **road classifications and thoroughfares plan, a future bicycle and pedestrian plan, and transportation improvements.**

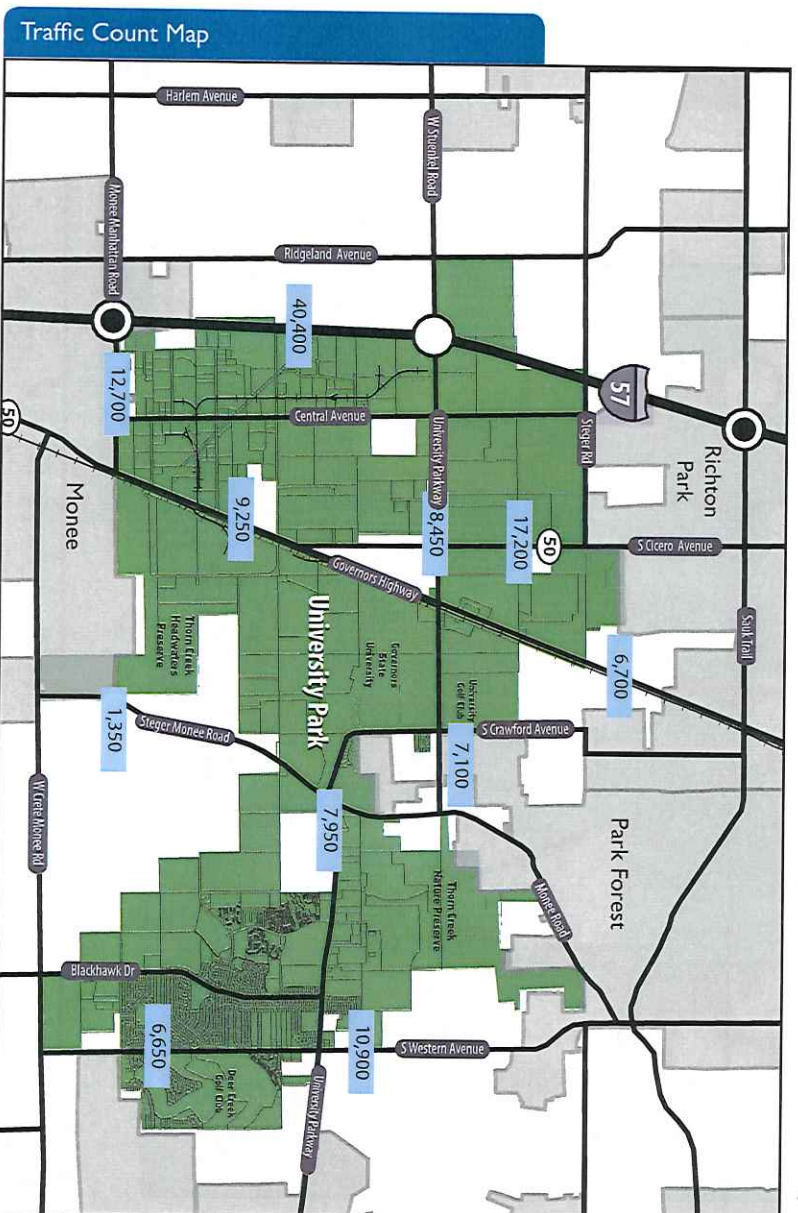


Traffic Counts

Daily traffic counts are used to determine which sections of the Village have the most exposure to automobile traffic. The traffic count data is used to analyze where there could be traffic issues and where commercial business is likely to succeed.

With the exception of Interstate 57, the traffic counts are not particularly high in any area around University Park.

For successful commercial retailers, daily counts over 20,000 are considered ideal for development. The highest counts in the Village are located on Interstate 57 and Cicero Avenue. The new University Parkway and Interstate 57 interchange will increase traffic along University Parkway and increase opportunities for commercial development.



Transportation

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Truck Routes

Truck routes are designed to direct trucks to roads designed to accommodate their weight and more limited turning movements. These routes attempt to keep large and slow moving vehicles off residential streets. There are two types of truck routes:

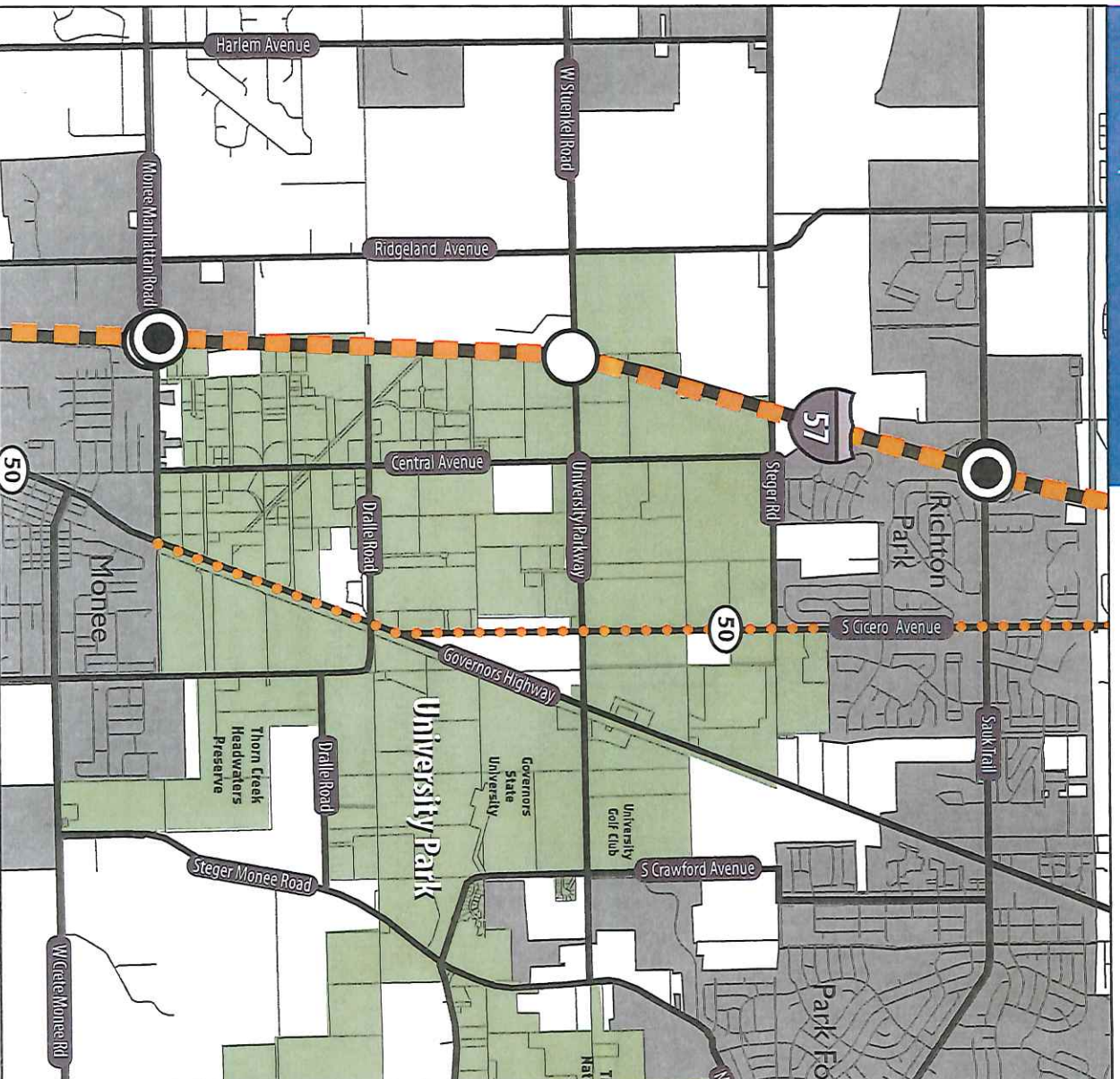
- **Class I**
Are made to handle the largest trucks and are designed to only be on limited access divided highways.
- **Class II**
Can also handle the largest trucks but are used to connect industrial regions to the Class I routes.

In University Park, the only existing truck routes are located on Interstate 57 and Cicero Avenue. These routes run through the industrial parks on the west side of town completely avoiding residential areas.

Legend

-  Class I Truck Route
-  Class II Truck Route
-  Full Interstate Access Point
-  Proposed Interstate Access Point

Truck Route Map



Public Transit

Public transit is essential to the long term health and growth of University Park. A strong transit plan is key in developing an environmentally sustainable community. University Park is served by two forms of public transit:

Metra Electric Line

There is a Metra passenger train station located in University Park off of Governors Highway and University Parkway which is a terminus for the Metra Electric Line. This line travels through other south suburbs such as Matteson, Homewood, and Olympia Fields. The other end of this line is located at Millennium Station in downtown Chicago. Ridership from the University Park Station has increased over the years with approximately 1,250 weekday boardings in 2006.

Legend

 PACE Bus Route 367

 Metra Electric Line

 Metra Train Station

 PACE Bus Stop

PACE Bus Route 367

This is the only bus route that runs through University Park. There are several nicely maintained bus stops throughout the residential areas of the Village and stops at several key spots around town. The route connects residents to the following locations:

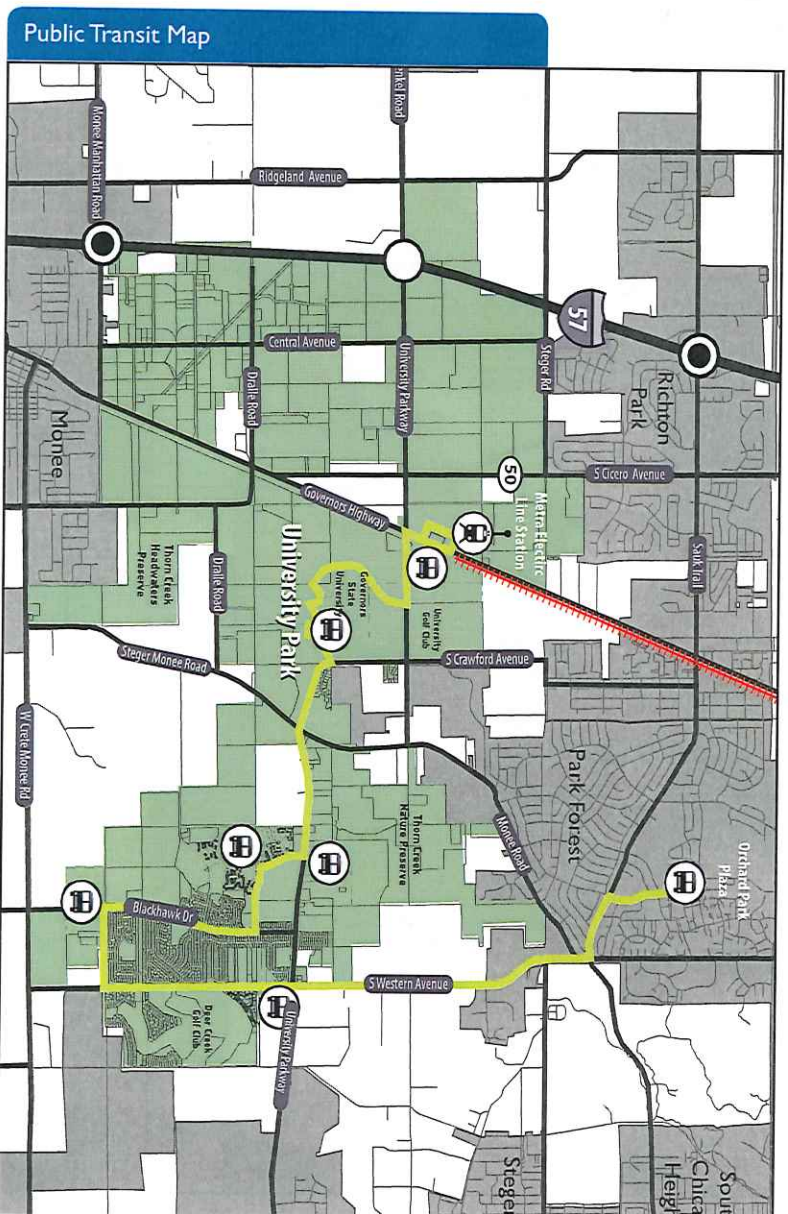
- Metra Station
- Governors State University
- Town Center/Village Hall
- Orchard Park Plaza in Park Forest (with connections via Pace Route 366 to the Pace Route regional hub in Chicago Heights)

Transportation

This route also links to other regional routes in Pace's network which allow residents to travel all over the Chicagoland region.

This route has had a consistent ridership amount of about 2,500 riders annually for over 10 years. While the ridership number may seem low, the purpose of this route is to connect residents to local features. Residents have expressed two concerns regarding existing bus service:

- Lack of service at night and on the weekend
- Lack of service to jobs in the industrial park



Transportation

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EXISTING BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHS

Bicycle trails, lanes, and multi-use paths offer residents another mode of transportation and can be used for recreation. The following is a description of the current conditions and proposed improvements for bicycle trails in the Village:

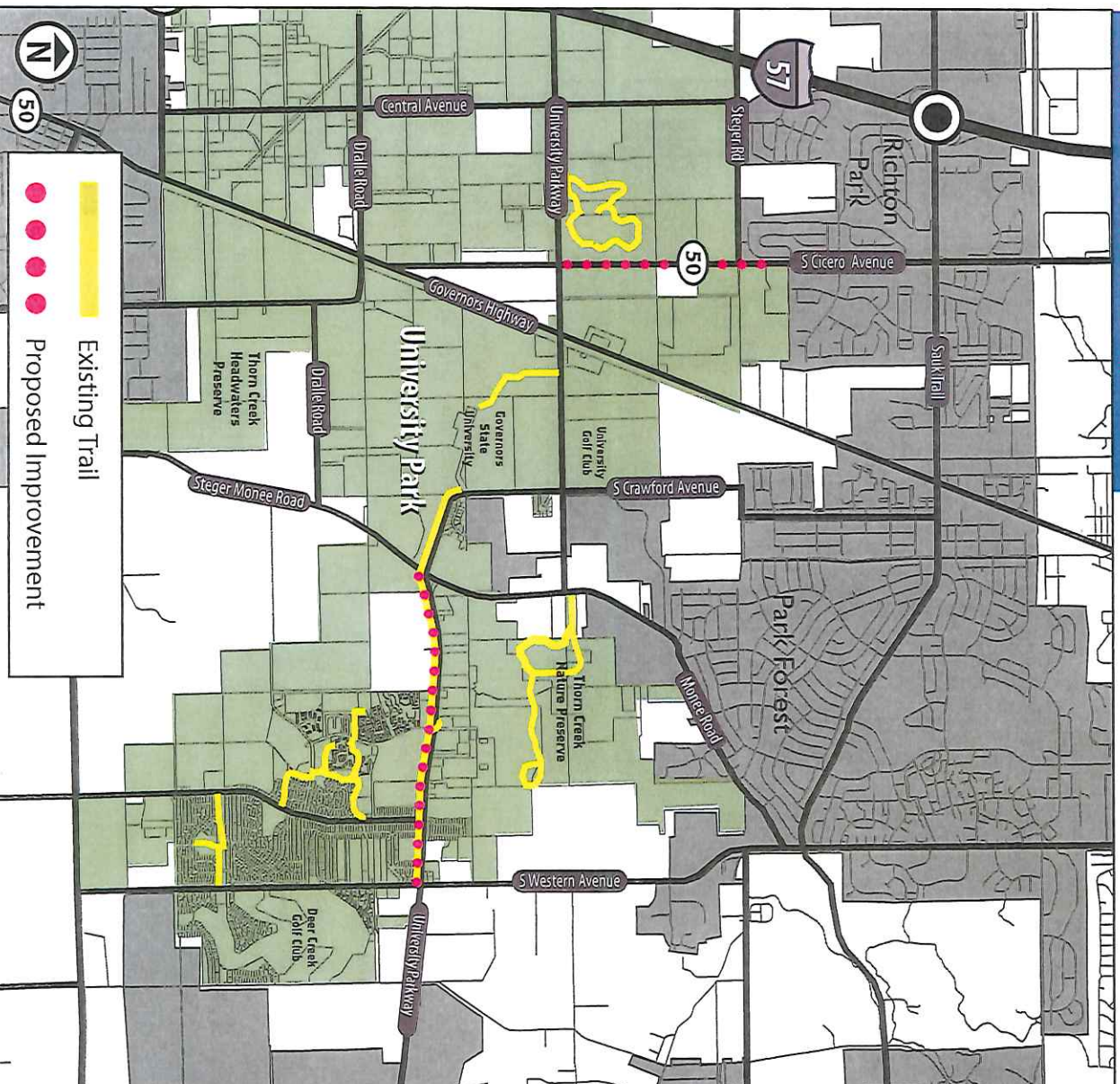
Existing Trails

- *University Parkway* - This trail runs along University Parkway from Governors State University to Western Avenue.
- *Thorn Creek* - This trail runs through the Thorn Creek Forest Preserve and is unpaved.
- *Governors State University* - This path connects the University with the Metra train station.
- *Heritage Park* - This trail runs through residential areas and connects to Heritage Park, Hickok Aquatic Center, and Coretta Scott King Magnet School.
- *Riegel Farm Park* - This trail is unpaved and connects the park with Blackhawk Drive and Western Avenue.
- *Applied Systems* - There is a private system of looping trails within the Applied Systems campus.

Proposed Improvements

- There is a plan to improve the trail along University Parkway. The 2 mile stretch from Western Avenue to Monree Road will be upgraded to a fully paved 10 foot wide multi-use path.
- There is another plan which will add a bike lane along Cicero Avenue going north from University Parkway. The plan for this trail is currently in Tier 1 research.

Existing Bicycle & Pedestrian Path Map



Road Classifications & Thoroughfare Plan

Identifying and classifying routes throughout the community will allow the Village to understand where traffic flow is expected and to keep the roadways less congested. These five roadway classifications will direct traffic into, out of, and through University Park:

Interstate

Interstate routes are divided highways which may only be accessed by a limited number of interchanges. With its higher speed limits and regional connections, the interstate is typically used for long range trips and accommodates the highest amount of traffic.

Interstate 57 along the Village's west side is the only interstate route that travels through the community. Presently, the only access points to this road are at Monee-Manhattan Road in Monee and Sauk Trail in Richton Park. There are currently plans to add a full access interchange in 2015 at University Parkway which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Principal Arterial

Principal arterial roads are designed to carry a large amount of traffic and service long distance trips within the Village and to neighboring communities.

These routes primarily serve the Village's industrial districts. The parts of Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway which are labeled as principal arterials are established truck routes. Monee-Manhattan Road is another principal arterial in the region which is meant to direct traffic onto Interstate 57.

Minor Arterial

Minor arterial routes accommodate shorter trips with lower speed limits and traffic volume. Since these routes are meant to supplement the principal arterial system, they tend to offer more access to fronting properties.

Some of the main minor arterial routes in the community include:

- **Western Avenue** - gives residents a route to go north
- **Governors Highway** - accommodates access to the Metra Station
- **University Parkway** - gives residents access to the town center area
- **Steger Monee Road** - travels through the geographical center of town

Collector Streets

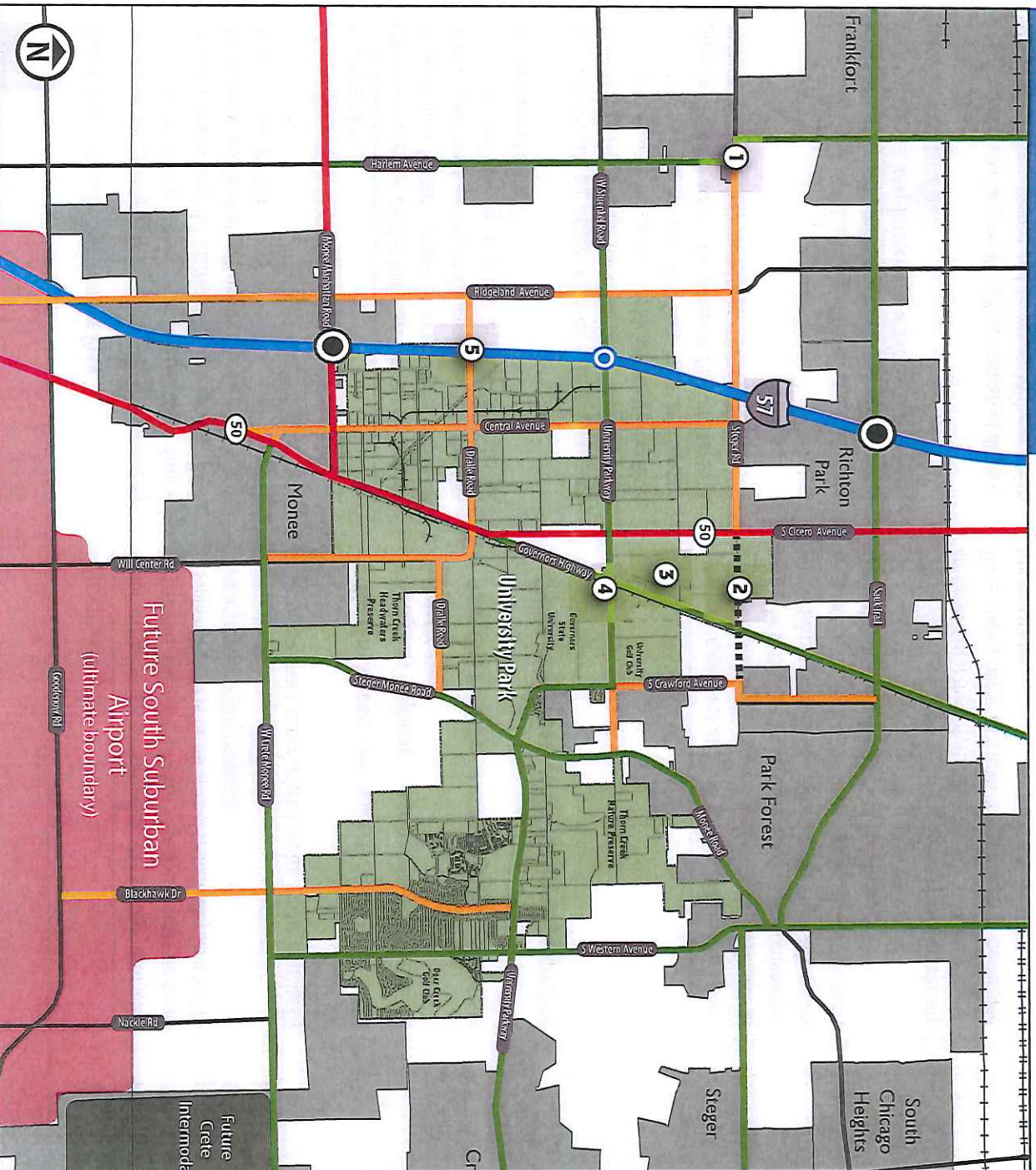
Collector streets serve as a link between the arterial system and access points in the residential, commercial and industrial areas. The primary purpose of these routes is to accommodate trips within the community. Speed levels and traffic counts are typically low on these roads as they are meant to support local traffic circulation and not regional trips.

A majority of the main collector streets in the community are located near the industrial uses on the west side of town. These streets allow industrial traffic to get to designated trucking routes.

Local Streets

All other routes in the Village are considered local streets. These streets are meant to have direct access to fronting properties and connect to the other roadways within the system. Local streets offer the lowest speeds and mobility of all the classified roads and discourage through traffic.

Master Thoroughfare Plan



Legend

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Existing Access Point
- New Interchange

Roadway Improvements

- ① Realign Harlem/Steger intersection
- ② Steiger Road extension
- ③ Realign Governors Highway
- ④ Construct grade separation at rail crossing
- ⑤ Dralle Road extension with I-57 overpass

FUTURE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHS

Bicycle and pedestrian paths can be used for two main purposes: transportation and recreation. Having a well-connected network of trails and paths can help a municipality improve the mobility of its residents. The following plan outlines how University Park can connect its resources and encourage non-motorized transportation from home to work and other community facilities.

Due to the large amounts of open space and undeveloped land in the community, all of the proposed improvements suggest to develop 10 foot wide, paved, multi-use paths. These paths offer the best quality of service for pedestrians and bicyclists. They accommodate two way traffic and create a safe environment for users by keeping them off the roads. The following describe the features shown on the Bicycle & Pedestrian Path Map (next page):

Existing Multi-use Paths

These paths represent a complete and fully functional multi-use path. The only path that is complete and in good condition is located around the Applied Systems property on University Parkway. This path travels around the building and connects to its own parking lot.

Existing Multi-use Paths

These are paths that already exist in University Park but are not considered full two way paths. Most of these paths are paved but are not currently in good condition. Since these paths are already in key locations around the Village, it is recommended that these be upgraded to the preferred 10 foot wide path. As previously mentioned, the path along University Parkway is already accomplishing this strategy.

Proposed Multi-use Paths

These paths have been laid out in a way to eventually allow everyone in the community close access to a multi-use path. They travel through every type of district in town and attempt to follow natural features. These paths should be developed with in the following order:

Phase 1

The paths around the residential areas on the east side of the Village are the highest priority. Upgrading the existing paths and building these new paths will connect residents to each other and to the local schools and parks.

Phase 2

The next paths should connect the residential area with Governors State University, the new Transit Oriented Development area, and the existing industries on the west side of the Village. This will also include the paths along Old



Transportation

Monroe Steger Road and other open space areas. It will give residents an opportunity to ride around the area and enjoy the existing natural areas.

Phase 3

The paths located on the west side of Interstate 57 should be constructed as development occurs in that area. This includes the two overpasses over Interstate 57 which is a long term solution to connecting that side of the interstate with the rest of the community.

Phase 4

Any other route that ends in an arrow is meant to show a connection to a neighboring community. As the region grows, there may be new paths created which are out of the control of University Park. This plan may be modified to connect to surrounding municipalities to create a well connected regional network.

Bicycle Facilities

Providing durable parking facilities for bicycles is important for schools, parks, libraries, commercial areas and public transit stops. Bicycle parking should be located in a visible, well lit and well signed area close to building or park entrances. For long term parking areas, such as parking near the University, covered parking should be provided to protect the bikes from the weather and other elements.

While not shown specifically on the map, the following locations are ideal for long term bicycle parking facilities:

- Governors State University
- Metra Train Station
- Town Center
- Thorn Creek Nature Center
- All parks & schools