

JUSTICE TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT STUDY

Village of Justice, Illinois



EXISTING CONDITIONS AND COMMUNITY INPUT

Background Report

January 2007

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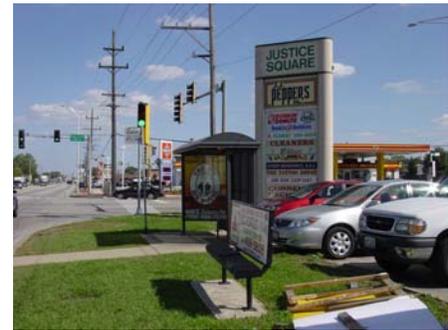
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INTRODUCTION

Many communities throughout the Chicago region have capitalized on their public transportation assets as a resource to provide mobility options for residents and as a catalyst for commercial and residential development. Through its Regional Technical Assistance Program (RTAP), a tool used to facilitate local community and economic development and improved access and connections to and near transit stations, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has worked with over fifty Chicago-area communities to formalize transit-oriented planning and local transit improvement projects.

With assistance from the Regional Transportation Authority, the Village of Justice is undertaking a Transit Improvement Study to assess existing public transit assets and develop recommendations for future enhancement. HNTB Corporation (HNTB), a planning and urban design consulting firm, and MKC Associates (MKC), a transit services consulting firm, are providing planning services to the Village over the course of the study.

The overall goal of the Transit Improvement Study is the development of a set of visionary- yet also realistic and achievable- implementation strategies to enhance mobility alternatives for Justice residents, to improve neighborhood connections and community cohesion, and to encourage appropriate new development and redevelopment that can both benefit from transit access and provide potential riders.



Pace bus service improvements will be the primary focus of the Justice Transit Improvement Study



Recent residential development in the Village of Justice has increased local housing options

This Background Report represents the culmination of the first step in the planning process. The report documents the following study elements:

- A summary of the overall planning process;
- An understanding of the Village's objectives for the study, and existing planning policies;
- A summary of existing physical conditions within the Village, including land use patterns and access and circulation features;
- A summary of demographic and housing characteristics of the Village;
- A description of existing transit facilities, routes, and service levels; and
- A summary of community input received to date.

In the final chapter, this report presents the key planning considerations to be addressed in the study, along with an overall planning framework within which a more detailed assessment of future transit service improvement opportunities will be developed.

BACKGROUND REPORT

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

The Village of Justice is a stable, mature and nearly built-out suburb that benefits from a strong school system and excellent access to local expressways and Midway airport. However, limited convenient public transportation options are currently available to Village residents. Residents of both higher density residential areas and single family neighborhoods in the Village could potentially benefit from increased transit services. For this reason, the Village of Justice sought RTA funding assistance through the RTAP program to undertake this Transit Improvement Study.

A. PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The Village of Justice is conducting the Transit Improvement Study in order to explore the following general planning objectives:

- Encourage increased utilization of Pace bus service in the future by identifying more effective routing and scheduling alternatives;
- Identify physical enhancements to Pace bus service facilities to better serve the needs of Justice residents;
- Assess the feasibility of establishing a Metra Station in Justice on the Heritage Corridor Line;
- Facilitate multi-modal access throughout the Village and to destinations outside the Village, including bus service, potential commuter rail service and regional recreational/bicycle trail connections; and
- Realize “spin-off” benefits to improved public transit accessibility, including new housing opportunities, a stronger market for local commercial businesses and an enhanced community identity and image.



Many bus stops in Justice lack appropriate amenities for waiting passengers

B. THE PLANNING PROCESS

A Steering Committee comprised of several Village officials, Village staff and transit agency representatives has been established to work closely with the consulting team during the study, reviewing work products and offering valuable input based on their understanding of both community concerns and transit operations issues. The Steering Committee will host opportunities for public involvement during the planning process, and will provide guidance to the consulting team to ensure that the recommendations and strategies that result from the study are realistic and achievable, and are desirable from local and transit agency perspectives.

To achieve the Village’s planning objectives, a process has been developed that involves the following general steps:

- Analysis of existing physical conditions and demographic characteristics;
- An understanding of existing transit service levels and facilities;
- Several opportunities for input by Village residents, including a community workshop, focus group and written survey;

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The study will include the development of concept plans for a potential future Metra station on this site at the north end of Blackstone Avenue

- Assessment of the feasibility of the proposed Justice Metra Station, to include a preliminary cost-benefit assessment and development of alternative conceptual station facility site plans;
- Assessment of Pace bus service, to include a cost-benefit analysis and improvement strategy; and
- An implementation strategy that includes prioritized actions and an overall phasing plan.

The first three steps in the process are included within this Background Report. As the study moves forward into subsequent steps, the planning process will continue to engage residents, property owners and civic leaders in generating a preferred transit improvement strategy. Recommendations that enjoy significant community support are vitally important as the Village moves forward with its public transit partners to implement the study's recommendations.

C. EXISTING PLANNING POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

Before embarking on a targeted planning effort such as the Justice Transit Improvement Study, it is important to understand the policy context within which the study is undertaken. At both the local level and the regional level, policies have been established and concurrent planning efforts are underway which will have a bearing on implementation of the recommendations of this study. Conversely, the outcome of this study will aid the Village of Justice in advocating for public transit improvements in the Village as regional studies progress. Relevant local policies and regional initiatives are briefly summarized as follows:

- As of 2005, the Village has adopted two phases of a Comprehensive Plan that seeks to maximize commercial business opportunities and maintain housing affordability within the Village. Implemented primarily as a series of zoning code amendments, the Plan has resulted in:
 - Establishment of maximum square footage provisions and strict lot coverage provisions in residential districts to limit the impact of teardown redevelopment on housing affordability, maintain variety in the housing stock, and preserve established neighborhood character. Residential neighborhoods north of 79th Street are limited to a maximum 4,000 sf home size and 25% lot coverage. Residential neighborhoods south of 79th Street are limited to a maximum 2,500 sf home size and 20% lot coverage. 35% of the total lot must remain as green space in all residential districts.
 - A review of business zoning district provisions and adjustments to zoning standards and permitted uses along the Village's major arterials in an effort to enhance the business environment;
 - Establishment of a C-I Planned Commercial and Office Development District to facilitate coordinated redevelopment of commercial areas in a mixed use format. This district has not yet been mapped in any locations within the Village.
- The Village has created two tax increment finance (TIF) districts in the past and is considering a third. The two existing TIF Districts have resulted in major residential development projects, Arbors of Justice and Asbury Woods. The new TIF would encompass commercially zoned frontage along both Archer Avenue and 79th Street, from just west of Oak Grove Avenue on the west to 86th Avenue on the east.

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- Pace is currently working on a study entitled the “South Cook County Will County Initiative” to conduct a comprehensive review and restructuring of service in the area that encompasses the Village of Justice. It encompasses 81 communities and 48 bus routes. The purpose of the study is to review current Pace service in South and Southwest Cook County and in Will County in order to ensure the most effective use of existing resources to meet current and projected travel needs, and to identify areas where additional resources are needed to expand service to meet current and future travel needs.
- There are two regional studies being supported by the Regional Transportation Authority that would be applicable to the service in the southwest suburbs: “Moving Beyond Congestion” and the “Job Access and Reverse Commute Grant /New Freedom Program.”
 - Moving Beyond Congestion is a strategic plan being undertaken by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in conjunction with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace. The objective of the strategic plan calls for significant investments to maintain, enhance and expand transit service to address congestion and support economic growth. The plan includes recommended projects specific to the Metra Heritage Corridor line as well as the Metra/BNSF and Metra/Southwest Service Lines which are beyond the federal transportation bill (i.e. SAFETEA-LU) authorized New Start program. The Metra Heritage Corridor service recommended improvements include upgrading infrastructure, signals and implementing rail-to-rail grade crossings on the Heritage Corridor to provide for more frequent peak and off-peak service (as also recommended by the CREATE project discussed in Chapter 2). The plan also includes recommendations to seek additional capital and operating funding to maintain, enhance and expand Pace bus service.
 - The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Initiative (NFI) programs, administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act- A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) legislation, supports projects that increase transportation options for low-income workers and people with disabilities, respectively. Beginning in 2007, projects selected for both programs must be derived from a Coordinated Public Transit- Human Services Transportation Plan, the creation of which is being led by the RTA.

II. EXISTING COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

This Chapter summarizes relevant information on existing conditions in the Village of Justice and is organized in the following topic areas:

- *Locational Framework* - describes contextual issues surrounding the Village
- *Demographic Summary* - contains a "snapshot" of the demographic and housing characteristics of the Village
- *Existing Land Use and Community Facilities* - describes overall development patterns and key activity generators within the Village
- *Access and Circulation* - describes the roadway and sidewalk system in the Village
- *Potential Metra Station Area* - describes pertinent physical and environmental features in the area immediately surrounding the potential future Metra Station site

A. LOCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Several features of the area surrounding the Village of Justice are described below. Several of these features are also depicted in [Figure 1: Vicinity Map](#) on the following page.

- The Village is divided through the center by the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and is located just south of Interstate 55.
- The Des Plaines River, the Sanitary Drainage and Ship Canal, and the Illinois and Michigan (I & M) Canal run parallel to one another just north of the Village, separating the Village from the I-55 right-of-way. The I & M Canal now terminates at its eastern end adjacent to the Village, and as it extends west serves as a major historical tourist attraction, with canal-side trails and historical markers.
- The Metra Heritage Corridor Line forms the northern edge of the Village, operating on the double-tracked Canadian National Railroad right-of-way immediately south of the I & M Canal. The Metra/BNSF Line operates approximately three miles north of the Village, and the Metra SouthWest Service Line runs approximately two miles southeast of the Village.
- Midway Airport, and the terminus of the CTA Orange Line, an elevated light rail connection to downtown Chicago, is located northeast of the Village, along Cicero Avenue between 55th and 63rd Streets.
- Major shopping centers in the vicinity of Justice include the Quarry shopping center in Hodgkins, Ford City Mall on the east side of Cicero Avenue at 76th Street, and a shopping center at the southwest corner of Roberts Road and 95th Street in Hickory Hills.
- There are significant potential shopping and/or employment destination opportunities for Justice residents at the UPS facility in Hodgkins, further west along the I-55 corridor in business parks in Woodridge and Bolingbrook, and south along LaGrange Road in Orland Park. A major new industrial park and commercial development is also underway in McCook, on 47th Street west of First Avenue.
- The Village of Justice is served by Argo Community High School District 217, with students attending Argo High School in Summit, located three blocks east of Archer Avenue on 63rd Street.
- Moraine Valley Community College is located south of the Village, at approximately 88th Avenue and 107th Street. The college serves a broad area with over one hundred degree programs.

FIGURE NO. 1: VICINITY MAP



Data Sources: Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's Digital Map of the Region (1997) and Census 2000 for Municipal Boundaries

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Justice Transit Improvement Study
 HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates

B. DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

The following section summarizes key demographic and housing characteristics from the U.S. Census Bureau for the Village of Justice. Where appropriate, demographic and housing statistics for Cook County overall have been provided as a comparison. Demographic and housing characteristics provide a context for the transit planning concepts and recommendations that will be prepared as part of this study. Vehicle ownership, occupation, income levels, home ownership and several other factors are appropriate in determining transit dependency.

Demographic Characteristics

- The Village of Justice has a current population of 12,692 (2005 Special Census), a 4.1% increase since the year 2000 population of 12,193, and a 14.0% increase since 1990 when the population was 11,137. Population projections generated by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), formerly NIPC, indicate that Justice is expected to grow by 20.8% to 14,726 by the year 2030.
- In 2000, there were 4,402 households; the number of households is expected to increase to 5,967 or 35.6% by the years 2030 according to CMAP projections.
- In 2000, the average household size was 2.77 persons, slightly higher than the average household size in Cook County of 2.68.
- The median age in Justice in 2000 was 31.4. This compares to a median age of 33.8 for Cook County residents.
- Of the population 25 years and over, 21.2% have no high school diploma, 34.6% graduated high school but did not advance beyond high school, 24.9% attended college but did not receive a degree, and 19.5% received an associates degree or higher. Cook County data, in comparison, is 22.3%, 24.2%, 20.3% and 33.2% respectively.
- Median household income in Justice in 1999 was \$50,254, higher than the median household income in Cook County of \$45,922. However, per capita income was lower; per capita income in 1999 dollars was \$20,714 for the Village of Justice and \$23,227 for Cook County.
- 7.3% of Justice residents were considered to be below the poverty level in 1999 as compared to 13.5% of Cook County residents overall.
- 4.3% of Justice residents in 2000 were unemployed.
- For the 6,035 residents employed in 2000, 22.5% were in management and professional occupations, 42.5% were in sales and service occupations, 22.8% were in production or distribution related occupations and 12.2% were in the construction and extraction business. Comparisons with Cook County data are 35.2%, 42.5%, 15.1% and 7.1% respectively. 81.5% of employed Justice residents worked in Cook County.
- The Village of Justice reported that there were 1,797 jobs within the Village in the year 2000; this number is expected to increase to 2,711 or 33.7% by the year 2030 according to CMAP projections.
- With regard to means of transportation to work, 91.8% drove to work (the majority of which drove alone (81.0%) and the balance (10.8%) carpooled); 5.2% used public transportation (bus, subway, railroad and taxicab), and the others either used a bicycle, walked, or used other means. For a further breakdown of these statistics, see Table 1 on the following page.
- Travel time to work statistics indicate that the greatest percentage of Justice residents traveled between 15 and 29 minutes, with those traveling 30-44 minutes the second highest group. The mean travel time to work is approximately 32 minutes. For a further breakdown of these statistics, see Table 2 on the following page.

Table 1: Means of Transportation to Work (2000)

Means of Transportation	No. of Employees	Percent of Employees
Used a Car/Truck/Van	5,543	91.8%
<i>Drove alone</i>	4,889	81.0%
<i>Carpooled</i>	654	10.8%
Used Public Transportation	315	5.2%
<i>Bus</i>	110	1.8%
<i>Subway</i>	88	1.5%
<i>Railroad</i>	111	1.8%
<i>Taxicab</i>	6	0.1%
Used a Bicycle	11	0.2%
Walked	56	0.9%
Other Means	76	1.3%
Worked at Home	34	0.6%
Total Employees	6,035	100%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Journey to Work, 2000

Table 2: Travel Time to Work (2000)

Time Traveled	No. of Workers	% of Workers
1-14 minutes	1,110	18.5%
15-29 minutes	1,815	30.2%
30-44 minutes	1,547	25.8%
45-59 minutes	734	12.2%
60 minutes or more	795	13.3%
Total Employed Outside the Home	6,001	100%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Journey to Work, 2000

- With regard to vehicles available in households: 224 households (5.1%) had no vehicle available; 1,588 (36.1%) had one vehicle available; 1,788 (40.7%) had two vehicles available; and 797 (18.1%) had three or more vehicles available. The figures for Cook County overall were 19.1%, 40.4%, 30.3%, and 10.2% respectively. Justice residents, as true with residents in many other Cook County suburbs, are more auto dependent than City of Chicago residents, which accounts for a greater percent of Justice residents owning two or more vehicles as compared to Cook County overall.

Housing Characteristics

- In 2000, there were 4,772 housing units in Justice. This estimate does not reflect the newly constructed Asbury Woods development which contains 242 townhomes, or the housing units in the Sterling Estates manufactured housing community in adjacent unincorporated Cook County.
- The majority of the housing units, 92.2%, are occupied; 7.8% are considered vacant.
- 36.6% of the housing units are single family homes; 9% are single family attached or duplexes; 21.3% are units in buildings that have 3 to 9 units, 27.9% are in buildings 10 units or larger, and 4.8% are mobile homes.
- Of the occupied housing units, 54% of the housing units are owner occupied and 46% are renter occupied; the percentage of renter occupied is slightly higher than the percentage of renter occupied in Cook County overall (i.e. 42%).
- The median value of owner-occupied homes in 2000 was \$143,500; this is lower than the median value in Cook County of \$157,700.

BACKGROUND REPORT

C. EXISTING LAND USE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

It is important to understand the land use pattern in the Village and the locations of key activity and traffic generators before transit-related recommendations can be developed. Land use patterns and activity centers in the Village of Justice are depicted in [Figure 2: General Land Use Pattern and Activity Centers](#) on the following page, and are described briefly below.

- **Residential areas** are the predominant land use in Justice, and offer a wide variety of housing types and neighborhood environments. Areas that are predominantly single family residential in nature are depicted in Figure 2, and are generally buffered from arterials by commercial and multi-family uses, or by sound walls if adjacent to I-294. While homes vary in age and style in these neighborhoods, the predominant neighborhood character is that of small homes on large lots, resulting in a somewhat “rural” low-density character. In many neighborhood areas sidewalks have never been installed, which further reinforces this character. Other housing environments include:



A typical single-family neighborhood



Sunset Lakes apartment complex



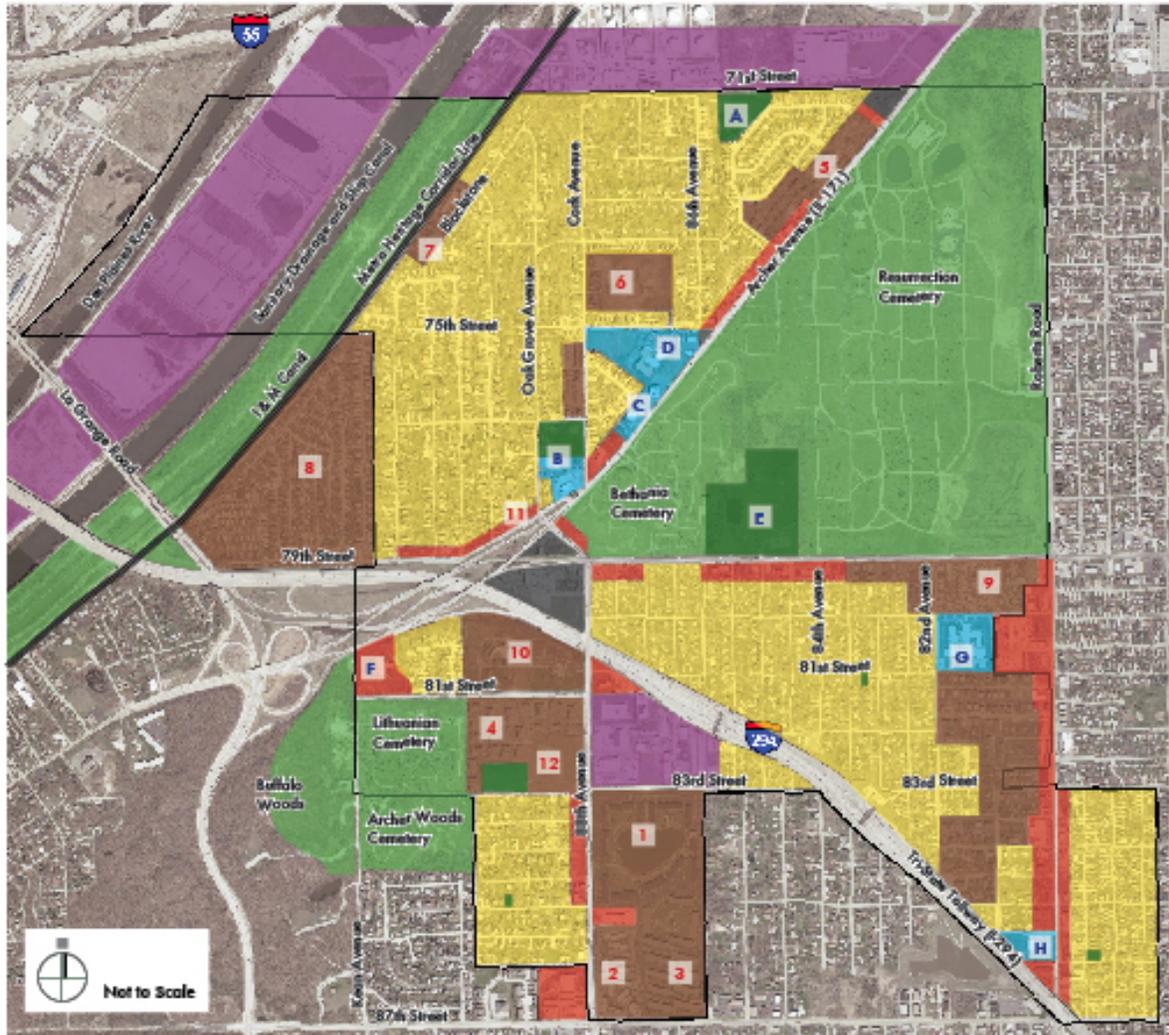
Multi-family residential near the potential Metra station site



Townhomes in the Arbors of Justice subdivision

- Master planned and self-contained apartment communities include Sunset Lakes (512 rental units), Willow Hill (263 rental units) and The Laurels (520 units undergoing conversion to condominiums). These complexes are located east of 88th Avenue between Hickory Trace and 87th Street. They are entirely fenced, with one vehicle entrance each and limited additional pedestrian access points along 88th Avenue.
- Smaller condominium and apartment developments are located in various locations along arterials and along Blackstone Avenue in the vicinity of the proposed future Metra Station site.
- Asbury Woods- Phase I is a 252-unit townhome development developed in recent years, located south of 81st Street on the west side of 88th Avenue.
- Arbors of Justice is a mixed residential subdivision at the north end of Archer Avenue across from Resurrection Cemetery, including 138 townhomes and 109 single family homes adjacent to the new Lipinski Community Center.
- Sterling Estates (adjacent to the west edge of the Village in unincorporated Cook County) and Chief Mobile Home Park (at 79th Street and Roberts Road) offer the option of manufactured housing.
- Rosary Hill Home, at the corner of 88th Avenue and 81st Street, is a retirement home for Dominican Sisters.
- Two residential developments are currently in the proposal stage: 1) Asbury Woods- Phase II (84 townhome units), and 2) a development at the northwest corner of Archer and Oak Grove Avenues (13 townhome units and two commercial businesses).

FIGURE NO. 2: GENERAL LAND USE PATTERN AND ACTIVITY CENTERS



Legend

- Approximate Village Boundary
- Lower Density Residential (predominantly single family)
- Higher Density Residential (predominantly multi family)
- Commercial corridor uses (mix of retail, service, office and multi-family)
- Employment Uses (Light or heavy industrial)
- Municipal or Institutional
- Active Open Space (parks)
- Passive Open Space (cemeteries, wooded areas, trail areas)
- Redevelopment Potential (vacant or under utilized)

Residential Developments

1. Sunset Lakes (apartments)
2. Willow Hill (apartments)
3. The Laurels (condo conversion)
4. Asbury Woods Phase I (townhomes)
5. Arbors of Justice (townhomes)
6. Covington (senior housing)
7. Villa Del Roe (condominiums)
8. Sterling Estates (mobile home park)
9. Chief Mobile Home Park
10. Rosary Hill Home
11. Proposed townhome development
12. Proposed Asbury Woods Phase II (townhomes)

Activity Centers

- A. Upinski Community Center
- B. Municipal complex (Village Hall, Library)
- C. Holy Cross Orthodox Church
- D. Brodnicki School (elementary)/S D 109 Offices
- E. Park District driving range
- F. Surgery Center
- G. Wilkins School (elementary & junior high)
- H. Player Early Childhood Center

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Justice Transit Improvement Study
 HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates

There are approximately 150 commercial businesses in the Village of Justice, located along the arterials of Archer Avenue, 88th Avenue, 79th Street and Roberts Road. **Commercial areas** generally consist of small-scale strip malls or stand-alone buildings with dedicated off-street parking. Businesses include a mix of convenience uses (such as gas stations, food marts and dry cleaners), commercial services (such as barbers), auto-related uses (such as repair shops), and several monument companies along Archer Avenue near the cemeteries. Commercial uses are interspersed with multi-family residential buildings along the arterials.



Commercial uses on 79th Street

- Employment uses within the Village are located in a **light industrial** area east of 88th Avenue north of Hickory Trace Drive.

- **Schools** in the Village include Wilkins School at 80th Street and 82nd Avenue (elementary and junior high), Brodnicki School at 8641 West 75th Street (elementary), and Player Early Childhood Center at 8600 South Roberts Road. The Indian Springs School District 109 administrative offices are located adjacent to Brodnicki School.



Justice municipal complex

- Major **municipal and institutional uses** along arterials in the Village include the following:

- The Village municipal complex at 7800 South Archer Road, including Village Hall, the fire and police departments and the public library.
- Lipinski Community Center, at 7256 Skyline Drive in the Arbors of Justice subdivision.
- Holy Cross Orthodox Church, on a prominent Archer Avenue site just south of Brodnicki School.



Bethania Cemetery entrance

- **Parks and open spaces** in the Village include:

- Resurrection, Bethania and Lithuanian cemeteries.
- A Park District driving range north of 79th Street at approximately 85th Avenue.
- A new public park with perimeter walking trail adjacent to the Lipinski Community Center in the Arbors of Justice subdivision.
- A *proposed* new four-acre park just south of the Asbury Woods- Phase I townhome development.



This vacant site along Archer Avenue at 86th Avenue may have potential for redevelopment in a transit-supportive manner, in conjunction with an intersection improvement project

Areas that are predominantly vacant or underutilized have been highlighted in Figure 2 as they may have redevelopment potential for transit-related or transit-supportive uses in the future. Because the Village is essentially built-out, most redevelopment opportunities will primarily consist of “in-fill” redevelopment (i.e. replacement of isolated aging or obsolete structures). In order to streamline traffic movement and create a more cohesive and pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment along Village arterials, it would be prudent to consider the redevelopment of adjacent sites in a manner that allows for consolidated curb cuts and shared parking lots.

BACKGROUND REPORT

D. ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Two aspects of access and circulation are important to consider for transit planning, the roadway network and the pedestrian mobility system related to it. This section of the report describes key features of each in the Village of Justice.

Roadway Network

Key aspects of the street system in the Village are depicted in [Figure 3: Access and Circulation - Roadway Network](#) on the following page, and are also described below.

- The Tri-State Tollway (I-294) cuts through the Village diagonally with no access points in the Village. A sound barrier separates the Tollway from adjacent neighborhoods. The Tollway carries approximately 157,000 cars through the Village on a typical day, according to IDOT traffic counts.
- La Grange Road is a U.S. Highway (U.S. Routes 45/12/20) that runs north-south, west of the Village, accessed via ramps from westbound Archer Avenue or 79th Street. La Grange Road carries approximately 67,000 cars per day north of I-294 and 37,000 cars per day south of I-294, according to IDOT traffic counts.
- Archer Avenue (Illinois Route 171) is a state highway running diagonally through the Village, providing one link between the north and south sides of the Village at an intersection with 88th/Oak Grove Avenue. Just over 17,000 cars travel along Archer Avenue on a typical day, according to IDOT traffic counts.
- 88th Avenue, 79th Street, 87th Street and Roberts Road function as arterials. Average daily traffic (ADT) counts on these arterials, according to IDOT traffic counts, are as follows:
 - 88th Avenue: 11,600 ADT
 - 79th Street: 24,100 ADT
 - 87th Street: 22,500 ADT
 - Roberts Road: 19,700 ADT
- A system of collector streets provides access from Village neighborhoods to the arterial street system, as depicted in Figure 3.
- In most older single family residential neighborhoods in the Village, a rural cross-section exists on both collector and local streets, with grassy drainage swales and no curbs, gutters or sidewalks.
- Traffic signals exist only at the locations noted in Figure 3. As a result, pedestrian crossing of arterials in intermediate locations can be quite treacherous.
- Right-of-way widths for selected Village roadways are as follows:
 - 100 feet: 88th Avenue (south of 79th Street)
Cork Avenue (north of Archer Avenue)
Portions of 86th Avenue (north of Archer Avenue)
 - 80 feet: Portions of 86th Avenue (north of Archer Avenue)
 - 50 feet: Oak Grove Avenue, Blackstone Avenue
- Reconstruction of 88th Avenue is underway, with completion expected in the Spring of 2007. After reconstruction is complete, 88th Avenue will be five lanes in width with a continuous left turn lane, sidewalks on both sides, new street lights and new bus stop pads/shelters. Other arterials in the Village are generally in good condition, with the exception of Archer Avenue which currently has a rural cross-section with gravel shoulders in most areas.
- There is a possibility for an intersection improvement at the junction of Archer Avenue, 75th Street and 86th Avenue. A vacant Village-owned lot adjacent to the current intersection may afford the Village the opportunity to reconfigure the intersection to improve traffic safety, while also setting some land aside for parking and/or other improvements.



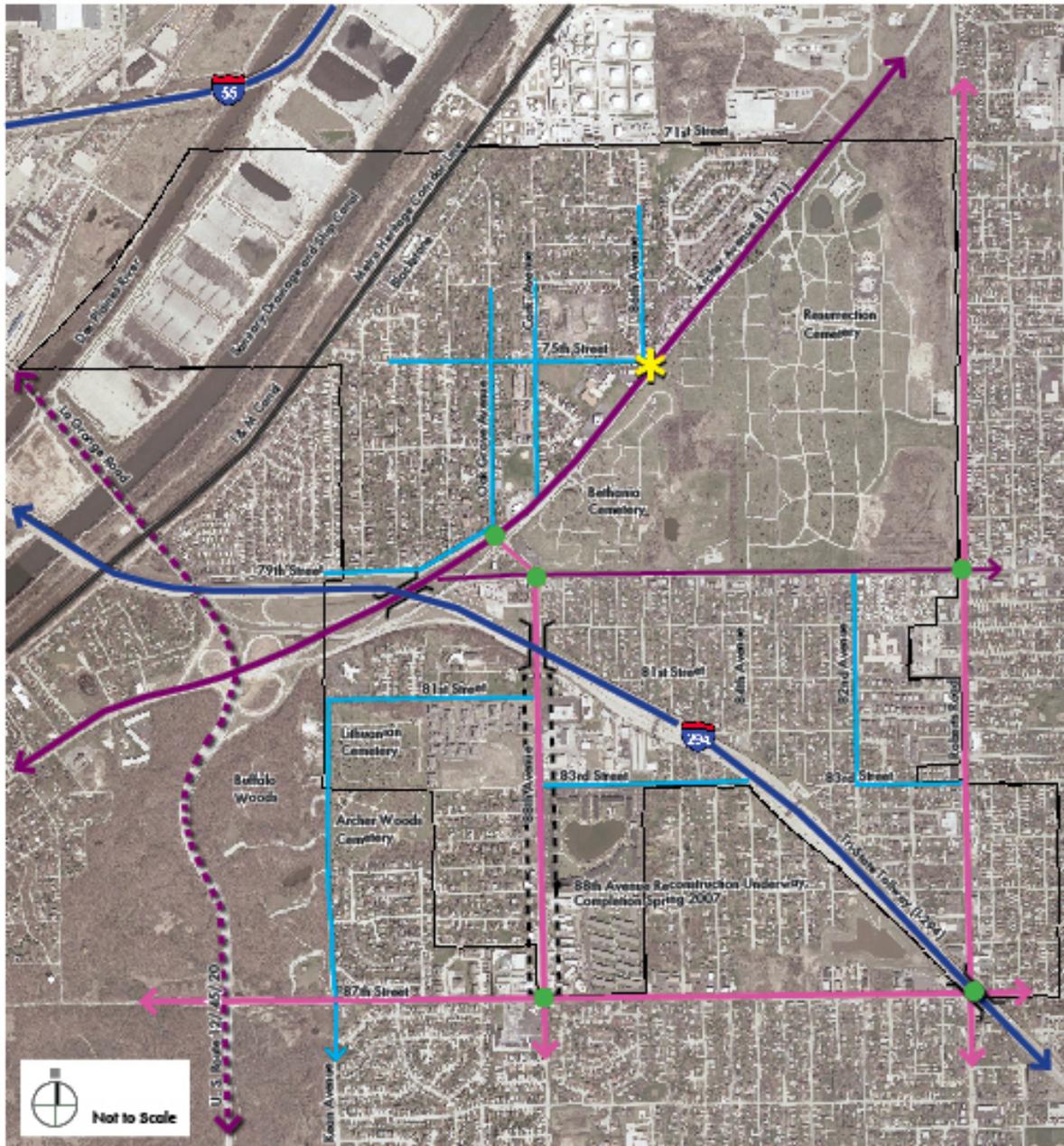
Typical Archer Avenue conditions at commercial areas, with undefined curb cuts and missing sidewalks



A typical "rural" cross-section street in a single family residential neighborhood

BACKGROUND REPORT

FIGURE NO. 3: ACCESS AND CIRCULATION - ROADWAY NETWORK



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | Approximate Village Boundary | | Collector (local jurisdiction) |
| | Expressway (grade separated) | | Traffic Signals |
| | Major Arterial (U.S. Highway) | | Potential Intersection Improvements |
| | Major Arterial (State Highway) | | |
| | Arterial (Cook County jurisdiction) | | |

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Justice Transit Improvement Study
 HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates

Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

Key aspects of the pedestrian and bicycle mobility system in the Village are depicted in [Figure 4: Access and Circulation - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network](#) on the following page, and are also described below.

- Some newer neighborhood areas within the Village have sidewalks, as indicated on Figure 4. However, there remain several neighborhood areas where safe pedestrian and bicycle movement are very limited, due to the lack of curbed streets and sidewalks.
- New sidewalks will be installed along both sides of 88th Avenue during the ongoing street reconstruction project.
- Sidewalks exist along portions of the south side of 79th Street, but there are gaps in the network here and there that make walking and biking difficult.
- The Village has secured funds for construction of sidewalks along both sides of Archer Avenue and along the perimeter of the Resurrection and Bethania cemeteries. A CMAQ grant for the installation of sidewalks on Roberts Road between 79th Street and 87th Street has also been secured, but is currently on hold.
- The most significant gaps in the pedestrian network currently appear to be the lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle access in the vicinity of the intersection of Archer Avenue, 79th Street and 88th Avenue. This area is an important linkage point for the north and south areas of Justice and is a key community “gateway” location. The section of 79th Street west of Oak Grove Avenue provides no safe pathway for pedestrians or bicycles to access commercial businesses or institutions in the Village from Sterling Estates. 88th Avenue extending south from 79th Street over I-294 also creates a very difficult environment for pedestrians.
- Several major intersections in the Village that coincide with Pace bus stop locations do not have adequate crosswalks and amenities to facilitate pedestrian movement, such as wide curb ramps and pedestrian-activated crossing signals. Of particular concern are the adjacent intersections of Archer Avenue/Oak Grove Avenue and 79th Street/88th Avenue. This is the only direct pedestrian connection point between the north and south sides of Justice, and it is currently very difficult for pedestrians to traverse.
- An off-street pathway was installed at the perimeter of the park north of the Lipinski Community Center, and also along the north side of 81st Street west of 88th Avenue.
- The I & M Canal Trail runs adjacent to the I & M Canal from Route 83 on the west end to La Grange Road on the east end, with a parking facility for trail users available near Willow Springs Road. There may be an opportunity for an extension of the trail further east, which will be explored in conjunction with the development of concepts for the potential future Metra station site in the next step of the planning process.



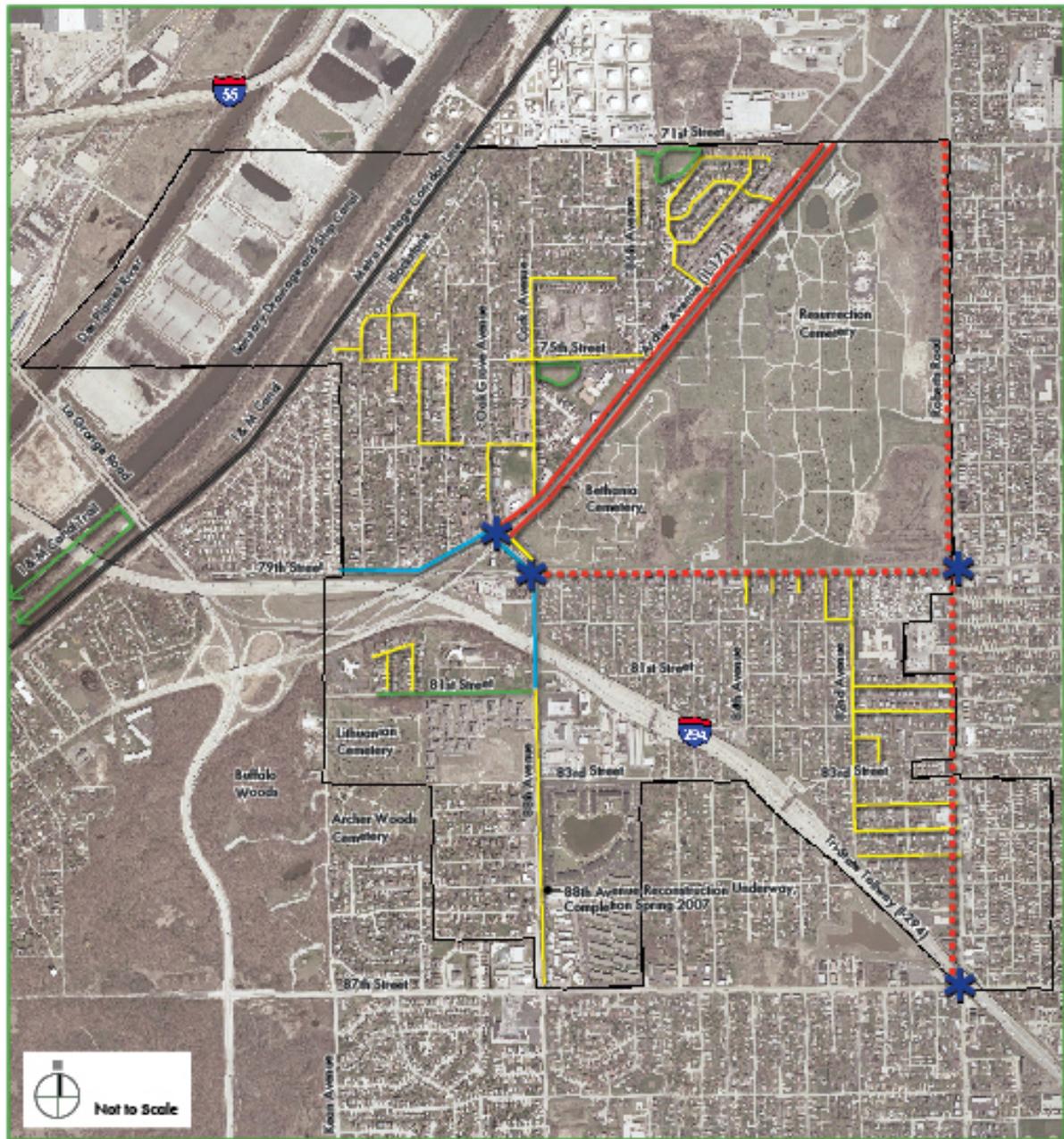
Sidewalks are present on some blocks along the south side of 79th Street, but are missing on others, resulting in difficult walking and bicycling conditions



The key “gateway” intersection of Archer Avenue and 88th / Oak Grove Avenue is treacherous for pedestrians

BACKGROUND REPORT

FIGURE NO. 4: ACCESS AND CIRCULATION - PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK



Legend

- Approximate Village Boundary
- Sidewalks - continuous, good condition
- Sidewalks - discontinuous, poor condition
- Sidewalks to be installed Spring 2007 (funding secured, design underway)

- Sidewalks pending (grant on hold)
- Off-Street Pathway
- Gaps in pedestrian network and/or pedestrian-hostile environment
- Major intersections without pedestrian-friendly features (such as crosswalks or pedestrian-activated walk signals)

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Justice Transit Improvement Study
HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates

E. POTENTIAL METRA STATION AREA

A key outcome of this study will be an understanding of the feasibility of pursuing construction of a new Metra station to directly serve the residents of Justice. The Village has purchased two properties in the vicinity of a potential future Metra station site. When combined with adjacent public rights-of-way, including a 33-foot right-of-way at 71st Street, the northernmost section of Blackstone Avenue, and a 30 foot Canadian National (CN) Railroad right-of-way adjacent to the railroad embankment, the Village currently controls approximately 3 1/2 contiguous acres of land. The following are a few key features of the potential station area that will be considered as concept plans are developed in the next step of the planning process:



The Metra/HC Line is a double track on a raised embankment through Justice



An existing square culvert provides access under the Metra/HC Line near the potential station site

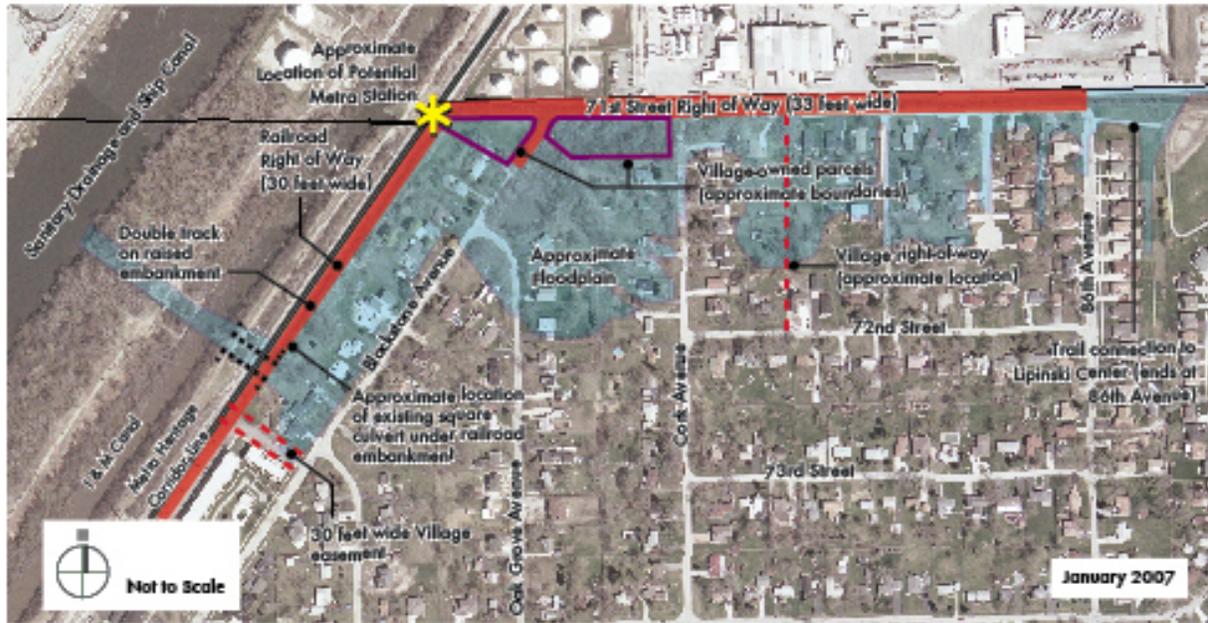


A narrow Village-controlled right-of-way at 71st Street extended could potentially serve as a station access route

- The double tracks used by the Metra/HC Line service and freight rail are on a raised embankment, with the tracks several feet above the surrounding grade.
- The entire potential station area, along with much of the surroundings area, is currently in a designated floodplain.
- Approximately one block south of the potential station site is a square culvert that provides access under the embankment. It may be feasible to expand this culvert to allow for adequate access to the north side of the embankment for emergency vehicles and/or Metra passengers. Any such change would need to be discussed with the CN Railroad.
- Another potential use of an expanded culvert would be a trail connection to an extended I & M Canal trail, whether or not the Metra station is constructed.
- If a station facility is constructed at the site, there would be a potential for a future connection to Amtrak, which also currently utilizes the CN Railroad.
- The large industrial facility located just north of the 71st Street right-of-way is in neighboring Bedford Park. The northern half of the 71st Street right-of-way is also in Bedford Park and has been vacated, and is therefore no longer available to provide access to the potential Metra station site. In addition, the tank storage facility is a visual eyesore that is clearly visible from the potential Metra station site.

The configuration of Village-controlled land, along with the key features described above, are depicted in [Figure 5: Potential Metra Station Area](#) on the following page.

FIGURE NO. 5: POTENTIAL METRA STATION AREA



Another important consideration in planning for a potential future Metra station in this location is the ability of Metra to provide additional service. Because of current level of freight rail interference, future increases in commuter rail service on the Metra/HC Line are largely dependent upon the implementation of improvements elsewhere along the Line to alleviate freight rail interference. The CREATE (Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency) Project identifies several improvements that are needed to allow increased levels of traffic on the CN tracks. The most significant project is a proposed rail-to-rail grade separation of the two CN tracks over three Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) tracks in Bedford Park [CP Canal (Argo)], which could directly impact the proposed Justice station site. CREATE also proposed a rail-to-rail grade separation at the Brighton Park crossing in Chicago at Archer and Western Avenues, where the Heritage Corridor Line (two CN tracks) currently crosses over five tracks (three Norfolk Southern and two CSX tracks). Two other busy rail-to-rail crossings were studied as future grade separations, at LeMoyné (CN and Belt Railway Company) and Corwith (CN and BNSF), however both of these projects were not listed in the CREATE schedule of projects. In addition to these major projects, track upgrades and new connections further east, between Cicero and Ashland Avenues, are proposed. Funding availability and timing for these proposed improvements is unknown at this time. Once these improvements are in place, Metra can pursue negotiations with the CN Railroad for additional track access to increase service levels along the Metra/HC Line.

BACKGROUND REPORT

III. EXISTING TRANSIT FACILITIES AND SERVICE

This Chapter summarizes relevant information on existing transit facilities and services in and surrounding the Village of Justice, and is organized in the following topic areas:

- *Pace Suburban Bus* - describes service levels, routes, ridership characteristics and infrastructure within the Village of Justice
- *Metra Commuter Rail* - describes existing transit service levels, ridership characteristics and facilities along the Heritage Corridor line, and in particular at the stations adjacent to Justice
- *Lyons Township Para-Transit Services* - describes door-to-door bus service provided to elderly and/or handicapped residents of the Village of Justice

Figure 6: Existing Transit Routes and Facilities on the following page depicts existing bus routes and transit infrastructure, which are described in detail in the sections to follow, along with the location of the potential future Metra station site described in the previous chapter.

A. PACE SUBURBAN BUS

Bus service in the Village of Justice is provided by Pace, the suburban bus transit provider in the Chicago region. Pace covers 3,500 square miles and is the 14th largest bus service in North America. Pace serves 130,000 daily riders with 240 routes, 450 vanpools and many Dial-a-Ride programs. All Pace bus service is wheelchair accessible, and all Pace buses are equipped with bicycle racks.

Current Pace fares are \$1.50 and Pace accepts a variety of fare instruments including cash, Pace 10-Ride Tickets, Pace Commuter Club Cards, student passes, Metra Link-Up Passes, as well as CTA passes and transit cards. Reduced fares are offered for children aged seven to eleven, senior citizens and disabled residents with a Reduced Fare Permit, and students with valid student identification on school days between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. Children under the age of seven ride for free. Pace also offers local fares in some areas and higher fares for express and/or subscription routes, however, none of these types of routes serve the Village of Justice.

Pace also provides Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Service, pre-arranged curb-to-curb service for persons with disabilities whose eligibility has been determined by a regional certification process. Pace's ADA Paratransit Services operate in all areas that are within three quarters of a mile of regular fixed route service and during the same days and hours as the regular fixed route service. As of July 1, 2006, Pace became responsible for operating all ADA Paratransit services in the six-county region, including those previously provided by the CTA.

The Village of Justice is relatively well-served by Pace bus routes due to its proximity to major destinations such as Ford City Shopping Center, Midway Airport and CTA's Orange Line. Existing bus services in Justice have been described by some current users as reliable and on time. Bus routes serving these destinations must travel through Justice from areas to the south and west. There are four Pace bus routes serving the Village of Justice: 379 West 79th Street, 385 87th/111th/127th, 390 Midway CTA - UPS Hodgkins, and 831 Joliet - Midway.

The four Pace bus routes are depicted in Figure 6.

FIGURE NO. 6: EXISTING TRANSIT ROUTES AND FACILITIES



Legend

- Approximate Village Boundary
- Existing Pace Bus Routes
- ★ Potential Future Metro Station
- Busiest Bus Stop Locations
- ★ Existing Pace Bus Shelters (Does not include shelters to be reinstalled on 88th Avenue in Spring 2007)

January 2007

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Justice Transit Improvement Study
 HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates

Service Levels

Service frequency and hours of service for each of the four bus routes are shown in Table 3 below, listed generally in order of level of service. These service levels are typical of suburban bus operations.

Table 3: Justice Pace Route Service Levels

Route No.	Frequency		Approximate Service Hours in Justice		
	Peak	Off-Peak	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
379	30 minute	60 minute	EB 5am - 10:30pm WB 6am - 10:40pm	EB 7:45am - 5:50pm WB 8:10am - 7:20pm	EB 9:40am - 5:45pm WB 11:10am - 6:30pm
831	4 trips NB, 6 trips SB		7am - 6pm	No Service in Justice	No Service
390	7 trips WB, 8 trips EB		3am - 9:50pm	No Service	No Service
385	60 minute	60 minute	NB 6am - 6:40pm SB 7:15am - 7:15pm	No Service	No Service

EB = eastbound, WB = westbound, NB = northbound, SB = southbound

Source: Pace

Bus Route 379-West 79th Street

Route 379 provides the most comprehensive service to the residents of Justice in terms of service levels and routing. Bus route 379 operates on 88th Avenue and 79th Street and connects Justice to Moraine Valley Community College, Ford City Shopping Center, Midway Airport and the CTA Orange Line. Service is provided seven days a week for approximately 17 hours on weekdays, 10.5 hours on Saturday and 8 hours on Sunday. Buses operate 30 minutes apart during the peak/rush time periods, and every hour at other times. The busiest bus stops are along 88th Avenue adjacent to the Willow Hill and Sunset Lakes apartment complexes, and at 79th Street and Roberts Road.

Bus Route 831- Joliet-Midway

Route 831 operates on Archer Avenue with connections to the CTA Orange Line, Midway Airport, Orland Square Mall, Stateville Prison and downtown Joliet. Service is provided to Justice on weekdays only. Although route 831 operates on Saturdays, it operates as an express on Interstate 55 and does not travel along Archer Avenue. Service is limited to four northbound trips and six southbound trips each weekday. The northbound trips serve Justice at approximately 7:05 a.m., 10:10 a.m., 1:20 p.m., and 4:45 p.m. The southbound trips leave Midway at 7:45 a.m., 10:35 a.m., 1:45 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 5:17 p.m., and 6:09 p.m. There are five bus stops for route 831 on Archer between 88th Avenue and Heather Trail. Pace ridership data by bus stop indicates that passenger activity along Archer Avenue is very low and that passenger alightings exceed passenger boardings. This phenomenon was raised at the stakeholder workshop when a bus rider in attendance observed that he takes route 379 in the morning due to service frequency, but he takes route 831 in the afternoon because it is closer to his home and a bus leaves Midway terminal at a convenient time.

Bus Route 390- Midway CTA-UPS Hodgkins

Route 390 is subsidized by UPS in Hodgkins and service is scheduled to serve the facility's shift changes. In Justice the route operates on Archer Avenue west of 88th Avenue, and on 79th Street east of 88th Avenue. The route serves UPS, Daley College, Ford City Shopping Center, Midway Airport and the CTA Orange Line. On weekdays trips leave Midway westbound at 3 a.m., 8:32 a.m., 8:40 a.m., 8:55 a.m., 3:52 p.m., 3:57 p.m., and 8:50 p.m. Trips returning eastbound to Midway leave UPS at 3:24 a.m., (Tuesday through Saturdays), 8:35 a.m., 8:45 a.m., 9:35 a.m., 2:50 p.m., 3 p.m., 9:15 p.m., and 9:40 p.m. The ridership by bus stop data indicates that Justice residents occasionally take advantage of route 390 even though service frequency is limited. It is not known whether these riders are employees of UPS. They may have schedules that coincide with route 390's schedule, or they may just be catching the first bus that comes along.

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Bus Route 385- 87th/111th/127th

Route 385 serves the southwest corner of the Village operating on 87th Street east of Roberts Road and on Roberts Road south of 87th Street. Route 385 provides connections to the CTA Orange Line, Midway Airport, Ford City Shopping Center, Moraine Valley Community College, Worth Metra Station, St. Francis Hospital in Blue Island and Rivercrest Shopping Center. Route 385 provides service on weekdays only with hourly frequencies between 6 a.m. and 7:15 p.m. The busiest bus stop serving Justice is at Roberts Road and 87th Street.

Ridership

Ridership by route is collected using data from the electronic farebox on each bus. Daily summaries for every bus route are prepared and utilized to track ridership trends and evaluate route performance. Routes are categorized into route types, (CTA Connector, Suburban Link, Metra Feeder, or Intra-Community), and routes are analyzed within their route type. Each of the Pace bus routes that serve Justice are defined as CTA Connectors. The average daily ridership reported in the fourth quarters of 2004 and 2005 for each of these four routes is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Justice Pace Route Average Daily Ridership

Route No.	Route Name	Day Type	2004 Ridership	2005 Ridership	Percent Change
379	W. 79th Street	Weekday	1,250	1,331	6.5%
379	W. 79th Street	Saturday	465	546	17.4%
379	W. 79th Street	Sunday	247	339	37.2%
385	87th/111th/127th	Weekday	864	981	13.5%
390	Midway - UPS	Weekday	401	483	20.4%
831	Joliet - Midway	Weekday	147	145	-1.4%
831	Joliet - Midway	Saturday	69	67	-2.9%

Source: Pace

The table shows that all but route 831 have experienced ridership gains when compared to 2004 fourth quarter ridership. To provide some context for the table, the average weekday route ridership for CTA Connector routes in the fourth quarter 2005 was 1,119, and the weekday ridership median was approximately 790 riders.

Ridership alone does not provide an accurate picture of how well routes perform. Operating data that reflects service levels, revenue and hours/miles consumed are used to measure service effectiveness and efficiency. Each quarter Pace analyzes ridership by route along with operating data to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of each route. The service evaluation is based on the route's service effectiveness, recovery ratio and subsidy per rider. Service effectiveness measures how well the route is utilized, whereas the measures for recovery ratio and subsidy per rider indicate financial route performance.¹ Each quarter the bus routes that do not meet minimum standards set by Pace are highlighted on either an Action or Review List for further analysis. Routes on either of these two lists are subject to service modifications to improve efficiency. If a route continues to perform poorly, then it may be proposed for elimination. In these instances, public hearings are conducted to solicit community input.

A review of the four bus routes serving Justice was conducted to ascertain their performance trends. Graphs illustrating the 2005 trends are shown in Figures 7 through 9. The 2005 quarterly reports show that routes 379 and 390 consistently performed better than average. Route 385 was below the system average, but still above the minimum requirements for all three measures. In contrast to the

¹ Service effectiveness is the number of passengers per hour of service, the recovery ratio is the percentage of operating costs covered by rider fares and operational subsidies, and the subsidy per rider is the external funding required to support the service in addition to farebox revenue collected directly from riders.

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acceptable performance levels of these three routes, route 831 on weekdays exhibits poor performance under all three performance measures. On Saturdays the service effectiveness measure for route 831 improves, however, the recovery ratio and subsidy per rider do not meet required levels. This data indicates that the future provision of service on route 831 depends upon improved performance. Improved performance can be accomplished by reducing costs (achieved through service modifications), or by increasing revenues (i.e., increasing ridership levels, raising the fare on this particular route, or obtaining an operating subsidy for this route).

Figure 7: Service Effectiveness

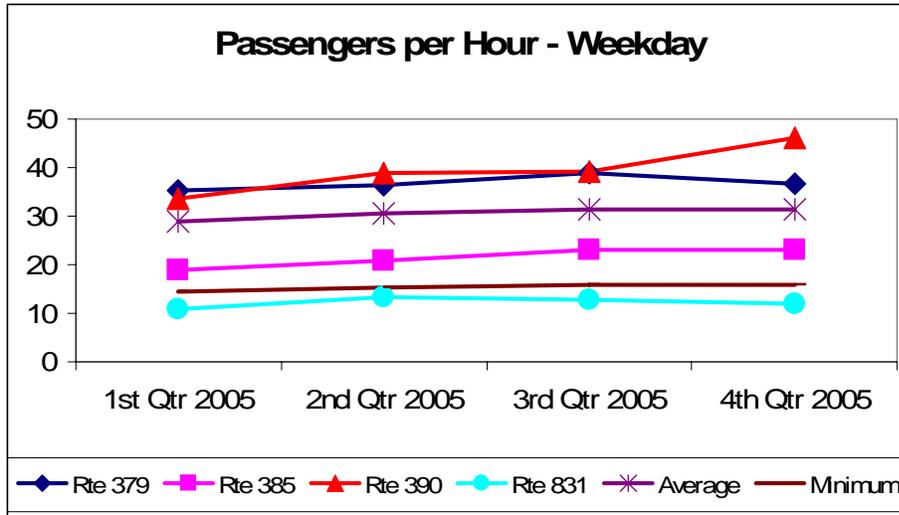


Figure 8: Recovery Ratio

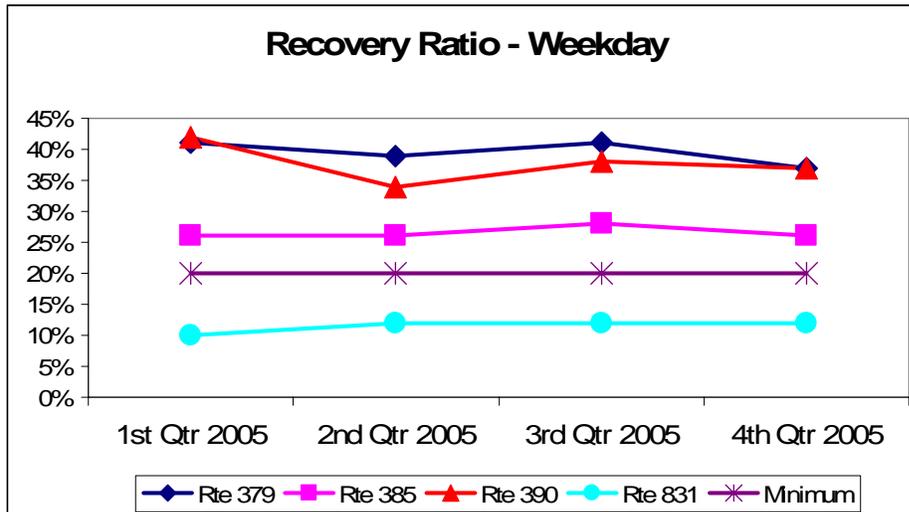
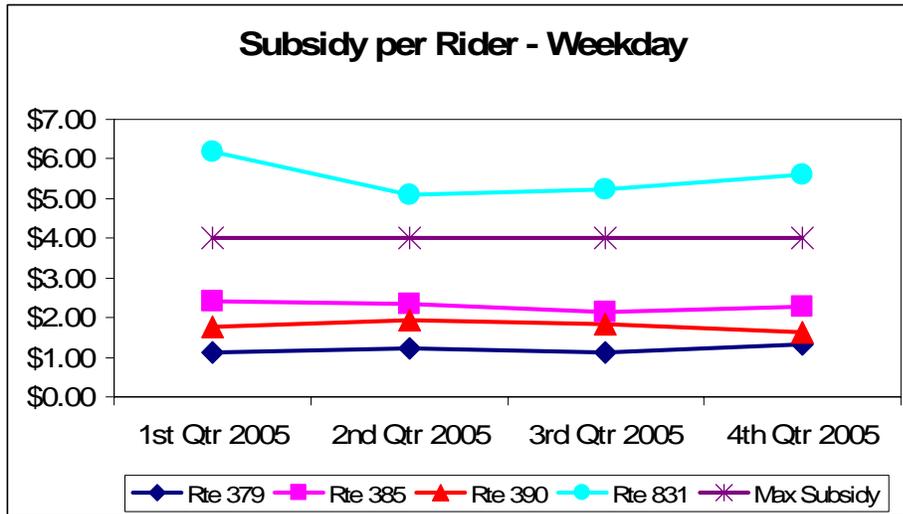


Figure 9: Subsidy per Rider



In addition to the ridership figures by route that are calculated from the farebox, Pace also obtains ridership by bus stop through Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs). The APCs collect data at each stop and counts boarding passengers as well as alighting passengers. Not all Pace buses are equipped with APCs and so the data is a sample, not a complete dataset for each trip. Even though the data does not reflect each trip for every day of service, the sampled data does indicate which bus stops generate the greatest passenger activity. Within Justice, the busiest bus stops (depicted in Figure 6) are located at:

- 88th Avenue and 87th Street
- 88th Avenue and 85th Street
- 88th Avenue and 83rd Street
- 88th Avenue and 79th Street
- 79th Street and Roberts Road
- 87th Street and Roberts Road

Bus Transit Infrastructure

Bus service, as compared to rail service, requires relatively little investment in capital infrastructure. Basic capital investments include the purchase of buses and bus stop signs. Bus stop signs are a marketing and information tool and are used to mark the route and communicate to the passenger the route number serving that stop. In suburban transit markets, not every stop is equipped with a bus stop sign. Much of Pace's operating territory is operated as a "flag stop" system where the bus driver will stop when signaled by a waiting passenger - as long as it is safe to do so. Within Justice the busiest stops are marked with a bus stop sign.

Bus Stop Amenities

Additional amenities for bus customers include shelters, benches and concrete pads. Special lighting can also be considered as well as trash receptacles, windbreaks, leaning rails, transit information boards and electronic message signs. The transit experience can be greatly enhanced by providing some of these relatively small infrastructure improvements. A concrete pad is the first basic improvement to consider. A pad provides a firm standing space for waiting passengers, removing them

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from the mud and high grass that can be found along typical roadways. A shelter provides protection from wind, rain, snow and sun. It is typically reserved for the busiest bus stops due to the added cost of construction and maintenance. Benches give transit riders the opportunity to sit down while waiting for the bus - an important feature for the elderly or disabled members of the community. Benches are often provided free of charge by advertising companies, who sell the space on the back of the bench for advertising. This is the case in Justice where ad benches can be found along all the major arterials, even along Roberts Road where no bus service is provided.

A survey of transit infrastructure in Justice reveals that there are opportunities to improve the transit experience. A review of the bus stops shows that most locations lack a concrete pad for waiting passengers. Concrete pads at the busiest locations would improve the waiting environment for Justice Residents. When provided, concrete pads must be compliant with ADA Accessibility Guidelines. These guidelines require a paved surface at least eight feet long and five feet wide. The Pace Development Guidelines recommend construction of a paved waiting area at high-volume bus stops and in new developments that are expected to generate a high volume of transit use. Ideally, these pads would be 25 feet in length and connect to the existing sidewalks.



A bus shelter at 79th Street and 84th Avenue

There are two bus passenger shelters in Justice. Both are located on eastbound 79th Street - one at 84th Avenue and the other at Roberts Road as depicted in Figure 6. Both of these locations are busy bus stops. Additional shelters should be considered for the busiest locations on 88th Avenue. The APC data indicates that some of the 88th Avenue stops produce more passenger activity than the bus stops on 79th Street.



Inhospitable conditions at a bus stop at Archer Avenue and 86th Avenue.

Bus Stop Access

In addition to amenities at the bus stop itself, clear pathways to the bus stop are essential. Clear pathways include the provision of sidewalks with curb cuts for disabled residents and unobstructed access to the street on which the bus operates. Sidewalks remove pedestrians from the street and provide a safer and more comfortable walking environment. Curb cuts are a necessity for residents in wheelchairs but are also a convenience for residents with wheeled briefcases, suitcases or backpacks.

There are many areas in Justice without sidewalks, although new sidewalks are planned in several areas as designated previously on Figure 4. The absence of sidewalks provides a somewhat rural character to neighborhoods and is attractive to some residents. However, the lack of sidewalks inhibits pedestrian movements and in turn, discourages transit use. If a more transit-friendly environment is desired, then arterial streets with bus service and streets within three blocks of the arterial should be considered for sidewalk improvements. Studies have shown that bus riders will walk an average of three-eighths of a mile to access bus service, while rail riders will walk a bit farther - an average of one-half mile.

Future Plans

Planning and construction efforts are currently underway that will impact the transit environment within Justice. Sidewalk improvements are programmed which will enhance pedestrian travel and benefit transit users. In addition, Pace has embarked on a planning initiative to review bus services in the area.

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Sidewalks

As indicated in Chapter 2, a major street reconstruction project is currently taking place along 88th Avenue/Cork Avenue. In conjunction with that construction project, sidewalks will be provided both sides of the street by spring of 2007.

To improve pedestrian access along Archer Avenue, a request for proposals has been released for the construction of sidewalks on both sides of Archer Avenue between Oak Grove Avenue and 71st Street. The timing for this project will partially depend on the bids received, but it is anticipated that work could begin in 2007.

Pace Studies

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Pace is currently involved in the South Cook County - Will County Initiative, a study to conduct a comprehensive review and restructuring of service in southern Cook, southwestern Cook and Will counties. This initiative began in September 2005, and is the fifth such initiative conducted as part of Pace's long-range Vision 2020 Plan. The South Cook County - Will County Initiative encompasses 81 communities, 48 bus routes and approximately 40 percent of Pace's overall ridership. As was done in the previous four initiatives, Pace intends to realign its services to meet current travel needs and demographics, including identifying areas where Pace will seek additional resources to expand service to meet current and projected travel needs. For outreach and planning purposes, the study area is divided into three "sectors" - South Cook, Southwest Cook and Will County. By segmenting the study region in this way Pace can respond to the specific needs of each community.

Justice is within the boundaries of this initiative's study area, located on the north - central edge of the planning border. Also included in the study area are Bedford Park, Bridgeview, Hickory Hills and Willow Springs. Pace bus routes 379, 385 and 831 will be reviewed during the study to determine if route modifications are warranted to better meet customer needs. The next steps for the effort include public meetings anticipated in early 2007, with recommended service changes implemented in mid to late 2007.

B. METRA COMMUTER RAIL

The Metra/Heritage Corridor (Metra/HC) Line travels through the northwestern corner of the Village of Justice, providing service between Union Station in downtown Chicago and the City of Joliet. The municipalities served along the Metra/HC Line include Joliet, Lockport, Lemont, Willow Springs, Summit and Chicago. Metra does not currently provide service directly to the Village of Justice, but the feasibility of constructing a new station in Justice will be studied in the next step of the planning process. The potential station location is noted in Figure 6.



A view of the Summit Station on the Metra Heritage Corridor Line

Metra/HC Line stations that are most proximate to the Village of Justice are the Summit Station to the northeast and the Willow Springs Station to the southwest, as indicated previously in Figure 1. The Summit Station is located at Center Street just north of Hanover Avenue, 3.9 miles from the approximate geographic center of Justice. The Willow Springs Station is located on Willow Springs Road, just north of Archer Avenue, 3.6 miles from the approximate geographic center of the Village of Justice.

The Summit Station facilities consist of an enclosed passenger shelter, inbound and outbound asphalt platforms, and two surface parking lots. There are no recent or planned capital improvements for the Summit Station. The Willow Springs Station also has an enclosed passenger shelter and asphalt platforms. Two surface parking lots are

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also located at the station. Recently completed capital improvements at this station include an extension of the inbound (east) platform, new platform lighting and a retaining wall. The Village is in discussions with the developer of the new Village Center complex located adjacent to the Metra/HC Line tracks to incorporate a station facility within a commercial building in the Village Center. Metra and the Village are working together on this proposed new station facility.



A view of the Willow Springs Station on the Metra Heritage Corridor Line

Service Levels

Service on the Metra/HC Line is provided during the weekdays with three trains inbound during the morning peak and three trains outbound during the evening peak. No weekend service is provided. Inbound trains stop at the Willow Springs Station at 6:09 a.m. 6:49 a.m. and 7:29 a.m. and at the Summit Station at 6:17 a.m., 6:57 a.m., and 7:37 a.m. Outbound trains from Chicago leave Union Station at 4:50 p.m., 5:25 p.m., and 6:12 p.m. stopping at the Summit Station at 5:15 p.m. 5:50 and 6:37 p.m. and at the Willow Springs Station at 5:23 p.m., 5:58 p.m., and 6:45 p.m. The Summit Station is in fare zone C; between the Summit Station and Union Station a one way fare is \$3.05. The Willow Springs Station is in fare zone D with a one way fare between the Willow Springs Station and Union Station of \$3.45. Ten-ride and monthly fare cards that provide a slight cost break can also be purchased.

Service levels on the Metra/HC Line are functionally limited due to conflicts with freight rail movement on the CN Railroad. Service levels on the two Metra railroad lines that provide service to communities near Justice provide more frequent levels of service than the Metra/HC Line. The Metra/BNSF Line has 47 inbound trains and 47 outbound trains throughout the weekday serving communities between the City of Aurora and downtown Chicago. Frequent weekend service is also provided. The Metra/SouthWest Service provides 15 inbound and 15 outbound weekday trains to communities located between the Village of Orland Park and downtown Chicago (the line extends further southwest to Manhattan and serves the Manhattan Station and Laraway Road Station in New Lenox with two inbound and two outbound trains per day).

Ridership

According to weekday station passenger boardings and alightings conducted by Metra in Fall 2002, on an average weekday, a total of 142 riders board trains at the Willow Springs Station, and 106 riders get off trains at Willow Springs. At the Summit Station, there are fewer boardings and alightings, 79 and 82 respectively. These numbers are approximately one third of the boardings and alightings that are occurring at the three other stations on the line, Lemont, Lockport, and Joliet. A review of previous ridership counts indicate that the number of boardings at Willow Springs has increased over the years with a 73% increase between 1999 and 2002. The ridership at Summit also has increased 20% from 1999 to 2002. Daily boardings at stations along the Heritage Corridor overall are lower than the Metra systemwide average of 645 boardings.

Origins of Riders

An origin-destination survey was completed by Metra in Fall 2002. The origin for riders utilizing the Summit Station and the Willow Springs Station is indicated in Table 5.

Table 5: Origin of Riders Using the Summit and Willow Springs Stations

Origin	# of Riders Using Summit Station	% of Riders	# of Riders Using Willow Springs Station	% of Riders
Justice	18	22.8%	20	14.1%
Willow Springs	-	--	66	46.5%
Summit	21	26.5%	-	-
Chicago	20	25.3%	-	-
Hickory Hills	2	2.6%	17	12.0%
Orland Park	-	-	7	5.0%
Palos Park	-	-	5	3.5%
Burr Ridge	-	-	5	3.5%
Palos Hills	-	-	5	3.5%
Bridgeview	8	10.1%	-	-
Bedford Park	2	2.6%	-	-
Bolingbrook	-	-	2	1.4%
Lemont	-	-	2	1.4%
Willowbrook	-	-	2	1.4%
Undetermined	8	10.1%	11	7.7%
TOTAL	79	100%	142	100%

Source: Metra Origin-Destination Survey, Fall 2002

Table 6 indicates the stations used by Metra riders who live in Justice.

Table 6: Stations Utilized by Justice Residents

Station Name	Metra Train Line	No. of Justice Riders	% of Justice Riders
Willow Springs	Metra/HC	20	22.2%
Summit	Metra/HC	18	20.0%
Oak Lawn	Metra/SW Service	6	6.7%
Chicago Ridge	Metra/SW Service	5	5.6%
Worth	Metra/SW Service	3	3.3%
Ashburn	Metra/SW Service	2	2.2%
LaGrange Road	Metra/BNSF	20	22.2%
Harlem Avenue	Metra/BNSF	8	9.0%
LaGrange/Stone Avenue	Metra/BNSF	2	2.2%
Brookfield	Metra/BNSF	2	2.2%
Riverside	Metra/BNSF	2	2.2%
103 rd Street/Beverly	Metra/RID	2	2.2%
TOTAL		90	100%

Source: Metra Origin-Destination Survey, Fall 2002

Note that 20 riders who live in Justice board the train in Willow Springs and 18 board the train in Summit. This represents 42% of Justice commuters utilizing the Metra/HC line. Thirty eight percent of Justice commuters utilize the Metra/BNSF Line with 20 riders boarding at the LaGrange Road Station in the Village of LaGrange, eight riders boarding at Harlem Avenue in the City of Berwyn, and two each boarding at LaGrange/Stone Avenue, Brookfield and Riverside Stations. Other commuters drove to the Metra Southwest Service Line with six boarding at the Oak Lawn Station, five boarding at the Chicago Ridge Station and five others boarding at either the Worth or Ashburn Stations, representing 18% of the Justice commuters. It should be noted that Justice residents may choose to utilize Metra on lines

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other than the Heritage Corridor due to increased schedule flexibility on the other lines as noted in the description of Metra service above. An informal survey of the park & ride lot at the Midway Orange Line terminal by the Village found 41 cars from Justice parked in the lot on a typical weekday recently.

Mode of Access

For those commuters residing in Justice and responding to Metra's Fall 2002 Origin-Destination Survey, the following mode of access was reported to the Summit and Willow Springs Stations. For Summit, 12 (or 67%) of the 18 Justice residents drive alone and 6 (or 33%) of the Justice residents carpool to the station. For the Willow Springs Station, 18 (or 88%) of the 20 Justice residents drive alone to the station. Two (or 12%) of the Justice residents are dropped off at the Willow Springs Station. Pace bus service is not available directly to the Summit or Willow Springs Stations, so commuters using these stations who live beyond walking distance must either drive to, carpool to, bicycle to, or be dropped off at the station.

Commuter Parking

Commuter parking lots are located at both the Summit and Willow Springs Stations. At Summit, Lot 1 is located to the east of Center Avenue on the south side of the Heritage Corridor tracks and contains 96 non-restricted daily fee spaces and 6 spaces for those physically challenged. February 2006 Parking Lot Survey results indicate that the utilization rate of the non-restricted spaces was 58.3%. Lot 2 is located to the west of Center Avenue on the south side of the Heritage Corridor tracks and contains 55 daily fee spaces of which 23.6% were being utilized on the day of the survey. The daily fee at both lots is \$1.00. Both lots are accessed by turning north on Center Avenue from Archer Avenue.

At the Willow Springs Station, there are two commuter parking lots, both accessed from Archer Avenue. Lot 3 is located to the north of the Metra/HC tracks. Lot 3 contains 60 non-restricted daily fee spaces and 72 permit spaces for a total of 132 spaces. February 2006 survey indicates that 90.2% of these spaces were utilized. Lot 8 is located on the south side of the Metra/HC tracks southwest of Willow Springs Road. The lot contains 18 permit spaces and 5 spaces for the physically challenged. All 18 spaces were utilized on the day of the survey. The daily fee for lot 3 is \$1.00 and the permit fee for both lots is \$20.00 per month.

C. LYONS TOWNSHIP PARA-TRANSIT SERVICES

The Village of Justice is located entirely within Lyons Township. Lyons Township provides door-to-door bus service for eligible residents 60 years of age or older and/or handicapped persons. This service is provided to Lyons Township residents for trips to local shopping areas, doctor and dental appointments, social meetings, and other trips primarily within township boundaries. Service is available up to two miles outside Township borders to select area medical facilities. A transportation permit is required to utilize this service. This service is provided free of charge for the user, paid for by Lyons Township taxes. Reservations for the service need to be made 24 hour in advance. The boundaries of Lyons Township are Brewster Avenue (between La Grange and La Grange Park) on the north, Harlem Avenue on the east, 87th Street on the south and County Line Road (between Cook and DuPage Counties) on the west. Palos Township is located to the south of 87th Street, adjacent to the Village of Justice, and also offers para-transit services.

IV. COMMUNITY INPUT

To get the planning process started, the Steering Committee held a kick-off meeting on August 15, 2006 which included a preliminary discussion of the Village's objectives and ideas for the study. This meeting was followed up with a site tour of the potential Metra station site on September 19, 2006. Preliminary input from Village officials and interested members of the public has also been provided, in three separate venues to date:

- A Planning and Zoning Commission workshop was held on September 26, 2006 to gather trustee, commissioner and public input regarding Village issues, concerns and ideas related to transit;
- A Focus Group was held on November 14, 2006 to collect feedback from existing and potential future transit users, and to provide a basis of understanding of the level of community support for enhanced public transit services in the future
- A brief written survey of apartment complex residents was conducted in late November 2006 to assess current usage of bus services and the desire for additional bus services in the future

This Chapter provides summaries of the discussion and/or written feedback provided in each of the three venues described above.

A. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

On Tuesday, September 26, 2006 HNTB and MKC Associates conducted a workshop with the Village of Justice Zoning & Planning Commission. The purpose of the workshop was to elicit preliminary input from Village officials and citizens concerning current and future transit opportunities within the Village. The workshop was the first community stakeholder meeting conducted as part of the Transit Improvement Study.

The following bullet points summarize the observations and suggestions made by meeting attendees, separated for ease of reference into comments related to bus service, commuter rail service and general topics.

Bus Service

- Longer service hours were requested. Service hours currently extend from approximately 5:00 a.m. (first eastbound run) to 11:00 p.m. (last westbound run). It was also noted that the last trip on Route 379 from Midway ends at Harlem and does not operate into Justice. Extending the last trip to operate along 88th Avenue was suggested. Currently, residents with third-shift jobs can get to work but cannot take transit back home after work.
- Longer service hours are desired on Friday night and on the weekends so that residents can take advantage of events in downtown Chicago. Currently the last westbound bus from Midway leaves at about 6:50 p.m. on Saturday and at about 5:35 p.m. on Sunday.
- More frequent service is desired. Hourly service in the off-peak is inadequate.
- Major destinations are the CTA Orange Line station at Midway Airport (to downtown Chicago) and Ford City Mall.
- Current rush hour travel time to downtown Chicago via Pace and the Orange Line is approximately one hour to one hour and fifteen minutes.
- Service levels are dependent upon the number of riders using the service. Pace is required to recover 40% of its operating costs at the fare box, while that percentage is much lower for many agencies nationally.

BACKGROUND REPORT

- A north-south bus route between Justice and LaGrange was suggested. Extending this possible new route north to O'Hare, south to Moraine Valley Community College along 88th Avenue, and on to Palos Heights and Orland Park was discussed. One Workshop participant noted that Moraine Valley was a good transfer point.
- Service to UPS from the Waterton and Sunset Lakes apartment complexes was suggested.
- A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service connecting Midway to the Waterton/Sunset Lakes apartment complex and undefined points further south was suggested.
- It was suggested that Route 385 be changed to operate along 88th Avenue.
- Extension of CTA's Route 63W along Archer to 79th Street and returning to 63rd/Archer along Roberts Road was suggested for late night and early morning hours. (At the meeting it was believed that Route 63W operated all night long, however, Route 63W ends service at 11 p.m.)
- When construction along 88th Avenue is completed the driveways from Sunset Lakes onto 88th Avenue will be eliminated. All vehicular access will be from 83rd and 87th Streets. Space for bus access and a new bus turnaround is available on 83rd Street.
- Bus route timetables should be more widely available. Local businesses around major bus stops should be contacted to determine their willingness to post the timetable in their window.
- The advertising bench at 79th Street and 88th Avenue keeps getting moved due to construction activity. Ad benches are required to be 10 feet back from the curb and within 25 feet of the Pace bus stop sign. The ad benches do not belong to Pace.
- Flyers and advertisements on buses are often out of date, and should be updated or removed on a more timely basis.
- Pace noted that a recent market research effort in their south suburban service area resulted in approximately 7,000 survey responses that are providing valuable service improvement suggestions from Pace customers. The survey was conducted as part of the South Cook County Will County Initiative.

Commuter Rail Service

- The primary drawback to using Metra's Heritage Corridor service is the limited number of trips, with service currently limited to weekday peak hour service. There are only three trips to downtown in the morning and three trips westbound in the afternoon.
- The trains on the Heritage Corridor are too crowded and more cars are needed. (Note that while riders commented that passengers must often stand on the trains, Metra's Operations Department indicates that Metra Heritage Corridor trains are only 70.5% occupied overall as of September 2006. The most heavily utilized inbound train car during the morning peak period was found to be 89.0% occupied, and the most heavily utilized outbound train was found to be 84.2% utilized overall.)
- The LaGrange Metra Station is preferred by Justice residents due to the convenience of more frequent train service and longer service hours.
- A train station brings vitality to the neighborhood and many residents would walk or bike to the station. Traffic impacts could be mitigated by controlling the amount of parking available.
- If a new train station is built, it should be open for commuter comfort during all morning train stops.
- A train station would provide the opportunity to put Justice's "name on the map" and build a more positive and unique community image.
- If a new train station is built, bus shuttles could be provided from Sterling Estates, the Waterton/Sunset Lakes apartment complexes and other Village locations.
- Train station parking lots could bring revenue to the Village. The LaGrange commuter lots are adjacent to residential areas and are either permit or daily fee lots.
- Approximately 2 1/2 acres of parking could be available around the new station and underground water retention could be accommodated with the land currently owned by the Village.
- An extended bicycle trail into Justice would allow residents to bike to the Willow Springs train station. There may also be an opportunity to extend the bicycle trail east into Bedford Park.
- There is a potential for tourism-related development in the Village if a connection to the I&M Canal trail system can be created. If an Amtrak connection could be accommodated at the proposed new

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station, tourists could better utilize the trail by riding west to the trail-head with their bicycles and then riding back east.

- Questions were raised about the possibility of CTA extending the Orange Line. Current plans call for an extension only as far south as Ford City Mall. It was noted that the last Orange line train leaves the loop around 1:30 a.m. and later service should be provided.
- A recent and informal survey conducted by the Village found 41 vehicles in the Midway park and ride lot with Village of Justice vehicle stickers on a typical weekday.
- Access and egress at a new station will be a concern for nearby residents. One idea is to extend 71st Street and make the street one-way westbound to 86th Avenue. 71st Street could have one travel lane with a parking lane and a bicycle lane. Oak Grove Avenue could be used only for drop-off access.

General Topics

- Justice is growing and may look much different in five years than it does today, with a growing commuter-oriented population. President VanAllen noted that the goal of the Village is to achieve a maximum population of 15,000 people. Beyond that number there would be a need for significant additional infrastructure investment (e.g. new schools).
- A 520-unit apartment complex in the Village is poised to be converted to condominiums, signaling a potential shift in the multi-family housing market in the Village.
- A new transit station and upgrades to Pace service will have a positive impact on property values.
- While downtown Chicago is and will remain a major transit destination, other employment centers in the region are growing in importance. Job growth is occurring mostly in the suburbs, especially around O'Hare Airport and in the I-88 corridor, and transit access to these areas is critical.
- Lockport and Joliet are both growing which may stimulate interest in improving transportation in the southwest corridor.
- Sidewalks along Archer are planned between 71st Street and 88th Avenue.

B. FOCUS GROUP

On Tuesday, November 14, 2006 HNTB and MKC Associates conducted a focus group with Village of Justice stakeholders and transit users. The purpose of the focus group was to elicit comments on current and future transit options for the Village. Focus group attendees, listed in alphabetical order, included:

- John Bruce, Chairman, Justice Zoning & Planning Commission
- Orley Betcher, President, Justice Chamber of Commerce
- Irene Downes, Manager, Sunset Lakes Apartments
- Gary Dirkin, Villa Del Rae Association
- Arlene Hermosillo, Resident
- Jim Lurquin, Director of Economic Development, Village of Justice
- Hank Oszakiewski, Justice Zoning & Planning Commission
- Kelly Skala, Employee, Sunset Lakes Apartments

The focus group discussion covered a variety of transit related topics. The focus group discussion is summarized below.

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Introductions

Participants were asked to introduce themselves and provide information on how long they have lived in Justice, what area they live in, how often they use transit, and what transit routes are used. Five of the eight attendees live in Justice and all five of them have lived there for 20 years or more.

Four of the participants use transit at least occasionally. Two participants ride Pace buses and noted that they use routes 379, 383, 390 and/or 831. One participant is a regular Metra/BNSF customer, who occasionally (once or twice per month) rides the Metra/Heritage Corridor Line. The fourth transit user is an occasional customer of CTA's Orange Line. Sunset Lakes Apartments representatives noted that there are large groups of riders and potential riders in apartment complexes, many of whom work night shifts or other non-typical schedules.

Positive/Negative Aspects of Transit

Participants were asked to relate aspects of transit that they believed were positive. They were then asked to identify negative characteristics. The positive and negative aspects provided by the attendees are listed in the following bullet points.

Positive Aspects of Transit

- Provision of para-transit service
- Metra is always on time
- Transit increases property values
- Transit improves economic development potential, which in turn, increases Village revenues
- Can generate support for businesses

As part of this discussion, Jim Lurquin pointed out that the Village could potentially accommodate some parking spaces within the 83rd Street right-of-way, between 88th Avenue and I-294, which could be used as a "park and ride" area. The availability of this potential parking capacity enhances the future transit options in this area.

Negative Aspects of Transit

- Schedules provide infrequent service and service hours are not long enough. Third shift workers and people who work weekends cannot use the service.
- There is no transit link to the western suburbs or to O'Hare Airport.
- Existing routes are hard to change because the current service is used by riders who need the routes as they currently exist.
- No current service connects to LaGrange Road.
- No current link to proposed Justice train station location.

As part of this discussion it was noted that residents of Justice cannot use bus service to access the shopping centers in the vicinity of LaGrange Road and Joliet Road. It was noted that Justice is considered to be in Pace's "south" service area providing more service to the south, and yet desired destinations are often to the north and west where job opportunities are increasing. One participant recommended a new bus route which would provide a link to this area. The new route could potentially travel down Archer Avenue to LaGrange Road, north on LaGrange Road to Joliet Road, west on Joliet Road to Willow Springs Road and south on Willow Springs Road to Archer Avenue.

Improve the Typical Transit Trip

The participants were asked to consider their typical transit trip and identify how their transit experience could be improved. If they did not use transit, they were asked to think of a transit trip made by another member of their household. Improvements to transit that would enhance their experience are listed below.

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- Build a Metra station in Justice so that I no longer have to drive to LaGrange.
- Provide shelters at the cross-street and sidewalks leading to the bus stop.
- Provide a shelter at 88th Avenue and 83rd Street and provide handicap accessibility to the stop.
- Provide a Kiss and Ride.

Transit Destinations

Participants were asked where they could currently travel via transit. Answers included UPS, Moraine Valley Community College, Orange Line (Midway Terminal), Corn Products Corporation, and Ford City Shopping Center. The participants were then asked to identify destinations that they would like to access via transit. These destinations included:

- Orland Square Shopping Center
- Shopping and employment opportunities in Hodgkins, Chicago Ridge, Bedford Park, the western suburbs and DuPage County (Oak Brook, Burr Ridge, Woodridge, etc.)
- O'Hare Airport
- Palos Community Hospital
- LaGrange Memorial Hospital
- Christ Advocate Medical Center
- Daley College
- Kennedy-King College

It was noted that new bus routes serving these destinations should have schedules to accommodate employees who work weekends and third shifts, as well as visitors to these destinations who want or need to travel in non-peak times.

Metra Station Impacts

Participants were asked to identify the impacts of a new Metra station in Justice. The answers included the following:

- Increased property values
- Convenience to downtown Chicago activities and entertainment
- Revenue to the Village from parking lots
- Easier access to downtown Chicago
- Increased traffic in the vicinity of the new station

It was obvious from the focus group discussion that the attendees were very interested in improving transit within the Village of Justice. Even the attendees that did not use transit were aware of transit issues in the Village and understood the benefits associated with a good transit system.

C. SURVEY OF SUNSET LAKES RESIDENTS

At the focus group on November 14th, representatives from the Sunset Lakes apartment complex recommended that the consultant team prepare a short survey that could be passed out to apartment residents at the end of the month. Because a relatively small number of bus transit users attended the focus group, this suggestion was pursued and a survey of apartment residents was conducted in early December. Surveys were given to residents when they came into the Sunset Lakes apartment office to pay their rent. Completed surveys were returned to the office and then forwarded to the consultant team for tabulation and analysis.

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A total of 24 surveys were returned. Three of the surveys indicated that their home location was outside of the Village of Justice (on the south side of Chicago), and these three surveys are not included in the result totals. A summary of the results is provided below.

A majority of the respondents are regular transit riders with 62 percent riding transit at least once per week. Forty-three percent reported riding five days or more per week. The CTA Orange Line at Midway Airport was the destination most reported by respondents. Ford City Mall and Moraine Valley Community College were close seconds. This response is expected because these three destinations are relatively well served by Pace route 379.

When asked where the respondents would like to travel on transit (if transit service was available), a total of 23 destinations were reported. Multiple responses to this question were allowed. The most frequent response was Downtown LaGrange with six responses, followed by Hodgkins and Countryside with four each, and LaGrange with three responses. However, when respondents were asked to pick the location that they would visit most often, the most frequent response was Hodgkins. Hodgkins is home to the Quarry Shopping Center on Joliet Road just east of LaGrange Road. The shopping center includes a Target, Wal-Mart, Kohl's, Sam's Club, multiple smaller stores and several restaurants. Another shopping center is located close by on LaGrange Road just north of Joliet Road. Countryside Plaza contains a Home Depot, Best Buy, JoAnn Fabrics, PetsMart, Old Country Buffet, and Office Depot.

It is apparent from the responses that Justice residents are a well-traveled group, desiring transit service to far-flung destinations such as Carpentersville, Evanston, Downers Grove and Oak Brook Mall. All but one of 21 respondents stated that they currently visit their desired transit destinations. It is reasonable to assume that many of these trips are now made using the automobile. Forty-seven percent of the respondents stated that they would travel by transit to their most desired location more than twice per week, while 41 percent reported that they would visit one or two times per week. Of the eight respondents who reported that the destination they would visit most often on transit was LaGrange, Hodgkins or Countryside, five reported that they would visit there one or two times per week, and three reported that they would visit more than twice per week.

Comments were provided on seven of the surveys. Most of the comments requested longer hours of service, especially on weekends. Other requests included more frequent service, heated shelters, extension of the last trip (presumably on Route 379) into Justice, and a new bus route to the Hodgkins/Countryside shopping centers.

The survey results indicate that investigation into some type of service connecting Justice to Hodgkins and LaGrange may be warranted. However, due to the small sample it is difficult to determine if such a service would be widely appreciated by Justice residents. The survey results do not provide an overwhelming endorsement of the service and estimating ridership for the new route will be difficult.

BACKGROUND REPORT

V. A PLANNING FRAMEWORK

What does all of this information really mean with respect to the future of public transportation services for the residents the Village of Justice? Based upon an understanding of current community conditions and existing transit services, along with the valuable input collected to date from local stakeholders, a list of “key planning considerations” has been compiled. Responding to these considerations will form the basis for the next step in the process, the development of preliminary improvement recommendations for Pace service and facilities and the development of conceptual plans for a potential future Justice Metra station.

A. KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Transit Service Levels

- Explore options to increase service frequency and extend service hours.
- Explore options to expand potential destinations via transit, especially to the north and northwest.
- Explore options to create transit linkages between all areas of Justice.
- Explore the feasibility of providing “park & ride” locations to enhance transit accessibility and spur commercial activity, including along 83rd Street east of 88th Avenue and at the intersection of Archer and 86th Avenues.
- Explore non-traditional methods to provide transit access—shuttle services, increased para-transit, etc., including improved access to nearby Metra/HC Line stations.
- Actively participate in the upcoming public meetings sponsored by Pace as part of its South Cook County - Will County Initiative, along with the RTA’s Moving Beyond Congestion planning initiative.
- Advocate for CREATE Project improvements that will allow for Metra/HC Line service level upgrades.



The Village-controlled right-of-way along 83rd Street near the main entrance to Sunset Lakes apartment complex could potentially provide “park & ride” parking capacity

Transit Infrastructure

- Improve the waiting environment for bus passengers by providing concrete pads at busy bus stops, and providing passenger shelters at the most active of these locations, coordinating these amenities with the overall streetscape.
- Continue to improve pedestrian mobility by constructing sidewalks along arterials and within several blocks of arterials, building upon significant project already being pursued.
- Require new real estate developments to include sidewalks within the development with direct connections to destinations outside the development.
- Provide pedestrian access points at the perimeter of new developments, even when vehicular access is limited.
- The most significant gap in the pedestrian network currently appears to be the lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle access in the vicinity of the intersections of 88th Avenue with Archer Avenue and 79th Street. This area is an important linkage point for the north and south areas of Justice and is a key community “gateway” location.

BACKGROUND REPORT

- Several other major intersections in the Village that coincide with Pace bus stop locations also do not have adequate crosswalks and amenities to facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Explore the potential of a link across LaGrange Road to the existing I & M Canal trail west of LaGrange Road, along with a potential trail extension to the northeast. A connection to the existing trail could provide bicycle access to the existing Willow Springs Metra station.
- Explore a strategy to implement cohesive streetscape improvements- shade trees, decorative light poles, banners, flower beds or pots, etc.- along Village arterials to establish a consistent community character and improve the pedestrian experience.
- In exploring the potential for a future new Metra station, the following considerations will apply:
 - All streets within a walking distance of approximately one half mile should be improved with sidewalks.
 - Adequate parking, kiss & ride access and shuttle bus pick-up/drop-off areas will need to be provided with minimal neighborhood impact.
 - Explore strategies to enhance Village image-building and economic development efforts in conjunction with new local Metra service.
 - Consider potential revenue enhancement from commuter parking fees and tourism-related activities tied to the I & M Canal (such as an Amtrak connection between Justice and the western terminus of the trail system).

Transit Supportive Development

- Explore the potential for a “gateway” development at the major Village crossroads at 79th Street and 88th Avenue, developed in a transit-supportive manner that could accommodate potential bus waiting and transfer facilities.
- Explore a TIF District along the frontage of Archer Avenue and 79th Street to implement transit-supportive public improvements and new development that can improve community cohesion between all areas of Justice.
- Building upon the provisions of the C-1 District, consider a “TOD District” for use at and near transit hubs and the potential future Metra station, potentially including such provisions as lower parking ratios, shared parking requirements, mixed use buildings, and an increase in allowable building height if well buffered from nearby single family homes.
- Explore the creation of design standards that would establish the Village’s preferences for building quality, site improvements, parking lot landscaping and buffering, signage, etc. to aid in creating a consistent visual character along the Village’s arterials. If a TIF District is established encompassing key commercial properties near potential future transit hubs, compliance with design standards that also support pedestrian access and amenities should be a requirement for receiving financial incentives.
- As redevelopment and other site improvements occur, require reduced curb cut widths and shared parking to improve the walkability along arterials.
- Assess the potential magnitude of infill redevelopment opportunities within one-quarter and one-half mile of the potential future Metra station and along Village arterials served by transit.
- Encourage new housing development that continues to increase housing options in the Village, and in transit-accessible locations.



The vacant site at the northwest corner of 88th Avenue and 79th Street could potentially serve as a “gateway” development site that accommodates transfer facilities for public transit

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B. PRELIMINARY PLANNING FRAMEWORK

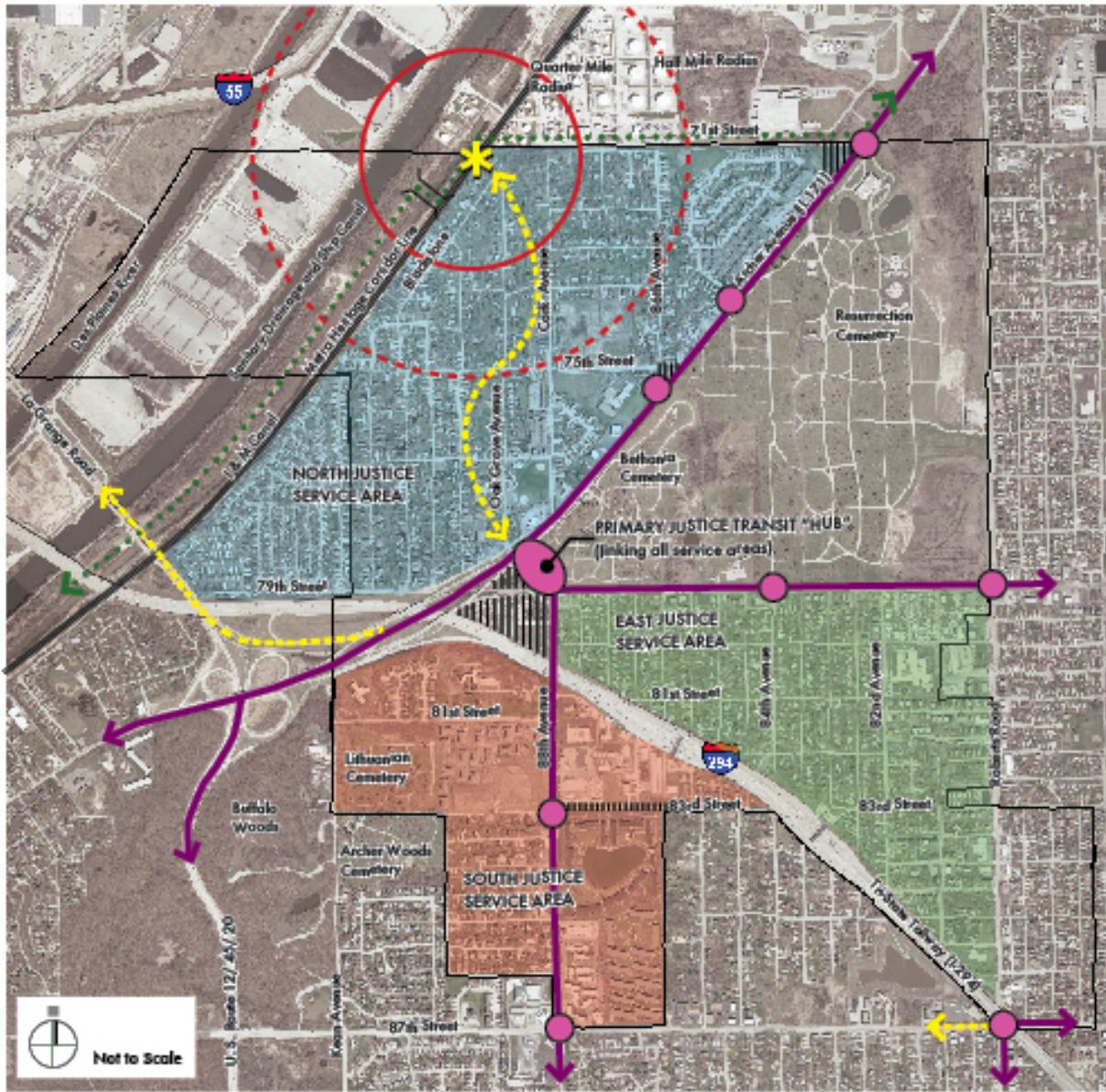
Building upon the key planning considerations described above, a preliminary “planning framework” is also provided. [Figure 10: Planning Framework](#) depicts a general organizing strategy for the provision of enhanced public transit infrastructure in the Village of Justice, using transit services as a way to knit together a dispersed community, enhance resident mobility options, provide a more successful business environment, and improve the quality of life in the Village overall. These preliminary ideas will be developed further in the next step of the planning process. Figure 10 depicts the following preliminary concepts:

- Justice is effectively separated into three “service areas” by the physical barriers of I-294 and Resurrection and Bethania cemeteries.
- Each of the three service areas is adjacent to a major arterial that currently has Pace service. However, transferring between routes or moving from one service area to another as a pedestrian is exceedingly difficult.
- Future bus service provision should likely focus on creating several “hubs” in each service area with an increased level of passenger amenities, and should facilitate transferring in a centralized location if feasible.
- A centralized “gateway” hub and possibly other park & ride locations could also provide transit-supportive commercial or residential uses.
- If a Metra station is established at the north end of Justice, a linkage to the station will also be needed. In the next step of the study, a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed station assessing order-of-magnitude ridership projections and order-of-magnitude station development costs will be conducted.
- Options for facilitating improved links to desired destinations outside of Justice will also be explored, in particular the Hodgkins / La Grange area.

C. CONCLUSION

The next step in the planning process will explore ways to build upon existing transit services and infrastructure taking into careful consideration the physical features and community preferences of Justice. Recommendations and planning concepts will be developed for community consideration.

FIGURE NO. 10: PLANNING FRAMEWORK



January 2007

Legend

- Approximate Village Boundary
- Potential Transit Service Hubs
- ||||| Potential Park-n-ride, Kiss-n-ride, bus turn-around and/or TOD redevelopment sites
- Existing Transit Service Corridors
- Potential Future Transit Service Linkages
- ★ Potential Future Metra Station
- ... Potential Bike Trail Connection
- ⌋ Existing Culvert Under Railroad Embankment

BACKGROUND REPORT

Justice Transit Improvement Study
 HNTB Corporation and MKC Associates