



Thatcher Avenue Transit Oriented Development Plan

March, 2014

Village of River Grove, Illinois



Acknowledgements

This plan summarizes the work conducted for the Village of River Grove. The plan was prepared under contract with the Regional Transportation Authority of Northeastern Illinois (RTA). The RTA provided funding and technical assistance for the preparation of this plan through its Community Planning Program.

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Executive Summary

With significant potential redevelopment opportunities adjacent to the River Grove Metra station, the Village of River Grove has taken a proactive approach to planning for potential transit opportunities. The Village's planning approach was supported by public involvement to ensure the Plan had oversight and input from the community. This Transit Oriented Development Plan focuses on these transit opportunities as well as the potential for mixed use transit oriented development in and around downtown River Grove.

Beginning with Section 1, the Plan starts with an overview of the planning process and a discussion of transit in River Grove. Section 2 describes the relationship between this Plan and River Grove's Comprehensive Plan, particularly the visioning, regulatory, and strategic elements that help frame the Village's potential for redevelopment.

The Existing Conditions Assessment, covered in Sections 3 through 6, provides a comprehensive analysis of a variety of elements, including: land use, zoning, environment, urban design, transportation, and market conditions. This assessment provided insight into community character, physical conditions, and market information that informed the preparation of concept plans for TOD opportunities. Although some site characteristics posed challenges to planning for redevelopment, these challenges inspired creativity to adequately address site issues and develop plans that optimized opportunities for creating transit oriented development. Overall, many existing characteristics, including a mix of uses, transportation accessibility, and potential to phase redevelopment over time, place River Grove in a favorable position to capitalize on future redevelopment opportunities.

Building upon the findings from the Existing Conditions Assessment and community input, the Concept Plans define the designs and marketing strategies for the potential transit facilities and mixed use TOD district in River Grove. In particular, the concepts focus on land use development, transportation factors, architecture, streetscape, and other urban design elements. In addition, the marketing strategies provide a foundation for the Implementation Strategies, which are described in Section 10.

Section 10 provides an overview of the Village's regulatory plans and policies, site acquisition needs, funding sources, and support resources. The core element of this section is the Implementation Action Plan, which is a matrix of implementation objectives and strategies, particularly outlining specific tasks, potential partnerships, and phasing, which are intended to guide the Village as it carries out the recommendations and strategies outlined in this Plan.



The Implementation Action Plan outlines a proactive task-oriented approach that the Village can take to implement the recommendations and strategies outlined in this plan.

Core Strategies

As defined in Section 13, the Implementation Action Plan is anchored by a series of objectives that are aimed to ensure the concepts and recommendations detailed in this Plan are achieved to capitalize on the Village's opportunities for transit and redevelopment in River Grove. The four core strategies include:

1. Build local and regional awareness of redevelopment opportunities.
2. Utilize the RFQ/RFP process to attract redevelopment.
3. Maximize the return on previous and continued Village investment.
4. Create a strong sense of place in the study area through streetscape enhancements, gateway elements, and transportation improvements.

These strategies are integrated into an Implementation Action Plan matrix, which outlines sets of tasks for each objective, responsibility for each task, potential partnerships, and phasing. The matrix is provided in Section 13.

Introduction

In 2005, the Village of River Grove adopted the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan, which examined the downtown area of River Grove with a focus on the Grand Avenue corridor. With this plan established, the Village's efforts are now geared towards implementation of the plan, and in coordination with the RTA, the Village is looking to evaluate specific opportunity sites within the ½-mile radius of the Metra station. This Existing Conditions Summary Report focuses on changes within the area since the previous plan was adopted, and identification of opportunity sites for (re)development within the Study Area.

The following summary provides an inventory of existing conditions within the Study Area, including: Land Use and Zoning, Utility Infrastructure, Streetscape and Urban Design, Natural Resources and Historic Sites, Transportation, and Demographics and Market Conditions. This information was collected in order to provide a foundation for the future (re)development of the Study Area and the creation of concept plans for the Subject Site in the next phase of the planning process.

River Grove Metra Station



Study Area

The Study Area includes the ½-mile radius around the River Grove Metra station .

Within the Study Area, the vacant site located southeast of the Metra Station on Thatcher Avenue has been identified as the primary opportunity site for (re)development within the Study Area. This site has been evaluated closely, and specific concept plans are outlined in Section 7: Concept Plan Overview.

Figure 1-1
Study Area Location
(1/2-mile radius around the
Metra station)



Figure 1-2
Target Redevelopment
Site Location
(Southeast corner of Thatcher Ave-
nue and the railroad right-of-way)



Planning Process

Throughout the duration of the planning process, a Steering Committee, comprised of Village staff, public officials, the Village Engineer (Hancock Engineering, Inc.), and representatives from RTA, Metra and Pace, and key property owners provided guidance and feedback during each phase of work. These phases included:

- Existing Conditions Assessment
- Conceptual Land Use & Development Plan
- Implementation Strategies

To ensure that the final plan had a broad level of support and understanding, the planning process included a public participation component designed to involve community stakeholders and residents in crafting a plan that represents a vision for the Study Area that is responsive to the goals and aspirations of River Grove residents and businesses. The public participation process included:

- **Key stakeholder interviews** provided select community members with the opportunity to share insights and ideas relating to the Study Area and visions for how they would like the area to be designed.
- A **project website** provided an online resource and forum to keep the public informed and engaged in the planning process.
- A **Public Open House** provided an informal public review process for community members to review the Conceptual Land Use Development Plan and share their preferences relating to the alternatives presented.

Website: <http://rivergrovetod.wordpress.com/>

The planning process was highlighted by a public participation component designed to keep the community informed and involved.

Transit oriented development, or TOD, is the functional integration of land use and transit to create a compact and walkable mixed use community.

Opportunity for Transit Oriented Development

Transit oriented development (TOD) is a prevalent planning concept that holds great potential to shape communities, or at least a portion of them, in a way that merges the best land use and transportation planning principles. Although the Study Area is occupied by a variety of established uses, many properties are vacant or under-utilized and hold strong potential for redevelopment. Combined with access to the River Grove Metra station and close proximity to River Grove's village center, the Study Area's potential for redevelopment creates an exceptional location for TOD.

One of the better definitions of TOD and key associated planning principles are found in the City of Austin's (TX) Transit Oriented Development Guidebook, which was published by the City's Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department in 2006. The highlights of this guidebook are summarized in Figure 1-3 below and are appropriate to considering TOD in River Grove.

Figure 1-3

TOD Definition & Principles

Source:
City of Austin, TX, Transit Oriented Development Guidebook, 2006.

Definition

Transit oriented development (TOD) is the functional integration of land use and transit via the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities within walking distance of a transit stop or station. A TOD brings together people, jobs, and services and is designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel on foot or by bicycle, transit, or car.

Principles

The following principles serve as a guide and provide an understanding of the essential elements and characteristics of a TOD. They will serve as the foundation for the station area planning.

- *Create a compact development within an easy walk (typically ½ mile) of public transit and with sufficient density to support ridership.*
- *Make the pedestrian the focus of the development strategy without excluding the auto.*
- *Create active places and livable communities that service daily needs & where people feel a sense of belonging & ownership.*
- *Include engaging, high quality civic spaces (e.g. small parks or plazas) as organizing features and gathering places for the neighborhood.*
- *Encourage a variety of housing types near transit facilities available to a wide range of ages and incomes.*
- *Incorporate retail into the development if it is a viable use at the location without the transit component, ideally drawing customers both from the TOD and a major street.*
- *Ensure compatibility and connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods.*
- *Introduce creative parking strategies that integrate, rather than divide the site and reduce the sense of auto domination.*
- *Create TOD plans that are flexible so they can respond to changing conditions.*
- *Strive to make TODs realistic, yet economically viable and valuable from a diversity of perspectives (Village, transit agencies, developer, resident, employer).*
- *Recognize that all TODs are not the same; each development is located within its own unique context and serves a specific purpose in the larger context.*

Relationship to River Grove's Comprehensive Plan

Section 2

As a major planning effort that will greatly impact the growth and development prospects of the Village, it is important to consider how the TOD Plan fits with the vision and guidelines established in River Grove's Comprehensive Plan.

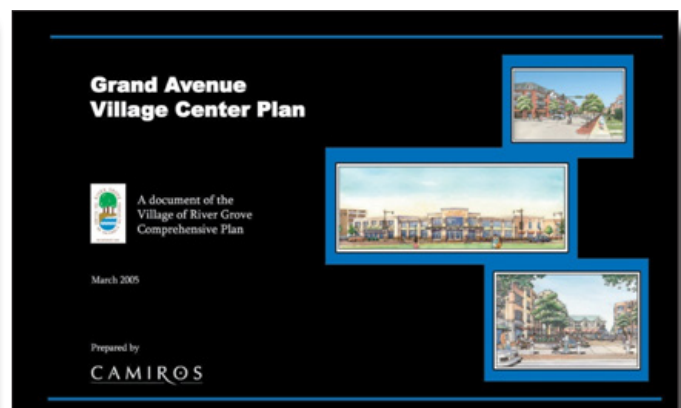
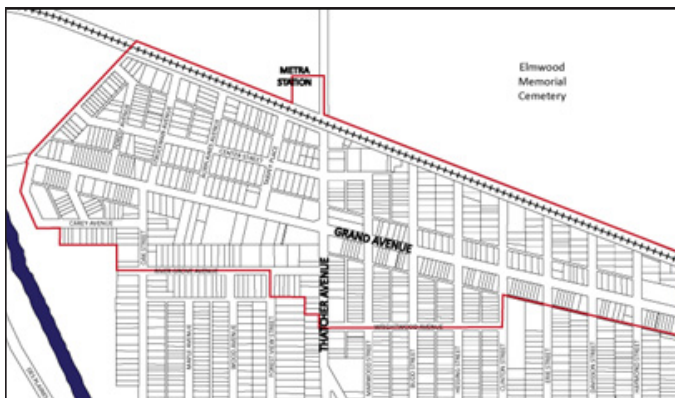
In 2005, the Village of River Grove adopted the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan, which was intended to be the first part of a comprehensive plan for the entire Village. The Grand Avenue Village Center Plan has the status and authority of a comprehensive plan and it is the intent of this document to focus more specifically on the area immediately around the Metra station and the Target Site in particular (immediately southeast of the Metra Station), while adhering to the general guidelines of the previous plan.

The overall revitalization goals of the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan include:

1. Plan for and encourage new development and investment.
2. Market and develop new residential units within easy walking distance of the Metra station.
3. Develop new storefront space to create a pedestrian shopping district.
4. Increase Village property tax and sales tax base.
5. Upgrade Village infrastructure, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and streetscape.
6. Create new urban design features and civic spaces that become signature places for River Grove.

In order to accomplish the goals outlined above, the Village has initiated this more detailed study of the area surrounding the Metra station and more specifically the Target Site located immediately southeast of the Metra station.

Grand Avenue Village Center Plan, prepared by Camiros and approved in March 2005.



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Section 3

Planning & Urban Design Overview

This section provides an overview of planning elements related to this study, including existing land use, zoning, environment, redevelopment opportunities, and urban design.

Existing Land Use

The foundation for formulating land use decisions is a sound understanding of existing land use patterns. The analysis of existing land use – the distribution of various land uses, and opportunities for future development – begins with a land use survey.



Figure 2-1
Existing Land Use Map

The Study Area comprises multiple land uses, including single and multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and open space. The following descriptions provide a brief overview of each type of land use within the Project Area:

- **Residential.** The majority of the Study Area contains of a mixture of low density and medium density residential uses. Medium density residential (shown as multi-family on the Current Land Use map) uses consist of 1960's-style apartment buildings located primarily along Grand Avenue and Arnold Street south of the Metra station, and north of the Metra station between the Thatcher Woods shopping center and Guerin Prep High School.

The remainder of residential uses within the Study Area consists of low density, single family neighborhoods.

Examples of single-family (below) and multi-family (above) residential in River Grove



- Commercial.** Uses within the Study Area include retail (shops, restaurants, etc.) and heavy commercial (auto service/sales, contractors, etc.) users. Retail uses are located primarily along Grand Avenue, with the major concentration at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue. However, the main commercial center of the Study Area, as well as the Village as a whole, is the Thatcher Woods shopping center located at Thatcher Avenue and Belmont Avenue. This center was developed in the 1960's and renovated through TIF financing in the 1990's. This shopping center serves the Village and surrounding communities with a grocery store, drug store, bank and restaurant.

Heavy commercial uses such as auto sales/service, contractors, plumbers, etc. are scattered throughout the commercial areas with the Study Area, but mainly on the east end of Grand Avenue east of Hessing Street.



Examples of retail (above) and heavy commercial (below) in River Grove



- **Office.** The only multi-story, multi-user office building within the Study Area is Triton Towers. This is a 5-story office building containing roughly 36,000 sq.ft. of office space. As of July 2013, the building was 60% vacant. Parking is a major issue for Triton Towers, however a new parking lot is planned to help alleviate the parking issues. Other smaller office buildings and mixed-use buildings containing office space are scattered throughout the Study Area, primarily along Grand Avenue and within the Thatcher Woods Shopping Plaza.

Triton Towers office building



- **Industrial.** A small area of manufacturing uses is located near the railroad tracks, east of Clinton Street. These industrial uses are located on streets that dead-end at the railroad tracks providing poor access and circulation, and in close proximity to residential uses causing conflicts between these incompatible land uses.

Example of industrial development in River Grove



- Institutional.** Institutional land use includes publicly owned facilities such as the River Grove School, Village Hall, the public works facility, the post office, the River Grove Library, multiple churches, telephone exchange building, electrical substation, and the Metra station and parking lot.

The River Grove School is located on the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue, which is the prime commercial corner within the Study Area (and the Village as a whole). This institutional use prohibits future commercial development at this highly desirable intersection.

The River Grove Library is currently located on Grand Avenue, but the Library Board has purchased land on Center Avenue for the construction of a new library. Financial and zoning issues, as well as strong public opposition, have prevented the new library project from proceeding forward. The Center Avenue site is located in a residential neighborhood and is less than ideal for a new library facility.

The public works facility on Center Street plans to relocate in the near future in order to allow for the redevelopment of the main opportunity site at the northeast corner of Thatcher Avenue and Center Street.



River Grove School



River Grove Public Library

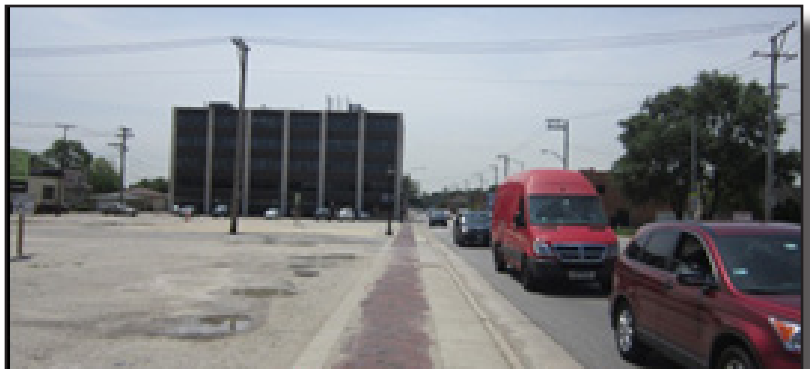
Aerial showing cemeteries within the Study Area

- **Open Space.** The St. Joseph's Cemetery and Elmwood Memorial Cemetery are located directly north of the rail line. West of the Study Area, the Des Plaines River runs through Cook County Forest Preserve property. Although large tracts of open space are present, it is primarily passive in nature and no active recreational opportunities exist within the Study Area (except those provided at River Grove School).



- **Target Site.** The Target Site is located directly southeast from the Metra Station across the tracks. It is the previous site of the Quasthoff's Flower Shop, which has been demolished. The Village Public Works facility is also located on the Target Site, and will need to be relocated prior to redevelopment of the site. The Target Site offers the greatest immediate opportunity for redevelopment within the Study Area, and specific concept plans have been developed highlighting potential redevelopment of this site.

Target Site Existing Condition



- Other Opportunity Sites.** Aside from the priority Target Site, additional opportunities for (re)development exist within the Study Area. These opportunity sites consist primarily of vacant parcels/buildings scattered throughout the Study Area, including the vacant bowling alley on Grand Avenue. In addition, potential for additional development within the Thatcher Woods shopping center should be explored.

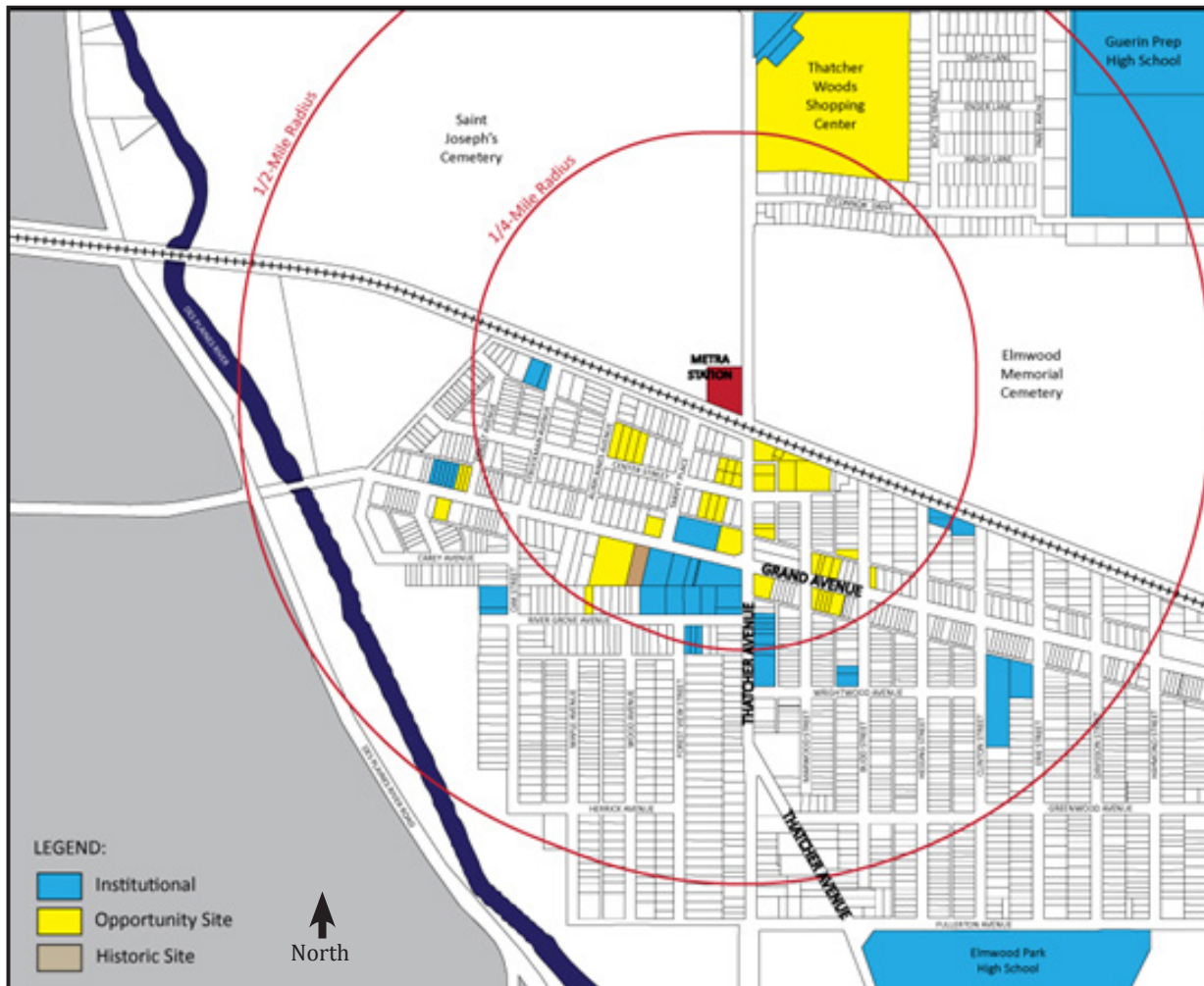


Figure 2-2
Opportunity Sites Map

Zoning

Zoning helps communities bring about orderly growth and change. It helps assure property owners and residents that the characteristics of nearby areas will remain stable. River Grove's zoning map includes twelve (12) different districts, eleven (11) of which are present within the ½-mile T.O.D. Study Area. These districts include four (4) residential, four (4) commercial, one (1) industrial, one (1) municipal and one (1) open space district.



Figure 2-3
Zoning Map

The Village of River Grove has recently updated its zoning ordinance, to more accurately reflect existing land use patterns and address current development standards. Eleven (11) zoning districts are present within the Study Area, including:

- R1 – single unit dwelling detached residential district
- R1 – single unit dwelling attached residential district
- R3 – single and multi unit dwelling residential district
- R4 – general residence district
- C1 – mixed use storefront commercial district
- C2 – office and commercial district
- C3 – heavy commercial district
- C4 – shopping center commercial district
- M1 – light manufacturing district
- G/E – government and education district
- O/S – open space district

Development standards for the zoning districts within the Study Area are detailed below. Although existing development was constructed under the previous zoning ordinance, future development will be governed by the new regulations.

	R1	R2	R3	R4	C1	C2	C3	C4	M1	G/E	O/S
Lot Area	5,625sf	3,750sf	3,750sf	3,750sf	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6,260sf	n/a	n/a
Lot Width	45ft	30ft	30ft	30ft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50ft	n/a	n/a
Lot Coverage	50%	50%	50%	50%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bldg. Height	32ft	32ft	38ft	45ft	45ft	45ft	45ft	45ft	45ft	60ft	35ft
Front Yard	20ft	20ft	15ft	10ft	n/a	n/a	n/a	25ft	10ft	20ft	20ft
Rear Yard	25ft	25ft	20ft	20ft	n/a	n/a	n/a	25ft	10ft	25ft	25ft
Side Yard	10%	10%	10%	10%	15ft	15ft	20ft	25ft	10ft	10ft	10ft

The new zoning ordinance has addressed some of the historic issues facing the Study Area, particularly along the Grand Avenue corridor. The Grand Avenue corridor is zoned primarily commercial (C1, C2, and C3) and high-density residential (R4). The R4 district now allows dwellings above ground floor commercial which will help maintain a commercial presence along Grand Avenue. Building heights have also been increased from previous standards, allowing buildings up to 45ft (4 stories) along Grand Avenue.

Parking is also a concern within the Study Area. Commercial parking requirements vary depending on specific use, however businesses under 1,000sf of gross floor area are exempt from parking requirements. Multi-family residential uses, which are prevalent within the Study Area, require 1.5 to 2.0 parking spaces per dwelling unit, which will likely require separate parking structures or eliminate ground floor commercial space in order to accommodate parking requirements. However, shared parking arrangements are allowed, and on-street parking can count towards required parking, which can help to offset parking requirements.

TIF Districts

There are two (2) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts located within the Study Area. TIF can be a valuable tool to help local businesses and property owners to rehabilitate and/or (re)develop deteriorated and vacant properties. Existing TIF Districts within the Study Area include:

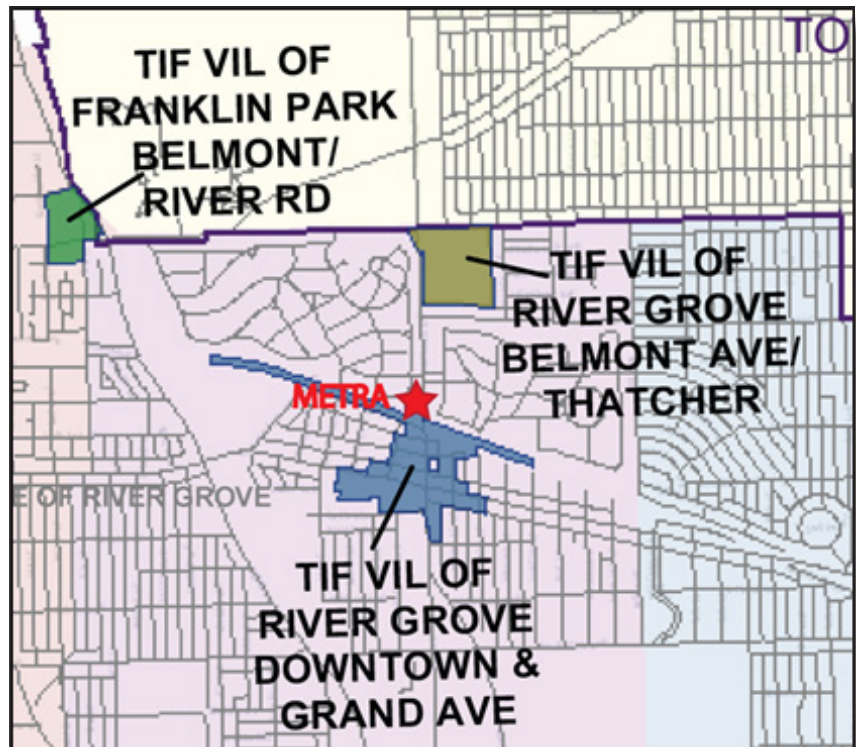
- Belmont/Thatcher TIF District

This TIF District encompasses the Thatcher Woods shopping center at the southeast corner of Thatcher Avenue and Belmont Avenue, and was created in 1997. The shopping center was purchased by a developer and completely rehabilitated with the help of TIF funding.

- Grand/Thatcher TIF District

This TIF District includes parcels located along Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue, and was created in 2006. It has been utilized for façade improvements and a restaurant expansion within the Study Area, and can be a valuable tool to help fund future redevelopment projects within the Study Area.

Figure 2-4
TIF Locations Map



Utility Infrastructure

There are a number of utility issues related to the site that may impact potential (re)development:

- An NFR letter has been issued for the Target Site. There are possible buried tanks/contaminants in the soil that may affect future development. The subject site has very sandy/silty soil at the north and east that may impact what can be constructed on the site and where future development on the site may occur.
- Water is readily available. There is a 12-inch main in the alley to the Target Site that may need to be rerouted.
- Sanitary sewer is available. A 12-inch combined sewer line runs on Center Street and has sufficient available capacity. Storm sewer may be an issue which may require best management practices and/or additional retention/detention on the Target Site.
- Roadway conditions throughout the Study Area are poor. The existing TIF may be a good source of future funding for replacement of road surfaces in the area. However, existing TIF funds are limited.



ComEd substation located southeast of the Metra station.

Streetscape and Urban Design

Although the subject site is only 2.16 acres, it is visually and functionally connected to its surroundings. The following subareas exhibit characteristics which have an impact on the subject site and the community as a whole.

- Thatcher Avenue Corridor and Metra Station Area
- Downtown River Grove Area and Grand Avenue Corridor
- Subject Site

Thatcher Avenue Corridor and Metra Station Area

The Thatcher Avenue Corridor and Metra Station Area represent the Village's northern gateway. Dominant features of this corridor are the wide expanses of cemeteries located at the east and west sides of Thatcher Avenue. Village gateway entry signage is present, however, it is difficult to read due to sign copy text size and materials. The Metra Station building serves as an effective gateway into the Village from the north.

The Metra Station is comprised of a wood sided structure with gable roof and cupola. The station and adjacent parking area are well defined and well landscaped. Bike storage areas are present at the station area. Pace bus facilities include a bench and shelter. Pedestrian routes between the Metra station and the surrounding areas, however are not well defined. Pedestrians were witnessed crossing Thatcher Ave mid block. Dirt 'cow paths' were identified along the west side of Thatcher Ave, north of the Metra station area. The at-grade pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks is poorly defined and includes uneven pavements and structures.

Gateway sign announcing entry to River Grove includes small text that is difficult to read

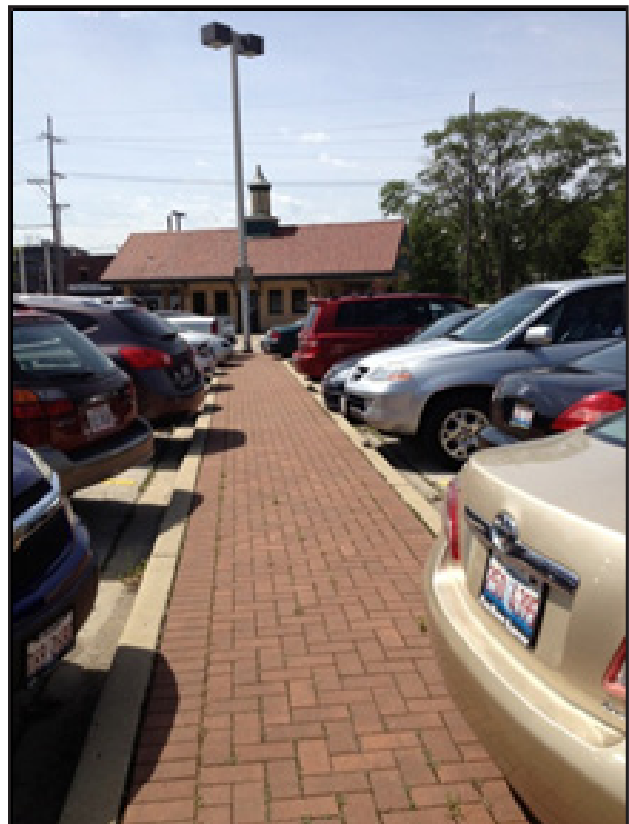




View looking across Thatcher Avenue towards the cemetery



Existing station area includes well landscaped areas and pedestrian friendly paving features





Site furnishings include benches and trash receptacles in brown-bronze finish



Existing Pace bus stop includes a bench, connected sidewalks and landscaping, but no shelter.



Existing chain link fence along the Cemetery is not a character giving element for the north gateway into the Village.



Existing crossing is deteriorating and dangerous for pedestrians.

View looking across the train tracks towards the Metra parking paybox shelter and River Café bar/restaurant beyond. River Café is an established building with history tied to early settlers and Village members.



Cow path suggests pedestrian movements north of the station area along the west side of the street.



Downtown River Grove Area and Grand Avenue Corridor

The downtown area has seen recent developments, especially along Grand Avenue with new retail shops and streetscape installations. The traditional downtown area spans 2-3 blocks along Grand Avenue, east of Thatcher Avenue. Established shops and dining establishments are eclectic in their appearance. Retail shops have maintained their traditional storefront proportions, including a defined storefront, cornice and base detail. Unique public art such as the Blues Brothers at Mario's Barber Shop and colorful awnings at Visionman suggest an eclectic design character which promotes individual expression.

Strip commercial centers are also dominant features in the downtown area. These developments are set back behind two rows of parking and include large pole mounted signs. The architecture of these buildings are similar overall and lack that eclectic character portrayed by the older shops.

Housing in the downtown area expresses various architectural forms. Historic homes in the area include a range of cottage and bungalow style. Homes are generally well preserved and very well maintained.

Recently constructed housing along Grand Avenue includes a multifamily building with interior parking garage space (northeast corner of Grand and Struckman). This building is generally constructed from high quality materials and incorporates best design practices.

Existing streetscape elements include raised planter curbs, low ornamental railings, decorative lighting and street signs and unit pavers.



Examples of eclectic storefronts which incorporate unique sculpture and decorative signage and murals



Example of recently constructed strip commercial. The currently vacant buildings are partially situated behind two rows of parking. The adjacent rehabbed grocer's (Ada's) location within this commercial center poses some challenges. The door abutting the sidewalk is closed. Although an open doorway exists towards the north parking area, no doorway functions along Grand Avenue.





Existing business along Thatcher Avenue includes a unique Pace bus shelter in which the bench and sign are situated along the blank building wall to provide as much buffer as is possible between bench and travel lanes.



Strip center commercial includes face brick, continuous sign band and pole mounted signage.



Housing in River Grove includes historic bungalow and cottage homes. Newer multi-family housing includes below grade parking, quality architectural design and quality materials.



Target Site

The target site is currently vacant. However the character surrounding the site includes Village standard streetscape amenities, including light poles and unit pavers. The existing buildings on the property are controlled by the Village and include wood frame and brick warehouse structures. This property abuts single family homes located along Marwood Street. The property is also adjacent to a 5-6 story office building.



Target Site includes a unit paver sidewalk along Thatcher Ave (at left) as well as decorative light poles.



Village structures within the Target Site are in the process of being vacated to facilitate redevelopment.

View looking towards public works facility located within the Target Site (slated for removal to facilitate redevelopment.)



View looking across the Target Site towards Thatcher Avenue and the Metra station (at right).



Natural Resources & Historic Sites

The major natural resource within the Study Area is undeniably the Des Plaines River, located at the western edge of the Study Area. The river lies within Cook County Forest Preserve property along River Road. The forest preserve property provides primarily passive recreational opportunities for the residents of the Study Area and the Village as a whole, however there are a small number of athletic fields located at Herrick Avenue/Maple Street and Ditka Drive. No other parks or recreational activities are located within the Study Area.



Baseball field located at southwest corner of Herrick Avenue and Maple Street.

The majority of the Study Area to the north of the tracks is utilized by two cemeteries, Saint Joseph's Cemetery located west of Thatcher Avenue and Elmwood Memorial cemetery located east of Thatcher Avenue. The location of these cemeteries severely limits the development opportunities within the ½-mile radius of the Metra Station.

The Study Area also includes the River Grove Historical House and Barn, located on Grand Avenue adjacent to the River Grove School, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The River Grove Historical Commission has recently rehabilitated this Italianate two-story home, and utilize it as a museum highlighting life in River Grove in the second half of the 19th Century.



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Section 4

Transportation Overview

Transportation (Metra)

The Thatcher/Grand Avenue area in River Grove is served by two Metra lines: the District West (MD-W) and the North Central Service (NCS). This unique location provides an opportunity for travel from River Grove to many areas within the region, including the City of Chicago, downtown Chicago, O'Hare Airport, Lake County, and Kane County. The MD-W originates in downtown Chicago at Union Station and terminates at Big Timber Road near Elgin located in Kane County. The NCS also originates at Union Station and travels to Antioch located in Lake County, Illinois. The River Grove station is located in the "C" fare zone, one of the first stations outside of the City of Chicago.

Ridership

Per Metra's System-wide Boarding/Alighting Counts conducted in the fall of 2006, there were 298 boardings at the River Grove station on both lines. Of these boardings, 228 (77%) were traveling in the traditional commute direction inbound towards the City of Chicago and 70 (23%) were traveling in the reverse commute direction outbound direction.

Weekday Boardings	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2002	2006
River Grove/MD-W	244	244	285	197	184	164	174
River Grove/NCS	n/a	n/a	n/a	138	176	172	124
TOTAL	244	244	285	324	360	336	298

Table 4-1

Weekday Boarding Over Time

Mode of access to the station is predominantly by driving and parking or being dropped off at the station. The mode of access to the River Grove station is relatively similar to the MD-W line as a whole and to Metra system-wide.

MODE	RIVER GROVE	MD-W	METRA SYSTEM
Walk	22%	25%	21%
Drive Alone	50%	53%	54%
Dropped Off	22%	12%	14%
Carpool (Driver/Pass.)	2%	4%	4%
Bus	0%	2%	4%
Bike	1%	1%	1%
Taxi	1%	1%	1%
Metra	1%	0%	0%
Rapid Transit	0%	1%	1%
Other	0%	0%	0%

Table 4-2

Mode of Access to Station (2006)

Commuter Parking

Commuter parking is provided in two facilities in the downtown area, providing 171 spaces. These spaces are divided between daily fee and monthly permit spaces. Overall occupancy is 67%, although if all permit spaces were assumed to be full, the effective occupancy rate would be 81%. The monthly permit spaces in the surface have a higher use rate (76%) than the daily parking spaces located along the railroad right-of-way (53%). Daily parking fee is \$1.50 and monthly permits are \$20.00 per month.

Figure 4-1
Commuter Parking Locations

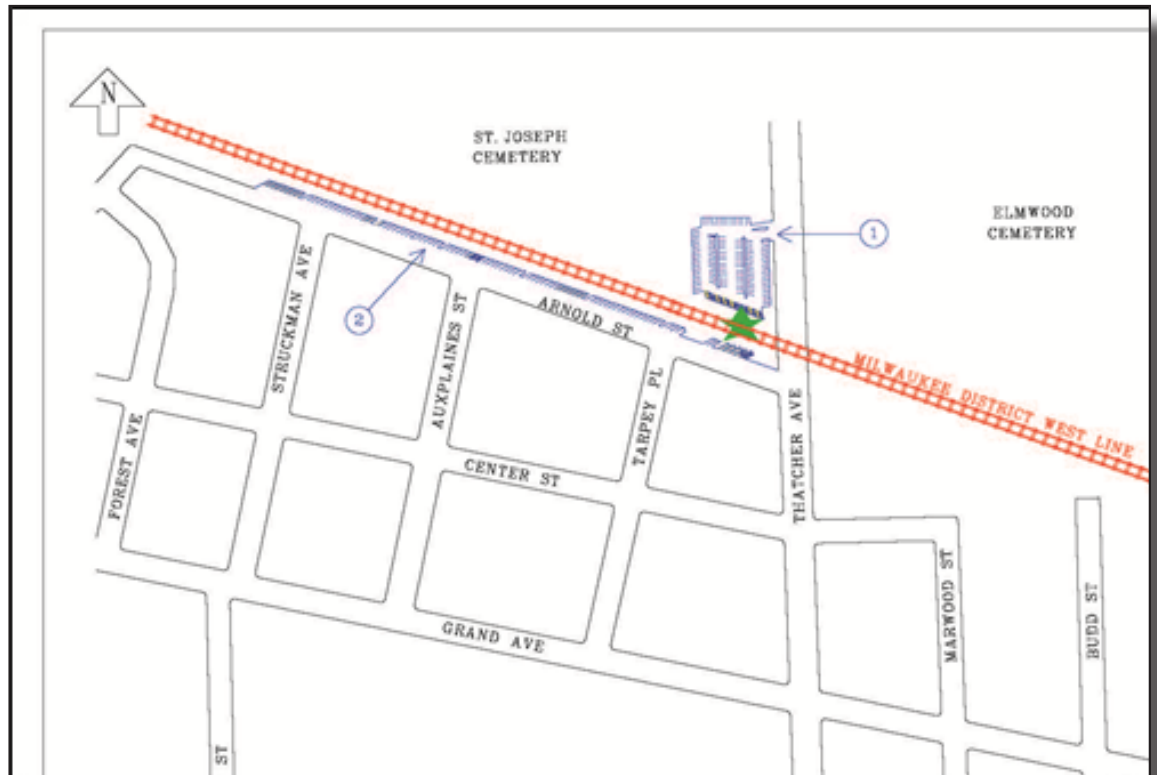


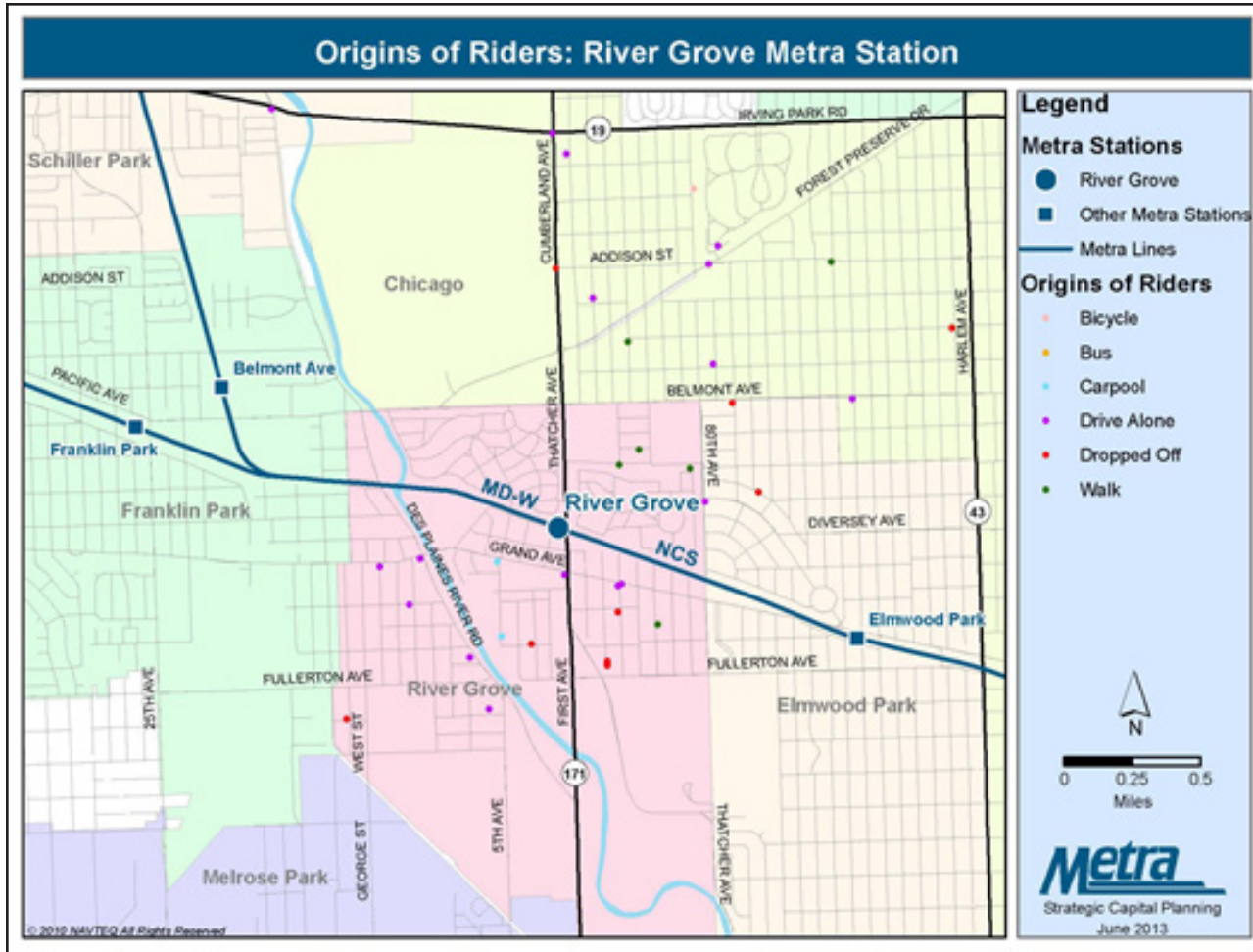
Table 4-3
River Grove Commuter Parking

LOT	DAILY FEE SPACES	PERMIT SPACES	TOTAL SPACES	USAGE	% OCCUPIED	EFFECTIVE % USE
1	0	101	101	77	76%	100%
2	70	0	70	37	53%	53%
TOTAL	70	101	171	114	67%	81%

Based on a 2006 Metra Origin-Destination survey, River Grove residents make up the greatest percentage of those boarding at the River Grove station (39%), closely followed by residents of the City of Chicago (35%).

Improving streets, sidewalks, and crossings can offer safe, direct, and pleasurable walking and biking routes to access the station. Improving/increasing bus service and providing a convenient bus staging area offers an opportunity to increase transit access to the station.

Figure 4-2
Origin of Riders



Transportation (Pace)

Two Pace Routes – 319 and 331 – operate in the study area and provide access to the River Grove Metra station.

Table 4-4

**Route 319 Average Weekday
– Major Stop Locations near
Grand/Thatcher**

DIRECTION	STOP LOCATION	AVG. WEEK-DAY ONS	AVG. WEEK-DAY OFFS
West	Grand/Budd	2	2
West	Grand/Thatcher (NE)	3	8
West	Grand/Thatcher (NW)	9	5
West	Grand/Oak	4	4
West	Cumberland/Belmont	17	0
East	Grand/River	5	4
East	Grand/Oak	3	3
East	Grand/Thatcher (SW)	0	1
East	Grand/Thatcher (SE)	15	12
East	Grand/Budd	2	0
East	Cumberland/Belmont	1	14

Table 4-5

**Route 331 Average Weekday
– Major Stop Locations near
Grand/Thatcher**

DIRECTION	STOP LOCATION	AVG. WEEK-DAY ONS	AVG. WEEK-DAY OFFS
North	River/Grand	9	8
North	Grand/Oak	8	3
North	Grand/Thatcher (NE)	30	10
North	Thatcher/Metra	7	8
North	Thatcher/O'Connor	3	9
North	Cumberland/Belmont	33	33
South	Cumberland/Belmont	40	37
South	Thatcher/Metra	15	20
South	Grand/Thatcher (NW)	9	21
South	Grand/Oak	2	2
South	River/Grand	8	10

Source: Pace (June/July 2013)

Roadways

Both Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue are under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Thatcher Avenue carries 25,200 average daily traffic (ADT) at Grand Avenue, and 17,900 south of Fullerton, where it continues south to IL 171. Grand Avenue carries 21,500 ADT at Thatcher Avenue. There are approximately 106 trains, including both Metra commuter rail and freight that cross Thatcher every day on the three sets of tracks. The southernmost track is used by freight trains and the other two tracks carry commuter trains.

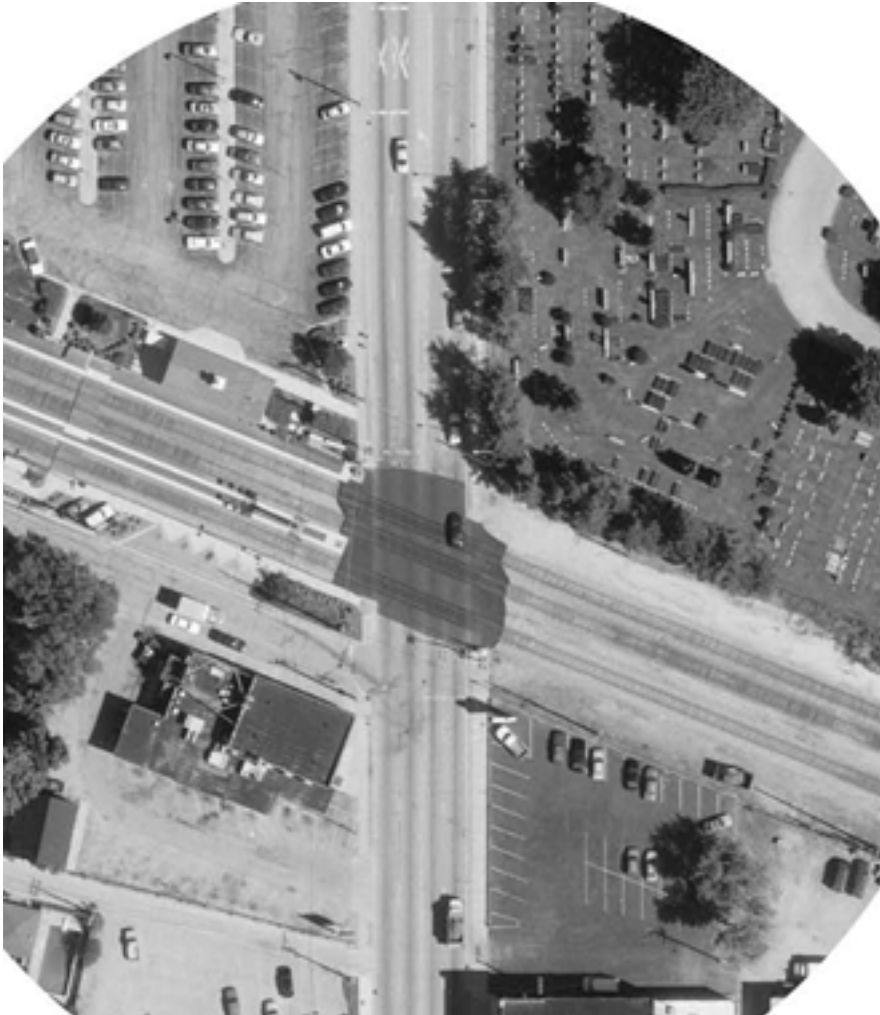


Figure 4-2
Thatcher Avenue Crossing

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Section 5

Market Overview

Current Market Conditions

River Grove's TOD area is a unique transportation hub served by two Metra rail lines, Milwaukee District West and North Central, and within walking distance of three roads carrying Average Daily traffic in excess of 20,000 cars, Thatcher, Grand and Belmont. Although, it offers a range of commercial development, including office, shopping centers filled with national chains, and a mix of independent specialty stores and restaurants. There are vacant parcels and underutilized properties that the Village seeks to improve and thereby meet community aspirations for the area. The Current Conditions Report provides baseline data to the Village, existing business owners, property owners, potential investors, and Village residents about the market demand for specific types of retail, office, residential, and mixed use projects that would be both appropriate and financially feasible. Also provided is information about the timing of investments and the market development and financing challenges that must be overcome to realize successful projects. This is a component of the TOD Plan that will identify changes likely to increase utilization of River Grove's Metra stop and protect its vital contribution to the community.

Community Overview

The Village of River Grove is a middle class west suburban Chicago community where residents value their family oriented lifestyles and the excellence of the public and private schools. This community overview identifies elements of the overall subregional economy that are relevant to how River Grove's TOD area fits into the community's overall economy. Later, the implementation action plan element of the study will provide strategies and actions that position River Grove's TOD area as a vital element of the regional economy through physical and business mix changes.

Housing Population Trends

Table 5-1 below updates the population trends for River Grove and four surrounding communities:

Table 5-1
Population Trends

	POPULATION			HOUSEHOLDS		
	2000	2010	% CHANGE	2000	2010	% CHANGE
River Grove	10,677	10,277	-4.2%	4,420	4,142	-6.3%
Melrose Park	23,218	25,411	9.4%	7,632	7,959	4.3%
Franklin Park	19,450	18,333	-5.7%	6,508	6,174	-5.1%
Elmwood Park	25,405	24,883	-2.1%	9,858	9,461	-4.0%
River Forest	11,634	11,172	-4.0%	4,092	3,961	-3.2%

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As Table 5-1 illustrates, River Grove's population loss from 2000 to 2010 was consistent with the surrounding communities except Melrose Park. A greater decline in households than in population indicates that there was an increase in family size.

Table 5-2
Occupied Units

Table 5-2 examines the mix of owned and rented housing in River Grove and the surrounding communities and illustrates that Melrose Park's growth has come from rental housing.

	2000 CENSUS			2013			% CHANGE	
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	Renter Occupied Units	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	Renter Occupied Units	Occupied Units	Renter Occupied Units
River Grove	4,424	59.0%	41.1%	4,202	58.4%	41.4%	-5.0%	0.3%
Melrose Park	7,368	54.9%	44.9%	8,064	49.3%	50.6%	5.6%	5.7%
Franklin Park	6,513	73.0%	26.7%	6,251	71.6%	28.2%	-4.0%	1.5%
Elmwood Park	9,886	65.5%	34.3%	9,569	65.6%	34.3%	-3.0%	0.0%
River Forest	4,092	86.8%	13.1%	4,023	88.1%	11.8%	-1.7%	-1.3%

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Nationally, the new homes market has faced an economic downturn never before experienced since data on that market has been collected. The downturn caused values to decline for all residential real estate and created a buyers' market, as new households chose rental over acquisition. Table 5-3 illustrates the recovering owner market by reporting average house sales prices and the months of inventory available for River Grove and surrounding suburbs. Builders become interested in markets where the supply of homes falls below four months where a buyer's market develops and begins to support price increases.

Table 5-3
Owner Market

	AVG. PRICE		MONTHS OF INVENTORY		ACTIVE LISTINGS
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2013
River Grove	\$155,116	\$136,494	5.6	2.7	21
Melrose Park	\$122,170	\$110,335	7.2	5.4	59
Franklin Park	\$126,129	\$116,466	6.5	3.0	67
Elmwood Park	\$179,764	\$173,780	8.0	4.0	77
River Forest	\$619,891	\$610,897	8.0	3.7	36

Since those conditions exist in the local markets except Melrose Park, there is an opportunity for new homes.

Employment Income

Table 5-4 compares River Grove's employment and income to the surrounding communities.

Table 5-4
Employment and Income

	EMPLOYEES	EMPLOYEES/ HOUSEHOLD	AVG. INCOME (2000)	AVG. INCOME (2013)	% CHANGE
River Grove	3,199	0.8	\$48,599	\$61,058	25.7%
Melrose Park	15,037	1.9	\$49,177	\$55,294	12.4%
Franklin Park	13,434	2.1	\$54,485	\$66,406	21.9%
Elmwood Park	3,637	0.4	\$58,351	\$70,029	20.0%
River Forest	4,171	1.0	\$128,370	\$166,124	29.4%

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Since those conditions exist in the local markets except Melrose Park, there is an opportunity for new homes.

Shopping and Dining

River Grove contends in a competitive regional shopping area where the full range of national high volume tenants has locations. Table 5-5 compares the retail sales in River Grove and its surrounding communities.

Table 5-5
Retail Sales per Household

	RETAIL SALES	HOUSEHOLDS	SALES/HOUSE- HOLD
River Grove	\$90,053,239	4,202	\$21,431
Melrose Park	\$645,369,417	8,064	\$80,031
Franklin Park	\$181,960,500	6,251	\$29,109
Elmwood Park	\$149,388,561	9,569	\$15,612
River Forest	\$167,237,141	4,023	\$41,570

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With an average household income of \$61,000 and sales per household of approximately \$21,000, there is an opportunity to increase local retail sales in River Grove. That opportunity becomes even clearer when the mix of River Grove sales is considered.

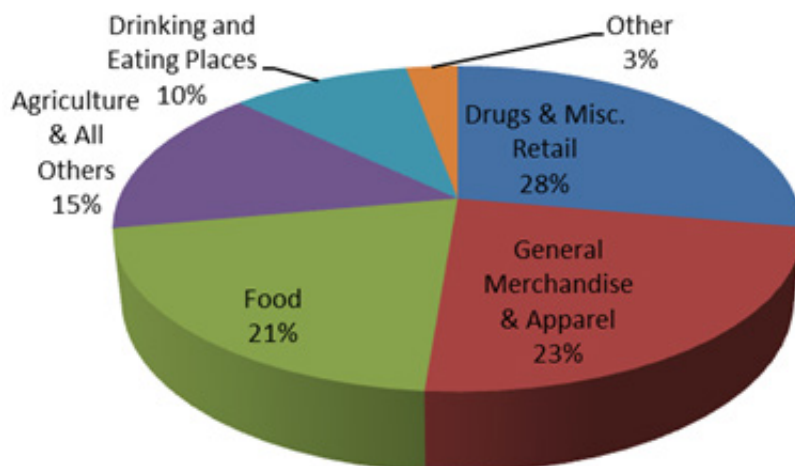


Figure 5-6
Sales Mix
(Illinois Department of Revenue)

Project research estimates total spending by residents at \$193 million while the Illinois Department of Revenue sales tax receipts show revenue on only \$90 million. Very low sales in the category that covers automobiles and auto fuel, only \$2 million verses expenditures of more than \$22 million, contributes to that shortage.

Overview and Summary

River Grove is at the heart of a Chicago suburban sub-region that has felt the impact of the national economic downturn but has remained relatively stable as illustrated by increasing average income and stable home ownership. Within its sub-region, the River Grove economy is smaller than its neighbors and therefore is significantly impacted by their economies. Consequently, its appeal to commercial investors can be significantly impacted by changes in these surrounding communities.

TOD Area Retail and Restaurant Opportunities

River Grove's TOD area presents a variety of markets. It contains a centrally managed grocery anchored neighborhood center; Thatcher Woods Center; Triton Towers, a five-story office building; single tenant retail and office spaces extending along Thatcher and Grand; and two multi-tenant strip centers. The Village Hall, library, and local elementary school are also within the TOD area. The Village has recently restored 93 on-street parking spaces along Grand Avenue, and constructed a new community parking lot at the southeast corner of Grand and Thatcher. The presence of vacant and underutilized parcels offers an opportunity to knit this existing development into a contemporary downtown that offers a central place for the Village. A downtown would mix residential units, financial services, institutions, recreation, public transportation; Downtown must appeal to a variety of markets. These markets are:

- **Community Affiliated:** Successful Downtowns often define the character of a community. With pride, residents bring guests to dine in independent restaurants and seek special items at unique stores. The Downtown serves as a setting for community festivals that draw residents. This relationship creates an affiliation that makes community residents an important market for the downtown.
- **Pedestrian:** Residents living within a one-half to one-mile walk of commercial development are particularly intense users. The frequent trips and presence of these nearby residents adds vitality even when businesses are not open and consequently this market is more important to the success of clusters than its spending power suggests.
- **Convenience** (also bicycle): If one can drive to obtain needed items within five-minutes, that location can be the routine choice to meet every day needs if it offers desirable quality and variety. Convenience shoppers are the core market for most neighborhood retail clusters. This five-minute drive time market also identifies the homes of bicyclists who can travel to a commercial cluster in ten-minutes or less. These markets add rec-

reational users to the convenience mix. The convenience five-minute drive time is the primary trade area for River Grove's TOD area stores and restaurants. It should provide 60% to 85% of the spending captured by TOD area businesses.

- **Destination:** The businesses gaining the smaller percentages of their sales from the convenience market create a destination draw as their unique offering attracts shoppers from a larger geography (such as the DaLuciano restaurant). Customers from this secondary trade area add sales to adjacent convenience businesses. The stores attracting this market also give the commercial cluster a unique character that differentiates it from other shopping alternatives. It is important to note that, although the sales volume from this market is a smaller percent of total volume, these marginal sales add significantly to the profits of all businesses and, without destination customers, few businesses can meet their operational goals.

Using the Metra Station as the center point, Table 6 highlights key demographic and spending characteristics of the River Grove TOD area markets and employee spending associated with the TOD area. To turn the spending power into sustainable retail square footage, this table divides spending power by \$300 average sales per square foot (ICSC, Center View; U.S. Mall Performance, February 2011).

Table 5-7
Spending Characteristics

	River Grove	0.5 Miles: River Grove Metra	5 Minutes: River Grove Metra	15 Minutes: River Grove Metra
Total Population	10,337	5,066	20,118	381,064
Population Density (per Sq. Mi.)	4,137.47	4,092.11	5,887.22	7,278.98
Median Age	38.1	37.4	39.7	37.2
Average Household Income	\$61,058	\$54,100	\$66,817	\$75,018
Employees	3,199	1,165	5,284	154,888
Resident Spending Power	\$192,939,032	\$94,821,615	\$384,124,248	\$6,685,274,109
Employee Spending Power	\$23,435,874	\$8,534,790	\$38,710,584	\$1,134,709,488
Supported Retail square feet @ \$300 per square foot	643,130	316,072	1,280,414	22,284,247

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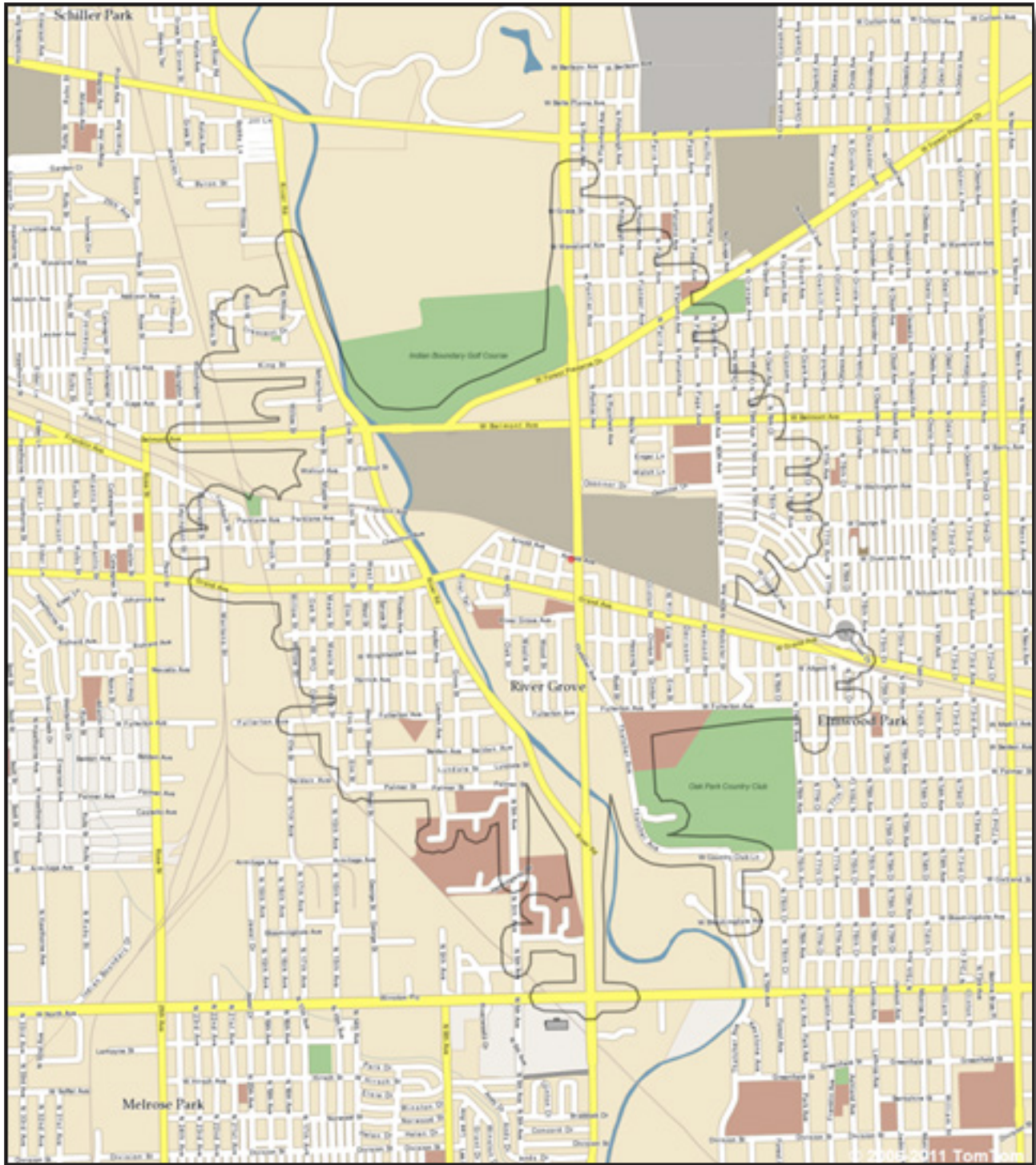


Figure 5-8
5-Minute Drive Time

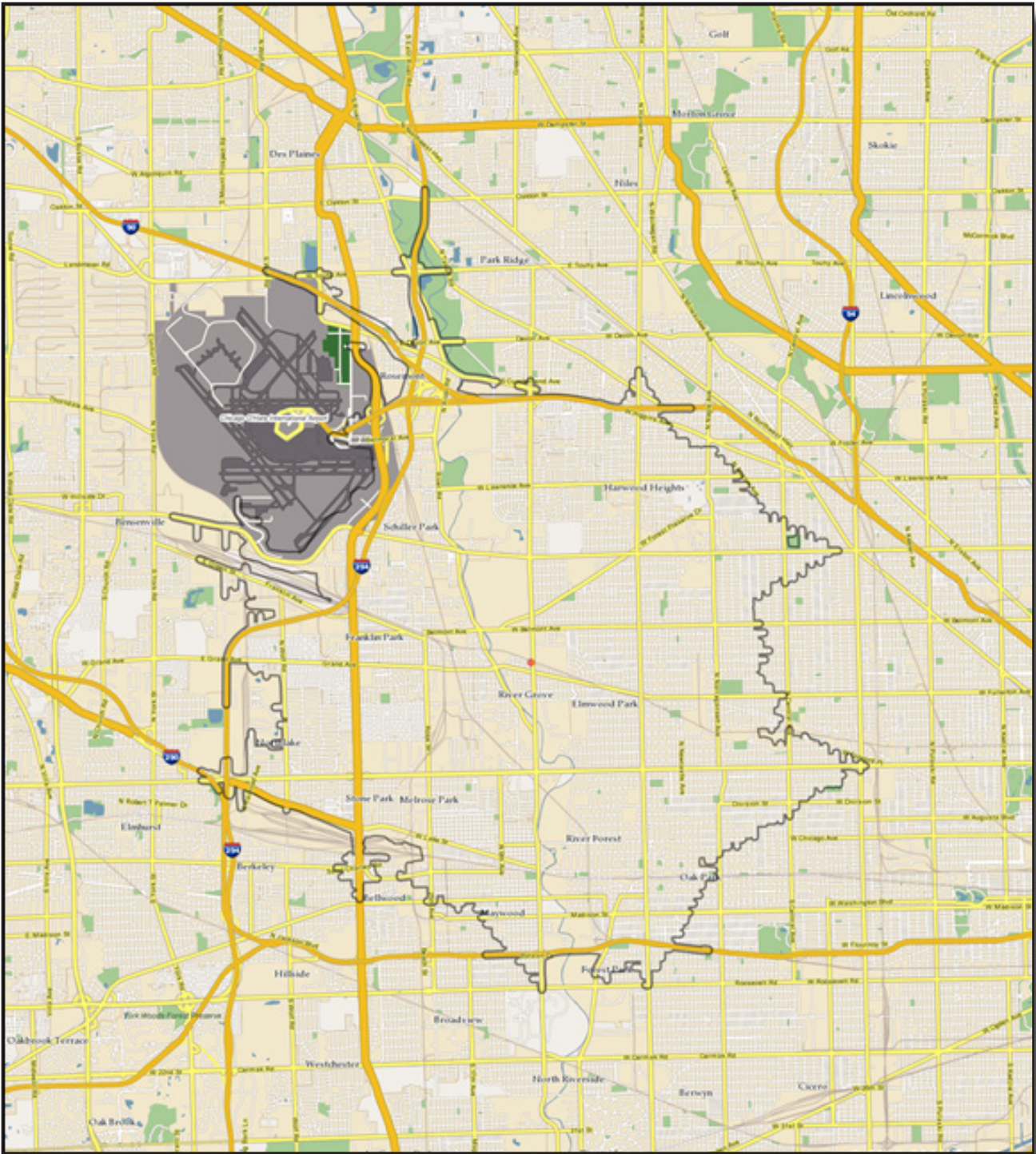


Figure 5-9
15-Minute Drive Time

This sales potential data in Table 5-6 confirms that the market is not limiting development. The constraint on development is right-sized, quality sites with easy access. Property owners are renting retail at \$8 to \$18 per square foot, prices far below the \$25 to \$28 rent that allows the businesses and property owners to achieve market rate returns on new construction.

The River Grove TOD area's core retail and restaurant business district extends along Grand Avenue and Thatcher and contains institutional uses that connect strongly to the community: Village Hall, Police Station, Fire Station, the Library, the Community Center, and the Metra Station.

In summary, the retail, restaurant, personal service, and office businesses of River Grove's TOD area Corridor are contending in a very competitive market that offers sufficient buying power for well-conceived and managed businesses to thrive but can quickly destroy weak concepts. The challenge is to increase the sales in existing space by filling vacancies, promoting quality tenants, and replacing ground floor office tenants with more customer friendly businesses. This competitive environment places less importance on what a business sells than on how the item is sold; any desired non-convenience good can be found within this market. The discerning customers with this extensive selection choose businesses that are well-stocked, well-staffed, clean, and open during the hours that fit their needs.

Office and Commercial Services Opportunities

Unlike retailers and restaurateurs, who must find space specifically connected to a consumer market, office tenants look regionally and are able to relocate for price or amenities. As recent headlines have proclaimed, the regional office market is very weak, experiencing vacancy rates never before measured in the 30 years that current publications have tracked this market. In its 2nd Quarter 2013 report on the Chicago Suburban Market, US Equities explained the long term vacancy challenge as, "A decrease in vacancy rates in the suburban sub-markets continues to be on stand-by, waiting for new job growth to create enough new full-time office jobs so that tenants will need to expand or relocate to larger spaces. As of May 2013, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a preliminary unemployment rate of 9.3% for the Metropolitan Chicago Division."

Office space in River Grove competes in the O'Hare sub market. Table 5-7 documents the current conditions in that market and the suburbs in general:

Suburban Submarkets

Submarket	Total Rentable Building Area	Direct Vacancy	Sublease Vacancy	Total Vacancy	Direct Vacancy %	Sublease Vacancy %	Total Vacancy %	Total Net Absorption Year-To-Date
O'Hare								
Class A	6,441,503	996,788	69,327	1,066,115	15.5%	1.1%	16.6%	59,883
Class B	5,470,732	1,332,215	34,636	1,366,851	24.4%	0.6%	25.0%	(13,337)
Total	11,912,235	2,329,003	103,963	2,432,966	19.6%	0.9%	20.4%	46,546
Total Suburban								
Class A	44,111,441	7,064,425	1,276,343	8,340,768	16.0%	2.9%	18.9%	(127,731)
Class B	45,532,260	10,407,791	447,211	10,855,002	22.9%	1.0%	23.8%	246,925
Total	89,643,701	17,472,216	1,723,554	19,195,770	19.5%	1.9%	21.4%	119,194

Suburban inventory includes single non-owner occupied buildings greater than 49,999 square feet

Although the general market for office is quite weak, downtowns in communities such as River Grove often overcome that weakness, as residents choose office locations that minimize their commute. Generally small to mid-sized corporations requiring developments of 10,000 to 30,000 square feet can make this type of relocation. Initially, buildings are constructed with the prime tenant occupying 70% of the space. These unique, office opportunities cannot be documented because they often involve property acquisition or landlord tenant relationships that occur because the tenant chooses to make an investment in the community where they have personal connections. Planning projects and notices in Village publications can stimulate these “micro-market” opportunities. In other communities, specialized advertising agencies, insurance servicing businesses, and manufacturing representatives have moved into downtown bringing 30 to 150 employees.

Given the regional market conditions, adding office is an especially challenging task. This assessment highlights the need to capitalize on community affiliation to seek “micro-market” office tenants as a component that could improve the financing of potential developments.

Table 5-10

Suburban Sub-markets

Residential Opportunities

With no residential developments occurring in any nearby community, the best guidance on the market for residential products for River Grove's TOD area, are current listings and recent sales in nearby River Grove neighborhoods. During 2012, foreclosure resales were 25.8% of River Grove's real estate closings. That depressed the market and resulted in an average sales price of \$146,750. Currently, The Multiple Listing Service (MLS) is marketing 53 River Grove Properties. Study area listings range from \$40,000 to \$229,000. Note that many study area listings are condominiums that were apartment conversions. Those conversion properties generally are the bottom of the ownership market and, due to their low price, are often purchased as an investment and rented. Those shadow rentals can present problems when they cause developments to fail HUD ownership rule for loan guarantees and renters fail to maintain properties.

These market conditions verify the significant market decline since a boom real estate market supported new residential development in the study area. Although construction costs have fallen somewhat, the market price for townhome and condominium units has fallen more. As a result, any potential projects face significant difficulty meeting community quality standards at a marketable unit price. When buildings containing viable businesses must be demolished to create a project site, the potential land price cannot replace the value of current lease income. The result has been the market's failure to support new condominium and townhome development.

The challenging equity multifamily market has opened opportunities for luxury apartments that did not exist when young upwardly mobile residents could easily purchase a condominium or townhome. Although apartments traditionally have been difficult to entitle in most suburban communities, a number of suburban Chicago apartment projects have recently been announced. In considering apartments, it is important to create developments of sufficient size to justify on site management that can be held responsible for high standards in tenanting and maintenance.

In summary, the housing market faces many challenges today. In the near-term, Downtown River Grove could expand its housing variety by adding luxury rental units that accommodate recent college graduates, aging residents with roots in River Grove, and other transitioning families. Although no one is certain when there will again be support for development of equity multi-family products, that product will be a longer-term option.

Section 6

Concept Plan Overview

This summary report ties together the concept designs and marketing strategies that prepare the Village to capitalize on transit facilities and a mixed use transit oriented development (TOD) district in River Grove. Concept designs focus on land use development, transportation factors, architecture, streetscape, and other urban design elements. In particular, the report includes the following elements:

- Land Use Development Concept Plan.** The Land Use Development Concept Plan is a conceptual site plan for the study area, providing further detail based on the key elements outlined on the Framework Plan for land use types, lot and road configurations, building forms and placement, parking, public spaces, streetscape elements, and other urban design features.
- Marketing Strategies & Action Plan.** The Marketing Strategies & Action Plan identifies specific use types and retail/housing potential appropriate to market conditions; identifies the tools needed to ensure retail, food, and entertainment success; defines goals and objectives for tenant attraction; outlines a feasibility analysis of key redevelopment sites to test market viability; and provides an action plan to implement strategies.
- Transportation Plan.** Building off of the Land Use Development Concept Plan, the Transportation Plan outlines multi-modal circulation patterns and access points for buses, trains, automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians, including their access to transit facilities. Parking, traffic operations control, and connectivity between adjacent areas are also considered.
- Urban Design Guidelines.** Defines the desired character for the streetscape, particularly noting design elements such as landscaping, signage, and gateway features. LEED design techniques are considered, particularly for stormwater management.

Altogether, these elements provide a conceptual perspective for how the potential redevelopment opportunities could be designed, with careful regard to market realities and the community's vision for the area. The concepts were developed after interviewing key stakeholders, including local property owners and developers.

Additional explanation of how the market economics and transportation analysis was prepared for each key site is provided on the following pages.

Concept Plan Elements

- Land Use Development Concept Plan
- Marketing Strategies & Action Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Urban Design Guidelines



Market Economics

Businesses and developers investing in River Grove face a market that was stalled by the 2008 economic downturn but now could capitalize on a recovering market. River Grove's regional position as a transit accessible area with high visibility on busy arterial streets makes it ready for the market's recovery. Although Grand Avenue has new retail space, it is mid-block and vacant. The lack of easy access for this new space means River Grove does not have an ideal building configuration for high volume businesses. River Grove's apartment stock is aging and the new residential proposed in these concepts adds an important choice to the housing mix. However, the high costs associated with redevelopment of occupied properties and constructing on tight infill sites requires a market strong enough to support rents that exceed those currently charged for vintage properties that are more affordable. This feasibility summary of the preferred conceptual development plans respects this economic framework, as it examines the public and private investment necessary to support each concept.

Market Economics Methodology

With limited information on building materials and specific tenants' needs, any analysis of site concept financial feasibility is a gross estimate of potential market response. Essentially these feasibility analyses screen each of the development concepts to determine land value and gauge whether property owners might consider selling or are content to hold onto land as an investment. The sensitivity analysis considers where public investment could be mutually beneficial in improving the return to both the property owner and the Village. The assumptions listed in Table 9-1 underlie this initial investigation.

Table 6-1
Economic Assumptions

Investment Returns		
1	Equity & Mortgage Blended Return: Going Concerns	7.5%
2	Equity & Mortgage Blended Return: New Retail Development	11.0%
Project Income		
3	New Construction Annual Net Operating Income per SF	\$23.00
4	High Volume Store Annual Net Operating Income per SF	\$11.00
5	Apartment Monthly Net Operating Income	\$1.75
Project Costs *		
6	High Volume Store Construction (Vanilla Box)	\$134
7	Office Construction	\$174
8	Additional Soft Costs	5.0%
9	Surface Parking Space	\$6,000
10	Garage Parking Space	\$23,000

(* These are averages for example calculation actual estimates used Rs Means Quick Cost Estimator, a tool that is more specific. Those specific estimates assume union labor which some developers assert raises costs by as much as 17%)

Each site concept analysis used assumptions to calculate project economics by comparing project costs to the value of recommended development. The income method was used to estimate the value of development. For example, a 1,000 square foot space where the property owner has net operating income of \$23 per square foot (line 3) has a value of \$209,000, as the annual income is \$23,000 and that is an 11% return (line 2) on an investment of \$209,000. The assumptions provide a commercial construction cost (line 7) of \$174 per square foot, so a 1,000 square foot store costs \$174,000 to construct, the hard costs. Soft costs, including marketing and permitting, add 5% to costs (line 8). Totaling hard and soft costs, calculates project costs at \$182,700. Table 6-2 is a sample calculation that solves for land value by deducting construction cost from project value.

Value	\$209,000
Total Costs	\$182,700
Land Payments	\$26,300

Value	\$100,000
Total Costs	\$134,000
Land Payments	-\$34,000

Table 6-2
Example Calculation of
Land Value

Table 6-3
Land Value

A similar calculation for a high volume retail component

Although Table 6-3 shows costs above value even before the land costs are included, it is not necessarily a less feasible project than the Table 6-2 project. These calculations explain why developers commonly provide a mix of tenants paying different rents to make a development work. It also explains why high volume stores often are supported by public/private partnerships that include public financial support, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The fiscal feasibility examination of each concept used this method to identify the investment economics associated with the River Grove TOD site concepts. The feasibility analysis also examined ways the project financial feasibility could be changed by community and market decisions. The possibility of higher rent for uniquely desirable sites and shared parking adjustments are examples of potential development changes. The possibility of tax increment financing is examined by calculating the potential annual property tax increment's net present value over a 20-year period.

Traffic Impacts of Development Concepts

The roadway network provides access and circulation into and through the downtown. This section presents recommended strategies for this system, including both roadways and intersections. Impacts of the re-development concepts are also presented in this section.

The two major roadways in the study are Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue, both under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Thatcher Avenue carries 25,200 average daily traffic (ADT) at Grand Avenue, dropping slightly to 17,900 ADT south of Fullerton. Grand Avenue carries 21,500 ADT at Thatcher Avenue. Rail traffic, approximately 106 trains, includes both Metra commuter rail and freight trains that cross Thatcher every day on the three sets of tracks. The southernmost track is used by freight trains and the other two tracks carry commuter trains.

The traffic generation characteristics of any development are based on the magnitude and character of its land uses. Projected A.M. and P.M. traffic volumes were developed based on trip generation rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Land use categories were selected to most closely match the proposed land use to provide an estimate of traffic impacts. Any differences will be noted as part of the discussion of each land use.

Based on the trip generation rates applied to the land uses, Table 6-4 presents the peak hour traffic estimated to be generated by each development concept. Also, as can be seen in Table 6-5, traffic estimates in the study area could have a 15% reduction due to the mix of uses and proximity to Metra and Pace service. TOD reductions can generally range from 10% to 25%, depending on factors such as density, level of transit service, and mix of areas. Given that the study area is a more urban suburb served by commuter rail, but not a high density urban area and served by rapid transit, a lower reduction was used.

Parking Analysis of Development Concepts

Every area needs an adequate, appealing, and accessible parking supply. However, too much parking is costly and creates a more auto-oriented environment while minimizing the pedestrian environment. Conversely, providing too little parking can discourage developers and visitors to the area. Traditional parking generation rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineering (ITE) generate the parking demand associated with individual land uses. These rates, however, do not reflect specific site characteristics such as the mix, density, and interaction between land uses as well as proximity to transit. Using the traditional rates without regard to site specific factors could create an oversupply of parking, which could drive up development costs and reinforces an auto-oriented environment with negative impacts on the bicycle and pedestrian environment and a disincentive to using transit.

There is no specific reduction percentage or “one size fits all” approach regarding parking that applies to every TOD. As the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) acknowledges in its latest TOD report, Access & Parking Strategies for Transit-Oriented Development, the topic of how to balance the need to provide parking for transit access while not generating other negative impacts is challenging. However, based on best practices, there are some generally accepted parking rates and/or reductions for TOD areas that can be used for project planning. These rates and/or reductions should continue to be refined as the project moves forward. Also, depending on the size of the development, distance from the transit station will vary, which could result in a range of parking generation rates.

Parking Impacts of Development Concepts

The existing parking system is comprised of private off-street parking, public on- and off-street parking, and Metra parking. The majority of off-street parking is private and dedicated to specific businesses. There is a public off-street lot adjacent to the Village Hall. On-street parking is available on local streets, many spaces being angled spaces between Grand Avenue and the alleys located north or south, primarily east of Thatcher. On-street parking is also permitted along Grand Avenue during off-peak periods. Commuter parking is provided in two facilities in the downtown area, providing 171 spaces. These spaces are divided between daily fee and monthly permit spaces. Overall occupancy is 67%, although if all permit spaces were assumed to be full, the “effective occupancy” rate would be 81%.

A specific parking issue in the Village is related to Triton Towers, located at Thatcher and Center St. Parking is a major issue for Triton Towers, although a new parking lot is planned to help alleviate the parking issues.

Parking requirements vary based on specific land uses. To determine the appropriate parking ratio for land uses in the TOD study area, census data, proximity to the Metra station, and interaction between land uses were considered. A review of census data indicated that, on average, there are 1.66 vehicles per household in River Grove. Proximity to CTA or Metra rail is also an important consideration. Many communities offer reductions in parking ratios for land uses located within 600 feet of rail transit. This reduction typically ranges from 25 to 50 percent. The key development site on Thatcher between the railroad and Center Street is within 600 feet from the Metra station and platforms at its farthest point. Finally, land uses that have a mix of uses or complementary uses can also benefit from parking reductions. Shared parking is allowed in the River Grove parking requirements.

Total parking needs for each development concept were prepared as presented in Table 6-5. Parking rates were adjusted based on site specific characteristics. For example, while multi-family residential units

in River Grove would require 1.5 parking spaces per unit, a rate of 1.0 space per unit was used, reflective of the proximity to transit. Residential uses will, however, require a combination of surface and parking structures spaces to accommodate parking requirements. For the sites with a mix of land uses, shared parking arrangements were included (multiple users with different peak hours sharing the same lot). Including on-street parking towards required parking was also included. As presented, all development concepts will generate sufficient parking through a combination of on-street and surface parking.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS - RIVER GROVE TOD DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

SITE #1						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
North Bldg.	Residential	25	5		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	3	10	13	10	5	16
	Retail			5.80	814 (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.71	0.44	0.56	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	9	16
South Bldg.	Residential	40	5		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	4	16	20	16	9	25
	Retail			4.50	814 (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.71	0.44	0.56	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	7	12
West Apts.	Residential	30	5		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	3	12	15	12	7	19
East Apts.	Residential	25	5		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	3	10	13	10	5	16
Subtotal				10.30								12	49	61	61	42	102
Internal Capture (2)	-15%											-2	-7	-9	-9	-6	-15
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-2	-7	-9	-9	-6	-15
TOTALS		120		10.30								9	34	43	42	29	72

(1) The A.M. peak hour for Specialty Retail (#814) does not correspond with the adjacent roadway peak hours (7-9 A.M.)

(2) Internal capture is the percentage of trips that will remain internal to the site (i.e., residents using the retail uses of the development)

SITE #2						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
South Bldg. (corner of Center St. and Thatcher Av.)	Restaurant	N/A	2	5.00	931	0.81	0.52	0.48	7.49	0.07	0.33	2	2	4	3	12	15
	Office	N/A		5.00	710	1.55	0.88	0.12	1.49	0.17	0.83	7	1	8	1	6	7
North Bldg. (existing River Café)	Restaurant	N/A	1	8.00	931	0.81	0.50	0.50	7.49	0.67	0.33	3	3	6	40	20	60
Subtotal												12	6	18	44	38	82
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-2	-1	-3	-7	-6	-12
TOTALS		0		18.00								10	5	16	37	33	70

SITE #3 (OPTION 1)						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
North Bldg.	Restaurant	N/A	1	5.60	931	0.81	0.5	0.5	7.49	0.67	0.41	2	2	5	28	17	45
South Bldg.	Restaurant with drive-through	N/A	1	4.20	934	49.35	0.51	0.49	33.84	0.52	0.48	106	102	207	74	68	142
Subtotal												108	104	212	102	85	187
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-16	-16	-32	-15	-13	-28
TOTALS		0		9.80								92	88	180	87	73	159

SITE #3 (OPTION 2)						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
North Bldg.	none	N/A	1	0.00													
South Bldg.	commercial with drive-through (drugstore)	N/A	1	12.00	881	2.66	0.57	0.43	10.35	0.50	0.5	18	14	32	62	62	124
Subtotal												18	14	32	62	62	124
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-3	-2	-5	-9	-9	-19
TOTALS		0		12.00								15	12	27	53	53	106

SITE #4 - (OPTION 1)						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
North Bldg.	Restaurant w/ outdoor café	N/A	1	1.5	932	11.52	0.52	0.48	11.15	0.59	0.41	9	8	17	10	7	17
South parcel	Village parking lot	N/A	1														
Subtotal												9	8	17	10	7	17
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-1	-1	-3	-1	-1	-3
TOTALS		0		1.50								8	7	15	8	6	14

SITE #4 - (OPTION 2)						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
North Bldg.	Bank w/ drive-through	N/A	1	4.0	912	12.35	0.56	0.44	25.82	0.50	0.5	28	22	49	52	52	103
South parcel	Village parking lot	N/A	1														
Subtotal												28	22	49	52	52	103
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-4	-3	-7	-8	-8	-15
TOTALS		0		4.00								24	18	42	44	44	88

SITE #5						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Section #4	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
bowling alley site	Community Center	N/A	1	7.00	495	1.62	0.61	0.39	1.45	0.37	0.63	7	4	11	4	6	10
Subtotal												7	4	11	4	6	10
Transit/TOD Reduction	-15%											-1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-2
TOTALS		0		7.00								6	4	10	3	5	9

SITE #6						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
NE quadrant Center St & Auxplains St	Residential w/ pocket park	24	3		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	2	10	12	10	5	15
Subtotal												2	10	12	10	5	15
Transit/TOD Reduction	-10%											0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
TOTALS		0		0.00								2	9	11	9	5	13

SITE #7						Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.			Trip Generation - A.M.			Trip Generation - P.M.		
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	'000 Sq. Ft.	ITE LAND USE CODE	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Rate	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL	Entering ("In")	Exiting ("Out")	TOTAL
s/o Grand across from Library	Residential	6	3		220	0.51	0.20	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.35	1	2	3	2	1	4
TOTALS				0.00								1	2	3	2	1	4

Table 6-4
Traffic Analysis

PARKING ANALYSIS - RIVER GROVE TOD DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

SITE #1					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces (est.)
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
North Bldg.	Residential	25	5		25	25	1.0	25	0	0
	Retail			5,800	5.8	28	3.0	17	11	0
South Bldg.	Residential	40	5		40	40	1.0	40	0	0
	Retail			4,500	4.5	22	3.0	14	9	0
West Apts.	Residential	30	5		30	30	1.0	30	0	0
East Apts.	Residential	25	5		25	25	1.0	25	0	0
TOTALS		120		10,300		170		151	19	0

SITE #2					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces (Center St)
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
South Bldg. (corner of Center St. and Thatcher Av.)	Restaurant	N/A	2	5,000	5	20	5.0	25	-5	
	Office	N/A		5,000	5	15	3.0	15	0	
North Bldg. (existing River Café)	Restaurant	N/A	1	8,000	8	34	5.0	40	-6	
Subtotal						69		80	-11	
Shared Parking Reduction	-10%							-8		
TOTALS				18,000		69		72	-3	0

SITE #3 (OPTION 1)					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces (Center St)
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
North Bldg.	Restaurant	N/A	1	5,600	5.6	47	5.0	28	19	
South Bldg.	Restaurant with drive-through	N/A	1	4,200	4.2	22	8.0	34	-12	
TOTALS				9,800		69		62	7	0

SITE #3 (OPTION 2)					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
North Bldg.	none	N/A	1	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	
South Bldg.	Commercial with drive-through	N/A	1	12,000	12	61	5.0	60	1	
TOTALS				12,000		61		60	1	0

SITE #4 - (OPTION 1)					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
North Bldg.	Restaurant w/ outdoor café	N/A	1	1,500	1.5	12	8.0	12	0	
South parcel	Village parking lot	N/A	1		0	26	0.0	0	26	
TOTALS				1,500		38		12	26	0

SITE #4 - (OPTION 2)					Proposed Units ('000 sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
North Bldg.	Bank w/ drive-through	N/A	1	4,000	4	12	3.0	12	0	
South parcel	Village parking lot	N/A	1		0	26	0.0	0	26	
TOTALS				4,000		38		12	26	0

Table 6-5
Parking Analysis

SITE #5					Proposed Units (^{'000} sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Section #4	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
bowling alley	Community Center	N/A	1	12,000	12	56	4.5	54	2	
		N/A			0	0	0.0	0	0	
TOTALS				12,000	12	56		54	2	0

SITE #6					Proposed Units (^{'000} sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
NE quadrant Center St & Auxplains St	Residential w/ pocket park	24	3		24	24	1.0	24	0	
TOTALS				0	24	24		24	0	0

SITE #7					Proposed Units (^{'000} sf or units)	Proposed Parking Spaces	Recommended Pkg Rates per unit	Parking Demand	Deficit / Overage	On-Street Spaces
Sections	Land Use	No. of Units	No. of Stories	Sq. Ft.						
s/o Grand across from Library	Residential	6	3		6	6	1.5	9	-3	
TOTALS				0	6	6		9	-3	0

Table 6-5 continued
Parking Analysis

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Section 7

Development Concept Plans

The Development Concept Plans illustrate key elements such as land use types, lot and road configurations, building forms and placement, parking, public spaces, streetscape elements, and other urban design features. Short-term redevelopment opportunities, which the Village can pursue within the first three years of plan implementation, and longer-term opportunities, are described in more detail below.

Short-term Opportunities

Marketplace economics will likely limit short-term redevelopment opportunities within the Study Area. The lull in marketplace demand can be utilized to initiate key projects that will attract new visitors, enhance the Study Area's identity and increase investor confidence in the Study Area's long-term prospects. Key projects include:

- Property assembly of opportunity sites within the Study Area into larger developable lots.
- Marketing and developer recruitment for the Target Site.
- Premium streetscape enhancements to Thatcher Street and Grand Avenue will significantly improve the Village's image and identity. Improved appearances will also help to attract the attention of private sector investors.
- Wayfinding improvements that will enhance the awareness of commuters on the Village's busiest thoroughfares.

Long-term Vision

The long-term vision for River Grove features significant new development that meets the contemporary marketplace needs of retailers and restaurants. Collectively, this new development will transform River Grove into a highly desirable place to live, work, play, shop and dine.

New, mixed use residential/retail development is focused at the Target Site southeast of the Metra Station, providing a variety of appealing destinations that will attract new residents and visitors to the downtown. New infill retail, office and apartments within the Study Area will be located within a short walking distance of the Metra Station and other downtown destinations such as Village Hall.

A key aspect of the vision is to provide convenient parking for transit commuters and downtown visitors. Premium streetscape enhancements will help to ensure that downtown remains a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.

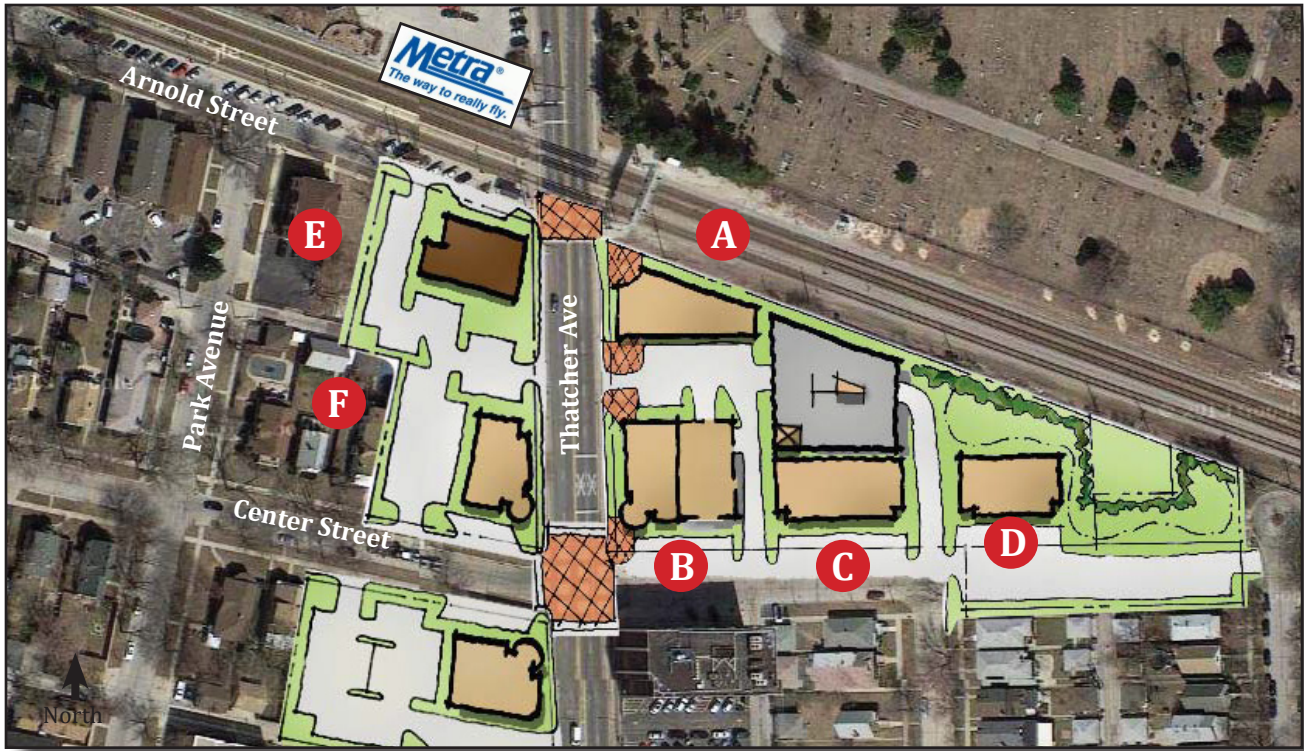


Figure 7-1
Concept Plans Overview

Key opportunity sites for future (re)development include:

1. Primary Target Site (including railroad crossing)
2. River Cafe Site
3. Grand / Thatcher Site NW
4. Grand / Thatcher Site SE
5. Community Center Site
6. Apartment Site - Auxplaines Avenue
7. Apartment Site - Grand Avenue
8. Facade Enhancement

Specific site details for each of the key opportunity sites identified above are outlined below.



Site 1 - Primary Target Site Land Use (2.84 ac)

The primary focus of redevelopment in the Study Area is the Target Site, located immediately southeast of the Metra Station. Three residential buildings and an accessory parking garage are envisioned on the Target Site, with a fourth residential building on the Village's property (now public works). The concept also includes extending Center Street to the east to connect with Budd Street, for which the Village has already acquired the land. Improvements to the railroad crossing are also addressed as part of this site.

Site A

North Building, 3-story mixed use

Floor 1 - retail, 5,800 sq.ft.

Floor 2 - residential, 5 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Floor 3 - residential, 5 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Site B

South Building, 3-story mixed-use

Floor 1 - retail, 4,500 sq.ft.

Floor 2 - residential, 8 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Floor 3 - residential, 8 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Site C

West Apartments, 4-story

Floors 1-4, residential, 20 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Site D

East Apartments, 4-story

Floors 1-4, residential, 24 dwelling units @ 900 sq.ft. each

Parking (131 cars)

Retail, 10,300 sq.ft., 61 cars (5.5/1,000 sq.ft.)

Residential, 70 dwelling units, 70 cars (1.0/du)

Figure 7-2

**Primary Target Site and
River Cafe Site**

Site 1 - Primary Target Site Market Economics

- This concept can occur without additional public subsidy other than the completed land assembly if the residential commands luxury apartment rent of \$1700 per month for a one-bedroom unit. If the market could only sustain monthly rents of \$1350, the project would require substantial public financial support.
- Much of the annual property taxes would be tax increment that could fund improvement in the existing district.
- It is anticipated that the underlying properties would be consolidated and this development would be completed by one owner. With 70 units, that could allow for amenities like a party room and gym. Those amenities could replace some of the retail space.

* Market economics assumptions provided on pages 56-58

Site 1 - Primary Target Site Market Economics (Option 2)

- This analysis assumes that the Village will cover the cost of 66 on-street parking spaces.
- This concept works because the construction is not steel frame. RS Means estimates for the same size buildings are \$5.5 million higher for steel frame construction.
- Much of the annual \$610,000 in estimated property taxes would be tax increment that could fund improvement in the existing district. This increment represents the increase in property taxes from the current levels based on undeveloped and tax exempt property.
- It is anticipated that the underlying properties would be consolidated and this development would be completed by one owner. With 120 units, that could allow for amenities like a party room and gym. Those amenities could be on a roof top garden.

This concept seems to offer a market rate return because the residential is estimated at a luxury apartment net operating income of \$1575 per month for a one-bedroom unit, a gross rent of at least \$1,700. If the market could only sustain rents that provide a monthly net operating income of \$1350, the project has no appeal to the market because it provides insufficient funds to pay land costs. To obtain the tax revenue from this project, the Village would negotiate a development agreement that shares those funds in a manner that offers a market rate return.

* Market economics assumptions provided on pages 56-58

Site 1 - Primary Target Site Transportation Impact

This site is located east of Thatcher between Center St. and the railroad, consisting of 70 multi-family apartments and 10,300sf of retail use. There is also a small pocket park and a ComEd facility. Access to this site would be via Center St. and Budd St. Center St. is proposed to be extended from its current terminus at Marwood to Budd St. The Village has acquired two parcels to allow for this extension.

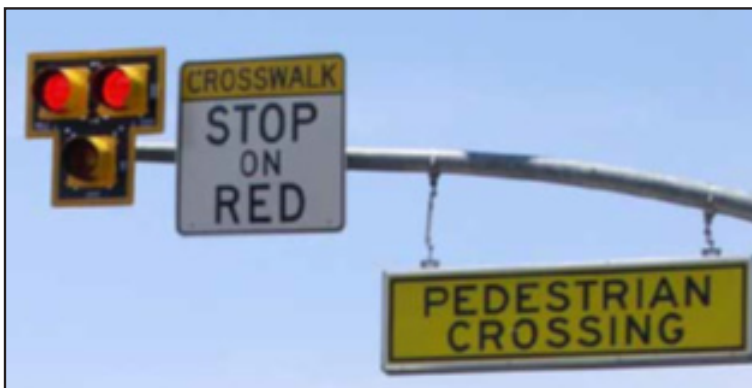
Given the site's proximity to two commuter rail lines at the River Grove station and Pace bus service along Thatcher and Grand, a 15% reduction in trip generation estimates was applied. Additionally, as a mixed use development, a 15% reduction for "internal capture" was applied. Internal capture reflects the mixed use character of the development, recognizing that a number of trips will stay internal to the site, i.e., residents using the retail sites. While TOD and internal capture reductions can range from 10-25%, the reductions used for River Grove were selected as moderate reduction level acknowledging that the community is a more urban suburb, but does not have the higher density found in more urban environments. The major access point will be the intersection of Thatcher and Center St., along with access from Grand Ave. via Budd St., and a right-in/right-out on Thatcher.

Potential Improvements

Thatcher/Center St. Intersection

The number of estimated trips generated by this development would likely not warrant a traffic signal at the intersection of Thatcher and Center St. However, it is anticipated that there will be higher pedestrian volumes due to proximity of the Metra station. This intersection should be improved to better accommodate pedestrian movements. Elements that could be included are listed below:

- Update striping or use of texture to highlight the pedestrian crossing.
- High visibility signage indicating pedestrians crossing.
- Curb extensions.
- Pedestrian refuge in the median.
- Pedestrian beacons.



Given the close proximity of the Thatcher/Center intersection to the signalized intersection of Thatcher/Grand, signaling the intersection of Thatcher/Center would not be an option. However, a pedestrian beacon such as a HAWK signal could be considered. Pedestrian beacons are used in conjunction with signs and pavement markings to warn and control traffic at unsignalized locations where pedestrians enter or cross a street or highway. Further analysis will be required to determine how these elements could be implemented. With improved pedestrian accommodations, this intersection would be the preferred pedestrian crossing location to access the Metra station from the south. A bus shelter should be located on the far-side of the intersection on the northbound side of Thatcher Avenue. An example of what this intersection could look like is presented below.

Figure 7-3
Example Intersection



Source: National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide

Center St. Extension

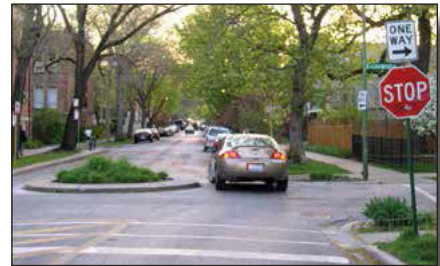
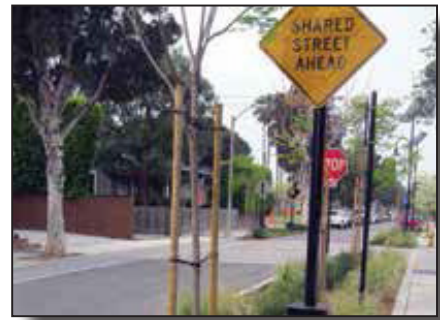
Center St. east of Thatcher should be extended to Budd St. This street should be designed as a shared street, accommodating vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles. Traffic volumes are projected to be low, allowing the roadway to function as shared space. Street furniture and other design elements should be included to reinforce shared use. Sidewalks could be constructed to be flush with the roadway. Signage should be included at both ends of Center St. indicating that it is a shared space.

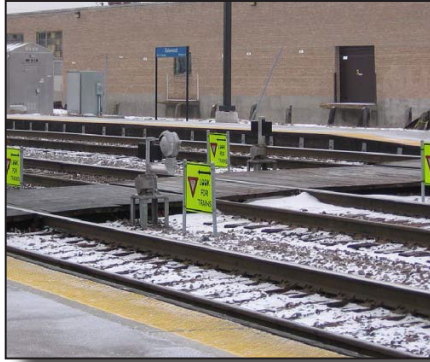
Center St. will provide access to head-in parking. This parking should be alternated as much as possible to provide a curving, or Chicane, effect. Streetscape elements such as bollards, paving materials and street furniture should be used to designate the parking area. The intersection of Center and Budd should be designed to acknowledge a shared street and reduce cut-through traffic. A mini-roundabout could be used at this location. Since Budd Street will now be a through street connecting to Center Street, regulations should be placed on vehicles to prohibit cut-through traffic. Signage indicating no through traffic should be included along with shared street signage. The intersection of Budd and Grand Avenue should also be improved with elements listed for the Thatcher/Center St. intersection including a pedestrian beacon. As noted, a traffic engineering study would be required to determine how these elements could be implemented.

Metra Station/Railroad Crossing

The Thatcher Avenue Corridor and Metra Station Area represent the Village's northern gateway. The Metra Station and adjacent parking area are well defined and well landscaped. Bike storage areas are present at the station area. Pace bus facilities include a shelter along Arnold St. and benches on the north side of the railroad east and west of Thatcher. All bus waiting areas should be improved with shelters.

This area is difficult to maneuver and may require crossing both Thatcher Ave. and the railroad tracks. Pedestrians traveling north using Pace bus service must cross Thatcher Ave at the railroad crossing when gates are down. Pedestrians crossing between inbound and outbound platforms must crossing railroad tracks. Give the presence of a center track platform (inbound platform), limited improvements, including the possibility of a pedestrian tunnel, are not viable. Therefore, improvements should be focused on better defining and identifying pedestrian space.





Pedestrian routes between the Metra station and the surrounding area are not well-defined. The at-grade pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks does include pedestrian gates, but the crossing is poorly defined and includes uneven pavements and structures. Improving streets, sidewalks, and crossings can offer safe, direct, and pleasurable walking and biking routes to access the station. Safety improvements that could be considered:

- *Improvements to better separate pedestrians from Thatcher and guide commuters safely away from the tracks.* This could include improvements such as fencing, high visibility crosswalks and changing the current concrete crossing to a rubber crossing. Multiple pathways currently exist for pedestrian to cross Thatcher and the railroad. A better defined pathway better define the walkways from auto traffic on Thatcher and provide additional warnings regarding freight and express trains that do not stop at this station. This is important particularly due to the mix of fast and slowing moving trains.
- *Improved Signage.* As noted, there is a mix of both commuter and freight trains, moving at different speeds and coming in different directions. An improved signage system alerting pedestrians to remain aware and look for trains in both directions would be an important safety feature.
- *Commuters on Pace buses traveling from the south should be guided to use the proposed improved crossing at Center Street.* Significant pedestrian facilities have been proposed to make this an attractive crossing location.

Metra Parking

Commuter parking spaces are located on both the north and south side of the railroad. The lot north of the railroad is only permit parking. The angled parking along Arnold is only daily fee spaces. Since the monthly permit fee is much less than paying the daily rate, most commuters purchase a permit to park on the north side. While the “effective” use of these spaces (assumes that all permit spaces are filled), in fact, the observed occupancy is 76 percent. Providing some portion of daily fee spaces in the north lot would help to ensure that all spaces are filled. Additionally, the rate of \$20.00 per month tends to be on the low side, especially in communities with constrained parking. The Village should consider increasing the monthly permit fee to \$30.00 to be more equal to the daily rate of \$1.50. Additionally, consideration should be given to extending the angled parking further west along W. Arnold Street.

Site 2 - River Cafe Site Land Use (1.04 ac)

The existing River Cafe is anticipated to remain. An additional mixed-use restaurant/office, with reconfigured parking is envisioned.

Site E

Existing River Cafe

34 cars existing and provided within reconfigured parking area.

Site F

2-story mixed-use

Floor 1 - restaurant, 5,000 sq.ft.

Floor 2 - office, 5,000 sq.ft.

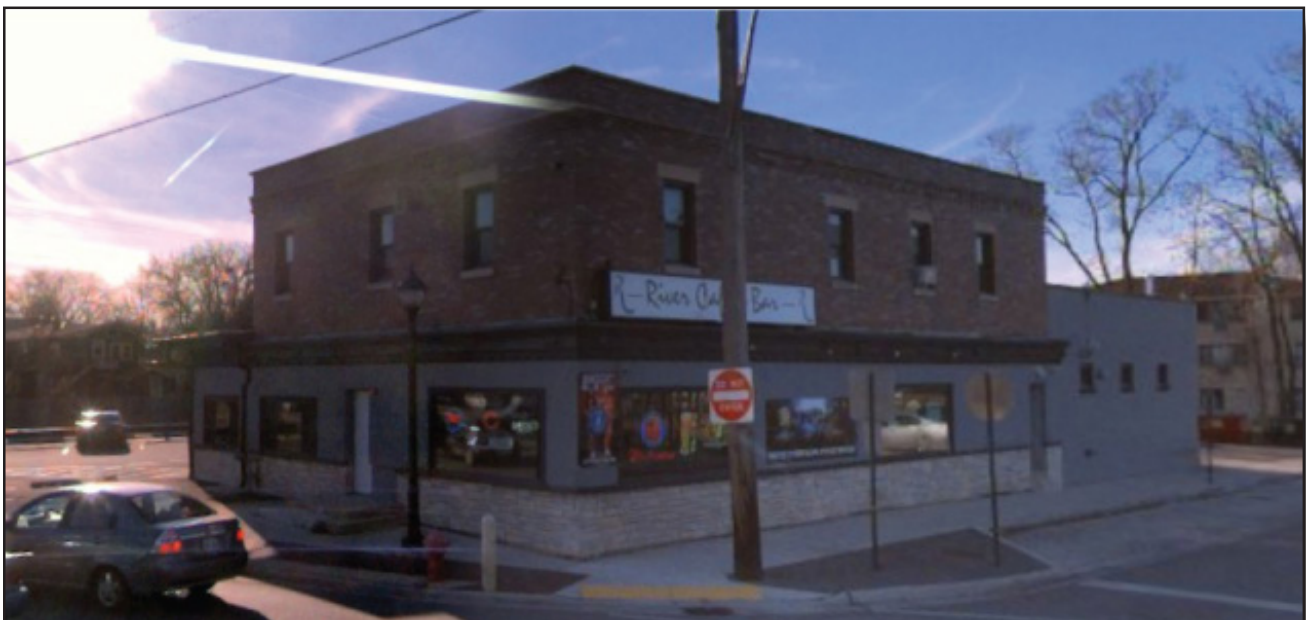
Parking (35 cars)

Restaurant, 20 cars (4/1,000 sq.ft.)

Office, 15 cars (3/1,000 sq.ft.)

Site 2 - River Cafe Site Market Economics

- The loss associated with this concept occurs because the estimate assumes elevators and other enhancements that are costly and can be spread over more square footage in a taller building. This 2-story concept is necessary because the parking requirements limit square footage.
- Another factor contributing to the loss is the high cost of restaurant construction.
- Tenant decisions could reduce the cost of this concept and/or increase rents in a manner that makes it feasible



Site 2 - River Cafe Site Transportation Impact

This site is located west of Thatcher between Center St. and the railroad, consisting of 13,000sf of restaurant use and 5,000sf of office use. Primary access will be via a two-way driveway on Center St. and a driveway on Thatcher. Center St. is one-way westbound between Thatcher and Tarpey Lane. Given the site's proximity to two commuter rail lines at the River Grove station, Pace bus service along Thatcher and Grand, and new residential proposed for site #1 just across Thatcher, a 15% reduction in trip generation estimates was applied.

Similar to Site # 1, the number of estimated trips generated by this development would likely not warrant a traffic signal at the intersection of Thatcher and Center St. Higher volumes of restaurant traffic are typically outside of the peak hour as well. However, it is anticipated that there will be higher pedestrian volumes due to proximity of the Metra station and residential across Thatcher.



Potential Improvements

Thatcher/Center St. Intersection

As identified under Site #1, this intersection should be improved to better accommodate pedestrian movements. Elements that could be included are listed below. Further analysis will be required to determine how these elements might fit within the right-of-way (ROW).

- Update striping or use of texture to highlight the pedestrian crossing.
- High visibility signage indicating pedestrians crossing.
- Curb extensions.
- Pedestrian refuge in the median.
- Pedestrian beacons.

Metra station improvements previously noted also relate to this site as well.

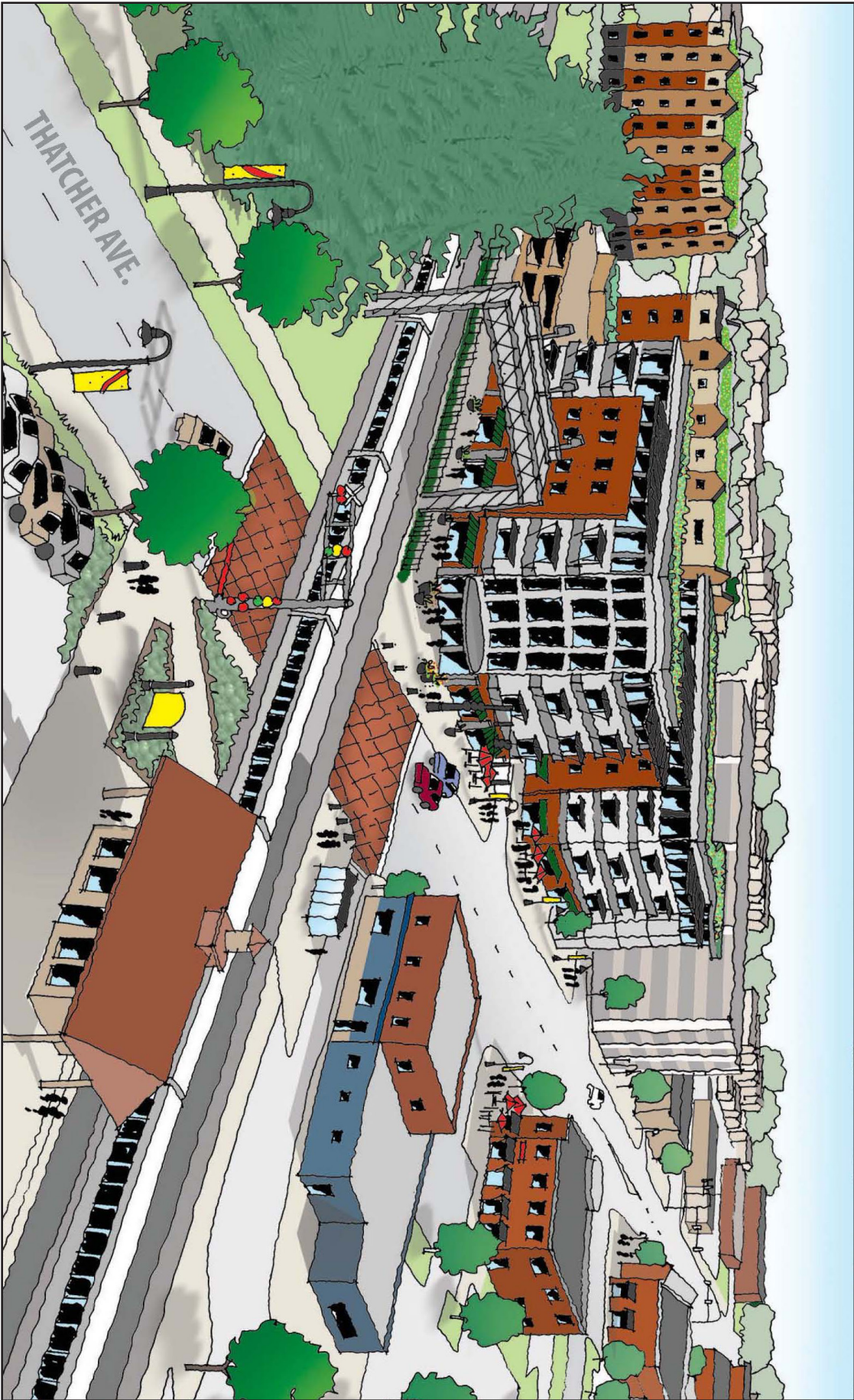


Figure 7-4
Birds eye view of Target Site concept looking southeast from the Metra Station. This sketch highlights potential pedestrian improvements, an expanded River Cafe, and a parking garage located on the Target Site.

Figure 7-5
Birds eye view 3D rendering looking south down Thatcher Avenue, highlighting building massing in relation to existing structures. New Development is shown in yellow.

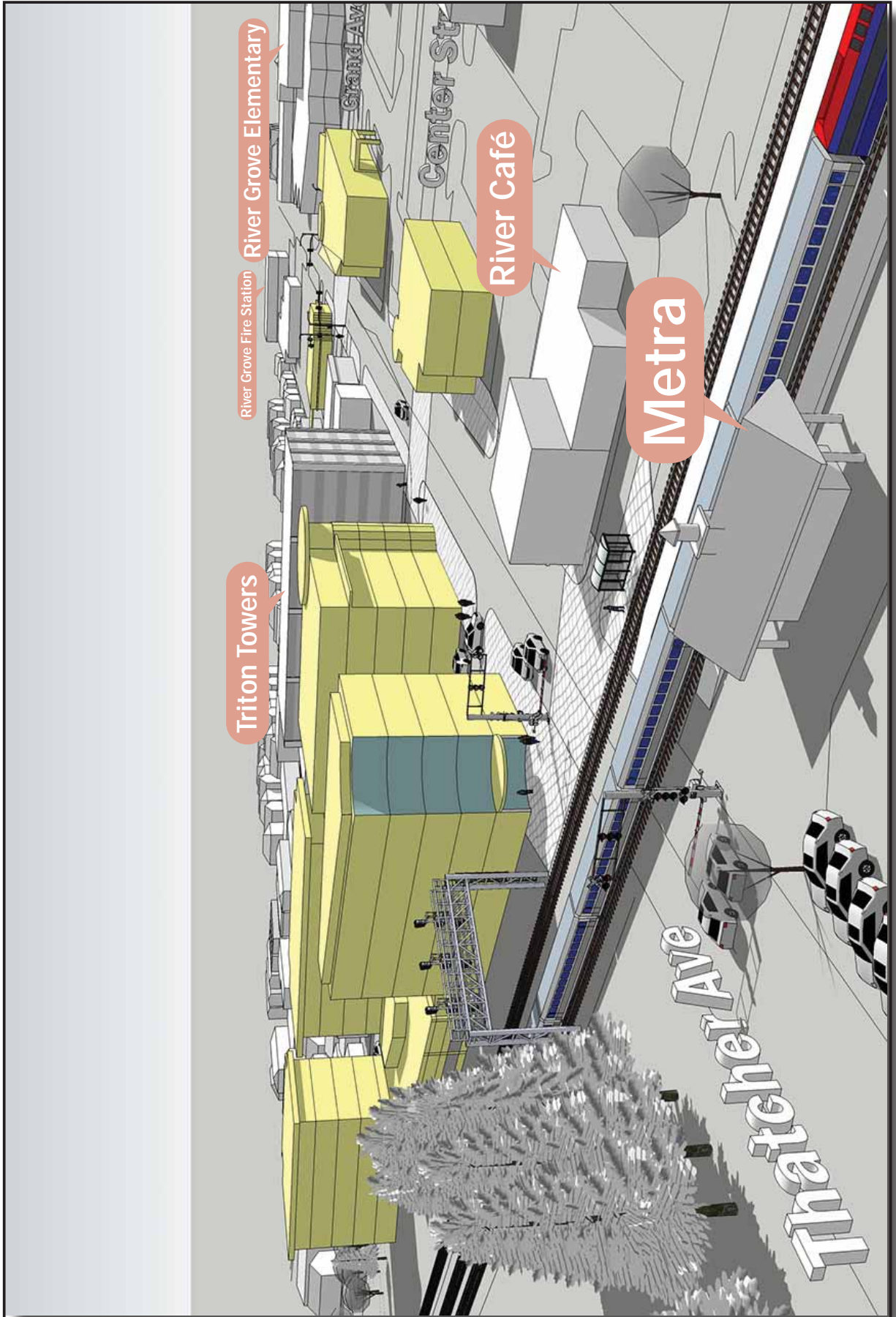


Figure 7-6
Birds eye 3D rendering looking southeast from the Metra Station.

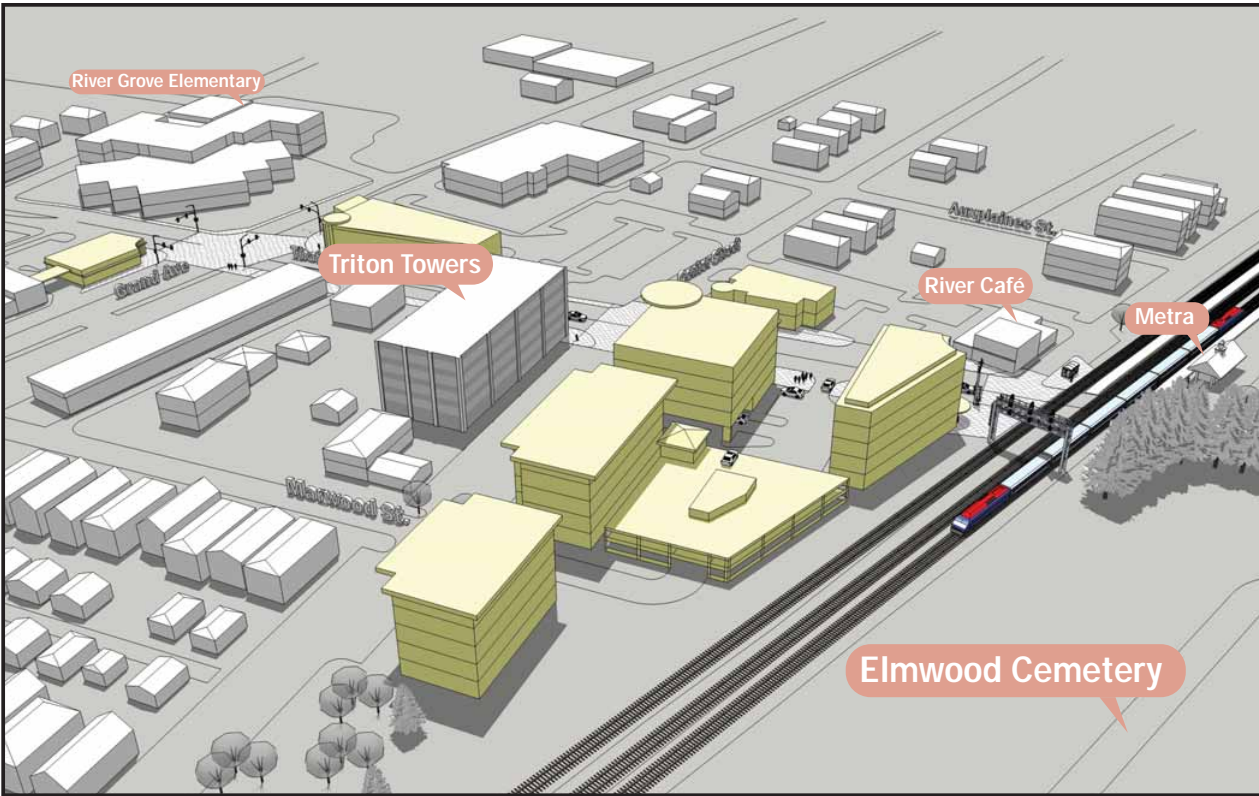
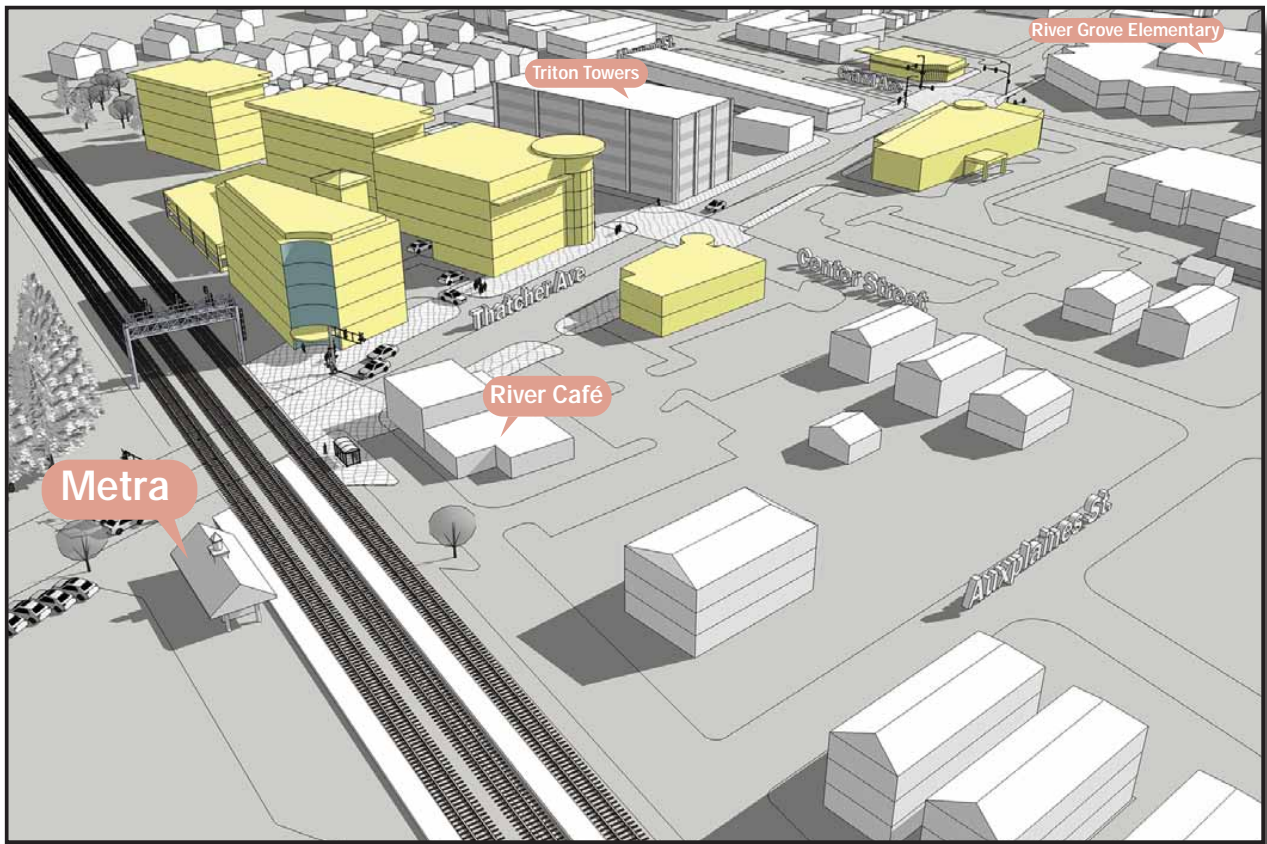


Figure 7-7
Birds eye 3D rendering looking west from Target Site, highlighting building massing in relation to existing Triton Towers.

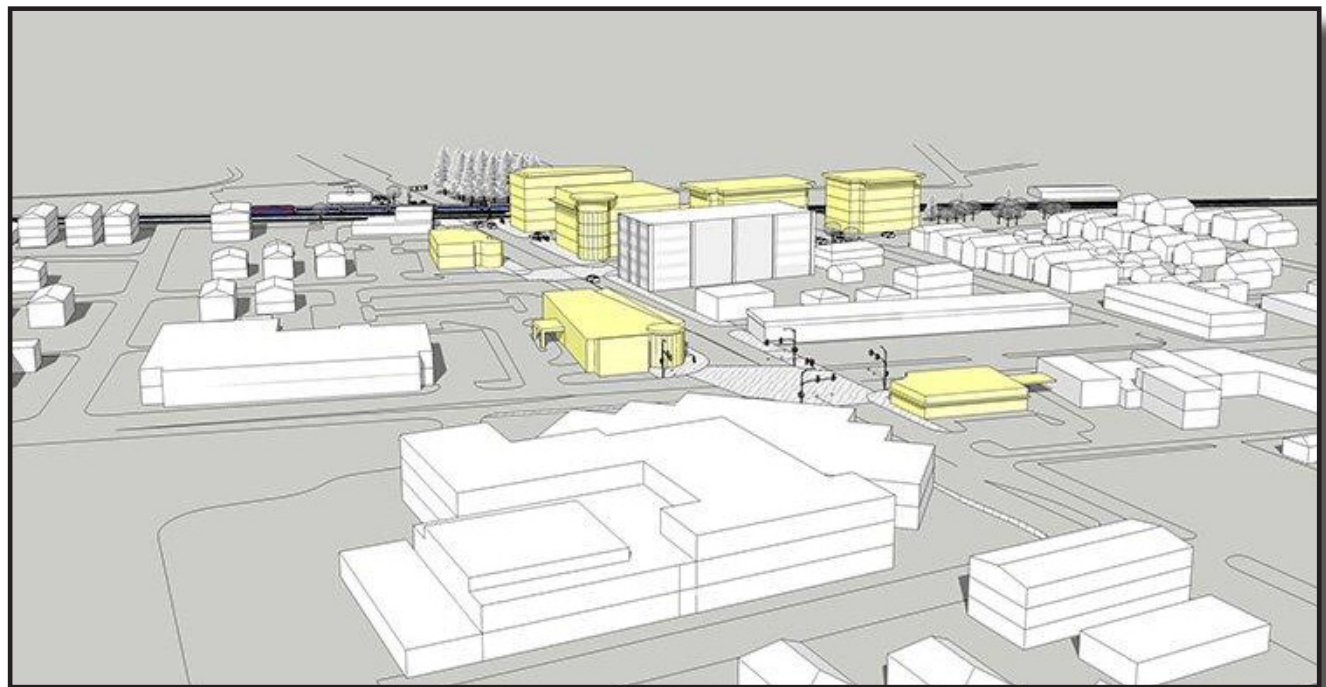
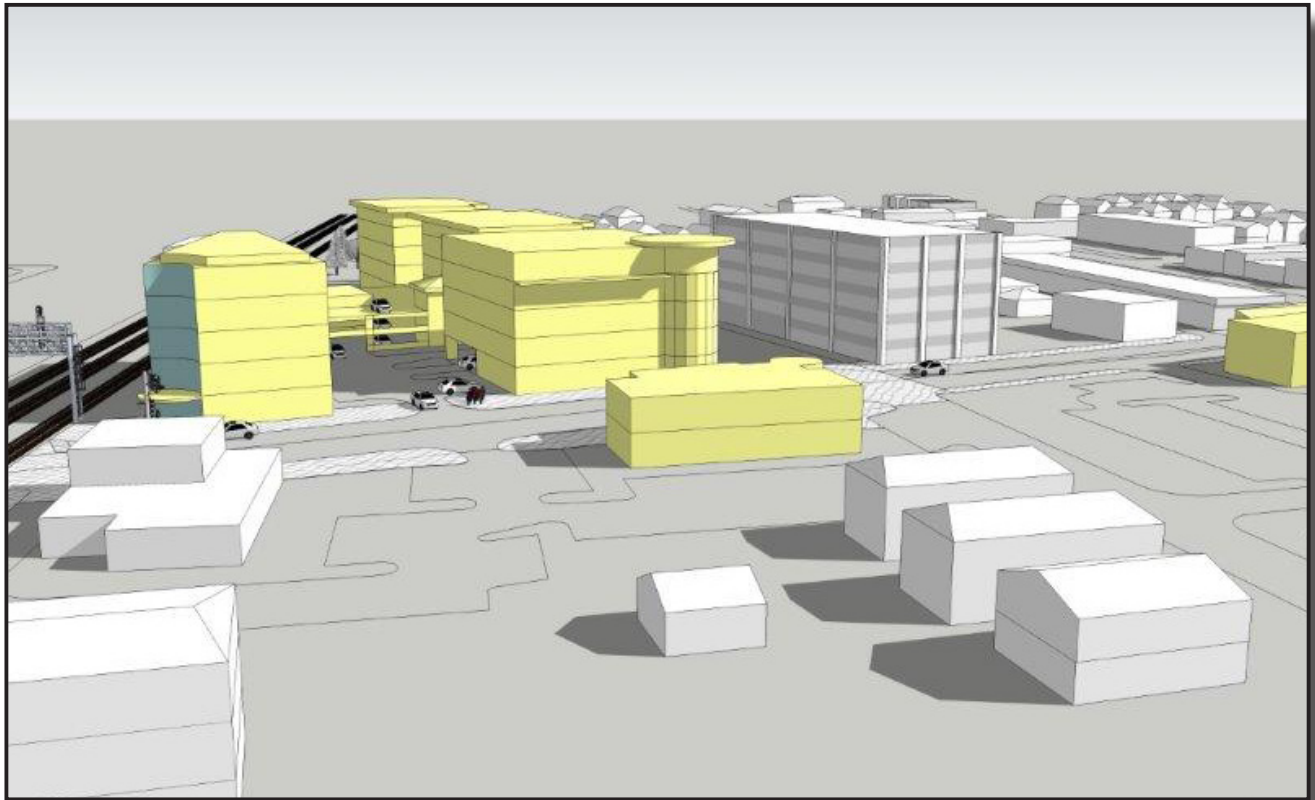


Figure 7-8
Birds eye view looking east towards Target Site (top) and looking north along Thatcher Avenue from River Grove School (bottom)



Figure 7-9
Street level view looking east down Center Street, showing building height in relation to existing Triton Towers.

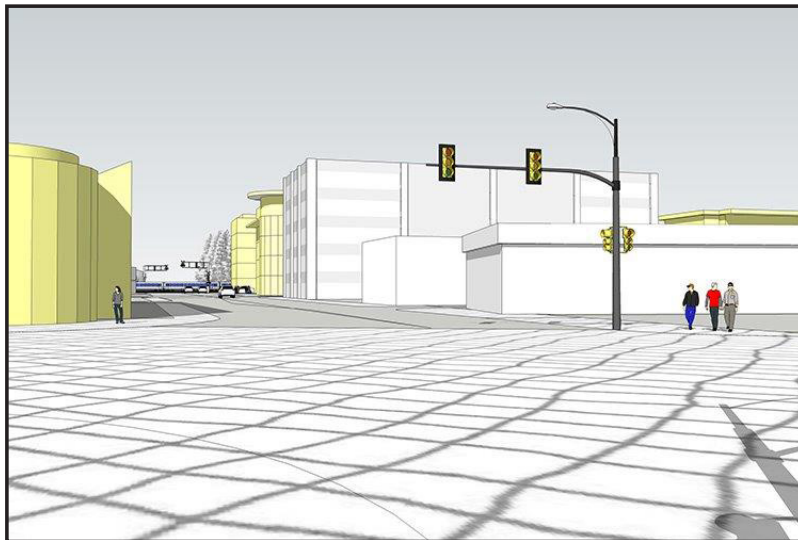


Figure 7-10
Street level view looking north from the intersection of Thatcher Avenue and Grand Avenue.



Figure 7-11
Street level view looking south from the Metra station across the railroad tracks towards the Target Site.

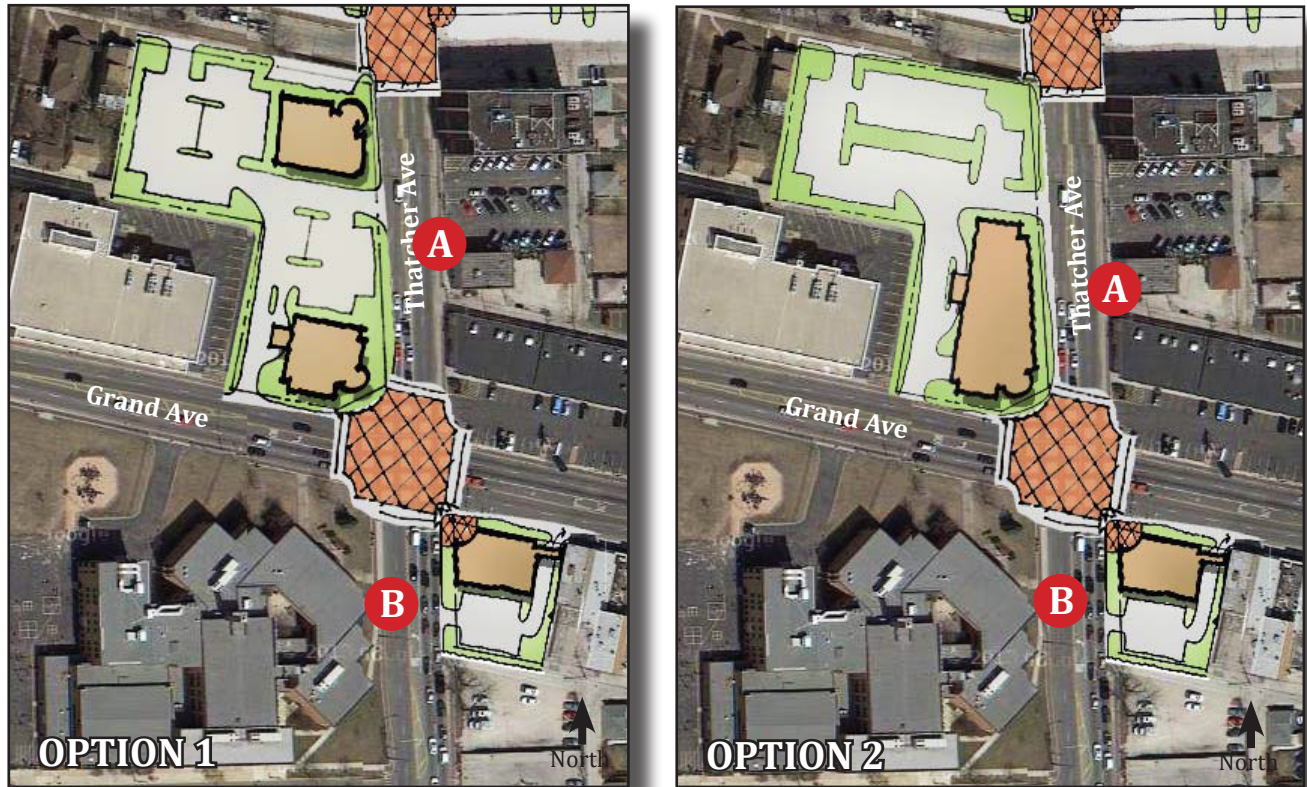


Figure 7-12

Two options for the northwest corner of Grand/Thatcher

Site 3 - Grand / Thatcher Site NW Land Use (1.35 ac)

An existing retail strip center is currently located at the northwest corner of Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue.

Option 1 - Site A

North Building, 1-story restaurant

Restaurant, 5,600 sq.ft.

47 cars (8.3/1,000 sq.ft.)

Option 1 - Site A

South Building, 1-story restaurant w/drive-thru

Drive-thru, 4,200 sq.ft.

22 cars (5.2/1,000 sq.ft.)

Option 2 - Site A

1-story commercial w/drive-thru

Drive-thru, 12,000 sq.ft.

61 cars (5/1,000 sq.ft.)

Site 4 - Grand / Thatcher Site SE Land Use (0.55 ac)

Redevelopment of existing Village owned parking lot.

Option 1 & 2 - Site B

Restaurant/outdoor cafe

Restaurant, 1,500 sq.ft.

Additional off-site parking available in adjacent municipal Community Parking Lot

Site 3 - Grand / Thatcher Site NW market Economics

- High restaurant construction costs and providing 8 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet cause the costs to exceed the value associated with the assumed rent.
- With the south building assumed to be a national chain that brings construction efficiencies, it is likely that costs would be brought into line with rents making that site feasible.

Site 3 - Grand / Thatcher Site NW Market Economics (Option 2)

- This concept considers a high volume, national drug store as a tenant and although it does appear to be market supported under the general assumption for this conceptual analysis, there may be high site acquisition and preparation costs that cause a financial gap. A public private partnership that funds those costs might be necessary to realize this concept.

Site 3 - Grand / Thatcher Site NW Transportation Impact (Option 2)

This site is located at the northwest quadrant of the Thatcher and Grand intersection. Two development options have been proposed for this one. Option 1 includes two restaurants, one with a drive-through. Option 2 includes a commercial use with a drive-through, such as a CVS or Walgreen's. A transit/TOD reduction of 15% was applied to the trip generation estimates. Access to the site would be via both Grand and Thatcher, with the two-way driveways located as far from the intersection as possible. The intersection should be improved to better accommodate pedestrians such as tighter turning radii, pedestrian countdown signals, and high visibility signage. Consideration should be given to adding a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) to the traffic signal. A LPI gives pedestrians a few seconds "head start" when entering an intersection. These are used at intersections with higher volumes of turning traffic which conflicts with pedestrian movements. Given the location of the elementary school on the southwest corner of the intersection, an LPI could be beneficial.

The highest traffic generator would be the fast-food restaurant with a drive-through as included in Option 1. While Grand Ave has lower traffic volumes than Thatcher, conflicts may arise with existing between traffic exiting the restaurant and left turning vehicles on Grand Ave. This will also cause a conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. A detailed traffic study will be required to more specifically address the traffic impacts and potential improvements.

Site 4 - Grand / Thatcher Site SE Market Economics

- This nontraditional concept overwhelms the value of a small building with the cost of parking and outdoor seating. The uniformly applied model for this analysis that allows comparison of sites assumes a more traditional approach.
- If this development paid for only 10 parking spaces and paid rent on reflecting the outdoor space, the developer could pay \$150,000 for the land and still make a market rate return on the development. Given Village ownership of this site, the potential for some sales income and to generate tax revenue makes this an attractive concept.

Site 4 - Grand / Thatcher Site SE Transportation Impact

This site includes a 1,500sf restaurant with an outdoor cafe and access to the Community Parking Lot and is located at the southeast quadrant of the Thatcher and Grand intersection. Access would be via Thatcher, with driveways located as far from the intersection as possible, with the potential for use of the existing alley for vehicle ingress/egress. A transit/TOD reduction of 15% was applied to the trip generation estimates for the restaurant. Similar to Site #3, The intersection should be improved to better accommodate pedestrians such as tighter turning radii, pedestrian countdown signals, high visibility signage, and adding a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) to the traffic signal.



Site 5 - Community Center Site Land Use (1.94 ac)

The previous bowling alley site provides opportunity for redevelopment as a community center. The close proximity to the River Grove School, the American Legion Hall, and the River Grove Historical House & Barn provides an opportunity for reuse of the structure as a community center. The size of the building and prominent location on Grand Avenue makes this site ideal for re-use as a potential site for a new relocated public library facility.

Bowling Alley Rehab to Community Center or Relocated Library

Events plaza and parking lot (56 cars)
Interpretive garden at historical society

Site 5 - Community Center Site Transportation Impact

This site is an existing bowling alley that would be redeveloped into a community center. The parking lot could be used for special weekend events such as art fairs or farmers market. Vehicle access would be provided via Grand Avenue and pedestrian access via River Grove Avenue. Located within a residential area, it is anticipated that this site would attract more pedestrian and bicycle access. Thus, a 15% transit/TOD reduction was applied to trip generation estimates. No roadway improvements are anticipated.

Figure 7-13
Community Center Site

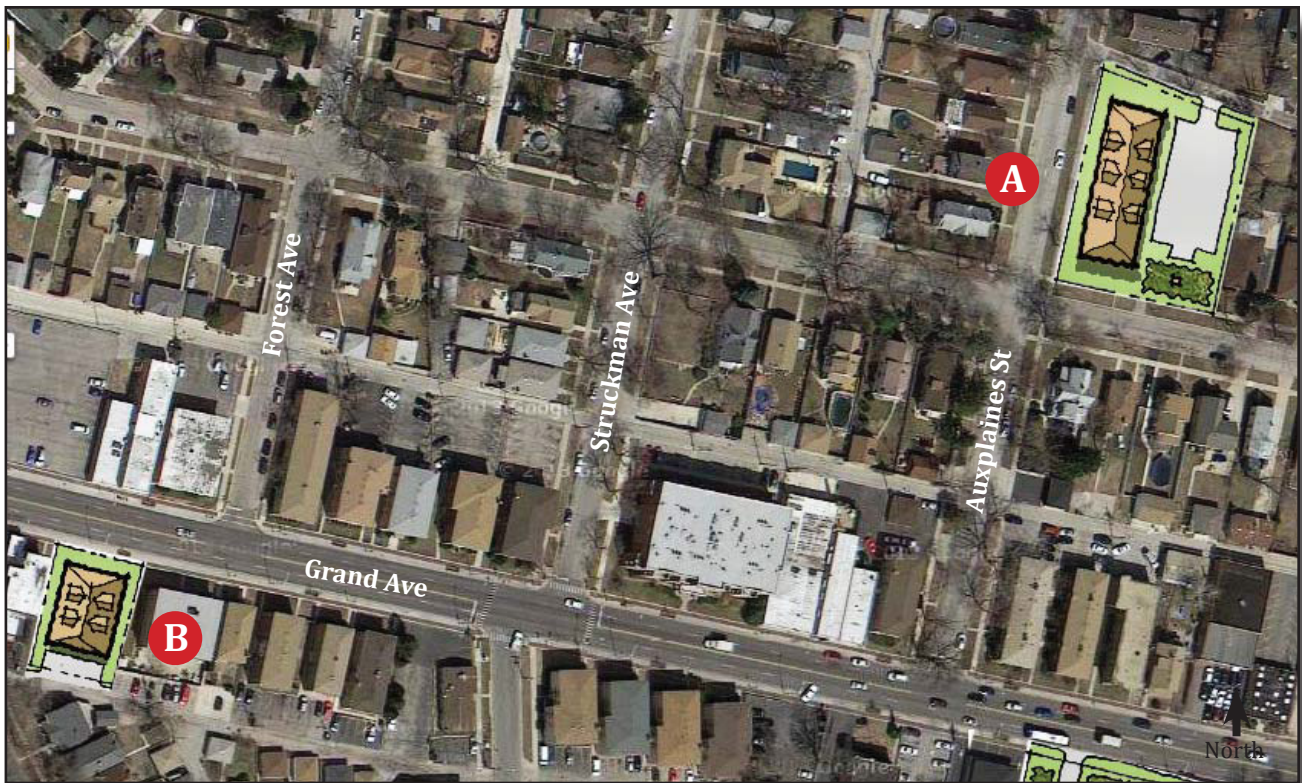


Figure 7-14 Apartment Sites

Site 6 - Apartment Site Auxplains Avenue Land Use (0.70 ac)

Vacant lot suitable for in-fill development. Apartment development anticipated to blend in with existing residential development in the neighborhood.

Site A

3-story Luxury Apartment Building
 8 dwelling units/floor @ 900 sq.ft. each
 24 total dwelling units
 1 car/dwelling unit
 Pocket park

Site 7 - Apartment Site Grand Avenue Land Use (0.24ac)

Vacant lot suitable for in-fill development. Apartment development anticipated to blend in with existing residential development along Grand Avenue.

Site B

3-story Apartment Building
 2 dwelling units/floor @ 1,800 sq.ft. each
 6 total dwelling units
 1 car/dwelling unit
 (potential to increase density, decrease unit size, and provide shared parking across Grand Avenue at the VFW Hall)

Site 6 and Site 7 - Apartment Sites Market Economics

- Since Site 6 adds the Village-wide amenity of a pocket park, the value of that village investment should be added to the contribution to land costs.
- As Site 6 is currently owned by the library district, the opportunity for a land-swap of library owned land for a parcel better suited for a new library exists. In addition, the current tax-exempt status of the property makes TIF incentives an attractive option for future redevelopment.
- Site 7 assumes very large units due to parking constraints. The construction estimating model also assumes elevators that probably would not be provided for this small development. Changing those elements would make this concept provide additional contribution to land costs.

* Market economics assumptions provided on pages 56-58

Site #6 and Site #7 - Apartment Sites Transportation Impact

These sites include 3-story multi-family apartment buildings. Site #6 would include 24 total units, so a TOD/Transit reduction of 15% was applied to the trip generation estimates. Site #7 includes only six units, so no reductions were applied. No roadway improvements are anticipated for these sites.

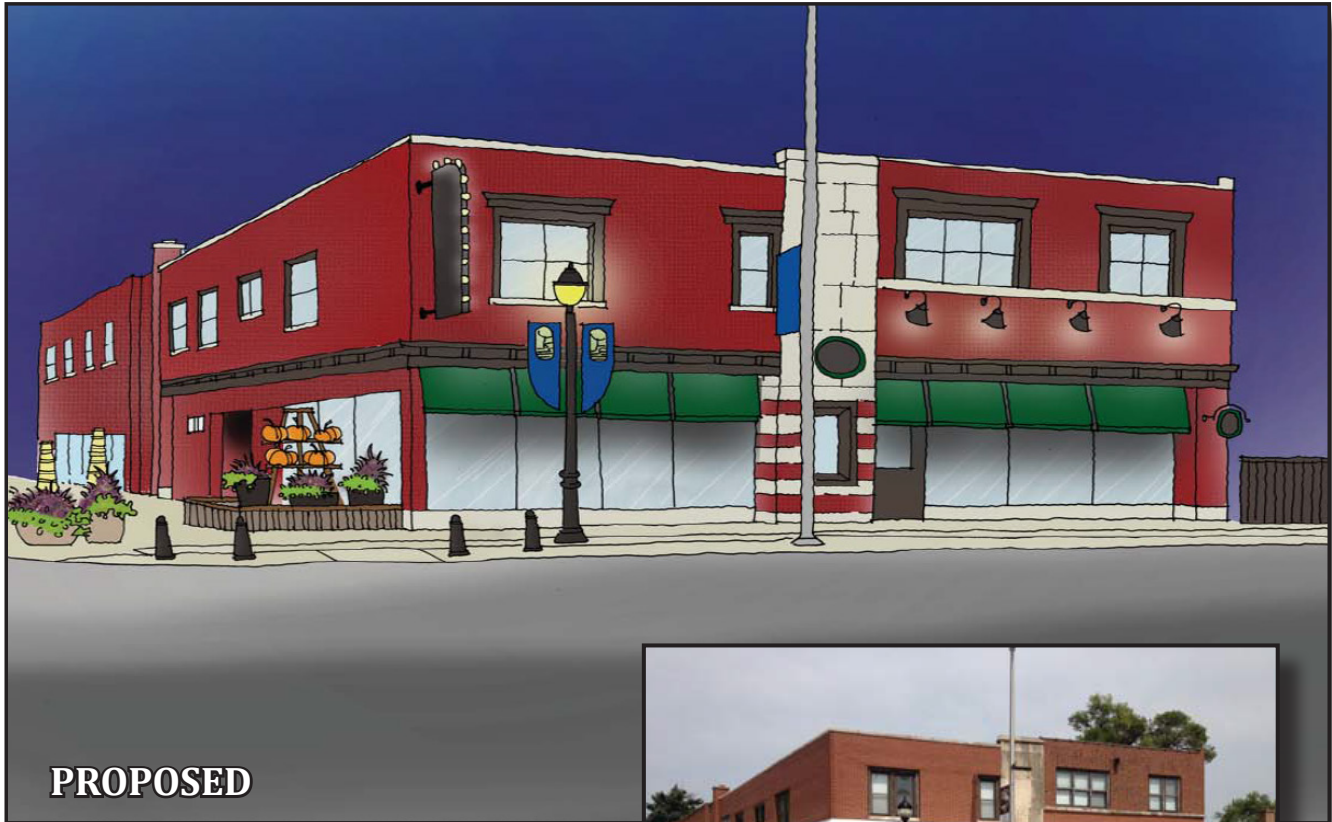


Figure 7-15
Facade Improvements

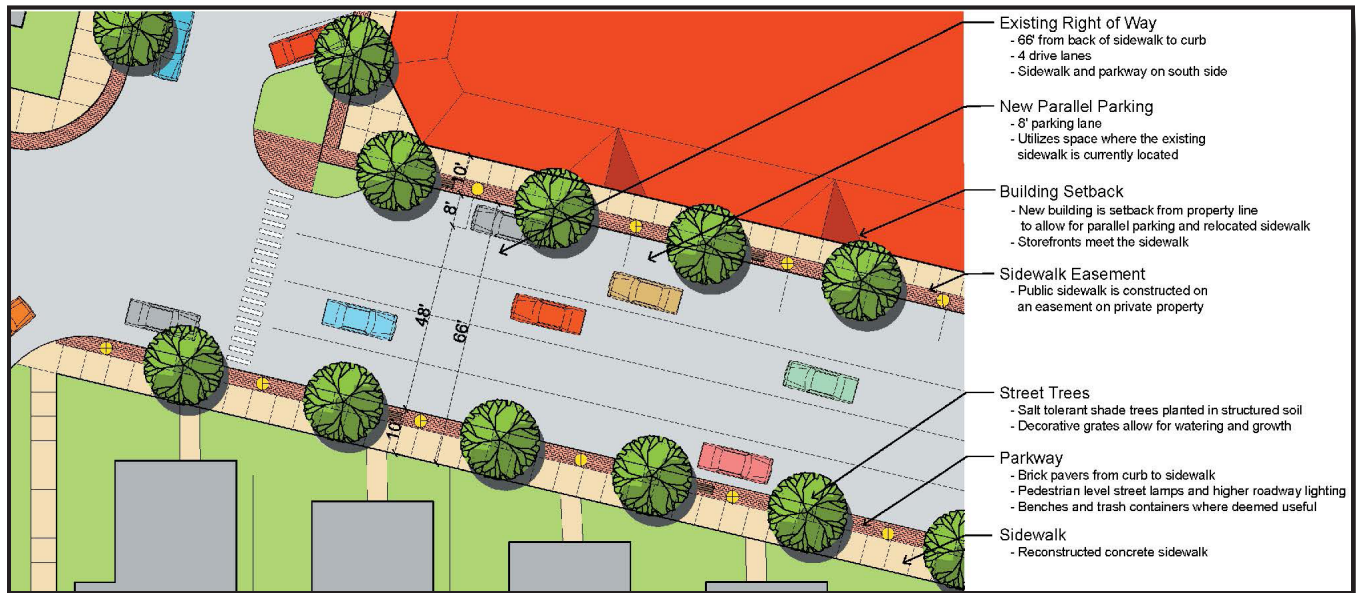
Facade Improvements

Facade improvements should be encouraged throughout the Study Area. Improvements to the architectural character of the area will help to create a unified vision that will continue to promote the themes and characteristics unique to the Study Area and River Grove as a whole.

The above illustration (Figure 7-12) shows suggested improvements to the vacant hardware store on Grand Avenue (between Marwood Street and Budd Street). Similar architectural characteristics and themes can be applied throughout the Study Area.

Grand Avenue Streetscape Design

The 2005 Grand Avenue Village Center Plan established a streetscape design concept for Grand Avenue. This concept incorporates extensive sidewalk reconstruction/brick pavers, street trees, pedestrian level lighting, and sidewalk furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.). Redevelopment along Grand Avenue allows for increased building setbacks and incorporation of additional on-street parking.



The addition of streetscape elements links together individual redevelopment projects up and down Grand Avenue. The band of red brick pavers in the parkway, the rhythm of street trees spaced evenly apart, and lamps placed at a level to light the walk for pedestrians all combine to soften and unify the avenue as a place. Locating elements in the parkway also creates a buffer between the sidewalk and moving traffic. Implementation of the streetscape construction in conjunction with redevelopment projects allows a space to be reserved for a row of parallel parking spaces. These on-street parking spaces make quick stops and visits to shops, or dwelling units, possible, while also adding an even more substantial buffer protecting the sidewalk zone. Space for the parallel parking is still in the public right of way, created by moving the sidewalk in front of the new building onto private property, but with an easement for public access.

Figure 7-16
Existing Streetscape Design
Concept (Grand Avenue Village
Center Plan, 2005)

Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements

Downtown River Grove can be a challenging environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. The pedestrian network is generally limited to sidewalks along Grand Avenue and Thatcher Avenue. Although the signalized intersection of these two roadways provides a protected crossing for pedestrians and bicycles, very little other amenities exist.

Issues/Opportunities

- High traffic volumes on Thatcher Avenue combined with numerous curb cuts and only one signalized intersection make traveling along and crossing Thatcher difficult.
- Railroad crossing on Thatcher. With three sets of railroad tracks and about 106 commuter and freight trains per day, this area is difficult to maneuver. Access to the Metra station platforms may require crossing both Thatcher Ave. and the railroad tracks. Pedestrians traveling north using Pace bus service must cross Thatcher Ave at the railroad crossing when gates are down. Pedestrians crossing between inbound and outbound platforms must crossing railroad tracks. Give the presence of a center track platform (inbound platform), limited improvements, including the possibility of a pedestrian tunnel, are not viable. Pedestrian routes between the Metra station and the surrounding area are not well-defined. The at-grade pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks does include pedestrian gates, but the crossing is poorly defined and includes uneven pavements and structures.
- Des Plaines River Trail located nearby provides regional bicycle access. The Des Plaines River Trail extends approximately 50 miles from River Forest, in Central Cook County, north to the Wisconsin border. It is part of the greater Grand Illinois Trail which spans

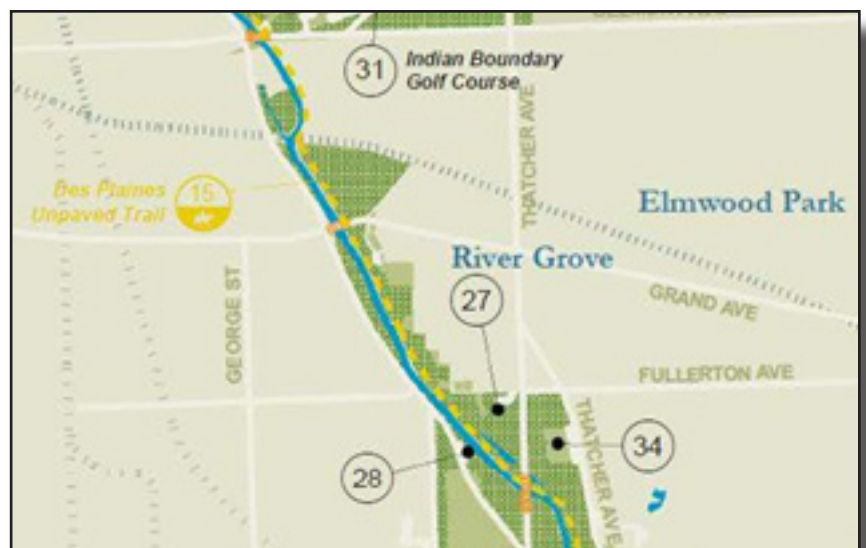


Figure 7-17
Des Plaines River Trail

all of northern Illinois. The Cook County portion of the trail is primarily unpaved and runs from River Forest to Potawatomi Woods. To better capitalize on this asset, specific connections to the downtown and Metra station should be explored.

- Streetscaping elements added along Grand Avenue have improved walkability. While the streetscaping elements are attractive, there are numerous curb cuts which creates conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motor vehicles.

Improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle environment should be focused on the following goals:

- The pedestrian system should be safe. Streets, sidewalks, and walkways should be designed to minimize conflicts with vehicular traffic.
- The pedestrian system should provide direct and convenient connections with continuous and well-connected sidewalks and walkways.
- The pedestrian system should be designed and maintained to promote walking and include elements that create a comfortable walking environment, such as trees, pedestrian-scaled street lighting, buffers from traffic, places to sit, and a pedestrian-scaled environment.
- The pedestrian system should be designed to be accessible for all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, seniors, and youth.
- The design of roadways and intersections should address pedestrian safety, accessibility, mobility, and comfort by the use of pedestrian-scaled elements such as shortened street crossings, buffering from traffic provided by wider sidewalks, pedestrian refuge locations, and tighter corner turning radii.



Figure 7-18
Grand Avenue Streetscape
(Grand Avenue Village Center
Plan, 2005)

Section 8

Implementation Strategies

The successful implementation of the plans and development policies for the TOD concepts established for River Grove is dependent on moving forward with various implementation actions to be undertaken by the Village, transit agencies and property owners. While some actions are dependent on an improved economy to spur development projects, the Village can make progress in the meantime by taking actions that it has control over. Any work the Village can perform in the near term will set the tone for future implementation steps, particularly as the economy rebounds and results in a more favorable environment for (re)development.

This section identifies recommendations to modify or supplement existing municipal plans and policies to ensure the Village's regulatory tools support the TOD concepts. Other strategies outline site acquisition needs, funding sources and support resources that will prepare the Village as it moves from the planning stage to the implementation stage, particularly as outlined in the Action Plan. The Action Plan summarizes the specific tasks, partnerships, phasing, and potential marketing tools for each strategy.

Village Plans & Policies

With its Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance already in place, the Village of River Grove has the necessary tools to regulate redevelopment opportunities within and around the TOD sites, ensuring they meet the Village's standards and reflect the community's character and identity. The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance are all generally supportive of the TOD concepts. The recommendations outlined below are intended to help the Village foster consistency between these redevelopment concepts and the Village's existing plans and regulations:

1. Adopt this TOD Plan by resolution of the Village Board, and provide appropriate references to this document within the existing River Grove Comprehensive Plan.
2. The Village has already modified the zoning ordinance following the approval of the 2005 Grand Avenue Village Center Plan. Standards for building height, building setbacks, parking requirements, among others, were modified in order to facilitate a more pedestrian-friendly, mixed use character as envisioned by that plan. This TOD plan is complimentary with the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan, and the Village should continue to monitor the zoning ordinance to maintain these standards.

Site Acquisition

Implementation of the redevelopment concepts established in this Plan will require acquisition of properties to either provide land for redevelopment or accommodate public improvements, particularly for roads and parking. Specific site acquisition needs are described below.

Redevelopment Sites

This Plan outlines several redevelopment opportunities that are intended to capitalize on the proximity to existing transit facilities, as well as strengthen the vitality of downtown River Grove. Several potential redevelopment sites are identified in Section 7: Concept Plan Overview.

Although site acquisition generally opens up the availability of land for redevelopment of entire sites, it may also be necessary to purchase space for expanded rights-of-way (ROW's) along the outer edges of properties. Expanded ROW's would help accommodate different parking configurations (angle parking vs. parallel parking) and wider sidewalks and parkways to create more inviting and safer pedestrian environments.

Implementation Action Plan

The Implementation Action Plan is anchored by a series of objectives that need to be met in order to ensure the concepts and recommendations detailed in this Plan are achieved to bring transit and redevelopment opportunities to life in River Grove. The four core strategies are:

1. Build local and regional awareness of redevelopment opportunities.
2. Utilize the RFQ/RFP process to attract redevelopment.
3. Maximize the return on previous and continued Village investment.
4. Create a strong sense of place in the study area through streetscape enhancements, gateways elements, and transportation improvements.

The strategies are plugged into a matrix that also includes tasks for each strategy, potential partnerships, and phasing. The Village of River Grove will assume primary responsibility for each task, with the potential to partner with other organizations or agencies, such as RTA, Metra, Pace, and property owners, among others. Many of the tasks can be supported by the funding sources and support resources described later in this section.

With a Concept Plan and redevelopment strategies in place, numerous activities need to be accomplished to achieve the transit and redevelopment opportunities outlined in this plan. While the present economy suggests that development will not be immediate, there are still many steps that can be accomplished in the near-term. The phasing component of the Implementation Action Plan matrix utilizes the following timeframes:

- Short-Term Tasks (0-3 years)
- Intermediate-Term Tasks (3-5 years)
- Long-Term Tasks (5+ years)

The Implementation Action Plan matrix is provided in Figure 8-1.

Figure 8-1
Implementation Action Plan Matrix

Strategy 1 | Objective: Build local and regional awareness of redevelopment opportunities.

Task	Potential Village Partnerships	Phasing
1. Meet with individual property owners to assess their future plans for their properties and discuss partnerships to implement this plan.	Property owners	Short-Term
2. Maintain regular contact with individual property owners of sites that have longer-term redevelopment prospects.	Property owners / real estate brokers	Intermediate- to Long-Term
3. Reach out to local newspapers and real estate trade journals to submit press releases or articles relating to the redevelopment opportunities in River Grove.	Local newspapers; real estate trade journals	Short-Term
4. Create promotional materials, such as brochures, newsletter, or website, to circulate around the region and among development companies and professional organizations to help attract redevelopment.	Real estate trade journals; real estate brokerages	Short-Term

Strategy 2 | Objective: Utilize the RFQ/RFP process to attract redevelopment.

Task	Potential Village Partnerships	Phasing
1. Assess each redevelopment site to determine whether they are "shovel ready" or require any remediation that should be noted in the RFQ/RFP process.	Village Engineer; property owners	Intermediate-Term
2. Commence with an RFQ/RFP process to accept and review redevelopment proposals for each site, ensuring they uphold the principles of the Framework and Concept Plans.	N/A	Intermediate- to Long-Term
3. Secure property options and purchase or create public/private partnership agreements for key target redevelopment sites.	Property owners	Intermediate- to Long-Term

Figure 8-1

Implementation Action Plan Matrix (continued from previous page)**Strategy 3** | Objective: Maximize the return on previous and continued Village investment.

Task	Potential Village Partnerships	Phasing
1. Encourage improvements to Village-owned properties that raise their values through the support of government grants and lower interest rate investments.	Property owners	Intermediate- to Long-Term

Strategy 4 | Objective: Create a strong sense of place in the study area through streetscape enhancements, gateway elements, and transportation improvements.

Task	Potential Village Partnerships	Phasing
1. Design a unified wayfinding and information signage program to establish an identity for the transit facilities and TOD.	Village Engineer; IDOT;	Intermediate-Term
2. Integrate streetscape enhancements and gateway elements as detailed in the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan (2005)	Village Engineer; IDOT	Short- to Intermediate-Term
3. Provide transportation improvements as detailed in the Framework and Transportation Plans.	Village Engineer; RTA; Metra; Pace; IDOT; Union Pacific Railroad;	Intermediate- to Long-Term
4. Ensure proposed streetscape enhancements and redevelopments adhere to the guidelines established in the Grand Avenue Village Center Plan (2005).	N/A	Intermediate- to Long-Term

Funding Sources & Support Resources

Multiple funding opportunities are available to support implementation of the transit opportunities and redevelopment concepts outlined in this Plan. Since many elements of the Concept Plans are considered long-term opportunities, funding sources and support resources will be accessible and available throughout the implementation process. The funding sources noted below are primarily administered by state agencies. Any program listed is subject to change or elimination.

Local Municipal Funding Sources

Municipal funding mechanisms can supplement River Grove's ability to use local revenues for potential transit and TOD opportunities. These funding mechanisms can supplement River Grove's general revenues, capital improvement plans, and other revenue sources, such as Motor Fuel Taxes, that can be partially allocated to TOD implementation over the long-term.

- A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District is a special area designated by the Village to make public improvements within the district that will help generate private-sector development. Taxes derived from increases in assessed property values (i.e. the tax increment) resulting from new development would either go into a special fund created to retire bonds issued to originate the development or leverage future growth in the TIF district. Portions of the Study Area already lie within the existing River Grove Belmont Avenue/Thatcher Avenue TIF and the River Grove Downtown/Grand Avenue TIF.
- A Special Service Area (SSA) can be used for infrastructure, maintenance, or area management purposes in a geography defined by River Grove. Such revenues can support bonding or generate a revenue stream for specific projects for the defined geography.
- A Business District (BD) can generate additional sales tax revenue for certain purposes, similar to the eligible uses for Tax Increment Financing (TIF). This approach may be appropriate for commercial and mixed use areas that redevelop for retail uses.
- Other tools, such as tax abatements that support capital projects or sales tax rebates could be applicable.

Transportation Funding Sources

Funding for transportation related implementation work is available from federal, state, and regional sources.

- The Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP), administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT), is a reimbursement program for local governments applying for federal transportation funding. ITEP provides assistance to support local communities achieve their transportation initiatives and expand

travel choices. The program also supports broader aesthetic, cultural, and environmental aspects of transportation infrastructure. ITEP is comprised of 12 categories of eligible funding, including mitigation for roadway run-off and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. (The future of this program is uncertain, but there may be a similar alternative program available in the future).

- Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement funding is available via the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) and IDOT. This program is intended to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, improve intersections, and increase and enhance multiple travel options, such as biking and walking. These funds are available locally through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). More information can be found at http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/policy/transportation.aspx?ekmense=c580fa7b_8_18_396_2
- The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) administers the Job Access Reverse Commuter (JARC) program, a federally funded program that provides operating and capital funding for transportation services planned, designed and carried out to meet the transportation needs of eligible low-income individuals and of reverse commuters regardless of income. The RTA also administers the New Freedom program, which provides operating and capital funding for new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). More information can be found at: www.rtachicago.org/jarcnf
- Through the Innovation, Coordination and Enhancement (ICE) program, the RTA provides operating and capital funding for projects that enhance the coordination and integration of public transportation and develop and implement innovations to improve the quality and delivery of public transportation. More information can be found at: www.rtachicago.org/ice
- Formerly the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, the Active Transportation Alliance provides support services for local governments on bicycle and pedestrian programs and issues.

Community & Economic Development Support

Illinois' Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) provides multiple grants and loans to local government for economic and community development purposes. Other state agencies and authorities have certain programs that could support implementation of River Grove's plan.

- DCEO's Business Development Public Infrastructure Program provides a grant to local governments to improve infrastructure related

to projects that directly create jobs.

- Other DCEO programs provide affordable, low interest financing for public infrastructure improvements for economic development purposes.
- DCEO assistance in the form of participation loans is available to community and economic development corporations to serve small businesses within their defined areas.
- The Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) is a self-financed, state authority with multiple programs for local governments (among other entities). IFA can assist with bond issuance, provide low cost loans, facilitate tax credits, and supply investment capital to encourage economic growth statewide.
- The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) offers certain similarly structured programs for multi-family housing development. With different multi-family residential options outlined in the Concept Plan, IHDA programs could be partnered with private developers.
- As plan implementation proceeds, DCEO, through its Illinois Bureau of Tourism, provides grants to municipal and county governments and local non-profits to market local attractions to increase hotel/motel tax revenues.
- DCEO tourism grants are also available to private sector applicants, working with local government, to attract and host events in Illinois that provide direct and indirect economic impact.

Specific Purpose

Two state departments, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), provide multiple programs for specific purposes to local governments.

- IEPA provides technical assistance and funding support, depending upon the issue. IEPA has programs intended to protect watersheds and water quality near developments and roadways utilizing federal Clean Water funds. Municipal governments can also apply for revolving low interest loans for new wastewater facilities, collection systems, and sewers. Upgrades are eligible, too.
- Just like DCEO, IEPA offers programs to improve energy efficiency.
- DNR has two programs for bike and recreational path development

or renovation.

- » The Illinois Bicycle Path Grant is a reimbursement program for multiple bike path development activities, including land acquisition, path development and renovation, and the development of support facilities for the path. This grant would be an appropriate funding source for trails along the Des Plaines River as well as for trails leading into and through the TOD area.
- » The Recreational Trails program funds land acquisition, trail construction, and trail renovation for recreational paths/trails that can be used by multiple users.
- DNR has additional programs dedicated to open space preservation and land and water conservation.

Private & Foundation Support

Certain regional and community foundations, private sector entities, and individuals may provide grant funding to support economic development, environmental, and land use activities or study.

- The Grand Victoria Foundation (GVF) includes land use as a general field of interest to prepare grants. Taxing bodies are eligible to apply for funding, assuming any proposed program is outside of their normal scope of services. Only proposals invited by GVF are considered.
- Other potential grantors may be identified through the Donors Forum of Chicago.
- Local citizens or businesses may also provide a donation or series of donations to fund a specific local public improvement project. These projects can include funding for subsequent studies, or physical improvements and their maintenance. These activities are usually conducted under the auspices of a local public charity and may be subject to written commitment.

Intergovernmental Coordination

The complexity of coordinating multiple modes of transportation, the expense of required improvements, and the need to wisely allocate government resources all suggest the need for the Village of River Grove to work closely with multiple local, regional, and state governments and agencies. This effort includes:

- Agreements with both Pace and Metra to monitor and maintain station parking, area maintenance, lighting, and other issues related to operating transit service.
- Extensive coordination and cooperation with the Union Pacific Rail-

road to improve pedestrian access.

- Permits required from the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) for any pedestrian or roadway improvements to the at-grade railroad crossing on Thatcher Avenue.
- IDOT approvals for and review of access issues, particularly related to Thatcher Avenue (IL Route 171).
- Coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and likely permitting for floodplain and potential wetlands issues within and near the TOD area.
- Coordination with the River Grove Fire Department to ensure adequate fire and safety vehicle access and arrange other fire protection related elements.
- Open lines of communications with other utilities serving the community such as Nicor and AT&T to ensure appropriate service to new development and coordination with existing service lines.