

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	The Study Area	2
	The Planning Process	2
	Organization of the Station Area Study	3
<b>II.</b>	<b>STATION AREA VISION AND GOALS</b>	<b>4</b>
	A Vision for Wood Dale Town Center	4
	Planning Goals	5
<b>III.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND FOR PLANNING</b>	<b>7</b>
	Regional Context	7
	Demographics and Market Potential	7
	Land Use and Physical Features	9
	Public Transit Facilities and Services	11
	Access, Circulation and Parking	12
	Planning Opportunities	13
<b>IV.</b>	<b>REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS</b>	<b>15</b>
	The No Build Scenario	15
	The Preferred Development Scenario	22
<b>V.</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>31</b>
	Administrative Initiatives	31
	Development Regulations	34
	Funding Sources and Incentives	36
	Redevelopment Considerations	41
<b>VI.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>47</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

1.	Existing Land Use	10
2.	Planning Opportunities	14
3.	No Build Scenario Land Use Framework	17
4.	No Build Scenario Access and Circulation Framework	19
5.	No Build Scenario Town Center Concept	21
6.	Preferred Development Scenario Land Use Framework	24
7.	Preferred Development Scenario Access and Circulation Framework	26
8.	Preferred Development Scenario Town Center Concept	29

## LIST OF TABLES

---

1.	Wood Dale Town Center Redevelopment Potential	8
2.	No Build Scenario Development Summary	22
3.	Preferred Scenario Development Summary	28

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

---

The *Station Area Study* for the City of Wood Dale, Illinois, was prepared through the efforts of the City of Wood Dale, the Regional Transportation Authority, Metra, Pace and the project planning consultants, HNTB Corporation and Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates. Many citizens, staff and officials of the City of Wood Dale, too numerous to mention here, participated in the planning process. Their involvement and insights are sincerely appreciated.

### **City of Wood Dale**

Kenneth P. Johnson, Mayor  
Edward Kneip, Alderman  
David Tolemy, Alderman  
Frank Williams, City Manager  
Jeff Mermuys, Assistant to the City Manager  
Roger Nowick, Director of Community Development  
Mimi Anderson, Administration

### **Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce**

Mike Melone, Wood Dale Bowl

### **Wood Dale Residents**

Jim Weathers  
Roy Sye

### **Regional Transportation Authority**

Joseph Voccia, Manager, Market Development  
Bill Reynolds, Principal Analyst, Market Development

### **Metra**

Catherine Kannenberg, Senior Transportation Planner  
Demetri Skoufis, Community Affairs

### **Pace**

Tom Radak, Planning Services Department  
Patrick Wilmot, Planning Services Department

### **HNTB Corporation**

Phil Hanegraaf, AICP, Associate Vice President  
Diane Gormely-Barnes, AIA, AICP, Senior Planner  
Gary Lehman, ASLA, Senior Urban Designer  
Jason Daihl, Visualization Specialist

### **Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates Inc.**

Valerie Kretchmer, President

Preparation of this document was financed in part through a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, under the Federal Transit Act, and/or the Illinois Department of Transportation. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, or the Illinois Department of Transportation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

---

The City of Wood Dale is centrally located in the Chicagoland area. The City has had a train station and commercial business district since the railroad was extended through the area in the 1870s. Incorporated in 1928, the City of Wood Dale has grown to a current population of over 13,000. The City is characterized by high quality residential neighborhoods that surround the commercial areas along the parallel east-west arterials of Irving Park Road and Thorndale Road and the north-south arterial Wood Dale Road.

With the potential for significant expansion of O'Hare International Airport to the east and related construction of a western access route at Thorndale Road, the City of Wood Dale is poised to leverage increased regional visibility and market potential into the creation of a revitalized "Town Center" at the intersection of Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads, adjacent to the Wood Dale Metra Station that provides commuter rail service between downtown Chicago and the City of Elgin on the Metra Milwaukee District West Line. The land use and economic development implications of the new western access route are currently being studied by DuPage County through their ongoing *DuPage County West O'Hare Corridor Economic Development Study*. Active participation in the planning for this significant new regional corridor will enable the City to leverage its impacts to benefit the City overall, and the Town Center area in particular. The City will need to be strategic in guiding appropriate development into the Town Center and to the Thorndale Road area, respectively.

In March 2005, the City of Wood Dale began this Station Area Study to comprehensively assess the redevelopment and enhancement opportunities within its Town Center area, with the intention of establishing a clear "vision" for the future of the area. A major element influencing future development and design opportunities is the potential future roadway reconfiguration being considered at the Irving Park Road/Wood Dale Road/Metra Milwaukee District West (MD-W) Line intersection. Three alternatives, including a "no-build" alternative and two potential realignments of Irving Park Road that would result in a grade-separated railroad crossing, served as the basis for this Study. They were taken from the preliminary recommendations of an Intersection Feasibility Study prepared in 2003 by CTE Engineers.

Utilizing resources available through the Regional Transportation Authority's Regional Technical Assistance Program (RTAP), the City engaged in an open, community-oriented planning process to understand the ways that each of these three alternatives might affect land use and development potential in the area. The Study identified ways to leverage the opportunities presented by each of the alignment alternatives, while building upon and enhancing the existing public transit asset of the Wood Dale Metra Station (Wood Dale Station). HNTB Corporation and Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates provided planning and real estate market consulting services to the City to complete the planning process.

## The Study Area

The study area for the Station Area Study generally encompasses the area within one-half (1/2) mile of the Wood Dale Metra Station, located just southeast of the intersection of Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads. Planning recommendations do not directly impact all properties within the study area; the focus was primarily placed on existing commercial and public use areas. However, for planning purposes it was important to consider the physical characteristics of the entire area, and to assess both the potential impacts that TOD planning recommendations may have on adjacent residential neighborhoods, and whether potential improvements in access to the future Town Center could be identified.

Within this Station Area Study the terms “study area,” “Metra Station area” and “Town Center” are used interchangeably. These terms are all intended to refer to the commercial, residential and public use areas surrounding the Metra Station and roadway intersection, as described above.

## The Planning Process

A Project Team appointed by the City, and comprised of a variety of community stakeholders representing residents, business owners and City officials, met periodically with the consulting team to provide ongoing input and feedback as the Study progressed. A series of Key Person Interviews were conducted on May 9 and May 16, 2005 by members of the consulting team to gain a preliminary understanding of planning issues and opportunities in the Wood Dale Station area. In addition, three major community meetings were part of the process, and were designed to garner broad-based input from the community, in particular with regard to TOD opportunities within the future Town Center area. The first of the three meetings was held on July 13, 2005, and included a Preference Survey and small group “visioning” exercise. A second meeting was held on September 12, 2005 to reach consensus on the Vision and Goals that served as a basis for assessment of alternative redevelopment scenarios. A third meeting was held on March 8, 2006 to provide an opportunity for the community to view and comment on the three alternative redevelopment scenarios before final refinements were completed.

Two additional sources of community feedback were also utilized: 1) a city-wide Community Needs Assessment Survey undertaken by the City in early 2005; and 2) selected results from six commuter surveys conducted by the RTA at Chicago area Metra stations between 1998 and 2002 for six RTAP station area planning studies, and from commuter surveys conducted by Metra at six stations for a Metra study completed in 1993. This input was a primary consideration in the development and assessment of alternative redevelopment scenarios.

Several existing plans prepared by the City address the Town Center area, and also provided significant insight into community preferences. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan update, a Comprehensive Plan Supplement adopted in 2004, and a Strategic Plan prepared in October 2004 all provided policy direction regarding redevelopment opportunities in the Town Center area.

At the conclusion of the first step in the Study, an *Inventory and Vision Memorandum* was prepared (dated September 2005 and available under separate cover). The memorandum summarized community preferences, existing conditions and other key planning considerations for the Wood Dale Station area, highlighted current market conditions and expected market demand impacting the area, and included a brief

description of the three potential future roadway alignments addressed in this Study. The memorandum concluded with a preliminary Vision statement and preliminary Planning Goals.

At the conclusion of the second step in the Study, an *Alternative Redevelopment Scenarios* report was prepared (dated November 2005 and available under separate cover). The report described and evaluated three Scenarios, to understand the extent to which they might achieve the City of Wood Dale's vision for a new Town Center. The three Scenarios were based upon the three potential future roadway configurations. Each Scenario was based upon a development program and other key planning factors that reflect community preferences and market potentials, and was assessed based upon Evaluation Factors that measured the ability of each Scenario to meet the community's needs and desires.

Based upon comments from the Steering Committee and from the community at large during the Open House on March 8, 2006, two Scenarios are included in this Station Area Study- the "No Build" Scenario and a "Preferred Development" Scenario that combines aspects of the two realignment alternatives presented in the previously described report.

### **Organization of the Station Area Study**

This report is divided into the following sections:

- **Station Area Vision and Goals** summarizes the Vision for Wood Dale Town Center and Planning Goals developed by the Steering Committee and reviewed by the community, which served as the genesis for the Town Center concepts to follow.
- **Background for Planning** summarizes the physical planning and policy issues that also influenced the Town Center concepts, addressing the following topic areas: regional context, demographics and market potential, land use and physical features, public transit facilities and services, access, circulation and parking. The section concludes with a synopsis of planning opportunities.
- **Redevelopment Scenarios** describes two potential future planning concepts in detail, a "No Build" Scenario that is based upon the roadway alignment in the area remaining unchanged, and the "Preferred Development" Scenario that is based upon a new alignment of Irving Park Road that creates a grade-separated railroad crossing and is commonly referred to as Alignment "2A."
- **Implementation** describes key administrative actions to be undertaken by the City, recommended development regulation updates, potential funding sources and incentives, and redevelopment considerations that are relevant to both Scenarios.

## II. STATION AREA VISION AND GOALS

---

A vision describes the community's aspirations for an "end state" condition it seeks to achieve in the future. A Vision for Wood Dale Town Center has been written to describe what will occur within the Wood Dale Town Center area over a period of approximately the next 20 years as a result of the implementation of potential roadway improvements and related redevelopment initiatives.

Planning Goals transform collective community values into operational guidelines; they describe a desired end state toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad based and long range in focus, representing a desired outcome.

### A Vision for Wood Dale Town Center

The Vision below summarizes the guiding elements utilized by the Project Team and consulting team as alternative scenarios, planning recommendations and implementation strategies were developed.

*Over the next ten to twenty years, the Town Center will become the true "center" of the City of Wood Dale, and a source of community pride for all residents. Building upon existing public transit assets, and benefiting from roadway improvements to ease traffic congestion and improve safety, the Town Center will provide a cohesive and positive identity for the City. The development of the Town Center will be accomplished with minimal displacement of existing homes, and existing businesses will be retained or relocated within the area.*

*The Town Center will offer an attractive and well-maintained environment for a variety of activities. Significant landscaping will bring the "woods" back to Wood Dale. Pedestrian-friendly streetscape treatments will make walking and bicycling to and through the Town Center from adjacent residential neighborhoods and public facilities safe and easy, and encourage window shopping and leisurely strolling. Gateway features will announce arrival to the Town Center, and encourage passersby to visit.*

*An integrated mix of uses will create a vibrant atmosphere. New mixed use and commercial buildings will house a variety of high quality businesses, services and small offices that meet the shopping and service needs of City residents, local employees, commuters and visitors. A major public plaza in the heart of Town Center will provide a year-round venue for community events and informal gathering, and smaller scale outdoor seating areas will provide for pedestrian comfort throughout the Town Center.*

*The Wood Dale Metra Station will be well integrated into the Town Center, with commuters able to conveniently patronize local businesses. The station facility will be redesigned to improve commuter access and visibility. Shared parking facilities will provide commuter parking on weekdays, and be available for local restaurants, businesses and civic facilities on evenings and weekends.*

*Varied housing types in the Town Center will provide new housing options for residents and additional support for local businesses. Condominiums over commercial space will be developed in the core of the Town Center, surrounded by medium density townhouses that provide a buffer to adjacent single family neighborhoods.*

## **Planning Goals**

This list of Goals is structured around key existing City policies regarding the Town Center area that appear in planning documents dating from 1997 and 2004. Ideas resulting from more recent community input and conditions assessments are also reflected, along with careful consideration of how to reflect transit oriented development (TOD) principles within the Town Center area. These Planning Goals establish the policy parameters against which individual development proposals and potential public improvements within the Town Center area should be assessed.

### ***Community Cohesion***

1. Utilize Town Center redevelopment efforts to promote a consistent and positive community identity.
2. Weave Town Center improvements into the area in a “seamless” way, so as to create beneficial impacts for existing adjacent properties to remain.
3. Increase the level of pride and commitment among City residents and business owners.
4. Increase awareness, both locally and regionally, of the City’s Town Center revitalization efforts.

### ***Land Use and Redevelopment***

1. Revitalize the Town Center as the center of civic and social life for Wood Dale.
2. Provide a mix of high quality and complimentary uses- small scale and specialty retail, services, entertainment, restaurants, multi-family residential and limited office.
3. Locate commercial uses to generate synergy and encourage walking between businesses.
4. Encourage a variety of businesses, to serve the needs of residents, seniors, commuters, area employees and passersby.
5. Accommodate public and institutional uses to create a truly multi-functional area.
6. Provide the flexibility to allow mixed use development- including residential over commercial and medium density residential as a buffer use.
7. Create distinct districts along Irving Park Road, limiting retail to specific areas.
8. Retain existing businesses, through a relocation and compensation program.
9. Eliminate or reduce land use conflicts, including the redevelopment of industrial areas.
10. Accommodate new residential development of varying types within the Town Center.
11. Maintain and enhance adjacent single family neighborhoods.
12. Provide a site depth of up to 300 feet where feasible, with an appropriate transition to single family residential.
13. Consider vacating public rights-of-way where feasible to create deeper lots for redevelopment.

14. Undertake improvements to the Wood Dale Metra Station, potentially including a new facility that will serve as a focal point for the Town Center. Consider relocation of the station and platforms if community benefits can be realized.

#### *Transit, Access, Circulation and Parking*

1. Implement improvements that will increase safety and reduce congestion.
2. Provide good access and visibility for all businesses from Irving Park Road.
3. Provide ample and well-located parking to serve all uses in the Town Center, including shared parking serving multiple uses.
4. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections, including to public facilities along Wood Dale Road.
5. Strengthen the functional and visual connection between the Wood Dale Metra Station and its surroundings, to encourage increased ridership and increased patronage of local businesses by commuters.
6. Provide limited access points along Irving Park Road, combined where feasible, with parking areas serving as a “frontage road” through the use of cross-easements.
7. Limit curb cuts on Wood Dale Road near the intersection with Irving Park Road.
8. Consider blocking off residential streets to reduce cut-through traffic.
9. Provide continuous sidewalks along Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads and on side streets to connect adjacent neighborhoods to the Town Center.
10. Provide bikeways throughout Wood Dale, along Salt Creek and connecting west to Itasca’s system.
11. Accommodate potential future bus and shuttle service, including transit signal priority and drop-off areas at the Metra Station.

#### *Urban Design*

1. Encourage a high quality visual character.
2. Buildings should be placed forward, with parking located to the sides and rear.
3. Provide an attractive, consistent streetscape.
4. Incorporate entry gateways and monuments with the City logo into the streetscape.
5. Beautify the land along the Metra MD-W Line, subject to Metra guidelines.
6. Provide a public commons or green space within the Town Center.
7. Encourage unified design and a height of two to four stories at new buildings.
8. Allow five to six stories (up to 30 dwelling units per acre) within one-quarter mile of the Wood Dale Metra Station.
9. Encourage facade and site improvements at existing buildings.
10. Enforce stricter signage controls.
11. Enforce stricter landscaping requirements at parking areas.
12. Improve views to Salt Creek.

### III. BACKGROUND FOR PLANNING

---

This section of the Study briefly summarizes the Key Planning Considerations identified in the first step of the planning process, which set the stage for the development of alternative Scenarios. The following topics related to the physical planning opportunities and constraints present within the study area are addressed: the regional context, demographics and market potential, land use and physical features, public transit facilities and services, access, circulation and parking. The section concludes with a brief synopsis of key Planning Opportunities.

Understanding these Key Planning Considerations and Planning Opportunities enabled the Study to be responsive to existing opportunities and constraints while fulfilling community aspirations to the greatest extent feasible. Complete background information related to this section is available in the *Inventory and Vision Memorandum* (available under separate cover).

#### Regional Context

Key planning considerations with regard to Wood Dale's regional context include:

- Access to Wood Dale is available from nearby expressway interchanges, and auto-oriented corridors through the City have high regional visibility. The Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads intersection is, therefore, a very high profile location with excellent regional exposure.
- Both neighboring communities with Metra facilities, Bensenville and Itasca, have maintained successful downtown areas with significant public infrastructure enhancements surrounding attractive public transit facilities. Other communities along the Metra Milwaukee District West Line have also taken steps to leverage their downtown or public transportation assets to encourage redevelopment, including Roselle to the west and Franklin Park to the east.

#### Demographics and Market Potential

Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc. prepared a market analysis (available under separate cover) that identified opportunities for TOD near the Wood Dale Metra Station, to provide a clear understanding of the regional "market position" of the Town Center. The analysis focused on development opportunities over the next five to ten years for retail, office and multi-family uses. The findings provided a valuable "snapshot" of current market conditions and an understanding of likely future trends, to aid in developing planning recommendations that reflect realistic development expectations.

Depending on the availability and configuration of sites, the Town Center area could attract a significant portion of the demand in the City of Wood Dale for new townhouses, condominiums, retail stores, restaurants, as well as office space geared to smaller companies. This demand is in addition to the current inventory of space in the area. The actual pace of development will depend on the number of other developments under construction in the City at the same time, and on the timing of the western access route and potential Town Center roadway realignment projects.

Price obviously will be a factor in the absorption of any type of new space in the Town Center. The analysis assumed that development will be priced at levels that are within the range of competitive properties. Initially, Town Center projects may not be able to charge a premium over other space in the City; once improvements to the Irving Park Road-Wood Dale Road intersection are completed, residential, retail and office space should be able to lease or sell for prices at the high end of competitive projects. Table 1: Wood Dale Town Center Redevelopment Potential below shows near term (1-3 years), medium term (3-5 years) and long term (5+ years) net additional demand in the Town Center area.

**Table 1:  
Wood Dale Town Center Redevelopment Potential**

Development Type and Location	Quantity (Units or Square Feet)	Comments
Townhouses	20 units per year	Near, medium and long term.
Condominiums	20-25 units/year	Near, medium and long term.
Retail and Restaurants	15,000-20,000 SF 20,000-25,000 SF 20,000-25,000 SF	Near term. Medium term. Long term. Could be higher with anchor tenant.
Office	7,500-10,000 SF 7,500-10,000 SF 7,500-10,000 SF	Near term. Medium term. Long term. Assumes no anchor tenant. Could be higher with anchor tenant such as medical office group.

Source: Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc.

Key planning considerations with regard to demographics and market potential include:

- Wood Dale is an older community overall than its neighbors, with a stable population but a trend toward more, smaller households in the coming decades.
- Significant competition exists from other established locations for large scale and “big box” retailing, including developments west of the Town Center area on Irving Park Road within Wood Dale.
- The Town Center is a more appropriate location for smaller scale convenience and entertainment oriented uses that can benefit from synergies with similar businesses and access to commuters and local employees.
- Accommodate small-scale office uses, primarily for medical offices.
- Consider the needs of local residents, commuters and seniors in particular.
- Consider the potential for fulfilling the market needs of ethnic populations in Wood Dale.
- There is a strong base of employees in business parks to the north; provide an easy way for employees coming from these businesses to get into and out of the Town Center area.
- Coordinated public realm improvements (sidewalks, streetscape, etc.) will help to create community and developer interest in the Town Center area.
- Townhouses will continue to fill an important market niche in Wood Dale.

- Accommodate a growing “empty nester” population with competitively priced condominiums.

The future development potentials identified in the market study were projected for a period of approximately ten years. The actual time frame for redevelopment in the Town Center area will exceed ten years. Based upon changing development variables over time (such as national economic cycles, the timing of the potential roadway realignment, regional factors including the future western access route, future retailing trends and the potential ability to secure an anchor use for the Town Center) the future development potential of the Town Center area may well exceed current near-term market projections. Market trends beyond ten years are very difficult to predict, and as a result the market potential for the area will be subject to ongoing reassessment in the future.

The Scenarios presume that the redevelopment period will exceed ten years, and that the City will both aggressively pursue redevelopment opportunities and public improvements that will boost the area’s image, as discussed in more detail in the *Alternative Redevelopment Scenarios* report (available under separate cover). For these reasons, the amount of redevelopment depicted in both Scenarios exceeds the development potentials identified in the market analysis.

### **Land Use and Physical Features**

A land use inventory of the study area was completed in March 2005. Existing land use is graphically depicted in Figure 1: Existing Land Use on the following page.

Key planning considerations with regard to land use and physical features include:

- Land uses are currently mixed haphazardly along the major corridors of Irving Park Road and Wood Dale Road.
- Land uses consist largely of single-use buildings surrounded by dedicated parking lots, exacerbating traffic congestion and minimizing opportunities for synergies between uses.
- There is no consistency in building scale or design currently in the Town Center area.
- There are no effective physical connections between commercial or public uses and adjacent residential areas.
- A pending mixed use development, combining ground floor retail and upper floor condominiums, has been approved for a site along Irving Park Road opposite Maple and Catalpa Avenues.
- The Town Center area does not currently provide an area to hold significant community events.
- The small open spaces that currently exist are not easily accessible, and lack visual impact. Seating is provided, but the locations are generally inhospitable to pedestrians.
- Streetscape improvements that have recently been installed lack sufficient visual impact.
- The bridge at Irving Park Road over Salt Creek could serve as a gateway feature.

FIGURE 1

- Existing wetlands and floodplain areas are not located within the immediate Town Center area.
- Future connections between the Town Center and Salt Creek, nearby community facilities and Forest Preserve District properties should be explored, as the City continues land acquisition within the floodplain and considers the creation of public open space along Salt Creek.

### **Public Transit Facilities and Services**

The City of Wood Dale is served by Metra Commuter Rail. The station is located southeast of Wood Dale and Irving Park Roads. Metra trains run on the Milwaukee District West Line (between Chicago Union Station in downtown Chicago and Big Timber Road in Elgin), an at-grade railroad that crosses Irving Park Road and Wood Dale Road. As of June 2005, there is no Pace bus service within the Wood Dale Metra Station area. The City of Wood Dale and Addison Township both operate "Dial-a-Ride" para-transit services within the City and to limited destinations outside the City.

According to Metra's Fall 2002 Weekday Boarding/Alighting Counts, there were a total of 551 boardings and 568 alightings at the Wood Dale Station. According to Metra's Fall 1999 Saturday and Sunday counts, there were 98 and 67 boardings at the station, respectively. Based on Metra's Fall 2002 Origin-Destination Survey, 11% of the riders using the Wood Dale Station walk, 71% drive alone, 3% carpool, 13% are dropped off, 1% bike, and 1% take a taxi. Also based on the same survey, 42% of the riders using the station reside in Wood Dale, 26% reside in Addison, 20% reside in Elk Grove Village, 2% reside in Bensenville, and 10% comprise other communities.

In the past, the City has discussed the potential of relocating the Wood Dale Metra Station to a site east of its current location. However, discussions with Metra regarding signal operations at the at-grade crossing at Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads indicate that moving the station any less than 3,000 feet further east would have no measurable impact on "gate-down" time or crossing signal operations. Moving the station and boarding platforms that far to the east would locate the facilities outside the Wood Dale city limits, and would sever any potential visual or functional relationship to the Town Center. For this reason, Town Center Scenarios have been developed with the station remaining in its current location, addressing opportunities to enhance access to the current station site.

Key planning considerations with regard to public transit include:

- Poor pedestrian and vehicular access is provided to the Wood Dale Station (an incomplete sidewalk network, one entrance to the commuter parking lot).
- The existing Metra Station building is not very visible from the surrounding area, and architecturally "bland."
- Commuter amenities at the station and platforms could be enhanced with additional seating areas, enhanced paving and lighting, etc.
- Most commuters are currently driving to the station, exacerbating traffic congestion issues.
- Driving commuters are primarily coming from the north and south, and therefore likely entering the Town Center area via Wood Dale Road. Other potential users of the Town Center will access it from all directions.

- Current daily fee parking spaces at the Metra Station are not fully utilized. Available permit spaces are sold out.
- Future bus service should be accommodated in physical planning for the area, including both local para-transit vehicles and the proposed cross-county connector bus route that would operate on Irving Park Road and connect to the Metra Station.
- Bus and shuttle drop-off areas, along with traditional “kiss-n-ride” areas, should be provided at the Metra Station.
- Transit signal priority (TSP) should be accommodated on Irving Park Road, a proposed future fixed community circulator route.

### **Access, Circulation and Parking**

Key Planning Considerations with regard to access, circulation and parking include:

- The Feasibility Study considers the Town Center to be a stand-alone development that will exist within the existing framework of isolated land uses. The City should consider the concept of a Town Center more broadly, to ensure a potentially more seamless integration of existing and new developments in the area.
- Balance pedestrian and automobile access needs, including the many commuters who arrive by driving.
- There are several sources of traffic within the area: Metra commuters, patrons of commercial businesses and institutions, and significant regional through-traffic. While serving local shopping needs is critical, ensuring visibility of and easy access to the Town Center businesses to passersby will be a critical element of the success of businesses.
- Adequate parking exists in the study area now, and in some cases parking spaces sit empty; greater efficiencies can likely be achieved in the future through shared parking arrangements, while maintaining adequate parking capacity.
- Current commercial parking is provided primarily in dedicated off-street lots with many curb cuts; this arrangement does not support the desired movement pattern in a TOD area of parking once and visiting multiple destinations.
- Consider structured parking as an alternative to meet Town Center parking needs while maximizing land available for redevelopment and maintaining a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Intermodal conflicts currently occur primarily in the immediate vicinity of the Irving Park Road and Wood Dale Road intersection, when the crossing gates are lowered and when pedestrians attempt to cross the roadways both at and away from the main intersection.
- Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians also occur beyond the immediate intersection as pedestrians attempt to cross Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads at other, non-signalized intersections, including numerous children crossing Wood Dale Road north of the Metra MD-W Line to access the water park.
- Overall, the visual consistency of Town Center roadways should be improved, and the “cluttered” effect reduced. Streetscape elements currently must compete with many other distracting features.
- Look for opportunities to create linkages for pedestrian and bicycles to key recreational and institutional destinations outside the study area.

## Planning Opportunities

Figure 2: Planning Opportunities on the following page graphically highlights several key physical attributes of the study area that can serve as “building blocks” of a successful Wood Dale Town Center redevelopment. These positive features, many of which have been discussed at length in previous memoranda, are summarized below. Two of the three potential future roadway alignments (Alternative 2 and Alternative 2A) addressed in this Study are also overlaid over the existing street network for ease of reference (the third potential future alignment being the “no-build” alternative).

Building upon these physical opportunities, while leveraging and capitalizing on available market opportunities, will allow the City to effectively achieve its overall vision for the Wood Dale Town Center.

FIGURE 2

## IV. REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

---

At the community meeting held on March 8, 2006 in conjunction with the Intersection Feasibility Study, the three Scenarios from the *Alternative Redevelopment Scenarios* report were displayed for public comment. Approximately 80 community residents and business owners attended the meeting and reviewed the Scenarios. Based upon those submitting written comments, preferences were roughly evenly divided among the “no-build” scenario, the scenario based upon Alignment “2” and the scenario based upon Alignment “2A.” Comments at the meeting suggested that the community’s major concerns include: the potential for residential displacement, assistance to business owners for relocation or access during construction, project costs versus the overall economic benefit to the City, providing sufficient open space as redevelopment occurs, and the appropriate mix of new commercial and residential development.

Two Redevelopment Scenarios are presented in this section. They represent two alternative realizations of the City’s vision for a Town Center- one if a realignment and grade separation of Irving Park Road is undertaken, and the other if the roadway configuration remains unchanged.

The No Build Scenario, while not resolving the traffic congestion and safety concerns that predicated the ongoing Intersection Feasibility Study, nonetheless provides significant opportunities for redevelopment and aesthetic enhancement of the Wood Dale Station area.

The Preferred Development Scenario represents the City’s ultimate redevelopment vision, and is a combination of Scenarios 2 and 3 from the previous *Alternative Redevelopment Scenarios* report. It presumes the construction of Alignment “2A” along with a significant reconfiguration of the existing section of Irving Park Road between Salt Creek and Wood Dale Road south of the Metra MD-W Line. These two changes would result in significant potential acreage for redevelopment. The Preferred Development Scenario represents the City’s desired redevelopment pattern if both of these changes are implemented in the future. While the exact eventual alignment of Irving Park Road is still unknown, the Preferred Development Scenario should be considered a prototype, individual elements of which can be modified and refined as needed to achieve the City’s vision for the area.

### **The No Build Scenario**

The No Build Scenario identifies future redevelopment, conservation, transportation and urban design enhancement opportunities in the station area based upon the “no build” roadway alternative, in which the current alignments of Irving Park Road and Wood Dale Road remain unchanged. In this alternative, the at-grade railroad crossings of Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads with the Metra MD-W Line would remain as currently configured.

The key features of this Scenario are highlighted below, followed by a brief discussion of the land use, public transit, access and circulation, parking and urban design implications of the Scenario.

## *Overview of Key Scenario Features*

The key features of the No Build Scenario include:

- A Town Center located primarily along the Wood Dale Road frontage north of Irving Park Road and the Metra MD-W Line at-grade crossing, incorporating a public plaza.
- Redevelopment of existing commercial sites along Irving Park Road in close proximity to the Wood Dale Station, to provide more intensive, mixed use opportunities.
- Enhancements to the Wood Dale Station and its immediate surroundings in the current location and the creation of an open space immediately north of the station, to accommodate a pedestrian underpass and future Pace bus drop-off facilities convenient to the Wood Dale Station.
- Select infill redevelopment along the frontage of Irving Park Road further east of the Wood Dale Road intersection, with consolidated access and parking, consistent signage and substantial site landscaping. To accommodate increased commercial parcel depths along the north side of Irving Park Road, it may be worthwhile to consider supporting developer acquisition of adjacent residential properties if appropriate landscape buffers and site access are provided.
- Phasing out existing light industrial uses within the Wood Dale Station area over the long term, providing sites for new transit supportive multi-family residential development.
- Streetscape upgrades along Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads and other key streets, based as appropriate on a “pedestrian-oriented” prototype and an “auto-oriented” prototype.

## *Land Use*

As indicated in [Figure 3: No Build Scenario Land Use Framework](#), the following land uses are represented within the Wood Dale Station area in this Scenario.

Mixed use parcels are indicated in all four quadrants of the Town Center surrounding the Wood Dale Road / Irving Park Road intersection. While it will be difficult to create strong physical connections between these areas, they should each be redeveloped in a visually consistent and pedestrian-friendly manner.

Commercial areas that are more auto-oriented in nature are indicated on Wood Dale Road north of Irving Park Road, and along Irving Park Road. In these areas, selected infill development is anticipated. Opportunities to create cross-connections between parking areas and improved pedestrian access should be leveraged where they arise.

Existing multi-family and single family residential areas remain largely unchanged. Over the long term, opportunities to develop additional multi-family residential along Irving Park Road east of the Wood Dale Station and along Commercial Street west of Wood Dale Road should be pursued. This will provide additional local residents to support Town Center businesses and transit, and help to focus commercial activity within a more concentrated Town Center environment over the long term.

FIGURE 3

Public and institutional uses in the station area are indicated to remain. Community open spaces are created in the northwest quadrant, which will incorporate a major public plaza, and at a smaller scale along Irving Park Road north of the station to accommodate a pedestrian underpass and future Pace bus drop-off facilities.

### ***Public Transit Facilities***

As depicted in Figure 4: No Build Scenario Access and Circulation Framework, the configuration of the Wood Dale Station, boarding platforms and existing commuter parking areas remains unchanged in this Scenario. Aesthetic enhancements to the station building and related facilities are anticipated, to highlight the commuter facility as a key feature of the Town Center and to visually relate the station area to streetscape treatments in adjacent areas.

A pedestrian underpass is indicated under Irving Park Road in the immediate vicinity of the Wood Dale Station, but outside the current boundaries of commuter parking and Metra facility areas, to provide improved access to the station area from residential neighborhoods to the north without impacting existing commuter parking. The Framework also includes suggested Pace bus drop-off facilities along Irving Park Road, located as conveniently to the station as feasible.

### ***Access, Circulation and Parking***

The roadway configuration in this Scenario remains largely unchanged from current conditions, as depicted in Figure 4: No Build Scenario Access and Circulation Framework. Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads receive upgrades as auto-oriented arterial streets; Commercial Street and Division Street are designated as pedestrian-oriented collector streets. Limited access points to areas of new development are indicated, to minimize curb cuts along arterials.

Traffic and circulation improvements in the area can potentially be achieved by the selective closure of local streets to limit access to Irving Park Road from adjacent residential neighborhoods. This can allow for more effective buffering of these neighborhoods from the impacts of future redevelopment along Irving Park Road and can allow for additional parking and open space areas along the commercial corridor.

Off-street parking needs within the Town Center will be accommodated in shared parking lots located to allow for unimpeded pedestrian movement between commercial businesses, and to allow for improved circulation between businesses, the public plaza and the Wood Dale Station in a pedestrian-oriented environment. Opportunities to provide conveniently located additional commuter parking north of the Metra MD-W Line, shared with other uses, should be explored. Outside of the Town Center core, auto-oriented commercial redevelopment should utilize consolidated parking areas and cross-easements to facilitate effective parking lot flow and minimize curb cuts.

FIGURE 4

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be facilitated through the creation of an uninterrupted network of sidewalks, marked crossings at intersections, pedestrian-activated crossing signals in high traffic locations, and designated on-street bicycle lanes throughout the Town Center. Potential future connections to public and recreational facilities outside the Town Center will need to be explored in more detail with participating agencies, as opportunities arise. The potential for an off-street pathway adjacent to the Metra MD-W Line at the rear of properties extending east from Wood Dale Road should be pursued with property owners, to facilitate access to the Wood Dale Station for residents of new housing along Irving Park Road east of the station. This proposed pedestrian pathway will need to be outside of the Metra MD-W Line right-of-way, and a fence must be built to separate the pedestrian pathway from the railroad right-of-way. The Village would need to seek funding for this project; Metra has no funding that might be allocated for this project.

Gateway signage at major entry points and wayfinding signage placed in key locations throughout the Town Center should be visually coordinated, to assist Town Center visitors in locating parking areas and other major destinations.

### *Urban Design*

A conceptual illustration of how redevelopment might occur within the Town Center area is depicted in [Figure 5: No Build Scenario Town Center Concept](#). A public plaza is indicated on the northwest corner of Wood Dale Road and Commercial Street, surrounded by commercial buildings. Additional commercial buildings are anticipated to occur in the northeast quadrant, between Irving Park Road and Commercial Street, including upper-floor office space. Multi-family residential redevelopment is recommended extending west along Commercial Street as existing light industrial uses are phased out. Redevelopment along Irving Park Road in the Town Center area should accommodate commercial businesses in mixed use buildings that include condominiums on the upper floors.

Streetscape treatments and substantial parking lot landscaping are recommended throughout the core of the Town Center, to provide a visually consistent pedestrian environment. This will also serve to visually relate public streets with key internal access routes within new development areas. Architectural design of buildings throughout the Town Center area, whether single story commercial structures or multi-story mixed use and residential structures, should be coordinated through the use of consistent materials and details.

FIGURE 5

***Development Quantities***

The conceptual plan in Figure 5 indicates significant redevelopment of existing commercial areas as mixed use and multi-family residential. Within this core Town Center area, the potential future quantity of new development is summarized in Table 2: No Build Scenario Development Summary below.

<b>TABLE 2: No Build Scenario Development Summary</b>	
<b>Commercial</b>	
New Retail, Service, Entertainment	203,000 sf
New Office	114,000 sf
Total New Commercial	322,000 sf
Existing Commercial displaced	(134,000 sf)
<b>NET NEW Commercial</b>	<b>183,000 sf</b>
<b>Residential</b>	
New Condominiums*	169
New Townhouses	18

NOTE: all square footages and unit counts approximate  
 \* Does not include 120 condominium units already approved as of June 2006

As previously discussed, the market study identified a market demand over approximately the next ten years for about 100,000sf of new commercial development in the Town Center area (70,000sf retail and 30,000sf office) in the absence of a major anchor tenant. This Scenario presumes that at least two anchor tenants can be secured to occupy the new developments in the northwest and northeast quadrants to boost market demand, and that build-out will occur over fifteen to twenty years. For these reasons, approximately 183,000sf of net new commercial development is depicted in Figure 5.

The new residential development depicted would likely be absorbed over a period of approximately fifteen to twenty years, considering the condominium units already approved for development along Irving Park Road east of the Wood Dale Station.

**The Preferred Development Scenario**

The Preferred Development Scenario identifies future redevelopment, conservation, transportation and urban design enhancement opportunities based upon construction of Alignment "2A", in which Irving Park Road would be realigned to curve north and drop under the Metra MD-W Line west of Wood Dale Road, returning to grade west of a new intersection between Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads that would be located north of the current intersection with Commercial Street. The Commercial Street intersection would be eliminated. East of Wood Dale Road, Irving Park Road would continue east and then swing back south, returning to its original alignment at approximately Maple Avenue. The Wood Dale Road crossing of the Metra MD-W Line would remain at grade.

The key features of this Scenario are highlighted below, followed by a brief discussion of the land use, public transit, access and circulation, parking and urban design implications of the Scenario.

### ***Overview of Key Scenario Features***

The key features of the Preferred Development Scenario include:

- A mixed use Town Center between Irving Park Road and the Metra MD-W Line east of Wood Dale Road, incorporating a public plaza.
- Redevelopment of existing commercial sites north of Irving Park Road along Wood Dale Road, to provide auto-oriented commercial opportunities.
- Redevelopment of commercial properties south of the Metra MD-W Line as mixed use, with condominiums above commercial uses. These structures will be oriented toward a new boulevard to the west and Division Street to the east of Wood Dale Road.
- Enhancements to the Wood Dale Station and its immediate surroundings in its current location. Also, the creation of a pedestrian underpass and future Pace bus drop-off facilities convenient to the Wood Dale Station within the Town Center redevelopment, and an additional pedestrian underpass to provide access to the Town Center for eastbound Pace bus passengers and the residential neighborhood to the north.
- Select infill redevelopment along the frontage of Irving Park Road further east of the Wood Dale Road intersection, with consolidated access and parking, consistent signage and substantial site landscaping. To accommodate increased commercial parcel depths along the north side of Irving Park Road, it may be worthwhile to consider supporting developer acquisition of adjacent residential properties if appropriate landscape buffers and site access are provided.
- Phasing out existing light industrial uses within the Wood Dale Station area over the long term, providing sites for new transit supportive multi-family residential development.
- Streetscape upgrades along Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads and other key streets, based as appropriate on a “pedestrian-oriented” prototype and an “auto-oriented” prototype. In this Scenario, the new section of Irving Park Road will function primarily as a limited access highway, with significant landscape buffering.

### ***Land Use***

As indicated in Figure 6: Preferred Development Scenario Land Use Framework, the following land uses are represented within the Wood Dale Station area in this Scenario.

Mixed uses are indicated east of Wood Dale Road between Irving Park Road and the Metra MD-W Line, in an area reorganized to accommodate mixed use development accessed from a network of internal roadways. The area would incorporate a public plaza, and should be redeveloped in a visually consistent and pedestrian-friendly manner. Mixed uses are also indicated south of the Metra MD-W Line both east and west of Wood Dale Road, with the area to the west accessed via a new boulevard.

FIGURE 6

Commercial areas that are more auto-oriented in nature are indicated on both sides of Wood Dale Road north of Irving Park Road. At existing commercial properties further east along Irving Park Road, selected infill redevelopment is anticipated. Opportunities to create cross-connections between parking areas and improved pedestrian access should be leveraged where they arise.

Existing multi-family residential areas remain largely unchanged. Single family residential areas northeast of the Town Center are impacted due to the roadway realignment and the desire to ensure adequate buffering between the new Irving Park Road and adjacent neighborhoods. Over the long term, opportunities to develop additional multi-family residential along Irving Park Road east of the Wood Dale Station should be pursued. Condominiums in a mixed use format should be developed in the core of the Town Center adjacent to the Metra MD-W Line. These new residential developments will provide additional local residents to support Town Center businesses and transit, and help to focus commercial activity within a more concentrated area over the long term.

Public and institutional uses in the Wood Dale Station area are indicated to remain. In order to accommodate the new boulevard in the southwest quadrant, the U.S Post Office is proposed to be relocated to the east side of Wood Dale Road at Division Street. Community open spaces are created in the Town Center, which will incorporate a major public plaza, and along the north side of Irving Park Road to accommodate buffering of adjacent neighborhoods, a pedestrian underpass and future Pace bus drop-off facilities.

### ***Public Transit Facilities***

As depicted in Figure 7: Preferred Development Scenario Access and Circulation Framework, the configuration of the Wood Dale Station, boarding platforms and existing commuter parking areas remains unchanged in this Scenario. Aesthetic enhancements to the station building and related facilities are anticipated, to highlight the Wood Dale Station as a key feature of the Town Center and to visually relate the station area to streetscape treatments in adjacent areas.

Two pedestrian underpasses are indicated, one under Irving Park Road and one under the Metra MD-W Line in the immediate vicinity of the Wood Dale Station. The underpass proposed for under the Metra MD-W Line tracks would be outside the current boundaries of the commuter facility, to provide ready access to the station area from the Town Center without impacting existing commuter parking. The Framework also includes potential Pace bus drop-off facilities within the Town Center and along Irving Park Road, located as conveniently to the Wood Dale Station as feasible. Improved vehicle access could be facilitated by a new four-way signalized intersection between Wood Dale Road and Division Street, if the roadway west of Wood Dale Road can be realigned to the south (see section below).

FIGURE 7

### *Access, Circulation and Parking*

The proposed roadway configuration in this Scenario, as depicted in [Figure 7: Preferred Development Scenario Access and Circulation Framework](#), includes limited access to an internal network of roadways within the Town Center. The realigned Irving Park Road will function in this Scenario as a limited access highway. Wood Dale Road will receive upgrades as an auto-oriented arterial street. The former Irving Park Road and Division Street are designated as pedestrian-oriented collector streets, with a potential realignment of the former Irving Park Road to form a boulevard south of the Metra MD-W Line. This change would allow the new boulevard to serve as a physical buffer between new redevelopment areas and existing residential neighborhoods to the south. A new street will be required to provide access to the existing water park west of Wood Dale Road, north of the Town Center.

Traffic and circulation improvements in the area can potentially be achieved by the selective closure of local streets to limit access to Irving Park Road from adjacent residential neighborhoods. This can allow for more effective buffering of these neighborhoods from the impacts of future redevelopment along Irving Park Road and can allow for additional parking and open space areas along the commercial corridor.

Off-street parking needs within the Town Center will be accommodated in shared parking areas located to allow for unimpeded pedestrian movement between commercial businesses, and to allow for circulation between businesses, the public plaza and the Wood Dale Station in a pedestrian-oriented environment. Opportunities to provide conveniently located additional commuter parking north of the Metra MD-W Line, shared with other uses, should be explored. Outside of the Town Center core, auto-oriented commercial redevelopment should utilize consolidated parking areas and cross-access easements to facilitate effective parking lot flow and minimize curb cuts.

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be facilitated through the creation of an uninterrupted network of sidewalks, marked crossings at intersections, pedestrian-activated crossing signals in high traffic locations, and designated on-street bicycle lanes throughout the Town Center. Potential future connections to public and recreational facilities outside the Town Center will need to be explored in more detail with participating agencies, as opportunities arise. The potential for an off-street pathway adjacent to the Metra MD-W Line at the rear of properties extending east from Wood Dale Road should be pursued with property owners, to facilitate access to the Wood Dale Station for residents of new housing along Irving Park Road east of the station. This proposed pedestrian pathway will need to be outside of the Metra MD-W Line right-of-way, and a fence must be built to separate the pedestrian pathway from the railroad right-of-way. The Village would need to seek funding for this project; Metra has no funding that might be allocated for this project.

Gateway signage at major entry points and wayfinding signage placed in key locations throughout the Town Center should be visually coordinated, to assist Town Center visitors in locating parking areas and other major destinations.

**Urban Design**

A conceptual illustration of how redevelopment might occur within the Town Center area is depicted in Figure 8: Preferred Development Scenario Town Center Concept. A public plaza is indicated in a central location in the Town Center, surrounded by mixed use buildings and visible from Irving Park Road. Mixed use buildings hold the street edges along Irving Park and Wood Dale Roads, and at internal Town Center roadways. Additional commercial buildings are anticipated to occur in the northwest quadrant. An anchor office tenant is anticipated for the upper stories of a mixed use building at the key southeast corner of Wood Dale and Irving Park Roads. Mixed use development is indicated south of the Metra MD-W Line, with storefront commercial along the new boulevard and Division Street, convenient to the Wood Dale Station and commuter parking lots.

Streetscape treatments and substantial parking lot landscaping are recommended throughout the core of the Town Center and north along Wood Dale Road, to provide a visually consistent environment. This will also serve to visually relate public streets with key internal access routes within new development areas. Architectural design of buildings throughout the Town Center area, whether single story commercial structures or multi-story mixed use and residential structures, should be coordinated through the use of consistent materials and details.

**Development Quantities**

The conceptual plan in Figure 8 indicates significant redevelopment of existing commercial and residential areas as mixed use, commercial and multi-family residential. Within this core Town Center area, the potential future quantity of new development is summarized in Table 3: Preferred Development Scenario Development Summary below.

<b>TABLE 3: Preferred Development Scenario Development Summary</b>	
<b>Commercial</b>	
New Retail, Service, Entertainment	397,000 sf
New Office	130,000 sf
Total New Commercial	527,000 sf
Existing Commercial displaced	(249,000 sf)
<b>NET NEW Commercial</b>	<b>278,000 sf</b>
<b>Residential</b>	
New Condominiums*	730
New Townhouses	45

NOTE: all square footages and unit counts approximate  
 \* Does not include 120 condominium units already approved as of June 2006

FIGURE 8

As previously discussed, the market study identified a market demand over approximately the next ten years for about 100,000sf of new commercial development in the Town Center area (70,000sf retail and 30,000sf office) in the absence of a major anchor tenant. This Scenario presumes that two or three anchor tenants can be secured to occupy the new Town Center development to “boost” market demand, and that build-out will occur over fifteen to twenty years. For these reasons, approximately 278,000sf of net new commercial development is depicted in Figure 8.

The new residential development depicted could potentially require more than twenty years to be fully absorbed by the market, considering the condominium units already approved for development along Irving Park Road east of the Wood Dale Station and the need to phase redevelopment as businesses are relocated from south of the Metra MD-W Line.

## V. IMPLEMENTATION

---

The Vision for Wood Dale Town Center, as embodied in the Preferred Development Scenario, will be realized through the implementation of a wide variety of inter-related actions over several years, and will be able to move forward aggressively after the determination of a future alignment for Irving Park Road.

It is important to note that while some public improvement efforts and limited redevelopment can potentially occur in advance of roadway construction, the uncertainty and inconvenience caused by the potential for an extended roadway construction period will significantly reduce developer and business interest in the area until an alignment and construction timeline have been established. Regardless of the eventual roadway alignment, the City will need to launch a proactive and coordinated marketing campaign to establish a Town Center image, and communicate Town Center opportunities and advantages to the development and business community.

The implementation strategy outlined here focuses on general actions that the City will need to undertake to set the stage for redevelopment regardless of the chosen roadway alignment, and consists of three basic elements:

1. Establishment of the **administrative structure** needed to attract both public and private investment and manage redevelopment in the City's interest;
2. Adoption of **appropriate development regulation amendments** to facilitate redevelopment of a consistent and high quality character that contributes to a pedestrian-friendly environment; and
3. Establishment of the partnerships necessary to leverage **funding resources** and **incentive programs** for the benefit of the City.

These three basic elements are addressed in the three sections that follow: Administrative Initiatives, Development Regulations, and Funding and Incentives. This Chapter then concludes with a discussion of more specific considerations for redevelopment once a roadway alignment determination has been made.

### Administrative Initiatives

During the time period before Town Center redevelopment can begin in earnest, while the eventual roadway configuration is being determined and subsequently designed, the City can undertake several key initiatives to prepare for administration of a significant redevelopment and public improvement program. Before outlining these initiatives, it is important to note that the City will take on varying roles and engage in many partnerships to bring the Town Center to fruition.

### *Roles, Responsibilities and Partnerships*

Town Center redevelopment will require varying degrees of involvement and/or direct action by the City in order to facilitate implementation. The City can act in a variety of roles, as appropriate, in order to move forward. These varying levels of involvement are described below:

- **Enacting and Enforcing Policies and Codes:** The City will need to amend the zoning text and map in order to align them more closely with the intent of the Study. In addition, ongoing enforcement of both amended and existing codes and regulations will be critical to the success of the Town Center.
- **Implementing Public Improvements:** The City should undertake several important physical enhancement projects within the Town Center area in the coming years, as described elsewhere in this report. These projects will be undertaken by the City alone or in partnership with other public agencies, as appropriate.
- **Providing Development Incentives:** The City can spur the implementation of other key aspects of the Town Center through the offering of appropriate development incentives to the private sector, to effect positive change on private properties within the area.
- **Acting as a Development Partner:** The City will need to consider taking on a more direct and active role in certain high priority development projects described in the Study, in order to overcome development hurdles. For example, the City may need to take direct ownership of additional key parcels within the study area, conduct environmental studies and assist with efforts to procure development permits for certain parcels, undertake environmental remediation or other site preparation work, provide publicly funded parking, and/or maintain ownership of key properties to be leased to developers in order to make development projects financially feasible and shorten the overall time frame for development.

### *Potential Partners*

To effectively pursue implementation of the recommendations in this Study, the City of Wood Dale will need to solicit the involvement of various public and private sector partners. Some of these may include the following:

- The Regional Transportation Authority Service Boards, **Metra and Pace**, who can assist with the design, coordination and implementation of transit facility service, and MD-W Line right-of-way improvements.
- **Other Public Agencies**, potentially to include the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Northwest Suburban Mass Transit District and others who can potentially assist with various aspects of the Town Center implementation program.
- **Other City Departments**, possibly including the Public Works and the **Park District**, who can cooperate in the improvement of open spaces and recreational amenities.
- The **Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce**, local businesses and local property owners, who can assist with marketing and business recruitment, and can undertake improvements to their own Town Center area properties.
- **Local Financial Institutions**, who may be interested in providing financing assistance for the implementation of private sector aspects of the Study.

- **Local Civic and Social Service Organizations, Institutions and Investors**, who can assist in various ways with the implementation of community facility and service improvements.
- **Technical Assistance Providers**, including the Center for Neighborhood Technology (provides assistance in securing business franchises), the Delta Institute (provides assistance and funding for brownfield remediation, should any contamination be discovered at redevelopment sites), the Urban Land Institute (ULI), Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) (provide redevelopment planning assistance).
- **Builders and Developers**, who will be motivated by the existing and future market potential of the area to get involved in implementing aspects of the Study.
- The **Citizens of Wood Dale**, who can get involved in myriad ways with various Study initiatives, and can patronize and support Town Center businesses and utilize Town Center community resources whenever possible.

### *Administrative Tasks*

The City should immediately undertake several administrative tasks to set the stage for successful implementation of Study recommendations, whether the Preferred Development or No Build Scenario is pursued.

1. Establish an **Economic Development Commission** to proactively undertake implementation of Town Center initiatives, including the issuance of RFPs, review of major project proposals for compliance with City priorities, and offering guidance to the City Council on decisions regarding land acquisition, developer selection, and the commitment of City resources and incentives. The Economic Development Commission will represent the City's interests in the development process, and aid in public outreach and education on Town Center implementation. The Commission will serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, and should be comprised of key elected and appointed City officials, key City staff, and representatives of local civic organizations and the Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce.
2. Designate a **City staff position** to focus primarily on long-term planning and economic development initiatives, including implementation of the Town Center. This person can serve as the City's liaison and staff support for the Economic Development Commission, and ensure clear and consistent communication both among partner agencies and potential investors and developers regarding the status of Town Center initiatives. Other responsibilities for this staff position could include:
  - Providing assistance to property owners and developers to ensure that projects meet the City's standards and expectations.
  - Recommending key properties to be acquired or property owner agreements, as appropriate, to the City Council.
  - Issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) related to high priority development projects.
  - Marketing available development incentives (such as TIF, sales tax rebates and relocation assistance) to the development and business community, with technical assistance to aid in their utilization. These efforts should be undertaken in conjunction with the Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce.

3. Establish a **clear and expedited development review process** for Town Center projects, incorporating concurrence with the Land Use Framework and Study recommendations as conditions of project approval. The City should prepare appropriate informational materials for distribution to the development and investment community highlighting the City's expectations and procedures to facilitate this process.
4. Investigate the alternatives for establishing a **business relocation assistance program** that encompasses the Town Center area, to allow for effective leveraging of public funds to maintain local businesses in the area, or to allow them to relocate locally (either temporarily and permanently) as a result of roadway construction.
5. Establish a **Town Center marketing entity** who would work closely with City staff, the Economic Development Commission and the Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce. The focus of activities will be to ensure that business community leadership is fully apprised of Town Center redevelopment progress and to advocate externally for business investment in the Town Center. Marketing efforts could include: producing informational maps and brochures about the area, providing information on the City's website, coordinating advertising and promotional events, and coordinating community festivals and other events in the Town Center.
6. Encourage appearance improvements to existing commercial properties in the Town Center area by establishing a **Facade Improvement Program** offering grants and low-interest financing to property and business owners, in cooperation with a local financial institution. Improvements should be made to off-street parking and loading areas in addition to building exteriors. Depending upon the timing and phasing of roadway construction, the City should consider financially supporting cost-effective interim improvements to properties that may later be removed, to avoid significant disinvestment and maintain a positive community image in the years prior to and during roadway construction.

## Development Regulations

Implementation of the Town Center is likely to require a combination of text amendments and the rezoning of key properties, building upon the City's recent updates to the sign ordinance. Options for rezoning include a new "mixed use" district for the Town Center area, or an overlay district to address key Town Center issues while keeping the underlying zoning in place. Within specific existing districts and other sections of the code, considerations when developing amendments include the following:

### *B-1 and B-2*

- Drive-in businesses are inappropriate for a pedestrian-friendly Town Center
- Front yard setbacks are inappropriate for a pedestrian-friendly Town Center
- Greater height than 3 stories are appropriate for a high-density Town Center
- FAR and lot coverage requirements will need adjustment to accommodate higher densities
- Allowable uses could include residential, or a mixed use district could be created

### *B-3*

- Auto-related uses are generally inappropriate for a pedestrian-friendly Town Center

### *PUD*

- Currently allows for up to 16 stories, but has a 2 acre minimum size
- Potentially increase allowable density to more than 10% above the underlying district
- Reduce the minimum lot size and clarify that PUD will apply to any proposal in the Town Center

### *Off-Street Parking and Loading*

- Precludes shared use parking that can result in more efficient land utilization
- Front yard parking is inappropriate for a pedestrian-friendly Town Center
- Lower parking standards for residential and commercial uses may be more appropriate within the Town Center
- Strengthen requirements for landscaping at the perimeter and interior of parking lots

### *Subdivision Regulations*

- Within a Town Center, discontinuous streets may inhibit vehicle and pedestrian accessibility and discourage use of the area
- Sidewalks should be mandatory, at least within a 1/2-mile of the train station, to promote pedestrian accessibility
- Since a traditional and “walkable” commercial district is typically no longer than 1000-1250 feet in length, a smaller block size should be considered for the Town Center area
- Parkways and street trees should be required where they can be accommodated, to promote more landscaped area

The Plan Commission should spearhead amendments to the text and map of the zoning ordinance as needed to align City regulations more closely with the intent of the Study as they impact the Town Center. At a minimum, actions should include the following:

1. Consider the creation of an **“overlay” district** covering the Town Center, creating a mechanism to allow greater scrutiny of proposed projects within the area for compliance with the intent of the Study.
2. Review **allowable densities and height** in the Town Center area, to ensure transit-supportive and appropriately scaled development. Alternatively, create new zoning districts to accomplish the same, including the creation of a new “Town Center Business District.”
3. Review and amend **setbacks and other bulk requirements** for application in the Town Center to more closely reflect the desired pedestrian-friendly character within the Wood Dale Station area.
4. Review and amend **off-street parking requirements** within the Wood Dale Station area to facilitate appropriately located and scaled off-street parking lots behind and/or between buildings, and to permit shared parking.

5. Review the mix of **permitted and conditional uses** within applicable zoning districts to ensure a compatible mix of future land uses, including those uses recommended as part of the Study.

### **Funding Sources and Incentives**

Potential funding sources for the implementation of Town Center initiatives can be considered as falling into three general categories: resources from within the City, federal and state resources, and private resources. While programs and funding availability at the state and federal level will change over time, those most potentially appropriate to Wood Dale are cited below to provide a basis for initiating implementation efforts. Of course, the Study assumes that the City will continually remain abreast of funding availability and will leverage all available resources.

#### ***City Resources***

A variety of City funding source options may be available to assist in Town Center implementation. These include long-term multi-year programs and annual or single purpose resources. In developing more refined funding strategies for plan implementation, it will be important to consider the longevity of the funding source in relation to implementation needs. While both will be important in implementation, their effectiveness must match the finance requirements of implementation activities.

For example, the use of a one-time, single purpose grant for the installation of sidewalks will serve a key purpose. However, in the case of public finance support for a redevelopment project, the City will need to identify and dedicate substantial multi-year resources capable of supporting debt service. The one-time grant would not qualify for this purpose.

In general, annual financial resources could be applied to almost any project in the community. However, for redevelopment initiatives which rely on public-private finance relationships, projects will require multi-year funding resources. Thus, many recommended activities in the Study will benefit most from long-term funding sources.

Multi-year funding sources are identified below. The reader should be aware that funding programs frequently change, especially those which can be characterized as one-time, single purpose funds. The City will need to stay abreast of changes in funding programs over the planning period.

- **General Fund Sources:** Communities have a number of general sources of revenue that can be applied to any corporate purpose that will benefit the community as a whole. The largest of these is normally the general-purpose property tax, which primarily funds the City's General Revenue Fund. Others can include state income tax rebates, motor fuel tax funds, public utility taxes, hotel/motel taxes, various fees, fines and other receipts. Municipal bonds may also be considered for special projects during various phases of the implementation of the Town Center that may require more long-term financing. Another type of bond that could be considered for targeted projects is the special assessment bond. These bonds are issued to finance improvements that are to be paid for by special assessments against benefited properties. Bond obligations are payable only from the special assessment receipts, are not backed by general taxes, and as such usually carry higher interest rates.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** Tax increment financing (TIF) is a mechanism used to carry out revitalization and redevelopment activities on a local basis in a defined area that meets State eligibility requirements. TIF allows a community to capture the increase in local property taxes that results from a redevelopment project in order to pay for the public costs involved in the project. Wood Dale has investigated TIF Districts as an alternative for the Town Center area. Pending a decision on an eventual roadway alignment, a TIF District encompassing most or all of the projected redevelopment area should be pursued, to maximize flexibility in the future.
  
- **Business Improvement District (BID):** Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are authorized by Division 74.3 of the Municipal Code of the State of Illinois. A community may designate an area as a BID after a public hearing. The benefits of a BID could include: 1) providing the ability to control and dispose of property; 2) securing financing for improvements; and 3) monitoring and reviewing development and redevelopment proposals. In carrying out business district development or redevelopment plan recommendations, a municipality is given the statutory authority to:
  - Approve all development and redevelopment proposals.
  - Exercise the use of eminent domain for the acquisition of real and personal property for the purpose of a development or redevelopment project, as may be allowed under state statutes.
  - Acquire, manage, convey or otherwise dispose of real and personal property acquired pursuant to the provisions of a development or redevelopment plan.
  - Apply for and accept capital grants and loans from the federal government, or any instrumentality of the federal government, for business district development and redevelopment.
  - Borrow funds as it may be deemed necessary for the purpose of business district development and redevelopment, and in this connection issue such obligation or revenue bonds as it shall be deemed necessary, subject to applicable statutory limitations.
  - Enter into contracts with any public or private agency or person.
  - Sell, lease, trade or improve such real property as may be acquired in connection with business district development and redevelopment plans.
  - Expend such public funds as may be necessary for the planning, execution and implementation of the business district plans.
  - Establish by ordinance or resolution procedures for the planning, execution and implementation of business district plans.
  - Create a Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission to act as agent for the City for the purposes of business district development and redevelopment.
  
- **Special Service Area (SSA):** A SSA program is a finance tool that utilizes a real estate property tax levy to fund special services in a targeted area where property owners voluntarily tax themselves for these services. SSA services and programs are in addition to, and go beyond, the normal programs and services provided by the community. Typically, commercial and industrial areas are subject to an SSA tax, although it can be extended to residential properties. SSA services and improvements are funded entirely through the tax revenues generated by the special service tax. The revenue is derived from a computation using the Equalized

Assessed Valuation (EAV) of the taxable parcels within the special service area boundaries.

Utilizing multi-year funding mechanisms can provide a community the ability to exercise greater oversight over the redevelopment process, and to work proactively to control potential development impacts.

### ***Federal and State Resources***

Grants and loans can be secured from a variety of federal and state sources to aid in both public sector enhancement projects and to reduce certain private sector development costs. In some cases, public agencies can secure and administer these resources on the City's behalf for use in local projects. In other cases, the City can secure funds and administer them independently or in conjunction with a public agency. Annual funding cycles are used to allocate federal funds, often to state and regional agencies who then review applications for funding from local communities. Some funding, however, will be available through direct application to federal agencies.

For communities who can demonstrate eligibility based on income data, federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available for a variety of physical upgrades and other initiatives. Additionally, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) administers programs to assist with financing public infrastructure projects.

Based on the types of improvements recommended for the Town Center, the funding sources that will most likely be applicable to Wood Dale are programs of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) authorizing Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009. These programs include the ITEP, CMAQ and STP Programs. Similar to the programs of its predecessor Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), SAFETEA-LU programs will be administered through various regional and state agencies and are supported by federal revenues. While the details of project eligibility vary from program to program, they all generally require that a project have a local sponsor (the City of Wood Dale), and some evidence of local support of the project. Brief descriptions of the component programs of SAFETEA-LU are described below.

- **Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)**:-This funding source is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation and is a set-aside fund from SAFETEA-LU. Among the projects that are eligible for this competitive funding source include bicycle/pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, landscaping, historic preservation and projects that control or remove outdoor advertising. Federal reimbursement is available for up to 50 percent of the cost of right-of-way and easement acquisition and 80 percent of the cost for preliminary engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering and construction costs.
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**- The CMAQ program is also part of SAFETEA-LU and focuses on projects that provide solutions to regional congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types include transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle/pedestrian projects and projects that result in emissions reductions. These projects are also

federally funded at 80 percent of project costs. The competitive program is administered through the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS). Transit improvements and commuter parking lot projects typically score higher when supported by Metra. Similarly, bicycle and pedestrian projects which are coordinated with neighboring jurisdictions are also rated highly. In most cases, grants are not available to assist in financing the replacement of existing commuter parking spaces or other improvements that were originally federally funded, should they be displaced for redevelopment purposes.

- **Surface Transportation Program (STP)**- These funds are allocated to coordinating regional councils to be used for all roadway and roadway related items. Projects in this funding category must have a local sponsor and are selected based, among other factors, on a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project among other factors. STP funds are allocated among the following programs: demonstration projects; enhancement; hazard elimination; and urban funds.

Additional funding sources may be available for use on commuter parking and commuter station improvement projects. These funds could include CMAQ funds, but may also come from other sources. The following should be noted with regard to funding for the redevelopment of commuter parking and transit-related facilities:

- Metra only participates in building new commuter parking spaces where demand warrants and funding is available. Metra has not currently projected a need for additional parking spaces by 2030 at the Wood Dale Station.
- While Metra has often provided funding for *additional new* spaces, most grant dollars, including Metra's, are not available for financing the replacement of commuter spaces that are displaced from designated and/or historical commuter parking facilities.
- While Metra has participated in funding *additional new* commuter spaces within parking structures, the level of participation has generally equated to the cost of building an equivalent number of surface spaces. Grant dollars for the construction of structured parking have been very limited to date.
- Throughout each step of the redevelopment process, the amount of Metra commuter parking at the Wood Dale Station must, at a minimum, remain at its current level, resulting in *no net loss* of commuter parking during any time period.
- Consideration should be given to involving multiple partners (public and private) in order to share the spaces and the costs of proposed new parking improvements and related infrastructure. Commuter parking fees within both existing and new parking areas should remain comparable and competitive with commuter parking fees within the Metra system over time.
- Metra encourages the exploration of shared parking opportunities where the commuter parking spaces can be used by others in the evenings and on weekends.
- The Metra MD-W Line cannot move in any way as part of the potential Wood Dale and Irving Park Road intersection improvements, and Metra has no funding that might be allocated for this project.
- The City will need to obtain funding for the proposed one or two underpasses; Metra has no funding that might be allocated for these projects. In addition, the City will need to discuss and coordinate any proposed underpasses with Metra's Engineering Department and obtain approval for them due to the potential presence of buried cables, etc.

- The City will need to seek their own funding for any proposed station or related facility aesthetic improvements, and for any proposed transit amenities. Metra does not currently have funding for these types of improvements. The City will need to discuss these proposed improvements with Metra, as the City does not own the station. The City will also need to discuss any proposed MD-W Line right-of-way improvements with Metra; Metra does not have funding for these types of improvements.

A variety of federal and state funding sources are available for real estate development projects, including grants, loans, bonds and tax credits. These can be used to lower development costs for a municipality directly involved in a project, or for a developer who can demonstrate community support for a project. These funds can be secured from agencies such as the Illinois Development Finance Authority and the Illinois Housing Development Authority, among others.

CDBG funds, mentioned previously, can also be used for projects related to real estate and economic development in eligible areas. In addition, programs are available through the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to alleviate costs for environmental remediation and increased energy efficiency.

Assistance with economic development, including direct support to new businesses through low-interest financing and technical and workforce training assistance, is available through DCEO and the U.S Small Business Administration (SBA), among others.

### ***Private Resources***

Private sources of funding can often be secured for specific projects or initiatives, in particular those with a cultural, environmental or beautification emphasis. These sources could include grants or loans from philanthropic organizations, foundations or private investors, or loans from local financial institutions.

The City should reach out to local community organizations and institutions to partner on applications for targeted funding to support various specific initiatives, or to take the lead in securing funding with demonstrated City support. Examples of specific projects include gateway and other beautification projects in the Town Center, or the establishment of an annual festival or other community event focused on the Town Center.

For certain projects, the City might consider soliciting endowments and gifts to help fund and support implementation activities. These activities should be undertaken only if the City Council has first set policy regarding the manner in which these activities would be executed.

## Redevelopment Considerations

Implementation is a complex process, influenced by many variables - financial resources, community participation, property owner involvement, and intergovernmental relationships, to name a few. The uncertainty surrounding the future alignment of Irving Park Road and the potential timeline for construction should a realignment proceed are already leading to increased vacancies and deferred maintenance on the part of property owners in the Town Center area, as they grapple with the potential impact of roadway work on their properties and business operations. This uncertainty will only be exacerbated in the future until an alignment is decided upon and a concrete timeline emerges. It is therefore especially important that the City maintain open communication with potentially impacted property owners and residents, and seek to proactively address their concerns.

This final section regarding implementation identifies the unique factors facing the City of Wood Dale with regard to Town Center redevelopment, and the considerations that relate to each of the Scenarios. Understanding these unique considerations will allow the City to proactively address and overcome them to ensure a successful and high quality redevelopment regardless of the eventual roadway alignment within the Town Center. The section concludes with general categories of implementation actions. The relative timing and scope of these actions will be determined by the eventual decision on a roadway alignment.

### *General Considerations*

Considerations inherent in the implementation of either the No Build or the Preferred Development Scenario will include the following:

- Capitalize on the potential impact of the creation of a **western access route** to O'Hare International Airport via an extension of the Elgin-O'Hare expressway along the Thorndale Road corridor. The configuration and regional market impact of the new route have yet to be determined, but in any event it would directly impact the City of Wood Dale. The land use and economic development implications of the new route are currently being studied by DuPage County through their ongoing *DuPage County West O'Hare Corridor Economic Development Study*. Staying abreast of, and actively participating in, the planning for this significant new regional corridor will allow the City to leverage impacts to benefit the City overall, and the Town Center area in particular.
- Focus **appropriate development and business opportunities** in the Town Center - those that can benefit from co-location and access to commuters. More auto-oriented development will be more appropriately located in other areas of the City.
- Establish an appropriate **phasing strategy** to both minimize disruption to existing businesses and facilitate business relocation in an effective manner whether roadway realignment or upgrading of the existing alignment is undertaken.
- Accommodate **residential and/or office development** in early phases in order to generate additional commercial demand in later phases, including the potential to accommodate redevelopment in selected locations in advance of roadway construction, in areas where reasonable access can be maintained throughout the construction period.
- Previously approved **condominium units** on Irving Park Road may dampen market interest in developing additional multi-family residential in the near term, but

residential development will be key to spurring retail development interest in the area.

- In later years, it may become apparent that the market for **townhouses** is stronger than the market for condominiums in the Town Center area. In this situation, redevelopment areas at the perimeter of the Town Center could be redeveloped with townhouses in lieu of portions of the mixed use and commercial areas indicated.
- Create a **strong connection** between the future Town Center and the Wood Dale Station. While the Preferred Development Scenario does not increase the visibility of the Wood Dale Station from Irving Park Road, it provides an opportunity to locate new commercial uses and shared parking in close proximity to the Wood Dale Station on the north side of the tracks.
- Solutions for **regional detention** adequate to serve predicted future redevelopment should be strategically planned and accommodated, so that these open space areas can serve as visual and functional amenities and storm water control can be coordinated on an area-wide basis.

### ***No Build Scenario Considerations***

Preliminary **high priority projects** in this Scenario include:

1. A public plaza and surrounding retail uses in the northwest quadrant, and
2. A mixed-use commercial and office development in the northeast quadrant.

These projects will allow for initial commercial development to occur with minimal displacement of existing businesses, and allow for relocation of key existing businesses from south of the Metra MD-W Line before redevelopment occurs in other areas.

Key **implementation issues** may include:

1. Continuing challenges related to difficulty in accessing key sites from Irving Park Road, despite their visibility.
2. Facilitating the potential need to make development parcels east of Wood Dale Road along Irving Park Road deeper.
3. Facilitating a case-by-case review of potential street closures in a timely and coordinated manner.

### ***Preferred Development Scenario Considerations***

Preliminary **high priority projects** in this Scenario include:

1. A commercial development in the northwest quadrant, to provide an area for relocation of existing businesses,
2. An “anchor” mixed-use development immediately east of Wood Dale Road in the new Town Center, some of which could potentially be developed in advance of the roadway realignment, and
3. A public plaza and surrounding mixed-use structures in the northeast quadrant.

These projects will allow for initial commercial development to occur with minimal displacement of existing businesses, and allow for relocation of key existing businesses from south of the Metra MD-W Line before redevelopment occurs in other areas.

Key **implementation issues** may include:

1. The need to relocate existing businesses and residents within the new Town Center area, in coordination with roadway realignment work.
2. The loss of visibility for businesses located along the former Irving Park Road west of Wood Dale Road and in the Depot Shopping Center, resulting in a need to proactively address relocation issues.
3. The feasibility of relocating the U.S. Post Office will need to be determined before the alignment of the new boulevard is determined. While an intersection with Division Street would be ideal, the new boulevard could potentially intersect with Wood Dale Road farther north, or remain in the current alignment of Irving Park Road.
4. Facilitating the potential need to make development parcels east of Wood Dale Road along Irving Park Road deeper.
5. Facilitating a case-by-case review of potential street closures in a timely and coordinated manner.
6. Traffic signal coordination at Wood Dale Road will need to be carefully considered, to ensure effective coordination of the at-grade rail crossing at the MD-W Line and the new intersection with Irving Park Road.

### ***Implementation Actions***

Actions described below are related to the Town Center image, land use and redevelopment, access, circulation, parking and urban design.

#### Town Center Image Enhancements

The Wood Dale Chamber of Commerce, the Park District and other entities will be key partners for these initiatives. Some targeted private funding may be secured for these initiatives, to supplement government sources of support. These actions will help to solidify the Town Center's image within the community and beyond.

1. Undertake focused marketing efforts, to potentially include: informational maps and brochures about Town Center businesses and amenities; information on the City's website, coordinated advertising and promotional events such as sidewalk sales; and the recurring use of the term "Town Center" in describing the area.
2. Organize community-wide events to occur within the Town Center area, so that Wood Dale residents and others begin to view it as the "heart" of the community.
3. Encourage businesses to coordinate hours of operation and remain open later to capture potential commuter business.
4. Focus City efforts on the general maintenance and upkeep of public areas in the Town Center. It will likely be necessary for the City to periodically supplement the efforts of Metra to maintain a standard of quality and appearance of the MD-W Line right-of-way. The City will need to discuss any proposed improvements to the MD-W Line right-of-way with Metra's Engineering Department.
5. At areas that are left vacant for a period of time in anticipation of pending roadway construction, ensure that properties are well-maintained. Ideally, parcels should be

cleared, fenced and sodded. Regular mowing, trimming and litter removal will be necessary to avoid having these areas negatively impact surrounding businesses.

### Land Use and Redevelopment

Funding for these initiatives will consist largely of providing support as needed to developers and businesses who are seeking financing and technical assistance available directly to them. TIF incentives and pre-development assistance with City-secured funds will also be necessary, as will encouraging the use of available state and federal business development and housing assistance programs.

1. Encourage and facilitate the establishment of additional commercial businesses within the Town Center Station Area. The quantity of small-scale commercial uses will be impacted by whether or not one or more larger-scale uses can be secured to “anchor” new developments.
  - Business types to encourage in the area might include: restaurants (sit-down and carry-out) and other food stores including ethnic and specialty foods; miscellaneous retail stores such as card and gift shops, hobby stores, jewelers, florists and beauty supply; small apparel stores; and other convenience uses that benefit from commuter traffic such as dry cleaners.
  - Other types of uses that can encourage “foot traffic” within the TOD core area include: medical and dental offices, professional office (such as real estate and insurance agents) and service businesses (such as a copy shop).
  - Relocate existing City businesses that can benefit from co-location and access to commuters into the Town Center as it redevelops.
  - Relocate auto-oriented businesses to contiguous areas east and west along Irving Park Road, or encourage relocation to other sites within Wood Dale over the longer term.
2. Facilitate and encourage new housing in the Town Center area.
  - Support the development of multi-family housing of various types within the area (townhomes and condominiums), to encourage an increased residential population near and within the Town Center.
  - Condominiums in the area should be in the form of mixed-use structures with commercial uses on the ground floor in the core of the Town Center area, or in mid-rise or townhouse structures at the periphery of the area. In all areas, establishing strong pedestrian connections between residential uses and commercial uses and the Wood Dale Station area will be very important.
  - Require the creation of shared green spaces in conjunction with new residential developments.
3. Consider the placement of a public, quasi-public or entertainment facility on a key Town Center parcel to act as an “anchor” activity generator. Ideas suggested by the community include a theater, bowling alley / family entertainment center, or a skate park.
4. Facilitate redevelopment of incompatible industrial uses in the Town Center area, per the Land Use Framework.

## Access, Circulation and Parking

Federal and State funding secured with the assistance of public agency partners will be critical for the implementation of these actions, as will close coordination with regional and state agencies and impacted property owners. These actions will improve mobility within the area as the level of activity increases due to new development.

1. Implement the following improvements related to pedestrian access and safety:
  - Create a complete pedestrian circulation network, including sidewalks and crosswalks, throughout the Town Center area.
  - Install pedestrian-activated crosswalk signals at all signalized intersections in the Town Center.
  - Create attractive pedestrian linkages to adjacent neighborhoods and natural areas from the Town Center.
2. Implement the following improvements related to traffic access and flow:
  - Implement an internal roadway system as the northeast quadrant of the Town Center area redevelops, per the Preferred Development Scenario, to provide connections to new development areas from limited access points on Irving Park Road, and allowing for pedestrian-friendly traffic movement patterns throughout the area.
  - Implement traffic signal prioritization (TSP) technology at signalized intersections for Pace buses as service is expanded.
  - Create on-street bike routes, with dedicated lanes if feasible, leading into the Town Center and to the Metra Station from surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Pursue an increase in City-wide Pace bus service or a local trolley service, to better connect outlying neighborhoods with the Town Center and Wood Dale Station, especially during peak hour periods and community events. During all phases of redevelopment, it will be important to maintain Pace access to the immediate station area.
4. Implement Town Center parking improvements. Create new parking lots for shoppers, commuters and residents, per the Preferred Development Scenario. Pursue shared parking arrangements between Metra, the City and commercial property owners to allow access to designated commuter parking spaces in the evenings and on weekends.

## Urban Design

The following actions will continue the aesthetic improvements of the larger area, building upon the improvements completed initially in the most visible locations. Partnerships with IDOT, Metra, Pace and others will be necessary to pursue the actions outlined below. Federal and state funding, secured with the assistance of the City's partner agencies, will be an important component of funding for these initiatives, along with TIF and general City revenues.

1. Enhance the Wood Dale Station area. Improvements could potentially include: new platform shelters, bus shelters, decorative lighting, information kiosk(s), benches, refuse receptacles, and decorative fences and landscaping along the railroad right-of-way. These improvements will need to be discussed with Metra. The City will

need to seek their own funding for any proposed station or related facility aesthetic improvements; Metra does not currently have funding for these types of improvements. The City will also need to discuss any MD-W Line right-of-way improvements with Metra; Metra does not have funding for these types of improvements.

2. Implement the following improvements related to streetscape and Town Center signage:
  - Create a unified streetscape image at both primary and secondary roadways within the Town Center through the use of consistent and recurring visual elements. Streetscape improvements should include: planted parkways and medians, crosswalks, upgraded paving and lighting at sidewalks, gateways, benches, refuse receptacles, pole-mounted banners and flower pots.
  - Create a focal point feature in the Town Center plaza, such as a clock tower or fountain.
  - Announce arrival to the Town Center through the use of “gateway” features at main entry points, including a special bridge feature at Salt Creek.
  - Implement a consistent Town Center “wayfinding” signage system.
3. Implement the following landscaping improvements throughout the Town Center area:
  - Provide attractive perimeter buffer treatments and internal landscaping at Town Center parking lots and loading areas.
  - Install maintenance plantings that would be low in height adjacent to and within the MD-W Line right-of-way, subject to Metra landscape guidelines to ensure adequate visibility (sight lines and clearances at tracks and crossings), to improve the appearance of highly visible stretches of right-of-way.

## VI. CONCLUSION

---

This Station Area Study includes planning recommendations and detailed implementation strategies to enable the City, working collaboratively with other partners where appropriate, to realize a significant revitalization of the area surrounding the Wood Dale Station, whether or not a realignment and grade separation of Irving Park Road is pursued. The revitalization effort will seek to leverage the opportunity provided by potential future roadway improvements, direct the market proactively to achieve the future Vision that community stakeholders have articulated, meet the City's redevelopment and improvement objectives, and better facilitate the use of Metra commuter rail service and other forms of public transit that may serve the community in the future.

The Study provides the policy guidance and implementation direction needed by the City to capitalize on national and regional development trends, build upon existing transit services, and realize the community's strong desire to recreate the Wood Dale Station area as an attractive and vibrant Town Center.