



SECTION 5

LAND USE & COMMUNITY DESIGN

This section provides an assessment of the land use characteristics that comprise the Village of Romeoville and its planning area.

LAND USE

In many ways, Romeoville has maintained a strong connection to its industrial heritage, including access to the railroad, Des Plaines River, and I&M Canal. While industry has diversified in production, delivery systems, and location away from the waterfront and railroad and towards major roadways, Romeoville still maintains a prominent industrial character, with about 41% of assessed valuation of property comprised of industrial uses.

ROMEOVILLE'S INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Since its early railroad days, Romeoville has a long history of industry, even as production has evolved and the delivery network has transitioned from the railroad to the waterfront to the interstate highway system.



This industrial heritage will continue to be one of Romeoville's defining characteristics, with an emphasis to improve and expand the commercial base in the future. Local, regional, and national economic changes over the last decade require a new vision consistent with the aspirations and needs of the Romeoville community. The Village's current 2001 Comprehensive Plan is no longer capable of guiding the Village over the next ten years, particularly in a housing market and economy that were significantly altered by the recession. A growing senior population and the rise of the millennial generation supplement these economic conditions. The Comprehensive Plan Update must consider development trends, such as new urbanism, transit-oriented development, Complete Streets, and mixed use development practices, that have evolved since 2001 but were not previously recognized.

Today, Romeoville is a dynamic, maturing community located along the I-55 corridor in northern Will County. The Village covers approximately 19 square miles and had a population of almost 40,000, as report by the 2010 U.S. Census. Romeoville's growth is attributed to its many unique natural, civic, and transportation assets, including: waterfront access to the Des Plaines River and I&M Canal; location along the historic Route 66 (IL Route 53); premier interstate access; a well-regarded regional airport; opportunities for higher education



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at Lewis University, Rasmussen College, and Joliet Junior College; and a soon-to-open Metra Station on the east side of town. The Village has capitalized on its location within one of the most active and successful industrial development corridors within the Chicago metropolitan region. As a result, Romeoville's industrial base compromises 30% of the planning area, with 19% in residential uses (primarily single family) and commercial development.

During the public engagement process, several community leaders identified the need to examine the appropriate relationship or amount of land in the Village devoted to different land uses, expressing concern that Romeoville may need to diversify its land uses, now currently dominated by single-family residential and various industrial uses. As illustrated in the charts in Figure 5.1, a comparison of the land use composition of neighboring communities reveals that Romeoville has a similar amount of land devoted to single-family residential, multiple-family residential, and commercial uses to most of its neighbors, with the exception of Crest Hill which has almost twice the amount of multiple-family residential, and commercial use in Bolingbrook which is double that of Romeoville. However, Romeoville's industrial sector comprises the highest percent of land in the Village at 30%, more than one-third higher than Bolingbrook.

Romeoville's growth over the past 20 years, and that of adjacent municipalities, has resulted in a community that can now be considered a maturing village due to little growth potential existing outside its current municipal limits. The proximity to neighboring communities, as shown on the Planning Area Map in Figure 1.2 in Section 1, restricts Romeoville's ability to grow through new annexations. Therefore, growth will occur primarily on existing vacant, underutilized, and older properties that may be subject to redevelopment. As the map in Figure 1.2 indicates, Romeoville maintains boundary agreements with Bolingbrook, Woodridge, Lemont, Lockport, Joliet, and Plainfield, but lacks an agreement with Crest Hill.



FIGURE 5.1
Comparison of Land Use Composition in Romeoville & Neighboring Municipalities

Source: CMAP Land Use Inventory

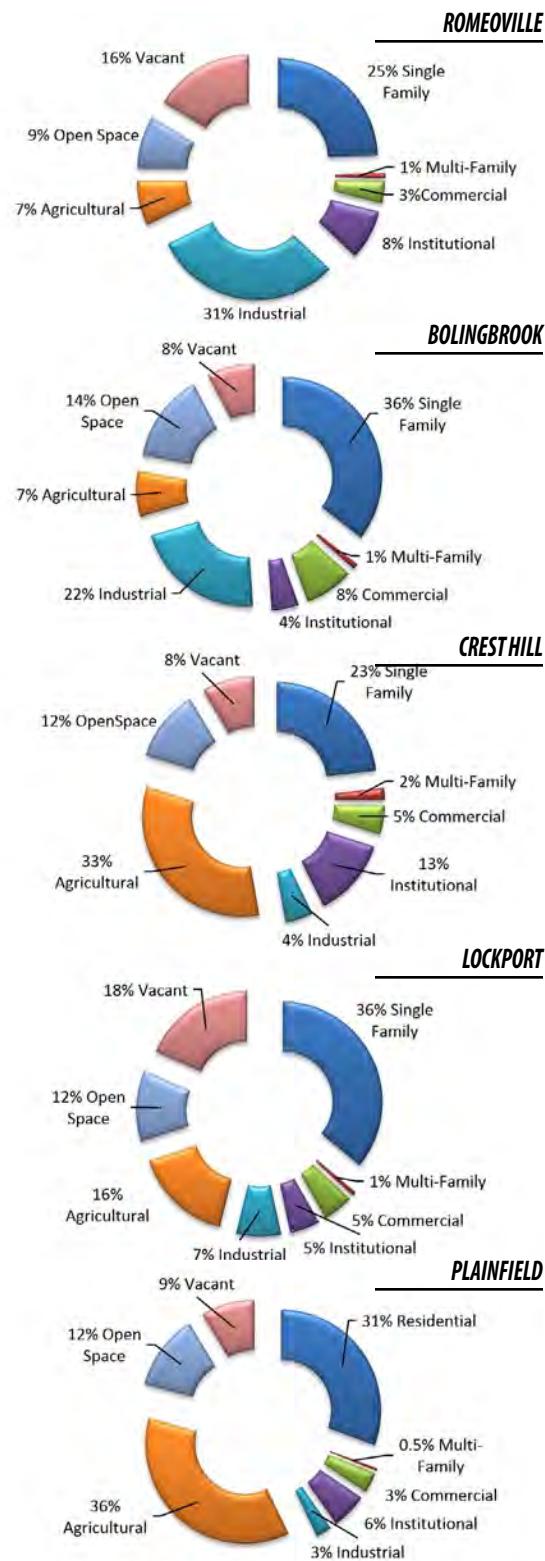
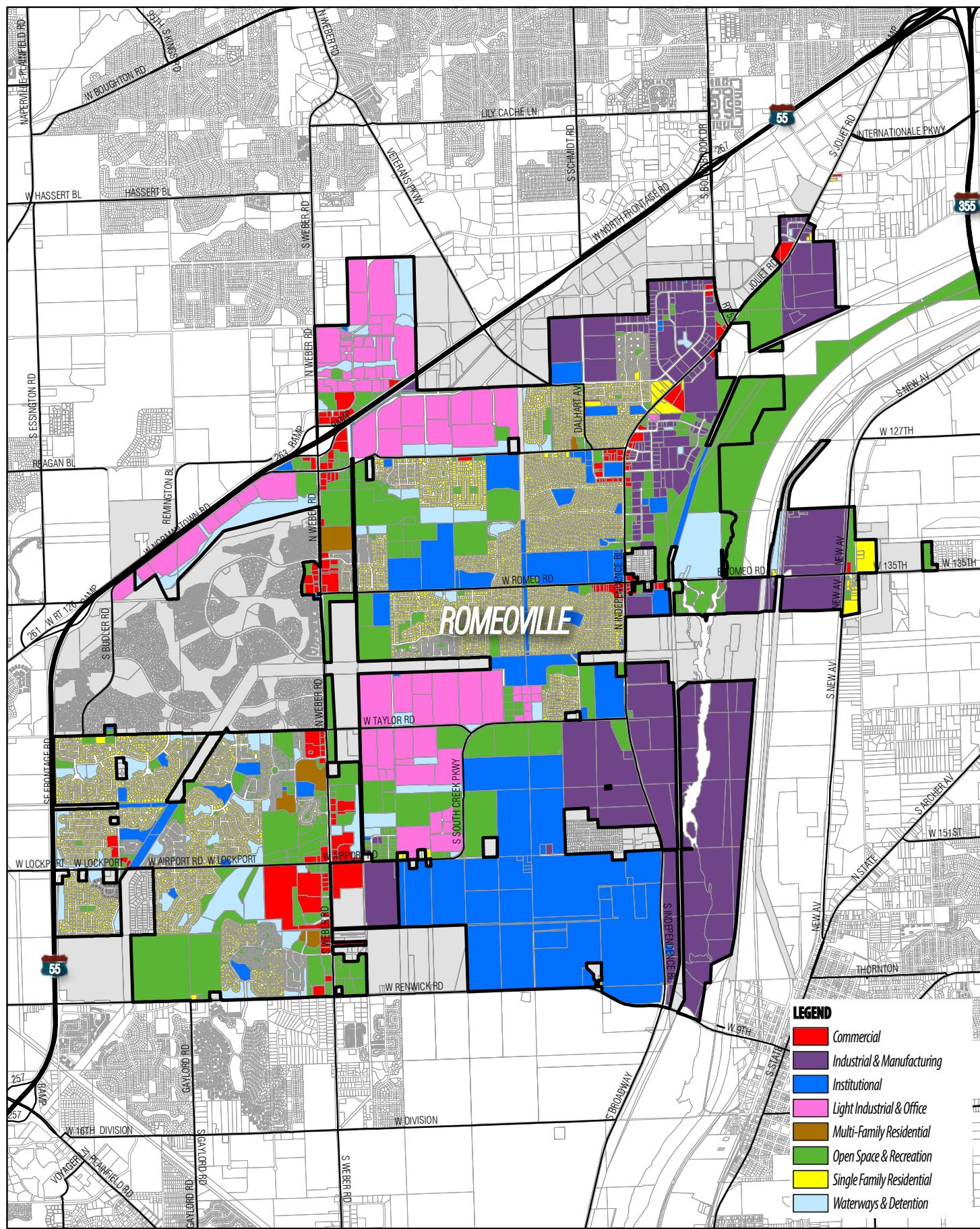


FIGURE 5.2
Existing Land Use Map

Sources: Village of Romeoville GIS; CMAP Land Use Inventory

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



IMPACT OF LOCAL & REGIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS

Previous plans prepared by the Village, Will County, regional agencies, and adjacent communities can have a direct or indirect influence on Romeoville's planning efforts. Below is a summary of the impacts of relevant planning documents.

2001 ROMEOVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Romeoville's most recent 2001 comprehensive Plan identifies boundary agreements with Plainfield to the west, and Bolingbrook to the north, and Joliet and Crest Hill to the south. The 2001 Plan, and the East Side Plan update in 2012 identified Smith Road and 143rd Road as the Village's limit of expansion to the east/southeast. Emphasis of the plan was the expansion of primarily single-family residential neighborhoods, significant development of commercial/mixed uses along Weber Road, continued expansion of industrial uses, and connection of the existing open spaces, forest preserves, and conservation areas through a system of greenway corridors.

Similar to the current planning process, the previous plan focused on two subareas providing for the creation of a town center area, which consisted of residential, commercial, civic, and mixed use buildings at the previous Spartan Plaza area along Weber Road in the vicinity of Romeo Street and South Carillon Boulevard.

EAST SIDE PLAN

With the plans underway to establish a new commuter rail station in Romeoville along the Metra Heritage Corridor (HC) rail line, the Village has taken a proactive planning approach and adopted a conceptual development plan for the station area and land east of the Des Plaines River. This plan focuses on the strategies and a mix of land uses that will benefit from commuter rail service, enhance the multimodal connectivity to and from the station area, and make the East Side viable for transit-oriented development. The East Site Plan promotes linkages to connect employees to jobs, customers to businesses, residents to diverse housing options, explorers to trails, and travelers to the region, while preserving natural resources.

2011 WILL COUNTY LAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

As illustrated in Figure 5.4, the Will County 2011 Land Resource Management Plan established a growth strategy based on various land forms – urban, suburban, rural, and others – to provide principles that can be applied to particular land uses. These forms and related concepts comprise a framework within which the County's communities can plan with complete local autonomy. Development forms refer to the general character of large areas of Will County.

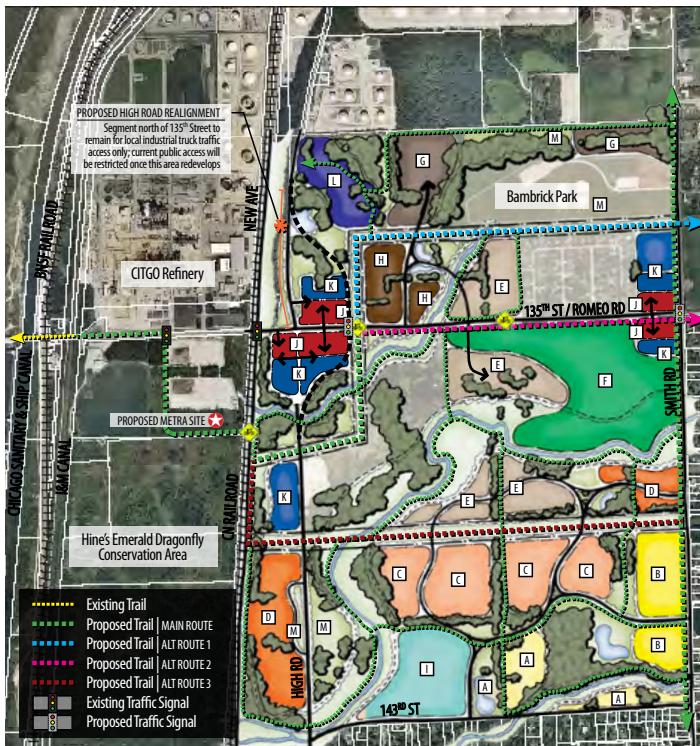
As contrasted with specific land uses, the identification of forms is a way to identify distinguishable development patterns at a county-wide level, and to use these forms as a way to manage the County's land resources. Romeoville is identified as a "Suburban Community"

form, typically developed without a strong sense of place and without "centers," or focal points as would be seen in an historic downtown. The Plan recognizes that typical suburban communities are newer, and are characterized with an automobile dependent land use pattern, where education and recreation facilities are not easily accessible, which can tend to isolate people and discourage a sense of community. The Will County plan encourages suburban communities to consider the following planning guidelines or "keystones":

- A greater mix of land uses should be encouraged to reduce the dependency on the automobile. For example, small-scale commercial and service uses can be built near residential areas if designed properly with methods that mitigate negative land use impacts. Similar or duplicative land uses should be dispersed where practical; for example, rather than have multiple large grocery stores clustered in a few

FIGURE 5.3
Proposed Romeoville Metra Station Area Preferred Concept Plan

Source: Romeoville East Side Plan



large commercial concentrations, smaller facilities should be dispersed to maximize the number of people that can be served with shorter trips.

- ❑ While commercial uses should be dispersed, they should also be focused on key nodes, avoiding strip patterns, which are inefficient from an access standpoint.
- ❑ More street connections should be encouraged in residential subdivision design. Rather than focus traffic on a few collector streets or arterials, which tends to create bottlenecks of congestion, more “through streets” should be encouraged to better disperse traffic and reduce their isolated impacts at certain points.
- ❑ Transit-accessible design should be considered in the site plan process, where feasible.
- ❑ When new development occurs, it should be designed around and connected to any regional or local open space corridors or networks.
- ❑ Pedestrian facilities should be included in all new developments, unless circumstances make this unrealistic. Suburban Communities should develop plans and standards for pedestrian systems to tie Suburban Areas together. In particular, improved connections between key destination areas should be developed, such as between residential and commercial areas, and between residential neighborhoods, parks, and school campuses.

CMAP GO TO 2040 PLAN

Different from past regional plans, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) prepared the GO TO 2040 Plan as a policy-oriented document promoting livable communities, sustainability, balanced growth, housing diversity, and better government policies across the Chicago region. Of importance for Romeoville are CMAP's policies articulating the importance of preserving open space, habitats, conservation, and sustainable efforts, and adoption of an Open Space Plan/Green Infrastructure Plan (see the description of Romeoville's green infrastructure and sustainability initiatives in Section 8). Romeoville plays an important role in fulfilling regional open space plans, providing a break from suburban sprawl and opportunities for habitat and ground water protection.



CMAP ON TO 2050 PLAN

While planning in Romeoville has adhered to CMAP GO TO 2040 principles, the Village will continue to pave a path towards sensible planning and sustainable development as CMAP prepares and rolls out its ON TO 2050 Plan Update.



PLANS FROM ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

Local plans of adjacent communities include those for Plainfield, Bolingbrook, Crest Hill, and Lockport. As discussed above and as shown on the Planning Area Map in Figure 1.2 in Section 1, very limited unincorporated areas remain in the Romeoville's eastern planning area, which may impact the Village's planning area. These areas for expansion, and related land use issues of adjacent communities, are addressed in the East Side Plan adopted in 2012.



FIGURE 5.4

Growth of a Typical Suburban Community & Proposed Development Form in Will County

Source: Will County 2011 Land Resource Management Plan



NATURAL AREAS & PROTECTION EFFORTS

Romeoville is served by a prominent network of natural areas that adds a pastoral and natural character to the Village. These natural areas are attractive, provide ecological benefits, and connect the Village to other communities. Many offer scenic views, recreation experiences, or preservation efforts of various ecological features.

Located at the center of the community, O'Hara Woods and Nature Preserve is adjacent to Village Hall and surrounded by residential neighborhoods. In addition, the extensive Lakewood Estates wetlands and floodplain complex runs adjacent to O'Hara Woods and provides natural area habitats and flood control benefits. The Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve covers a wide expanse along the western waterfront of the Des Plaines River and is managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Veterans Woods Forest Preserve, which is located north of the prairie nature preserve, is managed by the Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC). FPDWC also manages Isle a la Cache, which is a natural preserve and museum located on an island within the Des Plaines River.

The southern outskirts of Romeoville are also characterized by natural areas just beyond the municipal limits. Lake Renwick Preserve and Heron Rookery Nature Preserve are located at the far southwestern edge of town. Prairie Bluff Preserve, Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve, and Will County Forest Preserve are situated along the Village's southern border.

Other natural areas include the Des Plaines River, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, and I&M Canal. The I&M Canal offers 61.5 miles of trail with scenic views of the canal, multiple state parks and historic sites to visit, and connections to other trails. Trail users can enjoy activities such as running, fishing, and boating along the canal.

Romeoville can capitalize on its access to regional trails and natural features as a major hub for outdoor and recreation based activities. The natural areas are intended for preservation, recreation, protection, and conservation. Each area gives Romeoville a unique environmental feature and positions the Village to be on the forefront of protection efforts in the region. The preservation of these natural features are important for the environmental and recreation benefits they provide Village residents and businesses.

Key natural resources in the Village's planning area are described on the right and highlighted on the Environmental Features Map in Figure 5.5.

HINE'S EMERALD DRAGONFLY CONSERVATION AREA

Many wetlands sit along the Des Plaines River, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, and I&M Canal. A part of these wetlands has been designated as a conservation area for Hine's emerald dragonfly, which was classified as an endangered species in 1995, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The wetlands on the eastern side of Romeoville have been designated as habitat restoration areas for the dragonfly. Romeoville has the opportunity to keep development from affecting this area and to promote its unique protection efforts.

ISLE A LA CACHE

The island forest preserve and museum are environmental assets to Romeoville. The museum promotes public education of the Great Lakes' fur trade in the 1700s. The island is part of the Des Plaines River preservation system, protecting habitats such as prairies, wetlands, and forests. A multitude of recreational activities are available on the island, such as biking, fishing, and geocaching, which allow the public to get involved with nearby nature opportunities.

ROMEovILLE PRAIRIE NATURE PRESERVE

The preserve is 314 acres, with 155 acres dedicated as an Illinois Nature Preserve. Many types of reptiles and amphibians and over 500 plant species can be found on site as the preserve protects wetland, forest, prairie, and some of the Des Plaines River habitats.

O'HARA WOODS PRESERVE

The preserve is 53 acres and part of the Lily Cache Creek preservation system. It protects wetland and forest habitats, as well as some of the Lily Cache Slough. The preserve has a 0.67 mile trail.

VETERANS WOODS FOREST PRESERVE

The preserve is 77 acres where many plant species can be found as it protects forest habitat. The preserve has a 0.46 mile trail.

LILY CACHE WETLANDS

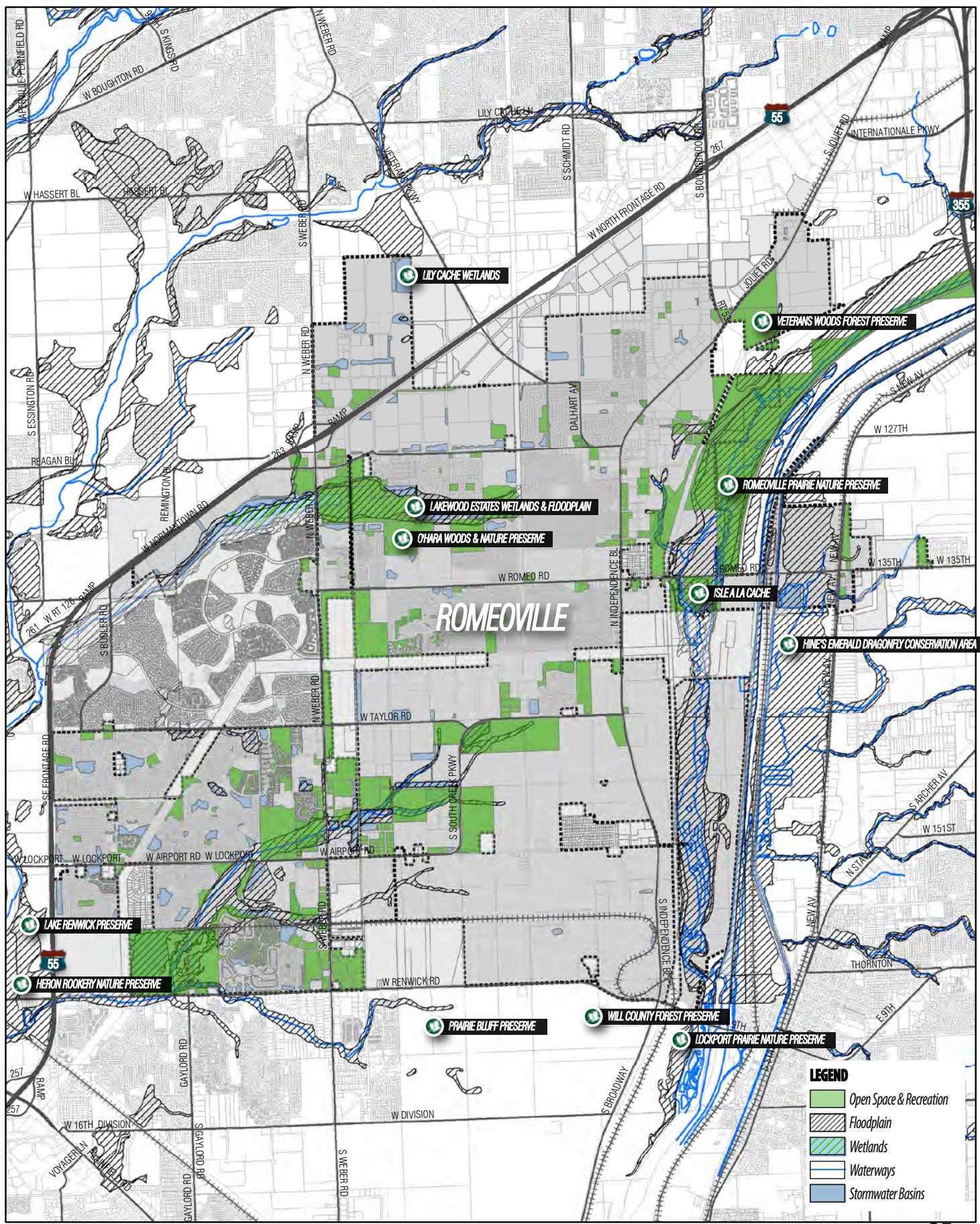
The wetlands are 49 acres which protect both wetland habitat and some of the Lily Cache Creek.



FIGURE 5.5
Environmental Features Map

Sources: Village of Romeoville GIS; CMAP Land Use Inventory

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles





**TYPES OF LAND USES AND INTENSITY
(SIZE, LAND COVERAGE) OF
DEVELOPMENT**



**SCALE, OR THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
BUILDINGS AND SPACES TO EACH OTHER,
AND TO ITS NATURAL SURROUNDINGS**



**DESIGN THAT REFLECTS THE COHESIVE
AND UNIQUE QUALITIES OF THE BUILT
AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Romeoville is a great place to live, work, learn, recreate, and visit, and the purpose of this planning process is to make it an even better place. Part of that appeal is based on community aesthetics, combining a beautiful physical setting with attractive development, strong identity, and protection of and connection to natural areas. To guide this process, this subsection describes the basic community design elements that will be explored further to enhance the image, character, and quality-of-life of Romeoville. Romeoville's character can be defined by three related components, as illustrated above.

URBAN DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

The Urban Design Opportunities Map in Figure 5.7 describes the basic organizational structure of the community, opportunities for economic development, and the role of roads in defining a sense of place. Each component of the community collectively plays an important part in ensuring a sustainable future:

- Open space preserves habitat, way of life, values
- Character reflects the community's values
- Economic opportunity allows for the others to be preserved

Romeoville has a distinct personality composed of districts, corridors, neighborhoods, and special places. As the community matures, projects relating to redevelopment, infill, and public improvement may impact the character of the Village. The purpose of the Urban Design Opportunities Map is to describe basic organizational principles and elements of the community. This will assist the community in evaluating ways to maintain and improve its quality-of-life by enhancing and protecting the Village's visual environment.

CORRIDORS

Major roadway corridors are the most visible parts of a community, and can be a major factor in how a community is perceived. "Views from the road" shape our memories in a way that establishes either a positive or negative community image. Corridors are links that tie communities together, and thus, are an important element of a community's character. A number of factors contribute to the appearance of corridors, including land use, density, open space, landscaping, architecture, infrastructure, and multimodal access and circulation.

As an outgrowth of its 2009 Master Transportation Plan, the Village developed the Transportation Corridor Beautification Plan that recommended various type of roadway improvements based on the function or type of street. For the higher visibility roads, including Romeo Road, Weber Road, and IL Route 53, improvements that are more extensive are recommended, including landscaping, signs, and lighting. Many of these improvements have already been



implemented in many sections of these roads. Romeo Road improvements include pedestrian level lighting due to its adjacent residential housing and public and educational amenities, such as the Romeoville Recreation Center, Joliet Junior College, and Romeoville Village Hall.

The proposed improvements for the major roads include unifying the fencing and planting styles when along residential roadway corridors and providing additional pedestrian circulation through the addition of public sidewalks and multi-use paths, as identified in Romeoville's Bike Trail Plan, as well as providing enhanced plantings at trail entries.

GATEWAYS & WAYFINDING

Gateways are important identify markers of a community. Several gateway locations are identified along each major corridor where they define entrances to Romeoville or special districts, such as Uptown Square or the Village's municipal campus. A range of design and appearance improvements should be undertaken at each gateway location. Key elements that may be used to define a gateway are illustrated in Figure 5.6 below.

In addition to gateways, wayfinding signs are important as they both bring attention to and direct people to special places in the community. While the Village has strong identity signs, a comprehensive wayfinding sign system should be considered to promote Romeoville's identity/brand image, as well as create early notification and provide direction to important places in the community.

GREENWAYS & TRAILS

The conservation and protection of principal open space corridors, as shown on the Urban Design Opportunities Map, and the natural environments that they support are also a major element of the Village over character and function. Numerous stream and wetland corridors are identified on the Urban Design Opportunities Map as open space corridors or greenways. These greenways provide Romeoville with safe, continuous, and scenic opportunities for creation of an extensive trail and pathway network. Planning for this system should continue to be extended throughout the Village, linking employment centers, parks, schools, universities, Uptown Square, the Village's municipal campus, and other key civic and retail destinations.

As the community matures, a primary theme of Village planning efforts should ensure that special natural areas are protected and celebrated, such as the unique forest preserve holdings and protected conservation areas associated with the Des Plaines River. These natural assets provide a beautiful setting and rich ecology within the community. In order to do that, the Urban Design Opportunities Map provides a framework and resource that identify existing natural areas and a larger system of greenways. Land use and infrastructure development and management must be consistent with the preservation and long-term stewardship of natural landscapes, aquatic systems, urban trees, and other resources vital to the community. Citizens, business owners, and visitors must be made aware of the qualities and value these elements provide for the community so they cherish and sustain them over time.



Landscaping - distinctive accent plantings should be provided at each gateway location

Medians - where feasible, new landscaped medians could be provided within existing rights-of-way for approximately one block long

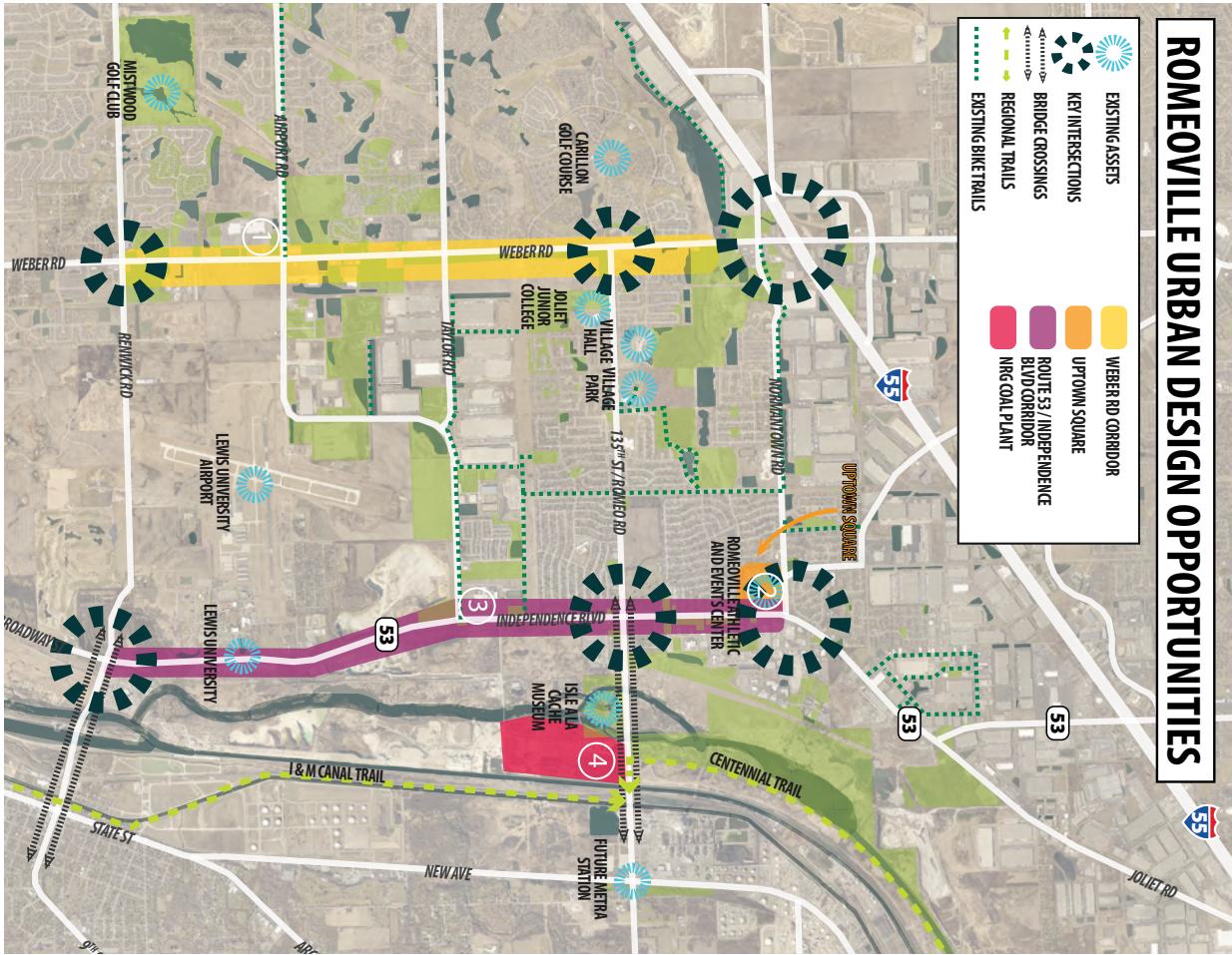
Entry Sign - distinctive identity signs announcing entrance to the community and special sub-areas of the City

Lighting - special or unique lighting fixtures could be provided to highlight and accent each gateway feature.

FIGURE 5.6
Defining Gateway Features

ROMEoville URBAN DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

EXISTING CHARACTER PHOTOS



WEBER RD CORRIDOR

ROUTE 53/INDEPENDENCE BLVD

ROUTE 53/INDEPENDENCE BLVD CORRIDOR

NRG COAL PLANT



EXISTING ASSETS
Commercial and nearby civic land uses
Occasional sidewalks
I-55 access
Large parcels
Four-lane road

OPPORTUNITIES
Gateway corridor
Maximize large parcels and I-55 access for quality commercial development
Safe pedestrian crossings
Continue bike network
Potential for Pace bus connectivity

OPPORTUNITIES
Commercial development
Intersection gateway development
Higher density residential development

OPPORTUNITIES
Recreation corridor
Streetscape planning underway
Wayfinding signage
Continuation of open space system on waterfront

FIGURE 5.7
Urban Design Opportunities Map

Source: Village of Romeoville GIS

SUBAREA PLANNING

Even though Romeoville as a whole has experienced significant growth and development since the 2001 Comprehensive Plan that have strengthened the Village's economy and solidified its industrial base, several key locations in the Village have not realized their full potential. As a result, the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan Update will focus on the land use, transportation, and site design guidelines for the specific subareas identified in Figure 5.8 below.

The evaluation of development opportunities and issues in each subarea describes the following elements: location; existing site conditions; land use; site configuration and access; and zoning issues that may influence development potential. Discussion of these issues and opportunities is provided for each subarea in Figures 5.9 through 5.12 at the end of this section.

FIGURE 5.8
Subareas Map

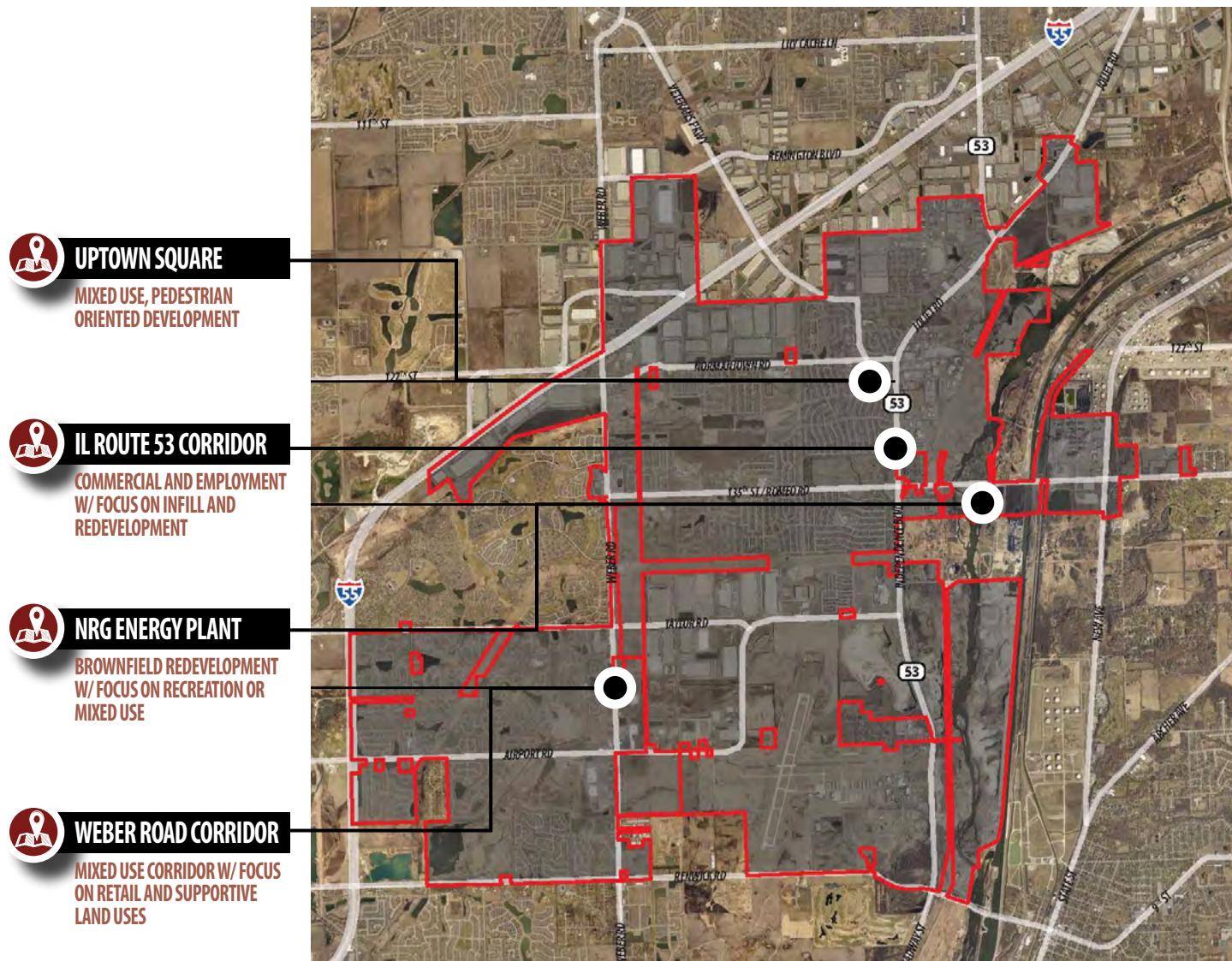


FIGURE 5.9

Site 1 | Weber Road Corridor

GUIDING FORCES

Previous Plan Recommendations	What are the past planning policies...	Market Findings	What are the market realities...
<p>2000 Comprehensive Plan recommended land uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-55 Interchange – Highway oriented commercial • Romeo Road – Town Center mixed-use • Taylor Road – Commercial (retail) and supportive business service uses • Airport Road - Commercial (retail) and supportive business service uses • Renwick Road – Commercial (retail) and Manufacturing uses • Access to major east-west greenway corridors • Establishment of local parks/open spaces as part of larger development sites 		<p><i>These are highlights from the market study that serve to inform what types of development may be most appropriate given the characteristics and location of the site.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of large commercial retail centers limited due to area competition and changes in retail trends resulting in smaller store sizes, store vacancies, and available land in existing centers. • Long-term opportunity consists of mixed-use commercial/residential providing alternative housing and civic spaces as a destination center as suggested in previous plans. • Limited opportunity for expansion of office uses serving local markets over the near term, with a focus to attract higher tech-oriented business. • Opportunity to expand multiple-family projects in freestanding and mixed-use centers. • Opportunity to create a mixed-use center consisting of retail, entertainment, office and residential uses, consistent with the Village's previous plan 	
The Built Environment + Zoning	What physical factors exist...	Transportation	What are the access policies...
<p><i>These are the existing site elements, both built and natural, that must be integrated and considered to create successful development plans.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Land Uses: Primarily commercial uses, with single-family, low density multiple-family (townhomes), limited high density residential (apartments) and service/medical uses. For most of the corridor commercial uses are located on east side of Weber Road, with the largest concentration of commercial use at the Airport Road intersection. • Environmental Features: As illustrated on the Environmental Features Map (Figure 5.5), two floodplains are located in the north and southern portion of the corridor, with an open space corridor created by the Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) power transmission facilities between Romeo and Taylor Roads. Extensive wetlands cover a substantial portion of the northern part of the corridor associated with the Lilly Cache Slough. The site has limited woodland cover, likely due to previous agricultural activity. • Zoning: R-2 Single-Family (2 ac. minimum) A planned development is necessary to achieve the mixed-use concept of the previous plan. 		<p><i>These are the existing site elements related to access, circulation and parking that must be considered relative to future development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway access: I-55 interchange access, with planned improvement to create a diverging diamond interchange to improve capacity and safety • Transit connection: None. Lack of adequate and safe crosswalks, and discontinuous sidewalk system that does not interconnect with the intersections, limits potential to expand PACE suburban bus service. • Trail Plan: Existing trails occur on Normantown Road, Taylor Road, and Airport Road. The Village bike trail master plan provides for two additional east-west trail connections along the ComEd corridor and northern end of the corridor, just south of Normantown Road, with grade-separated crossing over or under Weber Road. • Will County Transportation Plan Recommendations: Widening of Weber Road to full 6-lane cross-section for the entire length in the Village. 	



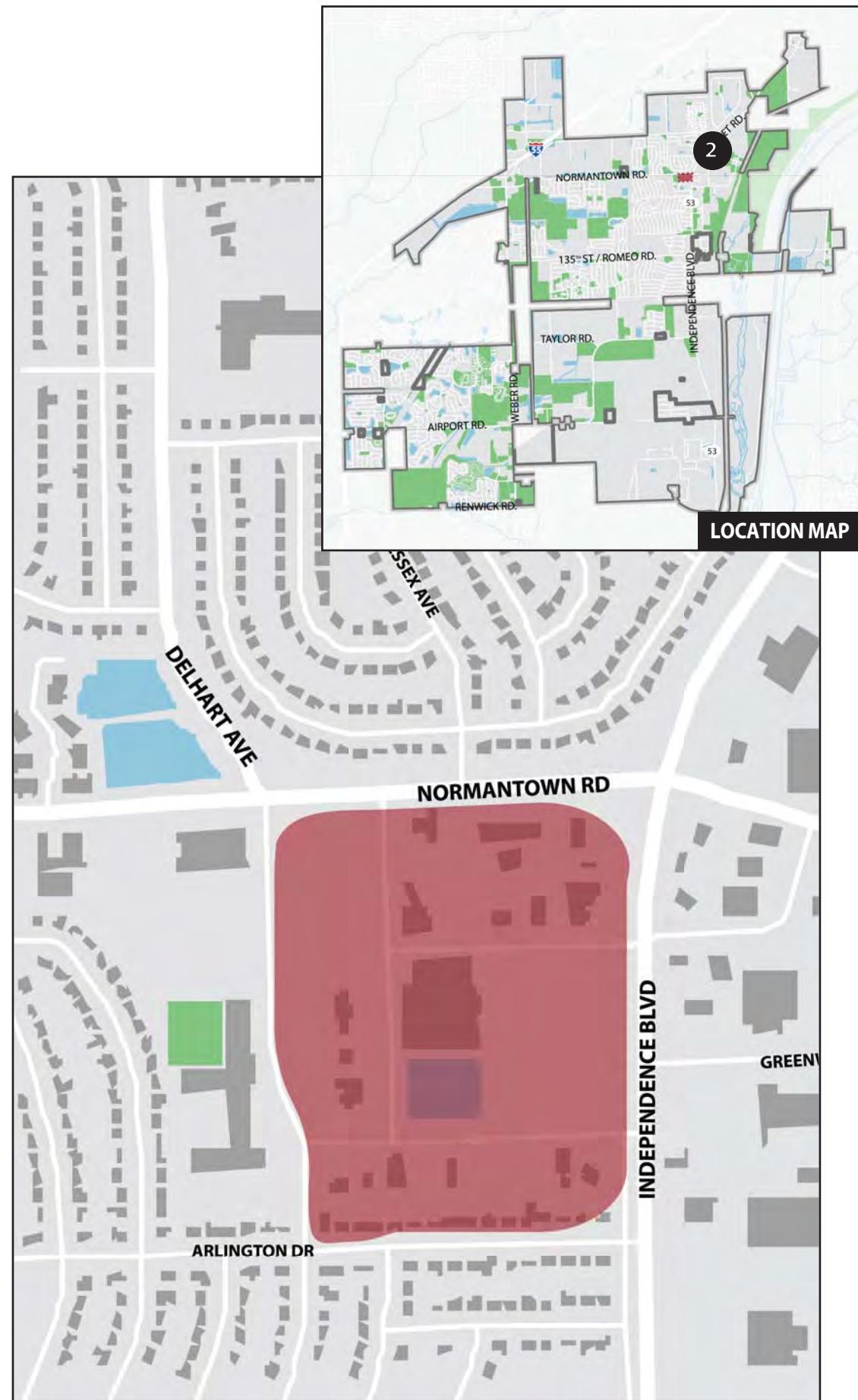
Site 1: Weber Road Corridor

FIGURE 5.10

Site 2 | Uptown Square

GUIDING FORCES

Previous Plan Recommendations	What are the past planning policies...	Market Findings	What are the market realities...
<p>Previously identified as the Spartan Plaza Redevelopment area, the Village created a specific plan for downtown – The Downtown Master Plan, 2003. Key recommendations of this plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a more viable, walkable shopping experience • Expand housing options and high density living opportunities • Create a compelling space for socializing and community events • Improve resident and visitor hospitality • Improve overall appearance • Create a marketing program and promote the Downtown 		<p><i>These are highlights from the market study that serve to inform what types of development may be most appropriate given the characteristics and location of the site.</i></p> <p>Market studies for Uptown Square identified the following issues and opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market conditions for apartment uses are favorable with high occupancy rates and rising rents, supporting the potential for over 100 new units. • The Athletic & Events center serves as an anchor for the area and is a complimentary use both supporting and attracting new tenants. Similarly, the approval of Franconi's market also serves to improve attractiveness of the area for apartments, and other similar tenants, so that they would be mutually reinforcing. • The Downtown's location between major competing retail nodes in nearby communities is not sufficiently close enough to capture potential spill-over demands; but too proximate to establish a trade area that is not already served by retailers in these well-established locations. • Commercial use in the Downtown should be targeted to strengthen the competitive position of the location for apartments and enhancing the appeal of the neighborhood to existing and prospective new households. Uses similar to those now being built have the greatest chance for success. 	
The Built Environment + Zoning	What physical factors exist...	Transportation	What are the access policies...
<p><i>These are the existing site elements, both built and natural, that must be integrated and considered to create successful development plans.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Uses: Considerable redevelopment activities have occurred over the past five years with the demolition of the shopping center and the establishment of the Athletic & Events center, combined with pedestrian streetscape, signage and landscaping improvements. Other anchors in Uptown include the Robert C. Hill elementary school and public library. The remainder of the area includes smaller service and commercial business. • Planned Redevelopment Activities: Currently under construction and planned uses include: Fat Ricky's restaurant & Franconi's market and a retail center anchored by Harris Bank. Other long-term development concepts include introducing higher density housing. • Zoning: D-D Downtown District. Intended to advance the ideas of the Downtown Plan, by encouraging a wide range of commercial, entertainment and multi-story residential uses in a walkable pedestrian oriented environment. • Site Area: Approx. 40 ac. 		<p><i>These are the existing site elements related to access, circulation and parking that must be considered relative to future development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadway Access: Route 53 (Highway Route 66): Uptown is served by a major regional arterial road, with direct access to I-55. The Village has undertaken various gateway identity sign and landscape improvements along and within the roadway corridor. Direct access to Uptown is provided by two non-signalized intersections on Route 53, and a signalized intersection at Dalhart Avenue and Normantown Road. • Transit connection: Romeoville is currently served by Pace Route 834, which runs along Illinois Route 53 connecting from Bolingbrook on the north to Lockport on the south. Route 834 also provides connection to Pace Route 855, which is the I-55 Flyer with service between Romeoville and Downtown Chicago. Route 834 also provides bus service to Metra commuter rail stations in Joliet, Lockport, and Downers Grove. • Trail Plans: A bikeway is planned along Route 53 as part of Village's long-term improvement plan. This path will interconnect with the existing bikeway along Normantown Road, and a planned paths linking Uptown to the Metra Station and Forest Preserve. 	



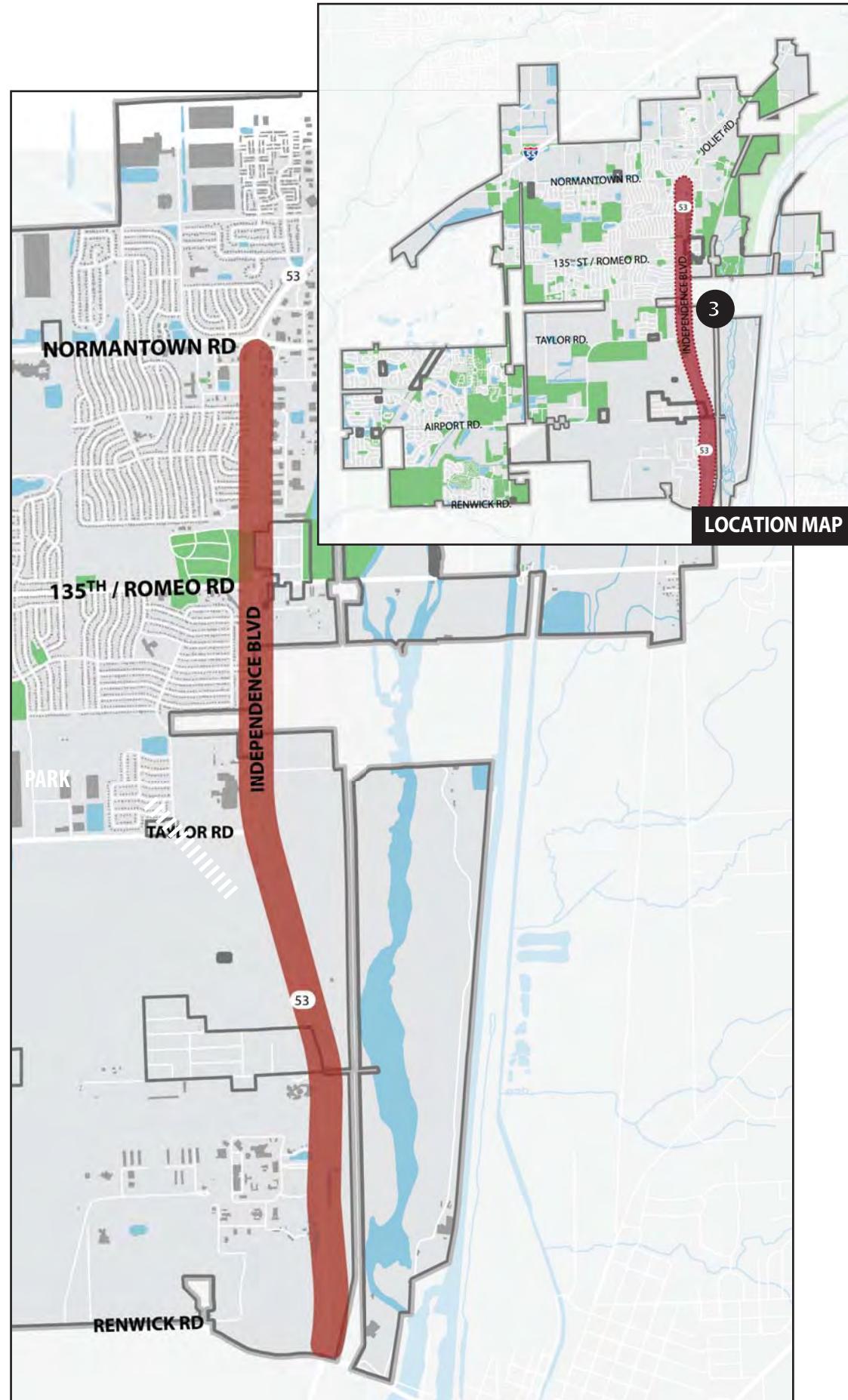
Site 2: Uptown Square

FIGURE 5.11

Site 3 | IL Route 53 / Independence Boulevard

GUIDING FORCES

Previous Plan Recommendations	What are the past planning policies...	Market Findings	What are the market realities...
<p>2000 Comprehensive Plan recommended land uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily industrial uses along the east side of Route 53 Residential use reflects existing neighborhoods, with no new expansion of residential uses Commercial use scattered along various locations, with larger concentrations at Romeo Road and the Uptown area intersections. The largest institutional uses the Village are located within the corridor – Romeoville High School and Lewis University. 		<p><i>These are highlights from the market study that serve to inform what types of development may be most appropriate given the characteristics and location of the site.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of large commercial retail centers limited due to area competition and changes in retail trends resulting in smaller store sizes, store vacancies, and available land in existing centers on Weber Road. Uptown area possess best long-term opportunity for local serving and mixed-use commercial/residential as part of the Downtown center concept. Limited opportunity for expansion of office uses serving local markets over the near term, with a focus to attract higher tech-oriented business. Opportunity to expand multiple-family projects in freestanding and in mixed-use centers. Older industrial centers provide opportunity for redevelopment, but may require consolidation of smaller sites. 	
<p>The Built Environment + Zoning</p> <p><i>These are the existing site elements, both built and natural, that must be integrated and considered to create successful development plans.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Land Uses: Primarily industrial uses, concentrated along the east side of the corridor, with single-family, low-density multiple-family (townhomes) and auto oriented service uses. For most of the corridor, commercial uses exist at scatter locations, with largest concentrations at the Uptown area, Romeo Road and Joliet Road/Route 53 intersections. The largest undeveloped lands consist of quarries, south of Taylor Road. Environmental Features: As illustrated on the Environmental Features Map (Figure 5.5), the Corridor is relative free of natural resources requiring protection, but is proximate to extensive preserved open spaces along the DesPlaines River. Zoning: M-2 Heavy Manufacturing; B-3 Highway/Regional Shopping; various single family and multi-family residential (R3 through R7) 		<p>Transportation</p> <p><i>These are the existing site elements related to access, circulation and parking that must be considered relative to future development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway access: Route 53 is the only State route serving Romeoville, providing direct access to I-55, and is one of the primary designated truck routes in the Village. Transit connection: Romeoville is currently served by Pace Route 834, which runs along Illinois Route 53 connecting from Bolingbrook on the north to Lockport on the south. Route 834 also provides connection to Pace Route 855, which is the I-55 Flyer with service between Romeoville and Downtown Chicago. Route 834 also provides bus service to Metra commuter rail stations in Joliet, Lockport, and Downers Grove. Trail Plans: A bikeway is planned along Route 53 as part of Village's long-term improvement plan. This path will interconnect with the existing bikeway along Normantown Road, ComEd corridor, and Taylor Road, and planned paths linking Uptown to the Metra Station, Forest Preserve, and region trails. 	



Site 3: IL Route 53 / Independence Boulevard

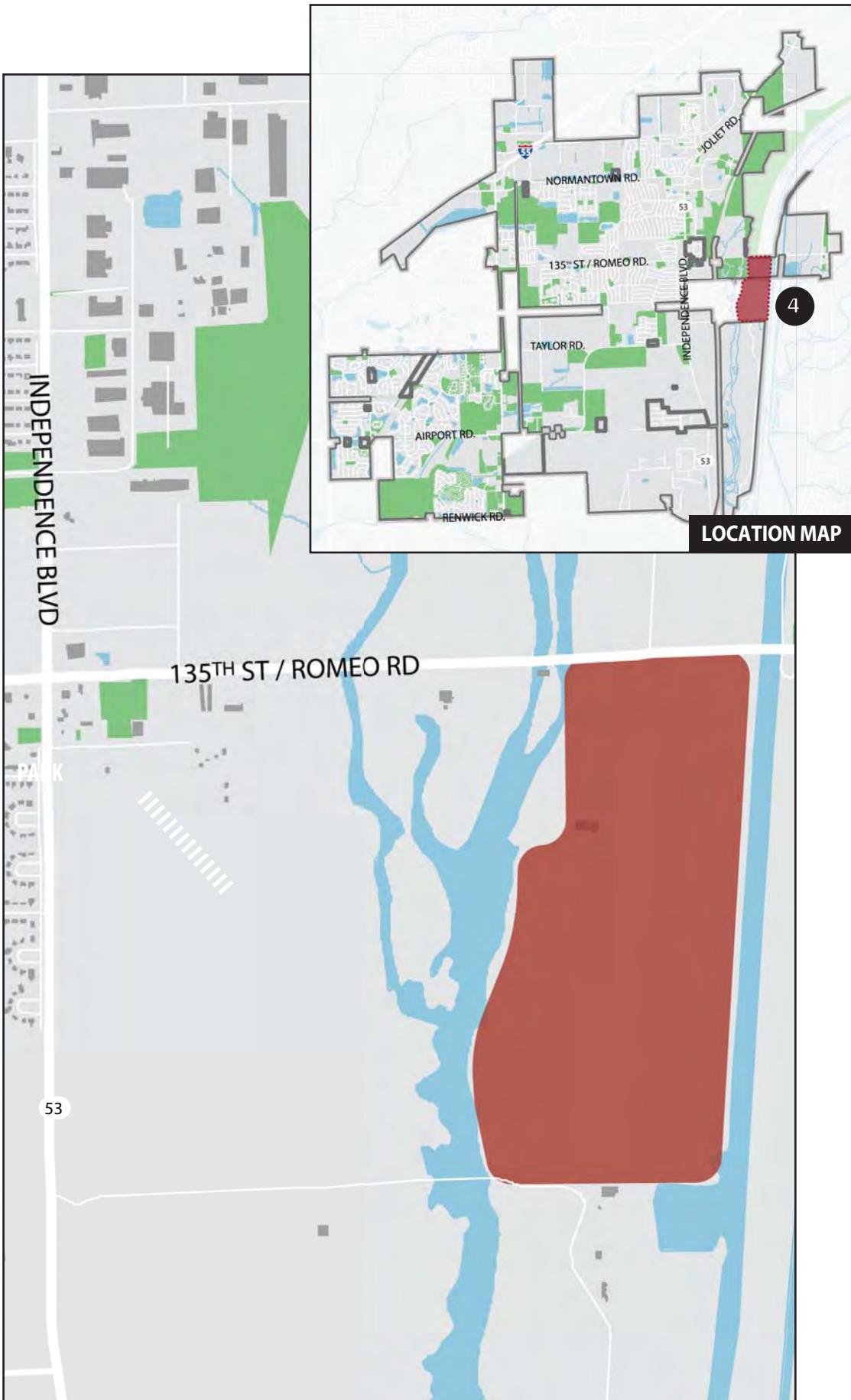
FIGURE 5.12

Site 4 | NRG Coal Plant

GUIDING FORCES

Previous Plan Recommendations	What are the past planning policies...	Redevelopment Conditions	What are the market realities...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the NRG plant was a fully operating power generation facility, the plan acknowledged its function as a 'basic industry' use, together with similar uses, such as the Citgo refinery. The NRG facility, together with a few other basic industries, resides within an environmental corridor formed by the DesPlaines River, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, and the Illinois and Michigan Canal, most of which is protected in Romeoville by the Forest Preserve District and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Expansion of the river corridor is recommended for non-industrial use areas. 		<p><i>These are highlights from the market study that serve to inform what types of development may be most appropriate given the characteristics and location of the site.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited data on site conditions will require more investigation to determine the type of uses that may be suitable if the NRG plant is closed and redeveloped. The removal and clean-up of surface coal ash will be a significant issue associated with site reuse. New regulations for inactive surface impoundments of coal ash will become effective in October 2016, and will address groundwater contamination and fugitive dust emissions associated with coal ash disposal; regulations also restricts disposal near aquifers and wetlands. Coal ash spreading at the southern portion of the facility is documented. 	
The Built Environment + Zoning	What physical factors exist...	Transportation	What are the access policies...
<p><i>These are the existing site elements, both built and natural, that must be integrated and considered to create successful development plans.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Uses: NRG coal power plant - Units 1 and 2 were closed in 2010 and Unit 3 was closed in 2015. NRG Energy stated its intent to close its final coal fired power generation unit (Unit 4) in May 2018, but this has not been confirmed. Flyash and bottom ash (coal ash) from the facility was spread on the ground in the southern portion of the site. Other surrounding uses include primarily open spaces and protected natural areas owned by the Will County Forest Preserve and IDNR. Limited industrial uses and quarry operations to the southwest, and the Citgo refinery to the northeast. Environmental Features: Emerald dragonfly habitat, which is an endangered species that is present in the area. Other wildlife reported at the site is fox, deer, and bald eagles. The bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list in 2007, but is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Act. Zoning: Unincorporated Site Area: Approx. 170 acres 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Access: The sole roadway access to the NRG site is from Romeo Road, a major collector road in the area, linking Weber Road to I-355. Romeo Road is a four lane facility, with bike path linkages and pedestrian walkways. The NRG site is within walking distance to the future Metra commuter station located approximately 1 mile from the plant. Transit Connection: The PACE bus 834 on Route 53 does not currently serve the plant, but with the opening of the Metra Station PACE indicates that service expansion will be considered to the station. Trail Plans: A proposed Village bike trail along Romeo Road will connect this site to regional trails east of the river. 	

(For more information on the NRG site, see Appendix B – "Brownfield Redevelopment Evaluation of the NRG Coal Plant at Romeoville, Illinois" CH2M)



Site 4: NRG Coal Plant

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