



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**VILLAGE OF ROMEOVILLE, ILLINOIS**

July 19, 2017

**PREPARED BY:**

Teska Associates, Inc.  
Gruen Gruen + Associates  
CH2M



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER

1: Introduction	1
2: Framework Plan, Strategies & Guiding Principles	7
3: Future Land Use Plan	15
4: Economic Development	33
5: Housing	45
6: Transportation	53
7: Community Infrastructure	63
8: Implementation	73

---

## APPENDICES

A: Community Assessment Report	A1
B: Analysis of Economic Base & Real Estate Market Conditions	B1
C: Brownfield Redevelopment Evaluation of the NRG Coal Plant	C1

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the individuals, stakeholders, steering committee, residents, and Village Officials who came together during the input, drafting and final approval stages to help create Romeoville's Comprehensive Plan Update.

---

## FUNDING AGENCY

Project Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

---

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Nancy Baldwin	Dr. David Livingston
Tony Diliberto	Dr. Judy Mitchell
Ken Griffin	Joe Strong
Gary Grizaffi	Dave Venn
Rich Holloway	Tom Wilczak
Michelle Jarnutowski	

## VILLAGE BOARD

Mayor John D. Noak	Brian A. Clancy Sr.
Village Clerk Dr. Bernice E. Holloway	Dave Richards
Linda Palmiter	Lourdes (Lou) Aguirre
Jose (Joe) Chavez	Ken Griffin

## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

David Venn, Chair	Petra Burgess
Paul Scieska, Co-Chair	Richard Holloway
Dan Repetowski	Rick Gougis
Dawn Sakalas	Steve Pyle
Gary Hoffman	Brandon Quan - student member
Jim McConachie	

---

## CONSULTANT TEAM

Teska Associates, Inc.  
Konstantine Savoy

CH2M  
Erik Spande

Gruen Gruen + Associates  
Aaron Gruen

---

This Comprehensive Plan Update for the Village of Romeoville was approved on July 19, 2017, Ordinance Number ORD17-1391.



## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan outlines a vision for how the community should develop based on current and projected conditions. It provides a statement of policy for land use, transportation, infrastructure, and development decisions. Guided by the Village's efforts to assess existing conditions, evaluate opportunities in the community, and craft a renewed vision for Romeoville, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan builds off of the 2001 version of the plan and prepares the Village for the future as a stabilizing community with fluid prospects for balanced growth and a diversified economy.

The update of Romeoville's Comprehensive Plan also provides the foundation in support of local land use decisions. The importance of well-considered goals and objectives, as well as creation of specific plans for the future development and growth of the Village, has been well established through the courts that look to land use regulations that link to and implement a community's plan when challenges arise. As provided for in Illinois State Statutes, the comprehensive plan provides the basis for rational allocation of land uses and resources, and guidance for the growth and development of the community. Similarly, residents and landowners in the community would have no assurance to govern ad-hoc decisions with respect to their land, or their neighbor's land, that would materially alter the character of an area and impair the value and use of land. Thus, land use decisions should follow a rational and deliberate consideration of the goals and objectives of the community.

Within the 2017 Comprehensive Plan, the Village of Romeoville articulates its vision, strategies, and guiding principles that will direct policy decisions for the future, with the recognition that planning must be an ongoing process.



### ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

- **CHAPTER 2: FRAMEWORK PLAN, STRATEGIES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES**
- **CHAPTER 3: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**
- **CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- **CHAPTER 5: HOUSING**
- **CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION**
- **CHAPTER 7: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**
- **CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION**



## FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING IN ROMEOVILLE

The Village of Romeoville has a rich history and tradition of planning, one that originally focused on supporting the economic vitality of the town of Romeo in the 1830s with the growth of industries relating to the railroads and building up the real estate opportunities for residents and workers. This tradition continues today with a modern focus on the excellent access provided by I-55 and the extensive growth of industrial and intermodal enterprises. The result is a strong local economy with a residential community that enjoys a high quality-of-life. As a result, Romeoville has evolved into a dynamic community of choice for residents, businesses, investors, and visitors alike.

Since the adoption of its current Comprehensive Plan in 2001, the Village has invested in the planning and development of key areas, including transforming the downtown area into the revitalized Uptown Square and the future Metra station with transit oriented development (TOD) on the east side of town. These long range efforts are already bearing fruit with new development occurring in Uptown Square and construction of the new Metra station, which is scheduled to begin in 2017. Moreover, the Village continues to advance a more diversified tax base through new commercial and industrial projects that create jobs and boost the local economy.

## NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

However, local, regional, and national economic changes over the last decade have resulted in an outdated Comprehensive Plan that requires a new vision consistent with the community aspirations, needs, and market realities in Romeoville. The 2001 Comprehensive Plan was also a streamlined poster plan that – while effective at the time of adoption and straight-forward in streamlining the community's vision into a manageable format – has outlived its initial purpose with the need to provide a more robust planning document that reflects present conditions and updated goals for the future.

The 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update must now provide a specific vision and goals that ensure new projects reflect the high quality of development that Romeoville has achieved, and accommodate new investments and redevelopment associated with Uptown Square, the future Metra station area, and the IL Route 53 and Weber Road corridors. The updated plan must consider smart growth planning principles which include a mix of land uses, compact building design, a range of housing opportunities and choices, walkable neighborhoods, preservation of open space and environmental areas, a variety of transportation choices, and potential reuse of industrial sites that get decommissioned or outmoded over time. Fifteen years after the adoption of its current Comprehensive Plan, the Village is once again seeking to address new priorities, while creating an updated vision for how Romeoville manages community and economic development into the future. Although Romeoville is mostly built out, the Village can strengthen its position in the market and the community's overall quality-of-life by enhancing key districts and corridors. This comprehensive planning process is intended to be both reflective of land use traditions and responsive to many changes, both locally and nationally, that affect the long term viability of Romeoville.

### KEY PLANNING THEMES

Input from residents and community leaders, combined with the research and analysis of the Consultant Team, resulted in the identification of five key planning themes that formed the foundation for visioning, goal setting, and drafting plan concepts throughout the planning process. These themes are particularly relevant for a community like Romeoville, which is facing the challenges of stabilizing a maturing community, as opposed to managing the high level of growth and development experienced in the 2000s. The five key planning themes are described in more detail, along with core strategies and guiding principles, in Chapter 2.



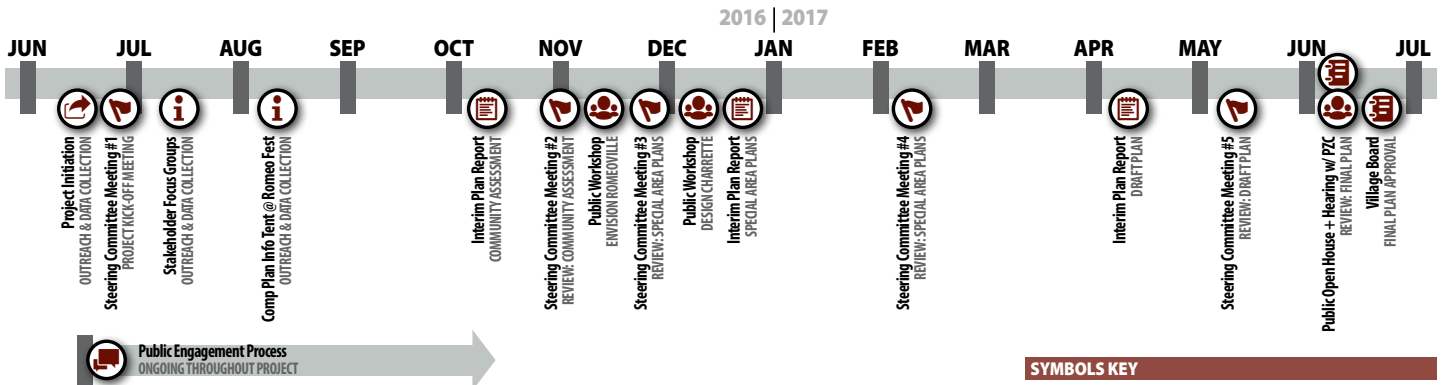
## OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

The 2017 Comprehensive Plan explores opportunities for development that enhance the vitality of the Village's core subareas by providing diverse housing options and supporting unique commercial, office, and industrial businesses that generate jobs meeting varying skillsets and spaces for entrepreneurs, research and technology, and hybrid enterprises. The updated plan also supports the bolstering of the community's infrastructure, from multimodal transportation, utilities, and municipal services to schools, parks, and green spaces.

The planning process to update the Comprehensive Plan provided opportunities for public input through an online survey, an interactive project website and mobile app, design workshops, and interviews with community stakeholders. These outreach efforts enabled the community to actively contribute to the planning process, providing valuable ideas and feedback needed to guide the plan to ensure that it will reflect the community's long-term vision and values.

These public engagement elements and key project deliverables are summarized in the Project Timeline below and described in more detail in the Community Assessment Report in Appendix A.

### PROJECT TIMELINE



## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

The key recommendations identified in each of the following chapters are activated by incorporation into an Implementation Action Plan that provides a series of recommended action steps for the Village and its partners to undertake. Summarized in a matrix format, the Implementation Action Plan in each chapter identifies the action steps and assigns potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources for each action step. The action steps identified in each matrix are intended to provide a starting point for prioritization and budgeting of actions needed to implement recommendations outlined in the respective chapter. Further refinement of each matrix will be needed as details of costs and staff resources are verified. In addition, the Village should review and update the Implementation Action Plan matrices on an annual basis to ensure that they stay within the Village's financial ability and resource capacity.



### COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORT [APPENDIX A]

*Prepared at the beginning of the planning process, the Community Assessment Report provides a summary of data analysis and research findings regarding existing conditions in Romeoville. In addition to providing a brief Community Profile of demographics, the report summarized current conditions in the community regarding land use, design, economic and real estate market, transportation, community facilities, utilities, and green infrastructure. A summary of findings from public engagement activities is also provided.*

#### SYMBOLS KEY

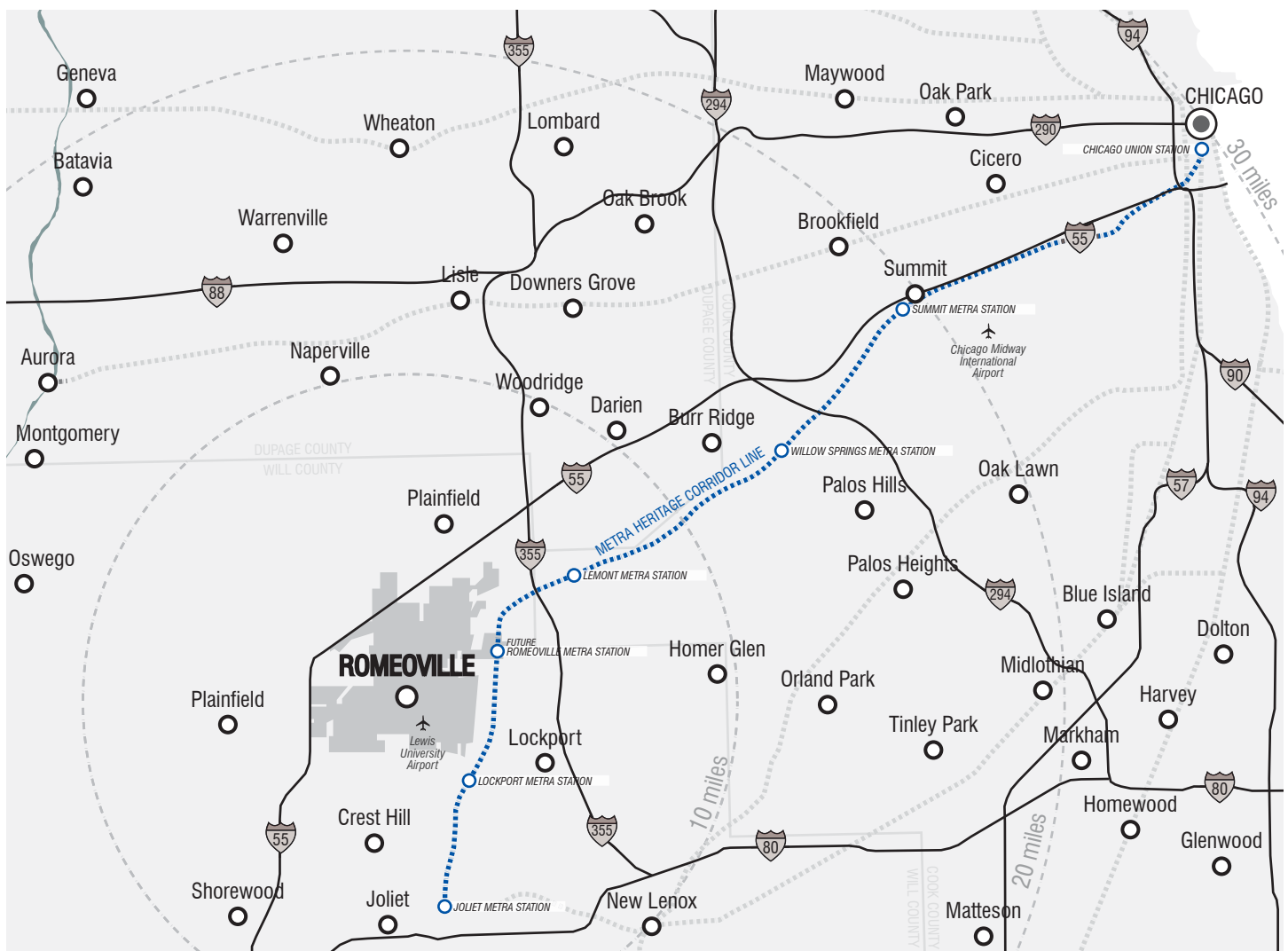
- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS
- PROJECT INITIATION
- COMP PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS
- PUBLIC WORKSHOPS
- INTERIM PLAN REPORTS
- FINAL PLAN REVIEW & ADOPTION

## LOCATION

Located in northern Will County, Romeoville is located approximately 34 miles from Downtown Chicago and offers excellent interstate access via I-55 and I-355 with plans for a future Metra commuter rail station that enhances the Village's transit access to the Chicago metropolitan region. Romeoville is bounded by: Bolingbrook and Woodridge to the north; Lemont and Lockport to the east; Joliet and Crest Hill to the south; and Plainfield to the west. The Village is also characterized by its access to waterfronts and natural areas, including the Des Plaines River, I&M Canal, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve, O'Hara Woods Forest Preserve, and Veterans Woods Forest Preserve. In addition, while Romeoville has its own airport service via Lewis University Airport, the Village is located 36 miles from O'Hare International Airport and 28 miles from Midway International Airport. Romeoville's location within the Chicago metropolitan region is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

FIGURE 1.1  
**REGIONAL LOCATION MAP**

Source: Bing Maps; Metra

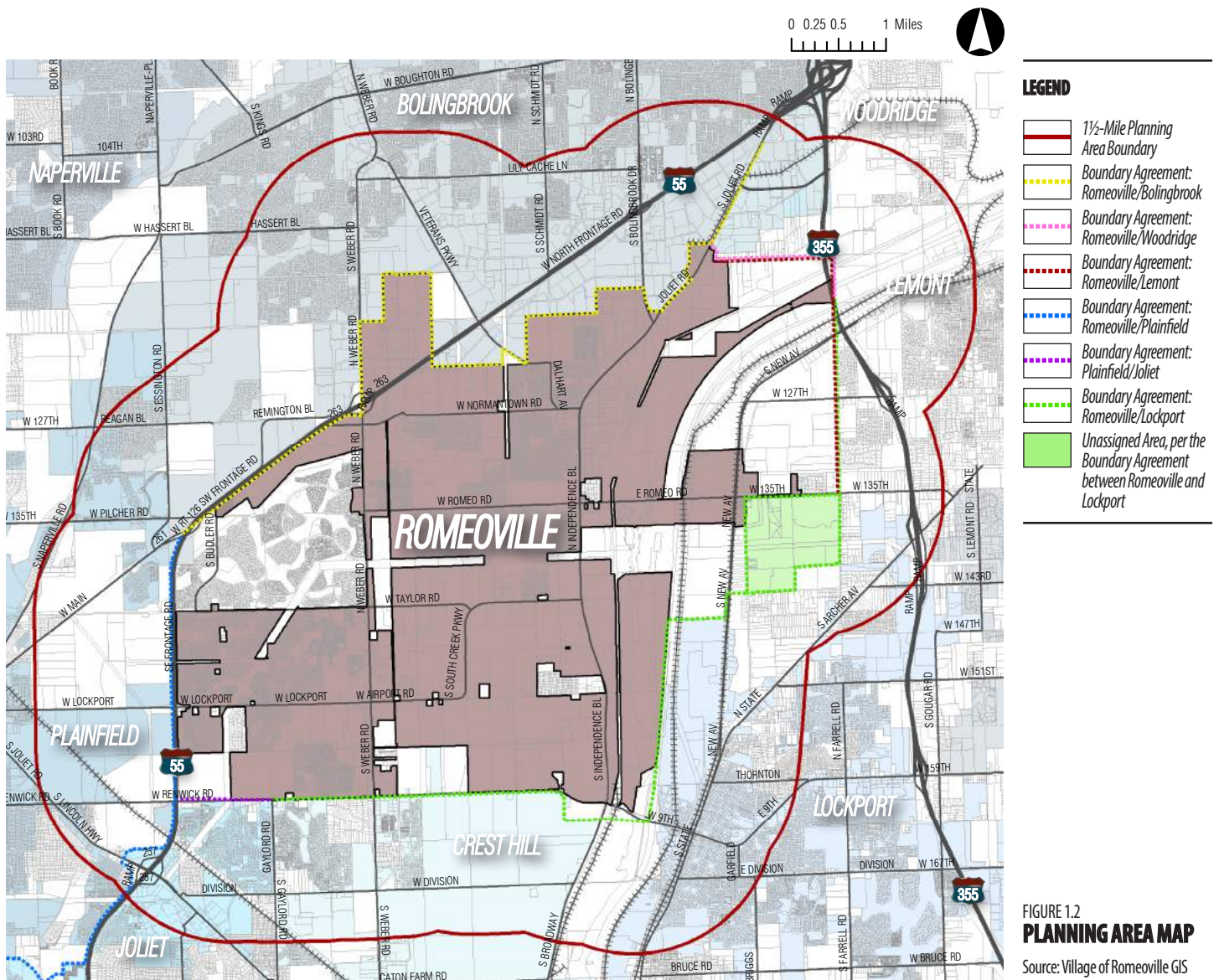




## PLANNING AREA

The Illinois State Statutes empower municipalities to plan future land uses within a 1½-mile radius outside their actual municipal boundaries, known as the planning jurisdiction. This planning area allows a municipality to identify desired future land uses, review plans for unincorporated areas, and preserve public sites and open space corridors. As is the case for many communities, Romeoville's planning area overlaps with neighboring municipalities. In such instances, communities will often enter into boundary agreements, which establish jurisdictional boundary lines that both municipalities agree not to plan or annex.

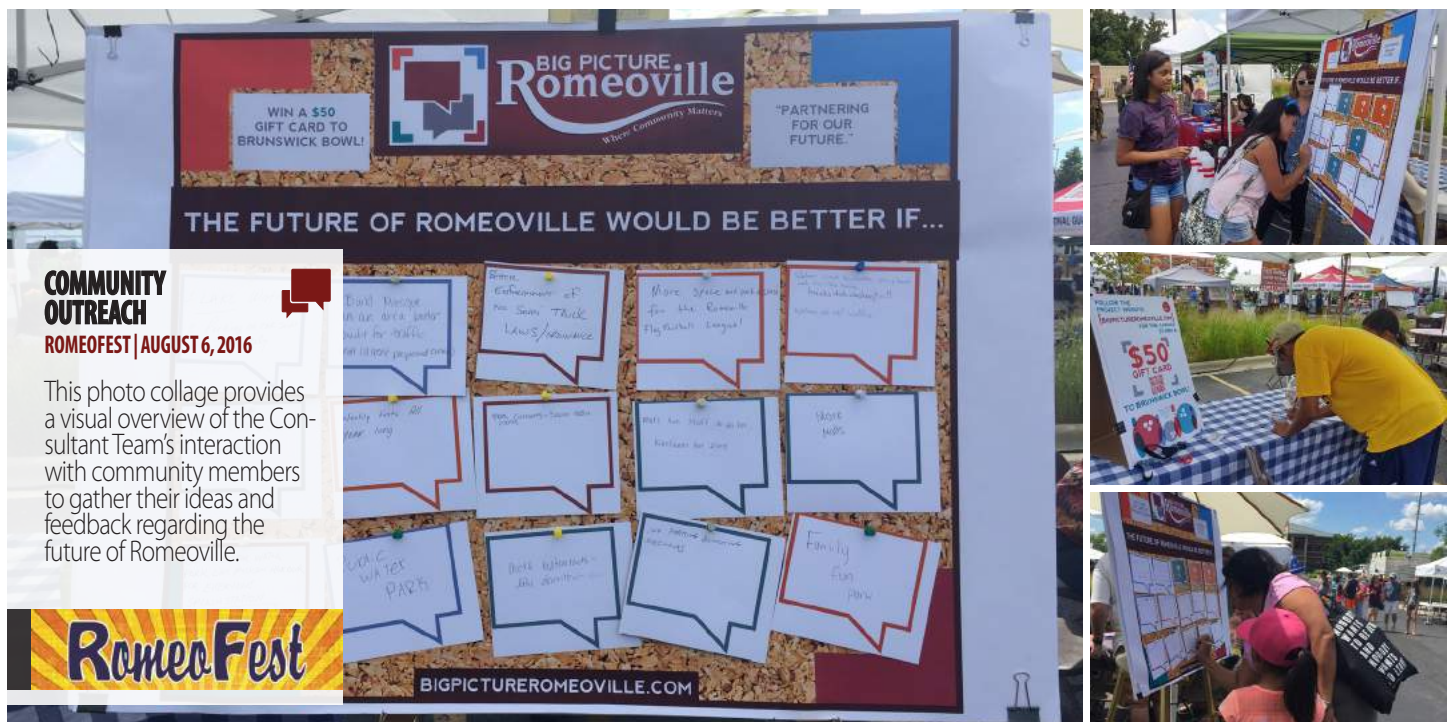
For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan Update, Romeoville's planning area encompasses all territory within the Village's corporate limits including certain unincorporated areas of Will County located at the periphery of the Village. Jurisdiction over some unincorporated areas at the Village's periphery is subject to intergovernmental agreements with the adjacent municipalities of Bolingbrook, Woodridge, Lemont, Lockport, Joliet, and Plainfield, as illustrated in Figure 1.2. Romeoville currently does not have boundary agreements with Crest Hill.



Public engagement was a core element of the planning process for the Comprehensive Plan Update. Designed to be carried out throughout the duration of the planning process, the public engagement approach was a multi-faceted strategy comprised of the following components:

- ☐ Project website
- ☐ App for mobile devices
- ☐ Community survey
- ☐ Online mapping tool
- ☐ Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
- ☐ Stakeholder focus group interviews
- ☐ Public meetings and workshops
- ☐ Community events

Key findings from these public engagement components are summarized in the Community Assessment Report in Appendix A. The key findings and general community feedback were integral to the preparation of the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Framework Plan, strategies, and guiding principles in Chapter 2 and the Future Land Use Plan and sub-area development concepts in Chapter 3.





## CHAPTER 2

# FRAMEWORK PLAN, STRATEGIES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Local, regional, and national economic changes over the last decade require a new vision consistent with the Village's commitment to advance a more diversified tax base through new commercial and industrial projects that create jobs and boost the local economy. Since the adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan in 2001, the Village has invested in Uptown Square, streetscape improvements along IL Route 53, commercial development along Weber Road, plans for a new Metra station, and significant growth of its industrial base.

The Framework Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan Update provides general guidelines to ensure new developments and community improvements advance the high quality of life in Romeoville, which touches upon all aspects of the community, from commerce, employment, and housing to transportation, recreation, and education. Moreover, the Framework Plan outlines strategies and guiding principles that support the five key planning themes, which are defined in Chapter 1 and have been the underlying factors guiding the comprehensive planning process.

As Romeoville plans for its future, the proposed strategies and guiding principles integrate smart growth planning principles, as summarized on the right. Taking a smart growth approach to long term planning will ensure Romeoville continues to support ***"economic growth, strong communities, and environmental health"*** by covering ***"a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect [the Village's] health and natural environment and make [the community] more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse."***<sup>1</sup>

### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

- ☐ A balanced mix of land uses
- ☐ Compact building design
- ☐ A range of housing opportunities
- ☐ Stabilization of existing neighborhoods
- ☐ Safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- ☐ Preservation of open space and environmental areas
- ☐ A variety of transportation choices
- ☐ Fiscally sustainable development
- ☐ An engaged community
- ☐ Strong sense of place, particularly for each of the Village's different subareas

<sup>1</sup> Smart Growth Online: <http://smartgrowth.org>



## FRAMEWORK PLAN

Romeoville's long range plan must be understood within the context of both its historic growth patterns and its current position in the region. Developing a long term growth strategy is influenced by several factors including:

- ❑ Interstate, local roadway and rail systems
- ❑ Competitive market trade areas
- ❑ Retail concentrations of various types (neighborhood, downtown, and community)
- ❑ Regional open spaces and trail systems

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the Framework Plan map describes primary use districts, nodes, gateways, and connections that make up the physical landscape of Romeoville. These elements are described below.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Framework Plan is to illustrate the basic planning and development principles that have and will form the organizational structure for growth and development in Romeoville. Details on each primary use district are provided in the subarea planning section in Chapter 3.



### PRIMARY USE DISTRICTS

Primary use districts describe two types of areas: (1) the historic pattern of development to be preserved or expanded, and (2) new approaches to development for existing areas, such as new growth areas.

#### Mixed Use Corridor

WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR

#### TOD Mixed Use Area

METRA STATION AREA (EAST SIDE)

#### Employment Areas

MULTIPLE SITES

#### Lewis University District

CAMPUS & AIRPORT AREA

#### Key Infill Sites

UPTOWN SQUARE & NE CORNER OF WEBER RD/RENWICK RD

#### Eco-Tourism/Recreation

NRG ENERGY PLANT



### NODES

Nodes typically occur at the intersection of major roadways where concentrations of activities take place, such as major retail centers or civic/institutional areas, such as the Lewis University and airport areas. Nodes typically consist of various types of land uses, including areas of retail concentrations (mainly at major intersections along Weber Road) or opportunities for new forms of development that provide for a diverse mix of uses and densities (including the future Metra station area on the Village's East Side, Lewis University District, and the intersection of Weber and Romeo Roads).



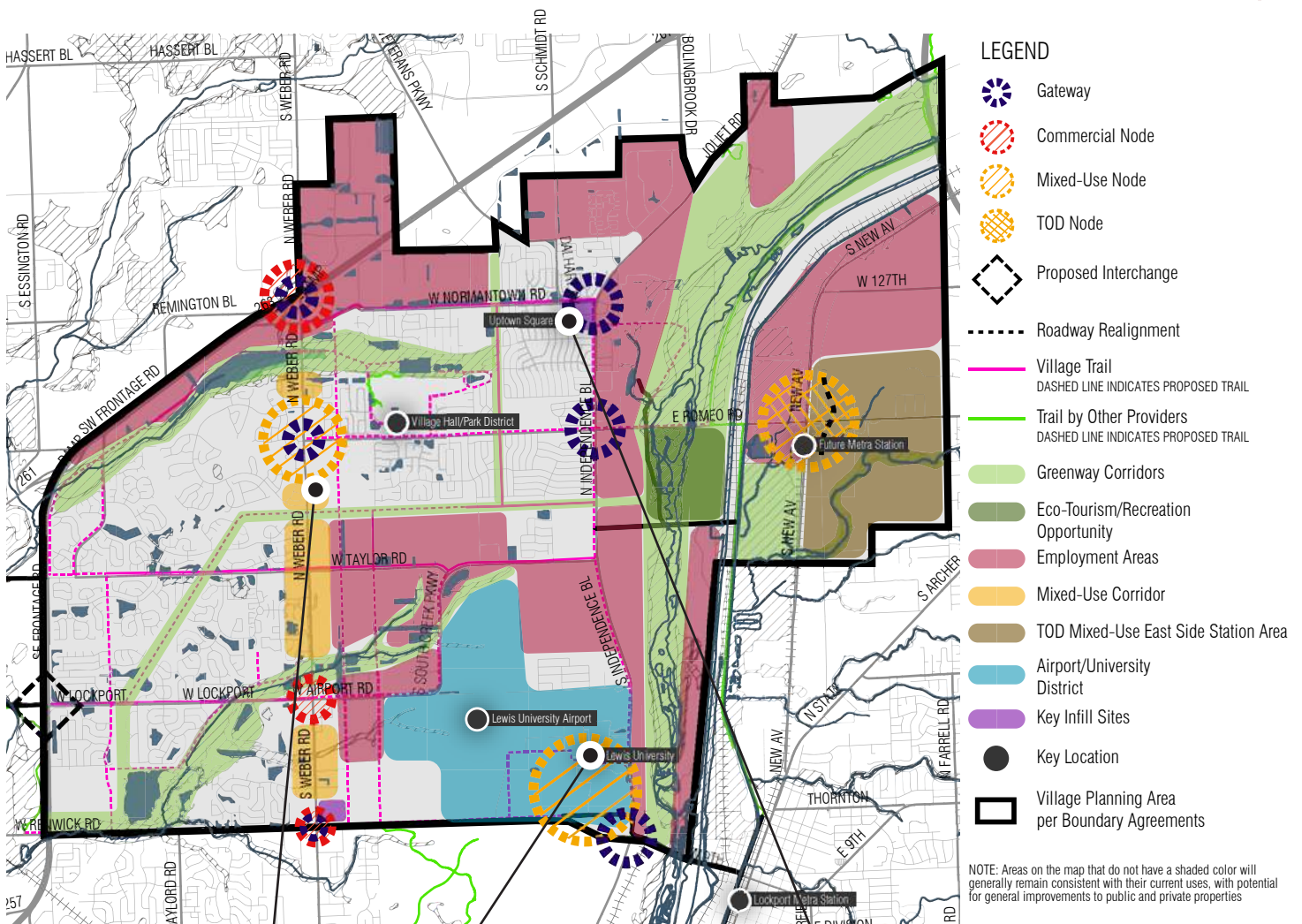
### GATEWAYS

Gateways are of two types: (1) **Identity markers** that are provided at the entries into the community and offer the first glimpse into a community's character, particularly marked by welcome signs, special landscaping, and highlights about its people and institutions; and (2) **Special place markers** identifying special districts in the Village, such as the points of entry for the regional bike paths, Uptown Square, and the future Metra station area on the Village's East Side.



### CONNECTIONS

Connections are the pedestrian and bicycle paths and corridors that provide non-motorized movement along which people travel and recreate. They also interconnect the Village's neighborhoods. Greenway corridors are a specific type of connection that primarily consist of natural areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, waterways, and wildlife habitats. These sensitive environmental features should be preserved and protected from development, but also serve as additional opportunities for non-motorized connections to civic destinations.



**FIGURE 2.1**  
**FRAMEWORK PLAN**

## WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR

### OVERALL APPROACH:

Diversify land uses along the corridor, providing a greater mix of commercial, residential, employment/office, industrial, and retail/service businesses.

WEBER ROAD/ROMEO ROAD NODE:

Emphasize opportunities to create a mixed-use destination with linkages to nearby civic/education uses.

WEBER ROAD/TAYLOR ROAD NODE:

Provide uses that support key mixed-use/commercial nodes, such as residential, office, and service businesses, with limited expansion of existing retail.

## LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

### OVERALL APPROACH:

Explore the development of a mixed-use district that provides residential and employment-focused opportunities that cater to students, faculty, and staff of Lewis University, as well as local residents.

Take advantage of connections to natural areas on the University property and Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve by utilizing the old rail spur right-of-way.

Create linkages to the Lockport Metra Station to promote TOD development.

## UPTOWN SQUARE

**OVERALL APPROACH:**

Strengthen existing uses by creating an entertainment focused destination with supportive housing and commercial.

Emphasize opportunities to build on new retail uses by clustering similar uses near Route 53 and expanding parking to the areas behind the Athletic and Event Center.

Explore the creation of a multipurpose festival plaza adjacent to the Athletic and Event Center, as well as a series of smaller central greens, to provide spaces for events and social gatherings.

## STRATEGY & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR KEY PLANNING THEME #1 ADVANCING A BALANCED ECONOMIC BASE

### STRATEGY

Provide a greater diversification of land uses to reduce reliance on any one business sector. The introduction of supportive land uses, such as housing near employment centers, creates a walk-in market comprised of employees who enhance local sales by frequenting local businesses. Quality housing near employment centers provides important assets for a business seeking a Romeoville location, as they improve access to employees and reduce commuting time for residents. Diversifying employment opportunities and providing for services, commercial businesses, and entertainment options that cater to the needs of residents is necessary to create a more complete community. Maintaining quality neighborhoods with a diversity of housing types is also important to attract talent to fill local jobs, particularly with the subarea development concepts (see Chapter 3) recommending spaces that support entrepreneurs, co-working communities, startups, research, and technology.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**1.1:** Promote mixed use development that is responsive to evolving retail patterns and a growing desire for “experience” based places.

**1.2:** Establish a balance of land uses to ensure long term fiscal sustainability.

**1.3:** Expand housing options that will ensure residents can age in place by finding suitable housing types that meet their changing needs over time without having to leave Romeoville.

**1.4:** Diversify the employment base, which has historically concentrated in the manufacturing, industrial, and warehouse sectors.

**1.5:** Explore other non-traditional business opportunities, such as recreation and tourism based business and hospitality centers.

**1.6:** Ensure the Village’s services, utilities, and other infrastructure are properly maintained and improved over time to continue providing exemplar municipal support and capacity to residents and businesses.



**Romeoville’s legacy as an industrial town has provided a strong local economy and significant job growth. While the industrial base will remain a dominant part of the Village’s economy, diversifying employment opportunities, and providing for services, commercial, and entertainment uses that cater to needs of residents is necessary to create a more complete and sustainable community.**



## STRATEGY & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR KEY PLANNING THEME #2 ENSURING MARKET-SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY

Advance implementation policies that encourage development introducing a broad range of uses to the community. A diversity of uses will support directly or indirectly the fiscal health of the Village through additional tax revenue, new services, and supportive uses that make existing business more successful and enhance the stability of neighborhoods. Fiscal sustainability is dependent on the ability of the Village to withstand significant changes in economic trends, such as the rapid changes in retailing, loss of taxes, or decline of significant business sectors, such as manufacturing.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**2.1:** Capitalize on Romeoville's comparative advantages.

- » A central location with excellent highway accessibility
- » A location providing affordable housing
- » Proximity to customers, suppliers, and support services
- » Access to a broad labor base
- » Excellent community services and amenities
- » Positive business climate

**2.2:** Attract compatible office uses with the recognition that the office market is limited in Romeoville.

**2.3:** Concentrate retail uses at key nodes to strengthen a small core of commercial center rather than a scattered collection of retail businesses across the Village.



**The Comprehensive Plan is guided by a realistic analysis of market conditions, that identifies feasible market-supportive strategies that the Village can undertake in cooperation with its partners. The Economic and Real Estate Market Analysis summarizes market findings and provide recommendations to diversify Romeoville's tax base relating to office, industrial, and retail uses.**

## STRATEGY & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR KEY PLANNING THEME #3 ENHANCING ACCESS & MOBILITY

### STRATEGY

Focus on improving internal accessibility by providing for alternative forms of transportation. Romeoville's economic success is based on its access to regional and interstate roadways. The success of creating more diversified, mixed use developments takes a multimodal approach to ensure all travel modes -- driving, walking, biking, and taking public transit -- are properly integrated into the design of the built environment. The provision of safe and convenient routes for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists are fundamentally tied to the Village's focus on strengthening access to transit facilities and enhancing connectivity to the local system of parks, forest preserves, and open space.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1:** Integrate a Complete Streets approach to provide for a safe, convenient, and comfortable circulation and access for all ages and abilities.
- 3.2:** Encourage development patterns that minimize conflicts between regular auto traffic and trucks that form the lifeblood of Romeoville's strong industrial base.
- 3.3:** Ensure all Village transportation plans are consistent with IDOT and Will County plans and studies.
- 3.4:** Expand the transit network to boost ridership and provide a greater amount of options in Romeoville.
- 3.5:** Utilize the RTA's *Setting the Stage for Transit* guide and Pace's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* to integrate transit-supportive design into bus corridors and the Metra station area.
- 3.6:** Create safe and connected pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly along major corridors, at major intersections, and within mixed use nodes.
- 3.7:** Collaborate with Joliet Regional Port District to ensure future improvement and expansion plans for Lewis University Airport are in concert with the Village's plans.
- 3.8:** Expand the Village's parks and open space system to ensure all residents and workers have safe and convenient access to natural areas and recreational facilities.
- 3.9:** Continue pursuing the Village's sustainability initiatives to protect natural resources and build up the community's green infrastructure.homes, where practical.



**Transportation planning will take a multimodal approach to ensure all modes are properly integrated into the design of the built environment, providing for safe and convenient routes for all travelers and connectivity between neighborhoods, shops, services, parks, open space, and other community amenities.**

## STRATEGY & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR KEY PLANNING THEME #4 DIVERSIFYING THE HOUSING STOCK

### STRATEGY

Provide opportunities to expand housing options in the Village, including a range of housing types to meet current and changing needs of residents over time without having to leave Romeoville. Specifically, each subarea development concept (see Chapter 3) advances the strategies and guiding principles of the Framework Plan by providing market rate housing, attainable housing, and rental housing as part of mixed use projects. Particular attention is given to integrating a mix of housing types near transit facilities, while providing convenient access to restaurants, entertainment, and recreational opportunities.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 4.1:** Expand market rate housing, attainable housing, and rental housing as part of mixed-use projects, particularly in relation to the Village's key subareas.
- 4.2:** Pursue measures that stabilize Romeoville's existing neighborhoods by leveraging municipal support and encouraging investments by property owners.
- 4.3:** Encourage infill development in single family residential areas to support neighborhood stabilization and redevelop underutilized or vacant sites.



**Expanding housing options will ensure residents can age in place by finding suitable housing types that meet their changing needs over time without having to leave Romeoville. To meet this end, promote housing policies that support the distribution of diverse housing types at varying price points.**



## STRATEGY & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR KEY PLANNING THEME #5 LEVERAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### STRATEGY

Continue to foster existing partnerships, such as the model partnership with Edward Hospital that resulted in the Athletic and Event Center, and build new partnerships with other local organizations and higher education institutions. Ensure that each mixed use development opportunity will provide for new uses that support the needs of residents, including expanded community events, gathering places, and social services and programs. Community improvements through partnerships enhance Romeoville's identity as an exemplar place to raise a family, enjoy natural amenities, do business, continue education, and partake in experiences that are unique to Romeoville.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**5.1:** Maintain strong working relationships with all of the Village's partners, from transit agencies, taxing districts, and other governmental bodies to businesses, non-profit foundations, and community-based organizations.

**5.2:** Work with local strategic partners to create efficiencies, leverage limited resources, and strengthen the collective capacity of Romeoville's network of organizations to enhance the quality-of-life for residents, strengthen the business environment, and create vibrant commercial areas.

**5.3:** Support local schools and the library in their efforts to improve facilities, curricula, and other elements that enhance the learning tools and environment for students and residents.

**5.4:** Partner with local colleges and universities to advance the Village's strong economic base by educating and training students who will enter the local workforce and fill the employment needs of local businesses.

**5.5:** Strengthen partnerships with local colleges and universities to build up their attractiveness as high quality destinations for learning and research by meeting the needs of students and faculty, as well as expanding the Village's strong economic base through supportive mixed use development.



**From local businesses and industrial enterprises to educational institutions and community-based organizations, the Village continually strives to leverage its partnerships to support community events, provide services and programs to residents, advance the vibrant business culture, and enhance Romeoville's identity as a great place to live, work, learn, and play.**



### "WHERE COMMUNITY MATTERS"

Through Romeoville's "Where Community Matters" branding program, the Village continues to value partnerships with its citizens, businesses and schools. The Village's "Community of Partners" campaign provides the platform on which to leverage resources and foster greater collaboration between schools, high education institutions, and businesses. The program goal is to improve academic achievement, foster successful individuals, and enrich student experiences.

## CHAPTER 3

# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

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 towards major roadways, the Village maintains a prominent industrial character, with about 41% of assessed valuation of property comprised of industrial uses. While its industrial heritage will continue to be a defining characteristic, two main objectives of this Plan are to expand the Village's commercial base and diversify the housing stock.

The Future Land Use Plan identifies locations within the Village for new land uses, as well as improvements to existing areas, that will help Romeoville expand its economic base and housing opportunities. This will enable the Village to remain a vibrant, growing, and attractive place to live, work, and play. However, due to the growth of the Village and its neighboring communities over the past decade, there are limited areas in the community that will undergo significant land use changes and significant major transportation route improvements, other than the opportunities illustrated in the Subarea Concept Plans, which are provided later in this chapter. This update to the Comprehensive Plan provides a blueprint for public and private decisions about how particular areas should develop in coordination with a multimodal transportation network (Chapter 6) and improvements to community infrastructure (Chapter 7).

The Future Land Use Plan Map in Figure 3.1 is a guide and is not intended to indicate precise boundaries between uses. These uses could vary, depending on how a specific proposal relates to existing uses and to the Future Land Use Plan. The Village will give fair consideration to proposals for land development that varies from the plan. If a proposal will enhance the community, the Village may amend the Future Land Use Plan Map to approve the proposed use.



## LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

The land use classifications identified on the Future Land Use Plan Map in Figure 3.1 are unique to Romeoville, reflecting its vision for long-term growth and stability. The land uses and their descriptions are not necessarily corresponding to current zoning districts or the uses permitted in the Village's Zoning Ordinance. The Village will need to adopt updated regulations and zoning districts in order to implement the recommendations of this Plan. The update of zoning regulations should take into account the following objectives:

- ❑ Consolidate single-family residential districts. The existence of seven separate districts fragments the community, limits development creativity, and impacts market responsiveness.
- ❑ Expand multiple-family districts to provide higher density options, particularly for areas within the Weber Road Corridor or Uptown Square, while consolidating existing multiple-family districts into one attached residential district that provides a greater range of product options.
- ❑ Re-examine the purpose of the three business districts, and consider consolidating to promote retail destination concentrations vs commercial/service use areas.
- ❑ Expand the types of planned developments allowed to include a Mixed-Use Planned Development District (PD-MU). This district would permit the type of mixed uses recommended for Weber Road and the East Side TOD area.



**SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL:** This land use category is intended for detached single family residential dwellings of generally one to two stories in height. This classification encompasses most of the Village's established residential neighborhoods. While there are no new, large areas anticipated for development of future single family residential, there are opportunities to improve and diversify the existing housing stock through infill development in established neighborhoods and limited instances of new development within Uptown Square and the Lewis University District.



**MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL:** This land use category is intended for duplexes, townhomes, condominiums, and apartments. These residential buildings typically range between one and three stories in height. Taller, larger-scale structures at four stories and higher may be considered in areas that may support denser and compact forms of development, like Uptown Square, the southeast corner of Weber Road and Romeo Road, and the Metra station TOD area on the Village's East Side. These areas generally provide access to public transportation and/or major arterial streets.



**COMMERCIAL RETAIL:** This land use category is intended for a mixture of retail stores, restaurants, shopping centers, and entertainment venues, primarily located along major transportation corridors and concentrated at key nodes and subareas, including Uptown Square and the Weber Road Corridor.



**COMMERCIAL SERVICE / OFFICE:** This land use category is devoted to commercial use predominantly of a service nature, including but not limited to auto repair and supply, construction trades and show rooms, and smaller institutional, non-profit, independent, and corporate offices. This category also includes emerging employment-generating uses like co-working spaces, business incubators, hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises, and research/technology labs, which are highlighted in greater detail in the Subarea Concepts Plans. This land use category is crucial to generating diverse employment opportunities in Romeoville.



**MANUFACTURING / WAREHOUSING / DISTRIBUTION:** This land use category is intended for industrial uses, including manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution operations that maintain desirable economic activities to support the Village's economic base and protect real estate values. This classification encompasses select areas with close proximity to major transportation corridors. Similar to Commercial Service/Office, this land use category is critical to the creation of jobs in the community.



**CONSERVATION:** This land use category is devoted to the conservation of sensitive environmental features such as floodplains, creeks, and wetlands. In some cases, recreation and open space opportunities may be provided in these conservation areas to create "green" corridors that provide trail linkages to sites and facilities around the Village.



**PARKS/RECREATION:** This land use category encompasses parks, recreational facilities, and forest preserves that serve the community at the neighborhood, community, and regional levels.



**GOVERNMENT / INSTITUTIONAL:** This land use category includes municipal, educational, and institutional facilities that serve the community. Certain institutional uses, such as churches and religious places of worship, are not individually shown on the map but understood to be vital assets to the community.



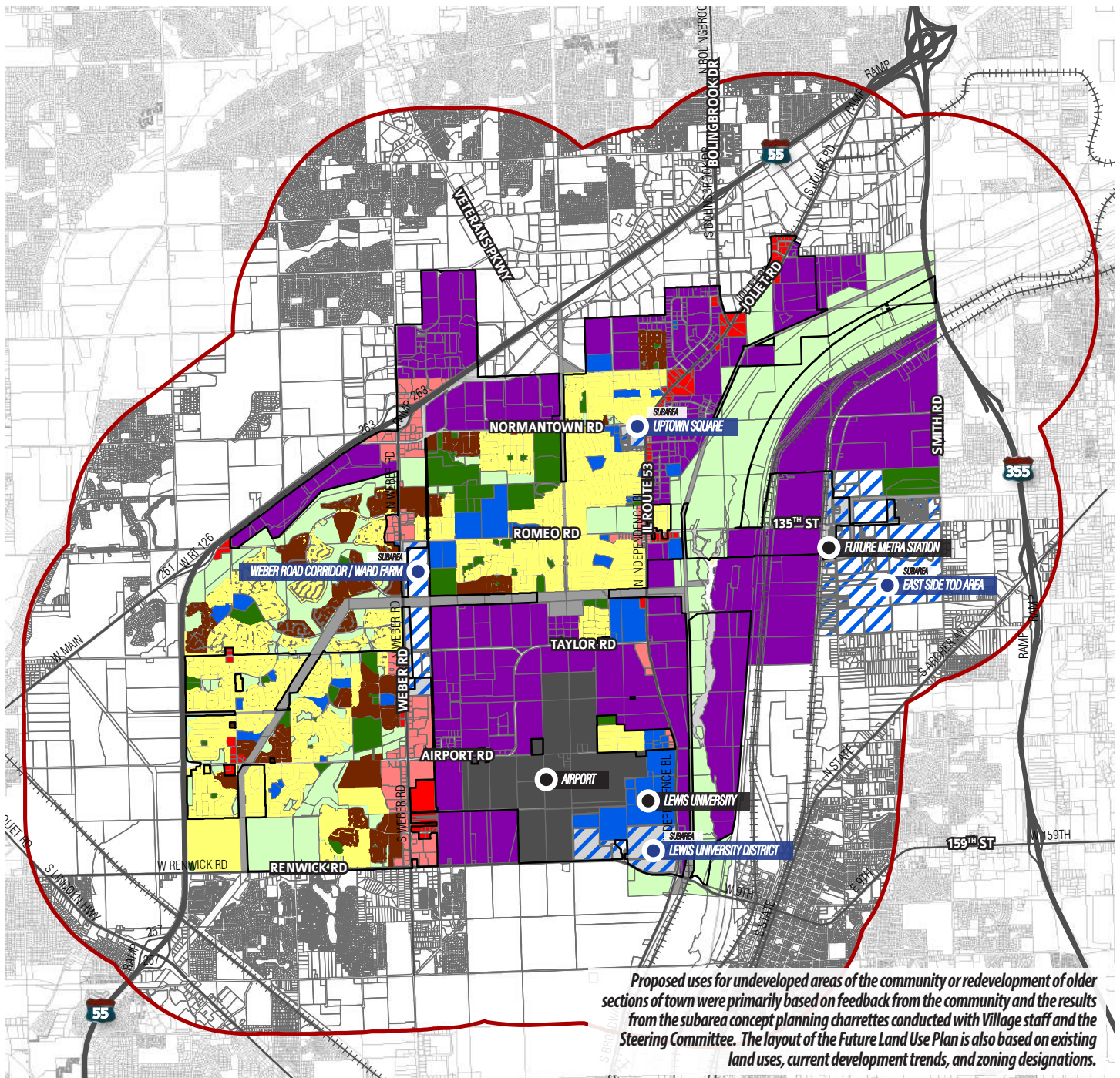
**UTILITY CORRIDOR:** This land use category is devoted to primary utility distribution transmission services by local and State authorized utility companies. The ComEd rights-of-way are the most significant utility corridors, which also provide opportunities for trails and recreational connectivity.



**AIRPORT:** This land use category encompasses land occupied by Lewis University Airport and ancillary facilities. Serving as an asset to the Village's transportation network, airport uses are also vital to economic development in Romeoville.



FIGURE 3.1  
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP



**LEGEND**

- |  |                          |                                   |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Single Family Residential              | Government/Institutional | 1 1/2-Mile Planning Area Boundary |
| Multiple Family Residential            | Conservation             | Mixed Use/Subarea                 |
| Commercial Retail                      | Parks/Recreation         | » Uptown Square                   |
| Commercial Service/Office              | Utility Corridor         | » Weber Road Corridor/Ward Farm   |
| Manufacturing/Warehousing/Distribution | Airport                  | » Lewis University District       |
|  |                          | » East Side TOD Area              |
|  |                          | » Weber/Renwick Area              |



## LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

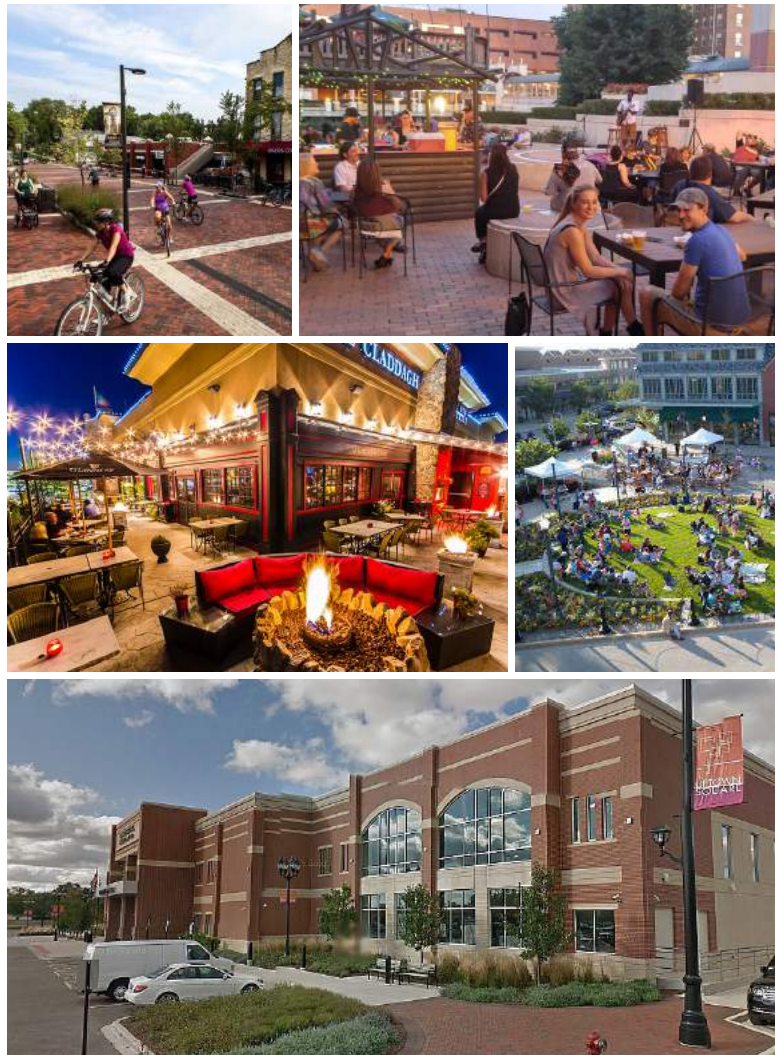
**Promote mixed use development that is responsive to evolving retail patterns and a growing desire for "experience" based places.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.1 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Revitalize existing commercial centers as more experienced based places to enhance function, activity, and productivity, while creating opportunities to cultivate a greater sense of place via civic engagement in well planned public spaces (e.g., provide a civic plaza/park in Uptown Square to draw more people).
- ❑ Expand the retail and entertainment footprint at nodes of concentrated development, including Uptown Square and Weber/Romeo Road intersection.
- ❑ Diversify uses along the Weber Road corridor, with concentrated retail and mixed use development at nodes, and supportive land uses (office, residential, and services) between development.
- ❑ Encourage big box and other similar large-format retailers to locate in mixed use centers, while discouraging freestanding locations.
- ❑ Expand restaurant offerings in concentrated centers that appeal to a wide variety of tastes and budgets, as well as draw residents and workers.
- ❑ Integrate cultural arts and recreational uses that appeal to the needs of all age groups, including Millennials, and senior citizens.

An increasingly mobile and tech-focused consumer base has changed traditional shopping patterns, requiring new forms of development that support a mix of uses, improved pedestrian access, and entertainment and housing options that offer unique experiences. A mix of land uses promotes a denser cluster of activities through the utilization of unique development and design standards. Compact land use forms that promote "experience" based places are achievable through mixed use development, which allows for residential, office, retail, public, and entertainment uses built in concentrated areas at higher densities and in a cohesive manner. The compact and cohesive elements are crucial to making places more conducive to a pedestrian-level environment that encourage amenities like outdoor dining, plazas, civic spaces, sidewalk kiosks, and interactive elements, which are central to creating "experience" based places.



*Many communities across the Chicago region have created "experience" based places, including: the Dutch street in Batavia (top left); the riverfront in Aurora (top right); Downtown Geneva (middle left); and the Glen Town Center in Glenview (middle right). Uptown Square is an ideal place for future "experience" based development, particularly building upon the high quality design and pedestrian-oriented environment that has formed around the Edward Hospital Athletic and Event Center (bottom).*

**RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE****Establish a balance of land uses to ensure long term fiscal sustainability.****GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.2 [SEE CHAPTER 2]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ Improve connectivity to commercial centers via roads and pedestrian/bicycle paths from neighborhoods and employment centers to enhance the access to and performance of retail centers.
- ❑ Diversify uses along the Weber Road corridor, with concentrated retail and mixed use development at nodes, and supportive land uses (office, residential, and services) between development nodes.
- ❑ Provide for high quality office spaces in and near nodes that provide locational and amenity advantages for firms serving local markets, and the growing demand for off-site and specialty medical services.
- ❑ Provide for high quality multiple family housing options near nodes that also provide transit access, dining, entertainment, recreational, and employment offerings.
- ❑ Emphasize the arrangement of freestanding land uses in mixed use developments along Weber Road corridor, rather than vertical mixed use projects that are more typical in dense urban centers like Uptown Square and the future Metra station TOD area.
- ❑ Consider changes in corridor zoning to provide for mixed use and other non-retail development.
- ❑ Explore other non-traditional business opportunities, such as recreation and tourism based business and hospitality centers, that take advantage of Romeoville's environmental resources, access to an established parks system, and a network of regional trails and open spaces.

Romeoville's legacy as an industrial town has provided a strong local economy and significant job growth. While the industrial base will remain a dominant part of the Village's economy, diversifying employment opportunities, and providing for services, commercial, and entertainment uses that cater to the needs of residents and workers is necessary to create a more complete and sustainable community. This will enable the local economy to absorb any hits and rebound well if a certain business falters or a type of product becomes obsolete. While balance is key, the Village does not need to provide every type of product, service, or use. However, whatever it offers should be done and presented well to the local community and visitors from across the region. As the adage goes: whatever you do, do it well.

**Expand housing options that will ensure residents can age in place by finding suitable housing types that meet their changing needs over time without having to leave Romeoville.****GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.3 [SEE CHAPTER 2]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

See Chapter 5: Housing for specific recommendations

Romeoville's relative affordability compared to other locations and superior freeway access to I-55 and I-355 have made the community a desirable location in Will County, which experienced a significant growth of new homes being built in the 1990s and 2000s. As the Village focuses on stabilizing its neighborhoods and prepares for additional growth, priority should be given to enhancing the diversity of housing options, which will ensure the Village is able to provide adequate housing for families, new starter households, senior citizens, and affordable options for students and workers at local businesses. High quality housing at affordable price points is a critical component of Romeoville's economic strategy to maintain a healthy business climate and provide a balanced residential land use mix.



## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

### FUTURE LAND USE

The key land use recommendations identified in this chapter are activated by the action steps summarized in the Implementation Action Plan matrix below. Potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources are also identified for each action step.

Action Step	Partner(s) <sup>A</sup>	Priority <sup>B</sup>	Phasing <sup>C</sup>	Potential Funding Sources <sup>D</sup>
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.1</b> Promote mixed use development that is responsive to evolving retail patterns and a growing desire for “experience” based places.				
Create flexible zoning to allow and encourage expansion of entertainment and non-retail uses as part of larger commercial projects along Weber Road, in the vicinity of Route 53 and Renwick Road, as part of the Lewis University expansion, and near the proposed Metra station as recommended in the East Side Plan.  » Change the commercial zoning for the property at Weber Road/Romeo Road intersection, to allow a greater mix of uses, varied building heights, and establish either a by-right commercial mixed-use or a planned development district.  » Establish a planned development district upon annexation of the Ward Farm to provide flexibility in allowable uses, as recommended in the subarea development concept plan for the Weber Road Corridor.  » Reduce parking requirements in mixed use developments and implement shared parking standards.	Village; Lewis University; Public/Private Partnerships	High	Near Term	Village
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.2</b> Establish a balance of land uses to ensure long term fiscal sustainability.				
Diversify uses along the Weber Road Corridor with supportive land uses (office, residential and services) between more intensive mixed use development nodes as recommended the subarea development concept plan for the Weber Road Corridor.  » Revise zoning along Weber Road to provide for a greater mix of uses, or introduce new zoning districts that allow for supportive land uses.	Village; Public/Private Partnerships	Medium	Long Term	Village

#### NOTES

<sup>A</sup> Partners: The list of partners is not static and may change over time

<sup>B</sup> Priority: High, Medium, Low

<sup>C</sup> Phasing: Ongoing; Near Term (Years 1-5); Long Term (Years 5+)

<sup>D</sup> Potential Funding Sources: See descriptions in Chapter 8

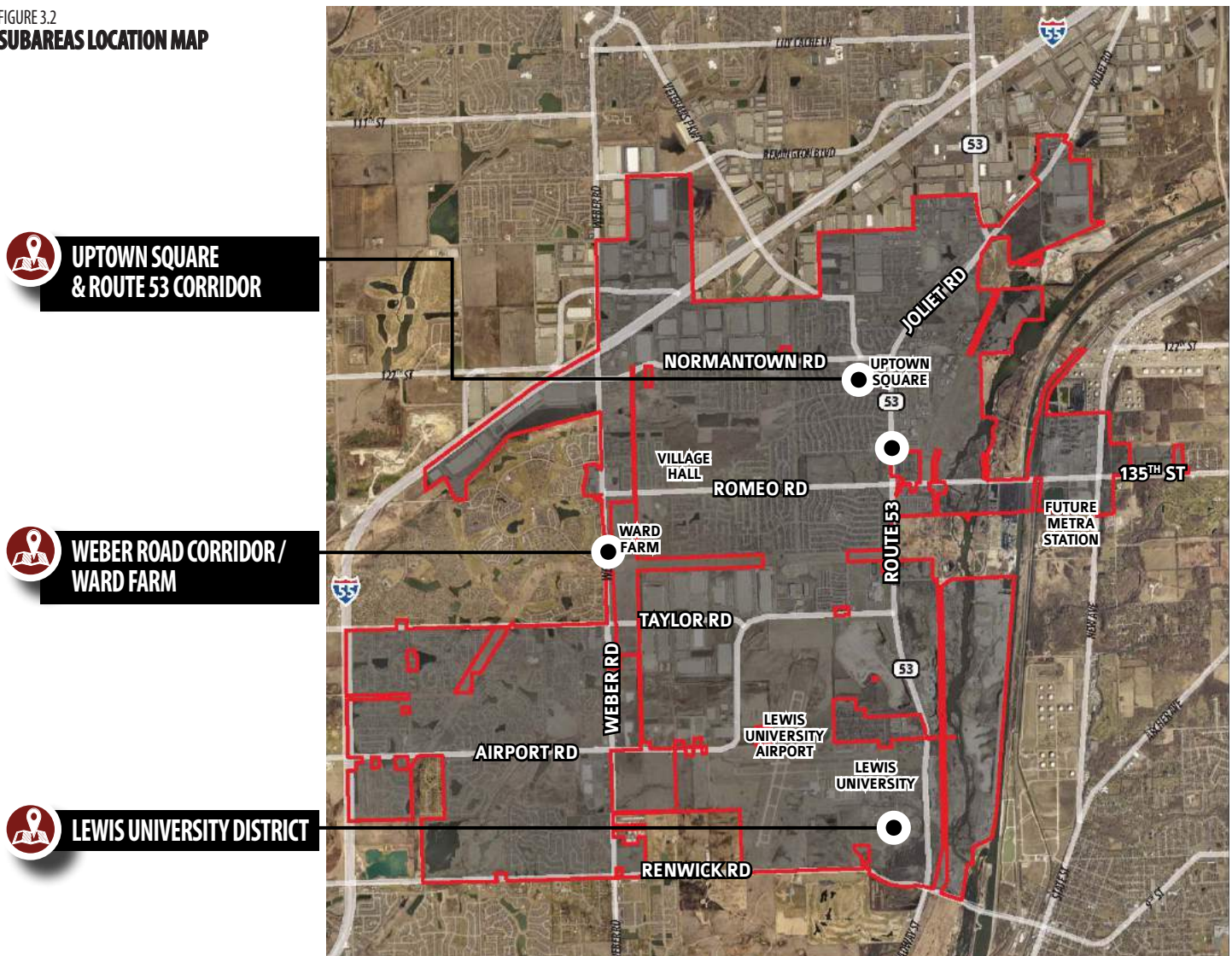
## SUBAREA PLANNING

### DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLANS

Subarea plans provide in-depth analyses, policies, and strategies for three of the Village's primary development opportunity areas: (1) Uptown Square and IL Route 53 Corridor; (2) Weber Road Corridor/Ward Farm; and (3) Lewis University District.

Each subarea offers different development opportunities based on their unique location, attributes, and place within the Village's historical growth pattern. Collectively, all subareas will play an important role in achieving the Comprehensive Plan's objective to contribute to balanced growth and revitalization in the Village, and be transformative in shaping the future of Romeoville. A key element of Romeoville's Comprehensive Plan Update process is the determination of the land use, design, and transportation policies that will direct the development/redevelopment of the remaining significant opportunity sites within the Village. Each of the land use concepts described in this summary reflects the information provided in the Community Assessment Report and the findings from community engagement tasks, including design charrettes and the community survey.

FIGURE 3.2  
SUBAREAS LOCATION MAP

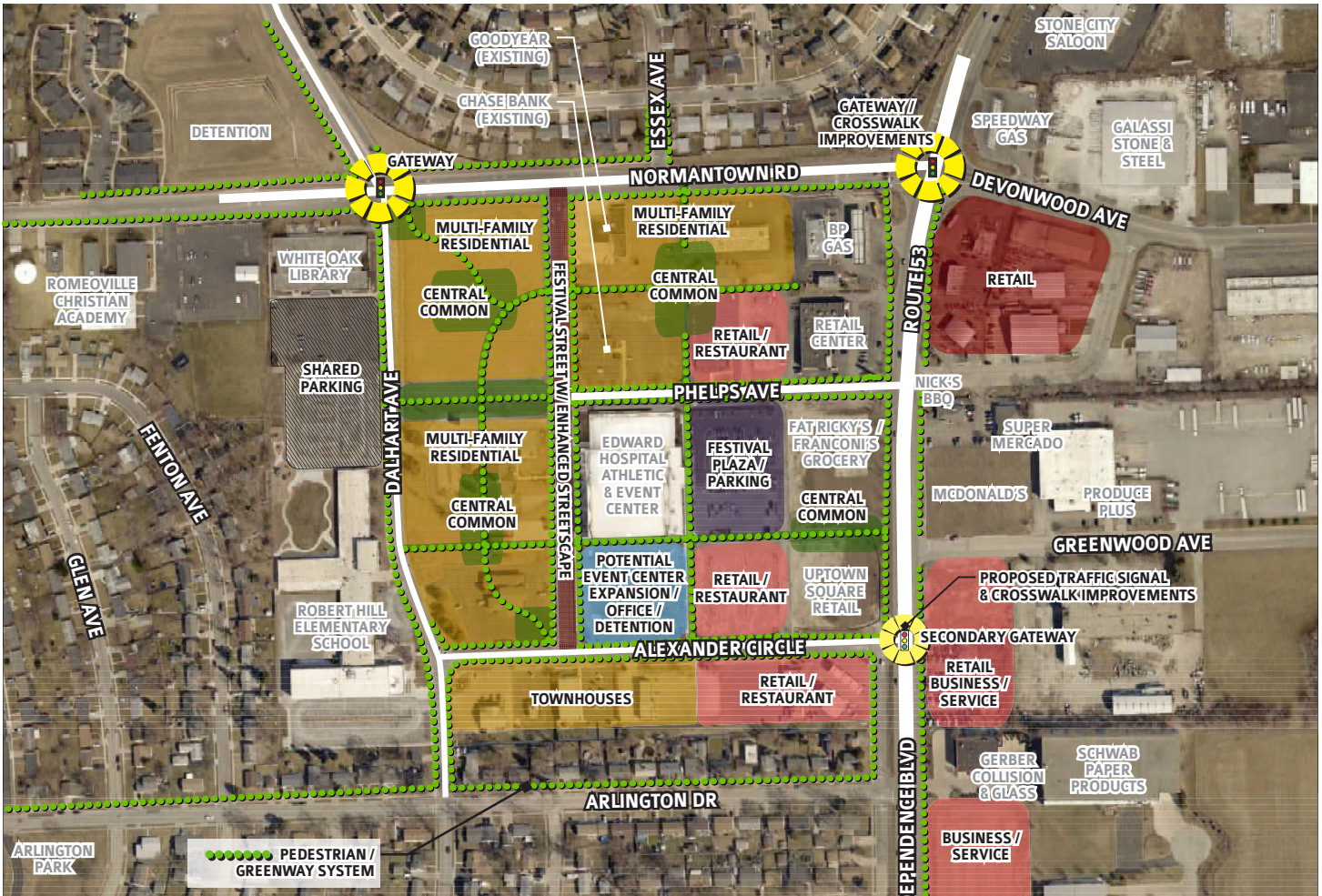




## SUBAREA: UPTOWN SQUARE & IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR

### DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

FIGURE 3.3  
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: UPTOWN SQUARE & IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR



#### PERSPECTIVE RENDERING OF POTENTIAL FESTIVAL PLAZA ADJACENT TO THE ATHLETIC & EVENT CENTER

Temporary use of parking lot for community events to activate the space and further enhance the vitality of Uptown Square



**SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: UPTOWN SQUARE & IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR**

The Village in its 2003 Downtown Plan established a vision to “create a distinctive, walkable neighborhood that features a variety and concentration of valuable destinations and activities.” While Uptown Square has historically been a commercial center, it holds greater potential to offer a mixed use environment, including commercial uses fronting the main roads and residential opportunities.

The Village’s investment in Uptown Square and the partnership with Edward Hospital to locate the Athletic and Events Center has provided a solid foundation for the revitalization of the areas as an important destination for all of Romeoville’s residents. These investments have already resulted in new private investment as exhibited by the soon to open new restaurant and grocer, and bank anchored retail center. Further advancement of Uptown Square will hinge upon infill development and potential redevelopment of existing sites that may become available over time. While the entire subarea covers about 40 acres, the potential redevelopment area comprises about 32 acres.

The development concept plan for Uptown Square ties the market opportunities with the community’s desire or vision to provide a guiding document for subsequent public and private decisions. The overall goal is to program and promote Uptown Square as a premier live-work-shop environment in the area. The plan builds on the investments of the Village and private sectors, by placing emphasis on creating an entertainment oriented destination consisting of retail, restaurant, and festival spaces all linked by a pedestrian and greenway system. These uses will be supported by multi-family housing and consolidated public parking that will transform the area into a genuine pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use destination. The plan is carefully crafted to foster an incremental implementation process. The concept plan embraces the following objectives:

- ☐ Create a more viable, walkable shopping experience;
- ☐ Introduce additional residents to the area;
- ☐ Create a compelling space for socializing and community events;
- ☐ Maximize the use of land for active and tax supportive uses;
- ☐ Improve connectivity; and
- ☐ Improve overall appearance and identity.

FIGURE 3.4

**ESTIMATED LAND COVERAGE & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FOR PROPOSED LAND USES  
UPTOWN SQUARE & IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR**

	Area	% of Subarea	Development Potential
Open Space/Parks/Detention	5 acres	16%	217,800 sq ft
Multiple Family Residential	10 acres	31%	100 units
Retail/Restaurants/Business/Service	13 acres	41%	113,256 sq ft
Parking/Plaza Space	2 acres	6%	87,120 sq ft
Townhouses/Rowhouses	2 acres	6%	8 units
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	

ASSUMPTIONS: Average density for townhouses/rowhouses (4.00 du/ac); average density for multiple-family residential (10.00 du/ac); FAR for retail (0.20)

*The Village and its partners have invested significantly in Uptown Square, including commercial businesses like Fat Ricky’s and Franconi’s Grocery (top) and community-oriented uses like the Athletic and Events Center (bottom).*



## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: UPTOWN SQUARE &amp; IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR

## RECOMMENDATIONS



## ENTERTAINMENT FOCUSED MARKET

To support and complement existing businesses, emphasis should be placed on creating a retail and restaurant cluster linked by a pedestrian greenway, central common green spaces, and a festival plaza for larger community events. Redevelopment sites should be comprised of compatible clusters of retail and office establishments, including medical offices.

**i** NOTE: See Chapter 4 for specific commercial recommendations



## PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT

The retail core must be integrated with residential uses and streetscape elements to provide the synergy needed to create a desirable pedestrian experience. The structures located along local roads should result in a distinctive 'main-street' character by establishing a "streetwall" with buildings at the sidewalks edge to provide an uninterrupted experience.



## VARIED BUILDING HEIGHTS

Commercial and population density will support businesses and create the economic incentives necessary for a financially feasible project. Therefore, varied building heights between two and three stories for commercial uses, and five to six stories for multiple-family uses create architectural interest, provide for a pedestrian scale, and enhance economic opportunity.



## DOWNTOWN IDENTITY, PLACEMAKING &amp; TOURISM

The identity of Uptown Square should be enhanced by improving gateway and wayfinding signage from major roadways and bike paths, including directory signage at the main entrances into Uptown Square. Additional signage is important to promote the Route 53 Corridor drive through Romeoville as part of the 'Route 66' tourism corridor. Expansion of the festival marketplace atmosphere by programming for frequent events will also serve to draw more visitors to local businesses.



## DISTINCTIVE HOUSING

Residential land uses are important in both maintaining vitality of Uptown Square and in providing alternative entry level housing. Developing distinctive, mid-rise housing, and townhouses creates a 24-hour presence increasing safety, customer base, and spending power. Direct access to the library, elementary school, Athletic Center, and downtown businesses provides desirable amenities and promotes the walkability of the neighborhood. Although desirable, multi-story residential buildings are not required to provide for ground floor retail.

**i** NOTE: See Chapter 5 for specific housing recommendations



## ACCESSIBILITY

Connectivity to neighborhoods, transit facilities, bikeways and ease of access to Uptown Square from Route 53 are essential elements of creating a successful destination. Potential to extend Pace bus service to loop through Uptown Square would encourage greater transit usage. Maintaining the street grid, and expanding/improving sidewalks and creating pleasing pedestrian/ greenway paths into and through the Downtown provide the public infrastructure that creates a vital place.



## CONSOLIDATED PARKING

Providing close, efficient parking opportunities is vital to the success of the Uptown entertainment/retail area. The existing auto-oriented retailers on the edges of Uptown Square rely on on-site parking as a part of their property, allowing customers quick, efficient access to the store for single purchases. The more urban, pedestrian-oriented businesses planned for the core area rely on centralized off-street parking and efficient, close on-street parking. Using land owned and planned for acquisition on the east side of Dalhart Avenue, the Village should construct a public off-street parking facility to serve Uptown businesses, Athletic Center and community festivals. Where provided on-site, all parking should be provided to the rear or side of buildings and screened with landscaping or masonry wall to create a buffer with pedestrian areas along Route 53 and within the proposed internal build-out of Uptown Square.



## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: UPTOWN SQUARE &amp; IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Uptown Square and adjacent residential areas were originally developed prior to contemporary storm water management requirements. For this reason, the study area has, at times, seen significant flooding arise from improper stormwater detention and retention. The development of a comprehensive stormwater management plan using Best Management Practices (BMPs) is essential so the effects of large storms do not impact the site, surrounding residents and businesses and downstream users. The Plan proposes several alternative methods for stormwater entrapment and release, such as underground detention to allow for dense, compact buildings to be constructed without the need for open retention/detention ponds. Where open detention is provided, create multi-purpose facilities that include opportunities for active and passive recreation. Parking areas and pedestrian/greenway shall be designed to incorporate bioswales and filtration systems in larger parking areas, allowing the water to be treated and temporarily stored on site in smaller detention basins. Where possible, use stormwater as a feature in the development, recycling and cleaning water for use in fountains and other focal points. Utilize green roof technologies if feasible to reduce the amount of water running off roofs.

**IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS**

The long term goals for IL Route 53 are to improve the corridor as a gateway providing a high quality identity for the Village, ensure efficient traffic flow, and create more multi-modal opportunities along this transportation link to the rest of the Village and region. As shown in Figure 3.5, the IL Route 53 Corridor Improvement Plan focuses on the portion of the corridor where most urban activity takes place – proximity of neighborhoods, schools, commercial, and employment centers.

The concept plan for Uptown Square and IL Route 53 serves as a guide for development potential over the next ten years. The goal of the plan is to re-establish Uptown Square as a thriving commercial and social center of the community that provides convenience shopping, unique dining, specialty stores, office space, and a location for events. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements are also a necessity to enable people to access and circulate around Uptown Square safely and conveniently on foot, by bike, or via Pace bus.

FIGURE 3.5

**IL ROUTE 53 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PLAN**



**FIGURE 3.6**  
**DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR / WARD FARM**



## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR / WARD FARM

This subarea encompasses the stretch of Weber Road from Romeo Road to Highpoint Drive. The availability of developable land covers approximately 188 acres and is concentrated along the east side of Weber Road, including the Ward Farm property at the southeast intersection of Weber and Romeo Roads. Commercial development currently exists at major intersections along Weber Road, with adjacent industrial development to the east and south of the ComEd right-of-way. Residential neighborhoods are located along the west side of Weber Road and at the northern end of the corridor. The Village's municipal campus is nearby to the northeast along Romeo Road, while Lewis University Airport is situated to the west.

The development concept plan for the Weber Road Corridor/Ward Farm recommends a distinct development pattern for each of the three corridor segments, as described below. An internal roadway system would provide north-south roads that run parallel to Weber Road, providing alternative access and circulation away from the busy arterial. This internal roadway system would also link to existing roads and adjacent sites, where feasible, to provide logical connections and ensure adequate circulation across the entire corridor. The open space and stormwater detention areas illustrated on the concept plan will need to accommodate mitigation of any impacts on existing water features and water drainage that is currently managed by agricultural field tiles. New development also has the potential to leverage stormwater management features to enhance the resilience of the corridor during major flood events.

The development concept plan illustrates the full build out scenario for the Weber Road Corridor, with the understanding that market conditions and absorption of new spaces placed in the marketplace will dictate the phasing of the build out of the various aspects of the development concept. The site layouts illustrated on the plan are also conceptual in nature, with the arrangement of buildings, open spaces, and internal roadways open to refinement as actual development plans solidify over time. Since the Comprehensive Plan Update is a long term vision for the community, it is important to view the development concept plan in that light to recognize that full build out of the Weber Road Corridor will take several years but can still have incremental positive impacts on the growth and prosperity of Romeoville.

FIGURE 3.7

**ESTIMATED LAND COVERAGE & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FOR PROPOSED LAND USES**  
WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR / WARD FARM

	Area	% of Subarea	Development Potential
Open Space/Parks/Detention	64 acres	34%	2,787,840 sq ft
Multiple Family Residential			
» Option A: None proposed along Taylor Rd	12 acres	7%	120 units
» Option B: Proposed along Taylor Rd	36 acres	20%	360 units
Retail/Restaurants/Business/Service	33 acres	18%	287,496 sq ft
Innovation District			
» Option A: Proposed along Taylor Rd	24 acres	13%	365,904 sq ft
» Option B: None proposed along Taylor Rd	-	-	-
Office	18 acres	10%	196,020 sq ft
Co-Working Space/Business Incubator	5 acres	2%	54,450 sq ft
Hybrid Light Industrial/Commercial	22 acres	12%	335,412 sq ft
Existing Farm	5 acres	2%	217,800 sq ft
Civic Campus	5 acres	2%	54,450 sq ft
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>188 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	

ASSUMPTIONS: Average density for multiple-family residential (10.00 du/ac); FAR for retail (0.20); FAR for office, co-working space, business incubator, and civic center (0.25); FAR for research/technology and hybrid light industrial/commercial enterprises (0.35)



SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: **WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR / WARD FARM****VILLAGE LIFESTYLE CENTER [NORTHERN SEGMENT]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

Covering the Weber Road Corridor from Romeo Road southward to the ComEd ROW, this segment of the subarea will primarily serve as a compact Village mixed use lifestyle center, which would build off the synergies created by the proximity to a diversity of existing uses, as described below.



Retail and restaurants are proposed to front along Weber Road and at the Romeo Road intersection. These uses would pair well with the existing retail centers north of Romeo Road and offer more options for residents, employees, Joliet Junior College students, and travelers along Weber Road. A hotel is also proposed at the eastern end of the site to provide a lodging opportunity along the corridor, particularly catering to families of local college students and youth sports teams that may travel from afar to play on the proposed sports/recreational fields that serve as either an expansion to Volunteer Park or a standalone facility.

**NOTE:** See Chapter 4 for specific commercial recommendations



Multi-family residential is proposed at the interior of the site and built around a courtyard/community green feature that can serve as a visual and physical linkage with the proposed civic center, hotel, and retail uses along Weber Road. Whether built as apartments or condominiums, the proposed multi-family residential will add to the diversity of existing housing in the area, with residential neighborhoods located to the north, east, and west. Situated in a compact mixed use setting, the proposed residential uses may attract young adults/Millennials, young families, industrial/office employees, or people seeking urban-style living along a busy suburban arterial. Apartments may also appeal to local college students at Joliet Junior College and Lewis University.

**NOTE:** See Chapter 5 for specific housing recommendations



A civic center is proposed as a non-commercial anchor along Weber Road. Potential civic uses may include fine and performance art spaces, community rooms, and satellite municipal/county services, particularly with the Village's municipal campus and Joliet Junior College situated nearby. A civic center would also provide a unique draw to the Weber Road Corridor beyond the typical traffic generated by commercial and industrial uses.



Sports/recreational fields are proposed in the area adjacent to Volunteer Park and north of the Ward Farm buildings. These fields may serve as either an expansion to Volunteer Park or a standalone facility, which would cater to families of youth sports teams that may compete in regional tournaments and travel leagues. The fields may also be used by athletic teams at Joliet Junior College. The Ward Farm buildings and grounds may be repurposed as an interpretive farm site with educational, historical, and community event components, similar to the Agricultural Interpretive Center at the Naper Settlement in Naperville and Wagner Farm in Glenview. Stormwater detention features may provide secondary uses, such as a corridor gateway at the Romeo Road intersection and general open space to soften the hardscapes of a major road corridor. With the repurposed farm site being adjacent to the proposed sports/recreational fields, the two uses could be promoted together as a family-oriented destination with sports, education, activities, and history in one central area. The adjacent uses could also share parking.

**NOTE:** See Chapter 4 for specific recommendations regarding non-traditional economic development opportunities



## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: WEBER ROAD CORRIDOR / WARD FARM

**EMPLOYMENT CENTER [CENTER SEGMENT]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

Covering the Weber Road Corridor from the ComEd ROW southward to Taylor Road, this segment of the subarea will primarily serve as a unique employment center providing the following opportunities described below. The co-working spaces, business incubators, hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises, and innovation district should be arranged in a campus environment to offer common open spaces, encourage collaboration, and break up the monotony of the expansive industrial spaces that characterize Taylor Road and other industrial parks in the community. In addition, these spaces that comprise this unique employment center are primarily proposed at the central/eastern portion of the site, which enables retail spaces to take advantage of frontage along Weber Road.

**i NOTE:** See Chapter 4 for specific recommendations regarding unique industrial, office, and employment opportunities

**INNOVATION DISTRICT**

An innovation district would aim to attract the types of businesses that cater to a highly skilled workforce and have the potential to make Romeoville an attractive destination for research and development firms and tech startups.

**CO-WORKING SPACES & BUSINESS INCUBATORS**

Co-working spaces and business incubators may cater to emerging entrepreneurs who don't require a lot of space to start their businesses but would benefit from a community of like-minded people to create, innovate, and grow.

**HYBRID INDUSTRIAL / COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

Hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises are becoming more prominent by providing manufacturing, warehousing, and sales under a single roof. While this model can cut down on transport and infrastructure costs, it also attracts buyers who are curious about the source and production of the items they purchase.

**COMMERCIAL/ENTERTAINMENT CENTER [SOUTHERN SEGMENT]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

Covering the Weber Road Corridor from Taylor Road southward to the Kohl's retail center, this segment of the subarea will primarily serve as a commercial/entertainment center, particularly building on the strong commercial centers that currently occupy the southwest corner at Taylor Road and the Airport Road intersection. While retail stores and restaurants would enhance the current commercial offerings, a movie theater would provide an entertainment component to the site, particularly at the southern end of Weber Road. In addition to commercial uses, the area south of Taylor Road could provide a continuation of the unique employment center proposed to the north, including the addition of business incubators, hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises, and research/technology labs.

**MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | ALTERNATIVE OPTION**

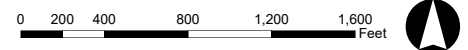
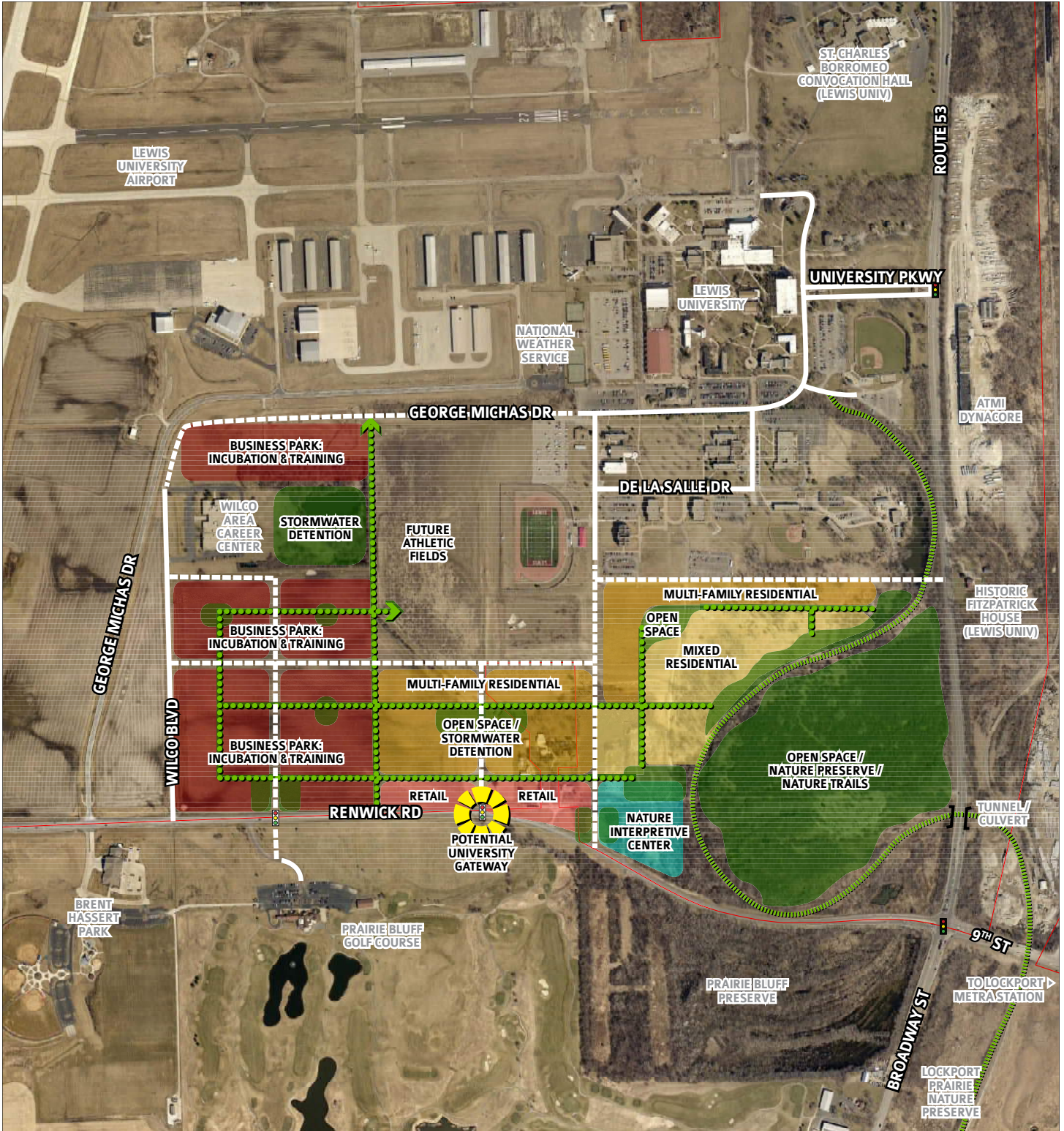
As an alternative to the proposed research/tech labs that straddle the north and south sides of Taylor Road, multi-family residential may be considered as an option to offer flexibility to the concept plan. Offering an alternative option for housing will be beneficial to long-term buildout of the corridor, particularly due to the uncertainty in the market over time to support large areas of such employment-generating uses.



# SUBAREA: LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

FIGURE 3.8  
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT





## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

This subarea is comprised of the area around the Lewis University campus located primarily west of Route 53, north of Renwick Road, east of the airport, and south of Airport Road. Lewis University already has a Campus Master Plan (see image below) that they have shared to illustrate their vision for the expansion and enhancement to their campus and surroundings. Since the subarea concept planning charrettes were intended to provide opportunities for Village staff, a few Village board/commission members, and the Steering Committee to brainstorm their own ideas for each subarea, concepts for the University Area were provided even with the knowledge that some of the ideas may conflict with the Campus Master Plan. The intent is to provide Lewis University with new ideas to consider. The developable land covers approximately 208 acres and is mostly located south of the current campus east of Wilco Boulevard and north of Renwick Road. The subarea does have a few physical constraints, such as the airport to the west, woodlands and wetlands to the southeast, and an old landfill also to the southeast. However, there are unique opportunities, including proximity to the Lockport Metra Station and an old railroad spur that could serve as a new trail connection to the Lockport Prairie.

The 2000 Comprehensive Plan assigned the College land use designation to a majority of this subarea, including uses “related to [the University’s] development and uses.” This is consistent with the intent of Lewis University to pursue campus expansion and provide uses that cater to the student, faculty, and staff.

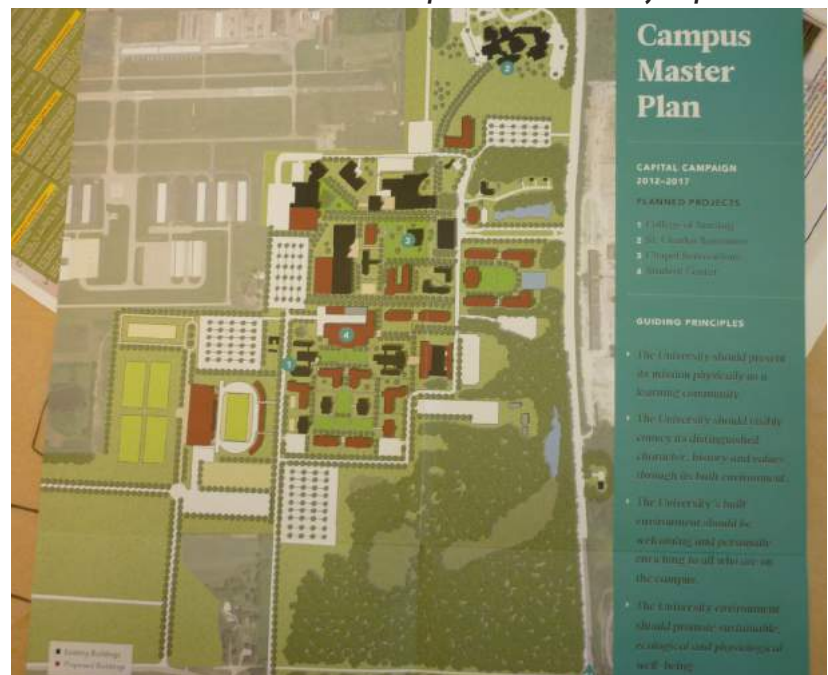
The Lewis University Campus Master Plan indicates various major capital campaigns that have been completed since 2011 and are slated by 2020: renovations to multiple buildings, including the College of Nursing, Oremus Fine Arts Building, and the Sancta Alberta Chapel; acquisition and renovation of the former St. Charles Borromeo property to support expanded enrollment and academic programs; three new residence halls adding almost 600 additional beds; recreational facility improvements; and construction of the new Student Center and new Visitors/Admissions Center. New academic buildings, residence halls, and an east academic quad are also proposed beyond 2020.

FIGURE 3.9

**ESTIMATED LAND COVERAGE & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FOR PROPOSED LAND USES  
LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT**

	Area	% of Subarea	Development Potential
Mixed Residential: Townhouses & Single Family	20 acres	10%	80 units
Multiple Family Residential & Student Housing	44 acres	21%	440 units
Retail	7 acres	3%	60,984 sq ft
Nature Interpretive Center	11 acres	5%	30,000 sq ft
Business Center: Incubator & Training	53 acres	26%	577,170 sq ft
Open Space/Parks/Detention	73 acres	35%	3,179,880 sq ft
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>208 acres</b>	<b>100%</b>	

ASSUMPTIONS: Average density for mixed residential (4.00 du/ac); average density for multiple-family residential and student housing (10.00 du/ac); FAR for retail (0.20); FAR for business center (0.25)

*Excerpt from the Lewis University Campus Master Plan*



## SUBAREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN: LEWIS UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

**RECOMMENDATIONS****CAMPUS EXPANSION**

The subarea provides space for Lewis University to advance its expansion options, particularly as outlined in its Campus Master Plan. While many of the university's expansion plans involve renovation of existing buildings and developing new buildings as infill sites, the campus is also anticipated to expand beyond its current footprint, including the provision of future athletic fields to the west. Lewis University may also explore options to build new spaces in areas that the concept plan designates as business park, commercial, and multi-family residential. This may include academic buildings, administrative spaces, and student housing.

**UNIVERSITY & AIRPORT RELATED BUSINESSES**

With Lewis University Airport situated to the northwest, developing the subarea provides appeal to both the university and airport. Commercial uses are proposed at the southern end of subarea at a potential university gateway along Renwick Road. These commercial businesses would cater to a wide audience, from students, faculty, and staff to airport users, residents, and general customers. Businesses that offer dining and social spaces, such as a sports bar, cafés, and late night eateries would be appealing to students. General restaurants and stores could also draw students' families, airport patrons, residents, and visitors. An aviation themed restaurant and entertainment venue, similar to the Flight Deck Bar & Grill at the municipal airport and skydiving center in Rochelle, may be a potential option that captures the spirit of the airport and create an experience-driven destination. The proposed commercial area along Renwick Road could also accommodate a hotel that would draw students' families and airport travelers.

**DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS**

The concept plan proposes a diversity of housing options for the subarea. Multi-family residential uses are recommended immediately adjacent to the Lewis University campus, which could take the form of apartments, condominiums, and residence halls that could be privately owned and managed by third-party entities or operated by the university's Office of Residence Life. A joint development including a mix of student and market-rate housing at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota may serve as a prototype. In addition to multi-family options, an area for mixed residential would provide opportunities for townhouses and single-family homes, which would cater to university faculty and staff who have families that require larger living spaces separate from the hustle and bustle of student life. While the housing options would be open to people not affiliated with the university, they may be more appealing to students, faculty, and staff due to the proximity to campus.

**i** NOTE: See Chapter 5 for housing recommendations

**BUSINESS INCUBATION & TRAINING**

The concept plan proposes a business park campus on the western portion of the subarea, which could provide business incubators and research/technology labs to attract entrepreneurs, startups, and the types of businesses that cater to a highly skilled workforce. These types of businesses hold the potential to make Romeoville an attractive destination for research and development firms and tech startups. With Lewis University next door, these startup businesses and research/tech labs would benefit from student apprenticeships, internships, and training that could be integrated into the academic curricula to better prepare graduates with the skills and knowledge that are integral to the job market. Similar skills and vocational training partnerships could be explored with the Wilco Area Career Center, which could serve as an anchor for the potential business park. With the airport next door, Lewis University and the Wilco Area Career Center could focus potential vocational training on aviation-related businesses, similar to Western Michigan University's Aviation Education Center that leverages its proximity to Battle Creek Airport.

**i** NOTE: See Chapter 4 for specific recommendations regarding unique industrial, office, and employment opportunities

**NATURE CONSERVATION & RECREATION**

With significant woodlands, wetlands, and topography at the southeast portion of the subarea, the Lewis University District provides opportunities for nature conservation and recreation. Open spaces and sensitive natural features should be preserved to maintain natural habitats for flora and fauna, as well as provide a natural setting as the subarea explores the development options illustrated in the concept plan. While the significant elevation changes limit development potential in the southeast area, the topography could be integrated into the site design for unique open spaces serving the adjacent campus and potential residential development. The conserved natural areas could also utilize natural trails to provide linkages with the Prairie Bluff Preserve and Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve to the south and east. Nature trails could repurpose the old rail spur that spirals along the east side of the subarea from the campus southward to the nature preserve and Des Plaines River. Nature trails could also create linkages throughout the subarea via greenways, with connections to the university, residential areas, the business park, a potential nature interpretive center, and the Lockport Metra Station, which is located about 1½ miles to the southeast.

## CHAPTER 4

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is critical to the vitality of Romeoville, not only in terms of the commerce, industry, and employment that are generated, but also regarding its impact on the well being of residents and liveability of the community. The Village provides a variety of reliable services to the community, from parks, schools, and police/fire protection to streets, utilities, and senior services. Maintenance of these services requires substantial financial resources, which are supported by a stable and strong local economy.

The Community Assessment Report (see Appendix A) summarized the existing conditions that characterize Romeoville, including the retail, industrial, and office markets that have formed the Village's economy. These market conditions also serve as influential factors for the future viability of commercial development and employment generation in Romeoville. A summary of key findings from this report are highlighted on the right and next page.



### LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**The land use character of the currently incorporated areas of Romeoville is primarily devoted to commercial and industrial uses, which accentuates the Village's focus on economic development. Of the Village's approximate 12,000 acres of incorporated land, less than 10% remains vacant with underlying zoning that is conducive to further strengthening Romeoville's economy.**

#### 54%

Portion of Romeoville's incorporated land coverage comprised of commercial and industrial uses, with 17% devoted to residential and 8% remaining vacant

#### 906

Acres of land that remains vacant and zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed use, with about 78% within manufacturing (M-R, M-1) and planned business (P-B) districts

## EMPLOYMENT

Romeoville maintains a strong presence in the region as a major employment center, with significant growth in warehousing, manufacturing, transportation, and wholesale trade. With access to I-55 and supportive infrastructure in place, the Village continues to attract potential enterprises looking to set up shop. One drawback of the local employment base is that only 5% of the Village's resident labor force live and work in Romeoville. However, about 29% of workers reside elsewhere in Will County. These numbers emphasize the importance of providing a range of housing options at attainable price points within the community, as well as providing amenities that individuals and families seek as they find a home to rent or buy, preferably near their jobs.

**6,600**

New jobs generated in Romeoville, which is a 67% increase from 9,800 jobs in 2005 to 16,400 jobs in 2015

**13%**

Share of Romeoville jobs in finance, insurance, real estate, and professional and business services, compared to 40% for entire Chicago region

**6.5%**

Unemployment rate in Romeoville in 2015, which is a significant reduction from a high of 12.3% unemployment in 2012

**29%**

Net growth in transportation and warehousing jobs, which was the largest increase of all sectors since 2005

**13**

Number of Romeoville's largest employers that generate 6,900 jobs, which comprise about 42% of the Village's total employment base

**59%**

Percent of Romeoville's labor force that has some college-level education; about 25% have a bachelors or advanced college degree

**30%**

Share of jobs from the wholesale and retail trade sector, which is the largest source of employment in Romeoville

**1.27**

Jobs per housing unit in Romeoville in 2014-15, which is almost within the 1.30-1.70 range to be considered a stable jobs-housing balance

**5%**

Percent of resident labor force that live and work in Romeoville; about 29% comes from Will County, while 40% from Cook and DuPage Counties

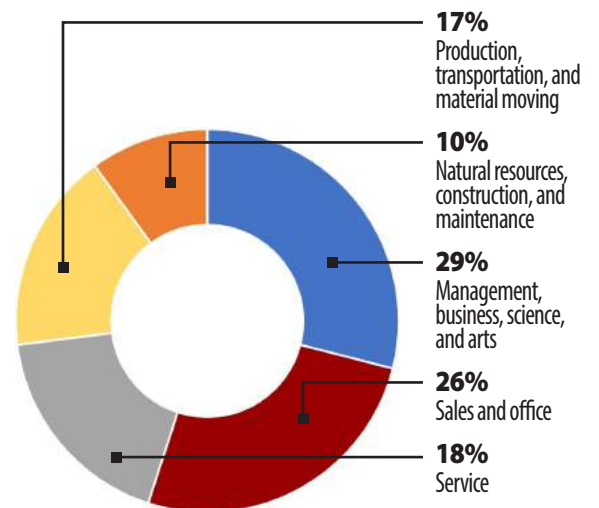
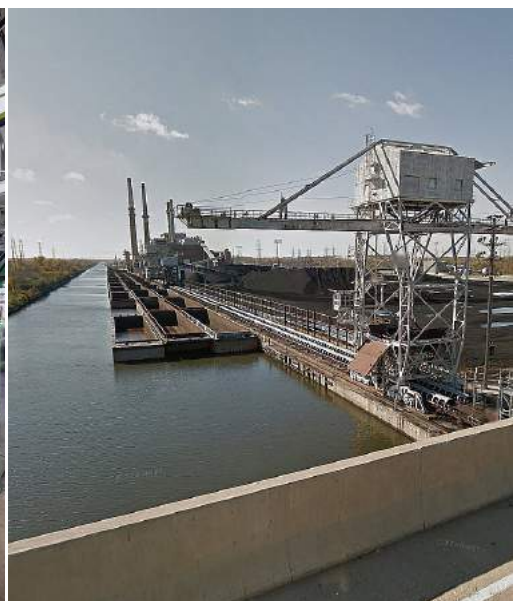


FIGURE 4.1  
**OCCUPATIONAL MIX OF ROMEOVILLE LABOR FORCE**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2014 American Community Survey; Gruen Gruen + Associates





## COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

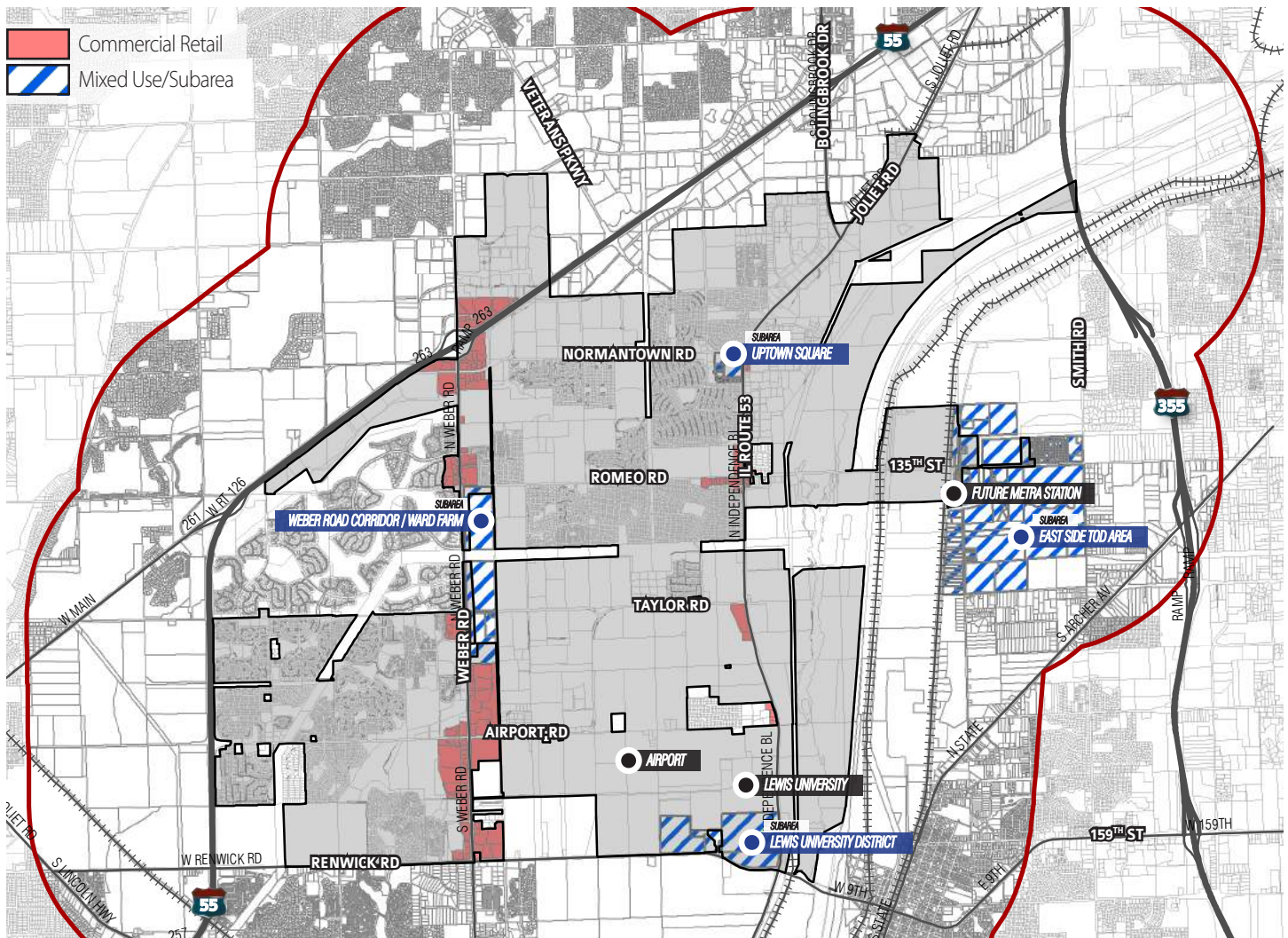
### COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN

Commercial development generally encompasses retail, restaurant, and service uses. As a subset of the overall Future Land Use Plan Map from Chapter 3, the Commercial Areas Plan Map in Figure 4.2 illustrates commercial development as being primarily concentrated along two of the Village's main road corridors: IL Route 55 and Weber Road. This enables commercial uses to take advantage of the significant visibility along roadways with high traffic counts.

Smaller pockets of commercial development are located at other key nodes, per the Framework Plan and Future Land Use Plan. In particular, limited commercial development is recommended as part of the mixed use node in the Lewis University District and the TOD node around the future Metra station on the Village's East Side.

Market capacity and development potential for commercial uses are summarized on the next page.

FIGURE 4.2  
**COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN MAP**



# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## MARKET FACTORS, DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & ABSORPTION

As detailed below, the market capacity for commercial uses are based on findings from the Economic and Real Estate Market Analysis in the Community Assessment Report, as well as the Future Land Use Plan and subarea concepts in Chapter 3. Development potential is determined by calculating the amount of new commercial spaces assuming full build-out of the Commercial Areas Plan in Figure 4.2. Figure 4.3 summarizes the development potential for commercial uses in Romeoville.

### MARKET FACTORS

Romeoville’s retail commercial base consists of locally serving neighborhood and community shopping centers, with larger regional serving retail nodes located north in Bolingbrook and south in Joliet. Comprising less than 2% of the South Suburban retail market, the 2 million square feet of existing retail space in Romeoville exhibits an 8.7% vacancy rate<sup>2</sup> with very little new inventory under construction. The retail vacancy rate and \$14.51 average rent are generally consistent with the South Suburban retail market. The oversupply of retail space – combined with vacancies, available commercial spaces, and competition from nearby regional centers – indicated that the demand for new retail will be limited and comprise businesses serving local households and employment base.

### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Commercial Areas Plan Map illustrates full build-out of approximately 557 acres of commercial use, which represents the capacity for 245 acres of additional commercial development beyond the existing 312 acres of commercial space. An estimate of commercial development is based on a conservative floor area ratio (FAR) factor of 0.20, which is typical of buildout of retail centers along major roads in suburban communities based on findings of Teska Associates, Inc. and regional planning agencies. The lower FAR estimates may underestimate development potential in higher intensity mixed-use developments, such as Uptown Square. By applying a conservative FAR of 0.20 to the 245 acres of additional commercial development, the Commercial Areas Plan will generate approximately 49.0 acres (or 2,134,440 square feet) of new commercial space. While a majority of this additional development will likely occur along Weber Road, new commercial space will also be integrated into mixed use centers like Uptown Square, the Lewis University District subarea, and the TOD node around the future Metra station on the Village’s East Side.

### ABSORPTION

It is important to note that the additional 245 acres should be viewed as maximum development capacity; it does not indicate that this amount of retail space will necessarily be built over the long term horizon covered by the Comprehensive Plan. Absorption has struggled to keep up with the delivery of new retail space in the Village, including 169,000 square feet of new retail space put on the market between 2011 and 2016 but only 65,000 square feet being absorbed. A significant amount of future retail development can be accommodated along Weber Road, including available space in the Shops of Romeoville, Romeoville Crossings, and the the new Farm and Fleet retail center.

FIGURE 4.3  
**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

Source: Future Land Use Plan; GIS land use data provided by CMAP, updated by Teska

501 acres	Commercial Retail (CR)
13 acres	CR in Mixed Use Subarea: Uptown Square
33 acres	CR in Mixed Use Subarea: Weber Road Corridor
7 acres	CR in Mixed Use Subarea: Lewis University District
3 acres	CR in Mixed Use Subarea: Future Metra Station TOD
<hr/>	
<b>557</b> acres	<b>TOTAL LAND AREA (FULL BUILD-OUT)</b>
<b>- 312</b> acres	<b>EXISTING LAND AREA</b>
<hr/>	
<b>245</b> acres	<b>FUTURE LAND AREA</b>
<b>X 0.20</b>	<b>FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)</b>
<hr/>	
<b>49.0</b> acres	[equivalent to 2,134,440 sq ft]
<b>DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: COMMERCIAL SPACE</b>	

<sup>2</sup>The Dominick’s closing accounts for 40% of Romeoville’s retail vacancy.



## INDUSTRIAL & OFFICE DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT CENTERS PLAN

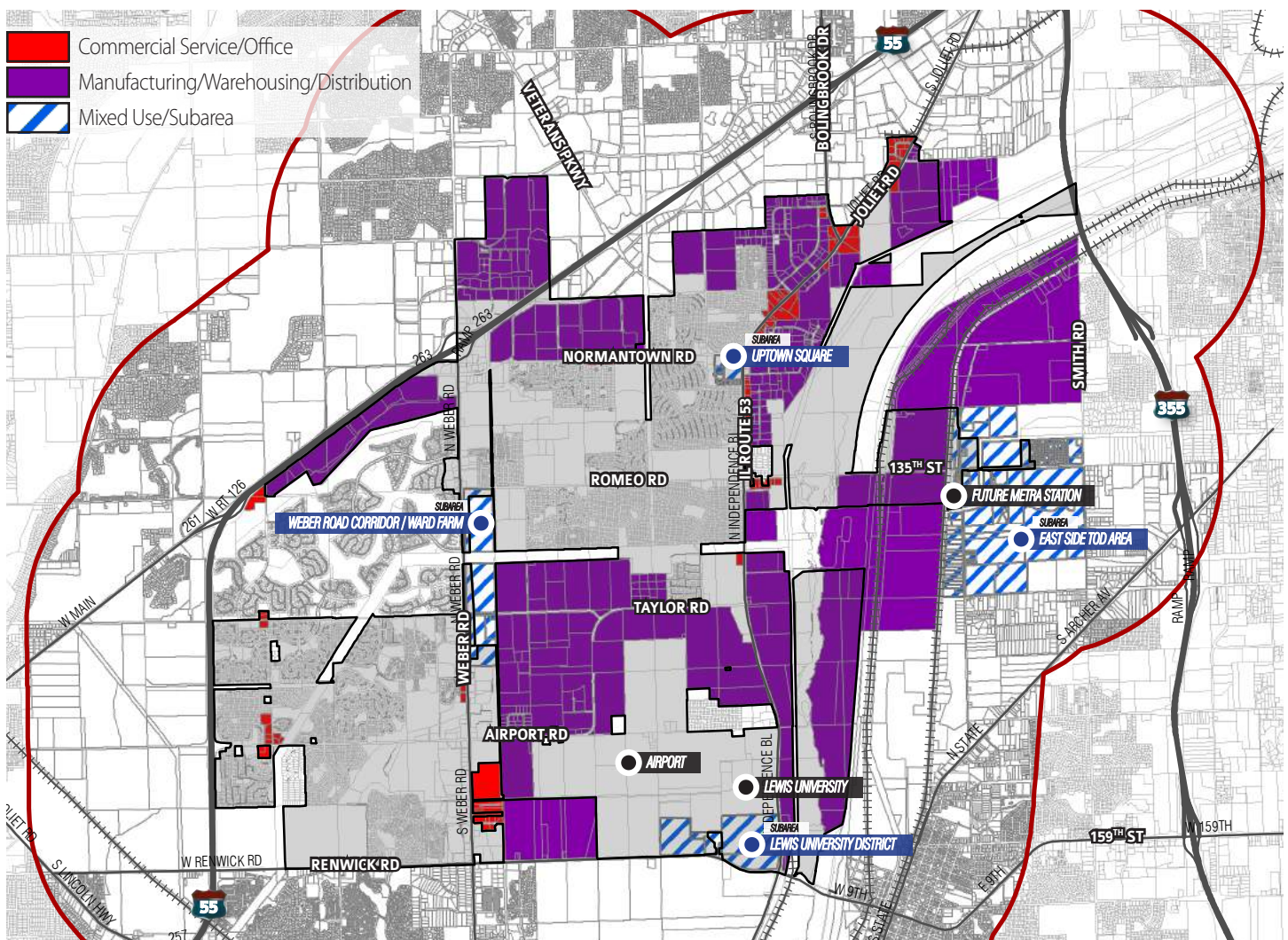
Employment centers generally encompass industrial and office uses, which can take a variety of forms such as heavy industrial and manufacturing, warehousing/logistics, co-working spaces, hybrid light industrial/commercial enterprises, research/tech, and business incubation and training. As a subset of the overall Future Land Use Plan Map from Chapter 3, the Employment Centers Plan Map in Figure 4.4 illustrates the various centers of employment at various locations across the Village:

- ❑ Along Weber Road, particularly at the I-55 interchange
- ❑ Along Taylor Road, particularly near the airport
- ❑ Within the Lewis University District subarea
- ❑ Along the east side of IL Route 53
- ❑ Along the I&M Canal and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
- ❑ On the Village's East Side, primarily north of 135<sup>th</sup> Street

In addition, offices and smaller employment generating uses may be located in mixed use areas like Uptown Square and the TOD node around the future Metra station on the Village's East Side. The various employment centers located throughout the Village are a strong indicator that Romeoville has been and will continue to be a major employment generator for the region, particularly with superior transportation access, a growing network of enterprises, and municipal infrastructure support.

Diversification of the types of industrial and office uses will support entrepreneurship, encourage greater collaboration between employers and local schools, attract unique businesses, and bring in jobs that match the varying skillsets of the resident labor force. Market capacity and development potential for industrial and office uses are summarized on the next page.

FIGURE 4.4  
**EMPLOYMENT CENTERS PLAN MAP**





# INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

## MARKET FACTORS, DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & ABSORPTION

As detailed below, the market capacity for industrial uses are based on findings from the Economic and Real Estate Market Analysis in the Community Assessment Report, as well as the Future Land Use Plan and sub-area concepts in Chapter 3. Development potential is determined by calculating the amount of new industrial spaces assuming full build-out of the Employment Centers Plan in Figure 4.4. Figure 4.5 summarizes the development potential for industrial uses in Romeoville.

### MARKET FACTORS

Romeoville exhibits a balance between industrial space development and absorption, which is a strong indicator that the industrial market is able to fill available spaces. This balance is further emphasized by the relatively low industrial vacancy rates in Romeoville, which have hovered in the 6% to 8% range since 2011. Romeoville’s low industrial vacancy rates compare favorably to the overall markets for the I-55 Corridor and Chicago metro area. In addition to low vacancy, Romeoville offers limited “shovel ready” sites for industrial space users. Over the long term, land development policies and available sites will temper the ability of Romeoville to accommodate significantly more industrial development.

### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Employment Centers Plan Map illustrates full build-out of approximately 5,873 acres of industrial use, which represents the capacity for 1,453 acres of additional industrial development beyond the existing 4,420 acres of industrial space. An estimate of industrial development is based on a conservative floor area ratio (FAR) factor of 0.35, which is typical of buildout of industrial centers in suburban communities based on findings of Teska Associates, Inc. and regional planning agencies. By applying a conservative FAR of 0.35 to the 1,453 acres of additional industrial development, the Employment Centers Plan will generate approximately 508.6 acres of new industrial space, with most of this additional development likely to occur east of Weber Road along Taylor Road.

### ABSORPTION

It is important to note that the additional 1,453 acres should be viewed as maximum development capacity; it does not indicate that this amount of industrial space will necessarily be built over the long term horizon covered by the Comprehensive Plan. With a current vacancy rate of 5.6%, Romeoville presently offers about 1.7M sq ft of vacant space for industrial use. The industrial market has tightened up as rents continue to increase in Romeoville, even with historic average annual absorption of about 1.1M square feet of space. The new supply additions (under construction or in the pipeline) in Romeoville and nearby totaling approximately 2M square feet of space will satisfy near term demand and temper near term rent increases. Over the longer term, land constraints will temper the ability of Romeoville to accommodate significantly more industrial development that would occur if more land were available.

FIGURE 4.5  
**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

Source: Future Land Use Plan; GIS land use data provided by CMAP, updated by Teska

5,851 acres	Manufacturing/Warehousing/Distribution (MWD)
-	MWD in Mixed Use Subarea: Uptown Square
22 acres	MWD in Mixed Use Subarea: Weber Road Corridor
-	MWD in Mixed Use Subarea: Lewis University District
-	MWD in Mixed Use Subarea: Future Metra Station TOD
<hr/>	
<b>5,873</b> acres	<b>TOTAL LAND AREA (FULL BUILD-OUT)</b>
- <b>4,420</b> acres	<b>EXISTING LAND AREA</b>
<hr/>	
<b>1,453</b> acres	<b>FUTURE LAND AREA</b>
x <b>0.35</b>	<b>FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)</b>
<hr/>	
<b>508.6</b> acres	
<b>DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: INDUSTRIAL SPACE</b>	

# OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

## MARKET FACTORS, DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & ABSORPTION

As detailed below, the market capacity for office uses are based on findings from the Economic and Real Estate Market Analysis in the Community Assessment Report, as well as the Future Land Use Plan and sub-area concepts in Chapter 3. Development potential is determined by calculating the amount of new office spaces assuming full build-out of the Employment Centers Plan in Figure 4.4. Figure 4.6 summarizes the development potential for office uses in Romeoville.

### MARKET FACTORS

Romeoville is not a preferred office location within the Chicago region. The Village currently has a limited office market, with only 29 office buildings encompassing about 465,000 square feet of office space. Furthermore, the Village has not historically experienced any significant office development. The office vacancy rate within the Village is about 5.7% and asking gross rents are reported at \$18.43 per square foot, which are below submarket and regional averages. The number of jobs in the finance, insurance, and real estate sector, which is the sector most likely to use office space, makes up less than 5% of local employment. Consistent with the positive office space absorption which has occurred since 2011 and very little new supply additions, the office space vacancy rate in Romeoville has improved considerably since the aftermath of the recession in 2011, declining from 12% to around 6% percent today. In addition, corresponding rent growth has been strong, with average asking rents growing by over \$3 per square foot over the past four years from about \$15 per square foot in 2011 to over \$18 per square foot today.

### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Employment Centers Plan Map illustrates full build-out of approximately 397 acres of office use, which represents the capacity for 241 acres of additional office development beyond the existing 156 acres of office space. An estimate of office development is based on a conservative floor area ratio (FAR) factor of 0.25, which is typical of buildout of lower intensity officer centers in suburban communities based on findings of Teska Associates, Inc. and regional planning agencies. By applying a conservative FAR of 0.25 to the 241 acres of additional office development, the Employment Centers Plan will generate approximately 60.3 acres (or 2,624,490 square feet) of new office space, with most of this additional development likely to occur along Weber Road, around Uptown Square, in the Lewis University District subarea, and around the future Metra station area on the Village's East Side.

### ABSORPTION

It is important to note that the additional 241 acres should be viewed as maximum development capacity; it does not indicate that this amount of office space will necessarily be built over the long term horizon covered by the Comprehensive Plan. The current 5.7% vacancy rate equates to approximately 26,500 square feet of vacant office space in Romeoville. With historic average annual absorption of about 7,100 square feet of space in Romeoville, the office market has capacity to absorb space demand for approximately three years.

FIGURE 4.6  
**OFFICE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

Source: Future Land Use Plan; GIS land use data provided by CMAP, updated by Teska

267 acres	Commercial Service (CS)
-	CS in Mixed Use Subarea: Uptown Square
47 acres	CS in Mixed Use Subarea: Weber Road Corridor
53 acres	CS in Mixed Use Subarea: Lewis University District
30 acres	CS in Mixed Use Subarea: Future Metra Station TOD
<hr/>	
<b>397</b> acres	<b>TOTAL LAND AREA (FULL BUILD-OUT)</b>
- <b>156</b> acres	<b>EXISTING LAND AREA</b>
<hr/>	
<b>241</b> acres	<b>FUTURE LAND AREA</b>
x <b>0.25</b>	<b>FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)</b>
<hr/>	
<b>60.3</b> acres	[equivalent to 2,624,490 sq ft]
<b>DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: OFFICE SPACE</b>	



The following recommendations are intended to support the Village's economic development efforts to continue building up and strengthening commercial areas, mixed use districts, and employment centers that meet market demand, provide for a variety of use types that meet different user needs, and advance a stable economy in Romeoville over time. The recommendations also support the guiding principles relating to advancing a balanced economic base (Planning Theme #1) and ensuring market-supportive strategies (Planning Theme #2), as outlined in Chapter 2.

While some recommendations cover economic development in a broad sense, certain recommendations are specific to supporting either commercial development or employment centers. Market capacity, development potential, and absorption for commercial development and employment centers are summarized separately on the following pages.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Historically, industry in Romeoville built up along the riverfront and rail lines to make, load, and ship products across the region, with the stone quarries serving as the lifeblood of commerce. Over time to the present day, industrial activity continues to have a presence along the riverfront and railroads; however, superior access to the interstate and municipal infrastructure support have made Romeoville a major destination for industrial development, particularly in warehousing and logistics.

In order to continue attracting middle class households that bring higher skilled jobs to Romeoville, it will be crucial for the community to ensure access to affordable housing options, given limited new development and rising home values, and diversify the types of industrial and office uses that provide higher paying jobs and distinct products and services to the marketplace. In addition to traditional heavy industry, manufacturing, and warehousing/logistics that presently characterize Romeoville's economic base, the graphics below describe some of the different types of industrial and office uses that should be pursued to diversify Romeoville's approach to economic development and employment generation.



**Capitalize on Romeoville's comparative advantages.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2.1 [SEE CHAPTER 2]



**A central location with excellent highway accessibility**



**A location providing affordable housing**



**Proximity to customers, suppliers, and support services**



**Access to a broad labor base**



**Excellent community services and amenities**



**Positive business climate**

## RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Diversify the employment base, which has historically concentrated in the manufacturing, industrial, and warehouse sectors.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.4** [SEE CHAPTER 2]

**Attract compatible office uses with the recognition that the office market is limited in Romeoville.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2.2** [SEE CHAPTER 2]

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ Take a strategic approach to attract new businesses to the Village's industrial sector, particularly attracting entrepreneurs, higher skilled jobs, and enterprises that bring unique services and products to the community. Such opportunities include:

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Weber Road Corridor in Chapter 3*

*Create spaces that support business incubation, co-working, research and technology, and hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises along Weber Road to diversify the corridor's industrial and commercial base.*

*Explore marketing programs, special planned development districts, zoning changes, and partnerships with local and regional economic development agencies, such as Romeoville's Economic Development Commission, partnerships with local businesses, and the Will County Center for Economic Development.*

- ❑ Integrate development opportunities for business incubation, co-working spaces, and research and technology within the Lewis University District to build up a centralized hub for business growth, employment, training, and education.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Lewis University District in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Integrate development opportunities for business incubation, co-working spaces, and research and technology in the future Metra station area to support employment in a mixed use center near transit.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Village's 2012 East Side Plan (separate document)*

- ❑ Collaborate with the Regional Alliance Business Incubator at Lewis University to support innovation and entrepreneurship.

- ❑ Review and amend the Village's Zoning Ordinance to ensure the appropriate zoning districts are supportive of the different types of employment-generating uses described on this page.


**RESEARCH/TECHNOLOGY LABS**

To position Romeoville as an attractive destination for research and development firms and tech startups that support a highly skilled workforce, encouraging the location of research/technology labs through recruitment, incentives, and availability of modern facilities should be pursued. Proximity to quality higher educational institutions, such as Joliet Junior College and Lewis University, provides opportunities to advance partnerships with research and development businesses to train area residents and provide continuing education opportunities for employees. Programs could include student apprenticeships, internships, and training could be integrated into the academic curricula to better prepare graduates with the skills and knowledge that are integral to the local job market.


**CO-WORKING SPACES & BUSINESS INCUBATORS**

Co-working spaces and business incubators may cater to emerging entrepreneurs who don't require a lot of space to start their businesses but would benefit from a community of like-minded people to create, innovate, and grow. Co-working spaces and business incubators are located across the Chicago region, including 25N Coworking located in an office park in Arlington Heights near the Route 53/I-290 interchange. Michigan has a variety of co-working spaces and business incubators, including the professional workspaces at Byte & Mortar in an office/commercial corridor in Troy and Metro Work Space along a commercial corridor in Livonia.


**HYBRID INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES**

Hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises are becoming more prominent by providing manufacturing, warehousing, and sales under a single roof. While this model can cut down on transport and infrastructure costs, hybrid enterprises also attract buyers who are curious about the source and production of the items they purchase. Local examples of hybrid enterprises include the Ashley Furniture HomeStore in Romeoville, Two Brothers brewery and restaurant in Warrenton, the WeatherTech factory store in Bolingbrook, and Abt Electronics in Glenview.



## RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Explore other non-traditional business opportunities, such as recreation and tourism based business and hospitality centers.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.5 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Attract unique businesses to Uptown Square that may build upon current and potential amenities, such as potential expansion of the Athletic and Event Center and creation of central commons, a festival street, and festival plaza.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for Uptown Square in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Work with the property owners of Ward Farm to pursue conversion of the existing farm site into an interpretive center with educational, historical, and community event components.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Weber Road Corridor in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Explore the potential to build up the northern end of the Ward Farm site for a regional sports and recreation complex, either as an expansion of adjacent Volunteer Park or a standalone facility that attracts sports teams from across the region.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Weber Road Corridor in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Take advantage of the natural amenities around Lewis University to create opportunities like open spaces, a nature preserve, and a nature interpretive center.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Lewis University District in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Explore the potential to build up ecotourism in Romeoville, particularly highlighting local natural areas and resources.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Natural Resources & Green Infrastructure recommendations in Chapter 7*

- ❑ Explore the option to utilize portions of former industrial sites, including the NRG Energy Plant in the potential scenario that it gets decommissioned, for ecotourism, recreation, and other businesses that takes creative approaches to adaptive reuse.

- ❑ Review and amend the Village's Zoning Ordinance to ensure the appropriate zoning districts are supportive of the non-traditional business opportunities described on this page.

*Explore marketing and recruitment programs using the Uptown Special area plan and more detailed vision plans, special planned development districts, zoning changes, and partnerships with local and regional economic development agencies, such as Romeoville's Economic Development Commission, partnerships with local businesses, and the Will County Center for Economic Development.*

*Explore use of tax credits for conservation development or preservation restrictions, grants and foundations and other not-for-profit agencies or local initiatives. Partner with local or national land conservancies, Landmarks Illinois, OpenLands, or other historic preservation groups dedicated to preservation of farmsteads.*

*Work with local and regional sports organizations to evaluate the market potential and development feasibility of a regional level sport complex.*

*Consider special planned development districts, creation of zoning incentives, streamlined zoning approvals, and establishment of form-based or by-right zoning regulations that remove barriers to non-traditional uses.*

*Non-traditional business opportunities that could be explored include: adaptive reuse of the Ward Farm as an interpretive center like Wagner Farm in Glenview (left); a regional sports complex, such as in Mansfield TX (center); and adaptive reuse of old industrial sites, such as a former municipal waste facility converted into a recycling and energy station in Elk River MN (right).*



## RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Concentrate retail uses at key nodes to strengthen a small core of commercial center rather than a scattered collection of retail businesses across the Village.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.6 [SEE CHAPTER 2]**
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ Continue to integrate retail, restaurant, and service opportunities within Uptown Square and along IL Route 53 to revitalize its commercial base, particularly with businesses that build up the pedestrian-friendly district as an "experience" based place that creates memorable experiences, encourages patrons to stay awhile and come back for future visits.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for Uptown Square in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Continue to integrate retail, restaurant, and service opportunities along the Weber Road Corridor, particularly at the Romeo Road, Taylor Road, and Airport Road intersections, to strengthen the commercial base, particularly with businesses that attract local residents, workers from nearby employment centers, and visitors from across the region.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Weber Road Corridor in Chapter 3*

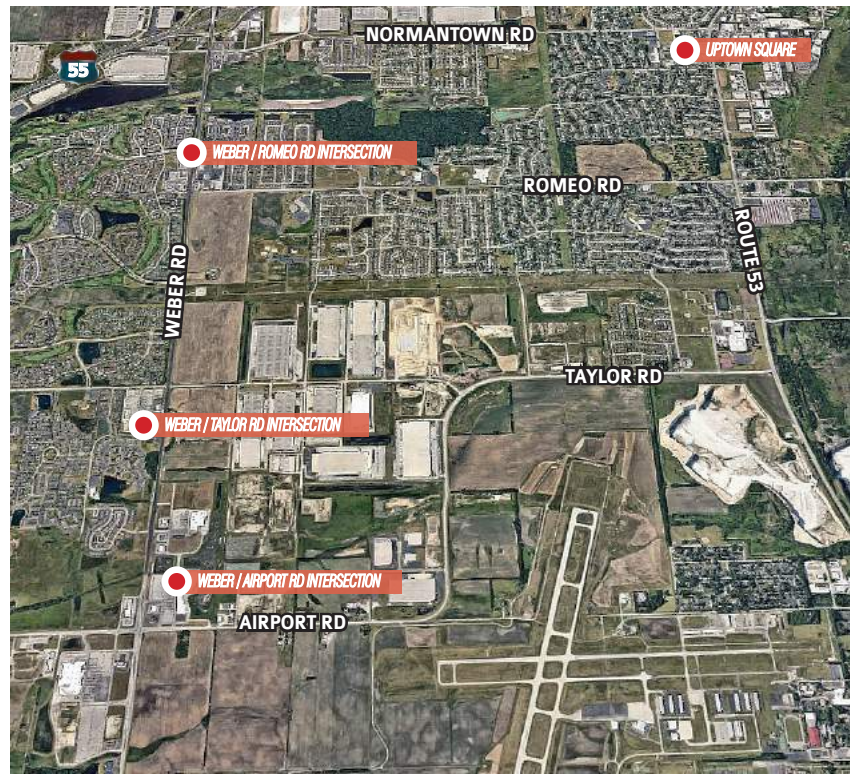
- ❑ Integrate limited retail, restaurant, and service opportunities in the Lewis University District to provide products and services that cater to students, faculty, and staff at the university.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Subarea Development Concept Plan for the Lewis University District in Chapter 3*

- ❑ Integrate limited retail, restaurant, and service opportunities in the future Metra station area to provide products and services that cater to commuters, residents, and workers in new mixed use development located near transit.

*NOTE: For more details, refer to the Village's 2012 East Side Plan (separate document)*

- ❑ Work with property owners and tenants in existing retail centers to improve their properties and promote vacant spaces through building improvement grant programs and financial incentive, such as Business Development Districts, which will help position them as stronger centers that retain existing tenants and attract new businesses.



*Focus on strengthening Romeoville's primary retail centers*

**Promote partnerships with the Romeoville Economic Development Commission and Will County Center for Economic Development in marketing properties.**

**Provide zoning flexibility to allow reuse of underutilized parking lots and great mix of uses to increase value and activity.**

**Encourage retail concentrations by eliminating the ability to develop single use, freestanding uses, by rewarding developers who assemble larger mixed-use projects with higher floor area ratio's (FARs) and residential density, establishing minimum site sizes that require property consolidations, and/or requiring all retail development shall comply with the planned development provisions of the Village code.**



## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The key economic development recommendations identified in this chapter are activated by the action steps summarized in the Implementation Action Plan matrix below. Potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources are also identified for each action step.

Action Step	Partner(s) <sup>A</sup>	Priority <sup>B</sup>	Phasing <sup>C</sup>	Potential Funding Sources <sup>D</sup>
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.4</b> Diversify the employment base, which has historically concentrated in the manufacturing, industrial, and warehouse sectors.				
Integrate development opportunities for business incubation, co-working spaces, research and technology, and hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises along Weber Road.	Village; Will County CED; DCEO	High	Long Term	TIF; Business Incubator Programs; EDGE Tax Credits; Will County Tax Abatements; Small Business Job Creation Tax Credit
Review and amend the Village's Zoning Ordinance to ensure the appropriate zoning districts are supportive of the different types of employment-generating uses in mixed-use centers near transit.	Village; CMAP	High	Near Term	Village; CMAP
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.5</b> Explore other non-traditional business opportunities, such as recreation and tourism based business and hospitality centers.				
Pursue the conversion of the existing Ward farm site into an interpretive center.	Village; DCEO; Landmarks Illinois; Illinois Historic Preservation Agency; Will County Forest Preserve District	High	Near Term	TIF; BDD; Will County Tax Abatements; Conservation Foundation; Local Crowdsourced Fund Raising Campaigns; Business and Community Foundations; Grand Victoria Riverboat Foundation; Vital Lands Illinois Grants; Will County Forest Preserve District
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.6</b> Concentrate retail uses at key nodes to strengthen a small core of commercial center rather than a scattered collection of retail businesses across the Village.				
Review and amend the Village's Zoning Ordinance and Map to ensure the appropriate zoning districts are available and supportive of land use policy.	Village; CMAP	High	Near Term	Village; CMAP

#### NOTES

<sup>A</sup>Partners: The list of partners is not static and may change over time

<sup>B</sup>Priority: High, Medium, Low

<sup>C</sup>Phasing: Ongoing; Near Term (Years 1-5); Long Term (Years 5+)

<sup>D</sup>Potential Funding Sources: See descriptions in Chapter 8

## CHAPTER 5

# HOUSING

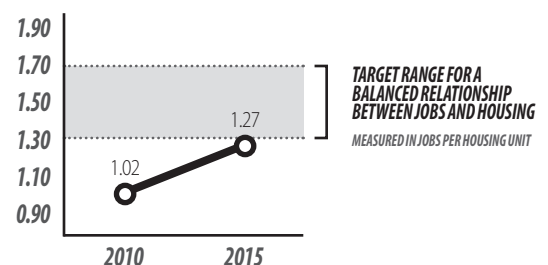
As a community seeking to stabilize after significant growth since the 1980s, future residential development in Romeoville will center around diversifying the current housing stock and attracting young adults and middle class families to live close to the Village's strong employment centers. With limited vacant land available, new development will also focus on infill housing and compact mixed use development in the Village's subareas. Mitigation of distressed properties and property maintenance resources will also be crucial for neighborhood stabilization.

Current conditions and trends in Romeoville's residential market are summarized in the Community Assessment Report, including present composition of the housing stock, trends in the housing market, and foreseeable demand of certain housing unit types. These conditions will play an important role in shaping and stabilizing the Village's housing stock. A summary of key findings from this report are highlighted on the right and on the next page.



### JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE

The jobs-housing balance is generally formulated as a ratio of jobs in the community to total housing units. As illustrated in the graph below, the jobs-housing balance in Romeoville has improved in recent time reaching 1.27 in 2015, which is on the cusp of entering the target range between 1.30 and 1.70 jobs per housing unit. This range is considered the point at which a community has achieved a balanced relationship between jobs and housing.





## HOUSING SUPPLY

Historically, the housing supply in Romeoville was predominantly comprised of detached single family homes. As recently as the 2000 U.S. Census, detached single family homes made up 79% of the Village's housing stock, as shown in Figure 5.1. By 2014, however, that number declined to 69%. Multiple family homes also saw a decrease, from 13% in 2000 to 10% in 2014. In that same timeframe, attached single family homes experienced a significant increase from 8% of the housing stock in 2000 to 21% in 2014. As demand for apartments continue to drive the market, as well as Millennials and others seeking smaller homes, the housing supply in Romeoville may continue to shift, which lends support to diversify the housing stock to meet different needs, lifestyles, and price points.

**74%**

Increase in the number of housing units in Romeoville from 7,379 units in 2000 to 12,844 units in 2014

**0.2%**

Change in housing vacancy rate in Romeoville, staying fairly steady from 8.3% in 2000 to 8.5% in 2014

**3.28**

Average household size in Romeoville in 2014, which is a moderate increase from 2.99 in 2000

**90%**

Percentage of the Village's 2014 housing stock devoted to single family units (detached or attached)

**713**

Number of residential properties sold in Romeoville in 2015, compared to 383 units sold in 2011

**31%**

Percentage increase in average sold price of residential properties, from \$123,805 in 2011 to \$162,072 in 2016

**354%**

Increase in the number of attached single family units, from 603 units in 2000 to 2,736 units in 2014

**68**

Average days on the market for a residential property in Romeoville in 2016, compared to 162 days in 2011

**16%**

Percentage of the Village's 2016 housing stock that is renter occupied, compared to 14% in 2000

Housing Type	2000		2014		Change	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Detached Single Family	5,827	79.0	8,893	69.2	3,066	52.6
Attached Single Family	603	8.2	2,736	21.3	2,133	353.7
Multiple Family	938	12.7	1,215	9.5	277	29.5
TOTAL	7,368	100.0	12,844	100.0	5,476	74.3

FIGURE 5.1

### ROMEOVILLE HOUSING STOCK CHARACTERISTICS

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2014 American Community Survey; Gruen Gruen + Associates

**57%**

### H+T® INDEX FOR ROMEOVILLE



The Housing + Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index provides a comprehensive view of affordability regarding the cost of housing and transportation. Romeoville's H+T® Index indicates that an average household devotes 57% of its income on housing and transportation costs. This breaks down to 34% of costs going towards housing, with 23% going to transportation. For comparison, the average H+T® Index for the six-county Chicago region is 53%.

Affordability generally starts to become a financial burden when the H+T® Index rises above 45%.

FIGURE 5.2

### ROMEOVILLE H+T® AFFORDABILITY INDEX | HOUSING + TRANSPORTATION

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology



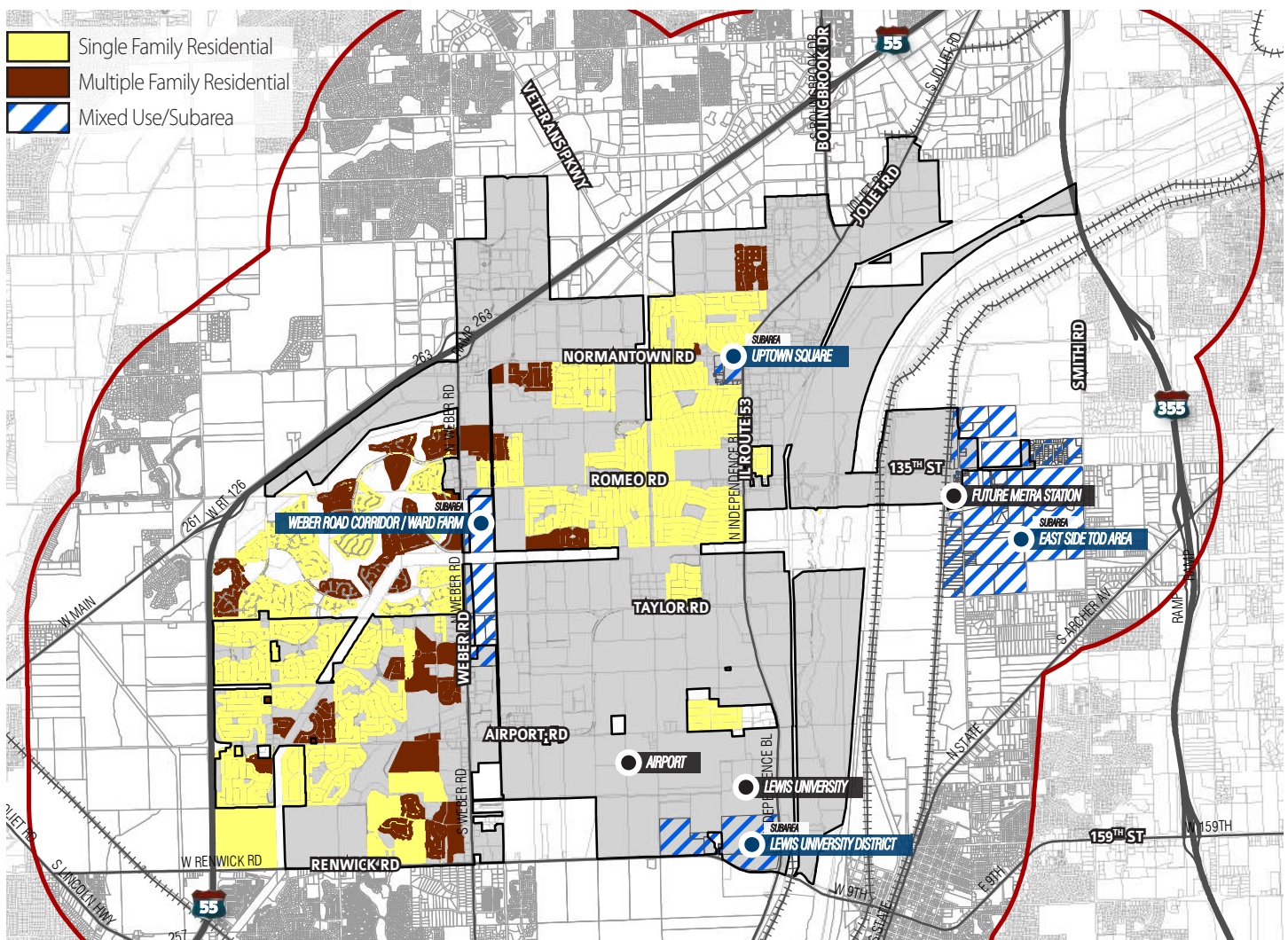
## HOUSING RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN

As a community seeking to stabilize its residential neighborhoods after significant growth and development since the 1980s, future residential growth in Romeoville will focus on diversifying the housing stock, providing units closer to transit, supporting compact mixed use development, and stabilizing existing neighborhoods. Diverse housing will be a key piece to support the Village's economic development efforts, particularly providing options that fit the needs and preferences of current and new residents. Existing residents need support to maintain their properties and bring stability to their neighborhoods, as well as options to upgrade or downsize without having to leave Romeoville. New residents seek a strong set of amenities, including jobs, schools, recreation, and entertainment, which encourage them to establish roots and call Romeoville their long term home.

As a subset of the overall Future Land Use Plan Map from Chapter 3, the Residential Areas Plan Map in Figure 5.3 illustrates the Village's existing neighborhoods, which are primarily located north of the ComEd right-of-way and west of Weber Road. While there is potential to provide infill development in existing neighborhoods, future efforts will focus on establishing new housing units as part of new mixed use areas or standalone residential developments. These areas for potential residential growth are primarily concentrated in Romeoville's subareas, including the Weber Road Corridor, Uptown Square, Lewis University District, and the TOD node around the future Metra station on the Village's East Side.

Market capacity and development potential for residential uses are summarized on the next page.

FIGURE 5.3  
**RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN MAP**





## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

### MARKET FACTORS, DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & ABSORPTION

As detailed below, the market capacity for residential uses are based on findings from the Economic and Real Estate Market Analysis in the Community Assessment Report, as well as the Future Land Use Plan and subarea concepts in Chapter 3. Development potential is determined by calculating the amount of new residential units that can be constructed assuming full build-out of the Residential Areas Plan in Figure 5.3. Figure 5.4 summarizes the development potential for residential uses in Romeoville.

#### MARKET FACTORS

The vacancy rate for owner-occupied housing units increased from 0.4% in 2010 to 2.1% in 2014, indicating that there are existing units that need to be filled, which impacts the market for new units. On the other hand, the vacancy rate for rental units remained steady in the 11.5% range from 2010 to 2014. However, with increasing demand for apartments across the region, the vacancy rate for rental units may decrease over time, particularly as existing units get rented and new units are provided.

#### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Residential Areas Plan Map illustrates full build-out of approximately 2,612 acres of single family residential, which would represent the capacity for 633 acres of additional development beyond the existing 1,979 acres. In terms of multiple family residential, full build-out would yield approximately 941 acres, which would represent the capacity for 862 acres of additional development beyond the existing 79 acres. By applying average densities of 4.00 du/ac for single family residential and 10.00 du/ac for multiple family residential, the Residential Areas Plan will generate approximately 2,532 new single family units and 8,620 new multiple family units, which add up to 11,152 total residential units. Additional residential development will occur as both new and infill development, with a majority of new units being constructed in Romeoville's key subareas and nodes, including the Weber Road Corridor, Uptown Square, Lewis University District, and the future Metra station TOD area on the Village's East Side.

#### ABSORPTION

It is important to note that the additional 11,152 total residential units should be viewed as maximum development capacity; it does not indicate that this amount of residential units will necessarily be built over the long term horizon covered by the Comprehensive Plan. However, high demand for apartment units in the Chicago region may help the market absorb any new apartment units that are built and placed on the rental market in Romeoville. Also, with the average day on the market for properties sold in Romeoville improving from 162 days in 2011 to 68 days in 2016, the real estate market will be able to absorb new single family units over the long term.

FIGURE 5.4

#### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Source: Future Land Use Plan; GIS land use data provided by CMAP, updated by Teska

##### SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

2,449 acres	Single Family Residential (SF)
-	SF in Mixed Use Subarea: Uptown Square
-	SF in Mixed Use Subarea: Weber Road Corridor
20 acres	SF in Mixed Use Subarea: Lewis University District
143 acres	SF in Mixed Use Subarea: Future Metra Station TOD

**2,612** acres TOTAL LAND AREA (FULL BUILD-OUT)

- **1,979** acres EXISTING LAND AREA

**633** acres FUTURE LAND AREA

X **4.00** du/ac AVERAGE DENSITY: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

**2,532** du

**DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL UNITS**

##### MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

787 acres	Multiple Family Residential (MF)
12 acres	MF in Mixed Use Subarea: Uptown Square
12 acres	MF in Mixed Use Subarea: Weber Road Corridor
44 acres	MF in Mixed Use Subarea: Lewis University District
86 acres	MF in Mixed Use Subarea: Future Metra Station TOD

**941** acres TOTAL LAND AREA (FULL BUILD-OUT)

- **79** acres EXISTING LAND AREA

**862** acres FUTURE LAND AREA

X **10.00** du/ac AVERAGE DENSITY: MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

**8,620** du

**DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL UNITS**

## HOUSING DIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Like much of Will County and the region, single family units were built en masse in Romeoville, with 94% of the Village's total single family unit permits issued between 1996 and 2004. That totaled to about 8,100 permits or 405 single family units built each year over two decades. When the Great Recession struck in 2008, development lessened significantly, with only 109 single family unit permits being issued since then. In fact, the composition of detached single family homes in Romeoville's housing stock decreased from 79% in 2000 to 69% in 2014.

During the same 2000-2014 timeframe, attached single family homes gained significantly, with over 2,000 units added to the housing supply, which increased the composition of this unit type from 8% in 2000 to 21% in 2014.

These trends indicate that the tide is shifting in the makeup of Romeoville's housing stock. The growing demand for apartments across the region may influence more rental units to come online in the marketplace. In fact, recent apartment projects like The Springs at Weber Road and HighPoint Community have bolstered the local market for multiple family units.

Rental units and smaller, affordable homes are attractive to Millennials, students, young families, and empty nesters. Diversifying the housing stock to meet different needs, lifestyles, and price points seems like it is occurring already. However, the different types of housing proposed for Uptown Square, Weber Road, Lewis University District, and the Metra station area will advance the Village's goal for greater housing diversity.

### 10%

Decrease in the composition of detached single family units in Romeoville's housing supply from 79% in 2000 to 69% in 2014

### 2,133

Additional attached single family units entering the Village's housing supply from 2000-2014

### 94%

Amount of the Village's single family unit permits issued between 1996-2004

### 86%

Amount of the Village's multiple family unit permits issued between 1997-1998

### 5%

Increase in the level of renter occupied housing units from 9.9% in 2000 to 14.8% in 2014

**Expand market rate housing, attainable housing, and rental housing as part of mixed use projects, particularly in relation to the Village's key subareas.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4.1 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Provide housing options that cater to the university community, including students, professors, and staff, with particular focus in the Lewis University District.
- ❑ Integrate a mix of housing types near transit facilities or within areas promoting compact development with convenient access to restaurants, entertainment, and recreational opportunities. Particular focus should be within Uptown Square, along IL Route 53, Weber Road, and around the future Metra station.
- ❑ Examine residential zoning districts in the Village Code to determine if sufficient opportunity exists for development of a range of housing types.
- ❑ Support the growing demand for apartment units, and the maintenance and investment of existing complexes.
- ❑ Emphasize market research on the housing and life-style preferences and necessities of key demographics (e.g., young families, students, Millennials, higher skilled workers, etc.) to provide desired housing options and ancillary amenities.
- ❑ Work with local employers to identify potential amenities, such as shuttles from transit facilities or major residential developments, that could be established to entice their employees to live in Romeoville.





## NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY

### RECOMMENDATIONS

After decades of substantial growth, Romeoville seeks to stabilize its neighborhoods to ensure current residents have access to support and resources to maintain their properties and shape the quality of life at the block level in their neighborhood and subdivision. Neighborhood stabilization has become even more prominent in the past decade, as property owners rebound from impacts of the Great Recession, including foreclosures and lack of personal funds to fix or maintain their properties.

The Village has taken proactive measures to mitigate the impacts of distressed properties, including a foreclosure mitigation program and an online collection of resources and community partners that property owners may utilize to address foreclosures.

As the data in Figure 5.5 indicates, foreclosure filings in Romeoville have decreased since 2008, with a high of 733 foreclosures in 2010 down to 190 foreclosures in 2015. Completed foreclosure auctions fluctuated in the 200 to 300 range in that same timeframe, but has steadily declined since 2012 to 147 auctions in 2015. These trends generally indicate that the national foreclosure crisis has gradually resolved in Romeoville, particularly with the support of the Village's proactive measures. These measures will be beneficial to finding resolution for distressed properties that still remain in the Village.

For those properties that are not distressed but could benefit from maintenance or rehabilitation, it will be imperative for the Village to connect property and homeowners with resources that provide assistance and tips for improving or maintaining their properties. For example, a homeowner may be more willing to integrate water sustainability features on their property, if there was greater awareness and access to resources like the rain barrel program co-sponsored by Will County and the Conservation Foundation.

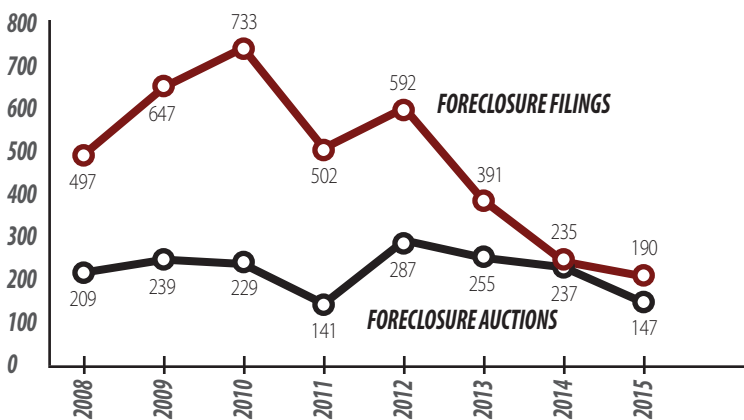


FIGURE 5.5  
**FORECLOSURE FILINGS & AUCTIONS IN ROMEOVILLE, 2008-2015**

Source: Woodstock Institute

**Pursue measures that stabilize Romeoville's existing neighborhoods by leveraging municipal support and encouraging investments by property owners.**

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4.2 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

**Encourage infill development in single family residential areas to support neighborhood stabilization and redevelop underutilized or vacant sites.**

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4.3 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Continue advancing the Village's foreclosure mitigation program to minimize negative impacts of distressed properties.
- ❑ Maintain online resources and partnerships that property owners may access to resolve foreclosure issues on their own terms.
- ❑ Connect property and homeowners with maintenance and improvement programs to stabilize existing neighborhoods.
- ❑ Explore land banking opportunities to stabilize existing neighborhoods and stimulate new development.
- ❑ Encourage homeownership through:
  - Single-family housing rehabilitation
  - Employer Assisted Housing (EAH)

*NOTE: See details below*

**SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING REHABILITATION:** Take stock of existing vacant and foreclosed properties to assess the potential for acquisition and rehabilitation. Partner with non-profit organizations, such as the Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF), to create and implement an acquisition/rehab program that leverages local, state (DCEO) and federal resources (U.S. Housing and Urban Development) to foster affordable homeownership.

**EMPLOYER ASSISTED HOUSING (EAH):** The Village could partner with Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) as well as brokers and home buying counselors to reach out to local businesses to educate them on the benefits of EAH. Housing Counselors, such as the Will County Center for Community Concerns, play an important role in EAH benefits because they handle all administration, as well as every interaction with employee homebuyers, and assist with layering employer-funded benefits with other housing funding sources. For more information on Employer-Assisted Housing, visit the Metropolitan Planning Council's EAH Guidebook. EAH benefits could be strengthened if there was an intermediary working to rehabilitate and sell property in the area.

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

### HOUSING

The key housing recommendations identified in this chapter are activated by the action steps summarized in the Implementation Action Plan matrix below. Potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources are also identified for each action step.

Action Step	Partner(s) <sup>A</sup>	Priority <sup>B</sup>	Phasing <sup>C</sup>	Potential Funding Sources <sup>D</sup>
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4.1</b> Expand housing options that will ensure residents can age in place by finding suitable housing types that meet their changing needs over time without having to leave Romeoville.				
Provide housing options that cater to the university community.	Village; Lewis University; Joliet Junior College; Rasmussen College; Local Development Community	Medium	Long Term	TIF; Lewis University; Joliet Junior College; Rasmussen College; Employer Assisted Housing Programs (EAH)
Integrate a mix of housing types near transit facilities or within areas promoting compact development, with particular focus within Uptown Square, along IL Route 53, Weber Road, and around the future Metra station.	Village; Local Development Community	Medium	Near Term	EAH; TIF; Community Development Corporations
Examine residential zoning districts in the Village Code to determine if sufficient opportunity exists for development of a range of housing types.	Village; CMAP	High	Near Term	Village; CMAP
Utilize LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for all new buildings to promote energy efficiency and reduce housing costs over the long-term.	Village; IEPA; Will County Green	Medium	Long Term	IEPA; Enterprise Green Communities; The Home Depot Foundation; Building Healthy Communities; ComEd; Nicor Gas; Federal and State tax credit programs and grants

#### NOTES

<sup>A</sup>Partners: The list of partners is not static and may change over time

<sup>B</sup>Priority: High, Medium, Low

<sup>C</sup>Phasing: Ongoing; Near Term (Years 1-5); Long Term (Years 5+)

<sup>D</sup>Potential Funding Sources: See descriptions in Chapter 8



This page left blank to facilitate double-sided printing.

## CHAPTER 6

# TRANSPORTATION

This chapter identifies the transportation improvements and multimodal opportunities that are necessary to support economic development, recreation, and general access and connectivity throughout Romeoville. From bicyclists, pedestrians, and commuters to truck drivers, transit riders, and aviation travelers, the local transportation network is used by a diversity of users who require safe and convenient access to commerce, employment, recreation, education, and other opportunities in Romeoville.

The roadway network is first and foremost the most critical aspect of the Village's transportation network, particularly with the people commuting to Romeoville for jobs and industrial businesses utilizing the truck-based intermodal system to reach suppliers, clients, and customers. However, transit service and an interconnected pathway system for bicyclists and pedestrians are just as crucial to the transportation network, especially for commuters and individuals who prefer less reliance on cars.

Transit and multi-use paths are also supportive of the type of development patterns that are characterized for certain subareas across the Village that encourage compact development that support Smart Growth principles, including Uptown Square, the future Metra station area on the East Side, and the Lewis University District. Even the mixed use area proposed along Weber Road at the Romeo Road intersection accentuates compact development, particularly with close proximity to the Village's municipal campus and Joliet Junior College.

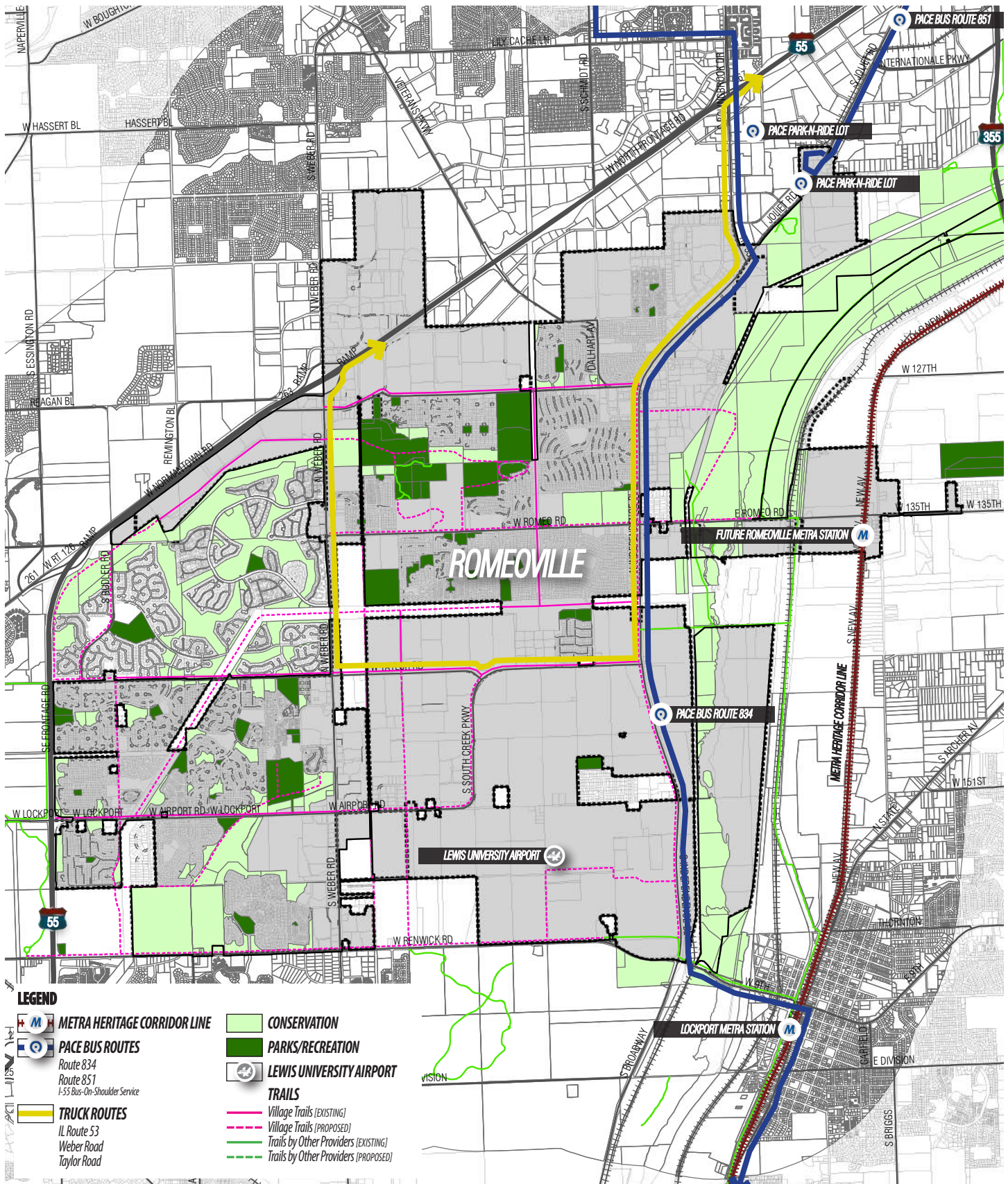
From bus, rail, and bikes to cars, trucks, and pedestrians, a multimodal transportation network that is strong in all of its components, not just roadways, will enable residents, visitors, and employees to have choices in how they connect to neighborhoods, commercial districts, and employment centers.



***A community that is able to offer different transportation choices will broaden its appeal to varying lifestyles and needs of residents and businesses, which is critical to attract those who are looking for a new home or place to set up a business.***



FIGURE 6.1  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP



As shown in Figure 6.1, the Transportation Plan Map illustrates the physical components of Romeoville's transportation network, as well as proposed improvements that will further enhance the different options that provide safe and accessible accommodations for cars, trucks, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and aviation travelers in a cohesive system. The following recommendations are intended to advance a multimodal transportation network in Romeoville that provides a diversity of options for all residents, employees, and visitors.

## COMPLETE STREETS RECOMMENDATIONS

Streets are a significant aspect of Romeoville's transportation network, serving as the primary way people navigate around the community. This includes motorists, truck drivers, bus riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians, as well as young children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities. Recognizing that a diverse group of users utilize the local street system, the strategy here is to integrate a Complete Streets approach in transportation planning to ensure that the Village's public rights-of-way can accommodate users of all ages and abilities. In addition, a Complete Streets approach will support alternative modes of transport within the community by making bike, bus, and pedestrian trips a safe, comfortable and viable option, which would help reduce car dependence for short trips within the Village.

### WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

"Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations. Complete Streets help create livable communities for various types of users, including children, people with disabilities, and older adults. Complete Streets improve equity, safety, and public health, while reducing transportation costs and traffic woes."



Source: National Complete Streets Coalition

**Integrate a Complete Streets approach to provide for a safe, convenient, and comfortable circulation and access for all ages and abilities.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.1 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Develop a Complete Streets policy that guides transportation planning in the Village, including coordination with IDOT, Will County, RTA, Pace, Metra, and other agencies providing transportation facilities.
- ❑ Designate a Village staff member to serve as the community's Complete Streets liaison, particularly to guide the drafting, implementing, and monitoring of the Complete Streets policy.
- ❑ Integrate performance measures in the Complete Streets policy to ensure effectiveness and achievements can be tracked over time.
- ❑ Create educational materials, such as flyers, brochures, and web-based content, that promote the Complete Streets policy and actions.
- ❑ Prioritize transportation projects that advance the Complete Streets policy.



## ROADWAY NETWORK | CARS & TRUCKS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Romeoville's roadway network is comprised of a system of State, County, and local streets with excellent access to two interstate highways, most notably I-55 with interchange access via Weber Road. The Village is also served by four County routes and a system of local roads maintained by the Village or private entities, such as homeowners associations (HOAs) or industrial/commercial property owners.

As summarized in the table in Figure 6.2, the Roadway Functional Classification System categorizes the Village's roads into classifications in accordance with their functional purpose relative to traffic movement. The Transportation Plan Map in Figure 6.1 also illustrates how the roadway classifications form the local roadway network.

Regarding truck traffic, Romeoville has three designated truck routes: IL Route 53, Weber Road, and Taylor Road. Truck traffic is a critical component of the Village's transportation system, with exceptional access to I-55, a regional airport, and various industrial facilities. Driven by Romeoville's strong core of industrial businesses, truck traffic is also integral to the vitality of the Village's economic base. However, truck traffic generates substantial impacts on increasing traffic congestion and the need for maintenance to repair strained roadway conditions.

With development patterns having already taken root and a future land use plan adding impacts to the roadway network, the Village will need to take proactive steps to plan for improvements and approaches that mitigate traffic congestion and ensure optimal access and circulation for cars and trucks.

***Weber Road is one of Romeoville's three designated truck routes, which generates significant traffic with convenient access to commercial, industrial, and residential uses, as well as the I-55 interchange.***



**Encourage development patterns that minimize conflicts between regular auto traffic and trucks that form the lifeblood of Romeoville's strong industrial base.**

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.2 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Integrate road improvement into a capital improvement program, while considering major upgrades and improvements to local roads on a maximum twenty-year cycle.
- ❑ Apply for grants to rehabilitate existing roads.
- ❑ Explore the potential for a new north-south collector road east of Weber Road as an extension of Pinnacle Drive to alleviate traffic congestion and serve local traffic generated by future development along the corridor. Such extension should not connect to Renwick Road to minimize the impact of truck traffic and create opportunities that establish significant landscape buffers to new industrial uses along Renwick Road.
- ❑ Explore the potential to convert Town Hall Avenue in Uptown Square into a festival street with enhanced streetscape to create a more pedestrian/bicycle friendly environment as redevelopment occurs on the western side of the district.
- ❑ Ensure future streets and vehicular access points in new developments properly align with existing streets and access points.
- ❑ Utilize different types of traffic calming measures to encourage appropriate traffic speeds, particularly in areas with greater pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- ❑ Improve access and road capacity to key commercial and industrial/employment centers.
- ❑ Coordinate truck route designations with IDOT to ensure proper standards are met.
- ❑ Work with existing and future industrial businesses that generate significant truck traffic to understand their traffic patterns and monitor them over time to assess future improvements or remediation of trouble spots.



## RECOMMENDATIONS: ROADWAY NETWORK

## Ensure all Village transportation plans are consistent with IDOT and Will County plans and studies.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.3 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Coordinate roadway planning efforts and projects with IDOT, particularly recommendations from the 2017 State Transportation Plan and other studies, including the I-55/Weber Road Study and I-55/Airport/Lockport Road Study.
- ❑ Continue to coordinate with IDOT on the ongoing roadway projects, including the Weber Road/I-55 interchange reconstruction and the new Airport Road/I-55 interchange.
- ❑ Integrate IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) into the design of roadway projects to ensure they fit within the context of their surroundings.
- ❑ Coordinate roadway planning efforts and projects with Will County, particularly recommendations from the *Will Connects 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan* relating to the following issues:
  - Congestion relief
  - Safety
  - Rail crossings
  - Truck corridors
  - Funding and investment priorities
- ❑ Provide new traffic signals at major intersections as development and traffic patterns warrant, ensuring proper coordination with IDOT and Will County.



FIGURE 6.2

#### ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

##### INTERSTATE EXPRESSWAY

Typically used for regional and national trips, with direct access provided by interchanges.

##### MAJOR ARTERIALS

Typically used for trips that span the entire community and beyond to neighboring communities. Typical traffic volume is greater than 15,000 vehicles per day.

##### SECONDARY ARTERIALS

Typically used for trips within the community and connect major arterials. Typical traffic volume is between 10,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day.

##### MAJOR COLLECTORS

Similar to secondary arterials but do not connect neighboring communities. Typical traffic volume is between 5,000 and 10,000 vehicles per day.

##### MINOR COLLECTORS

Typically meant to serve only vehicle-trips between residential neighborhoods, business developments, and industrial areas. Typical traffic volume is less than 5,000 vehicles per day.

##### LOCAL ROADS

Typically meant to connect residences within a neighborhood to collector roadways.

##### ROADWAY

##### JURISDICTION

##### INTERSTATE EXPRESSWAY

Interstate 55 (I-55)	State of Illinois
Interstate 355 (I-355)	State of Illinois

##### MAJOR ARTERIALS

IL Route 53	State of Illinois
Weber Road	Will County
Renwick Road	Will County

##### SECONDARY ARTERIALS

135 <sup>th</sup> Street/Romeo Road	Village
Airport Road	Village
Taylor Road (partial)	Village
Normantown Road (partial)	Will County, Village
New Avenue	State of Illinois
Veterans Parkway/Luther Drive	Village
South Creek Parkway	Village

##### MAJOR COLLECTORS

Taylor Road (partial)	Village
Normantown Road (partial)	Will County, Village
Remington Boulevard	Village
Crossroads Parkway	Village
Bluff Road	Village
Budler Road	Village

##### MINOR COLLECTORS

Multiple roads, including (but not limited to): Windham Parkway, Arlington Drive, Montrose Drive, Murphy Drive, etc.	Village
--	---------

##### LOCAL ROADS

All other roads	Village
-----------------	---------

## TRANSIT | BUS & COMMUTER RAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Romeoville has made significant strides in enhancing the transit facilities serving the community, from open discussions with Pace to expand service and the continued success of the Pace I-55 bus-on-shoulder service to the future Metra station on the East Side. Transit highlights in Romeoville are summarized on the right, with more details in the Community Assessment Report.

Expansion of the local transit system will be essential to provide more transportation options to residents, employees, and visitors, as well as reduce the reliance on the car. In addition to the future Metra station, the Village should collaborate with Pace to explore expanded service on existing routes and addition of new routes along Weber Road and Romeo Road/135<sup>th</sup> Street. Expanded or new Pace bus routes will need to be coordinated with IDOT and Will County to ensure pedestrian safety and right-of-way matters are properly addressed.

Expanded transit service will also be critical assets to the Village's subareas and nodes, including the Weber Road Corridor, Uptown Square, Lewis University District, and the East Side TOD area around the future Metra station.



**2**  
Existing Pace bus routes (834 and 851) serving Romeoville

**2**  
Nearby park-n-ride lots that provide access to nearby Metra stations

**2017**  
Year in which construction is likely to begin for Romeoville's Metra station

**7**  
Metra trains that currently run along the Heritage Corridor line each day (4 outbound, 3 inbound)

**38%**  
Increase in Pace bus ridership on Route 834 from 2005-2013, with recent decrease from the 2013 high-mark of 859 riders

**120%**  
Increase in Pace bus ridership on Route 851 since its inception in 2014 when it started providing bus-on-shoulder service along I-55

**50**  
Vehicles that are replaced by one Pace bus in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

**Expand the transit network to boost ridership and provide a greater amount of options in Romeoville.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.4 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Continue to support the construction of the future Metra station along the Heritage Corridor line, particularly leveraging the Village's ITEP grant and other funding.
- ❑ Assess the potential to provide additional park-n-ride lots, particularly working with major employers to identify strategic points in the community that may optimally serve residents and employees.
- ❑ Collaborate with Pace to explore the potential to expand existing bus service along Route 834, including additional stops and greater frequency, if warranted.
- ❑ Collaborate with Pace to explore the potential to add new bus service along Weber Road and Romeo Road/135<sup>th</sup> Street, particularly as development generates greater activity and creates nodes that would benefit from transit access.
- ❑ Generate a promotional campaign when new Metra or Pace service become active in the community to encourage transit ridership and educate the community on the benefits of transit.
- ❑ Work with local employers to evaluate the potential to establish employee shuttles to nearby park-n-ride lots or the future Metra station, whether for a single business or for a group of businesses pooling their resources.

## RECOMMENDATIONS: TRANSIT

**Utilize the RTA's *Setting the Stage for Transit* guide and Pace's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* to integrate transit-supportive design into bus corridors and the Metra station area.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.5 [SEE CHAPTER 2]**
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ Gain a more thorough understanding of the characteristics desired to support Pace fixed route bus and Metra commuter rail service, as outlined in both documents, particularly relative to the distinct needs, assets, and constraints in Romeoville.

Pace Fixed Route Bus

- Characteristics: Pages 5-12 (RTA); Pages 1-41 (Pace)
- Design Scenarios: Pages 21-22, 25-26 (RTA)

Metra Commuter Rail

- Characteristics: Pages 5, 6, 17-19 (RTA)
- Design Scenarios: Pages 23-24 (RTA)

- ❑ Utilize the principles, policies, guidelines, and resources outlined in both documents to guide planning and development of transit facilities in Romeoville.

RTA's *Setting the Stage for Transit*

- Transit & Design Principles: Page 27
- Policy Tools: Pages 29-30
- Financing Tools & Funding: Pages 31-32
- Other Resources: Pages 33-34

Pace's *Transit Supportive Guidelines*

- Guidelines for Infrastructure & Facilities: Pages 43-83
- Guidelines for the Public Realm: Pages 85-108
- Guidelines for the Private Realm: Pages 109-133
- Transit Checklist & Drawings: Appendix


**RESOURCE: RTA's *Setting the Stage for Transit***

[http://www.rtachicago.org/files/documents/plansandprograms/landusetod/TransitGuide\\_Interactive.pdf](http://www.rtachicago.org/files/documents/plansandprograms/landusetod/TransitGuide_Interactive.pdf)


**Transit Supportive Guidelines**

For the Chicagoland Region  
MARCH 2013

**RESOURCE: Pace's *Transit Supportive Guidelines***

[http://www.pacebus.com/guidelines/why\\_use\\_tsgs.asp](http://www.pacebus.com/guidelines/why_use_tsgs.asp)



## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION | PEDESTRIANS & BICYCLISTS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Most neighborhoods in Romeoville are served by continuous sidewalks with safe intersection crossings and linkages to bicycle trails to form a more interconnected network of trails and paths shared by pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition, the Village takes proactive steps to improve the infrastructure to support safe access and circulation for active transportation, including the 2006 Bicycle Trail Master Plan, 2009 Master Transportation Plan, and ongoing improvements or extensions of sidewalks and trails.



**Current Walk Score® in Romeoville, which indicates that the Village is car dependent (i.e., almost all errands require a car), based on a 0-100 scale<sup>3</sup>**

However, there are opportunities that the Village and its partners can take to make the community more walkable and bikeable, from filling sidewalk gaps and providing more sidewalks in commercial areas to adding more bike paths and creating safe street crossings on high traffic roadways. Moreover, safe pedestrian infrastructure is one of the core elements that Pace requires to provide or expand bus service along a roadway corridor.

While Romeoville has a current Walk Score® of 22, the score has just as much to do with development patterns as it does with sidewalks, trails, and related pedestrian/bike infrastructure. By reflecting Smart Growth principles and a Complete Streets approach in the Framework Plan (Chapter 2) and subarea concepts (Chapter 3), this ensures that the Village will be guided by a blueprint for future development that makes community amenities more accessible via walking or biking and reduces auto dependence. Taken in tandem with improving pedestrian/bike infrastructure, Romeoville's Walk Score® will increase in a more holistic manner.



<sup>3</sup> Walk Score® uses a patented system to measure walkability of any address or community based on walking routes to nearby amenities, starting from high scores within a 5 minute walk (¼ mile) but then decreasing points as amenities get further away. Walk Score® also utilizes population density and road metrics (e.g., block length, intersection density, etc.) to measure the pedestrian friendliness of an address or community.

**Create safe and connected pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly along major corridors, at major intersections, and within mixed use nodes.**

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.6 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Integrate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements into a capital improvement program.
- ❑ Ensure that all public rights-of-way include sidewalks on both sides of the street with preferably a parkway separating vehicles from pedestrians, where feasible.
- ❑ Fill gaps in the sidewalk network to ensure a continuous pedestrian path system throughout the Village.
- ❑ Work with property owners for commercial and industrial developments to integrate sidewalks and other connectivity features for pedestrians and bikes.
- ❑ Collaborate with agencies that provide bicycle trails to ensure their facilities are appropriately linked with those provided by the Village.
- ❑ Ensure that there is adequate space for bicyclists as well as motorists on the street pavement of local residential streets, with the understanding that not every public right-of-way will have a bike path.
- ❑ Ensure that all public rights-of-way are safe and accessible to the elderly and the disabled.
- ❑ Provide adequate street furniture along public rights-of-way, including benches, waste and recycling receptacles, bike racks, street lights, and other amenities, depending on the context, available space, and jurisdiction of the street.
- ❑ Provide street trees and ecologically sustainable landscaping treatments along public rights-of-way.
- ❑ Utilize distinct pavement markings, colors, and materials to clearly demarcate crosswalks, bicycle paths, bus lanes, and travel lanes.
- ❑ Collaborate with Pace to continue assessing improvements to pedestrian safety along corridors that have the potential to establish new bus service.
- ❑ Ensure public rights-of-way have the capacity to support bus stops and related infrastructure.
- ❑ Utilize corner "bulb-outs" and other street design elements to create safe street crossing conditions.
- ❑ Enhance the safety and visibility of existing at-grade railroad crossings.

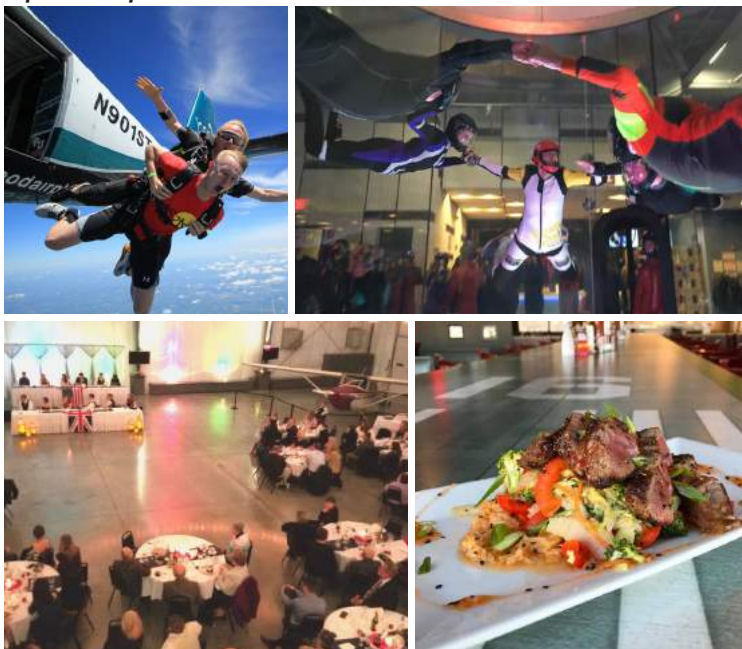
## AIRPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Lewis University Airport is one of a small handful of smaller regional airports in the Chicago metropolitan area, but one of the few that has access to an academic institution. This educational piece provides a competitive advantage for the airport to collaborate with Lewis University next door to continue building up curricula to train aviation students in flight, air traffic control, technology, security, and maintenance. While this aspect alone makes the airport an attractive asset in Romeoville, there are other opportunities upon which to build up the airport as more than just a port of travel and education.

As described in Chapter 2, the subarea concept for the Lewis University District identifies the opportunity to support aviation-themed businesses, such as a restaurant and entertainment venue or skydiving center. These types of businesses reflect the spirit of the airport, while also creating an experience-driven destination in Romeoville to attract residents, students, and visitors alike, particularly activating the Village's South Side. The subarea concept for the Lewis University District also describes the potential for business incubators and research/technology labs, which may be attractive to the Port District or third party businesses that provide services or supplies to the airport.

General coordination between the Village and Joliet Regional Port District will also be important to ensure future development plans around Lewis University Airport are compatible with any planned improvements or expansion of the airport.

***In addition to advancing improvement and expansion plans for Lewis University Airport, aviation-themed businesses, such as the Chicagoland Skydiving Center and Flight Deck Bar & Grill in Rochelle, Illinois, can enhance the attraction of the airport as an experience-based destination in Romeoville.***



**Collaborate with Joliet Regional Port District to ensure future improvement and expansion plans for Lewis University Airport are in concert with the Village's plans.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.7 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Maintain an open line of communication with the Port District to stay updated on airport plans, including runway expansions, site additions, or development of vacant parcels.
- ❑ Connect the Port District with existing and new businesses that may benefit from aviation services for product transport, supply delivery, or general business travel.
- ❑ Assess how current and future flight patterns may impact adjacent sites, particularly coordination of height restrictions and runway protection zones.
- ❑ Coordinate stormwater management facilities on airport property to ensure they are congruent with the Village's sewer system and other public or private stormwater facilities.
- ❑ Identify aviation-themed businesses, such as a restaurant or skydiving center, to build greater attraction of the airport as an experience-based destination beyond just serving as a port of travel.
- ❑ Assess how potential airport plans may be coordinated with the Lewis University District subarea concept, including aviation training, airport-supportive businesses, and aviation-themed businesses.
- ❑ Evaluate the potential to establish an airport overlay zoning district to formalize an approach to regulate development heights, densities, and uses within and around the airport.

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

### TRANSPORTATION

The key transportation recommendations identified in this chapter are activated by the action steps summarized in the Implementation Action Plan matrix below. Potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources are also identified for each action step.

Action Step	Partner(s) <sup>A</sup>	Priority <sup>B</sup>	Phasing <sup>C</sup>	Potential Funding Sources <sup>D</sup>
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.2</b> Encourage development patterns that minimize conflicts between regular auto traffic and trucks that form the lifeblood of Romeoville's strong industrial base.				
Develop a Complete Streets policy that guides transportation planning, and adopt performance measures.	Village; IDOT; Will County; RTA; Pace	Medium	Long Term	IDOT; RTA; CMAP; TCSP; IL-PBS
Develop a new north-south collector road east of Weber Road to alleviate traffic congestion and serve local traffic generated by future development along the corridor.	Village; land owners; Will County	Medium	Near Term	Developers
Provide new traffic signals at major intersections as development and traffic patterns warrant, particularly at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Alexander Circle/Route 53</li> <li>» Carillon Drive/Weber Road</li> <li>» New collector road (south of Highpoint Drive/Weber Road)</li> <li>» Two new collector roads (east of Wilco Boulevard/Renwick Road)</li> </ul>	Village; IDOT; Will County	Medium	Near Term	ITEP; SSA; TIF; BDD; STP
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.4</b> Expand the transit network to boost ridership and provide a greater amount of options in Romeoville.				
Introduce transit amenities, such as shuttles from transit facilities or major residential developments.	Village; local employers; Pace; Metra	Medium	Near Term	Village; Pace; Metra
Provide additional park-n-ride lots.	Village; local employers; Pace	Medium	Near Term	Pace; RTA; SSA; Village
Provide new bus service along Weber Road and Romeo Road/135 <sup>th</sup> Street.	Village; CMAP; Pace	High	Long Term	Pace; SSA
Collaborate with agencies that provide bicycle trails to ensure their facilities are appropriately linked with those provided by the Village. Develop a bike bridge to over Weber Road.	Village; Will County; IDOT; CMAP	High	Long Term	IDNR grant programs; CDBG; CMAQ; ITEP; STP; IL-PBS; TIGER grants
Improve safe access to schools through construction of sidewalks in neighborhoods that lack connections.	Village; local school districts	Medium	Near Term	SRTS; IL-PBS; Village

#### NOTES

<sup>A</sup>Partners: The list of partners is not static and may change over time

<sup>B</sup>Priority: High, Medium, Low

<sup>C</sup>Phasing: Ongoing; Near Term (Years 1-5); Long Term (Years 5+)

<sup>D</sup>Potential Funding Sources: See descriptions in Chapter 8



## CHAPTER 7

# COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

After decades of substantial growth, the Village seeks to stabilize its neighborhoods, strengthen its existing commercial areas, and balance out its strong employment base. To ensure reliable services and capacity to support future growth, Romeoville's community infrastructure -- municipal services, public safety, utilities, parks and recreational facilities, natural areas, and education -- must be improved and expanded where necessary to ensure Romeoville remains a community of choice for families, young adults, businesses, workers, and visitors.

Community facilities planning guides long range investment decisions by identifying the relationships between facility standards, land use, and capital planning. It promotes coordination among the various departments and agencies of government that serve Romeoville, which is intended to circumvent overlapping or conflicting programs. Plans to accommodate future use of land for residential, commercial, or industrial uses must account for the support structures and services needed to ensure that new residents and businesses can operate in a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment.

The demand for and types of facilities and services required to serve any community are a function of its size and growth potential. As a mostly built-out community with limited expansion potential, Romeoville generally has a well-established inventory of infrastructure and facilities to serve its existing and future needs. The focus of much of the Village's facility planning involves improving and expanding existing services, ensuring adequate infrastructure to growth areas like the Weber Road Corridor and the future Metra station area on the East Side.



## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The Community Infrastructure Plan is a tool to guide the Village and its partners in planning to address existing and future needs regarding services, facilities, and other elements to support Romeoville today, as well as population and business growth in the future. While the Community Infrastructure Plan Map in Figure 7.1 identifies existing and potential community infrastructure elements in Romeoville, the recommendations outlined in this chapter are intended to address core issues regarding infrastructure needs, particularly within the perspective of supporting economic development, housing, and transportation objectives defined in previous chapters.

This element of the Comprehensive Plan should be viewed as the framework for establishing policies that should direct a comprehensive facilities and services master planning process for all taxing districts, agencies, and service providers that serve Romeoville. As future development occurs in Romeoville's growth areas, including the Weber Road Corridor and Metra station area on the East Side, the Village will need to evaluate potential expansion of community infrastructure, including identification of land to locate new public facilities and easements for expanded infrastructure. Due to the age of many existing facilities, planning for the future will revolve more around funding improvements and modernizing existing buildings and equipment, while considering expansion of facilities on existing sites, as resources allow.



### ACCESS TO FACILITIES & SERVICES

Community facilities and services support the civic, recreational, educational, and health needs of Romeoville residents and businesses, particularly providing the foundation for sustainable vitality and economic growth over the long term. Equally important is the relative accessibility of these facilities and services to residents, workers, and students. This is particularly significant for segments of the population who do not have access to or choose not to use automobiles, or those who lack access to public transit. The Transportation Plan in Chapter 6 identifies improvements to the road, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network that would diversify the transportation options to access community facilities and services, regardless of where a person lives, works, or attends school in Romeoville. Trails and transit routes are illustrated on the Community Infrastructure Plan Map in Figure 7.1 to demonstrate connectivity to the various community facilities around Romeoville.

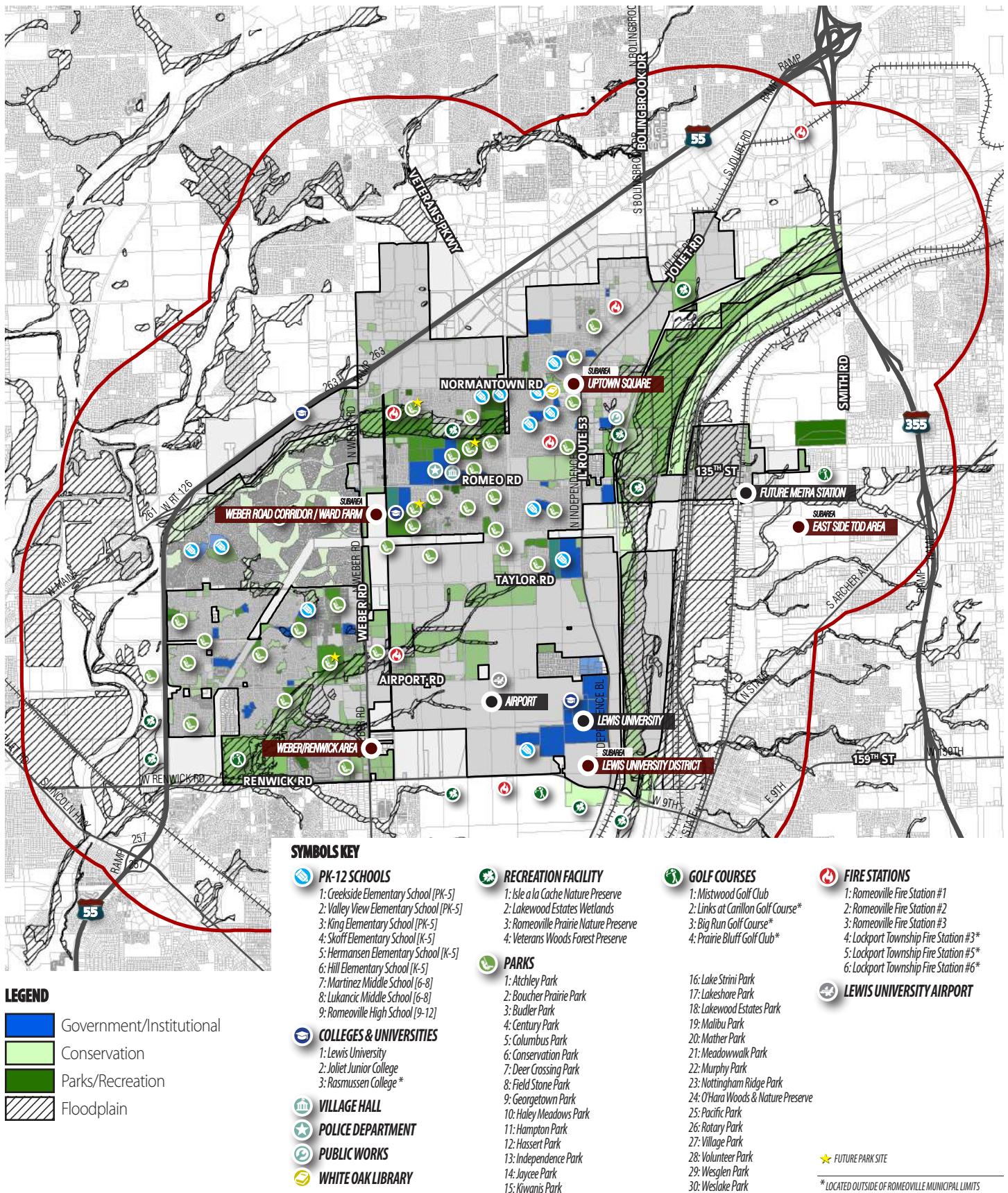


### INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND

One of the primary purposes of the Comprehensive Plan is to link land use goals with capital improvement programs so that public facilities known to induce growth are available in those areas where the community chooses to channel growth. Further studies will need to be conducted to determine the capacity of the Village's water and sewer system to support new businesses and homes, including redevelopment of existing sites and addition of infill development. This is particularly significant along the Weber Road Corridor and on the Village's East Side where the future Metra station and related transit oriented development are planned. The provision of adequate public facilities and services should be programmed or constructed in advance of development pressures to ensure Romeoville is able to provide reliable municipal infrastructure as it capitalizes on market opportunities to add new residential, commercial, and industrial uses to the community.



FIGURE 7.1  
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN MAP





## MUNICIPAL & UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Village of Romeoville provides a full range of services to the community including:

- ☐ Municipal government
- ☐ Police protection
- ☐ Building inspections
- ☐ Code enforcement
- ☐ Licenses and permits
- ☐ Water, sewer, and stormwater utilities
- ☐ Solid waste and recycling (via Waste Management)
- ☐ Transportation management (e.g., traffic control, street parking, road maintenance, etc.)
- ☐ Community development
- ☐ Community relations
- ☐ Parks and recreation
- ☐ General administration

It is this collection of facilities, utilities, and services that ensure a high quality-of-life for residents, support for business and property owners, and maintenance of public infrastructure.

Fire protection is provided by three entities: Romeoville Fire Department, Lockport Township Fire Protection District, and Lemont Fire Protection District. In addition, the Romeoville Emergency Management Agency (REMA) is responsible for providing emergency services.

Third party service providers are responsible for other utility services:

- ☐ ComEd generally provides electricity service for residential and commercial users. However, homes and businesses have an alternative option through a fixed price electricity supply contract with Homefield Energy. Customers who entered into this electric aggregation program reserve the right to return to ComEd or another electricity supplier before the contract expires in September 2017 without an early termination fee.
- ☐ Nicor Gas provides gas service to homes and businesses in Romeoville; however, some residential and commercial users beyond the Village may use private gas sources, such as propane or electric.
- ☐ Telecommunications providers offer homes, businesses, and schools with access to internet/broadband technology. Service providers include Comcast and AT&T for internet/broadband technology. Data plans, cellular phone service, and MMS/SMS messaging for mobile devices are offered by a range of vendors, from the major companies like Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile, and AT&T to budget-conscious options like Consumer Cellular, Boost Mobile, Metro PCS, and NetZero.

**Ensure the Village's services, utilities, and other infrastructure are properly maintained and improved over time to continue providing exemplar municipal support and capacity to residents and businesses.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.8 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☐ Address space, resource, and staffing needs for the Village's various departments and service districts, where appropriate, to address deficiencies, modernize equipment, improve service delivery, and enhance customer service.
- ☐ Explore the potential to provide satellite municipal services in Uptown Square or other growth areas to generate a civic draw to the Village's subareas.
- ☐ Monitor the municipal water, sewer, and stormwater utilities infrastructure to ensure adequate service to the community and increase their capacity when needed to accommodate growth and development.
- ☐ Maintain strong connections with the Northern Will County Joint Action Water Agency (JAWA) to support steps to efficiently provide adequate water supply and address water aquifer issues in the region.

**FOCUS:** Areas like Uptown Square and the Weber Road Corridor that experience flooding or stormwater capacity issues

- ☐ Continue to strengthen the relationship with Edward Hospital to expand healthcare services in the community, including at the Athletic and Event Center in Uptown Square or in stand-alone clinics or satellite offices around the community.
- ☐ Collaborate with the Will County Electric Aggregation Group to assess and potentially negotiate a renewed contract to offer a fixed price electricity supply via Homefield Energy (or another provider), which would maintain an alternative option to ComEd for homes and businesses.

**NOTE:** Current contract expires in September 2017

- ☐ Monitor updates to the local telecommunications network, particularly access to innovative technology and infrastructure, to ensure high quality service is continually maintained for homes, businesses, and schools in Romeoville.

**FOCUS:** Growth areas like Uptown Square, Route 53 Corridor, Weber Road Corridor, Lewis University District, and the future Metra station TOD area on the East Side

## PARKS & RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Romeoville residents, workers, students, and visitors have access to an extensive system of parks, open space, and recreational facilities. Many of the parks and open spaces are set in natural areas, which further enhance the unique character of the community. These amenities offer a multitude of opportunities beyond recreation, including the promotion of social interaction, respect for the natural environment, and alternative modes of transportation, including walking and biking.

A majority of the parks and recreational facilities in the community are provided by the Romeoville Parks and Recreation Department. Programming includes a network of classes, programs, athletic leagues, and community events that accommodate all age groups. Ranging from large recreational facilities to parks of various sizes, the department offers a wide range of facilities, spaces, programs, and equipment that meet a diversity of recreational, educational, and social needs. The 33 total parks in Romeoville provide a wide range of amenities, from playgrounds, sports fields, and open spaces to picnic areas, pavilions, and concessions. There are also two recreational facilities: the Recreation Center and Edward Hospital Athletic and Event Center. Programs and services include childcare, preschool, day camps, open gym, and senior activities.



### 30

**Parks are provided by the Romeoville Parks and Recreation Department, with three other parks maintained by Lockport Township**

### 420

**Acres of existing parkland in Romeoville, which complies with national standards for parkland per 1,000 residents**

### 40

**Acres of additional parkland that has been identified at six locations across the Village to accommodate future growth**

### 2

**Recreational facilities serve the community, providing spaces for recreation, events, meetings, and social gatherings**

### 4

**Golf courses serve Romeoville, with Mistwood Golf Club being the only one within Village limits**

**Expand the Village's parks and open space system to ensure all residents and workers have safe and convenient access to natural areas and recreational facilities.**

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.8 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☐ Use the parks master plan as a guide to set: (A) required open space contributions from new developments in underserved areas or in locations where new parks have been identified; or (B) payments of fees-in-lieu of land dedications to expand open space and recreational facilities across the Village.
- ☐ Explore alternative options to secure land to build new parks or recreational facilities, particularly due to rising land prices that make land acquisition cost prohibitive.
- ☐ Ensure all parks are accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists, including a reasonable walking distance to all homes, where practical.
- ☐ Ensure new parks are evenly distributed in the community, particularly serving growth areas that generate new households.
- ☐ Ensure population growth and new parks comply with national parkland per 1,000 resident standards, established by the National Recreation and Park Association.
- ☐ Secure funding and space resources to meet the Village's most urgent recreational needs, including a pool, gymnastics facility, and ice rinks.
- ☐ Collaborate with other trail providers to create an interconnected trail system throughout the Village, especially on the west side and crossings on Weber Road.
- ☐ Collaborate with third party providers of parks, recreational facilities, and open space to ensure new or expanded spaces fit well within the existing system to meet urgent facility needs, fill programming gaps, and pool resources, where appropriate.
- ☐ Assess the potential to introduce user fees for recreational programming, which has historically been offered free of charge but may need to apply fees to maintain quality level of service.

## NATURAL RESOURCES & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The conservation and protection of sensitive environmental features, such as floodplains, wetlands, and waterways, are essential to maintaining Romeoville's natural resources, which provide wildlife habitats, aquifer recharge areas, and stormwater detention capacity. Taking proactive steps to conserve and protect natural resources provides relief in the Village's development patterns, which will generate a healthier balance between the intensity of development and protection of the natural environment.

The Village takes proactive steps to build up its green infrastructure, particularly integrating sustainable elements to publicly accessible areas and working with partners and property owners to extend these efforts to private properties. From evaluating the quality of the community's water supply each year to encouraging LEED certification for new construction, the Village continues to advance its green initiatives and explore new options that will promote environmental stewardship and sustainable practices in Romeoville.

Land use, development, and infrastructure 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.



### NATURAL RESOURCES

Des Plaines River  
Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal  
I&M Canal  
Hines Emerald Dragonfly Critical Habitat  
Isle a la Cache Nature Preserve  
Lakewood Estates Wetlands  
Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve  
Veterans Woods Forest Preserve

### GREEN INITIATIVES

Annual Water Quality Report  
Stormwater Management Plan  
Northern Will County Joint Action  
Water Agency (JAWA)  
Beautification Commission  
Green Team  
Go Green Online Resources  
Clean Up Week  
LEED Certified Buildings  
Rain Gardens  
Bioswales  
Green Roofs

**Continue pursuing the Village's sustainability initiatives to protect natural resources and build up the community's green infrastructure.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.9 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☐ Establish a public education campaign utilizing signage, information kiosks, and social media features that encourage the conservation and protection of Romeoville's natural resources.  
*NOTE: Build off of current informational signs and kiosks along the I&M Canal and at Isle a la Cache Nature Preserve*
- ☐ Work with local schools and non-profit organizations to develop a curriculum that focuses on local ecology and the importance of protecting natural resources.
- ☐ Continue to advance the Village's existing green initiatives, as well as pursue new ones that promote environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.
- ☐ Maintain communication with the NRG Energy Plant and other similar industrial sites that may be decommissioned or come offline over time, which may provide opportunities for environmental cleanup and reuse for redevelopment, natural areas, and/or recreation.
- ☐ Review and update the Village's codes and ordinances, where appropriate, to ensure certain green initiatives are codified to support enforcement efforts.
- ☐ Continue to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to establish stormwater best management, aquifer recharge, and land use controls that protect the larger habitat area for the endangered Hines Emerald Dragonfly.
- ☐ Utilize LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for all new buildings and facilities, particularly capitalizing on successful LEED projects that have been completed in Romeoville (e.g., Village Hall, Lewis University Science Center, Kohls, etc.)



## SCHOOLS & JOB TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

One of Romeoville's strengths is the network of schools providing educational and vocational training for all ages. Covering two school districts, the public school system ranges from pre-school up through high school. While Romeoville High School is the only school within Village limits serving grades 9-12, students who live in Romeoville also attend three other high schools in neighboring Lockport and Plainfield. There are also two private schools in the community.

Romeoville is also served by three institutions of higher education: Lewis University, Joliet Junior College, and Rasmussen College. All three institutions provide a local option for high school students or adults seeking to pursue a college degree or certificate in a variety of disciplines to prepare them for the workforce in a community with a strong industrial base.

There is traction in the community to attract higher skilled jobs to the community, including opportunities in the Village's subareas to support entrepreneurship, business incubation, co-working spaces for collaboration, research and technology, and hybrid industrial/commercial enterprises (see Chapter 4 for details). The variety of options broadens the skills that employers would seek in the local workforce.

In turn, the local universities, colleges, high schools, and Wilco Area Career Center would need to advance their programs and curricula to better prepare students for an evolving workplace and diversity of jobs requiring varying skillsets.

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Plainfield CCSD #202  
Valley View CUSD #365U

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS (PK-12)

Creekside ES (PK-5)  
King ES (PK-5)  
Valley View ES (K-5)  
Skoff ES (K-5)  
Hermansen ES (K-5)  
Hill ES (K-5)  
Martinez MS (6-8)  
Lukancic MS (6-8)  
Romeoville HS (9-12)

### PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Romeoville Christian Academy  
St. Andrew Catholic School

### HIGHER EDUCATION

Lewis University  
Joliet Junior College  
Rasmussen College

### VOCATIONAL

Wilco Area Career Center

### PUBLIC LIBRARY

White Oak Library  
Romeoville Branch

**Support local schools and the library in their efforts to improve facilities, curricula, and other elements that enhance the learning tools and environment for students and residents.**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5.3 [SEE CHAPTER 2]

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Collaborate with local schools to monitor student population growth and space capacity needs to plan ahead for potential expansion or improvement projects.
- ❑ Continue to pursue grants through the Illinois Safe Routes to School Program to support improvements and construction of sidewalks in areas that connect neighborhood children to local schools.
- ❑ Support the school districts in continuing their efforts to refine high school curricula and prepare students for college coursework, particularly as local colleges and universities update their course offerings and programs to align with the changing needs of the workforce at the local, regional, and national levels.



## RECOMMENDATIONS: SCHOOLS &amp; JOB TRAINING

**Partner with local colleges and universities to advance the Village's strong economic base by educating and training students who will enter the local workforce and fill the employment needs of local businesses.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5.4 [SEE CHAPTER 2]****RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ Promote Romeoville as a center for advanced education and skill development through partnerships with Lewis University, Joliet Junior College, Rasmussen College, and Wilco Area Career Center.
- ❑ Expand workforce development programs at Lewis University, Joliet Junior College, Rasmussen College, and Wilco Area Career Center to help workers expand or sharpen their base of knowledge and skills.
- ❑ Encourage greater community involvement with local businesses to serve as guest speakers at schools, offer job shadowing, develop mentorship opportunities, and provide internships and full-/part-time jobs.



*Business partners can play many roles within the community, such as guest speakers, job shadowing, mentorships, and internships. In 2012, Nanophase Technologies Corporation entered into a collaboration with Lewis University to investigate aspects of engineered nanoparticle dispersions in polishing applications.*



## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The key community infrastructure recommendations identified in this chapter are activated by the action steps summarized in the Implementation Action Plan matrix below. Potential partners, priority, phasing, and potential funding sources are also identified for each action step.

Action Step	Partner(s) <sup>A</sup>	Priority <sup>B</sup>	Phasing <sup>C</sup>	Potential Funding Sources <sup>D</sup>
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1.8</b> Ensure the Village's services, utilities, and other infrastructure are properly maintained and improved over time to continue providing exemplar municipal support and capacity to residents and businesses.				
Work with regional and federal agencies to ensure adequate water supply and address water aquifer issues in the region.	Village; Will County JAWA	Medium	Long Term	CDBG; IEPA
Integrate stormwater management practices into Village codes and review procedures, including protection of habitats and recharge areas for the Hines emerald dragonfly. Develop regional solutions to stormwater detention.	Village; US Fish and Wildlife Service; CMAP; IEPA	Medium	Near Term	CMAP; Village; IEPA; SSA; Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant
Negotiate a renewed contract to offer a fixed price electricity supply via Homefield Energy (or another provider).	Village; Will County Electricity Aggregation Group	High	Near Term	-
<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3.8</b> Expand the Village's parks and open space system to ensure all residents and workers have safe and convenient access to natural areas and recreational facilities.				
Secure funding and space resources to meet the Village's most urgent recreational needs, including a pool, gymnastics facility, and ice rinks, and collaborate with third party providers.	Village; Edwards Health Community Foundations	Medium	Long Term	Village; Community Foundations

#### NOTES

<sup>A</sup>Partners: The list of partners is not static and may change over time

<sup>B</sup>Priority: High, Medium, Low

<sup>C</sup>Phasing: Ongoing; Near Term (Years 1-5); Long Term (Years 5+)

<sup>D</sup>Potential Funding Sources: See descriptions in Chapter 8



This page left blank to facilitate double-sided printing.

## CHAPTER 8

# IMPLEMENTATION

The Comprehensive Plan is a statement of policy, a guiding document expressing the visions and aspirations of the residents of Romeoville to develop a well-planned, economically viable, and sustainable community with a high quality of life. As a policy document, the Plan is fluid and not meant to be an end unto itself. This requires the Village and its partners to undertake further actions to implement the policies and recommendations contained herein over the long term.

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan does not signal the end of the comprehensive planning process in Romeoville. Rather, it signals the beginning of a process of continuing implementation whereby the Plan serves as a guide for both public and private decisions affecting the future of the community. This requires that Village officials, partners, and the community be familiar with and generally support the major tenets of the Plan. Therefore, it is important that the Plan be well publicized, understood, and supported by the community for it to be recognized as a practical and effective guide for Romeoville.

The process of achieving the goals for growth and transformative change in Romeoville over the long term is dependent on ensuring that the planning and development review system is tied to the specific actions, programs, and tools outlined in this chapter.



### A DYNAMIC DOCUMENT

It is important to keep in mind that the Comprehensive Plan is not static. The Plan is based on dynamic variables whose future direction cannot always be accurately predicted. The Village must periodically re-examine and update the Plan as conditions and community aspirations change.

- **EVERY YEAR (AT MINIMUM)**  
Review and update the Implementation Plan
- **EVERY 2 TO 3 YEARS (AT MINIMUM)**  
Review and update the Future Land Use and Subarea Plans; review the entire document
- **EVERY 5 TO 9 YEARS (AT MINIMUM)**  
Completely update the entire document

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Plan implementation consists of a variety of proactive and reactive activities that will collectively ensure that Romeoville achieves its goals. Proactive activities are those actions that the Village initiates through a proposal, plan, improvement, or regulatory change. On the other hand, reactive activities are those in which other parties approach the Village with a proposal on which the Village must act. Preparation of specific area plans, such as the Subarea Development Concept Plans developed for Uptown Square, the Weber Road Corridor, and the Lewis University District, is an example of a proactive activity, while development review is an example of a reactive activity.

Furthermore, creating or updating regulatory standards, such as zoning and subdivision codes, represent proactive activities which Romeoville should undertake to generate the types and character of desired development.

The implementation phase of the comprehensive planning process begins when the Village Board adopts the Comprehensive Plan. Since the implementation phase will require time and effort on the part of Village staff and officials, as well as an allocation of municipal funds and resources, the Village Board should prioritize all activities to be carried out.

In each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, specific action steps are provided to serve as the implementation vehicle for the recommendations outlined in each chapter. These action steps collectively form an Implementation Action Plan. In order to make the Comprehensive Plan a useful document, the Implementation Action Plan ties each recommendation to partners, priority, phasing, and potential resources. These elements activate the Comprehensive Plan into a dynamic guidebook that Village officials can reference in its daily activities that impact the future of Romeoville.

To facilitate the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan the Village should consider the activities described to the right and on the following pages.



**FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

As part of its long term strategic planning process, the Village should prepare an in-depth evaluation of the impact of growth and development on its finances and operational capacity. Fiscal impact analyses of key development areas are designed to determine the long term impact of these areas on Village financial, human, and capital resources. A fiscal impact analysis will identify potential new revenue sources, evaluate current and future levels of services, and identify costs associated with serving a growing community. This approach could also be extended to and benefit other taxing districts.



**UPDATED ZONING ORDINANCE & SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

Updating the Village's Zoning Ordinance and subdivision regulations will ensure that they are consistent with the policies and recommendations outlined in this Plan. More specifically, the Zoning Map should be updated to reflect changes to zoning districts that are consistent with future land use designations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Emphasis should be given to establishing a planned development process for mixed use development areas.



**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Preparation of a watershed management plan should be pursued, particularly recognizing the integrated nature of the watershed system and the need to consider stormwater management planning on a watershed basis. Plan objectives should include: reducing the potential for stormwater damage; controlling or reducing future increases in flooding; protecting and enhancing the quality of water resources; preserving and enhancing aquatic and riparian environments; controlling sediment and erosion; and promoting equitable and economically sustainable stormwater regulations. Preservation of the environment through the protection of existing wetlands and creation of new wetlands is an essential element to improve and maintain water quality, natural habitats for native plants and wildlife, and groundwater recharge areas. Consideration should also be given to coordinating flood improvement projects with recreation and trail plans.



## IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

**GREENWAY SYSTEM PLAN**

An attractive and functional greenway system that expands on and establishes links to Romeoville's primary waterways, parks, recreational facilities, natural areas, and bike trail system will enhance recreational opportunities, support non-motorized access, and protect quality environmental areas. Recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan can be integrated into a Greenway System Plan, which would include leveraging local support with efforts from other local and regional jurisdictions, such as Will County, Openlands, CMAP, IDNR, and other State agencies.

**HEALTHCARE TASK FORCE**

The Village should collaborate with leaders and advocates within the healthcare system to develop a task force to develop a plan that aims to support and improve the health and well-being of residents in Romeoville. The purpose of this Healthcare Task Force is to identify issues, trends, and policies related to healthcare and distribute pertinent information to the community.

**GREEN BUILDING & INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

Romeoville is on the brink of many advantageous development prospects. Establishing environmental guidelines is desirable to ensure a sustainable future that protects natural areas, while allowing for new development. Green infrastructure refers to site systems, including vegetation and porous surfaces, as key elements to slow, cool, cleanse, and infiltrate rainwater. These systems include: green roofs, permeable pavement, bio-retention/rain gardens, LED lighting, urban trees, and LEED certified construction. The aim of the environmental guidelines is to reduce the consumption of resources, while incorporating sustainable development into all stages of planning, design, and decision-making. A comprehensive approach to sustainability integrates Complete Streets guidelines (see Chapter 6) and ecologically based green infrastructure practices that address water, energy, and urban ecology.

There are several useful tools to help plan, design, build, and manage sustainable buildings and sites. Projects that have used these tools provide excellent examples of the potential to integrate high-performance building and site characteristics into the redevelopment of existing sites, as well as all future building and development initiatives in Romeoville:

**RESOURCE:** Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)  
<http://www.usgbc.org/LEED>

**RESOURCE:** Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES)  
<http://www.sustainablesites.org>

**RESOURCE:** Living Building Challenge  
<https://lbi.org/lbc>

**RESOURCE:** One Planet Communities  
<http://www.bioregional.com/oneplanetliving>

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES



In general, design guidelines are organized as a set of design standards or requirements to clearly communicate the importance of high quality design and physical appearance throughout the community. Adopting specific design guidelines for the unique subareas of the Village is recommended, as described on the right.

Design guidelines typically cover the following elements:

- ☐ Site design
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Building orientation
- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Streetscape
- ☐ Landscaping
- ☐ Lighting

### RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Residential design guidelines, through the use of standards and extensive illustrations, are used to clearly communicate the importance of design and physical appearance to the quality of neighborhoods. While the design guidelines should paint a clear picture of the community's design expectations, they should also provide adequate flexibility for creative design.

### UPTOWN SQUARE & OTHER SUBAREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines for these subareas would be tailored to the unique characteristics of each area consistent with the general site recommendations contained in Chapter 3. These locations warrant attention to design details to ensure that the quality of development is reflective of the community's expectations as expressed in this Plan.



Until recently, local government involvement in telecommunications has focused on franchising and placement of infrastructure such as utility poles in public rights-of-way. With the adoption of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, communities must now work with multiple players in the private sector to ensure that proper infrastructure is in place not only to serve current businesses and residents, but to also attract future economic development.

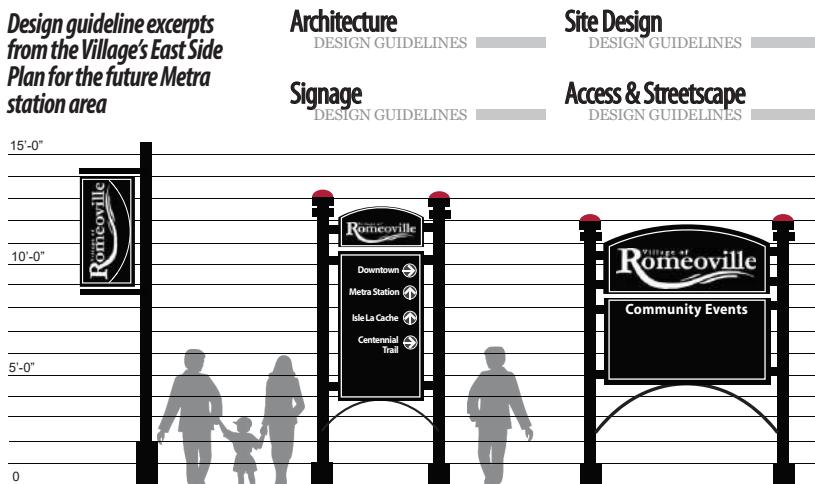
### RESOURCE: APA's *Growing Smart Legislative Handbook*

<https://www.planning.org/growingsmart/guidebook/>

To assist communities in this effort, the American Planning Association (APA), through its Growing Smart Legislative Handbook, recommends that a technology assessment and action plan be developed to include the following elements:

- ☐ Surveys and assessments of future telecommunication needs on a local and/or regional basis;
- ☐ Assessment of existing private telecommunications infrastructure;
- ☐ Inventory of existing telecommunications facilities and potential locations;
- ☐ Assessment of local ordinances, regulations, and permitting procedures that affect private telecommunications;
- ☐ Provisions for construction or installation of, or improvements to, the telecommunications and computer networks of local governments;
- ☐ Public education efforts to market the telecommunications potential in the community and region;
- ☐ Agreements between private firms and local governments for the use of technology capacity by local agencies, departments and service providers; and
- ☐ Establishment of incentives and removal of barriers for increased technology infrastructure investment by the private sector.

*Design guideline excerpts from the Village's East Side Plan for the future Metra station area*



## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

To accomplish many of the project initiatives outlined above, the Village will need to seek other funding sources beyond those available through Village taxes. A description of potential funding sources currently available is summarized below. It is important to note that because the following sources are subject to change. As programs and funding requirements or sources change, the Village will need to continually monitor grants, funding agencies, and programs to identify changes or new opportunities as they become available.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** Romeoville has established several TIF districts to facilitate the redevelopment of Uptown Square and the IL Route 53 Corridor. This financing tool may also be useful in the development of other older commercial areas and the East Side planning areas. TIF funds can typically be used for infrastructure, public improvements, land assemblage, and offsetting the cost of development – including, but not limited to, engineering, stormwater, and other site related issues. TIF utilizes future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district to pay for improvements and incentivize further reinvestment. As the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of properties within a TIF District increases, the incremental growth in property tax over the base year in which the TIF was established is reinvested into the area. Local officials may then issue bonds or undertake other financial obligations based on the growth in new tax revenue within the district. The maximum life of a TIF district in the State of Illinois is 23 years. Over the life of a TIF district, the taxing bodies present within the district, such as school or park districts, receive the same amount of tax revenue that was generated in the base year in which the TIF was established. There are provisions that allow for schools to receive additional revenue.

**Business District:** Business district development and redevelopment is authorized by Division 74.3 of the Illinois Municipal Code. A Business District designation empowers a municipality to plan for and invest in revitalization through the ability to levy up to an additional 1% sales tax within the district. These new funds can be used for, but are not limited to, the following actions:

- ❑ Acquire, manage, convey, or otherwise dispose of property acquired pursuant to the provisions of a development or redevelopment plan.
- ❑ Apply for and accept capital grants and loans from the federal or state government.
- ❑ Borrow funds for the purpose of development and redevelopment, and issue such obligation or revenue bonds as deemed necessary.
- ❑ Expend such public funds as may be necessary for the planning, execution, and implementation of the business district plans.

**Business Incubator Programs:** These programs provide low-cost space and specialized support services to small companies. Such

services might include administrative consulting, access to office equipment and training, and assistance in accessing credit. Incubators are typically owned by public entities such as municipalities or economic development agencies who then subsidize rents and services with grants. In addition to job creation and generating activity, the goal is to have startup businesses grow and relocate to larger spaces within the municipality.

**Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO):** DCEO provides multiple grants and loans to local government for economic and community development purposes, including: affordable, low interest financing for public infrastructure improvements for economic development; participation loans for community and economic development corporations to serve small businesses; and Illinois Bureau of Tourism grants to market local attractions to increase hotel/motel tax revenues.

### PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

**Special Service Area (SSA):** SSAs can be used to fund improvements and programs within a designated service area. An SSA is essentially added to the property tax of the properties within the identified service area and the revenue received is channeled back into projects and programs benefiting those properties. SSA funds can be used for such things as streetscape improvements, extra trash pickup, or the subsidizing of staff to market a commercial area.

**IEPA Revolving Loan Programs:** The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) administers several programs which may provide assistance to communities, including two revolving loan programs: (1) Public Water Supply Loan Program is designed to assist local governments in the improvement of water supplies; and (2) Water Pollution Control Loan Program is intended to assist local governments with the construction of wastewater facilities. While many of the IEPA programs are under review given State budget issues, these programs have a more permanent source of funding as they are loans rather than grants.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** The CDBG program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Initiated in 1974, the CDBG program is one of



## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

the longest continuously run programs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to over 1,100 general units of local government and states. Will County is an Entitlement Community and a recipient of CDBG funds annually. The CDBG Application Grant Cycle for Will County is October 1 to September 30 each year. When grant funds are awarded to the County for CDBG, Request for Proposals (RFP's) are made available for competition.

**Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant:** Under this program, grants are available to implement green infrastructure for stormwater management. There are three program categories: (1) combined sewer overflow rehabilitation; (2) stormwater retention and infiltration; and (3) green infrastructure small projects.

**USEPA Brownfields Program:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides technical and financial assistance for brownfields activities, supporting revitalization efforts through environmental assessments, cleanup, and job training. Several grant types are available, including area-wide planning programs, assessment grants, and cleanup grants:

(1) **Area-wide Planning Pilot Program** provides a flexible grant that can include financial and/or staff assistance for developing area-wide brownfields plans, identifying next steps, and resources needed for implementation. Awards are limited to \$175,000.

(2) **Assessment grants** provide funding for brownfields inventories, planning, environmental assessments, cleanup planning, and community outreach. Grants limited to \$200,000 per assessment or total grant funding \$400,000.

(3) **Cleanup grants** provide direct funding for cleanup activities at specific brownfield sites. Grants are limited to \$200,000 per site with 20% local match.

## HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The need for public resources is paramount for short- and long-term success of an initiative that supports an acquisition/rehab strategy and homeownership. Capital will be needed for acquisition and construction, as well as to help in purchasing an affordable home for low income buyers. Funds to consider include the typical "go to" sources for capital such as HOME, CDBG from Will County, and any available TIF funds from the Village. The State should also be considered as a resource as funds from both the HOME and Trust Fund program from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) are used to support housing activities. In addition, there are often special initiatives sponsored by DCEO that may support a broader housing development strategy as well as funds from the Federal Home Bank.

**Community Foundations:** Community foundations are public charities that offer grants dedicated to improving the lives of people in a defined local geographic area. They bring together the financial resources of individuals, families, and businesses to support effective nonprofits in their communities. Community foundations play a key role in identifying and resolving community problems. Foundations support a number of nonprofit activities in fields that included the arts and education, health and human services, the environment, and disaster relief. The Community Foundation of Will County serves as the County's charitable endowment by addressing changing community needs by raising funds from individuals and organizations interested in improving the lives of all county residents. The Community Foundation of Will County is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) public foundation that accepts donor-directed funds and unrestricted endowments to grant for unmet social, cultural, educational, and charitable needs throughout Will County. While providing philanthropic-minded citizens and nonprofit agencies with a central, local administered foundation, the Community Foundation of Will County also seeks to be a community partner and leader in addressing local needs.

**Employer Assisted Housing (EAH):** EAH is a targeted program for both renters and homeowners. EAH would be one approach to introduce renters to homeownership and attract new residents into the area. The Village could partner with Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC), as well as brokers and home buying counselors, to reach out to area businesses to provide information about employer-assisted housing. MPC would serve as a resource at the initial stages but would not play a role in the follow-up with interested employers. The Village would need to identify a HUD-certified housing counselor, which MPC could train. Housing counselors play an important role in EAH benefits because they handle all administration as well as every interaction with employee homebuyers. Housing counseling agencies also tend to be aware of and have access to additional housing funding that EAH beneficiaries can layer with their employer-funded benefits. For more information on Employer-Assisted Housing, please check out the EAH Guidebook provided on MPC's website..

**Community Development Financial Intermediaries (CDFI):** CDFI is a good source for capital resources. CDFI's offer a range of financing tools that support acquisition, construction, and permanent debt. CDFIs can also provide technical assistance on projects or initiatives from conception to implementation, and their expertise is with working with nonprofits along with municipal and state governments. CDFIs work as intermediaries to provide financial resources or help navigate the development process. A CDFI could be instrumental in an acquisition/rehab strategy.

**Foundation and Specialized Grants:** The successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan requires realization of projects that range in scale and scope. One type of funding source that becomes increasingly significant when issue-specific projects or

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

programs (e.g., tourism, performing arts, historic preservation, small business assistance, etc.) are considered is the foundation grant. The Village should continue to dedicate resources to monitoring and exploring foundation grants as a funding tool.

**Community Development Corporation (CDC):** A CDC serves as an independent entity that oversees a range of redevelopment activities for a specific geographic area, particularly commercial areas and central business districts. Typically set up as an independently chartered organization often with not-for-profit status, a CDC is generally funded through public-private partnerships with financial commitments from local financial institutions or businesses and a public funding source (e.g., TIF, SSA, etc.) to provide for operating expenses and programs, as appropriate. A distinctive activity of a CDC is property acquisition and redevelopment, which is most successful when the organization is mature in both expertise and capacity, particularly if the CDC intends to manage property after redevelopment.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Programs:** By working through its Parks and Recreation Department, the Village should use the policies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to identify projects where a cooperative pursuit of parks and open space grants may be beneficial. IDNR administers several grants-in-aid programs to help municipalities and other local agencies provide a number of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis to local agencies (government or not-for-profit organization) and are awarded on an annual basis. Local governments can receive one grant per program per year, with no restrictions on the number of local governments that can be funded for a given location. IDNR grants include:

(1) **Open Space Lands Acquisition & Development (OSLAD):** The OSLAD program awards up to fifty percent of project costs up to a maximum of \$750,000 for acquisition and \$400,000 for development/renovation of such recreation facilities as playgrounds, outdoor nature interpretive areas, campgrounds and fishing piers, park roads and paths, and beaches. IDNR administers five grant programs to provide financial assistance for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails that are used for public recreation uses (bike paths, snowmobile, off-highway vehicles, motorized and non-motorized recreational trails, etc.).

(2) **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** These grants are available to cities, counties, and school districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. Projects require a 55 percent match. All funded projects are taken under perpetuity by the National Park Service and must only be used for outdoor recreational purposes. Development and renovation projects must be maintained for a period of 25 years or the life of the manufactured goods.

(3) **Recreational Trails Program (RTP):** RTP is a federally funded grant program for trail-related land acquisition, development or restoration. A minimum 20 percent match is required by the applicant. A funding requirement targets 30 percent of the funding for motorized trails, 30 percent for non-motorized trails and 40 percent for diversified trail use. RTP grants are to be used for motorized or non-motorized trail development or renovation and preservation. Projects require a minimum match of 20 percent. Eligible applicants include cities and counties, schools, and private, non-profit and for-profit businesses.

(4) **The Illinois Bicycle Path Grant (IDNR-BPP)** is a reimbursement program for multiple bike path development activities, including land acquisition, path development/renovation, and the development of support facilities for the path.

## TRANSPORTATION

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ):** The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has been the administrator of CMAQ funds for the northeastern Illinois region. CMAP has supported a wide range of projects through the CMAQ program including improvements to bicycle facilities, commuter parking, transit facilities, intersections, sidewalk improvements, and signal timing. Funds have also been used to make transportation improvements to eliminate bottlenecks and limit diesel emissions, and to create promotional campaigns to enhance use of transit and bicycles.

**Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP):** The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers the ITEP and has funded projects including bicycle/pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, landscaping, historic preservation and projects that control or remove outdoor advertising. In the past, federal reimbursement has been 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.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP):** In the past, these funds have been allocated to coordinating regional councils to be used for all roadway and roadway related items. Projects in this funding category have required a local sponsor and have been selected based on, among other factors, a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project among other factors. The Will Council Council of Mayors is the body designated to select and program local STP projects in the Will and Grundy County region. The Council's STP funds have been used to fund a variety of project types including roadway rehabilitation, reconstruction, and restoration; widening and adding lanes; intersection improvements; traffic signal improvements; and green infrastructure funding.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

**Safe Routes to Schools Program (SRTS):** IDOT administers this program to make bike and pedestrian accessibility improvements.

**Integration of Pedestrian & Site Improvements into Planned Developments:** A community may require a developer to integrate pedestrian and site improvements into planned developments as part of the approval process. This facilitates a better development that fits well with the community's intent to create a more pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly corridor, while also sharing the responsibility of proper site design with the developer and potentially enabling the community to achieve cost savings.

**RTA Access to Transit Improvement Program:** The Access to Transit Improvement Program provides capital funding for small-scale projects that increase pedestrian and bicycle access to the transit system. The program is intended to leverage RTA and local funds with federal CMAQ funding to help implement recommendations contained in studies completed through the RTA's Community Planning program or CMAP's LTA program. Projects selected as part of the RTA's Access to Transit Improvement Program will be assisted by RTA staff in developing information required for a CMAQ application. Projects are bundled into one application submitted to the CMAQ program.

**RTA Community Planning Program:** The Community Planning program provides funding and planning assistance to applicants for implementation and planning projects that benefit the community and the regional transit system. Eligible implementation projects include zoning code updates, TOD developer discussion panels, pedestrian access improvement plans, and other innovative implementation approaches. Eligible projects include TOD, corridor, subregional, or local access improvement plans.

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG):** The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program is one of the most flexible Federal-aid highway programs offered by the U.S. Department of Transportation. STBG promotes flexibility in the transportation decisions made by State and local bodies to meet the varying transportation needs of communities. All STP eligible activities are also deemed eligible for STBG funds, along with certain additional activities. CMAP administers STBG funds via the STP-Local program and participation outlined by the methodology of each subregional council (the Will County Governmental League serves Romeoville).

**Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** As part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) from the Federal Highway Administration, TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and

environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. Each state has its own TAP funding, with a portion of funds programmed by CMAP.

**Motor Fuel Tax (MFT):** Motor fuel tax is a common taxing mechanism utilized by communities. According to the Illinois Department of Revenue, MFT is "imposed on the privilege of operating motor vehicles on public highways... in Illinois. It is paid by distributors and suppliers, who collect the tax from their customers." In general terms, MFT is an excise tax imposed on the sale of motor fuel, with the revenue allocated to transportation projects.

**Transportation, Community And System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP):** TCSP is a comprehensive initiative of research and grants to investigate the relationships between transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify sector-based initiatives to improve such relationships. Planning grants may fund projects to improve walking, biking, and transit systems, or develop new types of transportation financing. Implementation grants may include grants for activities to implement TOD plans.

**TIGER Grants:** TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grants invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects to preserve and create jobs, promote economic recovery, invest in transportation infrastructure to provide long-term economic benefits, and assist those areas most affected by the economic downturn. Projects can include highway or bridge rehabilitation, interchange reconstruction, road realignments, public transportation projects (including projects in the New Starts or Small Starts programs), passenger rail projects, and freight rail projects. In urban areas, awards must be between \$10 million and \$200 million. No more than 25% of total funds may be awarded to projects in a single state. Grants are available for up to 80% of project cost with higher priority given to those projects with greater local funding share. The U.S. Department of Transportation has administered over \$4.1 billion in TIGER planning grants over six rounds of funding since 2009.

**Illinois Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety (PBS) Program Grant:** This grant is designed to aid public agencies in funding cost effective projects that will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety through education and enforcement. Applicants for this grant can apply for one or more of three grant categories: (1) enforcement efforts; (2) educational efforts, which can include pedestrian and bicycle master plans, distribution of education materials, walk and bike promotional programs, and distribution of protective equipment; and (3) research and training.