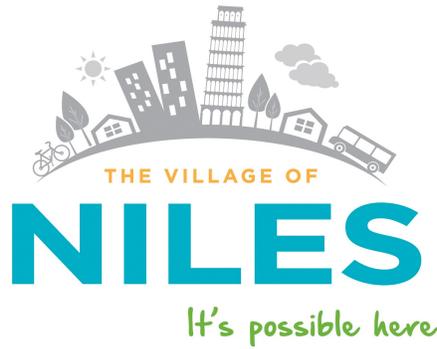


MAYOR
George D. Alpagianis

TRUSTEES
Morgan Dubiel
John C. Jekot
Danette O'Donovan Matyas
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Dean Strzelecki
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VILLAGE MANAGER
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Marlene J. Victorine

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AGENDA
NILES VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
6:30 PM

SPECIAL MEETING

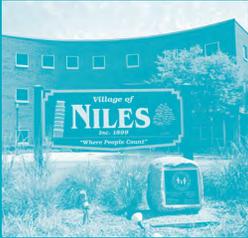
- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. PRESENTATION**

Item 4.a Comprehensive Plan (Community Development)
[Details](#)

- 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The floor is open for public comments on agenda items only. Please step up to the microphone, state your name and city, and make your comment. You will be allotted three minutes. Please make sure you sign in at the reception desk.

- 6. ADJOURNMENT**



Niles 2040

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

JAN 2024 | PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NILES 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Denise McCreery, Former Trustee (Co-Chair)
Craig Niedermaier, Trustee (Co-Chair)
Collin Baker, Resident
Mike DeSantiago, Resident
Tom Kanelos, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Board
Janet Lee, Resident
Joe Macchione, Resident
Dennis McEnerney, Resident
John Murphy, Resident
Scott O'Brien, Resident

VILLAGE MAYOR

George D. Alpogianis

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Morgan Dubiel
John C. Jekot
Danette O'Donovan Matyas
Craig Niedermaier
Dean Strzelecki
Marryann Warda

VILLAGE STAFF

Joe LaMargo, Village Manager
Katarzyna Thake, Assistant Village Manager
Tom Powers, Public Works Director
Charles Ostman, Community Development Director
Richard Wlodarski, Assistant Community Development Director
Katherine Lockerby, Staff Liaison to Committee/Senior Planner
Nathan Bruemmer, Planner I

VILLAGE CLERK

Marlene J. Victorine, Village Clerk

CONSULTANT TEAM

The Lakota Group
Christopher B. Burke Engineering (CBBEL)
Kenig Lindgren O'Hara & Aboona, Inc. (KLOA, Inc.)
Goodman Williams Group

**THE
LAKOTA
GROUP.**

All photos provided by The Lakota Group unless otherwise noted.

Thank you to the residents, property owners, business owners, community groups, and organizations who participated in the planning process. The insights and feedback from these participants helped to shape the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

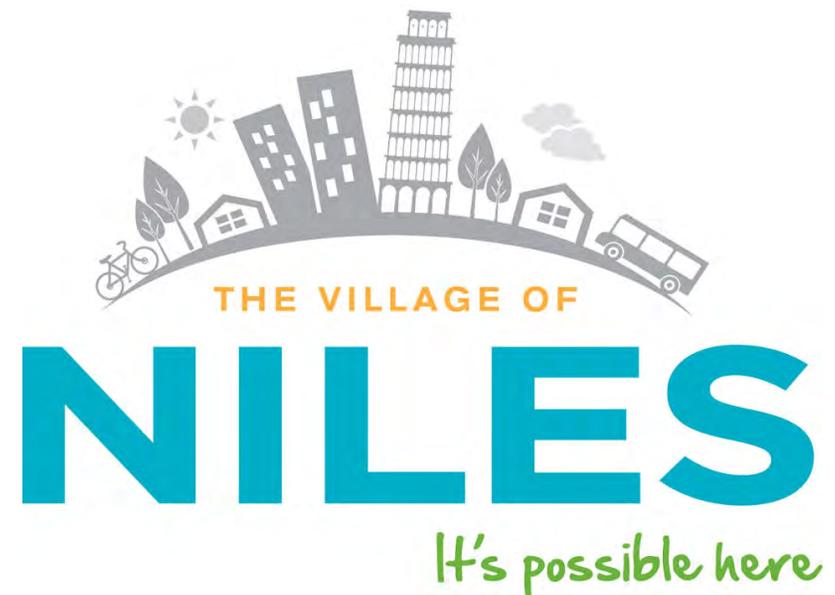


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INTRODUCTION



This is the first complete update to Niles' Comprehensive Plan in ten years and comes at a time when the community, the state, and the country are slowly recovering from the different challenges brought on by a worldwide pandemic. However, despite the pandemic and its impacts, Niles' citizens and stakeholders continue to plan for the future — one with a high quality of life, sustainable economic development, efficient and cost-effective public services, and ongoing opportunities for community participation and involvement in local decision-making. As with previous planning efforts, and despite the limitations of a global pandemic, an energetic community engagement process asked key questions and helped determine what Niles' residents, business owners, and other stakeholders desire for the future. What makes Niles a compelling place to live and do business? What aspects of Niles should the community keep, change, or enhance? How does the community best position itself to capitalize on constant economic shifts and transformations, even in the pandemic's aftermath?

Niles continues to evolve as one of Chicago's most diverse and stable inner-ring suburbs. Developed after World War II, Niles features classic Mid-Century residential neighborhoods, high-quality parks and municipal services, thriving employment centers, and numerous shopping and commercial districts. Niles is also known for its schools, community festivals and special events, and religious institutions that form a strong social network for existing residents and newcomers alike.

However, Niles recognizes it must meet the emerging 21st-century challenges: How will Niles remain a competitive place to live and work? How will it respond to the constant changes and uncertainties in the commercial sector as retailers, companies, and employers re-evaluate their operations post-pandemic and in light of growing internet-based sales? How does it maintain the quality and authenticity of neighborhoods while accommodating housing rehabilitation and new housing products that meet emerging housing needs? How does Niles continue its efforts to become a more walkable, visually appealing destination?

Today, Niles is a mature suburban community; tomorrow it can become an even more compelling place to live, work, and play that appeals to all people. This 2040 Comprehensive Plan is an expression of the community's vision for the future, providing a foundation for community action regarding land use, transportation, housing and neighborhoods, parks, economic development, arts and culture, and community design. It is the result of community discussion and collaboration. Its planning goals and strategies meet the challenges of the 21st century with new solutions.



Leaning Tower in the Village of Niles, Illinois

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Village of Niles began the process of updating its 2030 Comprehensive Plan in 2020. Municipalities update their comprehensive plans every five to 10 years due to changing economics, land use needs, and community priorities. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan addresses the need for a new long-range policy framework to guide the Village's land use and development decisions, focusing on a range of issues related to housing and neighborhoods, transportation improvements and connectivity, commercial corridors and districts, parks, trails and open space, community character, and sustainability. Most importantly, this new planning framework should respond to the always-changing economic climate.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan's primary planning objectives include:

Reinvesting in and redeveloping underutilized commercial and industrial parcels to ensure economic competitiveness.

Implementing infrastructure improvements and strategic transportation planning that balances land use and community growth.

Leveraging existing and emerging technologies and planning techniques related to sustainability and smart growth to better serve the Village.

Addressing an aging and diverse population with actions regarding future housing needs and neighborhood reinvestment.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The process of creating the 2040 Comprehensive Plan started in the summer of 2020. The process spanned three planning phases:

Phase 1 State of the Village

The goal of the first phase was to gain an understanding of existing conditions in Niles and to initiate a community engagement program. Phase 1 included an assessment and analysis of various land use issues, zoning, parks and open space, physical conditions and urban design elements, transportation conditions, demographic and economic market conditions, infrastructure, and utilities. The Village concluded Phase 1 with the completion of the State of the Village Report.

Phase 2 Community Visioning

The Community Visioning phase explored and evaluated a range of ideas, strategies, and policies for future land use and development in the Village, including key target opportunity sites. Phase 2 also encompassed various community engagement and outreach activities, including a community open house and two "pop-up" workshops. The Village prepared the First Draft Comprehensive Plan during this phase.

Phase 3 Final Plan and Implementation Strategy

Incorporating community feedback from the Phase 2 workshops and meetings, the Village prepared the Final Draft Comprehensive Plan with a set of implementation strategies. The Village, including its elected officials, appointed boards, commissions, and community members reviewed the Comprehensive Plan at a final community open house.

NILES' HISTORY

Niles' history extends before its incorporation in 1899 to when the Potawatomi Native Americans settled in the area in the 1700s. Thereafter, the first pioneers were Germans, arriving in this area due to the rich farmland. The vicinity of Milwaukee and Touhy Avenues became known as Dutchman's Point around the 1830s. After Niles Township's incorporation in 1850, numerous Danish, Bohemian, Polish, and English immigrants settled at Dutchman's Point, swelling the Township's population to 200 people. By 1920, the Village's population grew to 1,200 people. In the 1930s, the population increased to 2,135 residents, which included 800 orphans living in St. Hedwig's orphanage established in 1910. St. Hedwig's would close in 1960, later to become Niles College in 1995.

In 1932, Robert Ilg, a local businessman, and industrialist constructed a recreational park for his employees, consisting of twin swimming pools and featuring a half-size replica of the Leaning Tower of Pisa to serve as the pool's water tank. In 1960, the Ilg family donated the park to the Niles Leaning Tower YMCA, turning over the management and maintenance of the Leaning Tower to the YMCA.

The Village continued its land expansion in the Post World War II years and by 1959 annexed an unincorporated area that developed into Golf Mill Shopping Center. By the 1990s, the Village constructed a new Village Administration building and Family Fitness and Senior Centers. Today, Niles is known for its stable and pleasant residential neighborhoods, numerous retail and shopping districts, significant industrial and employment base, high-quality parks, recreation programs, diverse population, and vibrant religious institutions.



COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL SETTING

Niles is located in northwestern Cook County bordering the City of Chicago neighborhoods of Edison Park, Norwood Park, and Forest Glen to the south, the villages of Glenview, Morton Grove, and Skokie to the east, and the cities of Park Ridge and Des Plaines to the west. The Village of Niles is a mature built-out community connected by several regional transportation corridors and arterials. Chicago's Loop is 15 miles to the southeast. The Village of Niles is located between three interstate highways (Interstates 90, 94, and 294) and traversed by one U.S. State route, three Illinois State routes, and several other IDOT and Cook County roadways.

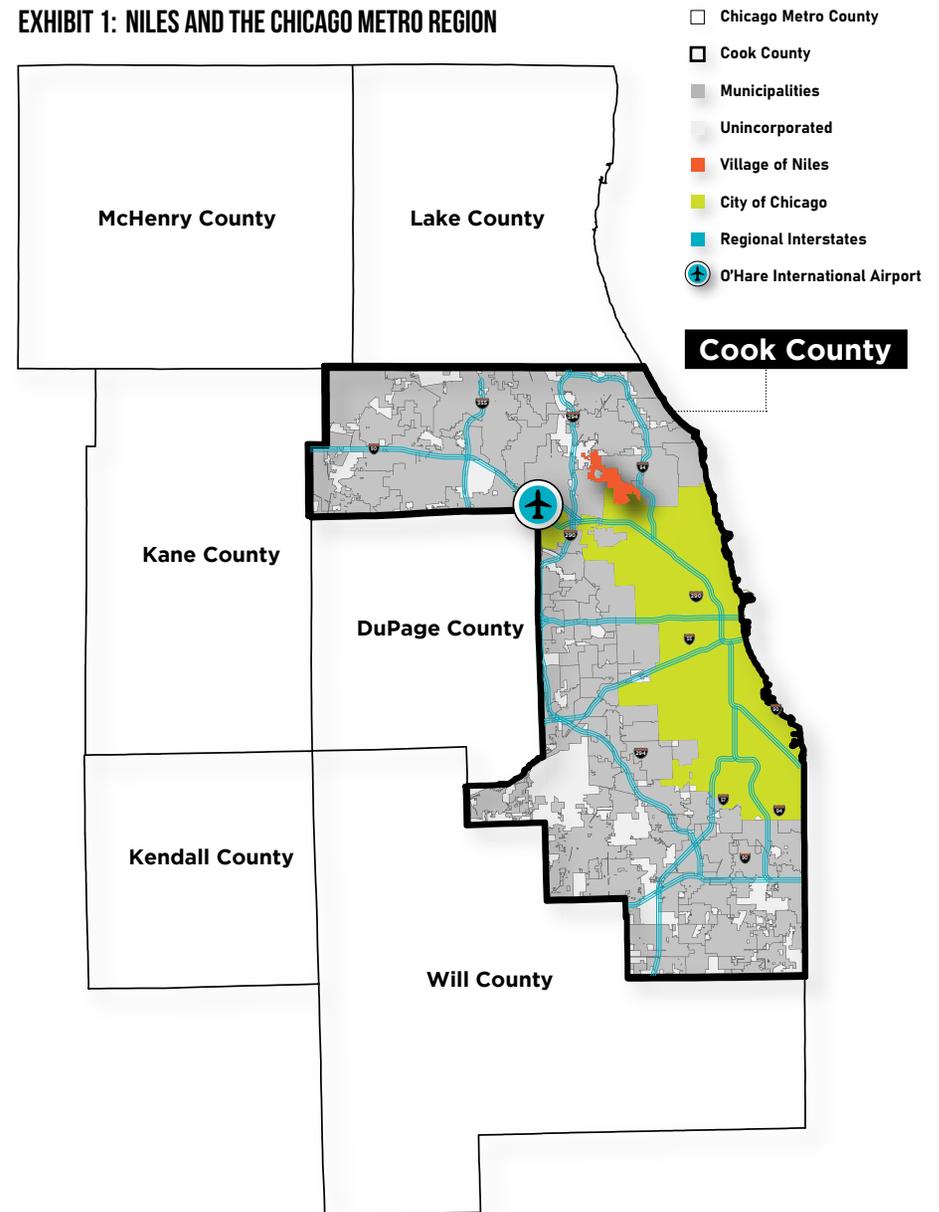
Regional highways serving Niles include:

- » Interstate 94 (Edens Expressway) is located less than two miles to the east.
- » Interstate 90 (Kennedy Expressway) is less than three miles to the south.
- » Interstate 294 (Tri-State Tollway) is one mile to the west from the furthest edge of the Village at Dempster Street and less than half a mile to the west from the furthest edge of the Village at Golf Road.

Several important regional arterial roadways bisect and traverse the Village:

- » Illinois Route 58 (Dempster Street)
- » Illinois Route 43 (Harlem Avenue)
- » Illinois Route 21 (Milwaukee Avenue)
- » Touhy Avenue
- » US Highway 14 (Caldwell Avenue)

EXHIBIT 1: NILES AND THE CHICAGO METRO REGION



The Village is located between two Metra commuter rail lines but does not currently have a train station within the municipal limits. The Village has worked towards broadening its transportation infrastructure into a more multimodal system with an extensive public transit network via Pace and the CTA that provides feeder bus routes to the Metra and CTA rapid transit system, including the region's first Pace PULSE arterial rapid transit line along Milwaukee Avenue, and free circulator bus routes. In addition, Chicago O'Hare International Airport is less than eight miles to the west.

SHOPPING DISTRICTS

The Village has a substantial commercial inventory of more than 5.2 million square feet. Niles' principal commercial areas and shopping districts include areas along Milwaukee and Touhy Avenues, Oakton Street and Harlem Avenue, and Golf Road and Milwaukee Avenue. Milwaukee Avenue, the principal commercial spine through Niles, consists of one-story strip commercial centers noted for their front parking, varying street setbacks and building orientations – a development pattern that lacks a consistent visual unity and streetscape and pedestrian environment. Average daily traffic counts ranging from 23,000 to 35,000 along Milwaukee Avenue make it a desirable corridor for many national and regional retailers.

The Village is home to fourteen shopping centers with more than 100,000 square feet and numerous freestanding big-box retailers and grocers. Unlike many of its neighbors, Niles has two distinct market areas, defined by the clustering of these shopping centers and freestanding big boxes at Golf Road on the north and Touhy Ave on the south. Several big box retailers, including Target, Walmart, and Home Depot, have multiple locations in Niles, reinforcing the Village's attractiveness as a retail destination.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Niles' neighborhoods include 24 areas of Niles intended for residential living. These areas include homes, parks, and schools, and represent family life in Niles. The housing stock in Niles exists in these neighborhoods and is an important factor in the evolution of the Village. Projections point to increasing housing demand from young professionals and families, as well as seniors and active adults. The neighborhoods are important locations for maintaining and improving the quality of life in Niles and its strong reputation as a community for families.



Example of neighborhood scale in Niles.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Niles' reputation for excellent park spaces and facilities reinforces its reputation as a family-friendly community with a high quality of life. Niles benefits from an array of local parks, the Cook County Forest Preserve and North Branch Trail, and a variety of community facilities including a Fitness Center, Niles-Maine District Library, and the Senior and Teen Centers.

The Niles Park District maintains 30 different parks, recreation fields, and facilities for community use, providing Village residents with adequate park and recreation space. Niles parks include a variety of community and neighborhood parks and playgrounds, as well as a variety of recreation facilities such as a water park, golf course, and tennis club and programs such as classes related to dance, martial arts, fitness, and sports clinics. In addition, the Village benefits from direct access and use of a large portion of the Cook County Forest Preserve area and the Preserve's North Branch Trail, all located in Niles along the north branch of the Chicago River.

Several Village operated buildings and facilities are located throughout the community. The Village's administrative center includes Village Hall, the Senior Center, Family Fitness Center, a U.S. Post Office, and Niles Main District Library. These collective facilities provide a level of civic identity and help solidify the Village's administrative center. The Village also maintains several other facilities related to public works, maintenance, fire and safety, and its fleet services section.

SCHOOLS

The Village is well-served by six public school districts and several private schools and educational facilities, including Oakton Community College District 535. The schools in Niles are an asset to the community and have the existing capacity to meet future growth in student enrollment.

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Diversity has been increasing in Niles and today the population includes a wide mix of people from different ethnic backgrounds. A large percentage of the population identifies as Asian, and this is evident by the many different ethnic businesses throughout the Village. Niles is proud of its diversity and seeks opportunities to celebrate and promote this diversity and culture while also fostering similar values such as inclusion, acceptance, and tolerance.

The Village of Niles has several arts and culture assets ranging from public cultural institutions, such as the Niles Historical and Cultural Center and the Niles - Maine District Public Library, as well as private cultural arts providers ranging from local dance companies, to live music venues and art galleries. Niles has begun to recognize its art and culture amenities by the adoption of its Arts and Culture Master Plan which outlines several planning priorities in advancing the cultural arts sector, including using the arts to enhance community identity, celebrating Niles' rich diversity of racial and ethnic groups, improving the conditions and settings for new art activities to take place, and to forge new public-private partnerships in implementing new programs and initiatives that enhance local arts and culture opportunities.



Out of the Fire | Cyd Smilie

PAST PLANS AND STUDIES

The following is a review of past plans and studies commissioned and adopted by the Village of Niles.

2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The current 2030 Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Village of Niles in 2011. It was the first comprehensive plan approved by the Village since the creation of its first comprehensive plan in 1972. The 2030 Plan sets a path for Niles toward the improvement and development of key focus areas and corridors. The Plan includes a multi-topic vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives, components, recommendations, and an implementation strategy. The Village has completed or continues to implement many of the Plan's strategies and implementation actions, many of them still relevant and worthwhile to this Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan brings forward several of these strategies and implementation actions. Since 2011, new developments have occurred on several of the opportunity sites identified in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

The Plan does reference four focus areas, which are quite large and will remain a focus moving forward given their prominence and importance in the Village. The focus areas of the 2030 Plan are:

- » **Golf Road Corridor Plan** - Including an Urban Design and Transportation framework, identification of development opportunities, and a Golf/Milwaukee Development Concept.
- » **Dempster Street Corridor Plan** - Including an Urban Design and Transportation framework, identification of development opportunities, and an underpass mural concept.
- » **Touhy Avenue Corridor Plan** - Including an Urban Design and Transportation framework, and identification of development opportunities.
- » **Milwaukee Avenue Corridor Plan** - Including an Urban Design and Transportation framework and Milwaukee Avenue widening plan.

2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Village adopted a Strategic Plan in 2020 to guide the future of the Village from an organizational and administrative perspective. The strategic plan, conducted by Northern Illinois University, included a community engagement effort that utilized focus groups and workshops. The process and plan resulted in the formulation of five key strategic priority areas, which highlight activities and initiatives that the Village should focus on in both the short and long term. The five priority areas include:

- » Financial Stability and Transparency
- » Diversified Economic Development
- » Infrastructure Planning and Funding
- » Foster Community Identity
- » Marketing and Communication

Although the strategic plan and comprehensive plan have different overall goals, the common objectives are consistent and can help to support the implementation of each other.



Music Event hosted in Niles, Illinois

2017 ARTS AND CULTURE MASTER PLAN

The 2017 Arts and Culture Plan includes a summary of current arts and culture facilities, needs, and programs in Niles. It also includes a vision and five key priority areas. Each priority area then includes a set of strategies and initiatives to implement. Each of the actions can be traced from Priority to Strategy to Initiative. Each priority also includes a case study example that illustrates a success story. The implementation guide lists the potential costs, responsible parties, timeline, and priority.

The implementation is organized by priority area, strategy, and initiative. This provides a clear hierarchy and relates to the previous sections of the plan. The priorities include the following:

- » Use Art and Culture to Enhance Community Identity.
- » Celebrate Niles' Diversity and Leverage Local Assets.
- » Enhance Conditions for Cultural Arts Activities.
- » Employ Innovative Methods in Increasing Arts and Culture Participation.
- » Seek New Financing Mechanisms and Partnerships with the Village as the Lead Entity to Guide the Development of Niles' Cultural Sector.

The Village has begun to implement the Niles Arts and Culture Master Plan with many priorities and initiatives underway or complete.

2016 TOUHY TRIANGLE PLAN

The 2016 Touhy Triangle Master Plan provides a development framework and improvement recommendations for the industrial/commercial area commonly referred to as the Touhy Triangle. The vision for this area is to redevelop underutilized properties and reposition existing sites with new commercial, mixed-use, or entertainment uses. The development framework divides the site into three smaller areas and provides development

recommendations and potential open space acreage and development square footage for each. It also provides recommended alternative concepts for each, including a residential TOD alternative. The Master Plan premises the TOD alternative is on a future Metra station directly adjacent to the site on its eastern boundary.

SOUTH MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

This plan includes a scenario planning approach for the overall improvement and development of the South Milwaukee Avenue corridor from Oakton/Monroe Avenue to the north to the Village boundary to the south. The plan also includes the following five guiding principles for reimagining Milwaukee Avenue:

- » Create destination environments.
- » Change the image of the corridor.
- » Encourage public and private investment.
- » Connect and protect adjacent neighborhoods.
- » Reimagine Milwaukee Avenue as a place to live, work, shop, and play.

The first scenario (adaptation) addresses (1) parking reconfiguration, (2) building siting improvements, (3) access improvements, (4) façade improvements, and (5) new zoning with design standards. The second scenario (reorganization) recommends key improvements to specific sites along the corridor. The third scenario (transformation) recommends intersection improvements at three major intersections along the corridor: Milwaukee-Oakton, Milwaukee, Harlem-Howard, and Milwaukee and Touhy-Waukegan. The plan includes an implementation matrix that identifies priority and timing. The Village adopted new zoning and design regulations in 2016 to implement various land use elements of the Master Plan.

2022 NILES BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

The 2014 Plan provides a blueprint for improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout Niles. It is organized around four topic areas: mobility, access, amenity, and culture. It also has a section for Milwaukee Avenue. Each topic area includes a set of recommendations with the recommendations summarized into a matrix that incorporates additional actions, timelines, and resources needed for successful implementation.

In 2022, the Village updated the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as a cooperative effort between the Village of Niles and the Niles Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Advisory Group (BPAG). The document establishes a series of performance measures by which the Village can evaluate the success of the plan going forward. The Master Plan also includes design guidelines that provide examples of best practices for bike lanes, traffic signals, and crosswalks. The updated Master Plan also provides a detailed list of improvements needed throughout the bicycle and pedestrian network in the Village. The updated Plan closes with a series of policy and programming recommendations to increase bicycle safety, utilization of the network, and foster a culture of non-motorized transportation throughout the Village.

2013 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

The Village's Environmental Action Plan provides policy direction to move the Village toward a more sustainable and resilient future. The plan is organized by an introduction and community profile, and eight topic areas: 1) Land Use and Development, 2) Transportation and Mobility, 3) Open Space, 4) Waste, 5) Water, 6) Energy, 7) Greenhouse Gases, and 8) Education. Each section is divided among existing conditions, goals, recommendations, and an implementation approach. The recommendations are further divided between priority and other recommendations. The plan also includes a monitoring and reporting section, similar to an implementation matrix. It includes a set of sustainability metrics that quantifies the baseline of different sustainable actions and provides measures to track progress (i.e., Pace ridership, recycling rate, water consumption).



**“THE MORE WE LEARNED ABOUT
AND EXPLORED NILES, THE MORE WE
CAME TO LOVE IT HERE.”**
- NILES STAKEHOLDER



EXISTING PLAN REVIEW

As evidenced by its past planning efforts, the Village has a robust set of policy guidance related to land use, development, transportation and mobility, urban design, arts and culture, and sustainability. Many of the policy directives, initiatives, and implementation strategies remain relevant but will need prioritization as the Village moves forward.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan has an extensive set of implementation actions, many of which have been completed or are ongoing. Some of these actions require monitoring, or in many cases continued operation of the many programs and services offered by the Village to its residents. These actions were reviewed, updated, and prioritized through this comprehensive plan update process. Some significant achievements have also occurred including the operation of the PACE Pulse BRT line along Milwaukee Avenue. This initiative was a key policy directive of multiple past planning efforts and now has come to fruition.

The Village's Arts and Culture Master Plan was recently completed and remains relevant. Its core principles and goals regarding the arts, arts programming, cultural activities, and celebrating diversity remain strong. Celebrating culture and diversity is a strength of the Niles community.

Milwaukee Avenue has been the primary focus of many past planning efforts and continues to remain a priority in the Village. The Village's "Design District" complements the South Milwaukee Corridor Plan to create a destination type of environment. The continued implementation of this plan as well as policies and guidance to improve and develop the Milwaukee Avenue corridor will remain a priority.

The Touhy Triangle area and its Master Plan also represent another geographic location in the Village where past planning and development efforts will continue toward implementation. The Master Plan has been successful in creating the zoning and development policy framework to allow the redevelopment and repositioning of properties in the Touhy Triangle to occur. This comprehensive plan update will foster these policies while reviewing and updating the development framework and vision for the Touhy Triangle.

Implementation of the Village's updated 2022 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan should remain a priority. It provides a roadmap for improving non-motorized transportation options by installing effective bike lanes, and completing sidewalk gaps, trail improvements, and intersection improvements to increase pedestrian safety. A focus on mobility options and making the pedestrian and bicycle environment a safe and pleasant experience is an interest of the Village as well as the community. This Comprehensive Plan brings forward these policies.

Similarly, a commitment to the environment and sustainability is emphasized in the Village's 2013 Environmental Action Plan. Although this plan is still generally relevant, an update is recommended given the change in dynamics and metrics of environmental regulations. However, a focus on the relevant environmental principles of this plan and a thematic understanding of sustainability is rooted in this Comprehensive Plan update.



Raised Ranch house types in Niles.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Village of Niles has seen a slight increase in population and a decrease in households over the last decade. The 2020 census shows Niles' population at 30,912, an increase of 1,109 from the 2010 census. Despite the recent trend, Esri forecasts population loss into 2027.

By current estimates, the Village is home to 11,065 households with an average size of 2.49 persons per household. The increase in household size and the decrease in median age since 2010 indicates that there has been an increase in larger family households and households with school-age children. Over the next five years, Niles is projected to gain almost 500 households. Total housing units have increased slightly in Niles between 2010 and 2020, but are projected to decline by 2027.

The Village has a median household income of \$69,081. This is slightly lower than Cook County as whole at \$72,092 and is notably lower than neighboring communities and adjacent Chicago neighborhoods. Nearly 47 percent of Niles households have incomes of \$75,000 or more, and almost 34 percent have incomes over \$100,000. At the other end of the spectrum, a quarter of households have incomes of \$35,000 or less.

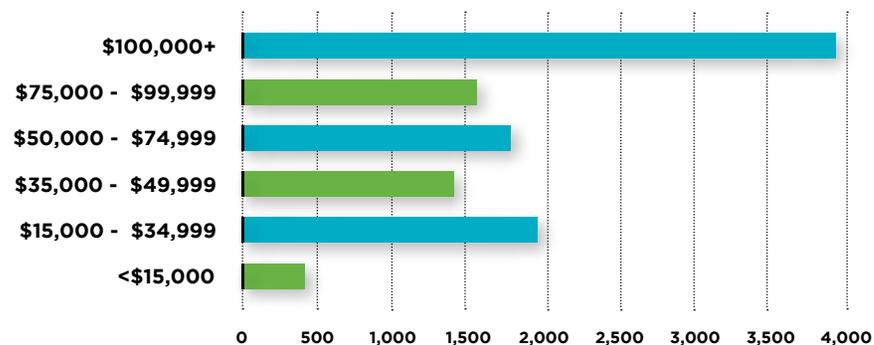
The following profile, which examines Labor and Employment, Housing, and real estate markets, was completed in 2020 as a part of the Niles *State of the Village*. Some of the numbers in the profile may have changed. Please reference the U.S. Census Bureau for the most up-to-date information.

TABLE 1: NILES DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

	2010	2020	% Change 2010 - 2020	2027 Projections	% Change 2020 - 2027
Total Population	29,803	30,912	+3.72%	29,835	-3.48%
Total Households	11,906	11,065*	-7.06%	11,531	+4.21%
Average Household Size	2.41	2.49	+3.32%	2.48	-0.40%
Total Housing Units	12,572	12,590	-0.14%	12,524	-0.52%
Family Households	7,658	7,953*	+3.85%	7,275	-8.52%
Median Age	48.2	47.6*	-1.24%	51.1	+7.35%

Source: Esri Business Analyst, US Census Bureau, Census 2010, 2020. Esri forecasts for 2027.
*U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 1: NILES 2021 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

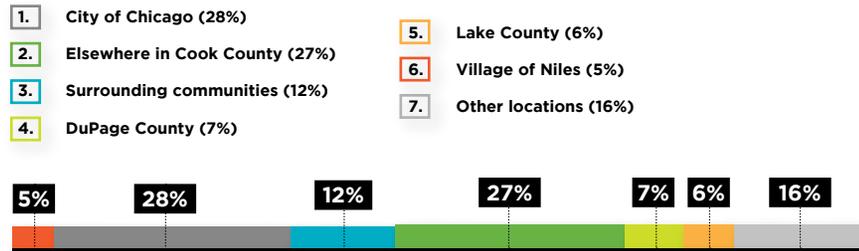
Niles has a strong employment base with nearly 15,000 employed residents living in Niles, according to the most recent available data (US Census, on the Map 2017). The two leading industries are health care and social services, and retail trade at 17 percent and 12 percent respectively. Only five percent of employed Niles residents work within the Village, amounting to just over 1,100 workers.

TABLE 2: EMPLOYED NILES RESIDENTS, LEADING INDUSTRIES (2017)

Industry	%
Health Care and Social Services	17%
Retail Trade	12%
Manufacturing	9%
Professional, Technical, Scientific Services	9%
Educational Services	8%
Accommodation and Food Services	8%

Source: US Census, OnTheMap 2017

FIGURE 2: WHERE NILES RESIDENTS WORK (2017)



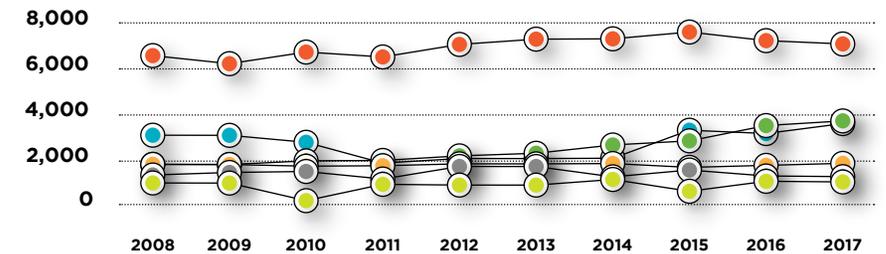
Source: US Census, OnTheMap 2017

* Surrounding Communities does not include Chicago Community Areas Forest Glen or Edison Park

The most current data available from the US Census for total all jobs (public and private) shows 23,737 jobs in Niles as of 2017, surpassing 2008 job numbers, indicating a recovery after the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009.

The consistent leading industry in Niles is retail trade with more than 6,800 total jobs, followed by health care and social assistance with 3,770 jobs, an increase of more than 1,600 jobs from 2008. While manufacturing saw job losses after the recession, numbers have recovered and surpassed 2008 totals. Other leading industries listed have had fairly steady numbers over the past decade, including wholesale trade, accommodation and food services, and educational services.

FIGURE 3: LEADING INDUSTRIES IN NILES (2008-2017)



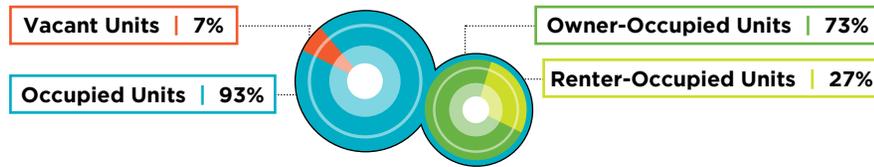
Source: US Census, OnTheMap 2008 - 2017



HOUSING PROFILE

According to the most recent estimates from Esri Business Analyst, there are 12,500 housing units in the Village of Niles. Of these, 11,677 (93 percent) are occupied. Among occupied units, 73 percent are owner-occupied, though renter occupancy has increased since 2010. The estimated number of vacant units is low at 7 percent, but it has increased by 157 units since 2010.

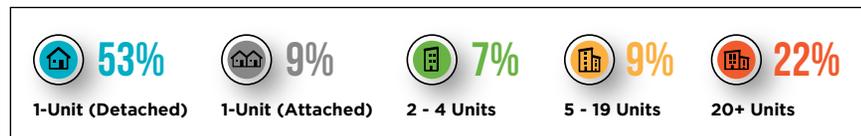
FIGURE 4: NILES HOUSING AND TENURE CHARTS (2020)



Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2020 Estimates

Niles' housing stock is single-family, detached units, which make up 53 percent of homes in the Village. Single family attached units, such as duplexes and townhomes, make up another nine percent of the Village's housing stock. Smaller multifamily buildings, those with less than 19 units, make up 16 percent of the housing units, while larger multifamily buildings with 20 or more units account for 22 percent of the total units.

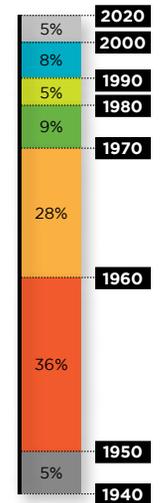
FIGURE 5: NILES HOUSING STOCK BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Commensurate with the migration of inner-ring suburbs that occurred during the post-war years, two-thirds of Niles' homes were constructed between 1950 and 1970. During this period, home builders added over 7,500 homes to the Village's housing stock. Another 13 percent of homes were constructed during the 1980s and 1990s, a peak time for residential development as the Baby Boomers moved into home buying years. Residential development slowed throughout the early part of the twenty-first century and this trend has continued, with less than 70 homes added to the Village stock since the Great Recession. The last multifamily building permits issued for new units were in 2003.

FIGURE 6: HOUSING UNITS BY YEAR BUILT



RESIDENTIAL MARKET

The Village of Niles has seen a slight increase in population over the last decade, growing to 30,912 in 2020. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is optimistic that Niles will continue to grow, projecting its population to reach 33,480 by 2050. Importantly, current low vacancy rates, increasing median sale prices, and shortening sales times are encouraging indicators for future residential development.

Demand Segments

Several demand segments present near- to mid-term opportunities for bolstering the Village's residential market, as well as encouraging population growth. Attracting recent college graduates and young professionals looking to move back to Niles, young families wanting more residential space in a strong school district, and empty nesters and seniors wanting to downsize while remaining in the Village should be a focus of housing development efforts.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND FAMILIES

By 2025, 10 percent of Niles residents are expected to be in the 25 to 34 age bracket, and another 12 percent will be 35 to 44 years of age. Anecdotes from local real estate professionals highlight the desirability of Niles for these age segments but cite as challenges the aging housing stock and high costs of renovation and potential low return on investment. Despite these concerns detached single family homes remain affordable and are selling quickly, highlighting the Village's desirability for potential first-time home buyers and new families.

Attached housing types, such as townhomes and duplexes, could potentially be attractive to these demand segments as well. This housing type could provide an entry point into the Village for those looking for a starter home. New multi-family units, including condominiums and apartments, would appeal to young professionals looking to move back to Niles but who are not yet ready for single-family homes.

SENIOR AND ACTIVE ADULT HOUSING NEEDS

Shifting demographics within the Village – most specifically the aging population – will play a role in determining housing needs over the near and mid-term. Opportunities to capture the senior and active adult housing market over the next five years include:

- » Senior Housing: by 2025, more than 40 percent of Niles residents are expected to be age 55 and older. This includes more than 5,100 residents aged 75 or older. Yet the current supply of service-oriented senior housing in Niles includes just over 1,500 assisted living and skilled nursing units.
- » Independent Living Senior Housing: Similarly, age-restricted independent housing geared toward those 55 and older is limited within the Village. There is just one active community – Embark Senior Living – which has 288 units. It is targeted to residents 62 and older. Additional active adult homes in small-scale, maintenance-free communities could help fill this gap.

RETAIL MARKET

Retailers providing essential goods and services have weathered these challenging times better than other types of retail. Grocery stores, home improvement stores, and sporting goods stores have kept up their sales. Specialty grocery stores, such as H-Mart and Patel Brothers, were consistently highlighted by stakeholders as unique assets in the Village. As the Asian population continues to grow and diversify, there is opportunity to foster more businesses catering to this burgeoning segment and market them as cultural destinations to attract more shoppers to Niles.

As people have spent more time at home during the COVID-19 Pandemic, they are making improvements to ensure their homes fit their growing needs. The Village has an opportunity to encourage residents to shop locally and support businesses and entrepreneurs in the Home Improvement and Lawn and Garden retail categories.

The Village is an established retail destination; however, its growth has stagnated, as national and regional retailers continue to reexamine business operations and reduce their real estate square footage. The pandemic accelerated many store closures. Prolonged vacancies at several shopping centers, like Golf Glen and Golf Mill, will continue to impact the Village's retail market.

These shopping centers occupy significant acreage on prime corridors, and with uncertainty over demand for additional retail space in the future, the Village should actively work with property owners on long-term plans to creatively reactivate underutilized, yet valuable, real estate. New households can create demand for health and wellness uses, such as physical therapy facilities, dental offices, or specialty fitness facilities like yoga studios, which are increasingly opening locations in shopping centers.

The ongoing pandemic has highlighted the importance of locally owned businesses to communities. Recent marketing campaigns led by the Village and Niles Chamber of Commerce and Industry have promoted supporting locally owned retailers and businesses. Extending these coordinated efforts can help bolster growth in the Village's retail market.

OFFICE MARKET

The long-term impacts of the pandemic on the office market remain to be seen; however, remote working has become normalized, as employees were forced to work at home. Uncertainty around the timing of vaccines and economic stability has caused many companies to reassess their longer-term office space needs. National brokerage firms such as JLL are tracking potential corporate urban exits and satellite suburban office openings.

Historically, the Village of Niles has not been a destination for large office developments, but for smaller office spaces along its arterials. Demand for large corporate office buildings in the Village is unlikely to strengthen in the future; however, the Village has a stable Class B and C office inventory that could capture demand from companies or entrepreneurs seeking affordable low-density space. There is also an opportunity to capitalize on remote working and provide co-working spaces for Village residents seeking temporary workspace outside their homes.



Shure Corporation Building, 5800 West Touhy Avenue

INDUSTRIAL MARKET

The Village's proximity to the Edens Expressway, and Interstates 294, and 90 supports the local industrial market. Trucks of varying sizes are frequently seen moving in and out of industrial facilities located near the Touhy Triangle, which has evolved as a strategic logistics location. However, the aging industrial inventory and lack of new industrial development will limit the future growth of this land use in the Village. This will especially be the case if new industrial space remains limited, and the focus of future planning efforts in the Touhy Triangle orients towards mixed-use shopping and entertainment.

Future industrial development activity will include the modernization of smaller existing buildings, like Une Annee Brewing. It could also include the redevelopment of several larger-scale buildings, as happened with the FedEx distribution center and the Woodward, Inc. building. While there is increasing demand for logistics and distribution centers throughout the region, the resulting increase in truck traffic can put additional strain on congested roadways.



Une Annee Brewing, 6343 West Gross Point Road

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use in Niles has been influenced by numerous factors. Some of these include its location in the region, past transportation and infrastructure improvements, large landowners, the Chicago River, and the Forest Preserve. The location of Milwaukee Avenue provides a primary north/south corridor through Niles and bisects the entire length of the Village.

Land use in Niles is dominated by two primary categories: single-family residential and public uses. The public use category includes schools, cemeteries, Village Hall and facilities, parks and open spaces, and other public uses. Public land uses are significant in Niles and are typically exempt from paying property taxes.

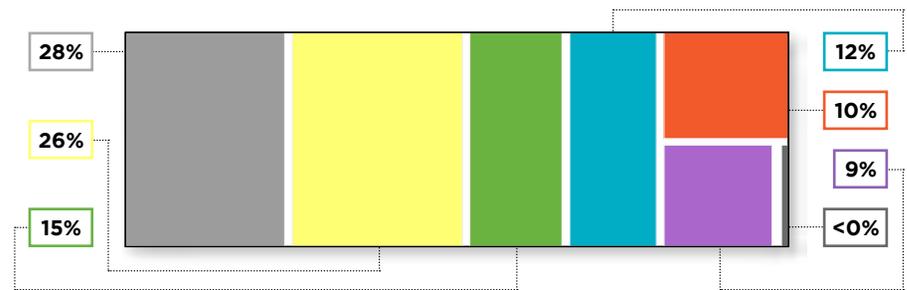
Commercial uses comprise the third largest category. These factors have helped establish a land use framework in Niles through its residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and larger commercial districts.

Single-family residential neighborhoods are located throughout the Village. Commercial uses are located along the primary corridors and in two larger commercial districts: the Golf Mill Shopping Center and the surrounding Milwaukee Avenue/Golf Road intersection; and the Touhy Triangle area. Industrial manufacturing and employment-generating uses are located and limited to the portion of the Village near the Touhy Triangle surrounding Howard Avenue.

Multi-family uses are also located in various locations of the Village, although they do not constitute a significant presence. Most multi-family housing is located north of Dempster Street. The Golf Road corridor west of Milwaukee Avenue contains concentrations of senior and other multi-family housing types.

The southeast portion of the Village located along Touhy, Howard, and Caldwell Avenues contains the Village's most significant concentrations of industrial land uses. The North Branch of the Chicago River, and the Forest Preserve buffer the industrial area from the rest of the Village.

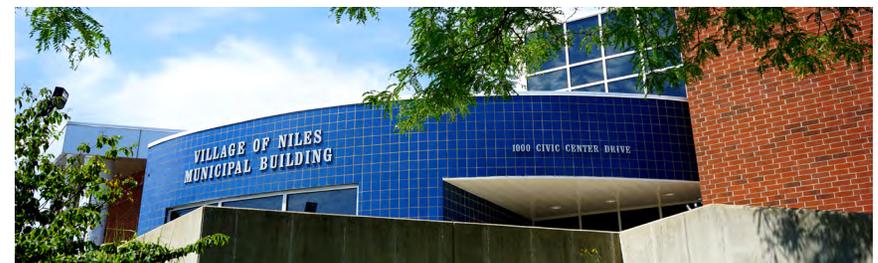
FIGURE 7: NILES LAND USE DESIGNATION ACREAGES*



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2015 Parcel-Based Land Use Inventory Categories (September 2020)

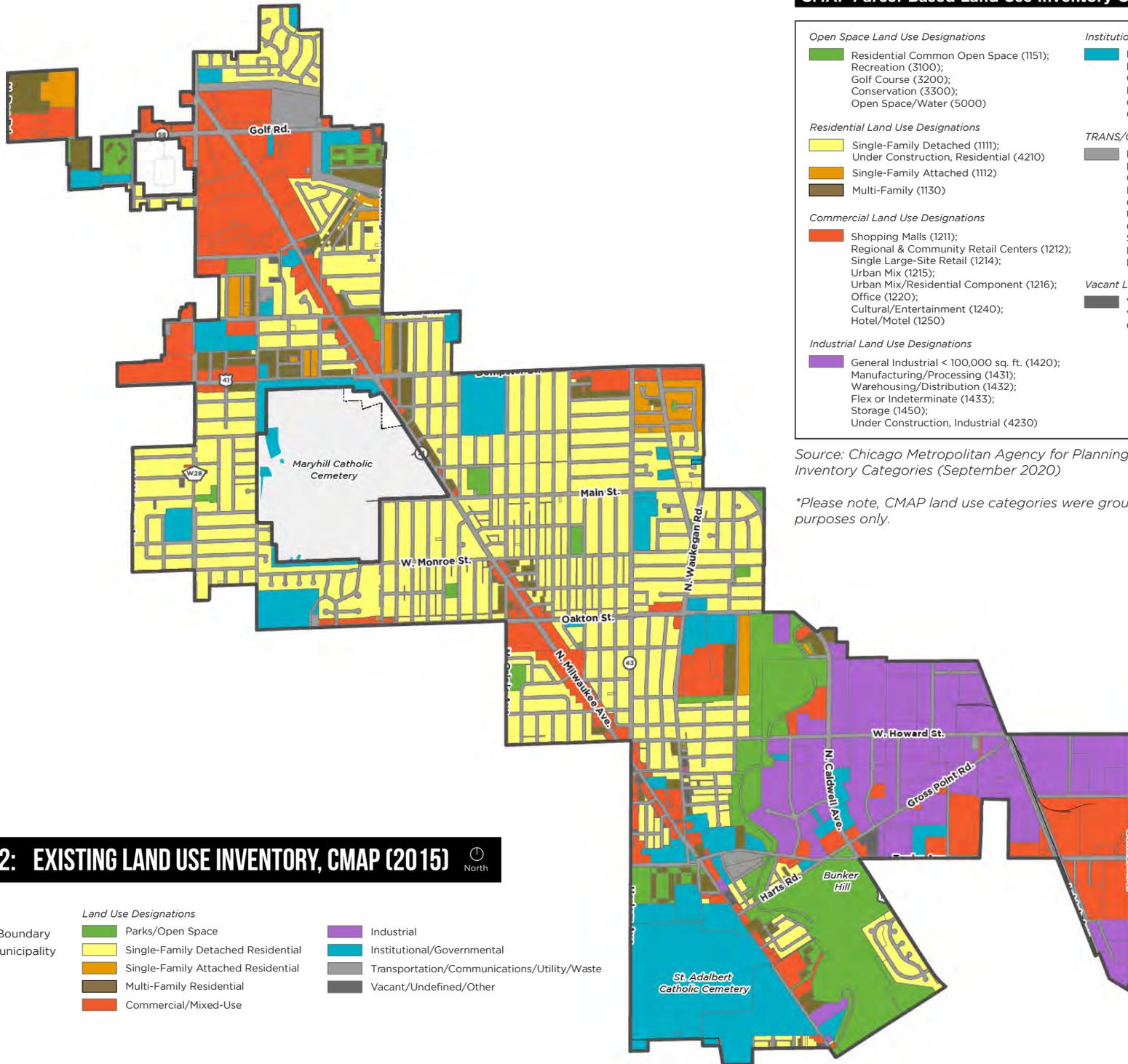
*Note: Land Use acreages are gathered from CMAP GIS data (2015) based off of the categories established on the following page.

- Transportation/Communications/Utility/Waste (1,483 acres)
- Residential (All Types) (755 acres)
- Parks/Open Space (440 acres)
- Institutional/Governmental (420 acres)
- Commercial/Mixed-Use (380 acres)
- Industrial (352 acres)
- Vacant/Undefined/Other (15 acres)



Village of Niles Municipal Building, Institutional/Governmental Land Use Category Example

CMAP Parcel-Based Land Use Inventory Categories (September 2020)*



<p>Open Space Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Common Open Space (1151); Recreation (3100); Golf Course (3200); Conservation (3300); Open Space/Water (5000) 	<p>Institutional Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Facilities (1310); K-12 Educational Facilities (1321); Government Administration/Services (1330); Religious Facilities (1350); Cemeteries (1360); Other Institutional (1370)
<p>Residential Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-Family Detached (1111); Under Construction, Residential (4210) Single-Family Attached (1112) Multi-Family (1130) 	<p>TRANS/COMM/UTIL/WASTE Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail ROW (1511); Roadway (1512); Other Linear Transportation/Facilities (1520); Independent Automobile Parking (1540); Communication (1550); Utility Right-of-Way (1561); Other Utility/Waste (1564); Stormwater Management (1565); Non-Parcel Areas (6000); Not Classifiable (9999)
<p>Commercial Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shopping Malls (1211); Regional & Community Retail Centers (1212); Single Large-Site Retail (1214); Urban Mix (1215); Urban Mix/Residential Component (1216); Office (1220); Cultural/Entertainment (1240); Hotel/Motel (1250) 	<p>Vacant Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant Residential Land (4110); Vacant Commercial Land (4120); Other Vacant (4140)
<p>Industrial Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Industrial < 100,000 sq. ft. (1420); Manufacturing/Processing (1431); Warehousing/Distribution (1432); Flex or Indeterminate (1433); Storage (1450); Under Construction, Industrial (4230) 	

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2015 Parcel-Based Land Use Inventory Categories (September 2020)

*Please note, CMAP land use categories were grouped by project team for analysis purposes only.

EXHIBIT 2: EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY, CMAP (2015)



Legend

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Boundary Other Municipality Streets Railway 	<p>Land Use Designations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks/Open Space Single-Family Detached Residential Single-Family Attached Residential Multi-Family Residential Commercial/Mixed-Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial Institutional/Governmental Transportation/Communications/Utility/Waste Vacant/Undefined/Other
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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE

WHAT IS THE NILES 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Village of Niles embraced a process to update its Comprehensive Plan and move the Village towards Niles 2040. Niles 2040 is the vision for the Village of Niles and its people. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a road map for creating a resilient, well-designed, livable community that reflects the aspirations and values of its residents. It is a long-range policy framework to guide the Village in making informed decisions regarding land use, growth, capital improvements, and development decisions over the next twenty years that will have long-lasting impacts on how Niles grows and develops in the future. Notably as important, the Comprehensive Plan captures the community's aspirations and goals to help communicate to private sector investors, local institutions, businesses, and residents.

HOW TO USE THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan serves as the framework for local leaders and government officials and is the foundation upon which development and land use decisions should be based. Going forward, the Village should integrate the Comprehensive Plan into everyday decision-making. The Village should regularly assess implementation progress and determine when Comprehensive Plan updates are necessary to remain relevant in addressing ongoing planning issues and challenges. The following are several key purposes of the Comprehensive Plan and recommendations for effective implementation and stewardship.

- » **Future Vision.** Niles 2040 represents the community consensus on Niles' desired long-term future and serves as a guiding planning document for the Village boards, Village staff, and other partner agencies and organizations.
- » **Land Use Framework.** The Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for future land use decision-making and assists the community, including elected and appointed officials, Village staff, businesses, and residents, in making informed decisions regarding future development activity. The land use strategy promotes the highest and best use of land while ensuring that Niles maintains a growing tax base, diverse housing options, increasing property values, a thriving industrial employment base, and that it remains a regional retail destination.
- » **Public Investment Guide.** The Village should use the Comprehensive Plan to guide decision-making. Departmental work plans and budgets include a statement of consistency on how departmental projects and budgets reflect, impact, or achieve the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies. Future capital improvement plans consider and align with the Comprehensive Plan especially community design and identity, natural resources, mobility initiatives, and infrastructure upgrades needed to facilitate development activity. The Village should review any zoning change requests to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Vision and Land Use Framework.
- » **Implementation Program.** The Niles Comprehensive Plan delineates an implementation program that prioritizes specific planning strategies and outlines key roles of the Village and other partners and stakeholders in implementation.
- » **Community Engagement Tool.** Written with the input and participation from the community, the Village should publicize and promote Comprehensive Plan implementation as a way to engage and inform stakeholders and residents on local success and progress.

WHAT IS IN THE PLAN?

The Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan features a series of goals, policies, and strategies that aim and strive to achieve the community's aspirations and future vision statement. The goals, policies, and strategies, along with the Future Land Use Strategy, constitute the Comprehensive Plan's planning framework for local action and implementation. Achieving all planning, goals, policies, and strategies will require active and ongoing collaboration between the Village of Niles, its residents, and its stakeholder partners.

- » **Vision Statement.** Provides the long-term vision for what Niles will strive for in the future and serves as the aspirational value of the entire Plan.
- » **Strategic Planning Elements.** Divides the plan into nine topical categories to carry forward the goals and objectives from the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and introduce new policies and strategies reflecting a range of planning needs determined by the Niles' residents and stakeholders during the two-year engagement process. All elements are essential to realizing Niles' long-term vision.
- » **Goal.** Overarching statement of aim and purpose for each element to guide decision-making over the time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan.
- » **Policy.** Specific course of action to achieve the goal proposed in the Comprehensive Plan and adopted by the Village of Niles as a statement of intent.
- » **Strategy.** Steps and initiatives required to advance the Comprehensive Plan's various policies.



THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Village of Niles implemented an extensive community outreach strategy for this planning process that incorporated the perspective of numerous community stakeholders including residents, business and property owners, school and public administrators, transportation agency representatives, community groups, elected and appointed officials, and Village staff. Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the team utilized a strong online and virtual format for public engagement and interaction activities. Outreach activities included efforts to gather community feedback regarding existing conditions, issues, and opportunities for growth and redevelopment, planning goals and strategies, and the community vision for the future of Niles.

Outreach efforts included:

- » Niles 2040 Project Website
- » Steering Committee Meetings
- » Stakeholder Interviews
- » Community Webinar
- » Community Workshops
- » Pop-up Events
- » Online Surveys and Engagement Activities

The following is a summary of the community outreach efforts conducted during the first two phases of the planning process: the State of the Village and Community Visioning.

NILES 2040 PROJECT WEBSITE

The Comprehensive Plan Update process includes a dedicated project website created and designed in collaboration with Bang the Table, specifically to engage the community for feedback about the Village and to provide updates on the process. Comprehensive engagement activities have included questions, polls, plans, online surveys, graphics, draft reports, mapping activities, and outreach for workshops. The Bang the Table site also allows for opportunities for continuous and real-time comments, questions, and feedback. Since September 2020, the site provided more than 4,500 people with information regarding the planning process from the project website and over 260 people have engaged with the various feedback opportunities.

Primary themes from the project website included the following:

- » Pedestrian and bicycle improvements and focus.
- » Milwaukee Avenue streetscape and business activation, particularly the southern portion of Oakton Street to Touhy Avenue.
- » Continue to nurture and promote a family-friendly environment, schools, parks, and being a perfect place to raise a family.
- » Destination creation at Golf Mill and the Touhy Triangle areas.
- » A dog park and continued enhancement of its great parks and Forest Preserve resources.
- » Become America's best example of a "15-minute City", a place where all daily activities and necessities are accessible within 15 minutes.
- » Continue to focus on and invest in stormwater management.
- » Help create more niche and specialty businesses focusing on Niles' diversity.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Village formed a project steering committee to help guide the planning process and solicit stakeholder ideas and feedback regarding the Plan's goals, policies, and strategies. The committee consisted of twelve community members including two Village Trustee representatives, though the composition changed over the course of the project.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In October 2020, the planning team held a series of stakeholder interviews with a wide variety of community participants. The interviews occurred over the course of two days, each with a variety of community, business, and public officials. The interviewees included school district superintendents, representatives from other local educational and religious institutions, park district staff, other Village staff, community residents, and transportation officials. Through these meetings several planning themes emerged, as well as consensus on areas for improvement in the Village. The following are some of the topic areas covered during the meetings:

- » Parks, Schools, and Community Resources
- » Diversity and Inclusion
- » Life-Cycle Housing
- » Empty Nesters and Families
- » Arts, Culture, and Entertainment
- » Golf Mill and Touhy Triangle
- » Milwaukee Avenue Corridor

COMMUNITY WEBINAR

Over 80 participants joined the first community webinar held on Thursday, December 3, 2020. The planned in-person community workshop format moved to an online webinar format due to the pandemic and public health guidelines. The webinar included a presentation and discussion of various issues, questions and answers, and poll questions and results.

The project team provided an overview of the project objectives and planning goals. They summarized past planning efforts including the 2030 Comprehensive Plan as well as the project schedule and key milestones. The primary activity of the webinar included a review of several key topic areas and general polling questions related to those topics. The questions were exploratory and not intended as an exhaustive review of the topic. They merely helped generate discussion on the larger topics, the topics and summary of discussions are below.

Topic 1 Land Use and Neighborhoods

Almost two-thirds or 63 percent of the respondents do identify with a neighborhood in Niles. The Village has created and maintains a list and boundaries of the residential neighborhoods throughout the Village. The strengthening and maintenance of walkable, residential neighborhoods close to parks and schools is a core principle of common city planning and should be a focus of the 2040 Plan.

Regarding land use and development, the planning team asked about geographic locations in Niles that need improvement, redevelopment, or change. The results indicate a clear preference for a change in the Golf Mill, Milwaukee/Golf intersection, and northern Milwaukee Avenue area as the priority areas. The southern portions of Milwaukee Avenue and the Touhy Triangle are secondary priority areas.

Topic 2 **Mobility, Connectivity, and Corridors**

The responses regarding the use of public transportation indicated only 25 percent of participants were regular users. However, this contrasts with the overall high rate of use of the PACE system throughout Niles. It was an equal amount of people (57/43 percent) who thought it was easy to get around Niles on foot and bicycle indicating a need for improvements.

Topic 3 **Demographics and Housing**

Participant responses regarding home ownership and tenure indicated a high number of long-time homeowners. Ninety-two percent were homeowners, and 88 percent lived in the Village for 10 or more years.

Topic 4 **Economic Development**

Regarding shopping preferences, most people do their shopping in Niles although their favorite restaurant is not in Niles. This is not surprising given the large range and amount of shopping opportunities in Niles as well as the range and diversity of great restaurants in the Chicagoland area.

Topic 5 **Parks, Trails, and Open Space**

The responses indicate high use of the North Branch recreational trail and general satisfaction with park and open space resources in the Village. The park facilities received praise for quality and condition, but some responses indicated a need for a dog park, more passive areas, as well as a playground and active park space. Niles' landlocked position and lack of land for park opportunities complicate progress toward achieving these additional amenities and necessitates alternative thinking about park and recreation facilities.

Topic 6 **Utilities and Stormwater, Environmental Conditions and Community Facilities**

Most participants feel Village infrastructure serves the community, with more than three-quarters (77 percent) indicating so. As far as future concern and attention, streets/roads received 56 percent of responses followed by stormwater management at 50 percent. Drinking water and wastewater only received two percent each indicating satisfaction with those services. The Village understands the need for safe roads but IDOT and Cook County control most of the arterials and major roadways causing constraints. The Village only maintains its local streets. The Village is also aware of flooding and stormwater issues and has directed considerable resources to these problems in recent years.

Topic 7 **Sustainability and Community Health**

The responses were overwhelmingly positive regarding the inclusion of sustainability and community health as primary themes in the comprehensive plan. Ninety-four percent of responses indicated that these two topics should be a large focus of the plan.

Topic 8 **Urban Design and the Arts**

Most participants indicated that arts and culture are important to them, 82 percent, while only 33 percent feel that Niles has a unique identity. Niles has completed its Arts and Culture Master Plan that directs the implementation of arts and culture initiatives and will remain a priority moving forward. Design improvement and enhancements can also help further shape and strengthen an identity for Niles.

Community Poll Questions

A detailed summary of the poll questions and answers from the webinar follow next:

Do you identify with a neighborhood?

Yes | 63%
No | 37%

Poll #1

Do you use public transportation in Niles?

Yes | 63%
No | 37%

Poll #3

Is it easy to get around on foot or bicycle?

Yes | 57%
No | 43%

Poll #4

Do you own or rent your home?

Own | 92%
Rent | 2% (Other 8%)

Poll #6

Do you do most of your shopping in Niles?

Yes | 73%
No | 27%

Poll #7

Do you use the North Branch Trail in Niles?

Yes | 71%
No | 29%

Poll #9

Are parks and recreation facilities adequate in Niles?

Yes | 77%
No | 23%

Poll #11

Which areas of Niles need improvement or change?

Golf Mill and Golf/Milwaukee | 89%
Milwaukee Avenue North | 47%
Milwaukee Avenue South | 45%
Touhy Triangle | 37%
Other Areas | 9%

Poll #2

How long have you lived in Niles?

20+ years | 69%
10 - 20 years | 19%
5 - 10 years | 6%
0 - 5 years | 6%
Less than 1 year | 2%

Poll #5

Is your favorite restaurant in Niles?

No | 68%
Yes | 32%

Poll #8

Do you feel like you are adequately served by Village infrastructure? ?

Yes | 77%
No | 23%

Poll #10

Which infrastructure category do you feel requires the most attention from the Village? Check all that apply

Streets/Roads | 56%
Stormwater | 50%
Drinking Water | 2%
Wastewater | 2%

Poll #12

Do you agree that sustainability and health are important themes to bring forward in the plan?

Yes | 94%
No | 6%

Poll #13

Is urban design and arts and culture important to you?

Yes | 82%
No | 18%

Poll #14

Do you think Niles has a unique identity?

No | 67%
Yes | 33%

Poll #15

STAFF TECHNICAL MEETINGS

The planning team held a series of staff technical meetings with a wide variety of Village staff during the planning process. These meetings included staff from various Village departments including Public Works, Fire Department, Community Development, and Economic Development. These meetings provided an opportunity for the planning team to hear different perspectives related to future planning and infrastructure programming in the Village.

MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

The project website, with Bang the Table, provided ample tools for online engagement. The Village used creative ways to market to and reach a wider audience. Below are some of the tools and platforms used to engage the Village of Niles.

Outreach Platforms:

- » Project website launch flyer in water bills
- » Village social media
- » Printed materials
- » Lawn signs
- » Niles 2040 Steering Committee members' social media networks
- » Email blasts

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The first community survey was made available the week following the virtual workshop. The main goal of the survey was to gather insightful feedback regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of the Village of Niles. There were 112 participants who shared their thoughts regarding the following key topics:

- » 2030 Comprehensive Plan
- » SWOT Analysis
- » Land Use and Neighborhoods
- » Mobility, Connectivity, and Corridors
- » Housing in the Village
- » Economic Development
- » Parks, Trails, and Open Space
- » Utilities and Stormwater
- » Sustainability and Community Health
- » Urban Design and Arts and Culture

POP-UP EVENTS

To kick off Phase 2, Community Visioning, the planning team hosted two informational pop-up booths during Village-hosted events. The first event was held on September 18th, 2021, during the Niles Public Works Open House, and then again on September 25th, 2021, during the Niles Fire Department Open House and Pancake Breakfast. These events were an opportunity to share project information with the community and gather input on the community's vision for the future of Niles. Primary themes and comments emerged during the pop-up events:

- » More parks and open space on vacant lots
- » More activities for young people

- » Need for streetscape improvements
- » More shopping, restaurants, and fine dining
- » Need for more sidewalks near Golf Mill and the Library
- » Need for improvements to Golf Mill – more shopping, entertainment, recreation, and activities

COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP AND SURVEY

The Village hosted a Community Visioning Workshop for the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan on Wednesday, September 29th, 2021, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The purpose of the workshop was to provide an update about the project tasks completed to date and learn about the vision and desires the public has for the future of Niles. Exercises included a visual preference survey, a big map 'Map Your Village' exercise, a "Big Idea" stickers board, and a "Mad Lib" visioning handout. Approximately 35 participants attended the workshop. Following the workshop, the Village released an online survey to the public, incorporating the workshop exercises. The workshop provided additional feedback from those unable to attend.



KEY THEMES

A robust engagement process built on the voices and ideas of community stakeholders, residents, business owners, local leaders, and more, revealed the following key planning themes that guided the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

- » **Niles is Known for its Strong System of Community Resources.** Stakeholders agreed the Niles schools and community facilities are assets to the community and well-regarded by residents. Communication and partnerships between schools and Village representatives appear strong and should continue to be a primary focus to achieve the interests of the community. Other community resources such as the Niles-Maine District Library, the Niles Teen Center, and local religious institutions and civic groups play important roles in Niles' social, cultural, and civic life.
- » **Improve Recreational Opportunities in Niles.** Parks in Niles are important assets however, it is acknowledged that there is not much opportunity to significantly add new parkland. It will be important to explore other recreation options in the future including improved connectivity to the Forest Preserve, the addition of parks and open space to new development, and creatively providing community gathering spaces throughout the Village.
- » **Celebrate Niles' Diversity.** Residents view Niles' existing and expanding ethnically and racially diverse population as a strength. Promoting and celebrating the community's diverse populations is an opportunity for the Village to promote inclusiveness, economic development, cultural expression, and local identity. Cultural events and other programs, as well as continued partnerships through the local religious community and cultural groups, can help advance these aims.
- » **Diversify the Housing Stock.** More housing options are needed in the Village. The Village primarily consists of single-family homes and there are limited options for other housing types. More multi-family style units, rowhomes, and condominiums would help diversify the housing stock and attract a variety of buyers while allowing existing residents to remain in the Village as they age and their housing needs change. The Village also has a significant supply of senior housing with demand expected to grow in the future due to population.
- » **Attract and Retain Empty Nesters and Families.** The population of Niles is getting older and one- and two-person households are becoming more common. The population of Niles does include a large segment of empty nesters who stayed in their single-family homes for many years. As mentioned above, increased housing options will allow empty nesters to stay in the community while opening larger single-family homes for younger families. Increased quality of life amenities in the Village is an attraction to increase families in Niles.
- » **Make Niles a Destination through Arts, Culture, and Entertainment.** The lack of a downtown business district or central gathering place in Niles is a constraint to fostering arts and culture activities in the Village. Given the difficulty of creating a downtown when one does not exist, the focus in Niles will continue to be on creating vibrant entertainment, shopping, and restaurant destinations. New large-scale community events, such as a "Taste of Niles," helps promote diversity and is an effective strategy to help create an identity and recognize Niles as an entertainment and event destination.

» **Reinvest in and Reimagine Golf Mill and Touhy Triangle.**

Locations in Niles that received the most commentary for redevelopment, improvement, and locations for the introduction of new uses were the Golf Mill shopping center and the area regarded as the Touhy Triangle. The Touhy Triangle, zoned as a multi-use entertainment district, has a plan in place for the transformation of this area. The Golf Mill shopping area provides an opportunity resulting from a change in shopping patterns, the retail environment, and the economy in general. Given the vacancies and land availability, there is interest in the redevelopment of portions of the area into new and different uses.

» **Strengthen Niles' Identity along the Milwaukee Avenue Corridor.**

The community also identified the Milwaukee Avenue corridor as a primary location for improvement in the Village. The corridor is highly visible and serves as the Village's "Main Street" in a certain manner. Interview participants discussed building improvements, streetscape repairs, and parking access as primary concerns. There is an opportunity for the Village to strengthen its identity through this corridor. The Village's Design District along the southern third of the corridor also presents another opportunity to strengthen the identity of the Village and promote an important niche retail destination.

» **Improve Walkability and Connectivity throughout the Village.**

Enhancing the system of corridors in Niles, through streetscape treatments, sidewalk infill, biking infrastructure, and landscaping and buffering can improve the safety and aesthetics of the community.



“THANK YOU FOR ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY! I HOPE THIS INPUT RESULTS IN SOME POSITIVE CHANGES FOR NILES.” - NILES STAKEHOLDER



NILES' FUTURE



The 21st-century challenges facing the Village of Niles require comprehensive, thoughtful approaches to positioning the community to succeed and prosper as a livable, sustainable community in the decade ahead. Niles' single-family neighborhoods, schools, and ready access to shopping, community services, parks, and open space, as well as the numerous cultural amenities found within the broader Chicago metropolitan area, provide a strong appeal to both Niles' residents and others seeking to live in a safe and vibrant community. At the same time, however, the changing big box, power center, and shopping mall retail environments and the need for diverse housing products that serve the emerging housing needs of the community are the pressing challenges that face Niles, as with other mature Chicago inner-ring suburbs.

This 2040 Comprehensive Plan and its vision for a prosperous, sustainable future provide a road map for making Niles more competitive as a place to live, work, and do business in the upcoming decade - a decade that will guarantee continual change and challenges. In the coming decade, the Niles community will also need to respond to the shifting housing and lifestyle preferences of its population groups, including the empty nesters seeking to downsize and young professionals and families wanting good schools and a first home. Both groups desire walkable environments in their neighborhoods and shopping districts, access to transit services and parks and recreational facilities, and mixed-use environments that are urban in nature but scaled to Niles' suburban setting. The preferences and interests of the empty nesters and the young family households will shape Niles' development in the years to come.

Going forward, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan advances a vision of a sustainable, diverse Niles community that retains its essential suburban character while enhancing its neighborhoods, districts, and corridors to meet the needs of its residents in the 21st century.



OUR VISION FOR 2040

The Niles Vision Statement is retrospective, looking backward from the year 2040 after the Village of Niles and its residents accomplish the goals and implement the policies of the Village’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

In 2040, the Village of Niles is a vibrant, diverse, and multi-generational community with **thriving commercial corridors and districts**, as well as established residential neighborhoods, offering a range of housing choices and community services for residents and newcomers of all ages and income levels.

Although the housing stock primarily serves traditional single-family households, progressive policies and land use changes facilitating **increased residential development** helped create more housing opportunities than at any time in the community’s past. This allowed empty nesters and senior residents to age in place while providing housing options for younger households and professionals to move in and remain in Niles to raise a family. As many of the Post-World War II houses in Niles approach the century mark since their construction, **home improvement projects helped maintain Niles’ original housing and increased property values** throughout the community. Incentives and educational programs provided the needed resources to residents who wanted to invest in their homes.

Niles remains a **regional retail destination** as key shopping districts and corridors anchor the Village on the north and south. Golf Mill is a dynamic center of commercial and residential development - the new “urban village” of the community - complemented by open spaces and access to public transit. The Touhy Triangle remains an important location for destination retail stores along with office and other commercial activities. A **series of commercial corridors** in the Village connects these destination shopping areas, each with its own visual identity and scale of development reflecting an urban character with suburban amenities.

Milwaukee Avenue, the primary north-south commercial corridor, attracted new commercial and mixed-use development on a series of opportunity sites. The Waukegan Road corridor is an established, walkable town center with mixed-use buildings providing housing opportunities with small-scale restaurants and retail activities.

Streetscape and urban design enhancements, as well as consistent use of design standards, created a built environment of high-quality architecture and public spaces, lending the Village of Niles a **distinct visual identity**.

Arts and culture activities and investments in public art and placemaking initiatives helped to bring the community together, enhanced the business climate and quality of life, and enlivened and animated the Village’s public spaces. A **thriving local cultural scene**, along with public art, special events, and festivals highlighting the community’s cultural and ethnic diversity, is a testament to the Village’s support of the arts.

The Village of Niles implemented a new framework for **transportation and mobility** that increased access to public transportation, provided dedicated bike lanes, and improved pedestrian pathways. A Complete Streets Policy, adopted in 2020, helped guide the transformation of Village-owned streets into multi-modal corridors, providing new connections and access for cyclists and pedestrians to destinations within the Village and trail networks in neighboring municipalities. Bicycle parking facilities are available throughout the Village, signaling a commitment to cyclists throughout the region that Niles is a cycling and pedestrian-friendly community.

Improved parks and open spaces remained a priority. While the Cook County Forest Preserve and the North Branch Trail provide passive open space and recreation opportunities, the Village collaborated with the Niles Park District to enhance and expand the park system. Residents enjoy safe and efficient access to over 30 recreational facilities, including neighborhood parks and playgrounds, the golf course, and the tennis club.

With dedication and commitment, the Village of Niles successfully implemented key initiatives in the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Positive impacts on residential neighborhoods, commercial districts and corridors, and connectivity within the Village attracted diverse new residents seeking an urban lifestyle in the suburban community. Residents are proud to be a part of the Village’s growth, prosperity, and future.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan features a series of goals, policies, and strategies that aim and strive to achieve the community's aspirations and future vision. A goal is an overarching statement of aim and purpose to guide land use decision-making over the time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. A policy is a more specific course of action to achieve the goal proposed in this Comprehensive Plan and adopted by the Village of Niles as a statement of intent. A planning goal may have one or several necessary policies to advance the goal. A strategy identifies specific steps and initiatives required to advance the Comprehensive Plan's various policies. The goals, policies, and strategies, along with the Future Land Use Strategy described below, constitute the Comprehensive Plan's planning framework for local action and implementation.

Apart from this framework, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan features nine strategic elements that carry forward goals and objectives from the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and also introduce new policies and strategies reflecting a range of planning needs determined by the Niles' residents and stakeholders during the two-year engagement process. All elements are essential to realizing Niles' long-term vision. Achieving all planning, goals, policies, and strategies will require active and ongoing collaboration between the Village of Niles, its residents, and its stakeholder partners.



Water Tower off of North Oriole Avenue in the Village of Niles, Illinois

The nine strategic planning elements include:

- » **Land Use Strategy** - A vital part of the planning framework, the Land Use Strategy describes the distribution and location of particular land uses in the Village of Niles, including its residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, corridors, and industrial areas. The Land Use Strategy also outlines future changes in Niles' land use pattern and mix to promote the desired balance between retaining existing assets and development opportunities that may exist for new commercial, industrial, and residential uses. The Village will use the Land Use Strategy in concert with adopted zoning requirements to evaluate the appropriateness of future development proposals.
- » **Districts and Corridors** - Niles' shopping areas, such as the Touhy Triangle and Golf Mill Mall, are key destination districts that provide a variety of goods and services to community residents. The Village also has several commercial corridors - Milwaukee Avenue, Touhy Avenue, and Golf Road primarily among them - that are also home to a diverse set of small business establishments and office uses serving the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Given the strategic importance of Niles' districts and corridors as a tax base and locations for both office and large and small format retailers, this element addresses their repositioning in light of an ever-changing economic environment and potential redevelopment opportunities.
- » **Mobility System** - Niles benefits from a comprehensive transportation and mobility system that includes its transportation corridors, arterials, and roadways, its public transit service, sidewalks and pedestrian connections, and its emerging bicycle path system. However, opportunities exist to enhance the system by focusing on improvements to traffic flow throughout the Village, encouraging mobility alternatives like autonomous vehicles and electric cars, undertaking intersection improvements that promote pedestrian safety, and continuing the implementation of a comprehensive bicycle path system. This element addresses all transportation and mobility system needs in Niles going forward to 2040.

- » **Village Character and Identity** - Niles' design character and appearance derive from its mid-century residential neighborhoods and its commercial districts and corridors, the latter having a mix of pedestrian and auto-oriented built environments. These contrasting places make it more challenging to attain a more visually unified and walkable community. This element outlines a complete urban design program for the community's visual character, architecture, and public spaces. While Niles' roadway corridors offer more opportunities to bolster the community's identity, streetscape, landscape, and signage, other design enhancements in neighborhoods and public spaces can also help to strengthen the community's design identity.
- » **Neighborhoods** - Niles' residential neighborhoods primarily feature detached single-family homes constructed in the decades succeeding World War II, although there are significant numbers of smaller multifamily buildings of less than 19 units and larger multifamily buildings complexes with 20 or more units. While active seniors and empty nesters are growing demand segments for apartments and condominium units going forward, Niles' existing housing stock, as well as new attached duplex housing, offer an attractive and achievable option for younger households. This element describes a housing strategy for Niles neighborhoods along with other amenities and infrastructure enhancements needed to complete a livable neighborhood.
- » **Parks and Open Space** - Niles, like other Chicago suburban communities, has a complement of parks, and open spaces, the latter comprising the Cook County Forest Preserve land located in Niles' eastern and southern neighborhoods, and quality recreational facilities. Yet, despite the ready availability and accessibility of parks and recreational amenities, Niles still lacks enough parkland with demonstrated needs for both passive areas and active park spaces. This element outlines policies and strategies for adding parkland and recreational enhancements to meet the community's needs.

- » **Community Facilities and Services** - Niles has community facilities and services located throughout the Village that provide safety, educational, and community-enhancing services. These assets require continued municipal government in terms of their maintenance and operation. This element outlines policies and strategies for updating and expanding community facilities and services to meet the community's future needs.
- » **Placemaking, Arts, and Culture** - The Niles community has long desired to nurture and build a creative arts sector that provides avenues for local creative expression, as well as opportunities for creative businesses to establish themselves and add to the community's economic and cultural vibrancy. The 2017 Arts and Culture Master Plan offers a blueprint for growing the cultural arts sector. This element reviews and carries forward the Master Plan's relevant key planning priorities and strategies while adding new policies and directions that reflect post-pandemic impacts and realities for arts and culture, as well as opportunities.
- » **Sustainability** - Niles has demonstrated a commitment to sustainable planning practices and positive climate action. The 2013 Environmental Action Plan offers a guide for continued efforts toward sustainability and environmental awareness. This element builds on past initiatives and outlines a framework to have Niles become a regional leader in sustainability and climate action practices.



North Branch Trail

GOALS AND POLICIES MATRIX

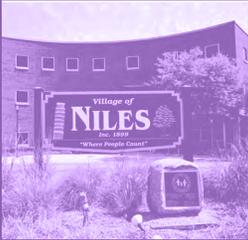
The matrix below summarizes the goals for each strategic planning element in the Comprehensive Plan, as well as the specific policies that will help accomplish each goal. The Implementation section includes an Implementation Matrix that prioritizes policies and actions. Of note, the following numbered policies do not signify their level of priority.

GOAL	POLICY
Districts and Corridors: Committing to Vibrant and Resilient Corridors and Commercial Centers	
<p>#1: Promote economic development throughout the Village focusing on expanding the Village’s tax base, business retention and attraction, workforce development, and adequate housing and transportation systems.</p>	<p>#1: Prioritize opportunity site redevelopment. #2: Enhance access to small business resources. #3: Expand the use of commercial revitalization tools to physically enhance the exterior facades and interior spaces along the corridors.</p>
<p>#2: Enhance the vibrancy of commercial shopping centers.</p>	<p>#1: Draft land use regulations that allow flexibility and the authority to consider non-traditional land use in the Village. #2: Pursue and attract new land users and tenants to fill vacant shopping center spaces. #3: Promote and assist the redevelopment of the Golf Mill commercial area into a mixed-use lifestyle center with a range of compatible uses including retail, residential, office, public spaces, and entertainment. #4: Promote elements of Touhy Triangle as a retail shopping power center. #5: Improve the identity, aesthetic, character, and function of commercial shopping centers with urban design enhancements, placemaking improvements, and parking considerations. #6: Enhance the appearance of shopping centers through zoning and design requirements. #7: Establish parking reduction strategies for commercial shopping centers. #8: Enhance connectivity to shopping centers and commercial districts from adjacent to residential neighborhoods. #9: Promote compatible uses within and between shopping centers and commercial districts. #10: Encourage the overall improvement of shopping centers and districts with a focus on building exteriors, signage, landscaping, lighting, parking lots, streetscape, and urban design elements.</p>
<p>#3: Support and expand the industrial and manufacturing sectors through business retention and attraction, and employment support services that encourage a range of compatible uses and a diversified tax base.</p>	<p>#1: Protect industrial areas from the encroachment of non-industrial uses and maintain standards for buffering, screening, and other methods to protect non-industrial uses. #2: Support beautification and sustainability initiatives in the industrial district.</p>

GOAL	POLICY
Mobility Systems	
<p>#1: Improve the efficiency and quality of the Village’s mobility network to accommodate a wide range of users including bicyclists and pedestrians, vehicles, and transit.</p>	<p>#1: Provide a planned roadway network that connects all areas of the Village and manages traffic flow while enhancing the streetscape and accommodating the needs of all users.</p> <p>#2: Partner with Pace Suburban Bus and Metra to expand the transit system and Pace Pulse bus rapid transit network throughout Niles.</p> <p>#3: Pursue different modes of transportation to achieve sustainability goals and various environmental benefits, including reduced greenhouse gas emissions and parking demand, and increased use of public transit.</p> <p>#4: Expand and improve the functionality of the sidewalk, trail, and bicycle facility network to ensure it can safely accommodate non-motorized transportation.</p>
Village Character and Identity	
<p>#1: Improve and enhance Niles’ design character and visual identity to reflect and complement the community’s assets and historical development pattern by implementing ongoing urban design improvement and placemaking efforts in the Village’s districts, corridors, and neighborhoods.</p>	<p>#1: Undertake, implement, and administer an effective design review program for new commercial and multifamily construction in the Village.</p> <p>#2: Update and maintain development regulations and design improvement programs to ensure the highest quality development design.</p> <p>#3: Implement ongoing improvements and enhancements to Niles’ streetscapes and public spaces.</p> <p>#4: Conduct streetscaping and public space enhancements as part of planned transportation and mobility projects.</p> <p>#5: Retain and reuse viable historic buildings and architectural elements as a part of redevelopment projects and enhance neighborhood appearance.</p> <p>#6: Conduct ongoing beautification and urban design enhancement efforts that establish and reinforce community and neighborhood character.</p> <p>#7: Enhance the appearances of the Chicago River and North Bridge Trail vehicular and pedestrian bridges.</p>
Neighborhoods: Fostering Livable Places	
<p>#1: Diversify the Village’s housing supply in order to meet changing household needs and promote a variety of housing product types for young professionals, families, empty nesters, and seniors.</p>	<p>#1: Promote the construction of new multifamily housing and “missing middle” housing types at a range of sizes and scales.</p>

GOAL	POLICY
<p>#2: Improve the Village’s character and attractiveness as a great place to live by enhancing the quality, appeal, and safety of all residential neighborhoods.</p>	<p>#1: Promote single-family home renovation and expansion with homeowner-friendly programs that allow the modernization of existing housing consistent with the needs of growing families.</p> <p>#2: Facilitate property maintenance efforts and initiatives.</p> <p>#3: Protect residential neighborhoods from adverse impacts related to adjacent non-residential uses, cut-through traffic, flooding, lighting, odors, or other nuisances.</p> <p>#4: Preserve and improve residential neighborhoods from non-compatible development by encouraging landscaping, neighborhood improvements, and design elements that highlight the visual character of each residential neighborhood.</p> <p>#5: Consider residential design guidelines and best practices to foster and promote design excellence in residential neighborhoods throughout Niles.</p> <p>#6: Continue to address lot-level drainage problems through cost sharing with property owners and revisions to Village regulations.</p>
Parks and Open Space	
<p>#1: Improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of Niles’ parks and open space resources by ensuring all neighborhoods have equal access to Village parks.</p>	<p>#1: Improve access to the Village’s parks and open space.</p> <p>#2: Work with the Niles Park District to seek opportunities to expand parks and open space in the Village.</p> <p>#3: Enhance and manage the Village’s existing parks and open spaces.</p>
Community Facilities and Services	
<p>#1: Provide high-quality and equitable Village services and facilities that accommodate all residents and businesses in order to enhance the quality of life, support overall community health, and fulfill the essential needs of the Village.</p>	<p>#1: Support and collaborate with community service organizations and other governmental entities in the Village; maintain mutually beneficial relationships with these organizations.</p> <p>#2: Strengthen the service network and enhance service offerings within Niles.</p> <p>#3: Improve non-motorized access to Village and other public facilities for walkers, bicyclists, and persons with disabilities.</p> <p>#4: Implement a Village Beautification Plan to improve the aesthetics of Village facilities.</p> <p>#5: Continue to conduct routine needs assessments for Village buildings, facilities, vehicles, and property to develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and update said plan annually. Identify funding sources early on for renovating or replacing Village facilities.</p>

GOAL	POLICY
<p>#2: Strive for recognition as a regional leader in intergovernmental partnerships and cooperation with the range of other governmental, community, education and non-profit services and organizations that operate in and adjacent to the Village.</p>	<p>#1: Expand community outreach efforts and advocate support for capital projects and community programs.</p> <p>#2: Maintain a regional approach by keeping open lines of communication and coordinating with other agencies such as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC), Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra, neighboring communities, and others to accomplish mutual objectives.</p>
<p>#3: Maintain and upgrade the Village's infrastructure and utility systems as needed to provide a sustainable and cost-efficient network that responds to modern technology, sustainable advancements, and improvements to the changing needs of Village residents and businesses.</p>	<p>#1: Establish a funding mechanism for stormwater utility infrastructure.</p> <p>#2: Facilitate the installation of stormwater management and flood control infrastructure that is consistent with sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP).</p> <p>#3: Ensure sustainable funding for the municipal water system into the future.</p> <p>#4: Continue to provide efficient, cost-effective, high-quality water and sanitary sewer services to meet the needs of current and future residents.</p> <p>#5: Continue to install and maintain the village-wide telecommunications network to continue provide high quality services to all Village stakeholders.</p>
Placemaking, Arts, and Culture	
<p>#1: Promote and expand the arts and culture sector in Niles through public-private partnerships, educational and economic development efforts, and the leveraging of existing arts and culture assets.</p>	<p>#1: Use public art, placemaking, and other cultural arts activities to enhance community identity.</p> <p>#2: Build and enhance the capacity of local artists and existing arts entities to offer a diverse range of cultural arts programming.</p> <p>#3: Build the capacity of the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council to facilitate the growth of Niles' cultural arts sector.</p>
Sustainability	
<p>#1: Niles will become a regional leader in sustainability and climate action practices through local sustainability efforts.</p>	<p>#1: Commercial and multifamily development will incorporate sustainable Best Management Practices.</p> <p>#2: Continue to support and implement the 2013 Environmental Action Plan.</p> <p>#3: Support a culture of sustainable practices in the Village.</p>



“I’M LOOKING FORWARD TO MOMENTUM AND POSITIVE CHANGES AS WE MOVE OUR GREAT COMMUNITY FORWARD!”
- SURVEY RESPONDENT



NILES 2040 LAND USE STRATEGY

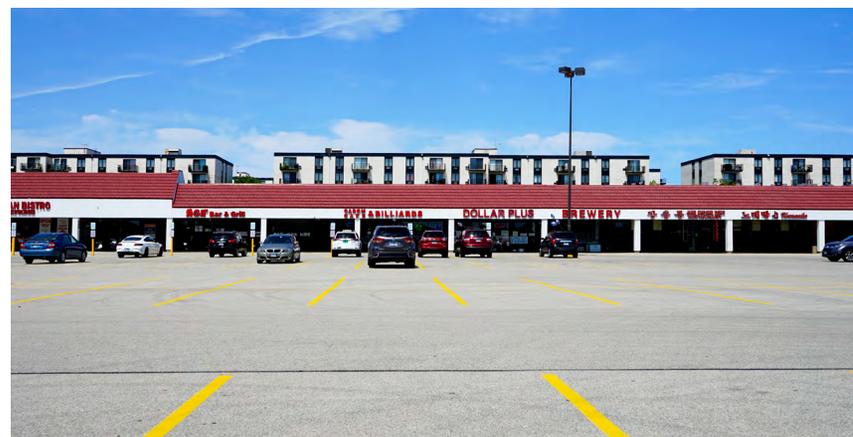
A holistic land use strategy is an integral part of the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan. It must acknowledge the diversity of land uses in the community, identify the strengths and benefits each brings, and advance the future vision and aspirations of Village residents and stakeholders.

The land use strategy includes the future land use map, land use categories, and the overall growth and development policies for the Village. It serves as a guide for future land use decision-making and assists the community, including elected and appointed officials, Village staff, businesses, and residents, in making informed decisions regarding future development activity.

A balance between land uses is essential to ensure that Niles maintains a growing tax base, diverse housing options, increasing property values, a thriving industrial employment base, and that it remains a regional retail destination. The land use strategy acknowledges the importance of Niles' housing and residential neighborhoods by emphasizing the improvement of the existing housing supply while identifying ways to expand housing options in the community. Institutional and light industrial land uses are a key employment base in the Village. Recognizing that land is difficult to transition back into these land uses once it changes, future land use recommendations focus on maintaining and improving Niles' industrial areas. The Golf Mill Shopping Center will continue to play a key role in Niles' economic development and the land use strategy anticipates an evolution of the commercial character into a dynamic mixed-use urban village.

There are ten separate land use classifications:

- » Single-Family Neighborhood
- » Mixed Neighborhood
- » Multifamily Neighborhood
- » Mixed-Use
- » General Commercial
- » Urban Village
- » Mixed-Use and Entertainment
- » Industrial / Office
- » Public and Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



Golf Glen Mart Plaza, 9100 West Golf Road

RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Niles' housing and residential neighborhoods comprise over a quarter of the Village's land area. Through ongoing investment in the existing housing stock, Niles' neighborhoods can continue to contribute to local identity and quality of life. Most neighborhoods feature Post World War II single-family houses, reflecting the community's predominant development period. The residential designations include:

- » Single-Family Neighborhood
- » Mixed Neighborhood
- » Multi-Family Neighborhood

COMMERCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT CENTER DESIGNATIONS

Niles' shopping centers and commercial areas are the most visible and visited parts of the Village and comprise about ten percent of the land area. The Golf Mill Shopping Center and other nearby commercial strips represent the Village's main retail commercial centers to the north, while the Touhy Triangle is the main focus of retail and employment activity to the south. In addition, the Village has shopping centers dispersed along key corridors. These contribute to the Village's identity and generate valuable sales tax revenue. Strategies to improve and promote shopping centers and commercial areas in the Village appear in Chapter 6 by defining key Districts. The future land use commercial designations include:

- » Mixed-Use
- » General Commercial
- » Urban Village
- » Mixed-Use and Entertainment

Industrial, office, and employment center land uses appears principally in the southeast portion of the Village, east of the North Branch of the Chicago River and north of Touhy Avenue. Industrial in character, it comprises about nine percent of the Village land

area and includes warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, and office uses. The largest office use is the Shure Company's headquarters and office building.

OTHER DESIGNATIONS

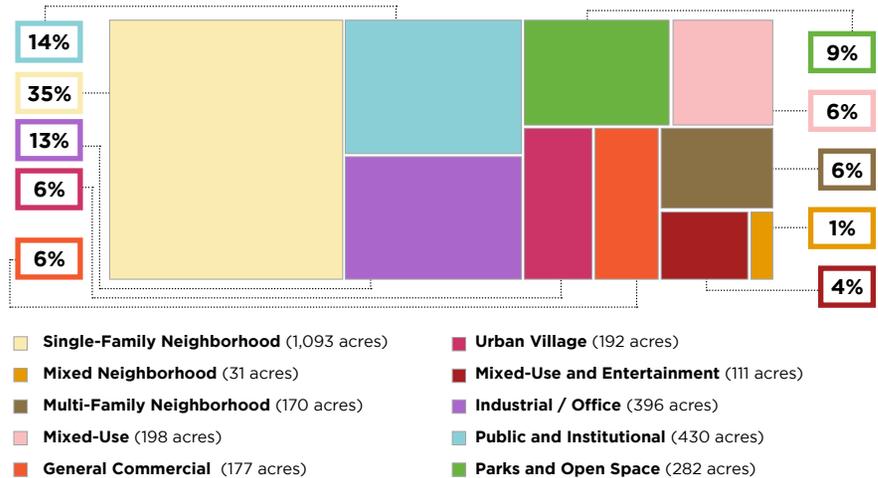
Public and Institutional

This land use category includes facilities such as the Village Hall and Administrative Center, the Police Station, Fire Stations, the Niles-Maine District Library, and similar public or institutional uses. The public and institutional designation also incorporates the St. Adalbert Catholic Cemetery. In total, public uses comprise about 12 percent of the Village.

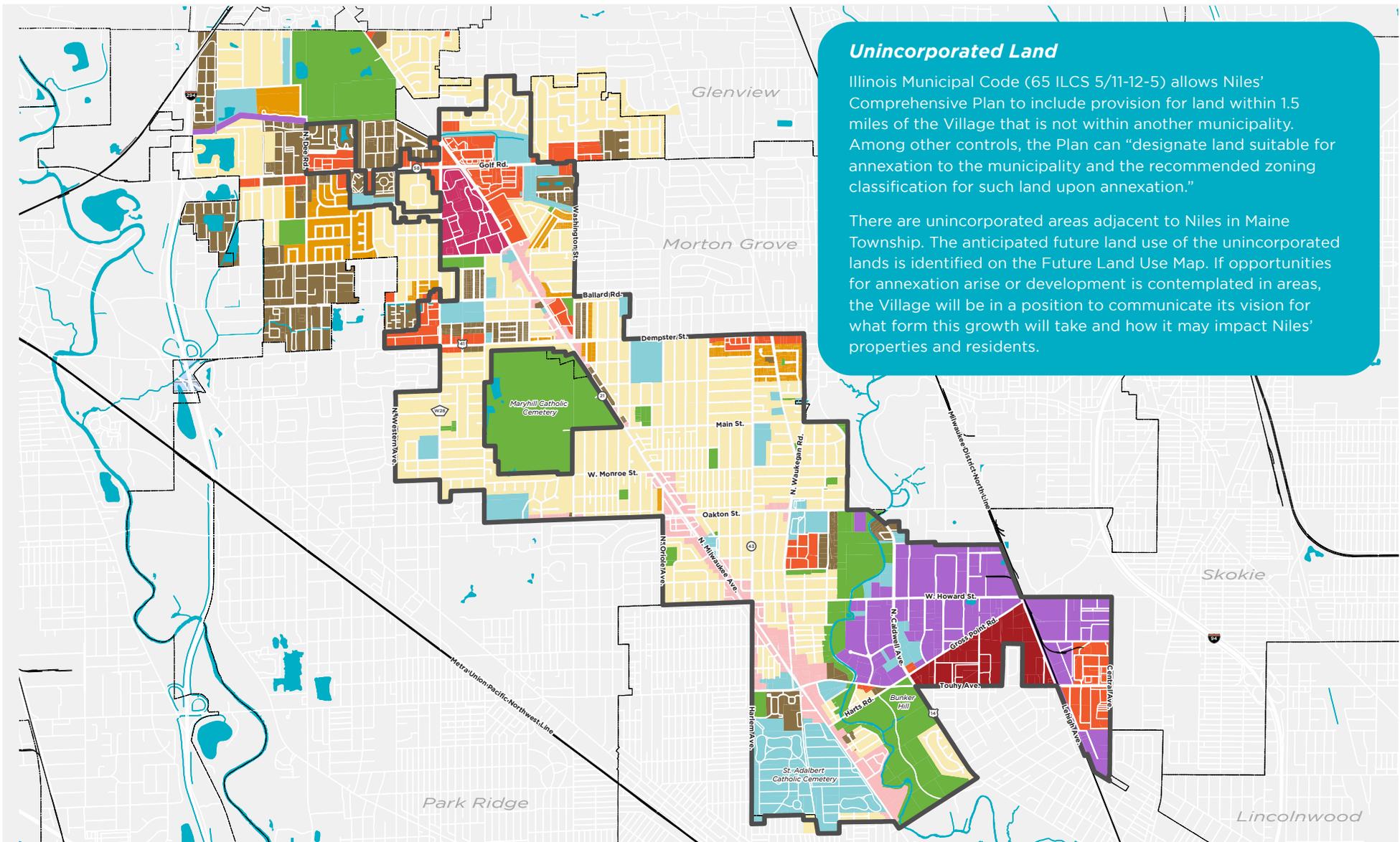
Parks and Open Space

Parks and open space make up about fifteen percent of the Village land area and include neighborhood parks, the Cook County Forest Preserve, and the river corridor. When not considering the Forest Preserve, Niles is deficient in neighborhood park space.

FIGURE 8: NILES FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION ACREAGES*



*Note: Land use acreages are recommended and do not reflect current land use acreages. Land use acreages only account for land within the corporate limits.



Unincorporated Land

Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-12-5) allows Niles' Comprehensive Plan to include provision for land within 1.5 miles of the Village that is not within another municipality. Among other controls, the Plan can "designate land suitable for annexation to the municipality and the recommended zoning classification for such land upon annexation."

There are unincorporated areas adjacent to Niles in Maine Township. The anticipated future land use of the unincorporated lands is identified on the Future Land Use Map. If opportunities for annexation arise or development is contemplated in areas, the Village will be in a position to communicate its vision for what form this growth will take and how it may impact Niles' properties and residents.

EXHIBIT 3: FUTURE LAND USE* North

- Legend**
- Village Boundary
 - Other Municipality
 - Water Bodies
 - Streets
 - Railway
 - Single-Family Neighborhood
 - Mixed Neighborhood
 - Multi-Family Neighborhood
 - Mixed-Use
 - General Commercial
 - Urban Village
 - Mixed-Use and Entertainment
 - Industrial / Office
 - Public and Institutional
 - Parks and Open Space

*Note: Land Use Designations are recommended and do not reflect current land use.

EXHIBIT 4: FUTURE LAND USE MATRIX INSTRUCTIONAL DIAGRAM

The Future Land Use Matrix on the following page organizes the future land use categories by designation and provides an overview of the key elements of each. The below instructional diagram provides detail on the elements. Following the matrix is a more in-depth analysis of each category as detailed in Exhibit 5.

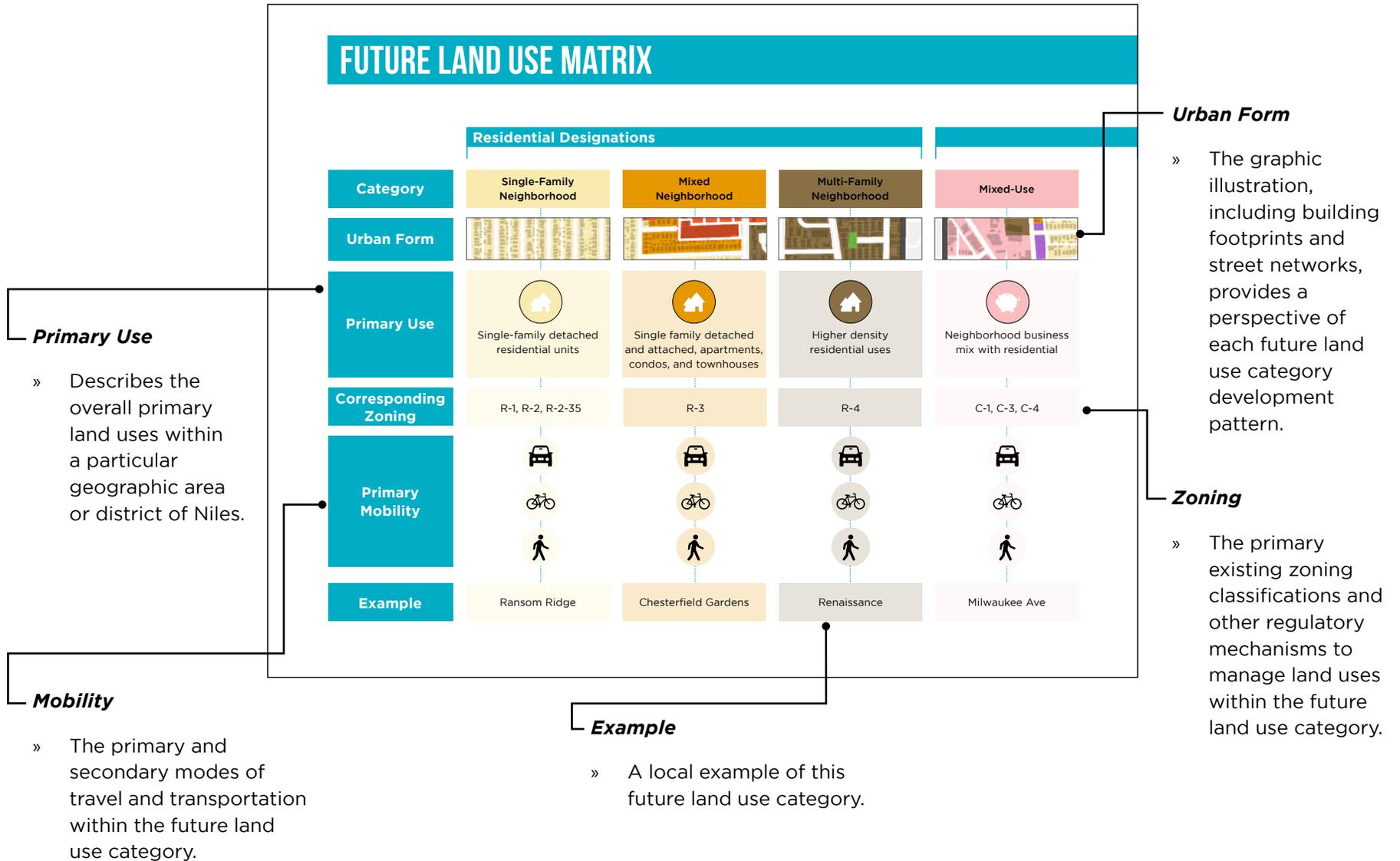


EXHIBIT 5: FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY INSTRUCTIONAL DIAGRAM

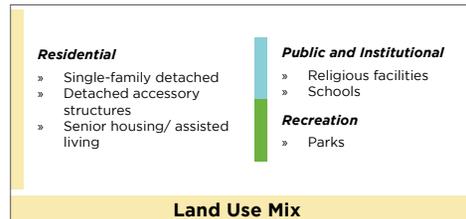
Future Land Use Category

- » Describes the overall land use strategy and preferred land uses within a particular geographic area or district of Niles.

SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD



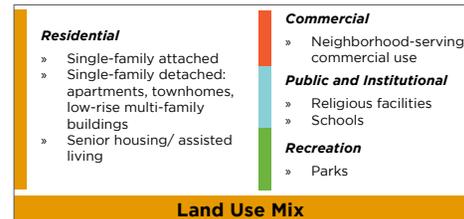
The Single-Family Neighborhood designation corresponds to most of Niles' single-family residential neighborhoods, characterized by detached homes on lots ranging from 6,250 to 14,000 square feet. In some neighborhoods, lot sizes are 3,500 square feet in area. The permitted density level for new development is three – seven units per acre and may permit up to 12 units per acre for areas with 3,500 square feet lot sizes. Ranch homes, Chicago Bungalows, and Split Levels are common single-family housing types. Single-Family Neighborhoods may also include schools, senior housing, assisted living facilities, parks, and religious buildings. This land use is primarily located in the center of the Village between the commercial areas to the north and south.



MIXED NEIGHBORHOOD



The Mixed Neighborhood designation applies to areas intended for a mix of compatible residential uses, including small lot single-family detached and attached housing, apartments and condominiums, and townhouses. The built form ranges from single-story houses to three-story apartment buildings, the tallest permitted by zoning, 3,500-7,000 square foot lot ranges, and a permitted density level for the new development of seven to 12 units per acre. This creates a suburban character of limited density and an approachable building mass. While residential in character, these areas also have neighborhood-serving commercial uses providing day-to-day goods and services. Other permitted uses include schools, senior housing, assisted living, parks, and religious buildings. The Mixed Neighborhoods are located in small pockets throughout the Village.



Visual Example

- » Examples of development types and physical design within each future land use category.

Land Use Mix

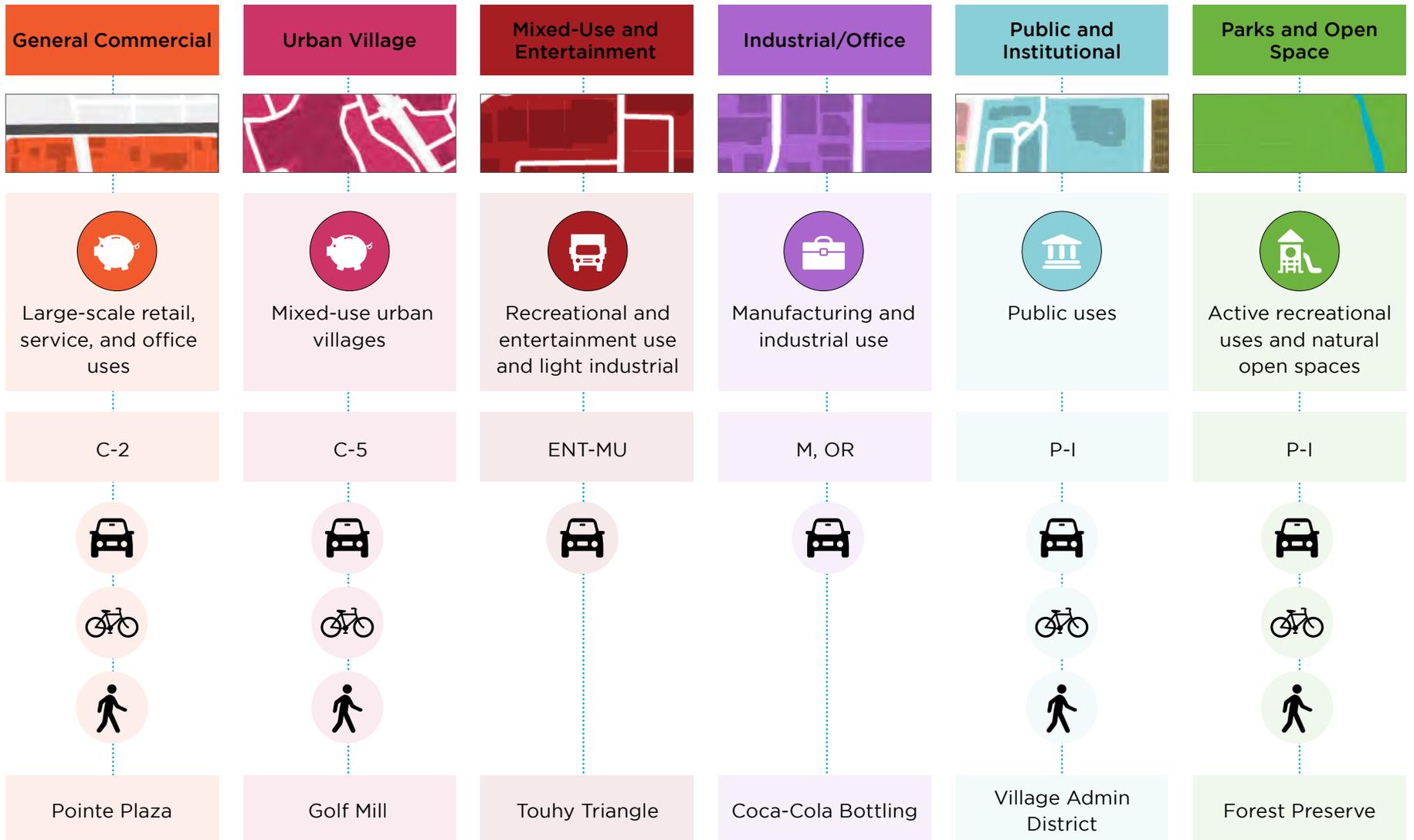
- » The mix of preferred land uses allowed within the future land use category.

FUTURE LAND USE MATRIX

	Residential Designations			
Category	Single-Family Neighborhood	Mixed Neighborhood	Multi-Family Neighborhood	Mixed-Use
Urban Form				
Primary Use	 Single-family detached residential units	 Single family detached and attached, apartments, condos, and townhouses	 Higher density residential uses	 Neighborhood business mix with residential
Corresponding Zoning	R-1, R-2, R-2-35	R-3	R-4	C-1, C-3, C-4
Primary Mobility	  	  	  	  
Example	Ransom Ridge	Chesterfield Gardens	Renaissance	Milwaukee Ave

Commercial and Employment Center Designations

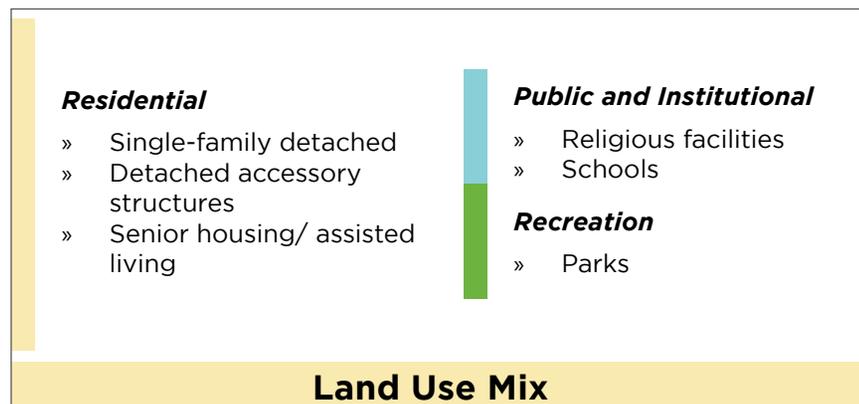
Other Designations



SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD



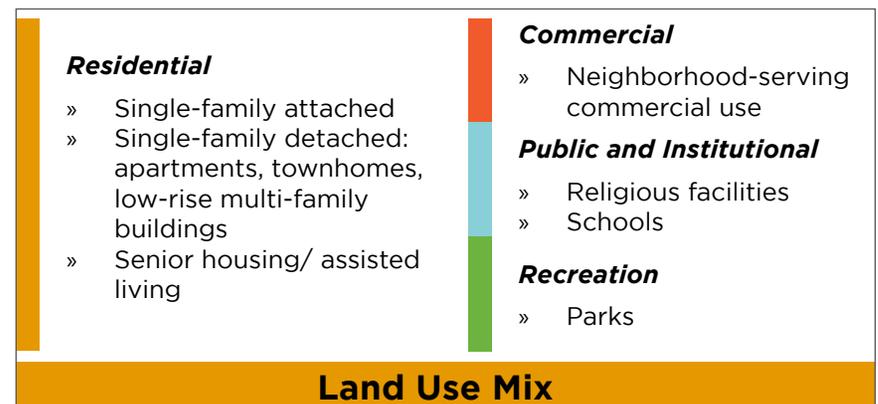
The Single-Family Neighborhood designation corresponds to most of Niles' single-family residential neighborhoods, characterized by detached homes on lots ranging from 6,250 to 14,000 square feet. In some neighborhoods, lot sizes are 3,500 square feet in area. The permitted density level for new development is three - seven units per acre and may permit up to 12 units per acre for areas with 3,500 square feet lot sizes. Ranch homes, Chicago Bungalows, and Split Levels are common single-family housing types. Single-Family Neighborhoods may also include schools, senior housing, assisted living facilities, parks, and religious buildings. This land use is primarily located in the center of the Village between the commercial areas to the north and south.



MIXED NEIGHBORHOOD



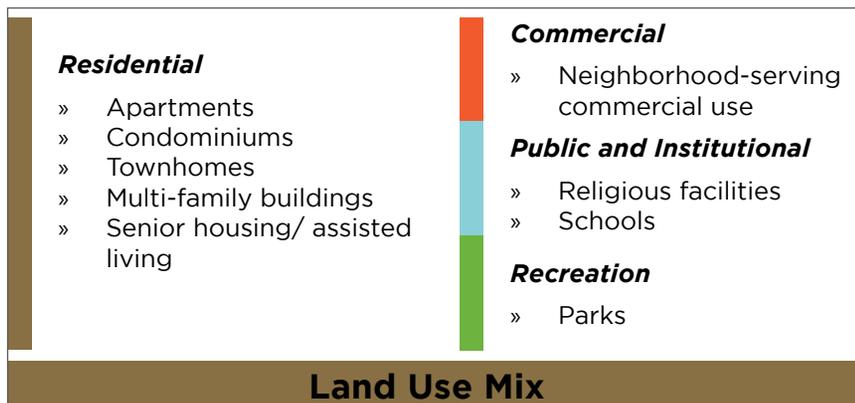
The Mixed Neighborhood designation applies to areas intended for a mix of compatible residential uses, including small lot single-family detached and attached housing, apartments and condominiums, and townhouses. The built form ranges from single-story houses to three-story apartment buildings, the tallest permitted by zoning, 3,500-7,000 square feet lot ranges, and a permitted density level for the new development of seven to 12 units per acre. This creates a suburban character of limited density and an approachable building mass. While residential in character, these areas also have neighborhood-serving commercial uses providing day-to-day goods and services. Other permitted uses include schools, senior housing, assisted living, parks, and religious buildings. The Mixed Neighborhoods are located in small pockets throughout the Village.



MULTI-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD



The Multi-Family Neighborhood designation applies to areas where higher-density residential uses (apartments, condominiums, and multi-family buildings) are appropriate. With the Village's highest residential densities of 8 to 25 units per acre, 1,700-5,400 square feet per unit, and the tallest building heights, these areas have a more urban character. Buildings are between three and five stories and typically have outdoor surface parking. Other compatible uses, such as schools, senior housing, assisted living, parks, and religious facilities may also be in this designation.



MIXED-USE



The purpose of the Mixed-Use designation is to promote the redevelopment of storefront space and provide a mix of retail, personal service, residential, and office uses primarily along the commercial corridors within the Village. These areas serve the local community, as opposed to larger commercial developments that are regional attractions and destinations. This designation accommodates auto-oriented uses while providing a more walkable pedestrian-oriented environment along the corridors. Mixed-use designated areas also encourage residential uses with residential dwelling units permitted above the ground floor and are target areas for increased multifamily density and building height.



GENERAL COMMERCIAL



The General Commercial designation includes large-scale retail, service, and office uses located along arterial and collector streets. Several existing General Commercial areas feature auto-oriented strip shopping centers while others include freestanding office, big box retailers, and destination commercial uses intended to meet local and regional needs, such as supermarkets, drug stores, and miscellaneous retail stores. Other commercial uses might include banks, finance, real estate, medical and dental offices, professional services, gas stations, restaurants, used car sales, and auto repair businesses. The Village already permits multi-family residential uses above the ground floor in General Commercial areas. General Commercial areas are in small pockets along the Dempster Road, Milwaukee Avenue, and Golf Road corridors.



URBAN VILLAGE



The intent and purpose of the Urban Village land use designation is to provide locations for the redevelopment of large regional commercial centers as mixed-use urban villages rather than traditional single-purpose shopping centers. This designation is applicable in all locations where mixed-use development provides an optimal future land use. Typical uses include multi-family residential, recreation and entertainment, restaurants, plazas, parks, open space, retail and commercial services, offices, and other similar uses. This designation intends to create and encourage a mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly urban village development with a mix of uses and high-quality architectural, landscape, and urban design. The future land use strategy envisions this designation within the Golf Mill commercial area.



MIXED-USE AND ENTERTAINMENT



This designation accommodates a mix of light industrial uses and certain compatible non-industrial uses that are more intensive, such as recreational and entertainment uses and large retail businesses consistent with the Village's vision for Touhy Triangle. This transition into a non-industrial, mixed use, and entertainment-based land use is predicated on the construction of a new Metra commuter rail station near the Touhy Triangle. If this does not occur, then this future land use designation may have a smaller presence in the Village. Development standards will serve to buffer surrounding less-intense uses from the impact of the industrial and commercial uses within Touhy Triangle.



INDUSTRIAL / OFFICE



This designation accommodates uses such as manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, production brewing, corporate facilities, research and development, office uses, and other industrial uses that may require separation from residential or less-intense commercial uses. Uses in this designation have the potential to generate off-site impacts including noise, odors, vibration, and truck traffic. They may also manage and store larger quantities of hazardous materials and require outdoor storage. Enhancing public rights-of-way and ensuring land use compatibility may require buffering and screening treatments.

These areas support a wide range of employment, generate a significant amount of revenue, and provide essential services that contribute to the local and regional economies. This land use is primarily located in the southeast corner of the Village where Caldwell Avenue, Howard Street, and Gross Point Road serve as access points.



PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL



The Public and Institutional designation applies to non-open space properties owned by the Village, other public or quasi-public agencies, or utilities. The designation includes publicly owned properties, libraries, public schools, hospitals, water and sanitary district facilities, other utilities, and other federal, state, county, township, and local government facilities. Other allowable uses on property designated as Public and Institutional are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Public and Institutional

- » Libraries
- » Public Schools
- » Hospitals
- » Service facilities
- » Special Use

Recreation

- » Plaza
- » Public Space
- » Parks
- » Open Space

Land Use Mix

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



This Parks and Open Space designation includes parks owned and managed by the Niles Park District, including its athletic fields, playgrounds, trails, sports courts, and recreation centers, as well as conservation areas and natural open spaces. It also includes the Cook County Forest Preserve and lands adjacent to the North Branch of the Chicago River. The appropriate uses in any given park are based on the park's classification and standards as defined by the Park District.

Recreation

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| » Parks | » Trails |
| » Athletic fields | » Recreation Centers |
| » Sports Courts | » Natural Open Space |
| » Playgrounds | » Conservation |
| » River Corridor | » Forest Preserve |

Land Use Mix



“I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DOWNTOWN AREA WITH SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS.”
- SURVEY RESPONDENT



DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS



The Village of Niles has a diverse economic fabric that positions it for resilience in times of change. A broad approach to encouraging and sustaining economic development is an essential part of maintaining this asset. To foster growth and economic development within the community, Niles should focus on expanding the tax base by prioritizing and engaging with potential and future commercial and industrial businesses and ensuring that services are in place to support workers.

Recognized as a regional retail destination, the Village has commercial districts with traditional malls, unique retail stores, and national big box stores. These are connected by commercial corridors where retail and other commercial businesses run along major streets throughout the community. The Village also has thriving light industrial and office districts. International companies like FedEx, Shure, and Woodward, Inc. have facilities in Niles providing thousands of jobs, as well as valuable tax revenue for the Village.

To ensure these assets remain strong, Niles is committed to a framework of Goals, Policies, and Strategies that provide a roadmap for adapting and growing the commercial, light industrial, and office districts, as well as the commercial corridors. The changing nature of retail means exploring new and innovative development concepts for the traditional shopping mall paradigm. Land use controls and the creative adaptation of old buildings are paramount as old properties get new life. Light industrial and office districts have unique needs, such as large properties, access to the highway network, and 24-hour traffic operations. From this, they can face pressure from less-intense land uses nearby. The Village can support resiliency in these districts by helping them establish an identity and ensuring properties are well-maintained and additive to the community.



DISTRICTS

Niles' Districts are distinct areas in which commercial, industrial, and institutional uses are condensed into an easily definable geographic area. Over the past decades, these districts have developed into key centers for services, industries, jobs, and development. Rather than seek to change the essential character of these areas, the Village of Niles should build off its strengths, while simultaneously seizing opportunities to make them more livable, sustainable, and vibrant through tailored interventions.

GOLF MILL DISTRICT

The Golf Mill District to the north features sprawling commercial development with more than 1.1 million square feet of space on about 80 acres. Easily identified by its mid-rise circular office tower, Golf Mill was once a premier shopping center in the region. However, it has struggled with increasing vacancies in recent years with an occupancy rate of around 70 percent.

Moving forward, the Village of Niles should adopt a flexible land use framework and consider rezoning this area to allow for non-traditional commercial uses, such as group kitchens, food halls, or other specialized and innovative uses, multi-family residential, entertainment and recreation uses, and plaza and open space opportunities that will serve to draw residents and visitors. Reinvestment in this district will ensure a more mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly urban village development with a mix of uses and high-quality architectural, landscape, and urban design.

TOUHY TRIANGLE

The Touhy Triangle is largely built-out with two- and three-story buildings surrounded by expansive parking areas. Several buildings in the area range from 140,000 to 220,000 square feet, while the Bee Sales Company and International Wholesale Center (IWC) building is 260,000 square feet. Many smaller buildings range from 25,000 to 50,000 square feet.

Smaller-scale retail and commercial service buildings are clustered around the periphery of the Touhy Triangle where they can take advantage of higher traffic levels and increased visibility. One exception to the prevailing development pattern is the Leaning Tower located off Touhy Avenue. The Leaning Tower of Niles, a half-size replica of the original in Pisa, Italy, provides a distinct local landmark in the Village.

The Touhy Triangle represents a valuable asset for the community and the economic vibrancy of Niles. The concentrated commercial development, essential arterial roadways, and the unique Leaning Tower cultural asset lend this district its own identity and role. To promote continued investment in the district, the Village should implement strategies that maintain the district's industrial presence, such as allowing for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, while still promoting it as a retail and shopping district.

Notably, there has been discussion about the construction of a new Metra commuter rail station close to the Touhy Triangle. This has the potential to impact how the Village views future land uses in the district, broadening the scope to include more mixed uses, as well as recreational and entertainment-related land uses that respond more appropriately to a nearby mass transit hub than light industry and big box retailers.

EMPLOYMENT DISTRICT

Niles' employment area is primarily located in the southeast portion of the Village, east of the North Branch of the Chicago River, and north of Gross Point Road. This area is industrial in character and includes a range of warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, and office uses. Recognizing the importance of this district and the diversity of industrial and office land uses it brings to the Village, Niles should seek to retain businesses, attract new ones, promote adaptive reuse, and provide employment services. Moving forward, attention should be made to the character and identity of this district. Urban design enhancements can elevate this employment district into a business park environment with a focus on connectivity, landscaping and buffering, and emphasizing the proximity to the Chicago River Corridor.



VILLAGE ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT

The Village Administrative District is located at the southeastern corner of Waukegan Road and Oakton Street. This district provides a central community service hub to support residents and visitors alike. It is home to numerous Village facilities including the following:

- » Niles-Maine District Library
- » The Niles Senior Center
- » The Niles Family Fitness Center
- » The Niles Family Services Department
- » Village of Niles Municipality Building
- » United States Post Office

Going forward, the Village should continue to improve aesthetics and access throughout this district, helping to make it a lively, pedestrian-friendly hub where residents can access a variety of community services and resources. The Village should consider reimagining the exterior spaces, including the roadway network and parking lots, to create a system of gathering spaces connected by a network of pedestrian trails for everyday use so the Village can continue to host public festivals at a central location that is redesigned to accommodate outdoor events.

CORRIDORS

Niles' system of commercial corridors is a vital economic and transportation driver, providing connection and access to goods and services for residents and visitors alike. Niles 2040 explores planning initiatives related to pedestrian safety, bicycle facilities, Niles' visual identity, streetscape design, development program, and transit connections. The goal of these initiatives is to reposition these corridors as unique thoroughfares for the Village. Partnerships, communication, and collaboration with all transportation agencies are critical to achieving the greater vision for the corridor system in Niles.

The Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan examines five primary corridors, Milwaukee Avenue, Golf Road, Dempster Street, Touhy Avenue, and Waukegan Road, and four secondary corridors, Oakton Avenue, Howard Avenue, Harlem Avenue, and Gross Point Road to provide clear positioning for land use, transportation, and urban design going forward. The Plan also explores future development programs at key opportunity sites along the corridors, which include unique interventions that encompass each primary corridor.

KEY CORRIDOR OPPORTUNITY SITES

Several factors point to potential opportunities for future growth within the Village, which extend beyond specific development sites. When examined comprehensively, the community's prevailing land use patterns, real estate market conditions, and regional transportation connections indicate areas of the Village that may offer broader strategic gains, requiring a coordinated approach between public policy and private sector investment.

The Village has identified several key opportunity sites and areas that offer unique strategic value. Collectively, the opportunity sites represent a substantial amount of land area that may be suitable for increased density and/or intensity of use due to opportunity or necessity. Exhibit 6 identifies the locations of the opportunity sites in relation to the districts and corridors outlined in this chapter. The corridors section provides site-specific recommendations of the visionary potential of each key opportunity site. The recommendations serve as a guide for future development but are flexible in nature and not intended to represent the only solution.

PRIMARY CORRIDORS

Niles' primary corridors provide a high degree of mobility and function. They serve as the primary travel routes through urban areas, connecting the freeway system with the local network of arterials, collectors, and local roads. These higher-capacity roadways are four to six lanes wide and carry high volumes of traffic. The majority of the Village's commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential land uses are proximate to these primary corridors. Because they serve as key connectors and economic drivers, they require unique positioning from a land use, transportation, and urban perspective.

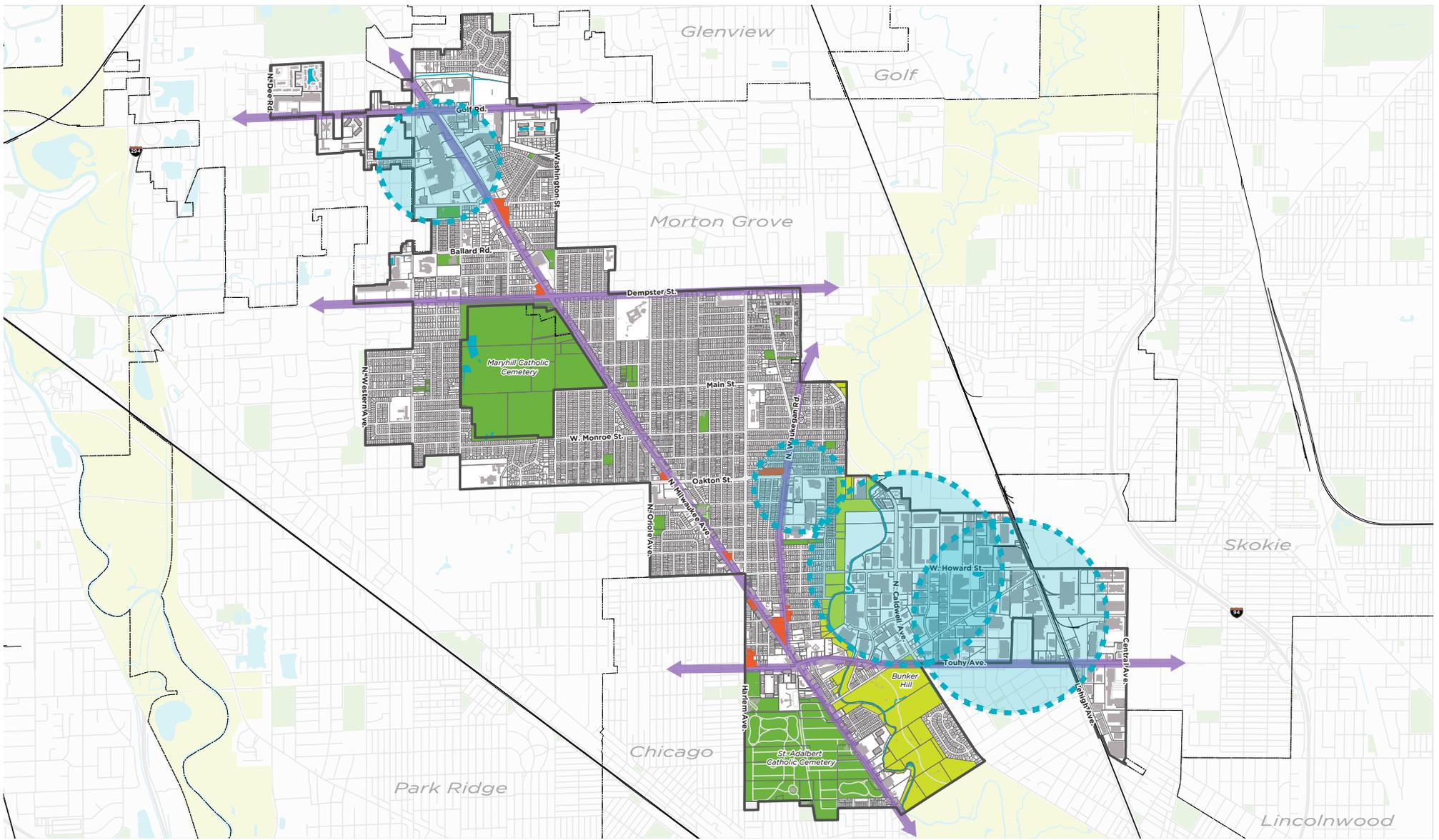


EXHIBIT 6: OPPORTUNITY SITES MAP



Legend

- Village Boundary
- Other Municipality
- Water Bodies
- Streets
- Railway
- Forest Preserve of Cook County
- Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries
- Districts
- Primary Transit Corridors
- Development Opportunity Sites

MILWAUKEE AVENUE

Overview and Positioning

Milwaukee Avenue is the most expansive primary corridor in the community, bisecting the Village diagonally from Northwest to Southeast. Over 4.5 miles in length, it has two distinct subareas with notably different market realities, land use patterns, transportation conditions, and character and identity: the Transitional Corridor (the northern portion spanning from Monroe Street north to the Village border) and the Traditional Corridor (the southern portion spanning from the Village border north to Monroe Street).

Transitional Corridor:

The Transitional Corridor, the northern portion of Milwaukee Avenue, has a predominantly auto-oriented use and scale. This corridor passes Golf Mill, an important commercial district that this Plan envisions as developing into a denser Urban Village in the future. This section of the corridor is considered transitional for several reasons. Because of the auto-oriented scale, cars pass through quickly as they travel across the northern border of Niles to other communities or as they travel into Niles. The area itself is also transitioning from what was once a sprawling shopping mall and big box commercial area to an Urban Village where these land uses will still exist alongside a denser mix of uses. This segment should remain transitional but foster new development, notably mixed-use at key locations to support the larger commercial uses and the growth of the Golf Mill District. Capacity improvements at key intersections along Milwaukee Avenue will alleviate existing traffic, improve safety conditions for pedestrians, and support future development.

Legend			
	Village Boundary		Commercial Zoning Designations (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5)
	Other Municipality		Primary Transit Corridors
	Water Bodies		Opportunity Site
	Streets		Key Intersection Improvements
	Railroads		
	Forest Preserve of Cook County		
	Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries		
	Buildings		



EXHIBIT 7: TRANSITIONAL CORRIDOR

Traditional Corridor:

The Traditional Corridor at the southern end of Milwaukee Avenue has a strong small business identity and a more pedestrian-oriented scale. This segment of Milwaukee Avenue is surrounded by residential development, including traditional single-family housing and denser multi-family housing. Surrounding residential development has impacted the businesses and uses along the corridor, which includes markets, family-oriented restaurants, service shops, delicatessens, and more. Going forward, efforts should continue to strengthen the small business character with the addition of supporting retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses. The Village should encourage mixed-use development, where appropriate, to grow the consumer base to sustain the vibrancy of the local businesses along the Traditional Corridor. Village-owned parking lots incorporated along Milwaukee Avenue can support the removal of parking in front of buildings to improve the aesthetic appearance and pedestrian safety.

A key objective of this stretch of the corridor is to implement urban design interventions from Howard Avenue to Touhy Avenue to support the Village’s desire to create a core area within the community featuring a mix of uses in a walkable, urban setting. Urban design enhancements will foster a stronger sense of place and improve the pedestrian environment resulting in a safer corridor. This, in turn, will help the area become even more attractive to businesses and give them more incentive to locate along this part of the corridor.

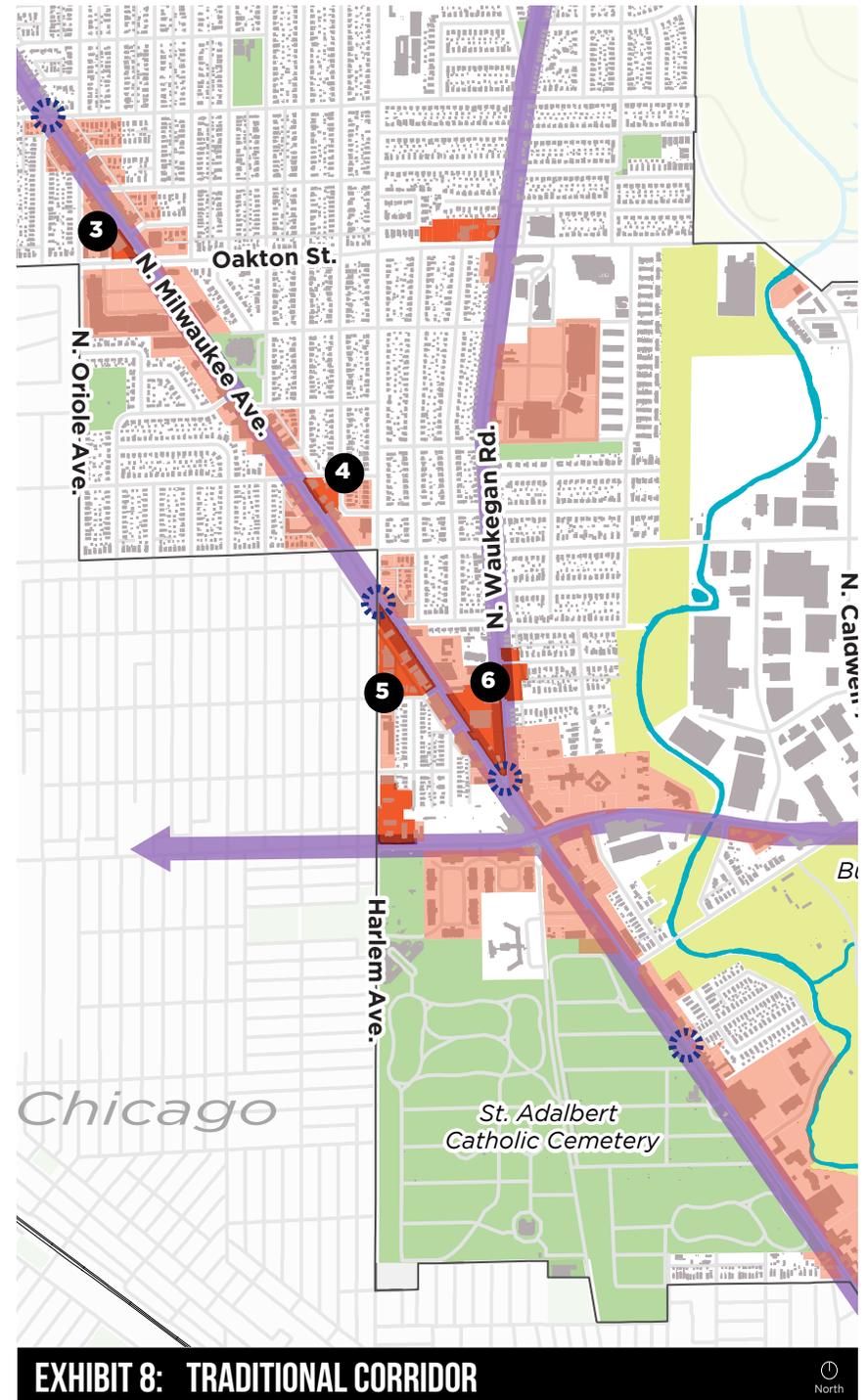
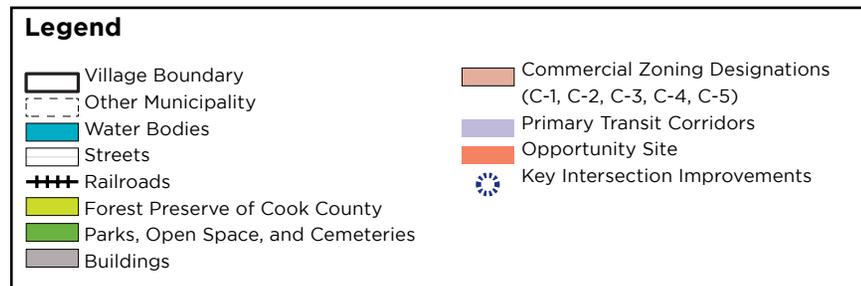
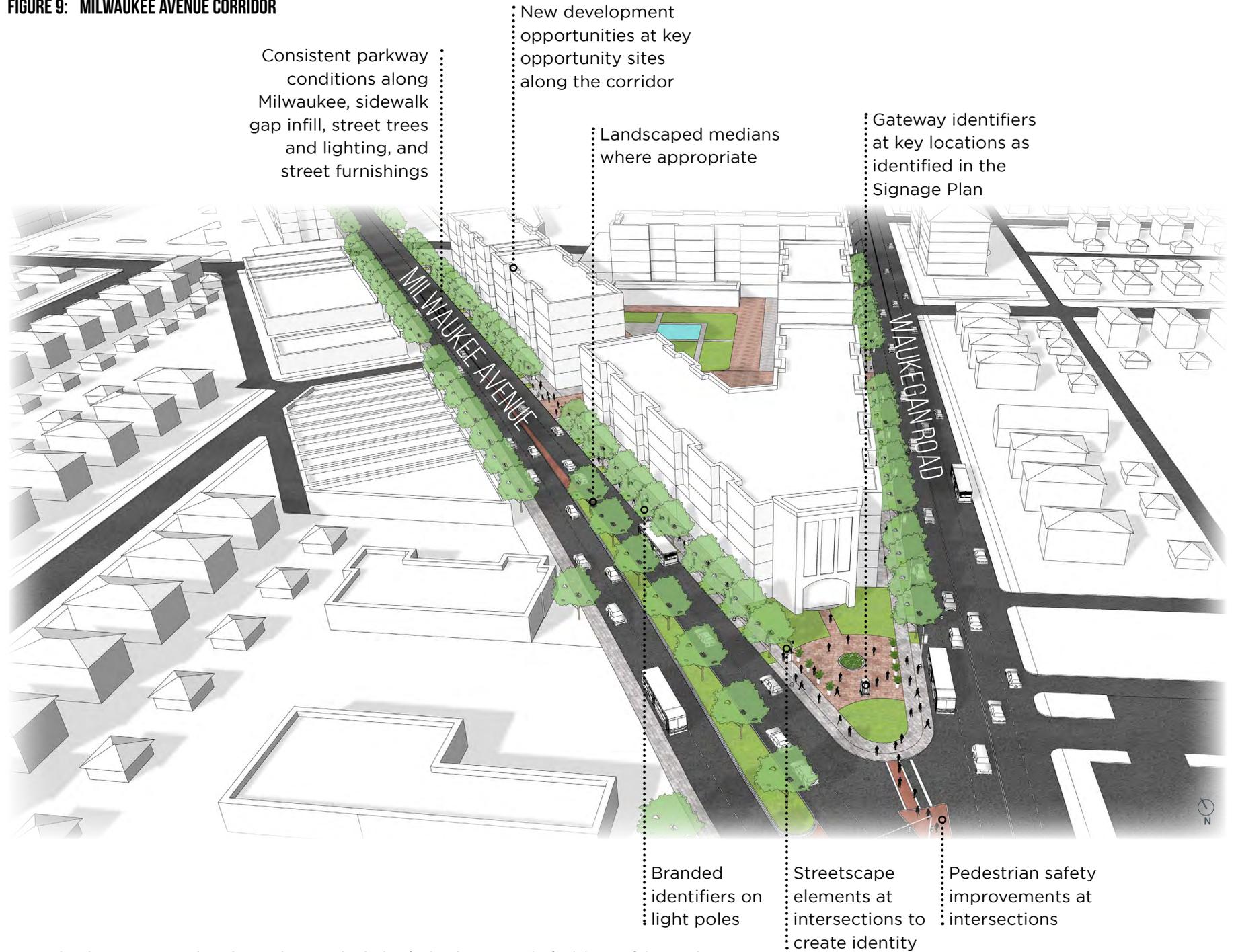


FIGURE 9: MILWAUKEE AVENUE CORRIDOR



Note: Milwaukee Avenue is under IDOT jurisdiction and IDOT has final authority over the final design of the corridor.

Transitional Corridor Development Program

Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 1



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 1, just south of Golf Mill, establishes a dense multi-family development with the potential for a mixed-use development at the northern portion of the site. This concept aims to increase the residential base of the surrounding neighborhoods and introduce new mixed-use development to Milwaukee Avenue. This site will complement new development occurring in the Golf Mill area and the increased residential base will help to provide more patrons for surrounding businesses.

Two concepts have been developed for this site. Concept A includes a new mixed-use development (Concept Highlight 1), while Concept B consists of a smaller footprint that omits the two northernmost parcels of the study area.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development fronting Milwaukee Avenue with 7,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space. Portions of the upper-story floors would accommodate 27-36 residential units. Internal parking to support commercial use and residential units above with a shared surface lot tucked behind.
- 2 New Multi-Family Residential Development.** New four- to five-story multi-family development fronting Milwaukee Avenue with 34-42 residential units. Internal parking for residential uses.
- 3 New Corner Multi-Family Residential Development.** New four- to five-story corner multi-family development at Milwaukee Avenue and Cortland Drive with 34-42 residential units. Internal parking for residential uses.
- 4 New Rear-Loaded Rowhomes.** Six new two- to three-story rear-loaded rowhomes fronting Cortland Drive.
- 5 New Plaza Space.** New development positioned along Milwaukee Avenue and Cortland Drive creating internal circulation with pockets of new gathering spaces to support the new residential uses and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- 6 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 10: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT A PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 11: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT A 3D VIEW



FIGURE 12: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT B PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 13: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT B 3D VIEW



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 2



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 2 is a challenging site with its location right off the Dempster Street viaduct. Several businesses have been located here in the past, such as restaurants and retail, but they have not been successful. The surrounding land uses also make it difficult to locate residential or mixed-use development in this area. Instead, this concept establishes a new shared office space fronting Milwaukee Avenue with parking tucked behind. The development concept includes various amenities that would complement an office use, such as a ground-floor commercial and an outdoor terrace. This concept works to establish a sense of place and vibrancy in an auto-oriented, transitional space.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Shared Office Space.** New two-story, 21,000 square foot shared office space fronting Milwaukee Avenue. Shared amenities include a green outdoor terrace overlooking the expansive green space across Dempster Street and 3,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space to support new office uses.
- 2 Shared Parking Lot.** Shared surface parking lot with 52 parking spaces located behind the new office development with access off Dempster Street and Elizabeth Avenue. Landscaping buffer from the surrounding residential uses.
- 3 Shared Parking Lot.** Shared surface parking lot with 18 parking spaces located north of Elizabeth Street for spill-over parking from the new office development. Landscaping buffer from the surrounding residential uses.
- 4 New Plaza Space.** Community gathering spaces at key entrances to the new development to support new commercial and office uses.
- 5 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 14: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 2 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 15: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 2 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



Traditional Corridor Development Program

Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 3



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 3 seeks to introduce a more urban form into the existing shopping center environments along Milwaukee Avenue; buildings front Milwaukee Avenue with parking tucked behind. Urban design enhancements such as the introduction of small plazas, street furniture, and streetscaping help support the new uses. New development encourages the introduction of a consistent streetscape along Milwaukee Avenue and Oakton Street and the removal of front-in parking directly off the road for commercial uses to create a safer and more walkable environment.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Commercial Development.** New 6,000 square foot commercial space fronting Milwaukee Avenue with the opportunity to be subdividable for tenants.
- 2 New Commercial Development.** New 3,600 square foot commercial space fronting Milwaukee Avenue with the opportunity to be subdividable for tenants.
- 3 New Shared Parking Lot.** Shared surface parking lot with 30 parking spaces located behind the new commercial development with access off the alley.
- 4 New Plaza Spaces.** Shared plaza space between commercial uses with a network of paths connecting parking to buildings to support new uses.
- 5 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 16: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 3 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 17: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 3 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



Western and Waveland Shopping Center

This shopping center features a variety of retailers, including a veterinary clinic, an eye doctor, a physical therapy office, and several fast casual restaurants. The shopping center features modern, single story brick buildings, several murals, and parking that sweeps around to the rear. Rear parking allows for ample sidewalk space, street trees, and bicycle parking structures. The parking lot includes pavers and landscaping. Unique murals, a contemporary feel, and human-scale elements give this shopping center a Main Street feel, even though it is located along a busy thoroughfare.

Design principles from this case study that can serve as best practices for new development include:

- » Locate parking in between or behind buildings.
- » Utilize shared drives for parking to minimize curb cuts.
- » Strategically screen parking with ornamental fencing, landscaping buffers, and artwork.
- » Buffer the pedestrian-way from the street with consistent street trees or landscaping.



3621-3647 N Western Avenue in Chicago, IL

Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 4



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 4 introduces mixed-use development fronting Milwaukee Avenue. The wide public right-of-way allows for an enriched pedestrian environment including consistent streetscaping and pockets of public open space. A new parking structure in the rear with access off Jonquil Terrace supports the new development and is buffered from the surrounding neighborhood. A minimum capacity version of this concept would be single-story commercial fronting Milwaukee with surface parking behind the buildings.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Corner Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development at the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Jonquil Terrace with ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space. Portions of the upper-story floors would accommodate residential units. The development would include streetscape improvements, urban design enhancements, and architectural embellishments to anchor the development at its key intersection location.
- 2 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development along Milwaukee Avenue with ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space. Portions of the upper-story floors would accommodate residential units.
- 3 New Parking Structure.** A 3-story parking structure behind new development to support commercial uses and residential units above.
- 4 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 18: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 4 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



- Concept Highlights**
- ❶ New Corner Mixed-Use Development
 - ❷ New Mixed-Use Development
 - ❸ New Parking Structure
 - ❹ Enhanced Pedestrian Environment

FIGURE 19: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 4 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 5



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 5 establishes a new mixed-use hub at the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Harlem Avenue. A new access street, with parallel parking, connects Harlem to Milwaukee, dividing the block in half. The positioning of the northernmost mixed-use building creates a public plaza at the corner establishing a new community gathering space to support the new and existing residents and visitors. The development would bring additional urban design enhancements such as consistent streetscaping, pockets of public space, street furniture, and pedestrian safety improvements at key intersections. Located in the heart of the traditional zone of Milwaukee Avenue, new residential and commercial uses would increase the local consumer base to support the surrounding neighborhood restaurants.

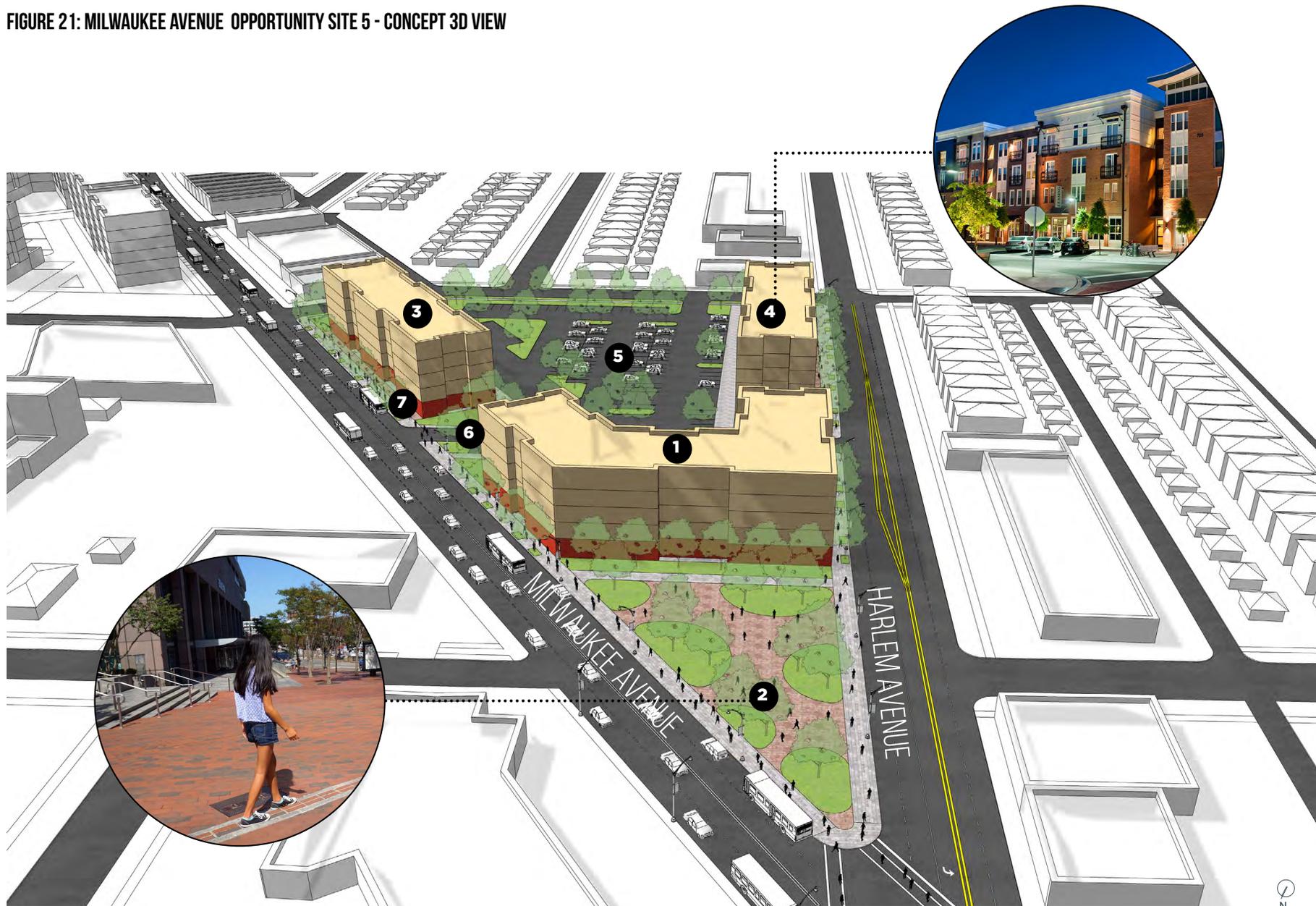
Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Corner Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development at Milwaukee Avenue and Harlem Avenue with ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space. Internal parking for residential uses.
- 2 New Plaza Space.** Community gathering space at the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Harlem Avenue to support new and existing residential uses.
- 3 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development fronting Milwaukee Avenue with ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space and 30-42 upper-story residential units.
- 4 New Multi-Family Residential Development.** New four- to five-story multi-family development fronting Harlem Avenue with 40-52 residential units.
- 5 Shared Parking Lot.** Shared surface parking lot with 170 parking spaces for the new residential units. Access off new access street and Jarvis Avenue to the south.
- 6 New Access Street.** New street with right-in, right-out access off Milwaukee and Harlem, to limit traffic issues but provide parking for residents and visitors.
- 7 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

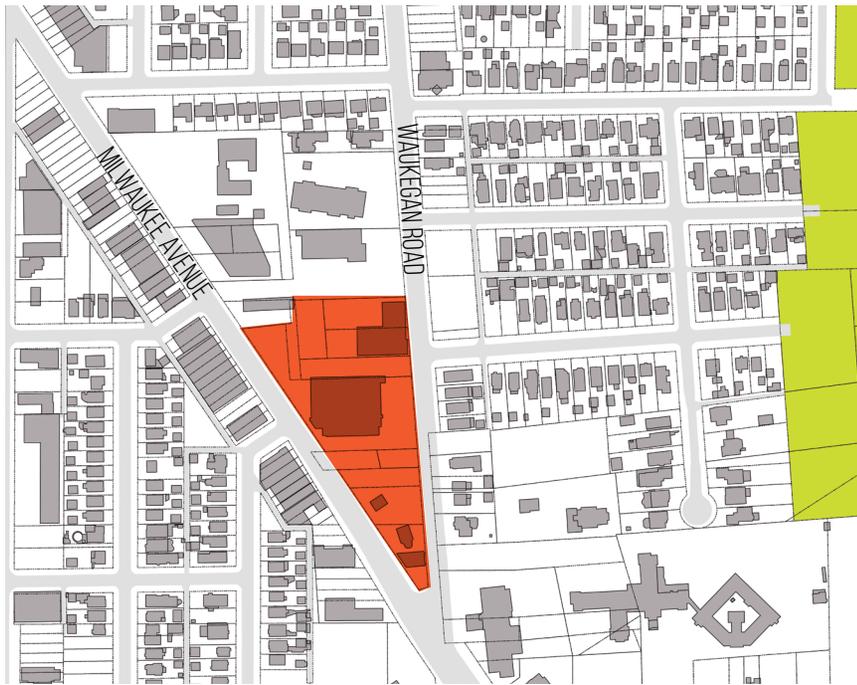
FIGURE 20: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 5 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 21: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 5 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 6



Past plans have explored and encouraged the notion of creating a new 'downtown' or core area within the community featuring a dynamic mix of uses in a walkable, urban setting. Milwaukee Avenue Opportunity Site 6 introduces this concept. New mixed-use development fronts Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road and surrounds a new central gathering space. Urban design enhancements such as the introduction of a shared street system, potential outdoor dining areas, street furniture, seating areas, and a fountain feature activate the new 'downtown' area. New development encourages the introduction of a consistent streetscape along Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road to create a safer and more walkable environment.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Corner Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development at the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road with 6,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space and 36-45 residential units. The development would include streetscape improvements, urban design enhancements, and architectural embellishments to anchor the development at its key intersection location. Internal parking supports a significant commercial use and residential units above.
- 2 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development along Milwaukee Avenue with 12,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial use and residential amenity space and 72-96 residential units. The prominent arch feature between the buildings creates a pedestrian connection to the new central gathering space.
- 3 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development fronting Waukegan Road with 5,000 SF of commercial use and residential amenity space and 30-40 residential units.
- 4 New Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development along Milwaukee Avenue fronting the new central gathering space with 5,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space.
- 5 Shared Parking Structure.** Three-level shared parking structure including below-grade parking with 300 internal parking spaces.
- 6 New Central Gathering Space.** New development builds around a core gathering space with internal shared street access. Commercial spaces front the core gathering space with the potential to expand outdoors. A central green space with a fountain feature and seating space provides an amenity for residents, visitors, and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- 7 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 22: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 6 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 23: MILWAUKEE AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE 6 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



GOLF ROAD

Overview and Positioning

Golf Road is the northernmost commercial corridor and runs east to west through the Village, running through the Golf Mill District. Golf Road is primarily flanked by large, big box commercial uses and shopping centers that range from smaller strip retail centers to the Golf Mill Shopping Center, a traditional shopping mall. There are also several multi-family residential developments located along Golf Road.

One of the main objectives for this corridor includes encouraging new, more varied development, while also preserving big box retail uses that provide the Village with a continued stream of tax revenues. Reinforcing the commercial character of the area can also help attract unique, destination land uses. New development can be located in vacant properties along this corridor and on the outlots of underutilized shopping centers. Mixed-use developments with commercial and residential components would help contribute to a denser Urban Village district.

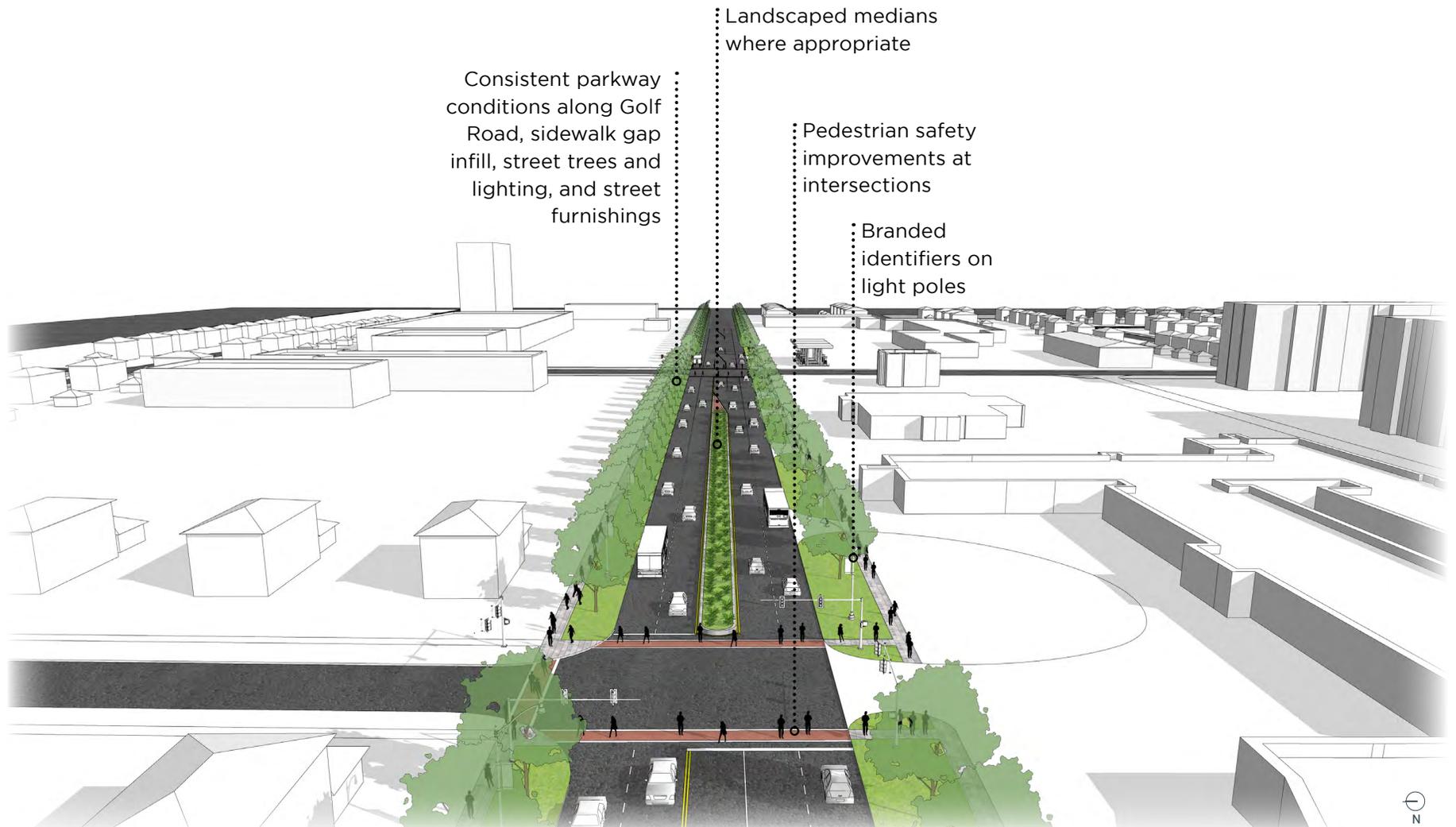
Urban design strategies can be used to brand and beautify this corridor and the surrounding district to create a recognizable, destination environment that draws residents and visitors to shop. Pedestrian improvements, such as well-lit pathways that break up the pavement parking lots, can help non-motorized visitors reach the amenities that are being proposed in this plan. While this area is likely to remain auto-oriented, it is important to prioritize creating a safe and accessible environment for pedestrians as it transitions to become a denser, more urban area.



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Village Boundary | Forest Preserve of Cook County | Commercial Zoning Designations (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5) |
| Other Municipality | Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries | Primary Transit Corridors |
| Water Bodies | Buildings | Opportunity Site |
| Streets | | Key Intersection Improvements |
| Railroads | | |

FIGURE 24: GOLF ROAD CORRIDOR



Note: Golf Road is under IDOT jurisdiction and IDOT has final authority over the final design of the corridor.

DEMPSTER STREET

Overview and Positioning

The Dempster Street corridor is an east/west corridor that spans over two miles. From the western boundary of the Village to Cumberland Avenue, the corridor passes through a largely commercial area. This portion of the corridor is lined with commercial strip centers and businesses that offer goods and services to the surrounding residential communities, such as restaurants, home improvement stores, and auto dealerships. The portion of the corridor from Cumberland to the eastern boundary of the Village is predominantly residential, however, the intersection of Dempster Street and Harlem Avenue is surrounded by commercial centers, such as the Super City Shopping Center and the Village Plaza Shopping Mall. Businesses include craft stores, home goods stores, pet supply stores, and restaurants in the outlots.

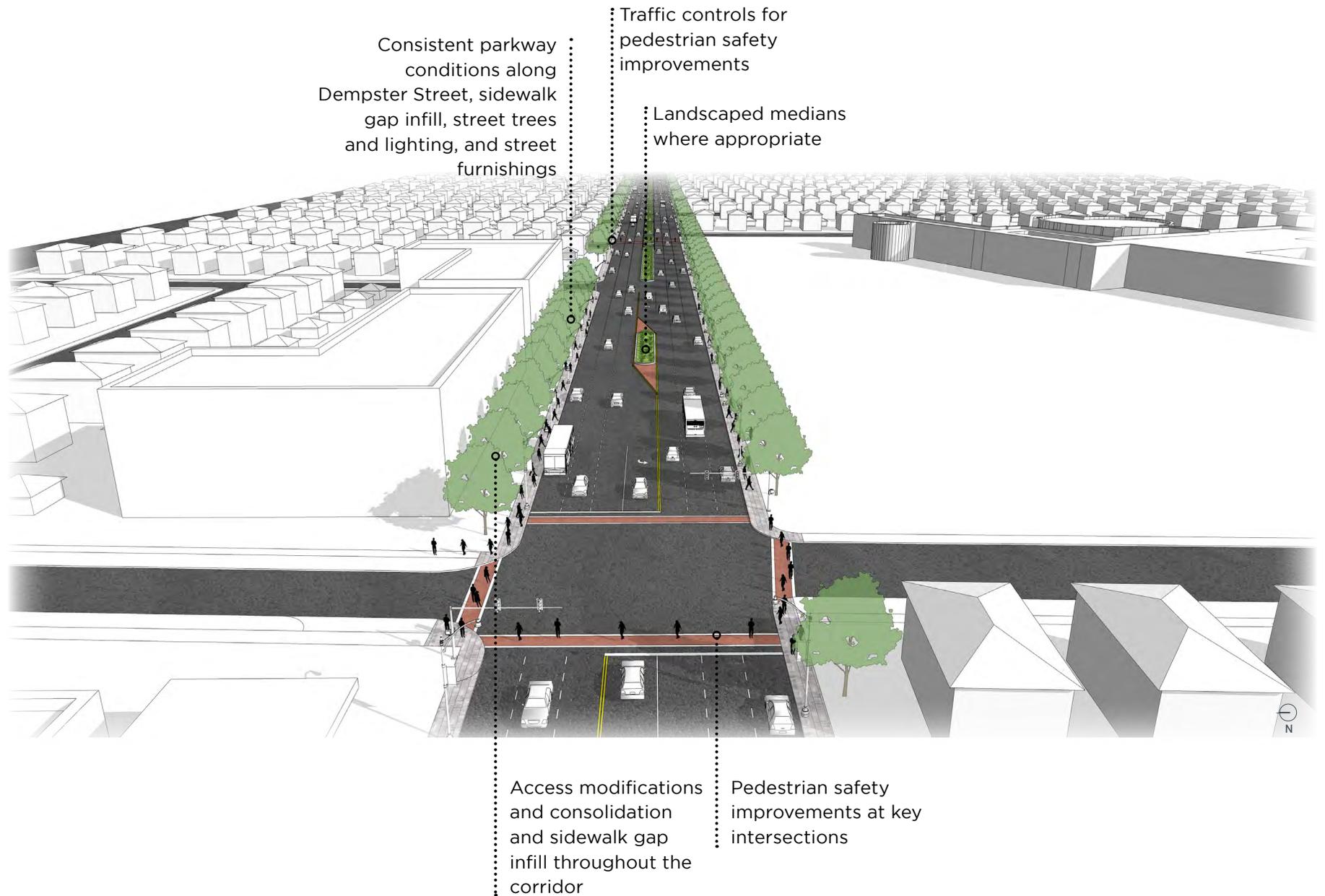
The main objective for this area is to reinforce and support the residential character of the corridor. This includes implementing a range of interventions that are geared toward creating a safer and more pleasant environment for pedestrians. These include improving access to commercial centers, other neighborhoods, and schools along this corridor by infilling gaps in the sidewalk network, implementing pedestrian safety improvements at intersections, and creating cross-access connections/access restrictions that will allow pedestrians to safely navigate large parking lots at shopping centers. The Village should also prioritize landscaping and lighting improvements along the corridor.



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Village Boundary | Forest Preserve of Cook County | Commercial Zoning Designations (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5) |
| Other Municipality | Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries | Primary Transit Corridors |
| Water Bodies | Buildings | Opportunity Site |
| Streets | Key Intersection Improvements | |
| Railroads | | |

FIGURE 25: DEMPSTER STREET CORRIDOR



Note: Dempster Street is under IDOT jurisdiction and IDOT has final authority over the final design of the corridor.

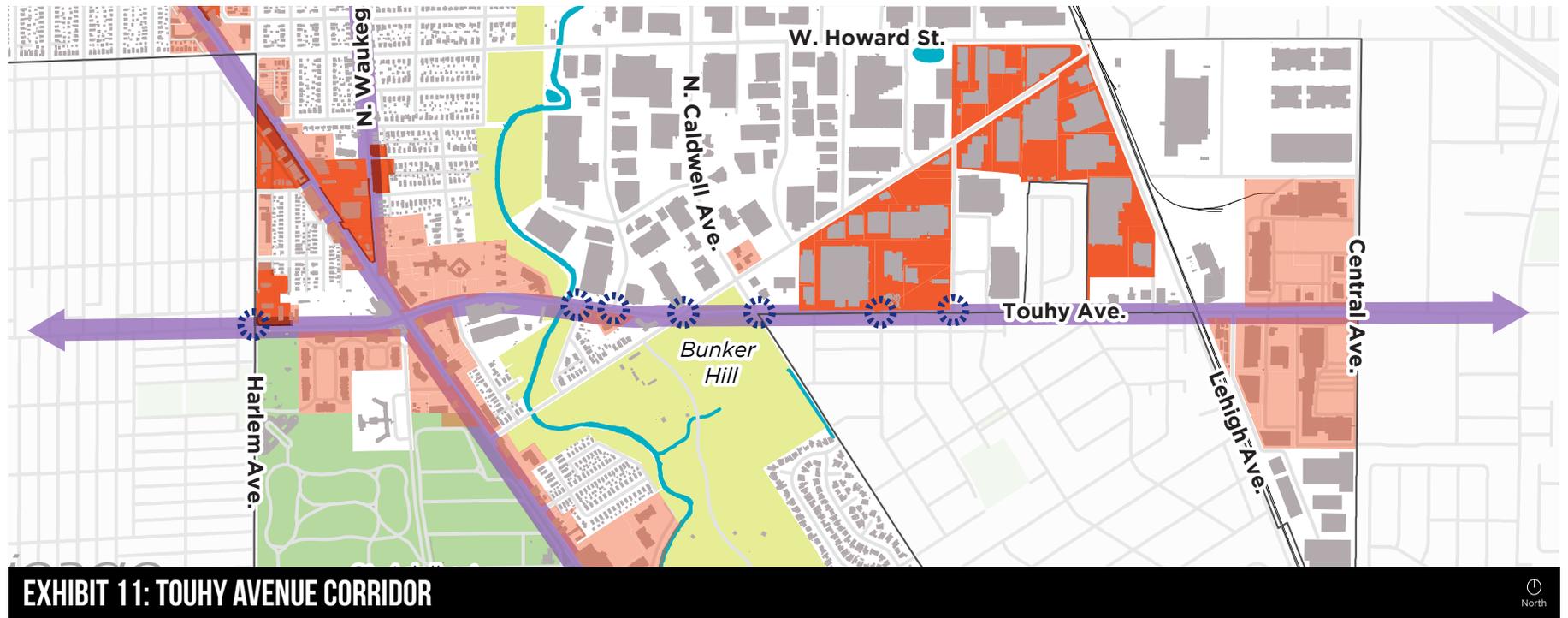
TOUHY AVENUE

Overview and Positioning

Touhy Avenue serves as a destination commercial corridor offering the community important shopping and commercial uses. While Touhy Avenue is largely built out, there are key opportunity sites that can support the potential for an additional mixed-use development that maintains the commercial frontage along the corridor. This can serve to increase the local consumer base.

The Forest Preserve and the North Branch Trail are key amenities of Touhy Avenue. Going forward, the Village should continue to improve access through sidewalk infill, bike path connections, and high-visibility crosswalks at key intersections to support the commercial corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

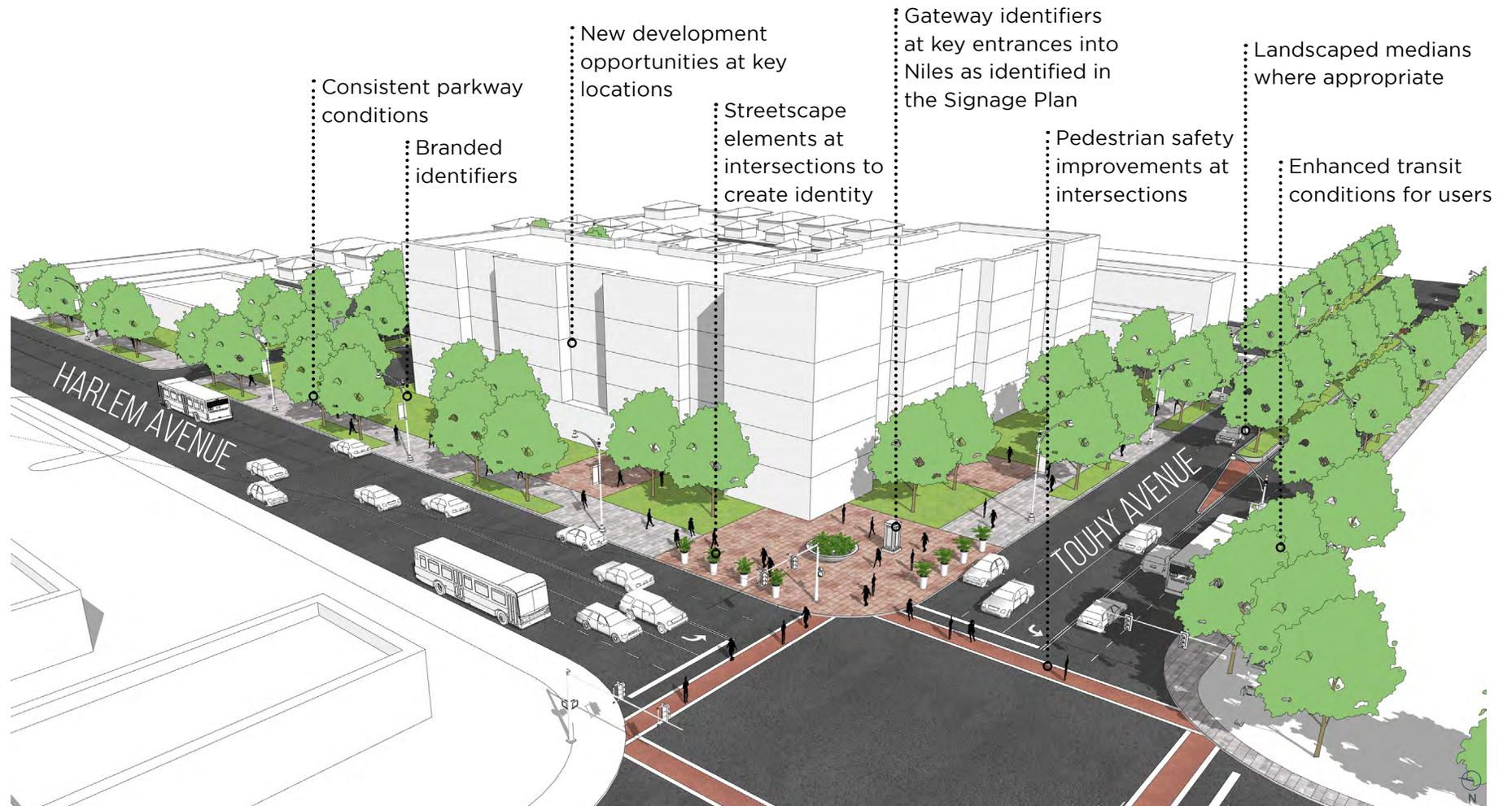
Congestion mitigation is one of the key objectives for this corridor, especially as future development brings more people and businesses to the area. The Village is currently in the process of pursuing improvements, including a continuous five-lane stretch with turn lanes created at two additional intersections. These transportation improvements will ensure that the area can support future growth.



Legend

- Village Boundary
- Other Municipality
- Water Bodies
- Streets
- Railroads
- Forest Preserve of Cook County
- Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries
- Buildings
- Commercial Zoning Designations (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5)
- Primary Transit Corridors
- Opportunity Site
- ★ Key Intersection Improvements

FIGURE 26: TOUHY AVENUE CORRIDOR



Note: Touhy Avenue is under IDOT jurisdiction and IDOT has final authority over the final design of the corridor.

Development Program



Touhy Avenue Opportunity Site

The Touhy Avenue opportunity site is at the corner of Harlem Avenue and Touhy Avenue, a key western gateway into the Village of Niles. Spanning three acres, this site seeks to establish a new mixed-use development with more efficient shared parking opportunities. This approach would introduce a new level of density and intensity into the urban fabric of Touhy Avenue.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Corner Mixed-Use Development.** New four- to five-story mixed-use development with 5,400 square feet of ground-floor commercial space and residential amenities. Portions of the upper-story floors would accommodate 54-72 residential units. Residential amenities would include an upper-level green terrace off the rear of the building. The development would include streetscape improvements, urban design enhancements, and architectural embellishments to anchor the development at its key intersection location. Internal parking spaces are provided for residents and visitors.
- 2 New Commercial Development.** New 6,750 square foot commercial space fronting Harlem Avenue with the opportunity to be subdividable for potential tenants. Locate 28 surface parking spaces behind the building with access off Harlem Avenue and Nora Avenue buffered with landscaping from surrounding residential.
- 3 New Access Road.** New access road connection from Harlem Avenue to Nora Avenue with 15 shared surface parking spaces to accommodate new commercial and residential use.
- 4 New Plaza Spaces.** New community gathering spaces at key entrances to the mixed-use development to support new commercial uses. Intersection enhancements at Harlem Avenue and Touhy Avenue encourage a newly defined identity for Touhy Avenue.
- 5 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, improved sidewalks, and enhanced intersection treatment. Branding opportunity at the intersection with a gateway element.

FIGURE 27: TOUHY AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 28: TOUHY AVENUE OPPORTUNITY SITE - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



WAUKEGAN ROAD

Overview and Positioning

The Waukegan Road Corridor is residential with one high-performing shopping center that is a destination location for the Village of Niles. The Village Administrative Center, including the Village Municipality building, the Post Office, and Niles Senior Center as well as Home Depot and H Mart Niles, attract residents from the surrounding neighborhoods and visitors from neighboring communities.

A key goal of the Waukegan Road Corridor is to create a more walkable environment connecting the envisioned town center at the corner of Milwaukee and Waukegan, up north through the residential uses, to the Village Administrative District. As a residential and neighborhood services corridor, Waukegan Road will support and grow Niles' consumer base with opportunities for new residential development along the corridor. The Village should work with IDOT to evaluate what the sub regional impacts are for removing the SRA designation from Waukegan Road. If the Village finds the impacts acceptable, consult with IDOT to remove the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) designation on Waukegan Road north of Oakton Street to promote a more walkable environment and allow for the opportunity to discuss lane reallocation/road diet from Milwaukee Avenue to Shermer Road.

Waukegan Road and Oakton Street will be a key intersection with urban design improvements including gateway elements, consistent streetscape improvements, street furnishings, and intersection safety improvements to brand and identify this area as a central community gathering space at the Village Administrative District.

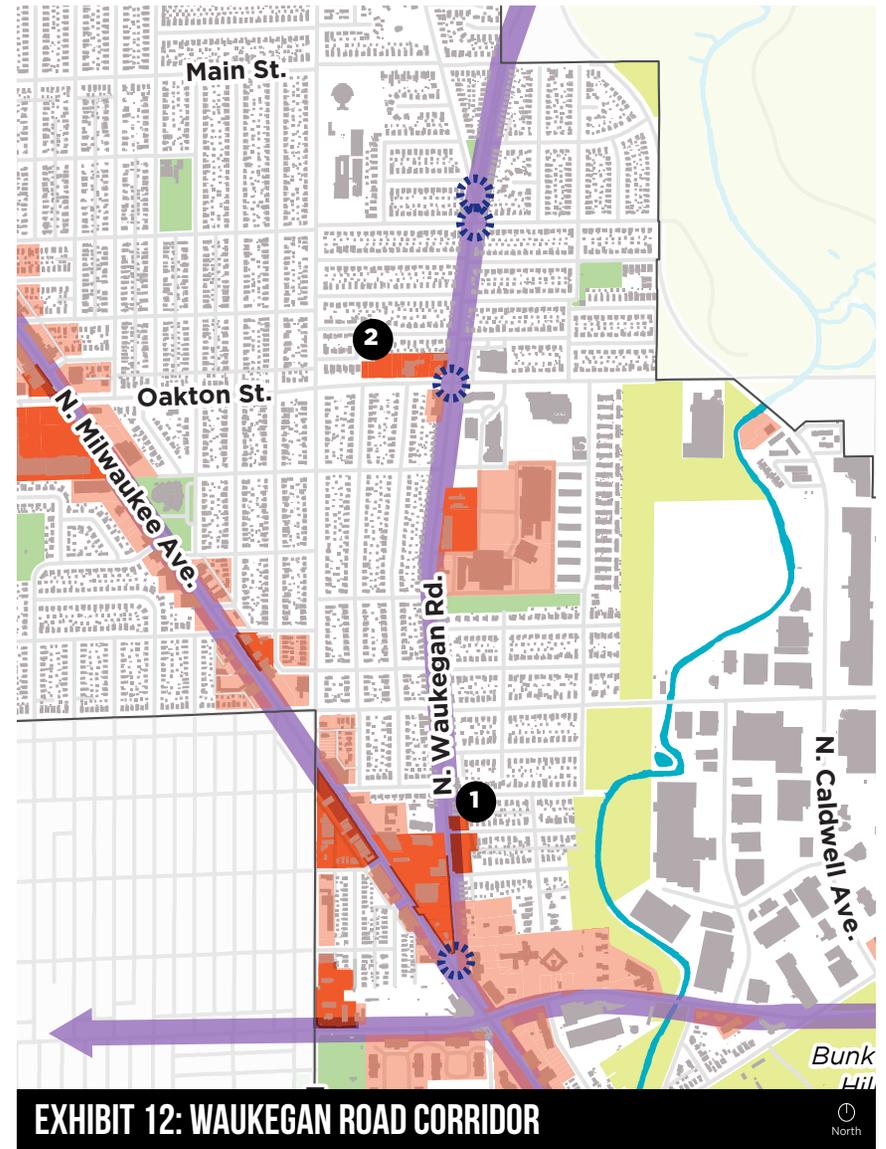
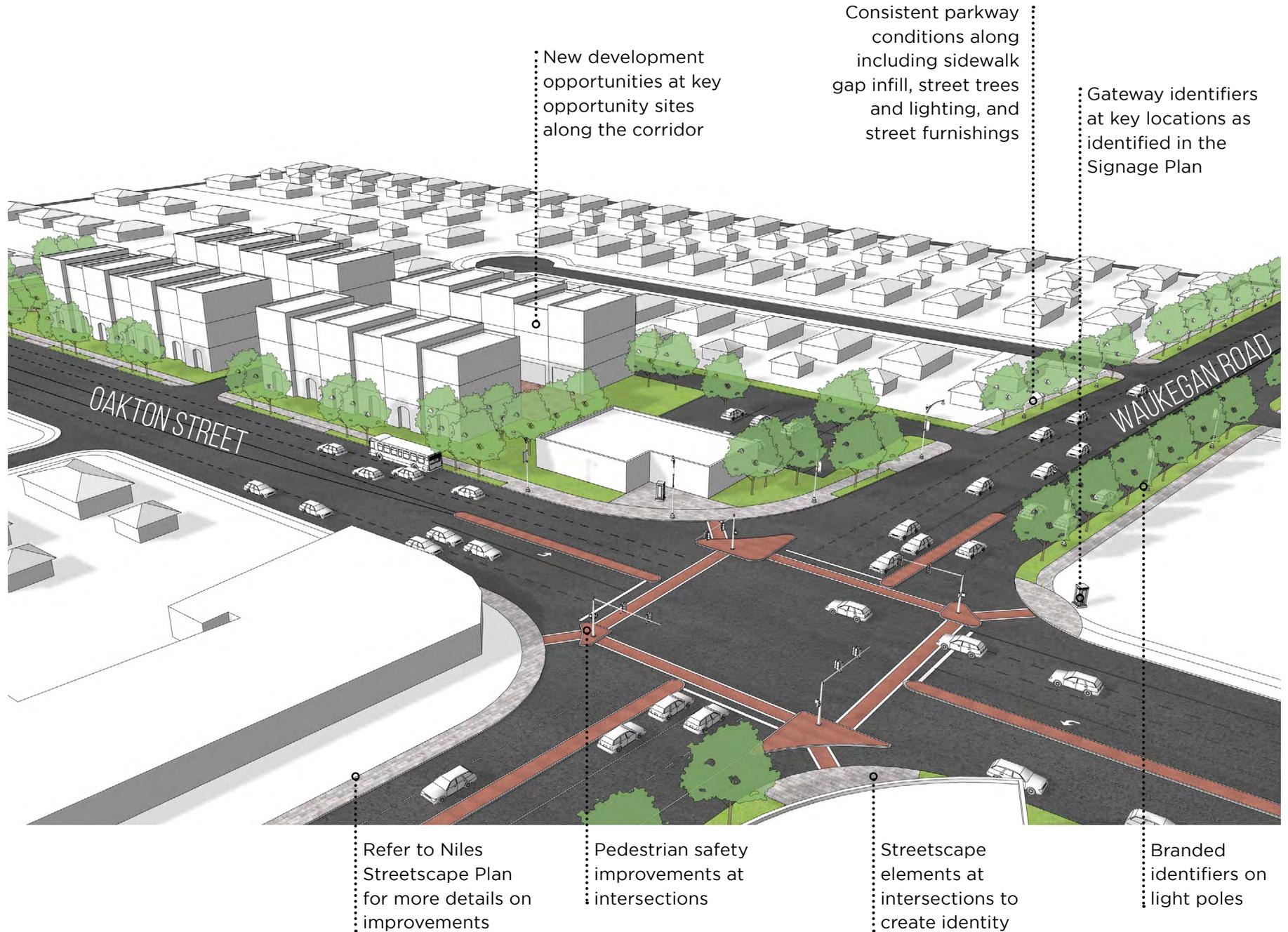


EXHIBIT 12: WAUKEGAN ROAD CORRIDOR

Legend

- Village Boundary
- Other Municipality
- Water Bodies
- Streets
- Railroads
- Forest Preserve of Cook County
- Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries
- Buildings
- Commercial Zoning Designations (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5)
- Primary Transit Corridors
- Opportunity Site
- Key Intersection Improvements

FIGURE 29: WAUKEGAN ROAD CORRIDOR



Note: Waukegan Road is under IDOT jurisdiction and IDOT has final authority over the final design of the corridor.

Development Program

Waukegan Road Opportunity Site 1



This concept introduces additional multi-family residential to currently vacant parcels along Waukegan Road to support the surrounding residential uses and potential reinvestment in the Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road intersection just south of this site. Density is reflective of surrounding multi-family development along Waukegan and utilization of the alley between Jarvis Avenue and Niles Terrace creates a natural barrier between single family residential and multi-family units. The envisioned residential units would have a similar design and character to the surrounding residential building types recommended in this Plan and would encourage a more walkable environment along Waukegan Road. This type of development would encourage similar density, character, and uses in any new development along the west side of Waukegan Road.

Concept Highlights:

- 1 New Multi-Family Residential Development.** New three- to five-story multi-family development fronting Waukegan Road with 30-50 residential units. Internal parking for residential uses as well as 18 surface parking spaces. Potential to be a mixed-use development with ground-floor commercial uses.
- 2 New Rear-Loaded Rowhomes.** Four new two- to three-story rear-loaded rowhomes fronting Jarvis Avenue with two-car garage space in the rear accessed off the alley.
- 3 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, sidewalks setback from the street, and enhanced pedestrian safety.

FIGURE 30: WAUKEGAN ROAD OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT PLAN VIEW

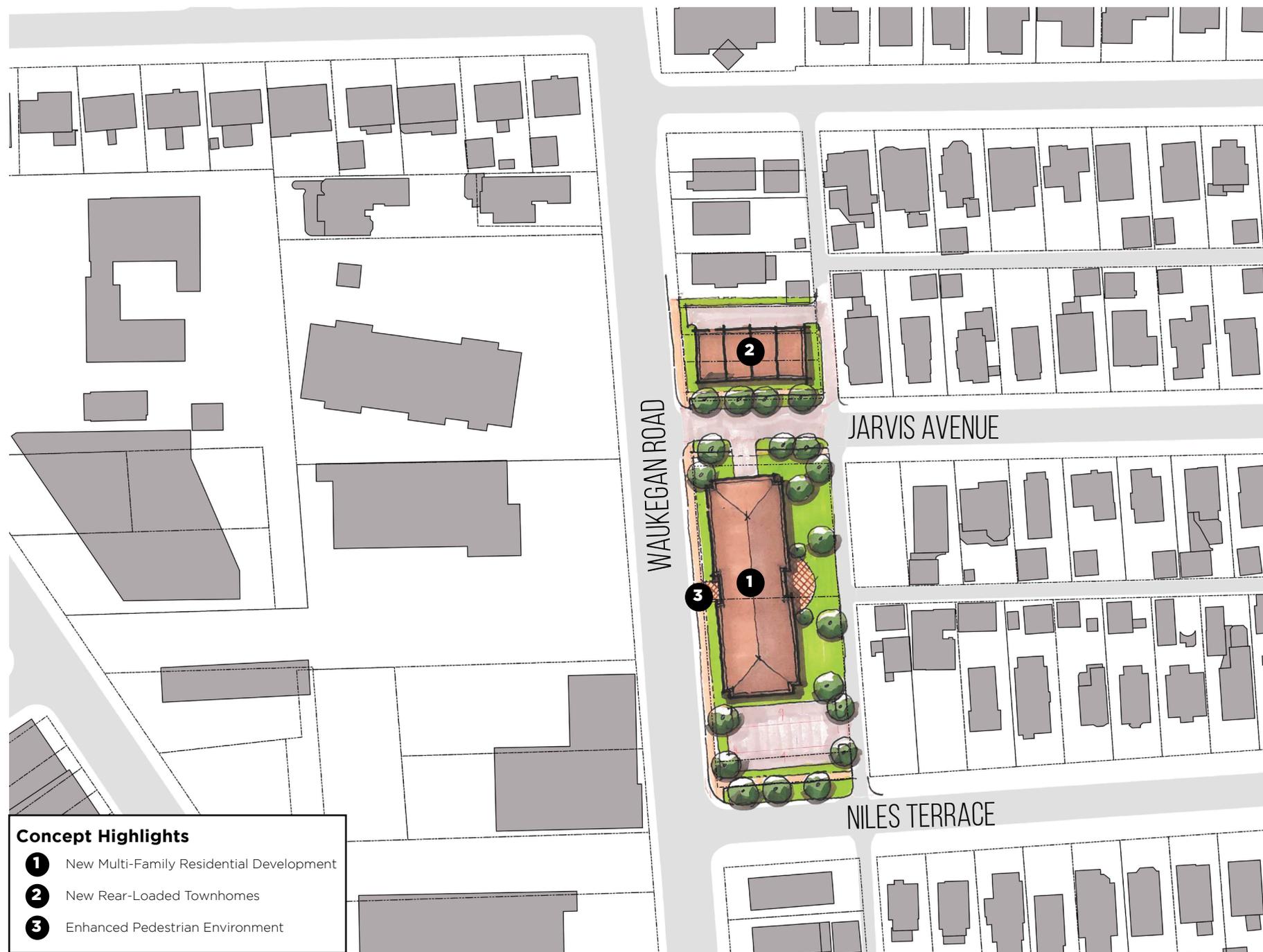


FIGURE 31: WAUKEGAN ROAD OPPORTUNITY SITE 1 - CONCEPT 3D VIEW



Waukegan Road Opportunity Site 2



Waukegan Road Opportunity Site 2 is at a key intersection within the Village of Niles, at the northwest corner of Waukegan Road and Oakton Street. This site establishes a new multi-family development with a new public pocket park to support the surrounding residential neighborhoods. A new corner commercial development with intersection improvements to connect the new development to the existing Village Administrative District and Library.

Concept A Highlights:

- 1 New Rear-Loaded Rowhomes.** New three-story rear-loaded rowhomes provide 26 residential units each with a two-car garage. The four buildings frame a new internal courtyard to provide a gathering space for residential uses.
- 2 New Pocket Park.** A half-acre new pocket park to the west of the new residential development to support the surrounding residential neighborhood. A walking trail and open lawn allow for recreational use.

- 3 New One-Story Commercial Development.** New 4,500 square foot commercial space at the corner of Oakton and Waukegan Avenue with the opportunity to be subdividable for potential tenants. Locate 24 surface parking spaces behind the building with access off Waukegan Avenue.
- 4 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees and enhanced pedestrian safety.

Concept B Highlights:

- 1 New Multi-Family Residential Development.** New three- to five-story multi-family development fronting Oakton Street with 20-40 residential units. Surface parking behind residential buildings with access off Waukegan Avenue and Oakton Street.
- 2 New Pocket Park.** A half-acre new pocket park to the west of the new residential development to support the surrounding residential neighborhood. A walking trail and open lawn allow for recreational use.
- 3 New One-Story Commercial Development.** New 4,500 square foot commercial space at the corner of Oakton and Waukegan Avenue with the opportunity to be subdividable for potential tenants. Locate 24 surface parking spaces behind the building with access off Waukegan Avenue.
- 4 Enhanced Pedestrian Environment.** Improved streetscape conditions with consistent street trees, sidewalks setback from the street, and enhanced pedestrian safety.

FIGURE 32: WAUKEGAN ROAD OPPORTUNITY SITE 2 - CONCEPT A PLAN VIEW



FIGURE 33: WAUKEGAN ROAD OPPORTUNITY SITE 2 - CONCEPT A 3D VIEW



FIGURE 34: WAUKEGAN ROAD OPPORTUNITY SITE 2 - CONCEPT B PLAN VIEW



SECONDARY CORRIDORS

The secondary corridors provide a high degree of mobility but with lower operating speeds and less stringent access controls than primary corridors. Secondary corridors in Niles are four and five lanes wide and are residential in use. Incorporating median landscaping in future road improvements is key to enhancing the character and safety of the secondary corridors. The section below is a more detailed look at the positioning of key secondary corridors in Niles.

OAKTON STREET

Efforts should continue to maintain Oakton Street as a residential corridor with some opportunities for development. The Village Administrative District intersects with Oakton Street and establishes this area, notably the Waukegan Road intersection, as a unique and complimentary service use to the corridor through urban design enhancements including intersection enhancements, streetscape improvements, and branding and identity opportunities.

HOWARD STREET

Howard Street spans east to west through Niles and the Forest Preserve visually separates the corridor with residential uses east of the Forest Preserve and industrial uses to the west. Moving forward, the Village should maintain and strengthen this land use pattern supporting the eastern residential uses and western industrial uses. Mobility efforts seek to extend the shared use path on Howard further west through the Village as outlined in the 2022 Niles Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

HARLEM AVENUE

Harlem Avenue runs north to south through the Village of Niles. This corridor should continue to maintain its residential character. Notable intersection capacity improvements are needed at the Milwaukee Avenue and Touhy Avenue intersections to improve pedestrian safety and access as well as reduce traffic and congestion. The Village should coordinate with IDOT to incorporate median landscaping into future road improvements.

GROSS POINT ROAD

Gross Point Road frames the northwestern edge of Touhy Triangle separating Touhy Triangle from the Employment District. Efforts should continue to maintain Gross Point as an industrial and office employment zone with support for adaptive reuse projects and flex spaces to introduce new and creative businesses along the corridor.



A neighborhood in Niles.



A neighborhood in Niles.

DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS

Goal #1: Promote economic development throughout the Village focusing on expanding the Village’s tax base, business retention and attraction, workforce development, and adequate housing and transportation systems.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Prioritize opportunity site redevelopment.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Focus on future multi-family residential development on Golf Mill opportunities sites.* Future redevelopment plans should consider adding multifamily residential land uses as a way to increase housing supply options desirable to the diverse demand segments. New households can create demand for retail space as well as health and wellness uses, such as physical therapy facilities, dental offices, or specialty fitness facilities like yoga studios, which are increasingly opening locations in shopping centers.

Policy #2: Enhance access to small business resources.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Establish a dedicated partner organization.* An example is a Small Business Center, an organization that provides one-on-one counseling, technical support on business issues, and educational opportunities to both new and existing businesses. Another option is to expand the Village’s Economic Development professional staff to provide more direct support.

Policy #3: Expand the use of commercial revitalization tools to physically enhance the exterior facades and interior spaces along the corridors.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Create Special Service Areas (SSAs) or Business Development Districts (BDDs).* A Special Service Area is a local financing tool that underwrites expanded services and programs through a localized property tax levy within a defined area, typically a commercial district or corridor. Funding from SSAs can support landscaping, marketing, branding, façade improvements, and targeted business support. Different from

an SSA, a Business Development District can receive increases from sales as well as hotel taxes within a defined district for use in building improvements, land acquisition, and site preparation as well as public infrastructure enhancements. While an SSA requires the majority of the property owners within the proposed district to agree to levy a tax, a Business Development District only requires the majority vote of a municipality’s governing body. Niles’ key corridors, notably the intersection of Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road, could be a candidate for such districts.

- » *Strategy #3.2: Enhance the existing Façade Improvement Program.* Enhancing the use of the Village’s Façade Improvement Program by raising the maximum grant award and allowing limited interior build-out improvements, may help in attracting new businesses and investors to the Village. Additional outreach and promotion efforts may also build awareness of the program within the Village.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Enhance the business environment by improving the expediency of the permitting processes.* Explore ways to simplify and provide permanent public way use permits, such as outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes, signs, awnings, and sidewalk sales, and providing outreach and services in multiple languages. Explore simplification or elimination of the permit process is feasible.

Goal #2: Enhance the vibrancy of commercial shopping centers.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Draft land use regulations that allow flexibility and the authority to consider non-traditional land use in the Village.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Continue to monitor land use requests in the Village to ensure by-right land uses permitted in the Zoning Code are up-to-date and meet the needs of the commercial community.* A prescriptive land use table or matrix identifying all Permitted and Special Land Uses can be helpful in adding clarity to a Zoning Code. However, it can create an obstacle to new or specialized land uses in the Village. If the Village experiences repeated requests for a land use that does not appear in the Zoning Code, an amendment may be needed to update the Code.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Continue to track how many Special Use Permit applications are received and approved for the Unique Use category identified in the Village's Zoning Code.* The Unique Use land use category is a progressive tool available to the Village. However, the Village should monitor its use carefully to determine what new land uses to add to the Code, if applicants are using the tool for appropriate requests, and if the Village Board is supportive of requests made under this land use category.

Policy #2: Pursue and attract new land users and tenants to fill vacant shopping center spaces.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Focus business attraction on underrepresented uses or commercial businesses not currently operating in the Village.* Niles is a retail destination in the region. Capitalize on this momentum by diversifying the land uses and commercial

offerings in the community with a focus on strengths unique to Niles. An example might be an ethnic dining destination. Innovative shared or group kitchen concepts can reduce typical restaurant-related costs and overhead. Reuse of large vacant shopping mall space may lend itself well to this concept.

Policy #3: Promote and assist the redevelopment of the Golf Mill commercial area into a mixed-use lifestyle center with a range of compatible uses including retail, residential, office, public spaces, and entertainment.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Change the zoning designation on the Golf Mill development site to the C-5 Urban Village district.* This will allow taller buildings and require conformance to the comprehensive design standards specific to the district.

Policy #4: Promote elements of Touhy Triangle as a retail shopping power center.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Facilitate redevelopment of the former Grainger and YMCA sites.* Redevelopment of these key sites should include retail commercial uses and associated complementary uses that relate to the existing uses in this location.
- » *Strategy #4.2: Pursue the development of a Metra train station.* The presence of a transit site brings energy, pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and commercial interest to a neighborhood or key intersection in town. A new Metra station near the Touhy Triangle could revitalize the entire southern commercial district in the Village.

- » *Strategy #4.3: Promote light industrial in the southeast portion of Niles.* The industrial area represents a key employment district, and the Village should continue to recognize its contribution to the Village’s economic base. Identification, branding, and promotion of the area should be among the Village’s economic development priorities.
- » *Strategy #4.4: Facilitate adaptive use and flex spaces in existing industrial buildings.* This industrial and office area is experiencing the introduction of new and existing flex uses. Efforts by the Village should strive to attract these new creative businesses and utilize funding incentives to support the revitalization of existing buildings.

Policy #5: Improve the identity, aesthetic, character, and function of commercial shopping centers with urban design enhancements, placemaking improvements, and parking considerations.

- » *Strategy #5.1: Continue to apply the design standards in Section 5 of the Niles Zoning Code consistently and rigorously.* The Village should organize pre-submittal conferences with developers and builders to discuss how to best meet Zoning Code design standards.
- » *Strategy #5.2: Assess the need for a design review commission or architectural review board.* An architectural review board or design review commission can work with developers on fine-tuning new development designs and meeting Zoning Code design requirements. Such a board or commission could focus on the application of the design standards in a more focused way, as opposed to a broad staff-level review or discussion with the Planning and Zoning Board. Furthermore, the Village can appoint residents with an architectural or design background to such as commission, bringing expertise to design review discussions where it might not otherwise be available.
- » *Strategy #5.3: Identify and utilize funding incentives to promote the overall improvement and redevelopment of commercial shopping centers.* Incentives could range from tax rebates, reduced or waived permit fees, TIF, SSA, and BIDs. The Village has a number of existing TIF districts with information on each posted online. This information must remain current and links to it shared widely for public review. As specific corridors

gain cohesion and identity, consider establishing a Business Improvement District to undertake collective advertising and streetscaping improvements.

Policy #6: Enhance the appearance of shopping centers through zoning and design requirements.

- » *Strategy #6.1: Apply the landscaping and screening requirements in Section 11 of the Zoning Code rigorously.* Redevelopment projects present rare opportunities to implement the Village’s vision on existing commercial sites to improve the overall design and aesthetic. The landscaping requirements in Niles Zoning Code seek to integrate developments into the site with sensitivity to existing planting material and enhance the appearance of the site especially as viewed from the public way.
- » *Strategy #6.2: Increase the total landscape area required in off-street parking areas and scale the requirement to the overall size of the parking lot.* Larger off-street parking lots should have more landscaping and less impervious surface than smaller lots.
- » *Strategy #6.3: Develop standards for permeable pavers in parking lots.* Permeable pavers promote the absorption of snowmelt and rain and reduce the quantity of surface runoff. Village standards will guide developers toward a resource that outlines high quality standards for the efficient use of permeable pavers.

Policy #7: Establish parking reduction strategies for commercial shopping centers.

- » *Strategy #7.1: Ensure off-street parking regulations accommodate complementary uses, shared parking programs, and off-site parking programs.* Burdensome off-street parking requirements can have unintended consequences, both for a development’s feasibility and for the built environment and community aesthetics. Flexibility in the code allows creative approaches to fulfilling parking requirements.
- » *Strategy #7.2: Allow reductions to off-street parking requirements for proximity and secure access to public transportation.* Reforming parking requirements to allow reductions to off-street parking near public transportation can promote pedestrian mobility, affordability, health, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

- » *Strategy #7.3: Continue to allow reductions to off-street parking requirements for the provision of carsharing services.* Allowing reductions to off-street parking requirements can allow for creative approaches to fulfill parking requirements such as carsharing services.

Policy #8: Enhance connectivity to shopping centers and commercial districts from adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

- » *Strategy #8.1: Focus on pedestrian improvements and accessibility.* Shopping malls often have expansive parking lots serving their stores. Dedicated pathways for pedestrians and non-motorized traffic can create a more comfortable environment in shopping malls for walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, and others.
- » *Strategy #8.2: Limit or consolidate curb cuts from corridors into shopping centers.* As redevelopment opportunities present themselves, plan sites around pedestrians and non-motorized transportation. Reducing curb cuts and carefully controlling vehicular traffic is one way to increase pedestrian safety.
- » *Strategy #8.3: Incorporate Village-owned parking lots along Milwaukee Avenue.* Village-owned mid-block parking lots along Milwaukee Avenue can allow for the removal of parking in front of buildings to improve the aesthetic appearance and safety of Milwaukee Avenue. The Village should pursue a parking and traffic study to determine the prime locations for mid-block parking lots.
- » *Strategy #8.4: Consider exploring the removal of the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) designation for Waukegan Road.* To ensure Waukegan Road is a walkable and bikeable corridor, the Village should explore removing the SRA designation of Waukegan Road. The Village will need to work closely with IDOT to ensure a road diet and SRA removal, as recommended in the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, are feasible.

Policy #9: Promote compatible uses within and between shopping centers and commercial districts.

- » *Strategy #9.1: Ensure proper buffering, screening, and other methods to limit impacts to adjacent uses.* Applying the Village's landscaping requirements will address this strategy, as well as thoughtful site design and building placement and orientation.
- » *Strategy #9.2: Incorporate community spaces into the redesign of shopping centers and districts.* The Village should encourage developers and builders to include plazas and green spaces as public gathering spaces in new site designs whenever feasible. The Village may also incentivize the installation of such spaces through the Planned Development process and the consideration of zoning modifications to achieve specific development project goals.

Policy #10: Encourage the overall improvement of shopping centers and districts with a focus on building exteriors, signage, landscaping, lighting, parking lots, streetscape, and urban design elements.

- » *Strategy #10.1: Allocate funds into a property and building improvement program to assist property and building owners with the enhancement and upgrade of their sites and uses.* Work with property owners and business owners to activate vacant storefronts, enhance facades and storefronts, and buffer surface parking lots.
- » *Strategy #10.2: Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and appropriate business groups to facilitate the aesthetic improvement of the Village commercial districts.* The Chamber of Commerce is a vital partner to support local businesses. The Village can utilize their business relationships to help improve the overall appearance of shopping centers and districts.
- » *Strategy #10.3: Continue to monitor the administration of Niles' municipal code to identify potential deficiencies to ensure proper property maintenance, repairs, and upgrades for commercial shopping centers and districts.* The Village Municipal Code establishes regulations for new and current businesses and developments and updating it to ensure the Village character and identity is maintained.

DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS

Goal #3: Support and expand the industrial and manufacturing sectors through business retention and attraction, and employment support services that encourage a range of compatible uses and a diversified tax base.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Protect industrial areas from the encroachment of non-industrial uses and maintain standards for buffering, screening and other methods to protect non-industrial uses.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Monitor requests to change the zoning district of any property currently zoned for light industrial use. Requests to rezone industrial properties to other zoning districts should receive heavy scrutiny because it is difficult to zone land back into an industrial district in the future.*
- » *Strategy #1.2: Ensure land uses allowed in the industrial zoning districts maintain the integrity, culture, and intent of the district. Large buildings, vacant tracts of land, and lower lease rates in Niles' industrial districts can be appealing to assembly, recreation, athletic or similar non-industrial land uses. While variety among land uses can bring vitality and added identity to industrial districts, the Village should remain cautious about diluting the light industrial nature of these areas. If not monitored, an overabundance of non-industrial land uses could negatively impact a district's energy and cohesion.*
- » *Strategy #1.3: Promote the redevelopment and improvement of older, obsolete industrial buildings and sites that do not meet operational or functional needs. Maintaining a functional building stock will reduce opportunities for changes in land use in the district. It will be important to maintain information on property ownership and points of contact for industrial buildings and sites in the Village. Encourage adaptive reuse and flex space in existing industrial building stock to support compatible uses and new and creative businesses.*

Policy #2: Support beautification and sustainability initiatives in the industrial district.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Encourage identification and branding for the Village's industrial districts. Branding within an industrial area using thematic wayfinding signs or other tools can lend a shared identity among users and property owners. This can build pride in the area and encourage renewed investment and maintenance efforts.*
- » *Strategy #2.2: Maintain performance standards for all industrial sites to control noise, odors, air quality, and other potential nuisances. Industrial districts can have a negative impact on a community if they are poorly maintained. Users and property owners must be accountable for their businesses and comply with the minimum performance standards in the Village's Code.*
- » *Strategy #2.3: Enforce property maintenance regulations related to outdoor storage. Without the need for an attractive storefront or pedestrian engagement, exterior maintenance on industrial properties can lag. Exterior storage of materials, vehicles, and refuse spreads quickly once it appears and is allowed to continue. Working with a group of property owners or business owners to address the issue holistically can be more successful than complaint-based code enforcement in situations like this.*
- » *Strategy #2.4: Promote the use of green infrastructure and sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP) when redeveloping industrial sites. Examples include green roofs, permeable paving systems to reduce impervious surface area, and rain gardens or bioswales to clean stormwater runoff.*

Section 6

MOBILITY SYSTEM

to Golf Mill

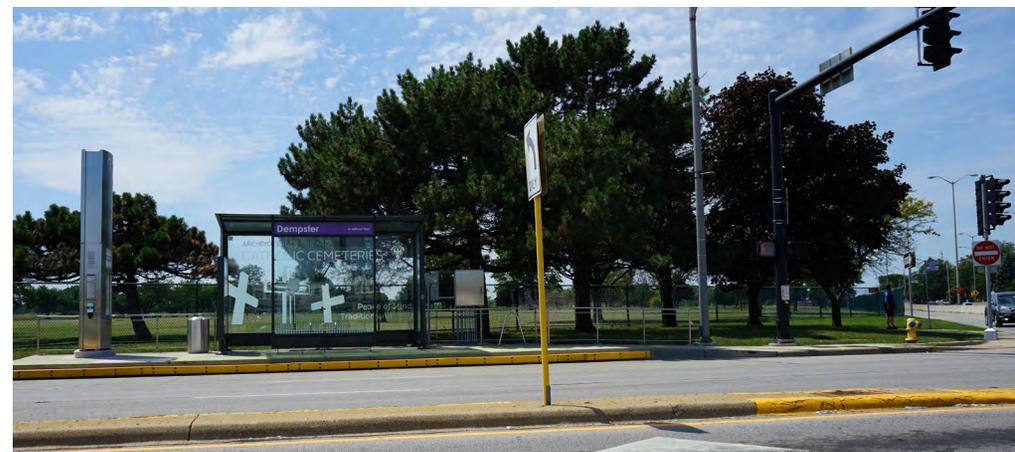
Touhy

The Village of Niles has a well-connected, multi-modal transportation system defined by its location to nearby interstate highways, its regional arterials and roadway network, and access to mass transit services. While Village residents and business owners benefit from having excellent automobile access within the community and to the greater Chicago region, this also leads to high volumes of through traffic, auto-centric commuting patterns, and significant barriers to pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Niles is located between two Metra commuter rail lines, though it does not currently have a train station within the municipal limits. Nevertheless, the Village has worked towards broadening its transportation infrastructure into a more multimodal system with an extensive public transit network via Pace and the CTA. This network provides feeder bus routes to the Metra and CTA rapid transit system, including the region's first Pace PULSE arterial rapid transit line along Milwaukee Avenue, and free circulator bus routes. Niles is also exploring the feasibility of building a train station within the Village and a bicycle system that extends throughout the Village. These investments have brought economic development to the Village and have enhanced the quality of life for its residents.

In planning for the Village's next 20 years, the Village should capitalize on opportunities to address remaining deficiencies in the transportation system. The Village should integrate various modal components of the system to support its commercial and residential base and achieve its environmental goals for sustainability.

This section focuses on strategic improvements to the mobility system to reduce congestion in the Village's commercial corridors, enhance its public transit assets to increase ridership and expand services, incorporate sustainable options and new technologies, complete the bicycle network, close remaining gaps in the pedestrian system, and improve pedestrian safety at the major roadway crossings.



Goal #1: Improve the efficiency and quality of the Village's mobility network to accommodate a wide range of users including bicyclists and pedestrians, vehicles, and transit.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Provide a planned roadway network that connects all areas of the Village and manages traffic flow while enhancing the streetscape and accommodating the needs of all users.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Maintain close coordination with IDOT and Cook County when programming improvements.* All arterials in the Village are under State or County jurisdiction and close coordination will support future development, control access, unify roadway character, and ensure that improvements achieve the multimodal goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Implement the 2020 Complete Streets Policy to ensure Village-owned streets provide safe mobility for users of all ages and abilities.* A "Complete Street" is a roadway that is designed to be safe for all users of the transportation network, including motorists, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Consistent with policies adopted by IDOT and Cook County for implementation on roadways under their jurisdiction, the Village has adopted its own Complete Streets policy and ADA transition plan, which the Village should use as a guide for application on the Village-controlled roadways in the future as they are rehabilitated and reconstructed.
- » *Strategy #1.3: Follow the Traffic Calming Policy adopted in 2016 to reduce cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods and increase pedestrian safety.* The Village adopted a Traffic Calming policy intended to improve quality of life by creating safe and attractive streets, reducing cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods, reducing the negative effects of motor vehicles on the environment, and promoting alternative modes of transportation. The purpose of the policy is to

evaluate and reduce if appropriate. The policy applies a uniform procedure that considers resident input in assessing the most appropriate alternatives for implementation. To reduce traffic problems, the policy also utilizes a toolbox of mitigation measures that are based on sound engineering criteria and Federal/State standards.

- » *Strategy #1.4: Monitor traffic flow along arterial roads for planned roadway improvement projects.* Roadway improvements are currently programmed or planned by IDOT, Cook County, or the Village for several arterial roadways that experience congestion. The Village should monitor traffic flow for these projects to ensure ease of travel for residents and visitors.
- » *Strategy #1.5: Maintain collector and local roads to the highest standard to enhance the viability of commercial redevelopment opportunities and incorporate multimodal facilities.* The Village should explore means of managing access along its collector and local roads to reduce the number of curb cuts, mitigate the potential for congestion and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts, and improve circulation.
- » *Strategy #1.6: Consider traffic controls and pedestrian safety improvements at key intersections.* The following intersections may warrant traffic signal control in the future or are candidates for pedestrian safety improvements such as rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB). The need is due to increases in traffic volume from development projects, as well as the need to improve access to the PULSE Milwaukee Line stations and other pedestrian destinations. Intersections outlined in the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should be a priority.

- » Milwaukee Avenue/Monroe Street
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Ebinger Road
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Jonquil Terrace
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Greenleaf Street
- » Waukegan Road/Shermer Road
- » Waukegan Road/Cleveland Street
- » Harlem Avenue/Greenleaf Street
- » Oakton Street/Washington Street
- » Oakton Street/Ozark Avenue
- » Dempster Street/Olcott Avenue
- » Dempster Street/Oriole Avenue
- » Greenwood Avenue/Park Lane
- » Caldwell Avenue/Cleveland Street
- » *Strategy #1.7: Conduct a neighborhood traffic study to identify inconsistencies with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD). The Village has a substantial number of one-way or two-way stop-controlled intersections that do not always follow a discernible pattern consistent with the guidelines in the Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD). The Village should evaluate the Washington Street-Church Street intersection for all-way stop control.*

Policy #2: Partner with Pace Suburban Bus and Metra to expand the transit system and Pace Pulse bus rapid transit network throughout Niles.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Work with Metra to determine the next steps towards bringing Metra service into the community.* There are currently no Metra commuter rail stations within the Village of Niles. Nearby Metra service is available on two of the Metra lines (Milwaukee District North Line, Union Pacific Northwest Line) that traverse the Village’s adjoining communities of Des Plaines,

Park Ridge, Morton Grove, Glenview, and Chicago. Importantly, however, none of the stations are within a convenient walking distance of 0.5 miles or less. A feasibility study to construct a Metra station within the Village on the MD-N Line near Touhy Avenue concluded that the location was feasible and met the criteria to be successful.

- » *Strategy #2.2: Evaluate the benefits of connecting the Niles Free Bus routes to the nearby Metra stations such as the Dee Road and Morton Grove stations.* Forecasting estimates of ridership can help determine if investment in new bus route connections is viable. Surveys of current Metra riders may be a method of evaluating interest, as well as research into similar bus connections in other communities.
- » *Strategy #2.3: Continue to coordinate closely with Pace to expedite start-up of the Pulse Dempster Line as well as plan for future Pulse lines in the Village.* The region’s second PULSE line is under construction and will extend from the Davis Street CTA-Metra Station in Evanston to O’Hare International Airport with stations in the Village at Waukegan Road, Harlem Avenue, Milwaukee Avenue, Cumberland Avenue, and Western Avenue. Pace’s longer-range plans include four additional PULSE lines that would extend through the Village along Golf Road and Touhy and Harlem Avenues, and a northerly extension of the current Milwaukee Avenue Line.
- » *Strategy #2.4: Work with Pace to assess the need for bus stop improvements.* The Village should collaborate with Pace to review bus stop passenger volumes to determine the need for new bus shelters and enhance passenger amenities where none exist such as adding ADA-compliant sidewalks. Most of the bus stops that receive the highest number of passengers are supplemented with bus shelters, but there are still a few high-ridership bus stops in the Village that lack shelters and other passenger waiting amenities such as benches, lighting, bus route maps and schedules, and concrete waiting pads. Some of the bus stops are also not ADA accessible as they either lack connections to the sidewalk system or do not have paved connections between the sidewalk and bus stop/curb. Priority bus stops are located along Golf Road, Touhy Avenue, and Harlem Avenue, and at the Niles Civic Center, Pointe Plaza Walmart, and Notre Dame High School.

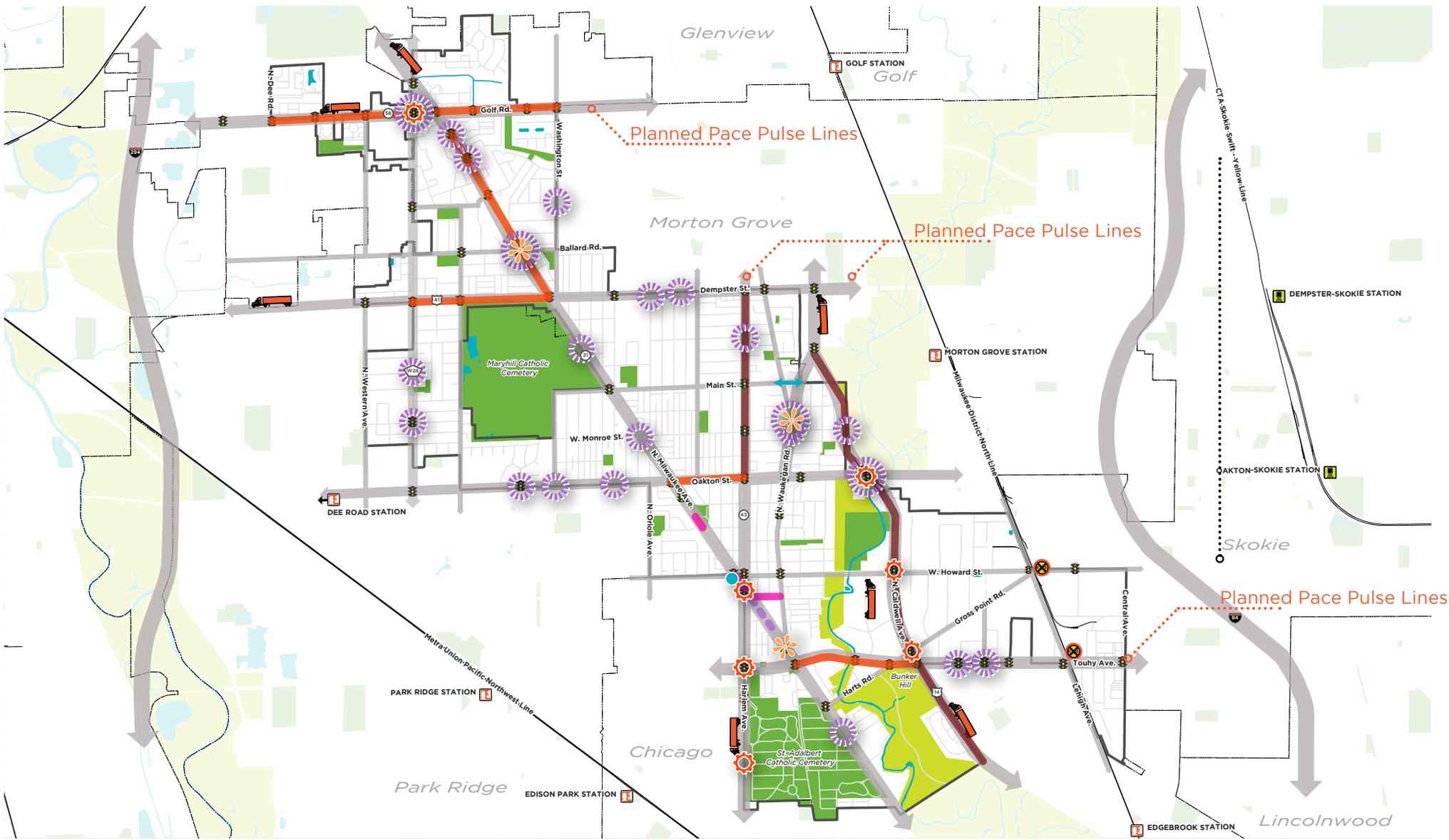


EXHIBIT 13: MOBILITY STRATEGY MAP

Village Boundary	Interstate	Local Road	Congestion Mitigation at Intersection	CTA Rapid Transit Station
Other Municipality	US State Route	Collector	Congestion Mitigation	Metra Commuter Rail Station
Water Bodies	IL State Route	Minor Arterial	Intersection Realignment	
Streets	Cook County Highway	Major Arterial	Curb Cut Consolidation	
Railway	Railroad Grade Crossing	Interstate	Potential Road Diet	
Forest Preserve of Cook County	Traffic Signal	Pedestrian Safety Enhancements	Potential Street Closure	
Parks, Open Space, and Cemeteries	Truck Route	Two-way Street Circulation Improvement	Removal of Front-in Parking Directly off the Road	

- » *Strategy #2.5: Promote the Village's public transit system to residents and visitors.* Pace is the designated public rideshare administrator for Northeastern Illinois and the agency facilitates a paratransit ADA service and a free carpool and vanpool rideshare-matching service. The Village should serve as a clearinghouse for the distribution of public transit information from Metra, Pace, and the CTA. The Village should disseminate on its website, social media outlets, and printed materials available at Village Hall and other community service facilities.
- » *Strategy #2.6: Collaborate with Metra and the Illinois Commerce Commission to modernize the traffic signals and crossings at Touhy Avenue and Howard Street.* Work with Metra and the Illinois Commerce Commission to modernize and install traffic signals, gates, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at the Howard Street crossing and the Touhy Avenue and Howard Street crossings. One railroad in Niles carries freight. It is owned by Metra and primarily carries the Milwaukee District North commuter rail service and Amtrak service. The freight line has two at-grade crossings in the Village: one at Touhy Avenue and the other at Howard Street. Both grade crossings are part of a Federal Railroad Administration-approved Quiet Zone that minimizes train horn noise through the Village. Vehicular safety features, such as cantilevered automatic flashing light signals, gates, warning signs, pavement markings, and bike and pedestrian infrastructure enhancements can improve grade crossings and ensure safety for all modes.

Policy #3: Pursue different modes of transportation to achieve sustainability goals and various environmental benefits, including reduced greenhouse gas emissions and parking demand, and increased use of public transit.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Consider engaging with carshare companies to establish business within the community and identify carshare vehicle storage locations.* Households with access to carsharing services such as ZipCar are likely to have lower automobile ownership rates and spend less of their disposable income on associated costs of ownership. While there are currently no carsharing services operating in the Village, the Village owns a variety of public parking lots that would be suitable for car share leasing.

- » *Strategy #3.2: Expand Niles' charging station inventory.* Electric vehicle charging stations are currently located at Golf Mill shopping center, Four Flaggs shopping center, Golf Mill Ford, Holiday Inn Express, Wildwood Tavern, Star Nissan, and Advantage Kitchen & Bath Gallery with plans to install charging stations at Golf Mill Park. The public parking lots owned by the Village would also be suitable for public charging stations and the Village can solicit vendors to install charging stations at public facilities and work with the business community to dedicate parking spaces and new charging stations at private locations.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Work with the Green Fleet Committee to transform the Village fleet of vehicles to be more sustainable.* As older and non-operational municipal vehicles need replacement over time, the Village should consider the purchase of low emission vehicles, including alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles, and equipment.
- » *Strategy #3.4: Consider ridesharing partnerships to provide affordable alternatives to owning and operating a personal vehicle and closing gaps in the public transit system.* Ridesharing services such as Uber and Lyft can supplement the public transit system by providing an alternative to using a personal vehicle for short trips to local destinations, such as the Metra stations or business parks/employment centers. Some communities in the United States have partnered with a rideshare company to subsidize a portion of the cost for rides that begin and end within the community, which can reduce the need to construct additional public and/or commuter parking.
- » *Strategy #3.5: Explore collaborative efforts to bring bikesharing or electric scooter-sharing services into the community.* Bikesharing is a micro-mobility option that can fill the first-mile/last-mile gap. It can also offer riders that do not own a bicycle an opportunity to explore the Village, utilize the North Branch Trail, or run a quick errand. The City of Chicago's bikeshare program (Divvy), which includes both pedal bikes and electric-assist bikes, currently has docking stations throughout Chicago and in the adjoining suburbs of Oak Park and Evanston. Bicycles can be rented from these stations for a short period of time at an hourly rate and returned back to any station. Potential partners could include the Niles Park District, Niles-Maine District Library, and

business park and shopping center owners. Potential locations for docking station locations could include Golf Mill Mall, Four Flags shopping center, the Niles Civic Center, Pointe Plaza Walmart, and larger multifamily residential complexes, among other locations.

Electric shared scooters (e-scooters) are another micro-mobility option and a first- and last-mile solution that supports public transit. Users access or return the dockless scooters wherever it is legal to lock a bike in the public right-of-way and use a smartphone or other cash-based option to unlock and ride the devices for short periods of time at an hourly rate. Cities throughout the country, including Chicago, have initiated E-scooter programs. The City of Chicago conducted E-scooter pilot programs in 2019 and 2020 and is considering establishing a permanent program.



Wildwood Tavern, Source: Plugshare



Golf Mill Shopping Center, Source: Plugshare



Holiday Inn Express, Source: Plugshare

Policy #4: Expand and improve the functionality of the sidewalk, trail, and bicycle facility network to ensure it can safely accommodate non-motorized transportation.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Continue to implement the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, as well as initiatives and projects captured in the 2022 update.* The bicycle system in the Village is under development and guided by Niles’ 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The system will consist of a network of trails, shared paths, bicycle lanes, marked shared lanes, and bicycle routes. Once completed, the network will provide bicycle access to major destinations within or adjoining the Village, including Metra stations, parks and forest preserves, shopping centers, schools, and civic facilities. It also establishes continuity with existing and planned bicycle facilities in the adjoining communities of Chicago, Des Plaines, Glenview, Morton Grove, Park Ridge, and Skokie.
- » *Strategy #4.2: Continue to expand the bicycle network as funding becomes available, pursuing grant funding opportunities whenever possible.* The lead agencies for the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan projects include the Village of Niles, IDOT, and the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways. The Village of Niles should collaborate with adjoining communities on projects that extend across Village limits.
- » *Strategy #4.3: Implement a wayfinding sign program to increase public awareness of the bicycle network system.* Cost savings can be achieved by utilizing existing public infrastructure like sign poles or light poles to mount the signs and having wayfinding signs fabricated or procured by the Village’s Public Works department. A wayfinding sign plan to increase non-motorized transportation may also be eligible for grant funding.
- » *Strategy #4.4: Expand bicycle parking infrastructure throughout the Village, as guided by the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan with respect to recommended bicycle parking locations and bicycle rack styles.* Bicycle parking is an essential component of the bicycle system. Providing a safe location for users to lock their bikes removes a barrier to using bicycles as an effective means of transportation and will encourage bicycle travel for short-distance trips. The Village, the Park District, and local schools currently provide bicycle racks at several municipal and school facilities, parks, and larger commercial centers.

- » *Strategy #4.5: Continue to close the remaining gaps in the pedestrian system by requiring sidewalk infill in redevelopment initiatives, pursuing grants to fund infill projects, and/or constructing infill segments when funds become available in the sidewalk repair program.* Deteriorated sidewalks and gaps in the Village pedestrian network limit accessibility and create safety issues. The Village has established an implementation schedule to close the remaining gaps in the system and these projects may require collaboration with IDOT, Cook County, and private landowners. Current sidewalk infill projects are being designed to close gaps along State and County owned roads, including Golf Road, Dempster Street, Ballard Road, Greenwood Avenue, and Caldwell Avenue. The 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies other significant priorities.
- » *Strategy #4.6: Coordinate with IDOT and Cook County to ensure that all pedestrian crossings in the Village incorporate high-quality safety features.* The Village’s arterial and collector roadways can be barriers to pedestrian travel due to the width of the roadways, high volumes of traffic, and traffic speeds. The signalized intersections along these roadways are the safest locations for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross, and most have been upgraded with high-visibility crosswalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and pedestrian signals with countdown timers. Several signalized intersections in the Village, however, are still in need of some of these enhancements on one or more of the intersection approaches, most notably at the Oakton Street intersections with Caldwell Avenue and Prospect Avenue, and the Greenwood Avenue intersections with Golf Road and Normal Avenue.
- » *Strategy #4.7: Provide safe pedestrian crossings at quarter-mile intervals and safe access to the PULSE Milwaukee Line, future Dempster Line stations.* The 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies priority locations for pedestrian crossing improvements. Improvements at these crossings could include traffic signals (if warranted), rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB), pedestrian refuge islands, continental-style crosswalk markings, pedestrian crossing signage, corner radius reduction, raised/decorative corner islands, curb extensions, and signal phasing with lead pedestrian intervals, among others, as guided by the Plan. The Village is seeking approval from IDOT for these

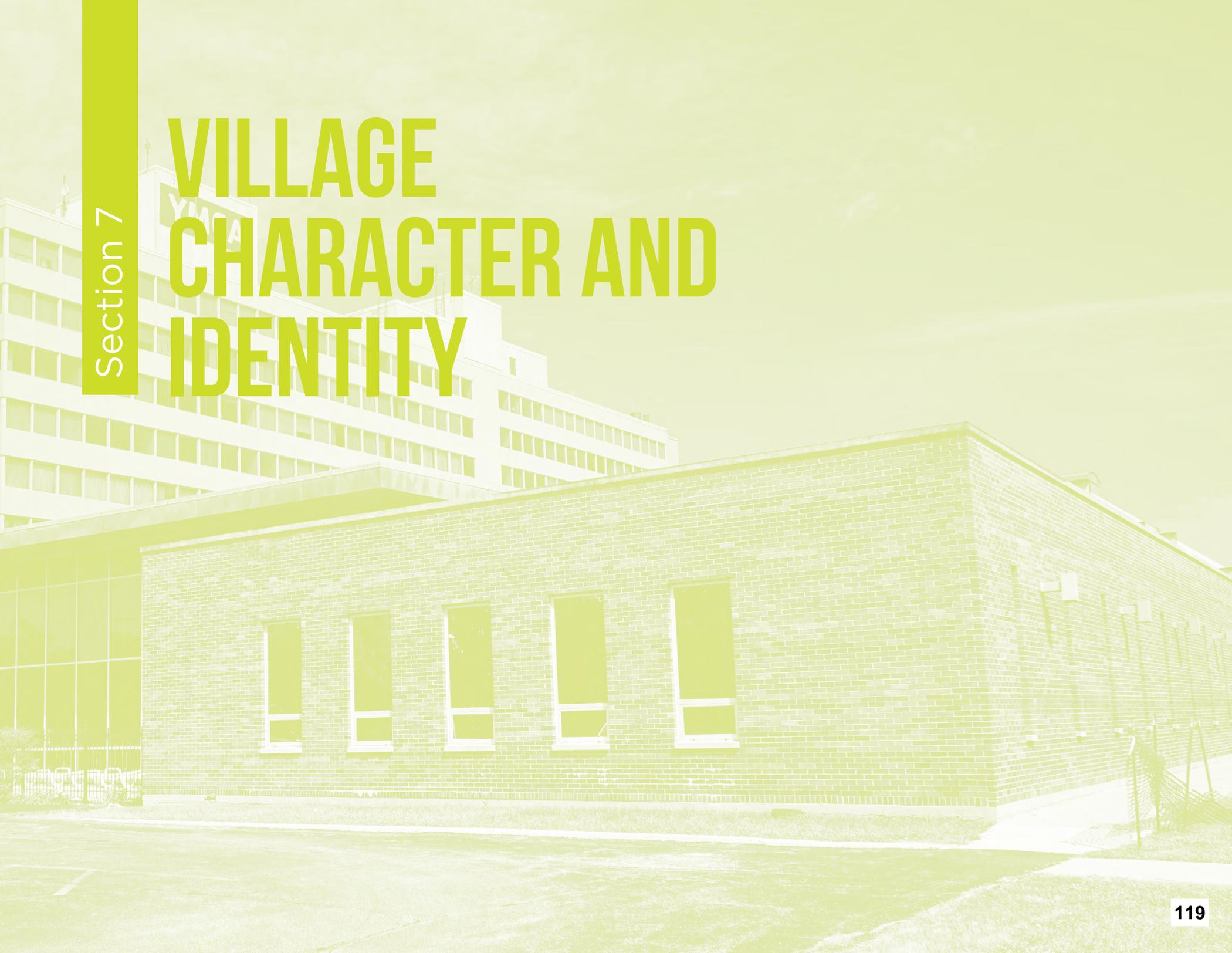
types of safety upgrades to the crosswalks along Cleveland Street at Waukegan Road and at Caldwell Avenue, which is part of the Robert Amling Memorial Bike Route. Crossings outlined in the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should be a priority, other significant crossings in need of enhancement include:

- » Milwaukee Avenue/Greenleaf Street
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Monroe Street
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Jonquil Terrace
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Ballard Road
- » Milwaukee Avenue/Golf Mill driveways
- » Dempster Street/Oriole Avenue
- » Harlem Avenue/Greenleaf Street
- » Greenwood Avenue/Park Lane
- » Oakton Street/Ozark Avenue
- » Touhy Avenue/Mobile Avenue
- » Touhy Avenue/Melvina Avenue



PULSE Bus Station

VILLAGE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY



Niles' design character encompasses a diverse pattern of development, from its well-maintained mid-century neighborhoods to its various commercial corridors and districts, to its tree-lined streets, parks, and Forest Preserves. This pattern contributes to making Niles an attractive and quality place to live, work, and play. The primary image and identity for Niles as a distinctive suburban community emanate from its residential neighborhoods of Cape Cods, Bungalows, Ranches, and Split-Levels homes constructed in the decades after World War II. The Touhy and Milwaukee Avenue and Golf Road corridors provide the main focal point for shopping and commercial activities in Niles, although in varying building forms from traditional storefronts to shopping malls and strip commercial centers. It is in the corridors and shopping districts where opportunities exist for streetscaping and other urban design treatments that can visually unify the community, connect neighborhoods to districts and corridors, and promote a more comfortable and safer pedestrian environment.

Beyond just neighborhoods, districts, and corridors, enhancing community character also involves other key design elements, such as building architecture, signage, gateways into the community, parks, and public art - elements that contribute immeasurably to community identity and local sense of place. Addressing urban design and local design character comprehensively provides many benefits to Niles, such as enhanced economic competitiveness, increased property values due to investments in streetscapes and infrastructure, and improved well-being and social connectedness due to well-designed urban spaces. Communities that commit to and work at developing their public space and urban design qualities are better able to differentiate themselves from other communities and become compelling destinations for new businesses and residents.



VILLAGE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

Goal #1: Improve and enhance Niles' design character and visual identity to reflect and complement the community's assets and historical development pattern by implementing ongoing urban design improvement and placemaking efforts in the Village's districts, corridors, and neighborhoods.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Undertake, implement, and administer an effective design review program for new commercial and multifamily construction in the Village.

- » *Strategy 1.1: Prepare and adopt design guidelines for both commercial and residential construction in the Village.* The Village of Niles maintains a basic set of design standards for new development in its zoning, subdivision, and building codes. However, a comprehensive set of design guidelines in addition to adopted standards can help elevate the design quality of new development, strengthen local character and established neighborhoods, and protect and leverage the value of the existing built environment. Design guidelines provide another level of guidelines for how new development design can be consistent and compatible within its development setting. In addition, the guidelines can help showcase high-quality examples of good development design in the Village and promote and encourage developments that are compatible and visually appealing in neighborhoods, districts, and commercial corridors. The Village may use the design guidelines to judge the quality of applications to its programs, such as the Facade and Streetscape Improvement Program.
- » *Strategy 1.2: Implement informal or formal design review for new development.* To promote compatible, visually distinctive new development, the Village of Niles could implement a formal or informal design review process. The Village of Niles may already conduct some form of informal design review through its regular development review process and may elect to add

certain design guidelines as a standard requirement for receiving development approvals from the Planning and Zoning Board. In some cases, the Village may also choose to administratively approve certain projects that meet specific design guidelines related to signage, and storefront improvements, for example. Administrative design review may be appropriate for building owners and developers accessing funds from the Village's Facade and Streetscape Improvement Program. However, a more formal design review process would require establishing a design review commission that reviews and evaluates building plans in certain cases or locations, such as along one of the commercial corridors, for commercial and residential projects with regard to architecture, colors, materials, and landscaping. Members of a design review commission should have some level of expertise in design to be able to analyze plans and drawings critically and make sound recommendations. The Village should add design review thoughtfully into the entitlement process to make development project approvals less cumbersome.

- » *Strategy 1.3: Establish design review districts in key districts and corridors.* The Village of Niles may determine that specific areas of the community may need more focused attention on development design, especially in those locations where the Village expects redevelopment to take place over the long term, such as the Touhy Triangle and along Golf Road and Milwaukee Avenue. In these locations, the Village would require either administrative or formal design review through the adoption of a design review zoning overlay.

- » *Strategy 1.4: Consider additional form-based zoning districts as an alternative to formal design review.* The Village currently uses a form-based zoning system for the Milwaukee Avenue corridor south of Monroe Street. The Village could opt to use form-based requirements within its base commercial zoning districts as an alternative to a formal design review process since form-based zoning usually involves an administrative review.

Policy #2: Update and maintain development regulations and design improvement programs to ensure the highest quality development design.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Evaluate all design standards in the Village’s zoning and subdivision codes and its landscape ordinance yearly and update as necessary.* The Village should periodically review and evaluate all design standards in its zoning and subdivision codes and landscape ordinance to ensure they advance key urban design objectives, including promoting visually well-defined and unified neighborhoods, districts, and corridors along with compatible, high-quality new development design.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Administer and enforce existing signage, landscaping, and other relevant design standards to enhance both building design and the public realm.* While the adoption of design guidelines and design overlay areas can help promote and facilitate more cohesive design in the Village in key locations, ongoing administration and enforcement of existing codes and ordinances for signage and landscaping can also have significant positive visual impacts, especially in the corridors and districts.
- » *Strategy #2.3: Continue funding for the Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program.* The Village currently funds and administers a matching grant program for façade and streetscape improvements within Niles’ commercial districts and corridors. The Village should continue supporting this important program and consider using any adopted design guidelines going forward as a basis for application approval. Additionally, the Village should explore the need for a smaller matching grant program for signage in the districts and corridors.

Policy #3: Implement ongoing improvements and enhancements to Niles’ streetscapes and public spaces.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Continue implementation of the Comprehensive Entrance and Roadway Signage Program.* In 2016, the Village of Niles commissioned and then began implementing a comprehensive signage program for its streets and gateway entrance points. The Village should continue the program’s implementation, including its directional and wayfinding elements, as part of a multi-year effort to enhance the community’s brand image and identity.
- » *Strategy #3.2: Target new streetscaping initiatives in gap areas along Niles’ corridors and districts.* In past years, the Village received funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation to undertake streetscape improvements along Milwaukee Avenue. These improvements included new sidewalks and pedestrian crossings as well as the installation of new street lighting. The Village should identify and continue streetscaping initiatives along Milwaukee Avenue and other locations where Tier 1 gaps from previous improvement efforts exist. Priority locations may include key corridor intersections, places where sidewalks and parkways need replacement and enhancement, or areas where visual improvements can make significant positive impacts on district or corridor appearances.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Create a committee to review the aesthetic impact of improvements in the Village’s right-of-way and to Village buildings and facilities.* Establishing a review committee will help ensure the Village meets its character and identity goals for its neighborhoods, districts, and corridors. Alternatively, a design review commission could also serve this function along with reviewing the quality and appropriateness of new development design.



A neighborhood in Niles.

Policy #4: Conduct streetscaping and public space enhancements as part of planned transportation and mobility projects.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Integrate pedestrian and streetscape improvements as part of federal, state, and Village-funded roadway projects.* Future federally, state, and Village-funded transportation and mobility projects offer opportunities for streetscaping treatments that improve walkability, and pedestrian safety, as well as enhance public realm appearances. Potential opportunities may include projects involving Niles' strategic regional arterials, such as Milwaukee, Touhy, and Harlem Avenues, and other major and minor roadways, such as Waukegan Road. Traffic capacity improvements are the key goals of such initiatives, and many roads are within the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation. Nevertheless, the Village should explore the possibilities for streetscape enhancements where possible and feasible.
- » *Strategy #4.2: Prioritize streetscape enhancements near transit facilities.* Niles' numerous CTA and PACE bus stops, including the pending start-up of additional Pulse Line routes, offer prospects for a special landscape, placemaking, and public art treatments that enhance the pedestrian environment. While the Pulse Line stops have their own branded signage and bus stop designs, other bus stops in the Village do not have bus shelters even in stop locations that have high ridership numbers.

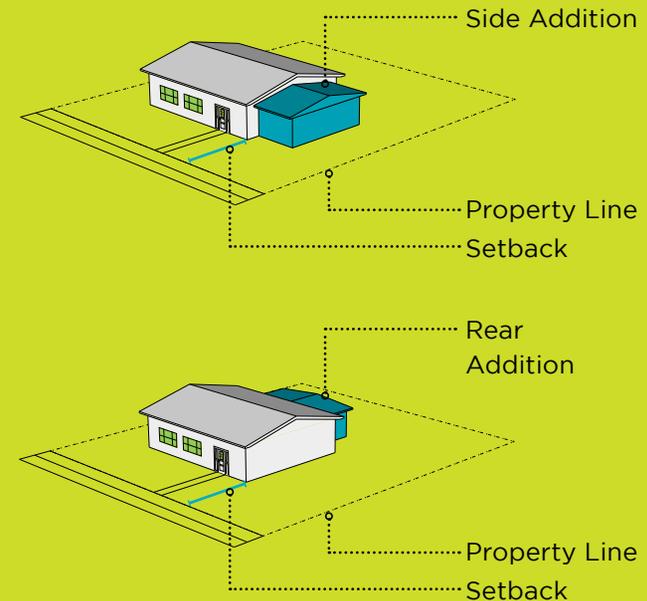
Policy #5: Retain and reuse viable historic buildings and architectural elements as a part of redevelopment projects and enhance neighborhood appearance.

- » *Strategy #5.1: Prepare, adopt, and distribute a residential housing design manual.* Given the local interest in housing renovations, the Village of Niles should create a residential housing design manual that offers guidance on proper procedures for maintenance, rehabilitation, and the construction of new additions. Given the predominance of mostly single-story, Ranch, Cape Cod, and Minimal Traditional housing types in Niles, the design and construction of new additions should be sensitive and appropriate to these housing types and compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

SAMPLE GUIDELINES

SAMPLE RESIDENTIAL HOUSING DESIGN MANUAL

Sample Residential Addition Guidelines



A residential housing design manual would provide residents with guidelines and standards to update, maintain, and renovate their homes. The above graphic illustrates the successful implementation of new additions in the Village of Niles.

- » *Strategy #5.2: Encourage the retention and preservation of high-character historic buildings through the Planned Unit Development process.* The Village's current Planned Unit Development code considers the preservation of "historic features" as a community benefit or amenity that a developer could claim in exchange for any needed exceptions or variances for base zoning requirements. This can be an important tool for preserving or adapting high-character historic buildings that may be part of a development proposal. However, the Village should further define what constitutes historic features and create a register of historic places and buildings. Ideally, the Village should encourage the preservation and adaptation of entire buildings within a new development using the PUD process. The Village should consider undertaking a windshield survey of its commercial districts and neighborhoods to identify historically and architecturally significant buildings and places. It should also consult with the Recent Past Survey of Suburban Communities conducted by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Landmarks Illinois to review properties identified within the Village as having preservation merit.
- » *Strategy #5.3: Broaden the mission and educational aims of the Niles Design District program.* Encouraging the maintenance, preservation, and adaptation of the Niles' older housing stock for new residents and families will require active and ongoing outreach efforts that equip homeowners with the educational resources to make the right decisions for the properties. The Niles Design District program currently serves as a clearinghouse for basic information about nearby home improvement businesses and contractors. However, the Design District could provide additional educational programming, workshops, seminars, and contractor referrals for property owners seeking to rehabilitate their homes, weatherize them, or construct new additions in ways that do not compromise their original design integrity. The Village and the Chamber should consider ways and means in which to staff the programs rather than relying on an internet presence.

Policy #6: Conduct ongoing beautification and urban design enhancement efforts that establish and reinforce community and neighborhood character.

- » *Strategy 6.1: Ensure the ongoing maintenance and design of streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and other public infrastructure.* The Village's streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces are most often a visitor's first impressions of the community. The Village should continue to prioritize and support its maintenance.
- » *Strategy 6.2: Encourage placemaking and other urban design enhancements that promote well-scaled, walkable environments along Niles' corridors, and neighborhoods.* The interface between the commercial districts and corridors can pose special design challenges, especially involving scale and height differences with new development and adjacent neighborhood areas. There are several ways to address such challenges that also aid in promoting corridor walkability and vitality. These urban treatments could include:
 - Establishing appropriate transitions between commercial and higher-density residential and mixed-use uses and lower-density residential areas by employing architectural design techniques, landscaped buffers, plazas, or more pedestrian-scaled offices, retail, and live-work units.
 - Encouraging creative landscape designs where possible to visually define corridors and districts and adjacent neighborhoods.
 - Design and install public spaces and plazas within commercial, mixed-use, and residential projects that can accommodate public art, outdoor café spaces, and small-scale community activities. Redevelopment opportunities along Milwaukee Avenue may provide such opportunities where triangular-shaped parcels may provide adequate spaces for plazas.
 - Implement placemaking initiatives that reinforce key design attributes in buildings and in the streetscape to create a greater, more unified sense of place. The attributes may focus on the Niles' mid-century design qualities found in its residential architecture and remaining 1960s-era commercial buildings, or an updated theme that reflects current development design preferences.

- » *Strategy 6.3: Bury overhead utility lines in key Village corridors and districts.* As suggested in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the Village should continue to explore and implement a program to bury utility lines along and within the commercial corridors and districts. The costs associated with burying utility lines are frequently the barrier to implementation. However, redevelopment projects may present opportunities to bury overhead lines as part of their construction. The Village may also seek out and consider other funding sources that would assist with financing.
- » *Strategy #6.4: Include “superior building design” as a public benefit in Planned Unit Developments.* To encourage and promote high-quality new development design within commercial corridors and districts, the Village could consider allowing superior building design to the list of public benefits that a Planned Unit Development can provide as a justification for zoning modifications. Design improvements could include height and massing treatments that effectively reduce a building’s overall scale and bulk, especially if adjacent to neighborhoods of lower density. Other architectural treatments include well-articulated façades using high-quality building materials, employing a color pallet appropriate and compatible with adjacent development, and integrating sustainable design features in the building as well as in the site.



Niles Historical and Cultural Center at 8970 North Milwaukee Avenue

Policy #7: Enhance the appearances of the Chicago River and North Bridge Trail vehicular and pedestrian bridges.

- » *Strategy #7.1: Undertake small-scale design interventions to improve the walkways and aesthetic appearance of the North Branch Chicago River bridges at Touhy Avenue, Harts Road, and Howard Street.* The pressed concrete bridges that pass over the North Branch of the Chicago River at Touhy Avenue, Harts Road, and Howard Street, were designed and constructed primarily for vehicular use rather than for pedestrians. Small-scale design interventions, such as low-profile planters, streetlights, and community identifiers, can encourage pedestrian use while also serving as opportunities for community branding. Low-profile planters can be placed on the sidewalk adjacent to the street in order to create a sense of safety for pedestrians. Community identifiers can subtly beautify the bridges while also alerting walkers, bikers, and pedestrians that they are passing through Niles.
- » *Strategy #7.2: Beautify the Caldwell bicycle and pedestrian bridge.* The North Branch Trail pedestrian bridge passes over Caldwell and Oakton Avenue and is a high visibility gateway. The Village should continue efforts to repaint the bridge and incorporate Niles’ branding. Consider installing low-profile wayfinding, planters, and pedestrian lighting to strengthen the pedestrian experience and overall aesthetic of the pedestrian bridge.



Golf Mill Park



“FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY AND CULTURE IN NILES AND BRING POSITIVE VISIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY.”
- NILES STAKEHOLDER



NEIGHBORHOODS: FOSTERING LIVABLE PLACES



Niles' residential neighborhoods are an essential part of the community. The housing stock is primarily single-family detached units and, commensurate with the population migration from inner cities to the suburbs that occurred during the postwar years, two-thirds of the homes constructed in Niles occurred between 1950 and 1969. This lends continuity to the look and scale of housing, but also means the housing stock is aging. With many structures over 50 years of age, maintenance and upkeep will be essential in keeping neighborhoods vibrant.

Efforts to expand the supply of housing options in Niles will be an important part of the Village's future, as well. Demographic changes over the next twenty years mean attached housing types, such as townhomes and duplexes, will meet the needs of young families moving into Niles and older residents wanting to age in place. Increasing the development of multifamily units, attached single family buildings, and senior housing options are all solutions to explore.

The policies and strategies detailed below establish a plan for responding to the pressures and obstacles the Village is likely to encounter in the coming years. Focusing on support for existing neighborhoods as well as increasing the diversity of housing options in Niles, the framework is achievable, measurable, and transparent.



Goal #1: Diversify the Village’s housing supply in order to meet changing household needs and promote a variety of housing product types for young professionals, families, empty nesters, and seniors.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Promote the construction of new multifamily housing and “missing middle” housing types at a range of sizes and scales.

» *Strategy #1.1: Consider amendments to the Zoning Code to facilitate the development of missing middle housing.* Recognizing that “missing middle” housing is largely about form and scale, key amendments to the Zoning Code can clarify how the Village approaches products like duplexes, townhouses, and smaller-scale multifamily infill projects. These include defining housing types clearly, ensuring they appear as permitted land uses in appropriate zoning districts, and reviewing residential density, setbacks, and minimum lot size regulations to accommodate new housing styles. Importantly, amendments may not be needed when zoning relief through a Planned Unit Development can achieve a desired development. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) mechanism is an effective tool to facilitate development of housing types that don’t fit into the by-right allowances of Niles’ single-family zoning districts. However, staff should track the nature of zoning modifications requested in PUDs. These can help identify shortcomings in the existing code and inform what amendments to the Zoning Code may be the most effective.

- » *Strategy #1.2: Consider revising the Zoning Code to allow two-family residential buildings in the R-2 Single Family Residential zoning district.* The Village could explore revising regulations for lots in the R-2 zoning district that meet a 7,000 SF lot area minimum to allow two-family residential structures. Properties with 7,000 square feet of lot area are 12 percent larger than the minimum 6,250 SF lot size in the R-2 district. This extra land area provides an opportunity to construct an additional residential unit while limiting the impact on adjacent properties and expanding the housing supply in the Village. This policy change would impact 1,229 (20 percent) of the properties in the R-2 zoning district. If the policy is successful, it could be expanded to include smaller lots in the R-2 district or other areas within the Village. Note this strategy may function concurrently with Strategy 1.3 below.
- » *Strategy #1.3: Consider revising the Zoning Code to allow multifamily buildings to be four stories and 50’ in height by right in the R-4 Zoning District.* This allows the construction of a larger building and more units, making development projects more appealing and encouraging multifamily development in the Village.

- » *Strategy #1.4: Consider revising the Zoning Code to reduce the rear yard setback and the maximum lot coverage for multifamily development in the R4 Zoning District.* The current 30-foot rear yard setback, when combined with the front yard setback requirement of 15 feet, can reduce the buildable area on a lot in the R4 Zoning District. If impacts on adjacent properties are a concern, they can be addressed through landscaping, screening, and site design rather than setback requirements. This can increase the amount of buildable area on a property, so it may be appropriate to increase the allowable building coverage, as well.
- » *Strategy #1.5: Consider adding a multifamily density maximum to the Zoning Code.* This will clarify the community's expectations with the development community and allow for more informed discussions as the Village considers multifamily and mixed-use developments. Clarity in the Zoning Code is an essential step in encouraging development in the community. This may also necessitate revisiting off-street parking requirements for multifamily developments.
- » *Strategy #1.6: Include residential land uses when developing available sites or redeveloping underutilized or opportunity sites.* Encouraging mixed-use development in Niles adds multifamily units to the housing supply and expands housing options in the community. Opportunity sites are present along key commercial corridors, including Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road.



A neighborhood in Niles.

CASE STUDY

LIBERTYVILLE ILLINOIS, SCHOOL STREET NEIGHBORHOOD

124-164 School Street Libertyville, IL



A vibrant infill development on School Street, blocks from the bustling downtown Main Street, introduced 26 single-family small-lot developments in the Village of Libertyville. The single-family homes are designed on smaller lots creating a denser neighborhood with homes abutting the sidewalks along a pedestrian-friendly street.

Goal #2: Improve the Village's character and attractiveness as a great place to live by enhancing the quality, appeal, and safety of all residential neighborhoods.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Promote single-family home renovation and expansion with homeowner-friendly programs that allow the modernization of existing housing consistent with the needs of growing families.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Enhance the "Grow Your Home Program" with strategic programmatic changes.* These might include expanded applicability to developers; expanded permit fee waiver; and expedited application review and site visit.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Organize a local Home Improvement Show.* Engage Niles-based design and construction businesses to become involved. Include workshops on home improvement basics, simple and affordable projects, and safety. Approach large retailers for involvement, sponsorship opportunities, and advertisement. Seek collaboration with area Chambers of Commerce and economic development organizations. There are also collaboration opportunities with the businesses participating in the Niles Design District. This program brings residents and professionals together in a fun environment and breaks down barriers to home improvement projects.
- » *Strategy #1.3: Explore Residential Rehabilitation Grant and Loan Programs and Senior Handyman Programs to encourage and aid the rehabilitation of existing housing stock.* Removing obstacles and providing resources to residents is a positive way to improve the quality and appeal of residential neighborhoods. Residents who are proud of their homes and neighborhoods build character in the community.

Policy #2: Facilitate property maintenance efforts and initiatives.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Seek ways to streamline enforcement of property maintenance complaints.* While the Village's website allows online submission of complaints, it requires creating an account and logging into the See Click Fix System. This may be an obstacle to some residents. Consider having a phone number available, or an email address specifically for property maintenance complaints.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Provide information on resources for residents who need help with property maintenance.* Provide "repeat offenders" for property maintenance complaints with information on handyman or senior assistance programs. Many homeowners may want to maintain their homes but are unable to or do not know how. In rental situations, absentee landlords should be engaged directly and rigorously related to property maintenance.
- » *Strategy #2.3: Require residents to submit a landscape plan as part of major additions to residential properties.* New landscaping provides a positive aesthetic impact in a neighborhood and along a streetscape in a residential setting. A well-designed landscape plan can also soften the impact of an increase in bulk on a property resulting from a significant addition or new construction.

Policy #3: Protect residential neighborhoods from adverse impacts related to adjacent non-residential uses, cut-through traffic, flooding, lighting, odors, or other nuisances.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Consider traffic-calming initiatives in residential neighborhoods that experience cut-through traffic.* Initiatives can be low-cost and highly effective. They may include yard signs, automatic vehicle speed detection, speed bumps, or an increased law enforcement presence for periods of time.
- » *Strategy #3.2: Ensure adequate buffering for new non-residential development constructed adjacent to residential zoning districts.* Headlights, vehicle exhaust fumes, and late-night noises are all nuisances that residents can encounter if they live next to a non-residential zoning district. Enforce all provisions in the Zoning Code, where feasible, related to setbacks and landscaping improvements. If existing regulations are inadequate, consider amending the Zoning Code or working with the development community on a case-by-case basis to address concerns as they arise.

Policy #4: Preserve and improve residential neighborhoods from non-compatible development by encouraging landscaping, neighborhood improvements, and design elements that highlight the visual character of each residential neighborhood.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Identify design elements that are unique to different residential neighborhoods in Niles.* A common way to do this is by conducting an architectural survey to identify unique attributes of the Village's various neighborhoods and housing types. With the information from the survey, residents can learn more about their homes and neighborhoods. This can build pride and a sense of ownership. It can also help establish a feel and character for neighborhoods, allowing renovations and new construction to be consistent with the existing built form.
- » *Strategy #4.2: Consider an incentive program to encourage residential improvements.* The Village could allow as-of-right renovations or additions and reduced rear-yard setback if a homeowner makes a sizable investment in improving a property located in the R-2 zoning district. A concept for the program is included in the implementation section of the Plan.

Policy #5: Consider residential design guidelines and best practices to foster and promote design excellence in residential neighborhoods throughout Niles.

- » *Strategy #5.1: Develop a catalog of renovation and home addition concepts that are adaptable to the most common housing styles in the Village.* Modifying and improving existing houses is typically more cost-effective than building new ones. It can be helpful for residents to have an idea of the scale and form that improvements to their homes can take. If the Village provides this information, it can encourage consistency and expertise in design.
- » *Strategy #5.2: Create design guidelines for new single-family construction and improvements to existing homes.* Different from design standards that the Village must follow within its Zoning Code, design guidelines provide information on how construction projects can be designed in a manner consistent with existing neighborhood housing forms and architectural styles.

Policy #6: Continue to address lot-level drainage problems through cost sharing with property owners and revisions to Village regulations.

- » *Strategy #6.1: Evaluate lot-level drainage problems in residential and non-residential development areas in the Village.* Many residential and commercial areas in the Village were developed without proper drainage easements. A lack of planned drainage systems has led to some residents and business owners having to manage stormwater.
- » *Strategy #6.2: Review on an annual basis municipal regulations related to lot-level drainage.* The Village should review and update municipal regulations to monitor lot-level drainage and should be reviewed and updated to manage current and future resident needs.
- » *Strategy #6.3: Review the cost-sharing drainage remediation programs to address drainage issues in residential areas.* The Yard Drainage Assistance Program was developed to provide financial assistance for qualifying stormwater improvements made by homeowners to address major drainage problems that lead to flooding. Continuing to promote and update the program to meet the current and future needs of Niles residents is critical to monitoring Village wide flooding impacts.

Section 9

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



Parks and open space make up about 15 percent of the Village, including the neighborhood parks, the Forest Preserve, and the river corridor. Niles is deficient in neighborhood park space but provides adequate open space when considering the adjacent location of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

The Village recognizes the importance of quality parks and an open space system in the community. This is exemplified by current plans, such as the Golf Mill Park redevelopment project, which seek to enhance preexisting park space. The policies below ensure all facilities remain connected, well-used, and appreciated by residents and visitors.



North Branch Trail



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Goal #1: Improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of Niles' parks and open space resources by ensuring all neighborhoods have equal access to Village parks.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Improve access to the Village's parks and open space.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Enhance accessibility to parks and open spaces.* Sidewalks must be complete on both sides of the streets and in good repair in proximity to park facilities. Bicycle parking should be available, as well as facilities to serve residents of varying needs and abilities. This includes appropriate benches and tables, accommodations for pets, accessible restroom facilities, and well-lit ADA-accessible pathways.

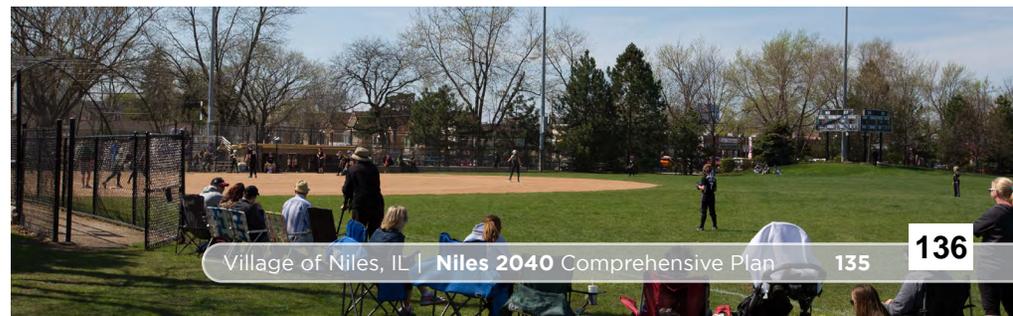
Policy #2: Work with the Niles Park District to seek opportunities to expand parks and open space in the Village.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Include the Niles Park District as an active partner in adding new park space as part of new developments.* Niles is a built-out community and finding opportunities for expanding parks and open space may be challenging. However, new developments might provide opportunities for improving access to existing park facilities or the dedication of land for new parks.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Promote access to and maximize benefits of the North Branch of the Chicago River.* Ensure improvements around and near the River consider water quality and access as the primary considerations.

- » *Strategy #2.3: Encourage different types of parks within the Village.* Parks can range in size from lot-sized pocket parks to acres-large green spaces. They can also provide the community with a range of programming and amenities. Developing different types of parks will ensure that the community has access to multiple green spaces that support a variety of different needs. In addition to parks created solely for people, consideration should be given to the addition of a dog park, something that came up many times during community engagement sessions.
- » *Strategy #2.4: Collaborate with the Forest Preserve to enhance the triangular Forest Preserve property at Caldwell and Touhy Avenue.* A triangular parcel bounded in part by Touhy and Caldwell Avenue has the unique opportunity to be an asset to the Village of Niles. Collaborate with the Forest Preserve to enhance this parcel aesthetically, provide recreational opportunities, and promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to and through the site.

Policy #3: Enhance and manage the Village’s existing parks and open spaces.

» *Strategy #3.1: Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Niles Park District and the Cook County Forest Preserve to expand parkland, park facilities, and recreation programming in the Village and to maintain, utilize, and maximize Forest Preserve resources to the greatest extent possible.* Scheduling periodic meetings with Park District planning staff may be beneficial to review development activity and Park District initiatives with an eye to opportunities for collaboration. The Village should collaborate with the Forest Preserve staff to make them aware of development activities that could improve access to Forest Preserve facilities or contribute to Forest Preserve initiatives in any way. Village staff should also be aware of planning initiatives and improvement projects undertaken by the Cook County Forest Preserve and the Park District. At the very least, the Village should maintain strong lines of communication with the Park District and Cook County Forest Preserve.



“THE PARKS ARE WELL MAINTAINED AND ARE IN MANY LOCATIONS TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AND THE PARK DISTRICT HAS MANY GREAT PROGRAMS.”
- SURVEY RESPONDENT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

512

Niles Design District
NILES

GREEN LIGHTS.
FASTER RIDES.

State-of-the-art technology, like transit signal priority, now available on Pulse. Pace's new rapid transit service.

THERE'S A NEW RIDE IN TOWN
Pulse is a Pace service.

Niles has facilities located throughout the Village that provide community-enhancing services, as well as critical infrastructural services, such as utilities and stormwater management systems. Several of the Villages' key facilities, including The Village Hall, the Senior Center, the Family Fitness Center, and a U.S. Post Office, are located within the Administrative District at the intersection of Waukegan and Oakton. With the Niles-Maine District Library across the street, these collective facilities provide a level of civic identity and help solidify the Village's administrative center.

Many of the community-enhancing services provided within the Village of Niles help to support holistic community health and quality of life for Village residents. The Village offers several of these services from facilities within the Village Administrative District and in different locations in the Village. The following section describes several of the facilities and their respective programs.

Health Facilities and Services

Niles residents have access to numerous health services and facilities. The largest provider of health and medical services in Niles is the Advocate Lutheran General Hospital and there are many other medical centers and offices throughout the community. Dedicated facilities and departments, such as the Niles Human Service Center, the Niles Family Services Department, and the Niles Senior Center provide more holistic health services, such as social work, behavioral health services, and more.

Exercise Facilities and Services

The wellness of Niles' residents is supported through dedicated facilities, such as the Niles Family Fitness Center, the Golf View Recreation Center, and many other indoor and outdoor facilities. These facilities provide programs for all ages, including youth sports clubs, adult fitness classes, and walking track memberships for seniors. Exercise and wellness services extend beyond dedicated facilities. For example, the Niles Senior Center offers dance, yoga, and fitness classes specifically tailored to seniors.



Safety Facilities and Services

Village life safety services are facilitated through the Niles Fire Department and the Niles Police Department. The Niles Fire Department provides timely life safety services, such as fire prevention, fire suppression, hazardous materials response, and emergency medical and rescue services. The Niles Police Department provides law enforcement services throughout the Village. The Police Department also hosts Walk and Roll Niles, a community event that focuses on bike and pedestrian safety.

Education Facilities and Services

The Village is well-served by six public school districts and five private schools, along with Oakton Community College District 535 with facilities in Des Plaines and Skokie. Niles is also served by the Niles-Maine District Library. The Library provides a variety of educational services and resources. These include typical library book and media-share services, as well as online learning courses, access to a creative makers space, and access to a recording studio and audio-video equipment.

The Niles Teen Center will soon be relocated to Milwaukee Avenue, directly north of Dempster Street. The Teen Center provides a safe and welcoming environment for local teenagers to develop and strengthen relationships with peers and adult staff. Students practice life skills and expand career and technical education offerings after school in a commercial kitchen, recording studio, stem learning experiences and a creative suite. The Teen Center also offers social and emotional support, community service opportunities, special events, recreational outings, and homework assistance.

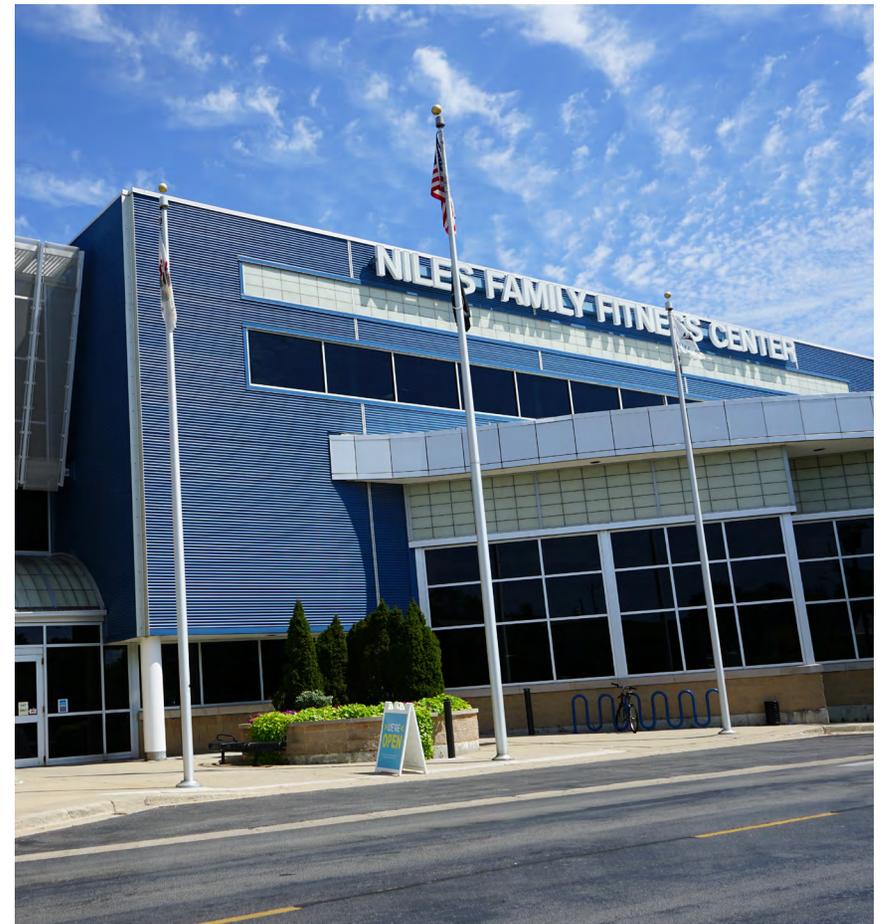
Employment and Training Facilities and Services

Several employment and training resources are available to Niles residents. Niles Family Services provides the community with an Employee Assistance Program that offers all full- or part-time employees with referrals for resources for children, seniors, legal assistance, and healthcare support. Niles Family Services also provides financial wellness services, helping community members through times of distress, as well as helping them to make smart financial decisions for the future. The Niles Chamber of Commerce

and Industry supports the Niles business community with events, outreach, and workshops. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry also assists employees by providing a list of jobs that are available within the community.

Critical Infrastructural Services

Critical services, such as utilities, are provided throughout Niles and are facilitated primarily by the Public Works Department. The Department is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of streets, sewers, parkways, sidewalks, alleys, signage, and the water supply system. The aim of the Public Works Department is to provide essential services to the Village in a cost-effective and efficient manner.



Niles Family Fitness Center, 987 Civic Center Drive

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal #1: Provide high-quality and equitable Village services and facilities that accommodate all residents and businesses in order to enhance quality of life, support overall community health, and fulfill the essential needs of the Village.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Support and collaborate with community service organizations and other governmental entities in the Village; maintain mutually beneficial relationships with these organizations.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Continue to support Village facilities, departments, and programs that partner with community service organizations.* The Niles Family Services department, Niles Senior Center, Niles Teen Center, and several other Village service providers partner with external organizations and entities in order to provide residents with a range of services. Continue to channel resources to these facilities, departments, and programs.

Policy #2: Strengthen the service network and enhance service offerings within Niles.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Assess gaps in the services the Village and/or other agencies provide and seek ways to fill those gaps.* Work with Village service providers to assess available services and the needs of Niles' residents. The Village can evaluate and seek partnerships with community service organizations to resolve any shortcomings or gaps in services.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Create partnerships and connections with existing service programs in surrounding communities.* Niles Township and Skokie provide a range of adult learning, English as a Second Language (ESL), and workforce training services. The Village of Niles should promote the availability of such services to residents.

- » *Strategy #2.3: Continue to support workforce training and resources available within Niles.* There may be opportunities to strengthen employment and training resources in Niles, especially related to skills, training, and job seeking. Services should be aimed at supporting technical skills training, workforce training, job search assistance, interview training, and more. These programs should focus on serving those hoping to acquire new skills, those searching for jobs, and those who need assistance with interview preparation or other workforce skills.

Policy #3: Improve non-motorized access to Village and other public facilities for walkers, bicyclists, and persons with disabilities.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Assess the accessibility of Village facilities and improve the mobility network and facilities where necessary.* Pay particular attention to incomplete sidewalk and bicycle networks leading to and surrounding Village facilities. Improvements such as signalized crossings on arterials, refuge islands, high-intensity activated crosswalks, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and mid-block crossings can help protect pedestrians as they travel to and from Village services and facilities. Eliminating gaps in the sidewalk network can also help to protect pedestrians and facilitate travel for those with physical disabilities. The Niles Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2022) provides specific network recommendations. Review and build off of this to ensure that there are safe routes to and from Village facilities. Evaluate the accessibility of the facilities and make the required ADA accessibility improvements, as necessary.

- » *Strategy #3.2: Upgrade and add additional bicycle routes, prioritizing protected bicycle routes and shared use paths.* A more continuous and safer bicycle network can help to facilitate travel to and from Village facilities. This can be particularly beneficial for youth that travels to schools, the Niles Teen Center, the Niles-Maine District Library, or Niles' many recreation and fitness centers.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Implement consistent wayfinding, signage, and lane markers.* These elements can help direct pedestrians and bicyclists toward community facilities and can accompany improvements to the overall pedestrian and bicycle network.

Policy #4: Implement a Village Beautification Plan to improve the aesthetics of Village facilities.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Develop a Municipal Property Beautification Plan and/or Committee.* A beautification plan provides guidelines for plant materials and landscape designs that can be used to beautify Village buildings and facilities. The Village should reference and update landscape enhancement plans, as needed when improving properties. Consider implementing a beautification committee to monitor progress.

Policy #5: Continue to conduct routine needs assessments for Village buildings, facilities, vehicles, and property to develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and update said plan annually. Identify funding sources early on for renovating or replacing Village facilities.

- » *Strategy #5.1: Pursue LEED certification or follow industry standards for green buildings for new or renovated Village buildings and facilities.* Following “green building” standards can help ensure new buildings are energy-efficient, provide cost-savings, and are healthier for those who occupy them.
- » *Strategy #5.2: Expand efforts to identify and obtain grant funding for public projects including infrastructure, Village facilities, transportation, economic development, and social programs.* Task Village staff with identifying grant opportunities to fund public projects. When feasible, consider hiring grant writers or other professionals to strengthen grant applications and help guarantee successful application.



Niles Public Works Department, 6849 W Touhy Ave

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal #2: Strive for recognition as a regional leader in intergovernmental partnerships and cooperation with the range of other governmental, community, education and non-profit services and organizations that operate in and adjacent to the Village.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Expand community outreach efforts and advocate support for capital projects and community programs.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Utilize various communication platforms, including print media, social media, online media, and marketing to share information with the community.* Not all community members use the same communication platforms. While younger cohorts may rely on digital communication, older residents may rely on print communications. Using multiple platforms ensures that more residents will be aware of community projects.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Provide exemplary customer service at all levels and improve contact and communications with residents.* In addition to broadening communication channels, ensure that those who interact with residents regularly are well-trained, knowledgeable, and helpful.
- » *Strategy #1.3: Maintain transparency related to Village operations, finances, and large capital expenditures.* Make this information publicly available and easy to find on the Village website.
- » *Strategy #1.4: Seek community input on major capital improvements that may affect individual neighborhoods.* Village staff members should attend these meetings when appropriate to update residents on projects and to obtain their input.

Policy #2: Maintain a regional approach by keeping open lines of communication and coordinating with other agencies such as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC), Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra, neighboring communities, and others to accomplish mutual objectives.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Regularly engage the above agencies or entities and strategize to accomplish mutual objectives.* If Village objectives align with those of surrounding Villages or regional entities, there is a greater chance of acquiring funding and completing projects or initiatives. Regular engagement may result in more opportunities for development and funding.



*Niles-Maine District Library, 6960 West Oakton Street,
Source: Journal and Topics*

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal #3: Maintain and upgrade the Village's infrastructure and utility systems as needed to provide a sustainable and cost-efficient network that responds to modern technology, sustainable advancements, and improvements to the changing needs of Village residents and businesses.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Establish a funding mechanism for stormwater utility infrastructure.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Evaluate implementing a stormwater utility fee which is currently industry best practice.* Other communities in the Chicago metropolitan region have established stormwater utility fee structures to fund stormwater projects based on the amount of impervious area on a site. Communities usually use Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) to determine the fee per site.

Policy #2: Facilitate the installation of stormwater management and flood control infrastructure that is consistent with sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP).

- » *Strategy #2.1: Consider the installation of stormwater detention storage as part of any redevelopment activities at Golf Mill Mall.* The redevelopment of the north end of the Golf Mill Mall will require the installation of stormwater detention storage features per §505 of the MWRD Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) as well as infiltration Best Management Practices. These features can be in the form of ponds, wetlands, rain gardens, water reuse mechanisms.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Maintain the Cost-Share Program for Flood Control Assistance.* In 2012, the Village implemented a cost-share program for residents to install sewer backflow protection mechanisms on their properties. Resident reimbursement for the program is 50 percent of the cost, up to \$4,000 maximum. As of February 2018, the program had aided 406 homes. Funding, as of 2018, will support flood protection for 12 homes per year. In addition, in 2020, the Village extended to include major rear yard drainage projects.

- » *Strategy #2.3: Require Green Infrastructure treatment and Best Management Practices when installing public infrastructure and stormwater management facilities as part of new development.* The Village wishes to engage in sustainability land use recommendations on new development, as well as in redevelopment where applicable. Sustainability land use recommendations include but not limited to the implementation of green Infrastructure and BMPs per the MWRD WMO.

Policy #3: Ensure sustainable funding for the municipal water system into the future.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Perform a water and sewer rate study to determine the appropriate rate to charge for municipal water and sanitary sewer.* A water and sewer rate study will ensure that charges and fees for water and sanitary sewer are equitable and transparent, while also ensuring that revenues can meet the cost of water and sanitary sewer utility operations. It is important to factor in operating expenses, as well as a set operating reserve that can help fund unexpected repairs to the system. The Village should perform a water and sewer rate study every three to five years to ensure equitable access to services.
- » *Strategy #3.2: Modify rates charged to customers for use of the Village's municipal water system as needed to ensure long-term proper operation and maintenance.* Based on the water rate study, create a range of water service costs based on customer income, while still ensuring that total revenues cover the cost of operations plus an operating reserve.

- » *Strategy #3.3: Investigate alternative funding sources as necessary to fund water and sewer system improvements. Seek State and Federal grants and other funding sources to help provide funding for utilities, maintenance, and other Village infrastructure.*
- » *Strategy #3.4: Consider alternative funding sources to support the public infrastructure needs of large-scale new development or redevelopment. Utilize a variety of tools such as recapture, special service areas, or TIF funding to ensure high-quality infrastructure is built to support large-scale development. Consider impact or connection fees as part of any sewer and water rate study.*

Policy #4: Continue to provide efficient, cost-effective, high-quality water and sanitary sewer services to meet the needs of current and future residents.

- » *Strategy #4.1: Annually review the capital improvement plans for water and sewer service to encourage consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Niles growth objectives. Ensure that these utility systems can manage additional growth and plan for improvements as necessary.*
- » *Strategy #4.2: Monitor water quality and maintain Niles water at the highest standards. The Village is continually improving and maintaining the water distribution system including fire hydrant and valve replacements, residential water meter upgrades and the replacement of aging water mains as the budget allows. Continue these improvements to ensure the continued and uninterrupted conveyance of quality drinking water.*
- » *Strategy #4.3: Promote water conservation education and programs to assist residents with proper knowledge about water system planning. Water conservation education helps residents understand what they can do to reduce water consumption and reduce the overall impact on the Village water supply as well as implementing strategies for residents and businesses to reduce daily water use.*

Policy #5: Continue to install and maintain the village-wide telecommunications network to continue provide high quality services to all Village stakeholders.

- » *Strategy #5.1: Explore the prospect of leasing unused ducts in the existing fiber optics conduit to third-party entities. The current fiber optics network was installed to provide connectivity between Village facilities. The fiber installed serves the Village’s needs, but there are channels/ducts within the installed conduit that are unused and could be leased to other entities.*



“WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE FRIENDLINESS OF VILLAGE EMPLOYEES FROM THE FOLKS AT THE CIVIC CENTER TO THE POLICE.”

- SURVEY RESPONDENT

PLACEMAKING, ARTS, AND CULTURE

NILES VETERANS
MEMORIAL WATERFALL

The Niles community increasingly recognizes that its arts and culture assets and amenities contribute significantly to local quality of life. Arts, culture, and placemaking initiatives provide opportunities and avenues to spur and retain creative arts-related businesses, attract visitors, develop local talent, and animate public spaces. The community also realizes and appreciates the influence arts and culture have in binding diverse peoples together through the celebration of heritage, customs, and traditions through various festivals, social gatherings, and special events. Arts, culture, and placemaking also help to shape community character and identity, creating a clear sense of place and distinct community presence. It is these more intangible aspects of local arts, based on the people and their cultural expressions and backgrounds, that Niles stakeholders believe can serve as a starting point for building a more visible platform for the arts in Niles going forward into the future.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the Niles Arts and Culture Master Plan adopted by the Village in 2017 provide action frameworks and priorities for enhancing the cultural arts sector. These priorities and frameworks focused on using arts and culture to strengthen community identity, celebrate Niles' diverse populations, increase participation in local arts and culture activities, and forge public-private partnerships to leverage existing assets and resources. These priorities still remain relevant as Niles stakeholders desire an enhanced art and culture presence to break down social boundaries and elevate community spirit and civic pride. The Village will accomplish this by building on existing assets and programming, and through outreach and educational efforts. The following goals, strategies, and policies outline how the Village will achieve this.



ARTS AND CULTURE

Goal #1: Promote and expand the arts and culture sector in Niles through public-private partnerships, educational and economic development efforts, and the leveraging of existing arts and culture assets.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Use public art, placemaking, and other cultural arts activities to enhance community identity.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Prepare and adopt a public art plan.* The 2017 Arts and Culture Plan recommended the Village and its Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council prepare and adopt a public art plan that identifies sites and public spaces that can accommodate public art and placemaking enhancements. In addition to identifying sites, a public art plan also outlines what types of public art are appropriate in certain locations and the procedures for reviewing public art installed in the public right-of-way. For Niles, creating a public art plan can involve not only the Arts and Culture Advisory Council but also other Village departments, such as Public Works and Community Development, as well as local artists, businesses, religious institutions, and residents.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Integrate public art in public and private projects and other placemaking initiatives.* Parks, streetscapes, public spaces, and even future developments in the Village represent opportunities for installing public art to enliven the public realm. The Village's Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council could dedicate portions of its revenues generated from commercial building permit fees to commission small-scale public art pieces, such as mini-murals, mosaic pieces, or sculptures, in local parks and streetscape enhancements as a way to promote creative expression and an enriched visual experience. The Council should make funding decisions according to an adopted public

art plan. In addition, the Village should stress and prioritize the provision of public art in its Planned Unit Development code, especially in locations where public art can serve as iconic or gateway features along corridors and within districts.

- » *Strategy #1.3: Encourage the use of temporary public art and placemaking activities to animate spaces.* Like permanent public art, temporary public art and placemaking installations can provide unique visual and emotional impacts in the public realm. Temporary public art provides vivid memories of a place in different ways than would a permanent art installation. It can also animate unused or neglected spaces for gatherings and events. The Village of Niles and its Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council could partner with the Niles Parks District, local religious organizations, and other organizations and entities to undertake temporary public art installations. Temporary placemaking projects can go beyond the usual art installation and incorporate digital projections, sidewalks and pavement painting, people spots, and even performances by amateur musicians and exhibitions by local artists.

Policy #2: Build and enhance the capacity of local artists and existing arts entities to offer a diverse range of cultural arts programming.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Use the commercial building permit fee fund to support local creative arts endeavors.* As with public art, the Village’s Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council could create a small unrestricted grant program to support visual artists, or other creative activities, that demonstrate the potential for developing sustainable artistic practice in the Village of Niles. The artists may use the grant proceeds in a variety of ways, including creating art for public display in Niles, teaching a master class at a local school, or mounting an exhibition at the Niles Maine District Library or Village Hall.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Position the Niles Historical Society and Cultural Center building as a center of cultural arts activities.* The 2017 Arts and Culture Master Plan noted the potential for space collaborations using the Niles Historical Society and Cultural Center building for other cultural arts activities offered by other arts providers in the community. In addition, the Master Plan suggests using underutilized Cultural Center space as a “makerspace” focused on photo conservation or the restoration of antiques in collaboration with the District Library, which also maintains a makerspace in its Oakton Street facility. Going forward, the Historical Society, along with the Village of Niles and other partners, should explore the prospects for collaborative uses that promote the Cultural Center building as an everyday destination for heritage and art exhibitions, meetings, classes, and community events.

Policy #3: Build the capacity of the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council to facilitate the growth of Niles’ cultural arts sector.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Develop and adopt fundraising and strategic plans that guide the work of the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council.* The Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council should prepare an annual strategic work plan that outlines and describes specific work plan tasks and programs the Council should fund and undertake for the coming year. The plan should also incorporate a fundraising program that could augment the Council’s budget through fundraising activities. The Village

currently allocates a portion of construction permit fees to the Council and should continue to do so in order to supplement fundraising efforts. Expanding the budget through fundraising efforts would allow the Council to expand its programming and services.

- » *Strategy #3.2: Consider adding a part-time or full-time manager or director for the Public Arts and Advisory Council.* With qualified staff, the Council could expand its programming to include the provision of technical services to local artists, working with other Village departments and local agencies on facility enhancements for the arts, and planning new arts initiatives with local partners. The Village could also consider sharing such a position to also staff the Niles Historical and Cultural Center. For successful examples consider referring to the Village of Oak Park and the City of Evanston who employ part-time or full-time staff to help manage and direct the arts and culture programming activities of their respective councils.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Continue ongoing implementation of 2017 Arts and Culture Master Plan.* The 2017 Arts and Culture Master Plan provides in-depth recommendations and initiatives regarding the expansion and growth of the Niles Cultural Arts sector, initiatives that still remain relevant even with the residual impacts of the Covid -19 pandemic on arts patronage throughout the country. The Village and the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council should review and consider implementing initiatives related to placemaking efforts in parks and public spaces, arts marketing activities, community events, and the delivery of small-scale arts activities in the neighborhoods. Other key recommendations include exploring the potential for an arts incubator and enhancing the capacity of local arts providers by offering training and grant support.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Village of Niles has demonstrated a commitment to sustainable planning practices through the adoption of the Environmental Action Plan adopted in 2013. Since 2013, the Village has made efforts to implement various aspects of the Action Plan with non-motorized transportation enhancements and the preservation of parks and open space. Residents and business owners appreciate the value and objectives of the Action Plan and strongly support continued efforts toward achieving sustainability and promoting environmental awareness. The goals below supplement these strategies by providing a framework to incorporate sustainable improvements into new developments and raise the visibility of best practices within the community. They also recognize the Village's 2013 Action Plan and continue the momentum it created.



North Branch Trail



SUSTAINABILITY

Goal #1: Niles will become a regional leader in sustainability and climate action practices through local sustainability efforts.

Policies and Strategies

Policy #1: Commercial and multifamily development will incorporate sustainable Best Management Practices.

- » *Strategy #1.1: Promote the use of green infrastructure and stormwater best management practices for new development.* The Village should consider requiring green infrastructure improvements and sustainable design treatments to manage stormwater runoff in new developments. In addition, consider requiring green infrastructure treatments as a public benefit in the Planned Development process.
- » *Strategy #1.2: Encourage private development to pursue a “green” building certification by a recognized organization such as LEED, Energy Star, or Green Globes or green building standards for new construction or substantial remodeling projects and explore incentives.* Certification establishes a baseline of sustainable improvements incorporated into a project. It also represents a commitment by a developer and the community to sustainable building practices.
- » *Strategy #1.3: Create a sustainability awards program to recognize innovative green building projects and programs in Niles.* Recognition in the community can be personally validating for recipients and provide valuable exposure for commercial entities. A formal motion or resolution by the Village Board recognizing awardees would lend additional credibility to the awards program.

Policy #2: Continue to support and implement the 2013 Environmental Action Plan.

- » *Strategy #2.1: Evaluate creating local zero emission targets and monitor progress against these targets consistent with the Village’s Environmental Action Plan.* Metrics are essential in sharing the success of sustainability initiatives, building momentum for them, and increasing buy-in from residents and other stakeholders.
- » *Strategy #2.2: Consider revising and updating the Environmental Action Plan into a Climate Action Plan.* Given that the Village has implemented many of the initiatives in the 2013 Environmental Action Plan, it may be appropriate to update the Environmental Plan as a formal Climate Action Plan with goals more related to climate change. An Environmental Action Plan is broader in scope and addresses environmental issues beyond climate change while a Climate Action Plan focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change impacts.

Policy #3: Support a culture of sustainable practices in the Village.

- » *Strategy #3.1: Collaborate with partner agencies such as the school districts, park district, transit agencies, and Cook County, to develop sustainability programs and promote their use.* The collective actions of residents, business owners, institutions, and other stakeholders are a true determinant of the community's culture of sustainable practices. In order to support sustainability, the Village needs to expand efforts to develop and promote environmental programs.
- » *Strategy #3.2: Share best practices, tips, and tricks for practical green initiatives with residents through newsletters, email blasts, and the Village social media and website.* To show Niles' commitment to sustainability, the Village can utilize its social media platforms to inform the public of green initiatives the Village is implementing and educating residents on best practices that can be done at home.
- » *Strategy #3.3: Collaborate with partner agencies such as the school districts, park district, transit agencies, and Cook County, to develop sustainability programs and promote their use.* The Village has a strong network of partner agencies that can help to develop educational programs that promote sustainability throughout the Village.
- » *Strategy #3.4: Adopt, implement, and maintain an Urban Forestry Management Plan.* Review Comprehensive Plan policies to ensure that they are consistent with the Urban Forestry Management Plan.



Leaning Tower of Niles, 6300 West Touhy Avenue



IMPLEMENTATION



Achieving the community vision for Niles requires a continued commitment by the Village through an ongoing Comprehensive Plan implementation process. Successful implementation is dependent on the collaboration of key implementation partners including Village departments, key stakeholders, residents, local businesses and institutions, other government agencies, developers, financial institutions, and other entities and organizations.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

The implementation of the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan will be dependent on the on-going collaboration, communication, and partnership of different Village departments and commissions, elected leaders, other governmental agencies, and private sector partners, organizations, and entities.

Village of Niles

The Village of Niles and its relevant departments or commissions including Community Development, Public Works, The Parks District, and the Planning and Zoning Board will need to take a key role in leading the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Cook County

The Village of Niles will continue to partner with Cook County on a variety of issues to pursue the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Collaboration with Cook County is critical to ensure regional connectivity to and through Niles and is vital to further the mutual goals and planning initiatives of these entities.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

Coordination with IDOT will be needed for any future planning, design, and construction initiatives related to roadways, transit, and pedestrian improvements under their jurisdiction. It is critical to ensure compatibility for future planning and between transportation plans.

FUNDING SOURCES

Identifying and securing funding sources will be one of the most significant aspects of implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Several of the strategies recommend the Village seek additional funding for projects and improvements when the opportunity is available. The Village should consider tracking local, state, and federal grant opportunities and update the list on an annual basis to support comprehensive planning initiatives.

ZONING

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's land use strategy will require the use of zoning tools. Several planning strategies proposed in the Comprehensive Plan, especially for the Districts, Corridors, and Industrial Areas were created to achieve the vision of the community and reflect current trends, future visions, and best planning practices. Zoning changes may be necessary where existing zoning is not consistent with the future land use map. The Village may need to undertake additional studies to determine what specific zoning changes will best address the Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies, and strategies.

Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendments

Updates to the Village's zoning regulations and zoning map will be necessary to achieve the Comprehensive Plan Vision and Land Use Strategy. The updates should reflect best practices in zoning and explore innovative and creative ways to achieve more pedestrian-friendly and sustainable land use patterns.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND HOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Strategy 4.2 under Goal 2 in Section 8 of this Comprehensive Plan describes the potential need for an incentive program that encourages residential improvements by allowing certain zoning modifications based on a specific percentage of the home's assessed value. The section below provides additional information regarding such an initiative.

The intent of this program is to incentivize property owners to make impactful improvements to their houses by allowing modifications to the bulk regulations in the R-2 zoning district if a property owner makes a certain level of investment.

Approximately 70 percent of the single-family housing supply in the Village of Niles dates from 1940 and 1970. Stakeholders stated consistently during the planning process that the relatively modest size of the community's Ranch, Cape Cod, and other housing types may deter growing families from staying in the Village or attract new ones from buying existing homes. The Village may benefit from a program that incentivizes property owners to improve and expand the footprint of their homes. One way to approach this is by allowing residents to increase the size of the house on the property if they make a required minimum investment in improvements. This can increase the home's value beyond what cosmetic repairs alone may accomplish and have the effect of "paying back" the homeowner's investment in increased property value.

Modifications to Zoning and Bulk Regulations

The vast majority of single-family residential dwellings in Niles are in the R-2 zoning district, which would receive the major benefit of such a program. However, the Village may scale this policy to include other zoning districts in the future if there is interest. There may be other zoning needs to consider in making this program feasible and useful, including:

- » **Lot Coverage.** Niles' zoning code currently limits maximum building coverage to 45 percent of a lot for all single-family structures in the Village. The Village may elect to undertake an analysis that estimates the current average building coverage on residential lots in the R-2 zoning district. If properties are consistently near the maximum 45 percent lot coverage, then increasing the Lot Coverage Maximum to 55 percent or 60 percent could provide an appropriate incentive to improve and expand an aging house.
- » **Rear Yard Setback.** The standard rear yard setback is 40 feet. Reducing this to 30 feet could increase the buildable area on a lot while not having an immediate impact on the streetscape and providing space for increased lot coverage noted above.
- » **Building Height.** The Village may consider an analysis to determine how many residential homes in the R-2 approach the maximum building height for residential buildings in the R-2 of 32 feet and two and one-half stories. If many houses featured this maximum construction, then increasing the allowable height to 35 feet and omitting any limit on stories may be an appropriate incentive to improve and expand an older house and thereby increase its value.

Applicable Properties

Opening up this program to all properties in the R-2 zoning district has the potential to change the nature of the zoning districts and established neighborhoods more than the Village leadership is comfortable with. For this reason, the recommendation is to implement the policy on a more limited basis for properties that exceed the minimum lot size in the zoning district.

The minimum lot area for a single-family property in the R-2 zoning district is 6,250 square feet. Since this policy proposes increasing the maximum building coverage to allow more structure to be built on a given property, it is recommended that this policy be implemented on properties that exceed the minimum lot size by at least 10 percent (625 square feet) and have a total lot area of 6,850 square feet. This is limited to 1,630 properties of 5,914 (28 percent) in the R-2 zoning district currently.

If there is interest in restricting this program, the Village could limit properties of at least 7,000 square feet in lot area, which is 12 percent larger than the required minimum size. There are 1,229 of these, representing 20 percent of all properties.

Minimum Investment in Improvements

This policy recommends a minimum investment of 20 percent of a home's value into improvements to be eligible for the zoning modifications identified above. The median sales price for a detached single-family house in Niles in 2020 was \$327,500. Therefore, 20 percent of this median sales price is \$65,500.

Application Process

Application materials will require the following documentation:

- » Assessed valuation of the subject property.
- » List of eligible expenses that must equal or exceed 20 percent of the property's current valuation.
- » Examples are available of forms identifying eligible expenses for similar applications
- » Plans identifying the proposed improvements and any exceptions to the bulk regulations.

USING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Going forward, the Village should integrate Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies into everyday decision-making. The Village should regularly assess implementation progress and determine when Comprehensive Plan updates are necessary to remain relevant in addressing ongoing planning issues and challenges. The following are recommendations for effective Comprehensive Plan implementation and stewardship.

- » **Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing annual departmental work plans and budgets.** Many communities use their comprehensive plans to prepare annual departmental work plans and budgets. Work plans and budgets can include consistency statements on how departmental projects and budgets reflect, impact, or achieve comprehensive plan priorities. In that regard, the Village should consider documentation, metrics or performance measures through a department's mission statement, annual work plan, and budget documents about how departments can direct their work consistently with the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies.
- » **Use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing future capital improvement plans.** As with other department work plans and planning documents, a future capital improvement plan should consider and align with the goals, policies, and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, especially urban design, natural resource and mobility initiatives, and infrastructure upgrades needed to facilitate development activity.
- » **Publicize actions and initiatives that implement the Comprehensive Plan.** Routinely publicize Initiatives that implement the Comprehensive Plan through the Village's press releases and website so that residents are aware of local success and progress.

» **Comprehensive Plan Annual Review.** To function as an effective guide for the Village’s decision-making process, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis to track progress on its implementation. The 2040 Vision Plan includes many strategies, not all of which can be accomplished concurrently given Village budgetary and staff levels. The Village should establish planning priorities as to which implementation strategies it wishes to undertake in any given year.

As part of the annual review, the Village should schedule an annual meeting to discuss how various strategies of the Comprehensive Plan have been implemented, implementation successes and challenges, how the Village and other entities are using the Comprehensive Plan, and if there are new trends, threats, or opportunities that may affect implementation efforts. Such a process will keep the Plan current, as well as suggest any needed changes or amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

At the end of this section is an Implementation Matrix, which the Village can use as a tool to prioritize implementation strategies and efforts. This matrix is a living document and should be updated on an annual basis to reflect priorities for the coming year and to ensure the Comprehensive Plan continues to align with the planning goals and aspirations of the community. A comprehensive review of the Plan should take place every five years to assure its relevancy and determine whether it still reflects the vision of the community.

The Village should identify Comprehensive Plan-related strategies as part of the project review and action. To promote a broader awareness of Comprehensive Plan implementation, items on Planning and Zoning Board meeting agendas should indicate the relationship between the item of consideration and the Comprehensive Plan. Village staff reports should include a section titled “Comprehensive Plan Impact.” To help ensure individual projects are consistent with and further the Vision of

the Comprehensive Plan, projects should be reviewed individually against the Comprehensive Plan as part of the internal review process. The purpose of this is to create a process to review private development and public improvement projects for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies. It will also give decision-makers a tool for finding consistency and strengthening the project recommendations for approval or denial.



A neighborhood in Niles



Gemini Junior High School

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following pages organize the Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies, and strategies into an implementation matrix for the strategic planning elements of this Plan: Districts and Corridors, Mobility Systems, Character and Identity, Neighborhoods, Parks and Open Space, Community Facilities and Services, Arts and Culture, and Sustainability. Each strategy's primary responsibility, level of priority, and suggested time frame for implementation are specified in the matrix. The Village and the Planning Commission should review and update the implementation matrix on an annual basis to ensure the Comprehensive Plan strategies align with the Village's yearly budget and priorities.

Primary Responsibility. These are potential stakeholders who will be a part of the implementation and suggest partnerships that can support the success of the strategies.

- » CC - Cook County
- » FP - Cook County Forest Preserve
- » ICC - Illinois Commerce Commission
- » IDOT - Illinois Department of Transportation
- » METRA - Illinois Metropolitan Rail
- » NCC - Niles Chamber of Commerce
- » NFS - Niles Family Services Department
- » NPD - Niles Park District
- » NSC - Niles Senior Center
- » NTC - Niles Teen Center
- » PAC - Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council
- » PACE - Illinois Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority
- » VA - Village Administrative Department
- » VCD - Village Community Development Department

- » VED - Village Economic Development Department
- » VF - Village Finance Department
- » VIT - Village Information Technology Department
- » VPW - Village Department of Public Works

Level of Priority. The strategies have a level of priority designations, including high, medium, and low priority.

Time Frame. A suggested time frame for completion is outlined for each implementation strategy. Short-term is five years or less, mid-term is five to 10 years, long-term is 10 years or longer, and ongoing strategies should be implemented over the time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan.



Niles Veterans Memorial Waterfall

Districts and Corridors

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Promote economic development throughout the Village focusing on expanding the Village’s tax base, business retention and attraction, workforce development, and adequate housing and transportation systems.				
Policy #1: Prioritize opportunity site redevelopment.	#1.1: Focus on future multi-family residential development on Golf Mill opportunities sites.	VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
Policy #2: Enhance access to small business resources.	#2.1: Establish a dedicated partner organization.	VED	HIGH	LONG
Policy #3: Expand the use of commercial revitalization tools to physically enhance the exterior facades and interior spaces along the corridors.	#3.1: Create Special Service Areas (SSAs) or Business Development Districts (BDDs).	VED	LOW	LONG
	#3.2: Enhance the existing Façade Improvement Program.	VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#3.3: Enhance the business environment by improving the expediency of the permitting processes.	VCD	HIGH	MID
Goal #2: Enhance the vibrancy of commercial shopping centers.				
Policy #1: Draft land use regulations that allow flexibility and the authority to consider non-traditional land use in the Village.	#1.1: Continue to monitor land use requests in the Village to ensure by-right land uses permitted in the Zoning Code are up-to-date and meet the needs of the commercial community.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.2: Continue to track how many Special Use Permit applications are received and approved for the Unique Use category identified in the Village’s Zoning Code.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
Policy #2: Pursue and attract new land users and tenants to fill vacant shopping center spaces.	#2.1: Focus business attraction on underrepresented uses or commercial businesses not currently operating in the Village.	VED	LOW	ONGOING
Policy #3: Promote and assist the redevelopment of the Golf Mill commercial area into a mixed-use lifestyle center with a range of compatible uses including retail, residential, office, public spaces, and entertainment.	#3.1: Change the zoning designation on the Golf Mill development site to the C-5 Urban Village district.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Policy #4: Promote elements of Touhy Triangle as a retail shopping power center.	#4.1: Facilitate redevelopment of the former Grainger and YMCA sites.	VED	LOW	LONG
	#4.2: Pursue the development of a Metra train station.	VED	LOW	ONGOING
	#4.3: Promote light industrial in the southeast portion of Niles.	VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#4.4 Facilitate adaptive use and flex spaces in existing industrial buildings.	VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #5: Improve the identity, aesthetic, character, and function of commercial shopping centers with urban design enhancements, placemaking improvements, and parking considerations.	#5.1: Continue to apply the design standards in Section 5 of the Niles Zoning Code consistently and rigorously.	VCD	LOW	ONGOING
	#5.2: Assess the need for a design review commission or architectural review board.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#5.3: Identify and utilize funding incentives to promote the overall improvement and redevelopment of commercial shopping centers.	VED	LOW	ONGOING
Policy #6: Enhance the appearance of shopping centers through zoning and design requirements.	#6.1: Apply the landscaping and screening requirements in Section 11 of the Zoning Code rigorously.	VCD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#6.2: Increase the total landscape area required in off-street parking areas and scale the requirement to the overall size of the parking lot.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#6.3: Develop standards for permeable pavers in parking lots.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	SHORT
Policy #7: Establish parking reduction strategies for commercial shopping centers.	#7.1: Ensure off-street parking regulations accommodate complementary uses, shared parking programs, and off-site parking programs.	VCD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#7.2: Allow reductions to off-street parking requirements for proximity and secure access to public transportation.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#7.3: Continue to allow reductions to off-street parking requirements for the provision of carsharing services.	VCD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #8: Enhance connectivity to shopping centers and commercial districts from adjacent to residential neighborhoods.	#8.1: Focus on pedestrian improvements and accessibility.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	#8.2: Limit or consolidate curb cuts from corridors into shopping centers.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#8.3: Incorporate Village-owned parking lots along Milwaukee Avenue.	VCD, VPW, VED	LOW	MID
	#8.4: Consider exploring the removal of the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) designation for Waukegan Road.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	MID

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Policy #9: Promote compatible uses within and between shopping centers and commercial districts.	#9.1: Ensure proper buffering, screening, and other methods to limit impacts to adjacent uses.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#9.2: Incorporate community spaces into the redesign of shopping centers and districts.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
Policy #10: Encourage the overall improvement of shopping centers and districts with a focus on building exteriors, signage, landscaping, lighting, parking lots, streetscape, and urban design elements.	#10.1: Allocate funds into a property and building improvement program to assist property and building owners with the enhancement and upgrade of their sites and uses.	VED	MEDIUM	MID
	#10.2: Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and appropriate business groups to facilitate the aesthetic improvement of the Village commercial districts.	VCD, VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#10.3: Continue to monitor the administration of Niles' municipal code to identify potential deficiencies to ensure proper property maintenance, repairs, and upgrades for commercial shopping centers and districts.	VCD	LOW	ONGOING
Goal #3: Support and expand the industrial and manufacturing sectors through business retention and attraction, and employment support services that encourage a range of compatible uses and a diversified tax base.				
Policy #1: Protect industrial areas from the encroachment of non-industrial uses and maintain standards for buffering, screening, and other methods to protect non-industrial uses.	#1.1: Monitor requests to change the zoning district of any property currently zoned for light industrial use.	VCD, VED	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.2: Ensure land uses allowed in the industrial zoning districts maintain the integrity, culture, and intent of the district.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.3: Promote the redevelopment and improvement of older, obsolete industrial buildings and sites that do not meet operational or functional needs.	VED	LOW	ONGOING
Policy #2: Support beautification and sustainability initiatives in the industrial district.	#2.1: Encourage identification and branding for the Village's industrial districts.	VED	MEDIUM	MID
	#2.2: Maintain performance standards for all industrial sites to control noise, odors, air quality, and other potential nuisances.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#2.3: Enforce property maintenance regulations related to outdoor storage.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#2.4: Promote the use of green infrastructure and sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP) when redeveloping industrial sites.	VCD	LOW	ONGOING

Mobility

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Improve the efficiency and quality of the Village’s mobility network to accommodate a wide range of users including bicyclists and pedestrians, vehicles, and transit.				
<p>Policy #1: Provide a planned roadway network that connects all areas of the Village and manages traffic flow while enhancing the streetscape and accommodating the needs of all users.</p>	<p>#1.1: Maintain close coordination with IDOT and Cook County when programming improvements.</p>	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#1.2: Implement the 2020 Complete Streets Policy to ensure Village-owned streets provide safe mobility for users of all ages and abilities.</p>	VCD, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#1.3: Follow the Traffic Calming Policy adopted in 2016 to reduce cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods and increase pedestrian safety.</p>	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#1.4: Monitor traffic flow along arterial roads for planned roadway improvement projects.</p>	VPW	LOW	ONGOING
	<p>#1.5: Maintain collector and local roads to the highest standard to enhance the viability of commercial redevelopment opportunities and incorporate multimodal facilities.</p>	VPW	LOW	ONGOING
	<p>#1.6: Consider traffic controls and pedestrian safety improvements at key intersections.</p>	VPW	MEDIUM	MID
	<p>#1.7: Conduct a neighborhood traffic study to identify inconsistencies with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD).</p>	VPW	LOW	MID
<p>Policy #2: Partner with Pace Suburban Bus and Metra to expand the transit system and Pace Pulse bus rapid transit network throughout Niles.</p>	<p>#2.1: Work with Metra to determine the next steps towards bringing Metra service into the community.</p>	VED	LOW	LONG
	<p>#2.2: Evaluate the benefits of connecting the Niles Free Bus routes to the nearby Metra stations such as the Dee Road and Morton Grove stations.</p>	VED	HIGH	MID
	<p>#2.3: Continue to coordinate closely with Pace to expedite start-up of the Pulse Dempster Line as well as plan for future Pulse lines in the Village.</p>	VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
	<p>#2.4: Work with Pace to assess the need for bus stop improvements.</p>	VED	HIGH	SHORT
	<p>#2.5: Promote the Village’s public transit system to residents and visitors.</p>	VED	HIGH	SHORT
	<p>#2.6: Collaborate with Metra and the Illinois Commerce Commission to modernize the traffic signals and crossings at Touhy Avenue and Howard Street.</p>	VED	HIGH	MID

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
<p>Policy #3: Pursue different modes of transportation to achieve sustainability goals and various environmental benefits, including reduced greenhouse gas emissions and parking demand, and increased use of public transit.</p>	#3.1: Consider engaging with carshare companies to establish business within the community and identify carshare vehicle storage locations.	VCD, VPW, VED	LOW	MID
	#3.2: Expand Niles' charging station inventory.	VCD, VPW, VED	HIGH	LONG
	#3.3: Work with the Green Fleet Committee to transform the Village fleet of vehicles to be more sustainable.	VPW	MEDIUM	LONG
	#3.4: Consider ridesharing partnerships to provide affordable alternatives to owning and operating a personal vehicle and closing gaps in the public transit system.	VCD, VPW, VED	MEDIUM	MID
	#3.5: Explore collaborative efforts to bring bikesharing or electric scooter-sharing services into the community.	VCD, VPW, VED	HIGH	LONG
<p>Policy #4: Expand and improve the functionality of the sidewalk, trail, and bicycle facility network to ensure it can safely accommodate non-motorized transportation.</p>	#4.1: Continue to implement the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, as well as initiatives and projects captured in the 2022 update.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	#4.2: Continue to expand the bicycle network as funding becomes available, pursuing grant funding opportunities whenever possible.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#4.3: Implement a wayfinding sign program to increase public awareness of the bicycle network system.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	SHORT
	#4.4: Expand bicycle parking infrastructure throughout the Village, as guided by the 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan with respect to recommended bicycle parking locations and bicycle rack styles.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	MID
	#4.5: Continue to close the remaining gaps in the pedestrian system by requiring sidewalk infill in redevelopment initiatives, pursuing grants to fund infill projects, and/or constructing infill segments when funds become available in the sidewalk repair program.	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	#4.6: Coordinate with IDOT and Cook County to ensure that all pedestrian crossings in the Village incorporate high-quality safety features.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#4.7: Provide safe pedestrian crossings at quarter-mile intervals and safe access to the PULSE Milwaukee Line, future Dempster Line stations.	VPW	HIGH	MID

Village Character and Identity

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Improve and enhance Niles' design character and visual identity to reflect and complement the community's assets and historical development pattern by implementing ongoing urban design improvement and placemaking efforts in the Village's districts, corridors, and neighborhoods.				
Policy #1: Undertake, implement, and administer an effective design review program for new commercial and multifamily construction in the Village.	#1.1: Prepare and adopt design guidelines for both commercial and residential construction in the Village.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.2: Implement informal or formal design review for new development.	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.3: Establish design review districts in key districts and corridors.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.4: Consider additional form-based zoning districts as an alternative to formal design review.	VCD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #2: Update and maintain development regulations and design improvement programs to ensure the highest quality development design.	#2.1: Evaluate all design standards in the Village's zoning and subdivision codes and its landscape ordinance yearly and update as necessary.	VCD	LOW	ONGOING
	#2.2: Administer and enforce existing signage, landscaping, and other relevant design standards to enhance both building design and the public realm.	VCD	LOW	ONGOING
	#2.3: Continue funding for the Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program.	VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #3: Implement ongoing improvements and enhancements to Niles' streetscapes and public spaces.	#3.1: Continue implementation of the Comprehensive Entrance and Roadway Signage Program.	VPW	LOW	SHORT
	#3.2: Target new streetscaping initiatives in gap areas along Niles' corridors and districts.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	#3.3: Create a committee to review the aesthetic impact of improvements in the Village's right-of-way and to Village buildings and facilities.	VCD, VPW	LOW	SHORT

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
<p>Policy #4: Conduct streetscaping and public space enhancements as part of planned transportation and mobility projects.</p>	#4.1: Integrate pedestrian and streetscape improvements as part of federal, state, and Village-funded roadway projects.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#4.2: Prioritize streetscape enhancements near transit facilities.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
<p>Policy #5: Retain and reuse viable historic buildings and architectural elements as a part of redevelopment projects and enhance neighborhood appearance.</p>	#5.1: Prepare, adopt, and distribute a residential housing design manual.	VCD	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#5.2: Encourage the retention and preservation of high-character historic buildings through the Planned Unit Development process.	VCD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#5.3: Broaden the mission and educational aims of the Niles Design District program.	VED	HIGH	SHORT
<p>Policy #6: Conduct ongoing beautification and urban design enhancement efforts that establish and reinforce community and neighborhood character.</p>	#6.1: Ensure the ongoing maintenance and design of streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and other public infrastructure.	VPW	LOW	ONGOING
	#6.2: Encourage placemaking and other urban design enhancements that promote well-scaled, walkable environments along Niles' corridors, and neighborhoods.	VCD, VPW, VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#6.3: Bury overhead utility lines in key Village corridors and districts.	VCD, VPW, VED	LOW	LONG
	#6.4: Include "superior building design" as a public benefit in Planned Unit Developments.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
<p>Policy #7: Enhance the appearances of the Chicago River and North Bridge Trail vehicular and pedestrian bridges.</p>	#7.1: Undertake small-scale design interventions to improve the walkways and aesthetic appearance of the North Branch Chicago River bridges at Touhy Avenue, Harts Road, and Howard Street.	VCD, VPW, IDOT	MEDIUM	MID
	#7.2: Beautify the Caldwell bicycle and pedestrian bridge.	VCD, VPW	MEDIUM	SHORT

Neighborhoods: Fostering Livable Places

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Diversify the Village’s housing supply in order to meet changing household needs and promote a variety of housing product types for young professionals, families, empty nesters, and seniors.				
Policy #1: Promote the construction of new multifamily housing and “missing middle” housing types at a range of sizes and scales.	#1.1: Consider amendments to the Zoning Code to facilitate the development of missing middle housing.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.2: Consider revising the Zoning Code to allow two-family residential buildings in the R-2 Single Family Residential zoning district.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.3: Consider revising the Zoning Code to allow multifamily buildings to be four stories and 50’ in height by right in the R-4 Zoning District.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.4: Consider revising the Zoning Code to reduce the rear yard setback and the maximum lot coverage for multifamily development in the R4 Zoning District.	VCD	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#1.5: Consider adding a multifamily density maximum to the Zoning Code.	VCD	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#1.6: Include residential land uses when developing available sites or redeveloping underutilized or opportunity sites.	VCD, VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Goal #2: Improve the Village’s character and attractiveness as a great place to live by enhancing the quality, appeal, and safety of all residential neighborhoods.				
Policy #1: Promote single-family home renovation and expansion with homeowner-friendly programs that allow the modernization of existing housing consistent with the needs of growing families.	#1.1: Enhance the “Grow Your Home Program” with strategic programmatic changes.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#1.2: Organize a local Home Improvement Show.	VCD	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#1.3: Explore Residential Rehabilitation Grant and Loan Programs and Senior Handyman Programs to encourage and aid the rehabilitation of existing housing stock.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT
Policy #2: Facilitate property maintenance efforts and initiatives.	#2.1: Seek ways to streamline enforcement of property maintenance complaints.	VCD	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#2.2: Provide information on resources for residents who need help with property maintenance.	VA, VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#2.3: Require residents to submit a landscape plan as part of major additions to residential properties.	VCD	HIGH	SHORT

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
<p>Policy #3: Protect residential neighborhoods from adverse impacts related to adjacent non-residential uses, cut-through traffic, flooding, lighting, odors, or other nuisances.</p>	<p>#3.1: Consider traffic-calming initiatives in residential neighborhoods that experience cut-through traffic. Initiatives can be low-cost and highly effective.</p>	VPW	HIGH	SHORT
	<p>#3.2: Ensure adequate buffering for new non-residential development constructed adjacent to residential zoning districts.</p>	VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
<p>Policy #4: Preserve and improve residential neighborhoods from non-compatible development by encouraging landscaping, neighborhood improvements, and design elements that highlight the visual character of each residential neighborhood.</p>	<p>#4.1: Identify design elements that are unique to different residential neighborhoods in Niles.</p>	VCD	LOW	MID
	<p>#4.2: Consider an incentive program to encourage residential improvements.</p>	VCD	MEDIUM	MID
<p>Policy #5: Consider residential design guidelines and best practices to foster and promote design excellence in residential neighborhoods throughout Niles.</p>	<p>#5.1: Develop a catalog of renovation and home addition concepts that are adaptable to the most common housing styles in the Village.</p>	VCD	MEDIUM	MID
	<p>#5.2: Create design guidelines for new single-family construction and improvements to existing homes.</p>	VCD	HIGH	MID
<p>Policy #6: Continue to address lot-level drainage problems through cost sharing with property owners and revisions to Village regulations.</p>	<p>#6.1: Evaluate lot-level drainage problems in residential and non-residential development areas in the Village.</p>	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#6.2: Review on an annual basis municipal regulations related to lot-level drainage.</p>	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#6.3: Review the cost-sharing drainage remediation programs to address drainage issues in residential areas.</p>	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING

Parks and Open Space

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of Niles' parks and open space resources by ensuring all neighborhoods have equal access to Village parks.				
Policy #1: Improve access to the Village's parks and open space.	#1.1: Enhance accessibility to parks and open spaces.	NPD	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #2: Work with the Niles Park District to seek opportunities to expand parks and open space in the Village.	#2.1: Include the Niles Park District as an active partner in adding new park space as part of new developments.	VCD, NPD	HIGH	SHORT
	#2.2: Promote access to and maximize benefits of the North Branch of the Chicago River.	VCD, VPW, NPD, FP	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#2.3: Encourage different types of parks within the Village.	VCD, NPD, VA	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#2.4: Collaborate with the Forest Preserve to enhance the triangular Forest Preserve property at Caldwell and Touhy Avenue.	VA, VED	MEDIUM	MID
Policy #3: Enhance and manage the Village's existing parks and open spaces.	#3.1: Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Niles Park District and the Cook County Forest Preserve to expand parkland, park facilities, and recreation programming in the Village and to maintain, utilize, and maximize Forest Preserve resources to the greatest extent possible.	NPD	HIGH	ONGOING

Community Facilities and Services

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Provide high-quality and equitable Village services and facilities that accommodate all residents and businesses in order to enhance the quality of life, support overall community health, and fulfill the essential needs of the Village.				
Policy #1: Support and collaborate with community service organizations and other governmental entities in the Village; maintain mutually beneficial relationships with these organizations.	#1.1: Continue to support Village facilities, departments, and programs that partner with community service organizations.	NFS, NSC, VED	HIGH	ONGOING
Policy #2: Strengthen the service network and enhance service offerings within Niles.	#2.1: Assess gaps in the services the Village and/or other agencies provide and seek ways to fill those gaps.	NFS, NSC	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#2.2: Create partnerships and connections with existing service programs in surrounding communities.	NFS, NSC	HIGH	SHORT
	#2.3: Continue to support workforce training and resources available within Niles.	NFS, NSC, NTC, VED	HIGH	MID
Policy #3: Improve non-motorized access to Village and other public facilities for walkers, bicyclists, and persons with disabilities.	#3.1: Assess the accessibility of Village facilities and improve the mobility network and facilities where necessary.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	MID
	#3.2: Upgrade and add additional bicycle routes, prioritizing protected bicycle routes and shared use paths.	VCD, VPW, IDOT	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#3.3: Implement consistent wayfinding, signage, and lane markers.	VPW, IDOT	LOW	ONGOING
Policy #4: Implement a Village Beautification Plan to improve the aesthetics of Village facilities.	#4.1: Develop a Municipal Property Beautification Plan and/or Committee.	VCD, VPW	HIGH	SHORT
Policy #5: Continue to conduct routine needs assessments for Village buildings, facilities, vehicles, and property to develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and update said plan annually. Identify funding sources early on for renovating or replacing Village facilities.	#5.1: Pursue LEED certification or follow industry standards for green buildings for new or renovated Village buildings and facilities.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#5.2: Expand efforts to identify and obtain grant funding for public projects including infrastructure, Village facilities, transportation, economic development, and social programs.	VPW, VED	HIGH	ONGOING

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #2: Strive for recognition as a regional leader in intergovernmental partnerships and cooperation with the range of other governmental, community, education and non-profit services and organizations that operate in and adjacent to the Village.				
Policy #1: Expand community outreach efforts and advocate support for capital projects and community programs.	#1.1: Utilize various communication platforms, including print media, social media, online media, and marketing to share information with the community.	VA, VED	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.2: Provide exemplary customer service at all levels and improve contact and communications with residents.	VA	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.3: Maintain transparency related to Village operations, finances, and large capital expenditures.	VA	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.4: Seek community input on major capital improvements that may affect individual neighborhoods.	VA	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #2: Maintain a regional approach by keeping open lines of communication and coordinating with other agencies such as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC), Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra, neighboring communities, and others to accomplish mutual objectives.	#2.1: Regularly engage the above agencies or entities and strategize to accomplish mutual objectives.	VA, CMAP, RTA, METRA, VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Goal #3: Maintain and upgrade the Village's infrastructure and utility systems as needed to provide a sustainable and cost-efficient network that responds to modern technology, sustainable advancements, and improvements to the changing needs of Village residents and businesses.				
Policy #1: Establish a funding mechanism for stormwater utility infrastructure.	#1.1: Evaluate implementing a stormwater utility fee which is currently industry best practice.	VPW, VE	HIGH	MID

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
<p>Policy #2: Facilitate the installation of stormwater management and flood control infrastructure that is consistent with sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP).</p>	#2.1: Consider the installation of stormwater detention storage as part of any redevelopment activities at Golf Mill Mall.	VPW	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#2.2: Maintain the Cost-Share Program for Flood Control Assistance.	VPW, VCD	HIGH	ONGOING
	#2.3: Require Green Infrastructure treatment and Best Management Practices when installing public infrastructure and stormwater management facilities as part of new development.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
<p>Policy #3: Ensure sustainable funding for the municipal water system into the future.</p>	#3.1: Perform a water and sewer rate study to determine the appropriate rate to charge for municipal water and sanitary sewer.	VPW	HIGH	SHORT
	#3.2: Modify rates charged to customers for use of the Village's municipal water system as needed to ensure long-term proper operation and maintenance.	VPW	HIGH	SHORT
	#3.3: Investigate alternative funding sources as necessary to fund water and sewer system improvements.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#3.4: Consider alternative funding sources to support the public infrastructure needs of large-scale new development or redevelopment.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
<p>Policy #4: Continue to provide efficient, cost-effective, high-quality water and sanitary sewer services to meet the needs of current and future residents.</p>	#4.1: Annually review the capital improvement plans for water and sewer service to encourage consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Niles growth objectives.	VPW	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	#4.2: Monitor water quality and maintain Niles water at the highest standards.	VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	#4.3: Promote water conservation education and programs to assist residents with proper knowledge about water system planning.	VPW	LOW	ONGOING
<p>Policy #5: Continue to install and maintain the village-wide telecommunications network to continue provide high quality services to all Village stakeholders.</p>	#5.1: Explore the prospect of leasing unused ducts in the existing fiber optics conduit to third-party entities.	VIT	HIGH	SHORT

Placemaking, Arts, and Culture

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Promote and expand the arts and culture sector in Niles through public-private partnerships, educational and economic development efforts, and the leveraging of existing arts and culture assets.				
Policy #1: Use public art, placemaking, and other cultural arts activities to enhance community identity.	#1.1: Prepare and adopt a public art plan.	PAC, VED	LOW	MID
	#1.2: Integrate public art in public and private projects and other placemaking initiatives.	PAC, VCD, VED	HIGH	ONGOING
	#1.3: Encourage the use of temporary public art and placemaking activities to animate spaces.	PAC, VCD, VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING
Policy #2: Build and enhance the capacity of local artists and existing arts entities to offer a diverse range of cultural arts programming.	#2.1: Use the commercial building permit fee fund to support local creative arts endeavors.	PAC, VCD	HIGH	SHORT
	#2.2: Position the Niles Historical Society and Cultural Center building as a center of cultural arts activities.	PAC, VCD	MEDIUM	MID
Policy #3: Build the capacity of the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council to facilitate the growth of Niles' cultural arts sector.	#3.1: Develop and adopt fundraising and strategic plans that guide the work of the Public Arts and Culture Advisory Council.	PAC, VCD, VA	LOW	MID
	#3.2: Consider adding a part-time or full-time manager or director for the Public Arts and Advisory Council.	VA, VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
	#3.3: Continue ongoing implementation of 2017 Arts and Culture Master Plan.	PAC, VA, VED	MEDIUM	ONGOING

Sustainability

POLICY	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
Goal #1: Niles will become a regional leader in sustainability and climate action practices through local sustainability efforts.				
<p>Policy #1: Commercial and multifamily development will incorporate sustainable Best Management Practices.</p>	<p>#1.1: Promote the use of green infrastructure and stormwater best management practices for new development.</p>	VED, VPW	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#1.2: Encourage private development to pursue a “green” building certification by a recognized organization such as LEED, Energy Star, or Green Globes or green building standards for new construction or substantial remodeling projects and explore incentives.</p>	VCD, VED	HIGH	ONGOING
	<p>#1.3: Create a sustainability awards program to recognize innovative green building projects and programs in Niles.</p>	VED	MEDIUM	MID
<p>Policy #2: Continue to support and implement the 2013 Environmental Action Plan.</p>	<p>#2.1: Evaluate creating local zero emission targets and monitor progress against these targets consistent with the Village’s Environmental Action Plan.</p>	VCD, VPW, VED	HIGH	SHORT
	<p>#2.2: Consider revising and updating the Environmental Action Plan into a Climate Action Plan.</p>	VCD, VPW, VED	MEDIUM	SHORT
<p>Policy #3: Support a culture of sustainable practices in the Village.</p>	<p>#3.1: Expand Village-supported environmental programs for residents and businesses, including recycling, water conservation, renewable energy, and public transportation, particularly Pace Pulse Bus Rapid Transit usage.</p>	VCD, VPW, VED	MEDIUM	MID
	<p>#3.2: Share best practices, tips, and tricks for practical green initiatives with residents through newsletters, email blasts, and the Village social media and website.</p>	VA, VED	HIGH	SHORT
	<p>#3.3: Collaborate with partner agencies such as the school districts, park district, transit agencies, and Cook County, to develop sustainability programs and promote their use.</p>	VCD, VPW, VED, IDOT, FP, NPD, METRA, PACE	MEDIUM	ONGOING
	<p>#3.4: Adopt, implement, and maintain an Urban Forestry Management Plan.</p>	VCD, VPW, VED	HIGH	SHORT



**“NILES IS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO LIVE,
WHETHER YOU’RE RAISING A FAMILY OR
ENJOYING RETIREMENT.”**
- SURVEY RESPONDENT



Niles 2040

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN