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A special Thank You! to everyone who participated in the planning process for the Village of University Park's *Comprehensive Plan*. This Plan was made possible by the contributions and insights of the residents, business persons, property owners, and representatives from various groups and organizations.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The *Comprehensive Plan* for the Village of University Park, Illinois, sets forth the Village's long-range plan for improvement, development, and growth within the community. This Plan includes goals, objectives, and policies for the future of the community, as well as long-range recommendations for the maintenance and enhancement of the existing image and character of University Park.

This *Comprehensive Plan* has been developed with substantial community input and participation and represents the conclusion of a nine-month community planning effort. Incorporated in the document is much of the material presented in previous deliverables, including the *Existing Conditions Synthesis Report*.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The *Comprehensive Plan* is University Park's official policy guide for physical improvement and development, not only in the near term, but also far into the future. Addressed in the *Comprehensive Plan* are issues ranging from community character and land use to targeted redevelopment and open space.

The *Comprehensive Plan* is a policy guide, intended to be flexible and adaptive over time. While it contains detailed recommendations and policies for various improvements and actions, it also sets the basic framework to guide activities and manage change, allowing room for adjustment as conditions and possibilities change. This Plan should not be viewed as a static document. This Plan should be subject to periodic review and refinement to ensure that it adjusts to the continually changing needs of the community and requirements of regional, state and federal agencies.

This Plan is comprehensive in both scope and coverage. It addresses land use, traffic and pedestrian needs, and the provision of parks, schools, and other community facilities. It also addresses residential neighborhoods, commercial areas and corridors, industrial districts, public and institutional lands and the public right-of-way. This Plan provides both general recommendations as well as specific program actions directed toward guiding land use and development decision-making for the Village.

In addition to defining community goals and objectives, the *Comprehensive Plan* provides guidance for implementing programs and policies to preserve and protect important existing features, coordinate new growth and development, and establish a strong and positive community identity. This Plan establishes standards for private development by which the Village can review and evaluate proposals. This Plan also includes a guide for public improvements that can help ensure local dollars are spent wisely and in a cost effective manner.

The *Comprehensive Plan* provides the basis for updating the Village's Zoning Ordinance and the other development codes that should be used to implement planning policies and recommendations. This Plan can also serve as a marketing tool to promote University Park's unique assets, to spur redevelopment and reuse of underutilized sites, and to help attract new families and desirable new development to the community.

The Planning Process

The University Park planning process incorporated a five-step work program that included the following:

1. Conducting outreach with stakeholders of University Park;
2. Collecting and analyzing existing conditions information and future potentials within the community;
3. Confirming and refining the overall vision, goals and objectives for the future of University Park;
4. Developing community-wide plans for land use, community facilities, natural features, and transportation; and
5. Preparing final *Comprehensive Plan* recommendations.

The process has established the basis for this *Comprehensive Plan* which will assist the Village in maintaining and improving upon the many positive attributes of the community, while identifying approaches and resources to meet community needs and concerns.

Organization of the Plan Report

This *Comprehensive Plan* is organized into the following sections:

- *Section 2: Community Outreach.* This section provides a summary of citizen participation activities conducted throughout the planning process. Consistent messages heard throughout the planning process included :
 - A desire to increase the number of retail and commercial establishments;
 - The importance of improving east/west circulation throughout the Village;
 - The benefits of having Governors State University within the Village and a desire to improve and expand the relationship between the Village and the University;
 - A vision of a greatly expanded municipal footprint; and
 - Development of the interchange at I-57/Stuenkel Road as a key priority.
- *Section 3: Demographic Overview.* This section presents an overview of historical, current, and future demographic and market trends for University Park. The *Demographic Overview* highlights several key demographic and market strengths of the Village, including a growing population and household base, rising incomes, high educational levels, and a young, family-oriented population.
- *Section 4: 2030 Vision.* This section describes, in specific terms, the kind of community that University Park wants to be in the future. It includes a vision statement for the community in the Year 2030. The *Vision Statement* covers a number of community issues, focusing on Finance and Growth, Relationships, Design Image and Amenities, and Transportation and Infrastructure. The *Vision Statement* incorporates the messages heard throughout the planning process and identifies key projects and initiatives that the Village should focus on in the future.
- *Section 5: Goals and Objectives.* This section contains a list of goals and objectives that provide the framework for the community's long-range aspirations and focus for the community-wide planning recommendations. The *Goals and Objectives* build

directly upon the *Vision Statement* and help the Village focus its planning efforts into discrete actions. This section includes both “Guiding Principle Goals” and “Functional Area Goals”, which includes Housing and Residential Areas; Commercial and Retail Development; Industrial and Business Development; Natural Features; Parks and Recreation; Community Facilities; Transportation; and Intergovernmental and Organizational Cooperation.

- *Section 6: Community Wide Plans.* This section provides recommendations for future improvement, growth, development and preservation within the Village of University Park, based upon the existing conditions research and analysis, community outreach, and the *Vision Statement*. The Community Wide Plans graphically display the results sought in the *Goals and Objectives* as well as the policies and recommendations put forth in each section. The *Community Wide Plans* cover topics such as the Village’s growth and annexation policies; future land use classifications; consideration of future community facilities that should be developed as the population increases; policies and recommendations to protect the Village’s abundant open space and natural features; and development of a trail network.
- *Section 7: Transportation Plan.* This section provides recommendations of key transportation projects with associated prioritization, potential funding sources, and time horizon attached to each. In addition, land use/transportation connection and impacts on the Village’s growth and development are discussed, both in relationship to the Village and broader regional initiatives. This contains three graphics: *2030 Traffic Volumes*, *Programmed Roadway Improvements*, and *Future Roadway Network*.
- *Section 8: Implementation and Action Agenda.* This section highlights the steps and actions to be undertaken to begin the process of plan implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Components of this section include administrative and regulatory actions, such as developing a Capital Improvements Plan and regular review and update of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Funding Sources and Implementation Techniques are also presented, including a brief analysis of sales tax analysis. This section also includes a number of technical resource sources for implementing various recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Finally, the *Action Agenda* presents a matrix covering Projects/Actions, Role of the Village and Other Possible Participants, and Tools, Techniques, and Resources. Elements of the Action Agenda are prioritized into three timeframes: Priority 1 (1-3 years); Priority 2 (3-5 years) and Priority 3 (5 years and beyond).
- *Appendix.* This section contains the Open House Agenda, the Open House Handout, and detailed feedback from the Open House. The *Existing Conditions Synthesis Report*, November 2006, is available as a separate document.

Figure 1. Community Setting

SECTION 2: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

The project to prepare the University Park *Comprehensive Plan* provided an opportunity for local residents to participate in the local planning process.

Planning Advisory Committee

Community stakeholders participated in every phase of the planning process. A group of stakeholders was appointed by the Mayor to serve on the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC was composed of a broad spectrum of elected and appointed officials, business owners, residents, and institutional representatives and service providers. The PAC met several times throughout the planning process to provide overall direction and feedback on work products prepared by the consultant. A full list of PAC members is provided on the Acknowledgements page.

Community-Wide Open House

A community-wide open house was held on March 10, 2007 at Coretta Scott King Magnet School.

Approximately fifty (50) community stakeholders of all ages and representing a variety of backgrounds attended the open house. The open house was designed to provide a forum for residents to communicate their opinions on the draft Plan products produced to date. The open house consisted of a presentation, followed by an open house with four (4) information / feedback



stations on key planning topics. Participants were asked to answer questions independently, using forms provided. Members of the PAC and Consultant Team members staffed each station in order to answer questions and elicit feedback. Information stations included:

- Station 1, Vision and Goals: At this station, the draft Vision Statement and Goals were presented. Participants were asked to provide feedback using “sticky notes”.
- Station 2, Community Heritage: At this station, the Existing Conditions maps, including *Land Use, Zoning, Community Facilities & Utilities, and Natural Features*, were displayed. Participants were asked to answer a series of targeted questions asking about strengths and weaknesses for various land uses within the Village.

- Station 3, Transportation: At this station, both existing conditions and draft transportation maps were displayed. Participants were given three (3) dot stickers and asked to vote on the key transportation projects.
- Station 4, Future Plans: At this station, draft *Land Use, Growth Plan, and Community Facilities* maps were displayed. Participants were asked to comment on planned locations for growth and changes in land use and to identify their top priorities for growth and development.

Attendees were asked to visit all four (4) stations and provide feedback in addition to completing the targeted questions provided at each station. The open house forms, accompanying questions, and all responses are presented in *Appendix 1*.

Previous Planning and Community Involvement Efforts

The Village has been proactively planning for its future since its inception. A number of plans, studies, and reports have been completed that involved substantial citizen participation and have helped form the foundation upon which this *Comprehensive Plan* was built. These documents are summarized below.

University Park Comprehensive Plan (1994 and 1973)

The last update of the *Comprehensive Plan* for the Village was completed in 1994. The 1994 document replaced the original *University Park Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in 1973.

The bulk of this document outlines a set of planning goals, objectives and policies for University Park. The executive summary of the 1994 *Comprehensive Plan* also presents the following as major proposed Village improvement efforts:

- Lead development of new interchange at I-57 and University Parkway. Improve University Parkway east of I-57 into Village.
- Lead development of University Park Golf Course in areas east of I-57.
- Create landscaped pedestrian/bike trail connecting residential areas to industrial park, Metra station and Governors State University.
- Develop a greenways trail system in flood plains and wetlands. Locate schools adjacent to greenways.
- Require first 30 feet of property on all developments be devoted to attractive landscaping.
- Add bus transport between Metra station and the rest of the Village, including the industrial park.
- Enhance industrial park area by improving Central and Hamilton Roads, and adding recreational facilities in the area (e.g., convert pond at Hamilton and Palmer to a park).
- Support development of a not-for-profit and research park on the north end of the University campus.
- Improve Village identification signs at multiple gateway locations.

Will County Land Resource Management Plan (2002)

The *Will County Land Resource Management Plan* (LRMP) (2002) serves as a long-range guide for land development. This Plan identifies the types of land use forms existing in the County (e.g., urban communities, suburban communities, towns, rural areas, etc.) and the appropriate development concepts (e.g., traditional residential, multi-family residential, neighborhood retail, regional commercial, etc.) for each. The *LRMP* then suggests a set of policies and guidelines for future development. A key facet of the Plan is preserving the rural nature of the southern half of Will County.

In the *Will County LRMP*, all of University Park is classified as a suburban community. Key recommendations for future development in this type of area are:

- Improved site plan and review standards related to landscaping, signage, building design and orientation, etc.
- A greater mix of land uses to reduce auto dependency (e.g., small scale retail near residential areas).
- Greater variety of housing types in residential subdivisions.
- Pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible design, where feasible.
- Coordinated delivery of development related to infrastructure such as sewer and water service.

University Park Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Study and Workshops (2002)

Transit-oriented development creates mixed-use, higher density communities that encourage people to live, work, and shop near transit services and decrease their dependence on driving.

The TOD Study (2002) focuses on the largely underdeveloped area surrounding the existing Metra Electric terminal, an area which lies between the primarily residential portions of University Park to the southeast and the primarily industrial development to the west. During the planning process for the University Park TOD Plan, the Planning Advisory Board (PAB) attended a series of workshops for the study. The following summarizes the activities and outcomes of the first two workshops (the last workshop was a presentation of the TOD Plan.

PAB Workshop #1: Values, Visions, and Priorities

This workshop included a moderated discussion around the topics of community heritage, circulation and development/financing. Participants provided feedback in response to three questions, summarized below:

How can future development reflect the Village's heritage?

- University Park was initially developed as a planned community, and should continue to emphasize large-scale master planning.
- The Village does not have a defined center.
- There has been a lack of marketing of the Village's assets to potential retailers and residents.
- GSU is identified as a cornerstone of the Village's heritage, as are the natural amenities, a wooded landscape and trail systems.

What are the pressing circulation issues?

- Pedestrian and bicycle access within the Village needs improvement and unsafe.
- The proposed interchange at Stuenkel Road and I-57 is considered essential to future development of the Village.
- The Village is oriented along an east-west axis, but there is a deficiency in the east-west transportation corridors.

What obstacles need to be overcome for success in community development?

- The Metra Electric Line should be used as an economic driver.
- Any vision should assume that a third Chicagoland airport is coming to Peotone.
- The industrial park flourishes because of low taxes.

PAB Workshop #2: District & Neighborhood Charrette

This workshop engaged the members of the PAB in a discussion that defined the districts around the University Park TOD. These districts included the traditional residential neighborhood on the eastern edge of the Village, the University district, the I-57 corridor, and the TOD area. Conclusions from the working session included:

- The existing neighborhood area is geographically separated from the TOD and the I-57 corridor, and the lack of a major east-west arterial road heightens this separation. Growth in this area is expected to be gradual but could be impacted by the creation of the South Suburban Airport.
- Governors State University is seen as a major asset of the Village, as is the open space associated with the campus. The development of an adjacent TOD stands to benefit the University.
- The I-57 corridor is seen as the employment center of the Village, with future development continuing as industrial and office. The interchange at I-57/Stuenkel Road is a major initiative for the Village, but the area around this road should keep its open space character for serving as a “gateway” to the Village. Transit access to this employment area should also be addressed.
- The TOD should be established as the high-density center for the Village. The relationship between the TOD and GSU needs to be examined, as each could provide interactive economic benefits.
- The next steps include improving the east-west corridors and integrating the TOD into the trails system.



A Blueprint Development Agenda (2005)

This policy document was developed by the Village with the intent of identifying a strategic vision for the Village’s growth and development over a 20 year period. To determine

priorities, the Village conducted a 48-question survey regarding a broad range of policy issues, and distributed it to 25 local policymakers.

The survey results highlighted the following “top-tier” policy directives for the Village:

1. Business attraction through site location assistance.
2. Integrating tactical, strategic and comprehensive plans into the planning process.
3. Improving water quality and supply through a legislative process.
4. Retaining businesses by forming a labor availability taskforce and developing a comprehensive business contact program.

The survey also confirmed the desire of Village policymakers to develop the Village as a “regional community center” as defined in the NIPC 2040 *Regional Framework Plan*. Finally, the document presents a two-year plan for implementing the blueprint development agenda, a five-step process which involves appointing a project principal in charge of assembling a preparing and implementing a strategic development plan.

Draft Concept Alternatives Analysis for the Inaugural Airport Program (2005)

This 2005 report, prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), proposes a range of development concepts for the proposed South Suburban Airport (SSA) and analyzes them to identify alternatives for the airfield, landside access, and passenger terminal facilities. The SSA would be located just south of the Village’s current boundaries. Preferred concepts are identified for the opening day of the inaugural airport through the first five years, as well as for a 20-year period in its ultimate footprint. In late 2006, IDOT submitted its preferred concept to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for review and comment. A *Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) assessment will follow to evaluate this concept and alternative designs.

Retail Site Determination Report (2007)

One of the Village’s main priorities is increasing the number of retail and commercial establishments within its boundaries. As a means of achieving this, the Village hired Buxton, a market research firm, to conduct a retail site determination study. The purpose of this report is to develop a customer profile that provides the basis for targeting potential retail and restaurant establishments. This report allows the Village to make better informed decisions about infrastructure and focus efforts on areas of higher retail development potential.

Buxton reviewed three sites within the Village on the basis of retail recruitment potential. These three sites were: Cicero Avenue and University Parkway; University Parkway and Kedzie Avenue; and Western Avenue and Crete-Monee Road. Cicero Avenue and University Parkway was selected as the site with the best overall retail trade potential. This site has a high amount of households and an estimated category potential value in excess of \$1.9 billion.

SECTION 3: DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

This section provides an evaluation of historic trends in population and demographic change within University Park, as well as a current snapshot of key demographics in Will County and the greater Chicago region. Demographic characteristics of the population play an important role in planning for the development and redevelopment within University Park. An understanding of growth and composition of the local population projections and forecasts for 2011 and 2020 are included in the overview.

The demographic overview includes an assessment of (1) population and household characteristics; (2) age distribution; (3) racial and ethnic identification; (4) employment statistics; (5) education and (6) income. This analysis is based upon data gathered from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC, now known as the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, or CMAP), Claritas, Inc., and supplementary information from the Village of University Park's website. The *Existing Conditions Report* appendix contains the tables utilized to base this overview.

In order to make the figures more meaningful, it is useful to examine a community within a larger context. The Village of University Park, in Will County, Illinois, is located approximately 35 miles south of Chicago, within the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha-IL-IN-WI Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA). Data from that CMSA and Will County are utilized in this analysis. University Park is located within Will County, the fastest growing county in the Chicago region and one of the fastest growing in the nation. University Park is more closely linked to the suburbs in eastern Will and southern Cook County, which have seen similar rates of growth.

Village of University Park: Summary of Trends

University Park is a well-known south suburban community, particularly because it is home to Governors State University, a major educational institution. University Park is a growing community comprised of a young, family-oriented population. University Park is experiencing, and is projected to continue to experience, major changes in demographic composition. These changes have implications for long-range planning. The following highlights the major trends that describe the Village of University Park:

- Rapidly growing population
- Steadily rising income
- Well-educated population
- Large percentage of professionals
- High proportion of children; young median age
- Larger than average household size

Specific numbers and percentages are presented in detail in the following section.

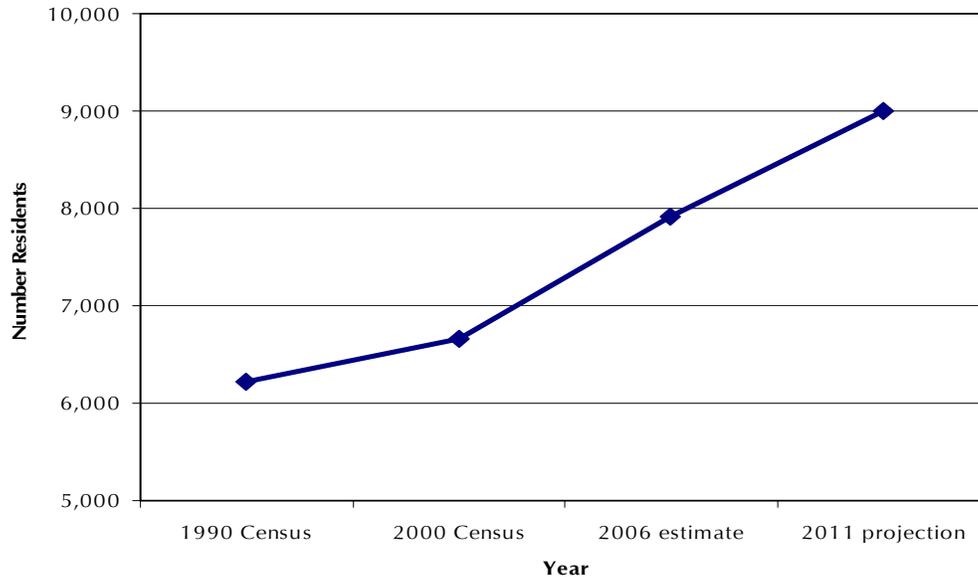
Population and Households

- Population estimates for 2006 place the number of residents living within the Village at 7,912. The Village of University Park had 6,662 residents as of the 2000 Census, a slight increase (+437, or 44 per year) from the 6,225 residents counted during the 1990 Census. More rapid population growth has occurred during the first half of the

decade following 2000, and by 2011, University Park's population is estimated to reach more than 9,000, an increase of 2,338, or 212 per year between 2000 and 2011.

- The average household size in University Park is 2.9 persons, compared to an average household size of 2.63 for Illinois and 2.58 for the United States. This higher number correlates with the high proportion of children in University Park.

Village Population
1990 to 2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Claritas, Inc.

- University Park had 2,253 households as of the 2000 Census. This represents an 8.6% increase over the number of households in the 1990 Census. Current estimates suggest that the number of households has grown more quickly during the current decade, up to 2,723 in 2006 and projected to reach 3,133 by 2011 (880 total, or 176 per year for the next five years).
- Current estimates indicate that just over half (51.5%) of the households in University Park consist of three or more persons, a proportion roughly equivalent to the rest of Will County but higher than state and national averages. By comparison, only 39.9% of the households in Park Forest and 33.4% of the households in Monee consist of three or more persons.
- NIPC has projected population, employment, and household growth for the year 2030. These projections address the southern and southeastern growth of the metro area, as well as an assumption that a third airport will be built in the south suburban community of Peotone. Relevant figures for University Park include:
 - Population growth of +419% (34, 571 total or an increase of 930 per year from the 2000 figures)
 - Household growth of +408% (11,459 total, or an increase of 307 per year from the 2000 figures)

- o Employment growth of +124% (13,845 total, or an increase of 256 per year from the 2000 figures)

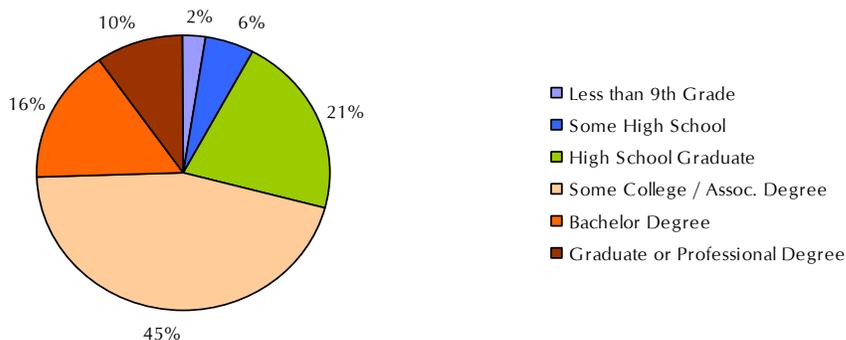
Income Distribution

- The estimated median household income in University Park in 2006 was \$56,984, lower than the estimated median household income in Will County (\$71,108).
- The median household income of Village residents has increased steadily since 1990, when the figure was \$34,375. Factoring in inflation, the median household income of University Park residents has risen of 7.7% since 1990.
- The median household incomes in communities adjacent to University Park range from \$47,381 (Steger) to \$77,091 (Crete).
- In 1990, a total of 36 households (1.7%) in University Park had a household income of greater than \$100,000. By the 2000 Census, this number had increased to 262 households (11.6%).

Education

- University Park has a highly educated population, with an estimated 91.8% of the population 25 or older having at least a high school education. The national average is 80.4%.
- From 1990 to 2000, the proportion of University Park residents without a high school diploma decreased from 13% to 8%. In Illinois, this proportion fell from 23.8% to 18.5% during the same period.
- A very high proportion (45.7%) of Village residents have had some college or completed an Associate’s Degree, but not attained a four-year degree. The proportion in Will County is 32.3%.
- More than a quarter (25.5%) of University Park residents have obtained a Bachelor’s degree or higher, which is roughly on par with state and national averages.

Educational Attainment
University Park Residents, 2006



Source: Claritas, Inc. & URS Corporation

Employment

- According to the 2000 Census, 24.8% of University Park residents are employed in the fields of education, healthcare, and social services. Only 17.6% of Will County residents are employed in these fields.
- There is also a very high proportion of government workers (24.3%) living in University Park, more than double the state and national average.
- There is a relatively low percentage (10.6%) of manufacturing workers in University Park, as compared to state and national averages.
- Roughly 80% of employed University Park residents traveled to jobs outside of Will County in 2000. This is a decreased proportion from 1990, when 86.6% worked outside of Will County.
- The largest employers in University Park are the Solo Cup facility and Governors State University.

Racial/Ethnic Composition

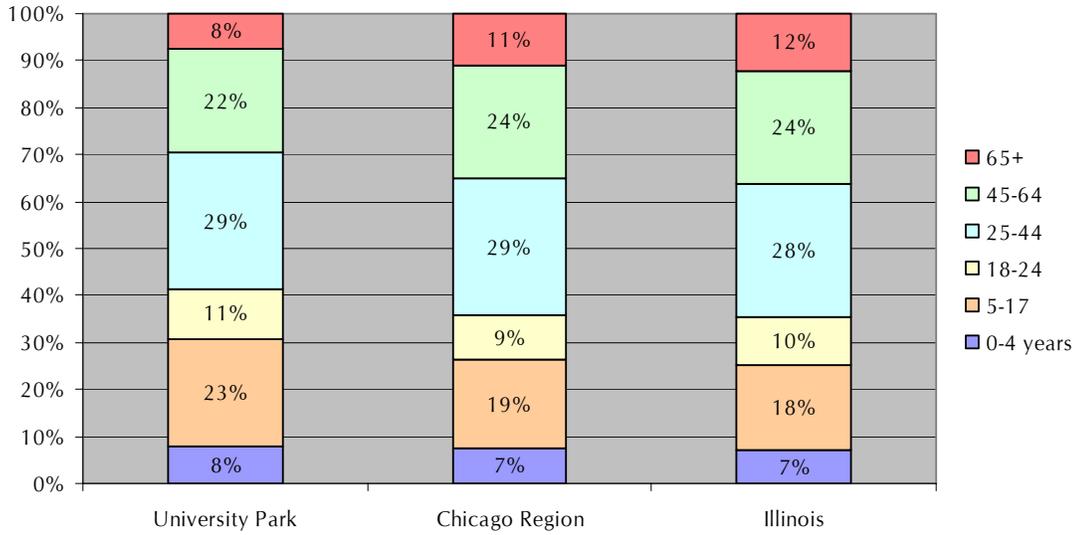
- Using the race categories defined in the U.S. Census, the majority of University Park residents identify themselves as “black”, an estimated 85.6% of the population in 2006.
- Some of the communities immediately adjacent to University Park are also racially homogenous, including Crete (82.6% white) and Monee (91.0% white), which share a school district with University Park. Park Forest (48.1% white, 45.9% black) and Richton Park (67.1% black, 27.5% white) have greater racial diversity among their populations.
- University Park, like the surrounding communities, has a lower proportion of Hispanic residents than the Chicago region as a whole. Only 2.5% of the 2006 population of University Park is estimated to be Hispanic, as compared to 12.5% for Will County and 18.9% for the Chicago region.

Age Distribution

- University Park is a relatively young community, with an estimated 31% of the residents younger than 18 years of age in 2006. The number of senior citizens (residents 65 years or older) is estimated to be 7.5%, much lower than national (12.6%) or state (12.2%) averages.
- The estimated median age in University Park is 30 years old. By comparison, the estimated median age in the state of Illinois is 36.
- The age distribution in University Park has not changed significantly since 1990.

Age Distribution

University Park Comparison, 2006



Source: Claritas, Inc. & URS Corporation

SECTION 4: 2030 VISION

A *Vision Statement* describes in clear terms where the Village wants to see itself in the future. It describes how events may unfold over 10 or 20 years if everything goes exactly as hoped. The *Vision Statement*, presented below, was based on input provided by the PAC and vetted by the community at large at the March 2007 Open House. The *Vision Statement* incorporates main ideas and themes heard throughout the planning process.

Recital

One: Definition

u·ni·ver·si·ty (yōd'nə-vûr'sĭtē) Medieval Latin *ūniversitās*, from Latin, the whole, a corporate body.

park (pärk) an area of land, usually in a largely natural state, for the enjoyment of the public, having facilities for rest and recreation, often owned, set apart, and managed by a city, state, or nation

American Heritage Dictionary

Two: Inspiration

Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality."

Martin Luther King Jr.

"Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you."

"Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government."

Thomas Jefferson

Three: Welcome to Will County, Illinois

"We are one of America's fastest-growing counties because of our strategic location, transportation infrastructure, skilled labor force, quality of life and diversity of residents who are committed to keeping Will County the nation's best place to live and raise a family."

Lawrence M. Walsh, Will County Executive

Four: University Park, a Bold Vision for a New Town

“The Village of University Park has ambition for growth and expansion in order to attain the highest standards and quality of life. Excellent education, a robust economy, state of the art community services, smart infrastructure, energy efficiency practices, a functional transportation system, strong neighborhoods, commercial and industrial employment centers, and regard for environmental conservation are documented priorities.

This Comprehensive Plan will be the Village reference guide to current and future community leaders to achieve this Vision for every generation of residents, businesses, visitors, and institutions. The result will be a premier planned village and an anchor in Chicago’s south suburban region.”

Vision: Imagine, Dream and Plan for the Year 2030

Imagine University Park in the year 2030. The following storyline depicts a future where many of our dreams are fulfilled and the fruits of our planning are realized. Certainly, the Vision is bold and will be difficult to achieve, requiring discipline, perseverance, and cooperation. But we are the residents, volunteers, neighbors, merchants, and the elected officials of University Park. Only we are responsible and only we can achieve our goals. Therefore, enjoy this Vision and this story and help this “interrelated structure” we call a Village achieve its bold objectives and become the leading planned village in Chicago’s south suburbs.

In the year 2030, University Park enjoys prosperity derived from its location. Our Village is accessible to Chicago and to I-57, the gateway to downstate Illinois and to northwest Indiana. We are host to Thorn Creek Station and Intermodal Bus Depot, which is quickly becoming the largest suburban intermodal station. We were a founding member of the Abraham Lincoln National Airport Committee (ALNAC) and are active supporters of the airport, which sits on our southern border. We are the fastest growing community in Will County. We have shed our early legacy as Park Forest South. We developed our *Comprehensive Plan* in 2007, which set us on a bold new course. The *Comprehensive Plan* put forth a bold vision to grow and anchor the south suburban region. This Plan’s goals were substantial and have called again for a modern new town.

We have successfully managed our growth. We have a blend of urban density, suburban residential subdivisions, and have retained natural and rural environments to provide relief. We maintain an interwoven set of simple and traditional American values with contemporary and modern amenities. We operate a Village government that is cohesive and civil yet aggressive in action. We have a healthy tax base, competitive tax structure, and a sound fiscal budget. University Park delivers services that provide for the health, safety and welfare of our people. As we tell our story and describe our condition in the year 2030, we focus on four primary categories:

- Finance and Growth
- Relationships
- Design Image and Amenities
- Infrastructure, Service and Transportation

Finance and Growth

Finance, growth and sound fiscal policies will deliver the means to fund Village services. We enjoy annual budgets that are balanced and have positive fund balances. Village growth is evident within the corporate boundaries. New construction abounds. Reinvestment is robust. Residences are owner-occupied and well-maintained. The commercial tax base is solid.

As we manage growth, we continue to invest in education. Our school districts are expanding their programs, managing their cash reserves, and supporting alternative programs—namely, the arts, sports, and innovative curriculums. The quality of teaching and diversity among the student body have made University Park’s public schools a desirable choice for families in the Village. We have a diverse array of options in education, including a very successful magnet school, trade school, a Montessori concept school, several daycare initiatives, and a model Parent Teacher Organization program. Parents have numerous programs to engage Village youth in privately run venues including local dance and music, youth sports and physical fitness, and traditional national programs such as scouting, 4-H, and parenting clubs.

University Park is now a thriving job center, with a balance between white collar service sector jobs and blue collar industrial sector jobs. Also contributing to the dynamic economy is the diversity of local employers attracting individuals of all skill and education levels.

The Village has expanded its borders and maintains wonderful cooperation with our neighboring Villages. University Park has annexed adjacent unincorporated areas, and extended its boundaries and services to the west side of Harlem Avenue and south to the northern boundary of the South Suburban Airport at Ohlendorf Road. There are positive cooperative initiatives supporting good regional planning with Crete, Monee, Frankfurt, Richton Park and Park Forest. Additionally, there are no longer any unincorporated parcels within the four corners of the Village. The Village has enjoyed a positive economic impact from the development of the South Suburban Airport and nearby intermodal distribution centers. The southern areas of the Village contain numerous distribution and office facilities that directly serve the light industrial needs of this national transportation hub. The Village has been a leading member of the Airport Authority and will continue to participate in the airport’s growth and expansion.

Relationships, defining the human aspect

Relationships underpin the fabric of the Village of University Park, which continues to be a wonderful place to live, work and play in the year 2030. The human spirit is nourished through the interaction of residents who help and support each other as neighbors. They participate in community organizations such as block clubs, youth groups, veteran programs, and senior socials. They demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism. They adopt and freely give their precious time toward important initiatives to improve the health safety and welfare for current and future generations. Residents live in the Village for generations because there are many choices to move into larger homes for growing families or to downsize for retired couples.

Communication within the Village is streamlined and efficient. The Village’s website is interactive and regularly updated to inform the residents of current events and issues. There is good communication between all of our institutions, including our K-12 schools and Governors State University. Our major employment hubs, including the industrial parks,

technology and commercial centers promote and market their businesses and communicate their needs.

The Village's most important institutional relationship is with the campus of higher learning and our namesake...Governors State University. In 2030 the strategic plan of the University and the Village are aligned such that fundamental decisions are made collaboratively. Governors State University is nationally acclaimed as an incubator in the Chicagoland area with satellite educational centers for corporate adult learning and governmental affairs. GSU's enrollment has grown steadily and the face of the campus has evolved from its original mall-style facility. The campus is abuzz with activities, entertainment, and student pedestrian movement. Residence halls, offices, faculty residences, and shopping and restaurants are available on site. The University's grounds remain park-like and a destination for sculpture aficionados. The Manilow Sculpture Park is world renowned and physically extends into the Thorn Creek Station environ, each Village gateway and beyond. The Performing Arts Theater now includes a Ravinia-style outdoor amphitheater. The biological reserve is a habitat for endangered species and its ecosystem management plan is the model for the remainder of the Thorn Creek Watershed.

The Village's many religious institutions continue to flourish, serving as destination houses of worship for congregations of all denominations. The Village is abounding with a sentiment of tolerance, forgiveness, and discipline, which influences the positive approach to community watches and neighborhood policing. Racial segregation is a distant memory. The residents and leaders of University Park understand that the most precious relationship is with rearing our children. Parents are very active in all of the schools assisting the teachers and administrators with the noble task of education. Schools are houses of learning, utilizing the most modern technology. In University Park, the arts are supported and promoted spurring creativity and amazement.

Design, Image and Amenities...Very Bold Indeed!

In the year 2030, University Park continues to enjoy planned and orderly new development. It is evident that private investors and lenders appreciate the predictability of our well documented governmental objectives. We are proud of our efficient approval and permitting process articulated in our modern and innovative ordinances and regulations. University Park contains an excellent blend of residential, commercial, destination retail, industrial and recreational land uses. While the Village still has plenty of greenfield development opportunities, it is interesting to note the recent redevelopment activities. For example, out-of-date structures are being recycled, adaptively reused or torn down and constructed anew. The number of award-winning buildings and site plans demonstrate the Village's commitment to architecture, land planning, and energy-efficient design.

University Park has distinct neighborhoods that are well maintained and range in price points offering many options for first-time buyers, estate-style living, and senior housing. For example, the historic enclave near University Parkway and Western Avenue has experienced a rebirth stemming from its roots as the original Park Forest South settlement. This rebirth was made possible over a decade ago when the Village relocated its Village Hall functions from the Burnham Avenue location to new facilities near the Thorn Creek Station. This move created the opportunity for a local hospital to partner with our Police and Fire Department to create the satellite Burnham Wellness Center.

University Park's most prominent urban place is the Thorn Creek Station, a transit-oriented development that is a south suburban model subdivision styled as a new urbanist pedestrian neighborhood. Organized around Thorn Creek Commuter Train Station and Intermodal Bus

Depot, the development includes residences, a public golf course and country club, retail, and mixed-use buildings in a quaint traditional style with ground floor shops and offices above. Residents, visitors and commuters regularly frequent the neighborhood's banks, antique stores, clothiers, restaurants, convenience marts, ice-creameries, and bistros.

Several other new major developments are nearing completion and others just underway, including those within the recently expanded Village boundary's south to the Airport and west to Harlem Avenue. Soon, the Village will once again catalyze new development and announce a new office, research and development campus on the Village's west side.

The Village contains several densely populated commercial, employment and technology auto corridors that serve Village residents as well as attract shoppers and employees from surrounding suburbs. Interstate 57, Cicero, Harlem, and Western Avenues are the primary north-south corridors. Cicero Avenue contains the most established development and Harlem Avenue the more recent; however, all have incorporated significant design standards. The result is a bustling yet attractive streetscape with landscape setbacks, buildings aligning the front property lines creating a human scale, plenty of screened parking lots in the side and rear-yards, making shopping and access comfortable and pleasing. Each corridor is reminiscent of the region's historic boulevards with landscaped medians, ornamental street lighting, decorative signage and artwork and colorful landscape. Compared to other communities' outdated retail corridors, University Park's commercial corridors maintain a beautiful ambiance that is attractive not only to shoppers but also to retail tenants.

Historically, moving east-west through the Village has been challenging. The Village recently announced the completion of its long-range plan to resolve this access problem. The effort has required an intense local effort combined with creative state and federal funding mechanisms and ground-breaking intergovernmental cooperation with GSU and the Canadian National Railroad. At long last, residents and visitors alike are able to efficiently circulate through the Village along the Steger Road extension, University Parkway, the new Dralle/Hamilton connector through GSU, Crete-Monee Road and the Pauling Road Industrial Corridor at the northern edge of the Airport.

Our open spaces have always been a priority. The pastoral character of the forest and parkland anchor the Village's image. Pine Lake Nature Area has recently been improved as a highly valued amenity. The Thorn Creek Watershed Restoration & Stewardship Team is working on a new ecosystem manual. A new community center and natatorium is open to residents of all ages. The Village youth sports programs utilize the center and the surrounding outdoor regional athletic park sponsoring organized soccer, baseball, and softball tournaments. It is evident that the various public buildings add value to the community and the many award-winning facilities headquarter the various municipal functions for delivering public services. Several working farms continue to thrive within the Village, including the Riegel Farm Park, and contribute to the Village's countryside aesthetic and supply healthy, locally-grown produce to local markets.

Infrastructure, Services and Transportation

Transportation has been the key infrastructure challenge, yet in 2030, we have accomplished many of the projects called for in the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan*. The list of key accomplishments has been made possible through regional and local initiatives. Much of the funding has occurred due to the assertive leadership of the Village officials who painstakingly advocated for our needs. Other projects were achieved through public/private partnerships and local investment. While we still have much to do, we celebrate this list of achievements:

- The South Suburban Airport is operational. Cicero Avenue, commuter and high speed rail have been extended to the Airport.
- Thorn Creek Train Station and Intermodal Bus Depot contains over 1,000 parking spaces, many shared with the commuters making numerous daily trips to Chicago and St. Louis, a bus depot and taxi call, and we will soon be announcing a bicycle facility including lockers and storage. The Depot shares parking with adjacent shopping and entertainment developments as a smart use of precious centrally located parking.
- Governors State University recently announced an extended shuttle service for indoor and outdoor performances to compliment their routine daily service.
- New gateway signage has been constructed at the clover-leaf ramp at University Parkway at I-57.
- The grade-separated viaduct at University Parkway and the Canadian National Railroad will be dedicated this year.
- New tree planting and streetscape beautification has been completed for the Village's major thoroughfares including Cicero, Harlem, and Western Avenues, Steger Road extension, University Parkway, the Dralle/Hamilton connector, Crete-Monee Road and Pauling Road. These plantings will be continuous along the entire rights of ways traversing the entire Village.
- The Illiana Expressway will soon receive new Pace bus shelters.
- The Village has constructed a new water tower and potable distribution facility.
- Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District has constructed a new sanitary treatment plant including innovative wetland treatment fields.
- The Village Cable Station is available in high-definition and over the internet.
- The Village Golf Course has recently been refurbished and the golf club and conference center is available for public reservation.
- The Riegel Farm Park has just opened several new exhibits.
- The Community Center and Athletic Complex, developed in partnership with GSU, will be hosting the regional youth soccer clinic.

SECTION 5: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Planning goals and objectives are designed to help achieve the ideas set forth in *Vision Statement* and provide more specific guidelines for University Park's updated *Comprehensive Plan*. The goals and objectives strive to transform the collective community values expressed in the *Vision Statement* into operational guidelines for the planning program.

Goals and objectives have a different purpose in the planning process:

- **Goals** describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long range. They represent an end to be sought. ("Nouns")
- **Objectives** describe more specific actions that should be undertaken in order to advance toward the overall goals. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning action. ("Verbs")

It should be emphasized that goals and objectives express many ideas and concepts that cannot be shown on plan maps or depicted in other plan components, and they are an important element of the University Park *Comprehensive Plan*.

The *Goals and Objectives* defined here form the basis for the *Implementation Plan* later in the document. The four goals listed below, along with their rationale, provide direction for the more specific functional goals and related objectives outlined below.

Guiding Principal Goals

Goal 1

Achieve a balanced pattern of development in the community that provides for well designed, compatible and economically sustainable business, employment, and residential areas.

Rationale

There is a high level of consensus in the community on the need to develop and redevelop sites in a manner that has long-term economic stability and meets the social, cultural, educational, recreational, and lifestyle needs of the residents.

Goal 2

Create and maintain a physically distinctive and high-quality community environment through efforts that preserves and improves the existing quality of life of the Village, while anticipating major growth and change in the future.

Rationale

To enhance a sense of community and pride, there is a need to physically enhance and improve areas of the Village. We expect to accomplish this through the design of land use areas as well as in the coordination and improvement of public facilities and services. In support of the goal of becoming an attractive, growing residential community, the Village is committed to providing community facilities and services that meet citizens' expectations.

Goal 3

Forge and maintain strong public and private partnerships to capitalize upon and coordinate all resources and assets the community has to offer in carrying out plans, policies and programs.

Rationale

The Village seeks to continue meaningful and productive relationships with local organizations, civic groups, institutions, and individuals to create awareness and understanding of community needs and potentials, as well as to mobilize organizations into action for change. This participatory philosophy is a central element in the strategic approach to community involvement and change.

Goal 4

Establish a process for the regular review and update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Rationale

The *Comprehensive Plan* is a dynamic document and should provide a basis for future land use and development decision-making. Because market conditions and community opinion can change over time, this Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it reflects the consensus of the community.

Functional Area Goals

Community Image and Character

Goal:

An attractive and distinctive community that continues to build upon University Park's unique characteristics.

Objectives:

1. Safeguard University Park's environmental resources, such as the Thorn and Deer Creek Watersheds, as distinguishing features of the community.
2. Preserve sites and buildings with local historic and cultural interest and value, and promote appreciation of the heritage of University Park.
3. Create an attractive and distinctive new "town center" for the community, as recommended by the 2002 *Transit-Oriented Development Study*.

4. Design and locate public sites and buildings so that they become focal points and landmarks within the community.
5. Encourage compatible, high-quality design and construction for all developments, with an emphasis on quality site design, building orientation, architecture and building materials.
6. Undertake design and appearance improvements along major roadways, including landscaping, lighting, public signage, and community “gateway” features.
7. Develop and implement landscaping and tree planting programs that beautify residential and business areas.
8. Improve communication to residents in an effort to increase awareness of, and participation in programs, services and events within the Village.
9. Maintain positive relationships with the press and other media.
10. Promote the advantages and benefits of living, working, or doing business in the Village.
11. Sponsor programs, events, and celebrations that stimulate public involvement and participation, foster a strong community spirit and identity, and bring together residents on a regular basis.

Housing and Residential Areas

Goal:

A housing stock and living environment that serves the needs and desires of local residents, attracts new residents to the community and enhances the quality of life in the Village.

Objectives:

1. Provide for the development of new residential subdivisions adjacent to existing developed areas, and identify a long-term strategy for the location, type and density of residential areas in the Village.
2. Provide for long-term residential expansion of Village south of Hamilton Road and west of I-57 to Harlem Avenue by creating boundary agreements with Will County, Richton Park, and Monee.
3. Permit high-quality and compatible new multi-family housing to be developed in select designated locations, such as the townhomes and condominiums planned for the Thorn Creek TOD area.
4. Encourage new development and infill development that is complementary to the scale and character of surrounding residential uses.
5. Ensure that the rate of residential growth is consistent with the capacity of public facilities, services, and infrastructure to serve new development.
6. Protect residential areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses and the adverse impacts of nearby non-residential uses.

7. Promote the improvement and rehabilitation of deteriorating residential properties, and preserve sound existing housing through effective code enforcement.
8. Strictly enforce all building, safety, zoning and fire codes to prevent overcrowding, unsafe conditions, and misuse of residential dwellings.
9. Strive to become a community of distinctive and cohesive residential neighborhoods, rather than a collection of individual subdivisions.
10. Ensure that best practices for stormwater management are included in all new residential developments.
11. Express the economic importance of the diversity of the Village's housing stock and work to ensure neighborhood stability in all areas of the Village.
12. Implement Neighborhood Watch programs and encourage efforts to increase community awareness of public safety.
13. Encourage sidewalks in new residential developments as a way to improve safety, connect neighborhoods, encourage pedestrian activity, and foster a sense of "community" in the residential areas.

Commercial and Retail Development

Goal:

Commercial and retail development that provides local residents with needed goods and services, enhances the Village's tax base, and is compatible with the character of the community.

Objectives:

1. Define and designate functional roles, such as corridor or neighborhood commercial, for the various commercial areas within the Village and promote development within select locations.
2. Promote the development of neighborhood and corridor commercial centers.
3. Identify sites and zone for new commercial development along the primary roadways that pass through the community.
4. Increase the number and diversity of convenience commercial establishments within the Village that serve the day-to-day needs of Village residents.
5. Ensure that new commercial developments, especially retail, offer pedestrian and bicycle access from nearby residential areas.
6. Establish a program that reasonably and uniformly regulates signage while providing for the identification of Village businesses and business areas.
7. Establish special design and improvement standards for commercial areas, guiding the scale, appearance, orientation, and overall character of new development. Design guidelines or standards should address building scale, neighborhood character, landscaping, parking, signage, lighting, access, and stormwater management.

8. Offer and facilitate access to public incentive programs (such as tax increment financing and special service areas) as needed to encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings and areas which are, or are becoming, functionally obsolete.

Light Industrial and Business Development

Goal:

The Village's industrial and business parks thrive as quality locations for light industrial and office uses.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the development of compatible new business, light industrial, and office/research facilities adjacent to the existing industrial development along and near the I-57 corridor and on the eventual southern boundary of Ohlendorf Road.
2. Ensure that industrial and business districts are extensively landscaped and served by adequate and attractively designed access, parking, and other site development features.
3. Offer and facilitate access to public incentives as needed to improve the attractiveness and function of industrial areas.
4. Promote to the business community the advantages of locating in the Village and the I-57 corridor, possibly in a partnership with adjacent communities or the County.
5. Provide for expansion of University Park's business development west of I-57 between Dralle and Steger Roads by establishing boundary agreements with Will County, Monee and Frankfort.
6. Minimize the negative impact of industrial activities on neighboring areas through the effective use of screening and buffering with landscaping, fencing, or a combination of the two.
7. Encourage new and existing Village businesses to the local labor force and supplies whenever possible.
8. Explore opportunities to establish a system by which industrial users contribute to the Village's cost of maintaining the industrial park's infrastructure and funding of municipal services.

Community Facilities

Goal:

A system of community facilities that provides for the efficient and effective delivery of public services and enhances the Village as a desirable place in which to live and do business.

Objectives:

1. Ensure an adequate level of fire and police protection throughout the Village. As land is annexed or incorporated into the Village, new facilities should be located in or near these newly developing areas to maintain expected levels of service.
2. Maintain adequate sites for public works and other Village facilities, relocating facilities when necessary to enable efficient access to all areas of the Village, especially as the Village's boundaries expand and development increases.
3. Construct a new Village Hall that can become a "landmark" for University Park and a focal point for local community facilities and services.
4. Construct a new, state of the art recreational facility with amenities that will be used and enjoyed by University Park residents.
5. Improve and expand specialized facilities and services for senior citizens and youths.
6. Cooperate, with and facilitate communication between, the Village and School District U-201 representatives to support continuous improvement of the local school system.
7. Cooperate with School District U-201 to maintain adequate school sites and facilities to serve the Village, especially in areas of the Village designated for new residential growth.
8. Cooperate with the Library Board to enhance the existing library facility as an important focal point and resource for the Village.
9. Work with the appropriate utility districts to improve and expand the provision of water and sanitary sewer services throughout the community.
10. Improve stormwater management and upgrade storm sewer facilities throughout the Village.

Natural Features**Goal:**

Preservation, protection, and enhancement of the natural resources and open space areas essential to the overall image and character of University Park.

Objectives:

1. Adopt design guidelines and ordinances that address issues such as stormwater management and native landscaping, for new development that support the preservation and protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.
2. Incorporate key "environmental corridors" that pass through University Park, which include flood prone areas, wetlands, surface watercourses, native vegetation, and wildlife habitats, into an area-wide open space network.
3. Adopt best management practices for stormwater management to ensure that new developments do not contribute run-off that increases off-site flooding or degrades water quality in surface or ground water systems.

4. Work with the Will County Forest Preserve District to acquire additional environmentally sensitive lands and open space areas within the Village's planning jurisdiction.
5. Undertake more extensive landscaping and "greening" programs along major street corridors, and consider these corridors integral parts of the local open space system.
6. Partner with Governors State University on initiatives that can complement the Village's open space character and enhance the image and identity of the community.

Parks and Recreation

Goal:

A park and recreation system that meets the active recreational, social and leisure needs of Village residents and enhances the overall image and character of the community.

Objectives:

1. Monitor local community needs and perceptions and develop new recreational facilities and services that respond to specific desires of Village residents.
2. Ensure adequate resources for and maintenance of Village parks and recreational facilities.
3. Promote cooperation between the Village and the school districts in the provision of recreational facilities and programs.
4. Require that land for future parks and permanent open spaces be set aside within large new residential developments.
5. Adopt a land/cash donation ordinance and an impact fee ordinance in order to achieve and implement park, open space, and recreation objectives.
6. Work with citizen associations, sports groups, and Township, County and State officials to explore alternative methods of funding and managing the operation and maintenance of parks and open spaces.
7. Ensure that future parks and open space are designed to maximize their utility and usefulness to residents in terms of meeting the demand for programmable recreation space, athletic facilities, and other desirable amenities.
8. Continue to improve and build upon the network of pedestrian and bicycle trails and pathways that provide connections between subdivisions, schools, parks, shopping areas, and other activity areas.
9. Establish standards for a local park system consisting of tot lots, neighborhood parks, and community parks. The local park system should complement the extensive regional open space amenities located within the University Park area.

Transportation

Goal:

A coordinated system of roadways, pedestrian facilities, recreational pathways, and public transportation services that provides for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists; reinforces surrounding land development patterns; and enhances the character of the Village.

Objectives:

1. Support transportation improvements that increase vehicular and non-motorized access across I-57 including the construction of an overpass at Dralle Road, in order to facilitate community and economic development.
2. Develop a functional street classification system throughout University Park's planning jurisdiction that improves local and regional mobility and supports residential, commercial, and industrial developments.
3. Identify desired connections for future arterial (approximately one-mile spacing) and collector streets and transportation improvements to serve new development.
4. Reduce, or eliminate, at-grade rail crossings within the Village to improve connectivity, traffic operations, and ultimately enhance travel safety.
5. Minimize through-traffic on local streets and within residential subdivisions.
6. Develop an attractive system of "boulevard streets" that would distinguish the major roadways within University Park from those in nearby communities.
7. Accommodate local and through truck traffic that will serve the commercial and business needs of University Park and minimize impacts on residential areas.
8. Review and amend the Subdivision Ordinance for all street classifications to establish standards for right-of-way and pavement widths, setbacks, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and storm water management.
9. Require sidewalks along all public streets and discourage carriage walks (sidewalks immediately adjacent to the curb) for all new development.
10. Develop a comprehensive network of bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways to link residential subdivisions with schools, parks, shopping, regional pathways, and the proposed "town center."
11. Create distinctive gateway treatments at the entries to the Village along the major roadways, at locations that will provide maximum visual impact and reinforce the Village's identity.
12. Adopt and enforce access management policies that enhance travel safety, preserve roadway capacity, and protect the function of the overall street hierarchy.
13. Minimize curb cuts on the primary corridors to the extent possible and promote internal circulation of adjacent parking areas.
14. Implement traffic management strategies that will minimize the impact of peak traffic flows in the Village.

15. Correct localized traffic operational problems, including placement of stop signs and traffic signals, use of one-way streets and cul-de-sacs, and readability and placement of traffic related signage.
16. Ensure safe design of street intersections, street lighting, and surface conditions throughout the Village.
17. Ensure adequate resources for maintenance of streets, sidewalks, and public rights-of-way in the Village.
18. Work with Pace to enhance transit service throughout the community, either through expanded bus service or the addition of new shuttle/van service.
19. Work with Metra to enhance and upgrade train station facilities.

Intergovernmental and Organizational Cooperation

Goal:

Coordination and cooperation among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations potentially having interest in University Park, to ensure the greatest level of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of municipal services.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with surrounding communities, Will County, and regional agencies (such as Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning) to ensure continuity and consistency of overall community planning and development activities.
2. Monitor development activities in the unincorporated areas of Will County within the Village's planning jurisdiction to ensure that development proposals are in conformance with the Village's *Comprehensive Plan*.
3. Establish meaningful lines of communication with those agencies and organizations that can assist the Village in meeting its overall planning objectives, and work to secure participation of these agencies and organizations in realizing mutual objectives.
4. Seek cooperative working relationships with adjoining communities, for example in financing local community facilities and services or improving the appearance of shared major street corridors.
5. Establish boundary agreements with neighboring communities where appropriate.
6. Work with residents and businesses in surrounding unincorporated areas to devise a long-range plan and program for annexation.
7. Continue to encourage communication and collaboration among service providers to provide the most efficient and cost effective services possible.
8. Continue to seek grants, loans, and other sources of intergovernmental funding transfers.

SECTION 6: COMMUNITY-WIDE PLANS

This section presents the Community-Wide Plans for the University Park *Comprehensive Plan*. Presented in this section are the *2030 Growth Plan*, the *Land Use Plan*, the *Natural Features Plan*, the *Community Facilities Plan*, and the *Transportation Plans*. These plans cover all areas of the community and lay the foundation for more detailed planning recommendations found in the *Implementation and Action Agenda*. The Community-Wide Plans are based on the

Community Outreach, *Existing Conditions Synthesis Report*, *Vision Statement*, and the *Goals and Objectives* that have been established for the community. This section of the *Comprehensive Plan* report contains the following:



- *2030 Footprint Plan*: This section identifies a phased, long-term growth plan for the Village's eventual boundaries.
- *Land Use Plan*: This section describes the existing land uses within the Village and presents long-range policies and recommendations for high quality and compatible new residential, commercial, office, and industrial development.
- *Community Facilities Plan*: This section is intended to assist the Village in ensuring that high-quality community facilities and services including schools, fire and police protection, libraries, administrative facilities and meeting spaces, public utilities, and other public and semi-public uses, are available to local residents and businesses in the future.
- *Natural Features Plan*: This section presents policies and recommendations for protection and enhancement of the open spaces, natural features, and environmental resources within the community.
- *Transportation Plan*: This section establishes the basis for a long-range system of roadways, trails and transit that efficiently supports existing and future development.

2030 Footprint Plan

This section sets forth the Village's *2030 Footprint Plan*. The *Footprint Plan* is based on the 2030 population projections created by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC, now Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, or CMAP) which, in 2000, predicted significant population growth for University Park and its surrounding communities. Growing from a base population of 6,662, University Park is projected to reach a population of more than 34,000 people by 2030, an average annual increase of 930 people over 30 years. Overall this would translate into a corresponding increase of more than 300 households annually. In order to accommodate such dramatic growth, the Village will need to increase the amount of land within the municipal boundaries.

Local governments in Illinois have, per state statute, planning and zoning jurisdiction for unincorporated territory one-and-a-half miles outside their boundaries. When an annexation request by a property owner is approved by the Village, a development agreement that spells out plan and zoning changes should be cemented. Annexations should occur over time to ensure that the type, density, and character of development are consistent with the types of growth and development desired by residents. The Village will need time to absorb new development and to plan for the extension of municipal services and utilities. In order to annex land into the Village, the unincorporated land must be contiguous to the current municipal boundary. Therefore, the Village will proceed with annexation on a parcel-by-parcel basis, gradually increasing the municipal footprint.

Assuming mutually agreeable terms between municipalities, the Village should work with adjoining communities in establishing ultimate community boundaries. University Park does not have any boundary agreements in place, nor does it have an annexation policy. This Plan should be used as a basis to guide boundary agreements with Monee, Crete, and Richton Park. The Village should adopt an annexation policy, driven by the ability of the Village to reasonably provide needed and necessary services to any area proposed for annexation. This includes provisions related to public safety (police, fire and emergency services), infrastructure (electric, water, sewer, drainage and roads), quality of life, and compatibility. The Village will comply with Illinois state law [65 ILCS 5/11-15.1-1, et seq.] which enables the corporate authorities of any municipality to enter into an annexation agreement, valid and binding for a period not to exceed 20 years from the date of its execution with one or more of the owners of record of land in unincorporated territory.

Figure 2, *2030 Footprint Plan*, illustrates the expressed desire of the community to greatly increase the municipal boundaries. The planning process sought to resolve logical ultimate boundaries of University Park and developed an incremental growth strategy with four zones. The boundaries illustrated are not "all or nothing," as some of the parcels shown may never be annexed into the Village. The zones are summarized below.

- Zone 1: South and annexation towards the potential South Suburban Airport. The ultimate southern boundary would be Ohlendorf Road, which is the northern edge of the full build out of the South Suburban Airport. By annexing land to the south, the Village would be able to capitalize on economic development potential from the proposed South Suburban Airport and proposed intermodal center in Crete.
- Zone 2: West and annexation towards Ridgeland Avenue, across Interstate 57. Steger Road would be the northern boundary and Monee-Manhattan Road would be the southern boundary. The expansion would allow the Village to leverage I-57 proximity, access and visibility for commercial and industrial development goals.

- Zone 3: West from Ridgeland Avenue to Harlem Avenue. Steger Road would be the northern boundary and Monee-Manhattan Road would be the southern boundary. This Zone could capture a portion of the residential growth that is occurring in this area. The Village must first incorporate the land shown as Zone 2 on the 2030 *Footprint Plan* before incorporating land in Zone 3, in order to satisfy the contiguity requirement.
- Zone 4: Annexation of unincorporated parcels of land within the current municipal boundary.

Footprint Plan Policy

When evaluating boundary changes and annexation, several key issues should be addressed. The following questions, at a minimum, should be answered:

- How is the proposed annexation consistent with this Plan?
- Does the annexation require an amendment to the Village’s Facilities Planning Area (FPA¹)?
- Is control of future development in this area of critical concern to the Village? Is annexation appropriate at this time and location?
- Does the area present a significant opportunity for future tax revenue generation?
- What other actions (zoning decisions, public facility improvements) will be necessary to approve this annexation?
- Is the proposed annexation consistent with existing boundary agreements? Have neighboring residents, property owners, and adjoining communities been notified of the proposed boundary change?



¹ An FPA is defined as "a centralized sewer service area to be considered for possible wastewater treatment facilities within a 20-year planning period." The State of Illinois has designated the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC), now Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) as the water-quality planning agency for the six-county region, with responsibility for reviewing wastewater permits and facility plans to ensure consistency with the federally approved Illinois Water Quality Management Plan. The Village should work with NIPC/CMAP when amendments are required.

Figure 2. 2030 Footprint Plan

Existing Land Use and Zoning

This section presents a summary of existing land uses within the Village of University Park. Understanding the existing land use pattern is important in assessing future development opportunities within the community. Figure 3, *Existing Land Use*, illustrates land use within the Village based on Will County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data and field surveys undertaken in Autumn 2006. While all of the land uses described below are present in the Village, one of the most prevalent current uses is agricultural, which indicates that there is a large amount of land potentially available for future development.

Existing Land Use

Land uses within the Village of University Park include single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial/business, parks and open space, public, semi-public/institutional, agricultural, and vacant.

Single Family Residential

The residential areas of University Park are located mainly in the southeastern corner of the Village. The southeastern area has the least direct access to the surrounding communities and transportation facilities such as I-57 and Metra Electric District Line.

Most single family homes have been built in typical suburban style subdivisions consisting of curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. The majority of the homes were built mid-century, but there are scattered pockets of new development. A few single-lot homes exist throughout the Village either as part of farmsteads or along University Parkway. Overall, the neighborhoods are good, and homes well-kept. There are several single-family homes that are used as rental property. The Village has a property maintenance code and an appearance code, and enforces both consistently.

One of the newest single family developments is associated with Deer Creek Golf Course, located on the far west side of the Village, just north of Old Monee Road. This development is currently under construction, as of 2007.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-Family residential includes both rental and owner occupied units. The land use classification refers to building type, not ownership structure. While there is a high percentage of rental units as compared to owner-occupied units in the Village, most of the multi-family units are concentrated in a few developments. The largest is one is located in the southeastern corner of the Village just west of the single family area described above. This development is a series of five story, brick buildings arranged around parking areas. Thornwood House Apartments, a 14-story tower off Burnham Drive north of University Parkway, is another large area of multi-family housing. The Arbors at Hickory Creek contains over 175 rental units.

The *University Park TOD Plan* (adopted in September 2002) calls for more dense housing to be built around the Metra station. The development mix is yet to be finalized, but will likely include a large number of owner-occupied multi-family for-sale residential units, such as condominiums and townhomes.

Commercial

Retail uses within the Village are located along University Parkway, mainly between Kedzie Avenue and Western Avenue. There are two shopping centers: the Limited Plaza on the south side of University Parkway, just south of Western, and the University Park Shopping Center, north of University Parkway and east of Monee Road. The Limited Plaza has no national chains and only one vacant storefront. The University Park Shopping Center contains a couple of local restaurants, Will County offices, and a check cashing store/currency exchange. The former U.P. Co-op Supermarket was the anchor for this shopping center and is currently vacant. There are two gas stations in the Village. One gas station is located at the southwest corner of University Parkway and Western, and the other at the southwest corner of University Parkway and Governors Highway.

Industrial

University Park has a large and growing industrial area located on the west side of the community near Interstate 57. The majority of the industrial uses are warehousing/shipping or office campuses, although there are some manufacturing uses. The established core of this industrial land use is located in the southwestern corner of the Village, in an area called the Governors Gateway Industrial Park, north of Monee Manhattan Road. Industrial tenants in this area are a mix of manufacturers, offices, distribution centers and utilities including Federal Signal, ComEd and Wal-Mart. Numerous new developments are being built in the formerly agricultural land north of Dralle Road, including a recently completed a 1 million plus square-foot facility for Solo Cup, which is now one of the largest employers in the Village. The dominant use is warehousing and distribution facilities among more recent developments. Demand for these types of facilities is expected to drive continuing development in this area.

Public, Semi-Public & Institutional

Public uses within the Village include the Village Hall, two fire stations, Village's Public Works Department facilities, a water treatment facility, and the public library. Semi-public and institutional uses within the Village include two schools, the Metra Station, and Governors State University Campus. Burnham House and Willow House, located just north of the Village Hall, provide facilities for adults with mental and/or physical limitations. Skyline Memorial Park Cemetery is surrounded by the Village, but not incorporated into the Village.

Parks and Open Space

Parks and Open Space within the Village include the Thorn Creek Nature Preserve, University Park Golf Club and Conference Center and several Village owned/operated parks, including Riegel Farm, Palmer Park, Pine Lake, Craig Park, Amherst Park, and the Hickok Aquatic Center. Deer Creek Golf Course and Hidden Meadows Golf Course are adjacent to, but not incorporated into, the Village and contribute to the open space character.

Agricultural

One of the largest land uses within the Village is agricultural land. Although much of this land is still used for active farming, subdivision and development of new industrial facilities and/or residential uses is anticipated.

Vacant

There are very few vacant sites within the Village. The largest is a forested area south of the water treatment facility. The former American Lock site, southeast of the intersection of University Parkway and Steger-Monee Road, is a large vacant site completely surrounded by the Village but not incorporated. These vacant sites represent obvious redevelopment potential within the Village.

Zoning

The Zoning Ordinance is the regulatory framework used to protect the public safety, health, and welfare of the Village of University Park. This *Comprehensive Plan* establishes the legal basis of the Zoning Ordinance.

A significant portion of the land in University Park is zoned for industrial uses. About half of the land zoned for industrial uses is currently in agricultural use. There are also significant portions of agricultural land zoned for residential uses. These differences between how land is currently being used versus how land is zoned and available for future development represent opportunities for development within the Village.

There are two zoning districts established within the Village's code that do not relate to any land area on the Village's zoning map. They include B1-Local Shopping, and O-Office and Research. As described in the next section of this Plan, the *Land Use Plan* designates areas as Office Campus. Current zoning does not match this category, and in order to implement this Plan, these areas should be rezoned as O-Office and Research.

Figure 3.Existing Land Use

Land Use Plan

This section presents the *Land Use Plan* for the Village of University Park. This Plan builds upon the existing land use and development patterns in University Park. The *Land Use Plan* provides a guide for future land development within the Village's planning jurisdiction and the Village's desired 2030 footprint. It identifies which lands should be devoted to residential, commercial, office, light industrial, public/semi public, and open space uses. It strives to promote a compatible arrangement and development of uses that makes efficient use of land resources and community facilities and services. A description of the Land Use Plan is provided below and illustrated in Figure 4, *Land Use Plan*, at the end of this section.

It should be emphasized that the *Land Use Plan* is a general guide for growth and development within the planning jurisdiction. It is not a site development plan. While it is specific enough to provide guidance on land use decisions, it is also flexible enough to allow for individual negotiations and the consideration of creative approaches to land development that are consistent with the policies and guidelines included in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

University Park's large amount of developable land, access to major regional transportation networks, and proximity to the proposed South Suburban Airport will continue to influence development. New land uses in University Park will primarily entail the development of incorporated vacant and agricultural land and the annexation of unincorporated vacant and agricultural land. Growth into the latter areas will require annexation, and will be subject to boundary agreements between University Park and neighboring municipalities. The new development areas contain a mix of single family residential, commercial uses at key intersections and along corridors, some additional light industrial close to I-57 and near the existing industrial area, office campus, public facility and school locations, and future green space and open space areas. Some leapfrog development has occurred and there are large vacant and agricultural areas within the existing municipal boundaries. Although most growth will be "greenfield" type development, redevelopment of older properties could occur.

Land Use Classification

A new land use classification system has been developed to help organize and arrange future land use areas in the Village. A land use classification system is necessary to accurately reflect the Village's intentions for the type, intensity, and location of future land uses anticipated under the *Comprehensive Plan*. Each of these areas is described in terms of its future function and may not necessarily translate to existing zoning ordinance districts. The Village should review the existing zoning map and ordinance for compatibility between this Plan and the code.

The land uses identified in this section and illustrated in Figure 4 include:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Mixed Use TOD
- Public/Semi Public/Institutional

- Parks/Open Space
- Office Campus

Residential Uses

Single-Family Residential

University Park’s existing neighborhoods and subdivisions should continue to be enhanced as important community assets and protected from incompatible land uses and other influences including noise and traffic. While quality new residential development should be promoted, the rate of growth should be managed to correspond with the capacity of public services and infrastructure facilities to serve new development. Development from the center of the Village outward, and of agricultural areas already incorporated, into the Village’s municipal boundaries should be encouraged. This Plan suggests Single-Family Residential development throughout the community, with large areas of new development into the southern and western expansion areas.

Single-Family Residential areas provide for moderate-density residential areas that continue the existing pattern of residential development within the Village of University Park. Existing homes located on typical suburban lots (usually between ¼ and ½ acre in size) with garages fronting the street characterize much of the existing residential areas of University Park, and the Single-Family Residential designation is intended to continue this pattern of development. Development within the Single-Family Residential areas, regardless of density, should be characterized by conservation design, a significant amount (30% or more of the total land area) of open space including a centrally located park site, and the preservation of environmentally sensitive features.

Single-Family Residential areas should develop at an overall gross density of 4 to 6 dwelling units per acre. This type of density follows the existing subdivision build-outs and allows for flexibility in future developments. Gross density calculations include the entire land area for a development, including open space requirements and right-of-way. Ideally, homes within the Single-Family Residential areas should develop on parcels less than 1 acre in size, but no smaller than ¼-acre in size.



The Village will remain flexible with the precise size of lots and the development character of individual developments in these areas, as they will be influenced by site constraints and open space requirements. Parks sites, school sites, open space/natural area designations, and bikeway/corridor linkages could be among individual site characteristics and environmental conditions of the area. All Single-Family Residential developments, whether individual or as part of a planned development, are subject to review and approval by the Village.

Multi-Family Residential Uses

While University Park should develop as primarily a single-family residential community, the Village should consider a limited amount of new, high-quality multi-family housing. Multi-family housing can include for-sale townhomes, cluster homes, condominium complexes or rental apartments in selected locations, provided the developments are characterized by creative site planning, protect environmental features, provide an amount of open space, and are compatible with nearby existing single family residential areas.

Attractively designed multi-family developments could provide a transition in the land use between the businesses, transportation facilities, commercial areas and single-family neighborhoods. Townhouses, condominiums, and similar developments are appropriate near the proposed mixed-use TOD area or developed commercial areas if they are incorporated as a component of a larger planned development.

It is important that the housing stock in the Village of University Park provide housing opportunities for residents in all stages of their lives. As the community matures, there will be an increasing number of residents who will be seeking smaller more affordable housing opportunities to stay in the community in which they have reared their families. Senior housing and assisted living facilities are important considerations for future residential development. Both senior housing and assisted living facilities should be provided in convenient locations to accommodate the needs of senior citizens within University Park. In addition to encouraging housing targeted for senior residents, the Village should encourage housing for students, near the GSU campus.

Other properties ideally suited for Multi-Family Residential Development are located to the north and east of the existing Village Hall, abutting the Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve. The existing multi-family properties along Burnham Drive, south of University Parkway/Exchange Street should remain in their current use.

Multi-family developments should develop with a gross maximum density range of 6 to 8 dwelling units per acre. The Village should consider development densities of up to 12 dwelling units per acre in the TOD area. Owner-occupied multi-family housing units are also strongly encouraged, in addition to rental units. All new multi-family development should be of a scale and character compatible with nearby existing single-family homes. New multi-family development should reinforce and enhance overall neighborhood quality rather than detract from it.

Residential Development Policies

The following policies should be used to guide all improvements and new developments within the designated areas in the Land Use Plan. As new residential development takes place in University Park, the Village should promote the formulation of residential “neighborhoods,” rather than separate and free-standing subdivisions. The Village should encourage new residential developments to comply with the policies below.

- Neighborhoods should be designed primarily for residential use. Shopping and services, elementary schools, and parks and playgrounds should be easily accessible by pedestrians and bicycles as well as vehicles. The boundaries between neighborhoods and adjoining non-residential land use areas should be clearly defined and screening and buffering should be provided as required.
- Neighborhoods should incorporate a centrally located neighborhood park site and provide for greenway connections to other elements of the park system.

- Through traffic should be routed around residential neighborhoods, along either arterial or collector streets, as outlined in Section 7, *Transportation Plan*. Pedestrian walkways and bikeways should connect homes with schools and other neighborhood facilities. The Village should strive to maintain a neighborhood atmosphere in which all residents feel safe and secure.
- New residential neighborhoods should be served by a safe and convenient circulation system with streets and roadways relating to and connecting with existing streets in adjacent areas. However, residential traffic should be separated from nonresidential traffic wherever possible. All new homes should “front” neighborhood streets rather than collector or arterials.
- New residential streets should generally follow the contours of the land and seek to highlight the natural features of the area. New residential neighborhoods should fit in with the surrounding landscape. Environmental corridors, natural vegetation, wooded areas, embankments, and mature trees in residential areas add greatly to the ambiance of the Village and should be maintained. Artificial changes to the natural topography should be minimal.
- All new residential construction, including additions and remodelings, should be characterized by high quality design and construction and should be compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood. Brick, stone, cedar, and cement board siding are appropriate building materials.
- Residential construction should seek to incorporate energy efficient design and materials as much as possible. Energy Star and Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design (LEED) standards should serve as guiding principles.
- Stormwater management should be addressed on a comprehensive basis within all residential areas. The Village should adopt a stormwater management ordinance based on local best practices.
- Major new residential developments should be developed as “planned unit developments.” The PUD technique gives the Village maximum control over residential area design and development, and also gives the potential developer flexibility and incentives for creative and high quality development.

Commercial Uses

The *Land Use Plan* promotes high-quality new commercial and business development in order to:

- Diversify and strengthen the Village’s tax base,
- Help relieve the tax burden that is currently borne by local residents,
- Provide revenues to support new Village services, facilities and schools
- Create new jobs, and
- Provide much needed shopping opportunities for local residents.

Commercial development, which includes retail, office, restaurant and service uses, should be located primarily along potential major corridors, including:

- University Parkway/Exchange Street
- Cicero Avenue

- Monee/Manhattan Road, and
- Crete/Monee Road
- Stuenkel Road

In addition, the proposed TOD area around the Metra Station at University Parkway and Governors Highway should contain a significant amount of commercial development, and serve as the pedestrian oriented shopping area for the neighborhood and for the larger community.

Three types of commercial areas should be encouraged in University Park:

1. “Neighborhood commercial areas” that serve the day-to-day convenience needs of nearby residents.
2. “Corridor commercial areas” that provide for a more diverse range of goods and services that serve the entire community.
3. “TOD area” that provides a unique pedestrian oriented shopping and mixed-use area within the community.

The key features of the commercial areas shown in the *Land Use Plan* are highlighted below.

Neighborhood Commercial

Ideally, Neighborhood Commercial uses will be located throughout the Village, primarily located along corridors and their intersections.

Neighborhood commercial areas are important to provide residents with a local place to shop and do business. Neighborhood commercial areas should be incorporated into new development areas, provided they front, and are located along, major and minor arterial roadways.

When neighborhood commercial uses are incorporated into mixed use developments, they should be screened and buffered from adjacent residential areas and should provide pedestrian access to the commercial areas from adjacent residential uses.

Corridor Commercial

Segments of Cicero Avenue, Old Monee Road and New Monee/Crete Monee should be considered for Corridor Commercial. These corridors should provide sites for retail, business and personal services, offices, restaurants, business parks, public and institutional, and residential uses.

Since these areas are not improved yet, they should be designed to have sufficient lot depths to accommodate contemporary commercial development. Lot depths should permit extensive landscaping along the arterial street, the creative clustering of commercial buildings that place buildings near the roads instead of setting back all buildings behind parking areas, shared parking areas, the consolidation of access drives, and safe pedestrian and vehicular connections between adjacent commercial properties.

Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area

The area around the University Park Metra station (roughly bounded by Steger Road on the north, Cicero Avenue on the west, Crawford Avenue/University Park Golf Course on the east and Stuenkel Road on the south) presents an excellent opportunity for the Village to provide destination shopping and a dense mix of housing units. The TOD Area should consist of a

dynamic mix of commercial, residential, and office uses. Current plans for the Thorn Creek Station development include approximately 1,000 housing units on 400+ acres adjacent to the Metra Station. A variety of housing options, including single-family homes, condominiums, and rental units should be built in the area.

Commercial uses within the area should include retail, dining and entertainment uses. The area should be developed as a “walkable” area, much like traditional downtowns. Parking should be provided in the rear of buildings, and buildings should orient inwards, creating a unique shopping experience for visitors. Landscaping, streetscaping, pedestrian amenities, building construction and orientation, lighting, wayfinding signage, building signage, façade treatments are all important considerations with the development of the TOD Area. In addition to residential and commercial uses, the TOD Area may also include civic uses, outdoor plazas, and cultural amenities.

Commercial Development Policies

The following polices should be used to guide all improvements and new developments within the areas designated as commercial in the *Land Use Plan*.

- Commercial development should be characterized by the highest possible standards of design and construction, and consist of primarily of brick and stone. The design and appearance of commercial buildings, site development, landscaping, lighting, signs and graphics, and pedestrian amenities should be all of special concern within commercial areas.
- Commercial centers should be designed with an attractive front façade.
- Since commercial and business areas are located along important traffic routes, access to individual properties should be carefully controlled to minimize conflicts with through traffic. The consolidation of access drives for adjacent properties should be encouraged.
- Adequate off-street parking should be provided within all commercial areas. The consolidation of parking facilities for multiple businesses should be encouraged. Shared parking should be encouraged, particularly within mixed-use development areas. All parking lots should be designed for maximum safety and ease of use. Parking lots should be extensively landscaped, particularly along major streets.
- Commercial sites should be characterized by an environmentally sustainable approach to stormwater management. Natural drainage measures should be employed to preserve the pre-development runoff characteristics of the site, utilizing best management practices.
- Stormwater management should be addressed on a comprehensive basis within all commercial areas. The Village should adopt a stormwater management ordinance based on local best practices.
- In addition to new commercial development, existing commercial and business areas should also be improved and enhanced as required, particularly the University Park Town Center. Projects should be undertaken to improve the appearance of the public rights-of-way, including landscaping, lighting, signage, sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian amenities. Enhancements should include façade, parking lot, outdoor lighting, site landscaping, and signage improvements.

- Commercial areas should not adversely impact adjacent neighborhoods. Screening and buffering should be promoted between commercial and residential areas, including landscaping and attractive fencing. Commercial traffic and parking should not be allowed to “spill over” into the neighborhoods.
- Noise, safety and grounds maintenance should also be carefully monitored within commercial areas.
- Commercial construction should seek to incorporate energy efficient design and materials as much as possible. Energy Star and Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design (LEED) standards should serve as guiding principles.

Office Campus and Light Industrial Uses

Office Campus

“Office Campus” is a new land use designation and has been defined to allow for expansion of the business sector in areas adjacent to residential, public, and open space zones in a compatible manner. The Village should encourage office, research and development, and related professional services in this land use designation. New office campus uses should emphasize office tenants, and especially research development activities, given the proximity to GSU. There is a national trend toward such developments within planned business environments, and the locational assets afforded by I-57 and GSU suggest significant potential in this area.

Compatible corporate campus, office, research and business uses and business incubators would increase employment opportunities and enhance the local tax base. GSU is home to a very successful incubator (“Centerpoint”) that could be expanded to this area. It is recommended that the Village promote development of portions of the I-57 corridor, (generally west of the interstate and east of Ridgeland Road), as planned Office Campus uses, characterized by generous setbacks, well-landscaped sites, and prominent exposure onto the adjacent highway. These particular locations build off the proximity to I-57.

Light Industrial

The Village of University Park has a large and growing industrial area located on the west side of the community near I-57. The majority of the industrial uses are warehousing/shipping or office campuses. The established core of industrial land uses is located in the southwestern corner of Village, an area called the Governors Gateway Industrial Park, north of Manhattan-Monee Road. Industrial tenants in this area are a mix of manufacturers,



offices, distribution centers and utilities. Numerous new developments are being created in the formerly agricultural land north of Dralle Road, including a recently completed one million plus square-foot facility for Solo Cup. Demand for warehousing and distribution facilities is expected to drive the continuing development in this area. This area should be

expanded to the east towards Cicero Avenue to maximize visibility and exposure for new business uses, and to also provide convenient access to visitors and employees.

The area shown on the southeast side of the Village's potential footprint, along Ohlendorf Road (the eventual northern boundary of the South Suburban Airport) is also designated as Light Industrial. If the potential third airport is built, the need for new warehousing, distribution, light industrial, and commercial establishments will be created.

New business parks should be guided by an overall site development plan to ensure the coordination of building sites, traffic access and circulation, and open space amenities. The business parks should be screened and buffered from nearby neighborhoods, and should be attractive when viewed from adjacent streets. The environmental corridors, wooded areas, and other natural features shown on the *Land Use Plan* should be preserved and protected as the office campus and light industrial areas are developed in the future.

Office Park and Light Industrial Development Policies

The following policies should be used to guide all improvements and new developments within the areas designated as office campus and light industrial in the *Land Use Plan*.

- New business development should be located in planned business parks help ensure coordination of circulation systems, lot configuration, building design, parking and access facilities, environmental amenities and land use compatibility.
- New business park development should only be permitted in areas that can be adequately served by public utilities and infrastructure facilities. This includes adequate access into the business park areas from major arterial roads. Approach routes and interior roadways must have design capacities sufficient to serve anticipated future needs.
- New business parks should be designed and developed so that offices, showrooms, and similar uses occupy high-visibility locations around park peripheries. These peripheral locations should be subject to special building and site design controls to ensure a high-quality appearance from major roadways and surrounding development areas.
- Major entrances into corporate campuses and business parks should be designated by attractive "gateway" features. Gateways should include special signage, landscaping, and low intensity lighting.
- Major entry roads and industrial collectors should be attractively designed and visually distinctive. These roadways should have street trees and street lighting, with accent landscaping at key access drives.
- Access to individual building sites within business parks should be via an internal circulation system. Site access from peripheral streets should be limited to major entrances serving the overall development area.
- Adequately screened off-street parking and loading facilities should be provided within all business sites, and the consolidation of parking areas and driveways serving two or more uses should be encouraged.
- Site improvements within business areas, such as lighting, signage and landscaping, should be well designed and coordinated in order to help create a positive identity and visual image throughout the development area.

- Particular attention should be given to screening and visual separation between business parks and other nearby land uses. The periphery of business parks should be extensively landscaped, particularly where business parks border residential neighborhoods or major roadways.
- New industrial and office development should occur in planned areas. Where possible, new commercial uses should be clustered in small groupings with shared parking areas, common access drives, and related design and appearance.
- Open space features should be incorporated into new light industrial and office development projects. These should include the preservation and enhancement of natural environmental features, as well as the provision of new open areas. All light industrial and office lots should be characterized by extensive landscaping.
- Require an objective traffic modeling study as part of development proposals to determine the impacts of additional traffic, particularly trucks, on the roadway network.

Other Land Uses

The following land use designations are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this Plan:

- Public/Semi Public/Institutional Uses: Discussed in the *Community Facilities Plan*, beginning on page 48;
- Parks/Open Space: Discussed in the *Community Facilities Plan*, beginning on page 48, and in the *Natural Features Plan*, beginning on page 55.

Figure 4. Land Use Plan

Community Facilities Plan

Community facilities provide important services and necessary utilities that significantly to the overall “quality of life” of the community. These facilities include schools, fire and police protection, libraries, utility providers, administrative facilities and meeting spaces, religious facilities, and other public and semi-public uses.

The *Community Facilities Plan* is intended to help the Village plan for sufficient community facilities to be available to local residents and businesses in the future. It should be used by the Village and other organizations to ensure that appropriate sites are reserved for community facilities that will be needed in the future. It is important to emphasize that this Plan presents general policies and guidelines for community facilities. This Plan is not intended to pre-empt or substitute for the more detailed planning and programming which should be undertaken by the Village and other service agencies and organizations. The *Community Facilities Plan* is illustrated on Figure 5, *Community Facilities Plan*.

General Recommendations

The Village will promote continued cooperation, interaction, and collaboration among the various agencies and organizations that serve University Park, including Crete-Monee School District 201-U, Will County Forest Preserve, University Park Library, and others. The Village should also keep abreast of the plans, policies, and projects of these other agencies and organizations.

Community facilities will be compatible with surrounding uses and should enhance the character of the neighborhoods in which they are located. Sites should be attractively landscaped with screening and buffering provided if necessary. Traffic generated by community facilities should not adversely impact surrounding areas. Adequate and attractively designed off-street parking should be available at all community facility sites.

The Village and other service districts will be attuned to the changing needs and requirements of local residents and businesses, and new facilities and services should be provided if they become necessary or desirable in the future. As nearby agricultural areas are more intensely developed, community facility and service needs may change dramatically.

In general, University Park is currently well-served by community facilities. However, the Village’s population is anticipated to grow dramatically by 2030. This growth will have a major impact on the provision of services within the Village. Using typical benchmarks that examine the relationship between projected growth and related impact on services, such as police, fire and parkland, the Village should use the following as a general guideline:

Projected Needs for Community Facilities, 2011 and 2030

Facility	2006 Population	2030 Population
	8,000	35,000
Park Land		
10 acres per 1,000 residents	80 acres	350 acres
Fire Personnel		
1.59 personnel per 1,000 residents	13 personnel	56 personnel
Fire Stations		
0.077 stations per 1,000 residents	1 station	3 stations
Fire Engines		
0.083 engines per 1,000 residents	1 engine	3 engines
Police		
2.3 personnel per 1,000 residents	18 personnel	81 personnel

Provided in this section is an overview of the community facilities within the Village and an assessment of each facility's existing condition and future needs. Understanding that the Village does not have jurisdiction or control over a majority of the community facilities within its municipal limits, but by identifying and understanding the needs of each community facility, the Village is better able to gauge its role in working with the different service providers to improve the overall level of service to University Park residents.

Future Parks

Parks and open space can be used for pure aesthetic enjoyment, for passive recreation such as bird watching, nature walks and picnics, and for active recreation such as soccer, baseball or other competitive sports. A minimum standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons has been recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association and by NIPC (now CMAP). There are two basic types of parks within a community: neighborhood parks and community parks.

Neighborhood parks are small parks that should be centrally located within a development or neighborhood. Neighborhood parks function as a local, "close to home" park site, providing both active and passive recreation opportunities convenient to nearby residents. The central location of a neighborhood park ensures all residents of a development benefit from recreational amenity of the development. Neighborhood parks should be between three and seven acres in size, with five acres considered ideal. Residential developers should provide new neighborhood parks, as they new build homes and attract new population to the community. This nexus serves as the legal principle behind the Village's land dedication ordinance.

Community parks are larger in size, developed more intensely, and are better suited for recreational programming, including athletic leagues and tournaments. To preserve the safety of residential areas and to provide efficient access for visitors, community parks should be located along major streets. Community parks have no minimum or maximum size. Community parks should protect significant natural resources within the community, and provide areas for active recreation, suitable for athletics, including lighted fields, parking areas, and field houses. The size of a community park should be need driven, with the appropriate size determined by the development objectives and park amenities needed by the community.

The general location of future parks and open space areas is illustrated on Figure 5. The location and size of the future parks should be interpreted as “conceptual” since the size and configuration will be determined as the land is platted for residential development.



The ideal location for a community park within University Park is adjacent to the waterways and greenways, as illustrated in Figure 5. Active recreation such as team sports or playgrounds should be located, planned and designed so that their normal use will not interfere with the enjoyment of adjacent land owners nor degrade the natural resources and ecosystems within the open space network. Other types of parks include sports complexes and special use facilities such as gymnasiums and swimming pools. The demand and need for these specific facilities and programs should be determined by the University Park Parks and Recreation Department, and they should be located in a similar fashion to community parks.

Village Hall and Other Village-Owned Facilities

Currently, the Village Hall accommodates the Finance Department, Village Manager, Village Clerk, and Code Enforcement Department. The building is not large enough to meet current space needs. A plan to build a new facility was completed, but funding has not yet been allocated. The Village also maintains a cable television studio that is in need of major improvements, and the Town Center Shopping Mall, which needs painting, ongoing maintenance, and landscaping around the outlet building.

The *Community Facilities Plan* identifies a “municipal center” in the TOD area. When the Village builds a new Village Hall, it should be located in the municipal center. A Village Hall can be a good civic anchor for the development of this area drawing in residents and visitors. The municipal center could also include a community recreational facility, such as multi-use gymnasium/health club. The Village should explore opportunities to partner with GSU, the YMCA, area hospitals, and other organizations to build such a facility.

University Golf Club and Conference Center

University Park Golf Club, operated by the Village, is a golf course and events center with a staff 60 employees. This facility mainly serves Chicago’s southern suburbs and northern

Indiana. Future plans for the Club include the expansion of the conference center and golf course property, as well as adding a driving range and practice facility.

Fire Department

The Fire Department operates two fire stations. Station #1 at 698 Burnham Road responds mainly to residential service calls, and Station #2 at 995 Central Avenue responds mainly to industrial service calls. Current station locations and sizes meet the needs of the Village. As the Village continues to grow, especially in the planned Residential, Commercial, and Office Campus areas west of I-57, an additional station and equipment may need to be added. The Department has a full-time staff of one chief, one deputy chief, and 15 firefighters/paramedics, a part-time, on-call staff of one assistant chief, and six paid on-call firefighters. The Fire Chief also serves as Village Manager, and the Deputy Chief assists with building permits. Currently, this level of full-time staff meets the community's needs. The department has no plans to increase staffing but will reassess staffing if rapid growth increases calls for service.

Police Department

The Police Department is located on Exchange Street/University Parkway, immediately adjacent to the Village Hall. The current facility is in good condition and was updated in 2004 with a state-of-the art gun range. The addition of classrooms and weight rooms are planned. The Department has a staff of 16 full-time sworn police officers, four civilian employees, five part-time sworn police officers, and six reserve police officers. The Police Department is assisted by the Will County Sheriff's Department when necessary. The County has jurisdiction over the unincorporated areas located within the Village.

Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District

Planning is currently underway to being annex the Village's sanitary sewer system into the Thorn Creek Basin (TCB) Sanitary District. Aqua Illinois is the current water and sewer service provider. In 2002, the Villages of University Park and Monee approached the Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District with a request that it provide wastewater treatment for their communities. University Park and Monee are located in the adjacent Deer Creek Facilities Planning Area, currently served by a 2.17 million gallons/day (mgd) wastewater treatment plant located in the Village and owned and operated by Aqua Illinois. TCB has excess treatment capacity at its main plant, which is rated for an average daily flow of 15.92 mgd. TCB completed a preliminary in-house analysis in 2004 which concluded that it could extend wastewater service to the two communities at a cost considerably less than at the rates assessed by Aqua Illinois.

After annexation, the areas serviced by Thorn Creek will be the same as the areas currently served by Aqua Illinois. The future service area would be the Deer Creek Facility Planning Area. Once the Village's sanitary system has been annexed, waste water will be transferred to the Thorn Creek main plant for treatment. Thorn Creek can maintain the current and short-term level of service, but long-term planning of the sanitary sewer system needs to be created. Overall, new development or redevelopment in the Village can be served by the existing infrastructure, unless the development or redevelopment results in very large wastewater discharge, such as from industries that use high levels of water.

Crete Monee School District 201-U

Despite the quantity of new residential units in Crete, Monee, and University Park, the school district is experiencing relatively a slow growth of approximately 100 students per year. According to District representatives, the district anticipates a steady growth rate from increased residential development. The District's Facilities Committee has recommended the development of new elementary schools in both Crete and University Park in the next 2-3 years. A possible location for the elementary school in University Park is on the north side of University Parkway, near the Village Hall. The committee also recommends the development of a new middle school within the next 4-5 years. The 2030 population growth trends projected by NIPC/CMAP suggest that there could be 10,700 school-aged children living in the Village by that date.

Forest Preserve District of Will County

The Forest Preserve District's primary responsibilities are to preserve, restore and manage natural resources and open space. They also provide outdoor educational opportunities and outdoor recreation. The Thorn Creek Woods Management Commission, whose members include the Village of University Park, Village of Park Forest, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Forest Preserve District of Will County, currently owns and operates an approximately one thousand acre dedicated state nature preserve ("Thorn Creek Woods"). The Preserve includes an environmental education center, 2.5 miles of trails, and two residences. The District owns 274 acres of the preserve; the rest is owned by other members of the commission. The District has an ownership and acquisition strategy map which has informed the *Land Use, Natural Features, and Community Facilities Plans*.

University Park Public Library

The University Park Public Library District provides services to all members of the community and reciprocal service to residents of the state of Illinois. The Library is open six days per week and provides materials in a variety of formats, public access to computers, and programming for all ages.

The library is located at 1100 Blackhawk Drive on a six acre site. There is potential to expand the library to accommodate a computer lab. The library is funded by a separate taxing district that primarily serves the geographical boundaries of University Park. Residents in nearby unincorporated areas may purchase a library card at the same tax rate applied to University Park residents. Residents of other communities who have library cards in good standing may use most services.

Telecommunications

Telephone, cable, and high-speed internet have become necessary services to residents and businesses. The Village should permit the necessary infrastructure to provide these important to current and future residents. When these utilities require hookups to properties, cabling should be located underground whenever possible.

Power Transmission

ComEd provides electric service to residents and businesses in the Village. In addition to the ComEd power service, there are two peaker power plants located in the industrial area of the Village. Peaker power plants generally run only when there is a high demand for electricity. Peaker power plants provide another reliable source of electricity within the Village.

Transmission lines supplying new development should be located underground wherever possible. Existing transmission lines currently located above ground should be relocated underground as streets are repaired and/or widened, as infill development occurs, or when repairs or upgrades are made to the lines.

Other Community Facilities

The Village is also home to a number of churches, including Pilgrimage Protestant, Miller Chapel AME Church, and University Park Baptist Church, and Willow House, a social service organization.

Figure 5. Community Facilities Plan

Natural Features Plan

University Park is fortunate to have large amounts of open space, several parks, three creeks, a lake, and other natural and environmental assets. There are no major areas of environmental concern within the Village, such as brownfields, container storage, or any type of large-scale contamination.

Figure 6, *Natural Features Plan*, illustrates the Village's goals, objectives, and policies for its natural features. The *Natural Features Plan* is intended to help the Village maintain and preserve key environmental and open space features, enhance the existing "green" character of the area, provide for a more complete range of park and recreational areas to serve new and existing development, and connect future residents of the community to the park system.

Flood Zones

As part of the National Flood Insurance Program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Insurance Administration have designated areas of flood boundary zones. The flood plain shown on FEMA maps are generally areas around lakes, rivers or streams which have historically been prone to flooding during periods of heavy rain. The natural flood plain reduces the severity of flooding in other areas by temporarily storing water that rises and flows into the flood plain where it is held for gradual release back into the streams and into the ground water storage system. Building in the flood plain without adjacent compensatory storage destroys this "safety device" and increases the potential for flood damage. Buildings in the flood plain are apt to be damaged and sewage from these buildings can seriously pollute streams, lakes and aquifers. Flood plains also act to improve water quality because water tends to travel at low velocities allowing sediments to settle. By holding water, flood plains act to permit greater infiltration into the ground water aquifers which hold the local water supply.

There are a few flood zones found in University Park: one along Deer Creek on the south end of the Village; one along Forked Creek on the far western edge of the Village, and one just west of Governors Highway/Metra tracks on the northern edge of the Village. Those zones, which are areas of 100-and 500-year flood plains, are shown on Figure 6.

Wetlands

Wetlands are classified according to a system developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They are defined by vegetation, hydric soils, and surface and ground water conditions. They are a valuable land use which is protected from encroachment. Several wetland areas are found in the Village and are shown on Figure 6. Most of these wetlands are relatively small and should not significantly impact development opportunities.

Watercourses and Lakes

University Park has three major creeks that run through its boundaries. Forked Creek comes into the Village from the west/northwest and runs through the industrial park. Running through the middle of the Village is Thorn Creek. Thorn Creek runs almost parallel to Steger-Monee Road, through the GSU campus. Deer Creek runs though the southeastern part of the Village. Pine Lake is also within the Village boundaries.

Recommended Resource Protection Areas (RRPA)

The Village contains land identified as “recommended resource protection areas.” These are existing public open spaces and the land surrounding it, according to the *Green Infrastructure Vision Plan* completed by NIPC, Chicago Wilderness, and the Village in 2004. Green infrastructure is defined as “the interconnected network of land and water that supports biodiversity and provides habitat for diverse communities of native flora and fauna at the regional scale. It includes large complexes of remnant woodlands, savannas, prairies, wetlands, lakes, stream corridors and the related natural communities that have been identified in the *Biodiversity Recovery Plan*. Green infrastructure may also include areas adjacent to and connecting these remnant natural communities that provide both buffers and opportunities for ecosystem restoration.” The existing open space and RRPA are shown on Figure 6.

Greenways & Trails

Also illustrated on Figure 6 are existing and proposed greenways and trails. A greenway is defined as a “corridor of open space” that can vary in scale from narrow ribbons of undeveloped land to wide corridors that incorporate diverse natural and cultural features. Some greenways are for primarily recreational use, while others function for environmental protection. Some greenways run along stream corridors or wetlands; others follow old railway tracks or other land-based features.

Greenway corridors, which help establish the overall structure of an open space system within University Park, generally follow surface watercourses and drainage ways defined by the flood of record, or, are conceptually illustrated as a direct connection linking park sites and open space areas in the residential areas. The parks within University Park should be connected to each other, creating a safe and attractive network of greenways and open space that will provide a safe, off-street transportation system and provide a recreational amenity for the community.

University Park is uniquely positioned to establish greenways throughout most of the community. Many communities have recognized the benefits and popularity of a greenway and trail network after most development has occurred. The majority of residential growth in the Village of University Park however, will transpire in the future, providing the Village the opportunity to require greenways through residential developments linking park sites to the entire park system. Within the Village, there are two proposed land-based greenways: the Illinois Central Corridor and the Plum Creek to Illinois Central Corridor. One water-based greenway, Thorn Creek, is proposed.

Future Open Space Requirements

All new residential developments should incorporate at least 30 percent of the gross area as open space. This policy is intended to preserve, in perpetuity, open spaces and areas of particular natural resource value as an integral part of all types of development projects.

Open spaces to be dedicated as a part of new developments should include “high and-dry” neighborhood parks, greenway corridors, and could also include wildlife habits, wetlands, wooded areas, natural vegetation, and recreational trails. Maintenance responsibilities for open space should be established at the time of development approval. Open space areas that are not suitable for active public use, such as stormwater management facilities, could be maintained by a property owners association, or a not-for-profit corporation, if a public agency (such as the Village, Will County Forest Preserve District, the school district, Monee

Township, etc.) does not wish to accept ownership and maintenance responsibility of the land. Ultimate ownership should be determined by the Village of University Park.

The lands along the greenway corridors should receive top priority as a part of these open space dedications. While most of the lands within the greenway corridors have natural limitations regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Village might consider leniency in other requirements, such as density, to compensate for setting aside more than the required 30 percent amount of open space. In some cases, the Village could work with a petitioner to seek purchase of the open space by one of the public agencies.

The way to protect greenway corridors and open spaces is through the development plan review process. Most important in this effort is the setting aside of areas with special environmental and ecological value for protection from development. The open space dedication recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan* is a guideline that could be modified on a project-by-project basis, depending upon



the character of the site and the quality of the development plan. If a development has extensive wetlands and/or stormwater detention or retention areas, the amount of open space could exceed 30 percent. Where open space is well planned to meet the objectives of this *Comprehensive Plan*, trade-offs could be considered in terms of smaller lots than stipulating the underlying zoning in exchange for creative or conservation-oriented design. For example, cluster/open space design is a site planning technique that concentrates buildings on a portion of the site in order to preserve the remaining land for recreation, open space, agriculture or the preservation of environmentally important features. This type of development allows a reduction in lot area, provided there is no significant increase in the number of lots that would be permitted under a conventional subdivision. Conservation design rearranges the development on each parcel as it is being planned so that half (or more) of the buildable land is set aside as open space. As new areas of parks, open space, and other natural resources are identified, they should also be added to the greenway corridors or areas identified as “Open Space/Parks” as shown on the *Land Use Plan*.

Figure 6. Natural Features Plan

SECTION 7: TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Section 7 provides an overview of future year transportation conditions for the Village of University Park. Included is a summary of future development and transportation issues, alternative transportation improvements, and recommended transportation improvements that support the Village's future land use plan and overall vision for growth and development. Figure 7, *2030 Traffic Volumes*; Figure 8, *Programmed Roadway Improvements*, and Figure 9, *Future Roadway Network*, graphically display goals, objectives, and policies related to transportation issues and concepts in University Park.



The Transportation/Land Use Connection

The transportation/land use relationship is extremely complex. Transportation systems and land use patterns influence each other. Roadways, transit, and other transportation elements shape land development, while the distribution and types of land uses affect travel patterns and transportation facilities. A dispersed pattern of low-density development relies almost exclusively on automobiles as the primary transportation mode. Alternative land use concepts, such as denser urban centers and transit oriented development (TOD), encourage a mixed-use of residential, commercial, and office development. The close proximity of these land uses promotes alternative transportation modes including walking, bicycling, and public transportation.

Today, many communities struggle with two development related concerns, 1) a shortage of developable land and 2) a lack of regional transportation facilities to sustain development. In the case of University Park, the Village has ample land for development with plans to expand its boundaries and increase residential, commercial, office and industrial activities. The I-57 corridor provides regional access to the Village which supports development opportunities. However, the limited access that currently exists from the interstate hinders the future growth of the Village. Strengthening the transportation / land use connection within University Park is critical to the continued growth and development of the Village.

Future Year Development Issues

There are several future year development issues that will impact transportation and infrastructure decisions within the Village. These issues are summarized briefly in the following:

South Suburban Growth

University Park is one of many communities in the south suburban area that is expecting significant growth over the next 20 years. In addition to commercial, industrial, and office growth, the Village population is expected to exceed 30,000 by the year 2030. One significant advantage that University Park has over some other communities is available land to accommodate growth. Improving the transportation infrastructure to be able to access this land is an important element in supporting future development.

South Suburban Airport

The proposed South Suburban Airport, located just south of University Park, will have significant regional and local impacts on the area's transportation system. IDOT plans to construct a new I-57 interchange, near Pauling Road, that would serve as the primary access to the airport. Within University Park, Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway will serve as secondary routes to access the airport. Governors Highway would ultimately provide a direct connection to the airport entrance.

Gateway Industrial Park

The area just east of the I-57 corridor consists of primarily industrial land uses. The future land use plan calls for additional industrial development to occur in this area. The on-going development of the Gateway Industrial Park will attract increasing levels of truck traffic to the University Park area. Regional access to the industrial park is provided via the I-57/Monee-Manhattan Road interchange while local access is provided via Central Avenue. Improving the regional and local access to the industrial area is critical to the continued growth and development of the Gateway Industrial Park.

Thorn Creek Station

Thorn Creek Station is a transit oriented development (TOD) plan for the area near the Village's Metra station. TOD is a fast growing urban planning trend in creating vibrant, livable neighborhoods and communities that promote compact, walkable environments centered around high quality transit service. The mix of residential, commercial, and office developments makes it possible to live a higher quality of life without complete dependence on the automobile for mobility. The development of the Thorn Creek Station will be a focal point of the Village for many years to come. Improving regional and local access to Thorn Creek Station, and creating an internal circulation pattern, are important to the success of this development.

Governors State University

Governors State University (GSU) is located in the center of the Village. The continued growth and vitality of the University is important to the future development of University Park. Opportunities to strengthen the relationship between GSU and the Village are important to the implementation of future transportation improvements.

Future Year Transportation Issues

Strengthening the transportation/land use connection within University Park is critical to the continued growth of the Village. An analysis of the Village's transportation system indicates that there are three major issues that must be addressed to strengthen this relationship. These issues are summarized in the following:

I-57 Access to Village

Access to/from University Park has been, and will continue to be, a major challenge for the Village. Access to and from I-57 is currently provided via the Sauk Trail interchange located one mile north of University Park and the Monee-Manhattan Road interchange located along the southern Village boundary. Both interchanges have heavy traffic levels, including significant truck traffic, during peak travel periods. With planned improvements (i.e., airport development, I-355 extension, Illiana Expressway, etc.) that will improve regional access to the Village it is critical that existing I-57 access points be improved and new access points be constructed. Without improved access, the Village will have a difficult time implementing and sustaining future development and expansion plans.

East-West Connectivity

East-west connectivity has been and will continue to be a major challenge for the Village. Ideally, three or four continuous arterial roadways, at approximately one-mile spacing, would connect the east and west sides of the Village. However, several constraints including existing residential developments, the forest preserve, other natural/environmental features, and at-grade rail crossings make the construction of continuous, direct east-west connections difficult. Roadway improvements that enhance east-west mobility are critical to the future development of the Village.

Developing the Arterial Roadway System

In addition to improving east-west arterials, there is also a need to develop north-south arterials to facilitate travel within and through the Village. The southeast portion of University Park, generally bound by Governors Highway, Dralle Road (extended east), Blackhawk Drive, and Ohlendorf Road, is an area in need of new east-west and north-south arterial roadways. Defining, and more importantly constructing, a comprehensive arterial system is critical to the implementation of the Village's future growth and land use plans. Once the future arterial roadway system is defined, it will set forth a blueprint for residents and developers to clearly understand the Village's vision for growth over the next several decades. This clear understanding of the transportation/land use connection by all stakeholders is critical to gaining support for plan implementation.

Regional Transportation Improvements

The following are regional transportation improvements that could impact the Village's future transportation network and services. These include:

Metra Service Extension

Metra has discussed plans to extend the Electric Line south, potentially as far as Kankakee. Currently, the River Valley Metro Mass Transit District provides a commuter rail link from Kankakee to the University Park Metra station. With the planned airport development, the Metra service would likely be extended to serve the airport.

Illiana Expressway

The Illiana Expressway is a planned roadway that would provide an east-west connection linking eastern Illinois to northwest Indiana. Original plans called for the expressway to run just south of University Park. However, the planned development of the South Suburban Airport will likely require this regional roadway to be constructed further south of University

Park, perhaps closer to Kankakee. Regardless of the final location, the addition of an east-west regional highway would increase access to the south suburban area and would benefit the Village.

I-355 Extension

The I-355 Tollway extension will increase regional accessibility and traffic volumes to the south suburban area. Construction to extend the I-355 Tollway from its current terminus at I-55 south to I-80 in New Lenox is scheduled to complete in 2007. Long-term plans call for the future extension of I-355 from I-80 to I-57 with an east-west connection. This planned improvement would dramatically improve regional access to areas south of I-80 including the Village of University Park, and will further connect the fast growing areas of west and northwest Will County along the I-55 corridor with eastern Will County.

High Speed Rail Corridor

The Canadian National-Illinois Central (CN-IC) rail line that parallels Governors Highway through the Village is a potential corridor for high speed rail. This corridor is currently one of approximately three or four concepts being evaluated as a connection between St. Louis and Chicago. With the planned development of the South Suburban Airport, this corridor becomes more attractive as a preferred high speed rail connection. If high speed rail is implemented along the CN-IC rail line, this would significantly increase rail traffic in the University Park area and would place greater emphasis on the need to construct grade-separated rail facilities within the Village.

Future Roadway Network

In order to formulate a recommended transportation plan, it is necessary to understand the future year baseline conditions. To do so, year 2030 traffic volumes were obtained and planned transportation improvements were reviewed.

Year 2030 Baseline Traffic Projections

The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Chicago area. This agency provided future year (2030) transportation projections for the Village of University Park. The 2030 baseline traffic projections included the planned South Suburban Airport and a new I-57 interchange at Stuenkel Road. Figure 7 displays the year 2030 baseline projections.

The 2030 traffic projections show a significant increase in traffic volumes along I-57. In fact, volumes on I-57, just south of Monee-Manhattan Road, are expected to increase to approximately 100,000 vehicles per day (vpd) in the year 2030. Current volumes at this location are approximately 35,000 vpd. This increase in traffic can be attributed to several factors including continued development in the south suburban area and improved regional access, including an I-355 extension and construction of the Illiana Expressway. As a result, the I-57 mainline will need to be widened to provide sufficient capacity.

The 2030 land use/transportation scenario also includes the planned interchange at I-57/Stuenkel Road. Existing traffic volumes along Stuenkel Road, west of Cicero Avenue, are approximately 8,500 vpd. With the new interchange, year 2030 volumes at this location are expected to increase to approximately 14,000 vpd. Should additional development occur, such as the Thorn Creek Station, it is likely that these traffic volumes would increase over the 14,000 vpd baseline condition and could reach as high as 17,000 to 18,000 vpd.

Figure 7. 2030 Traffic Volumes

Another significant increase in traffic volumes is expected near the I-57/Monee-Manhattan Road interchange. Existing volumes on Monee-Manhattan Road, just west of I-57, are approximately 7,800 vpd. Volumes east of I-57 are approximately 13,400 vpd. Year 2030 volumes show traffic projections approaching 25,000 vpd west of I-57 and 22,000 vpd east of I-57. IDOT is currently in the process of designing a new interchange at this location to accommodate future year traffic projections. Plans include reconstructing the interchange with a five-lane bridge and new ramps to accommodate dual left-turn lanes and a right-turn lane. These improvements should be sufficient to accommodate the future traffic levels projected in this area.

Planned and Alternative Roadway Improvements

IDOT, CATS, Will County, and University Park have identified regional and local transportation improvements that impact the Village. Figure 8 displays planned roadway improvements within and adjacent to the Village. The following sections describe these planned improvements and discuss the potential impacts as they relate to, 1) improving access to Village from Interstate 57, 2) improving east-west connectivity, and 3) developing a comprehensive arterial roadway network. In addition to the planned improvements that have



been identified, additional transportation improvements that would benefit the Village's transportation system are discussed. For each project, additional information such as projected 2030 traffic volumes and project priority are identified.

Figure 8. Programmed Roadway Improvements

I-57 / Stuenkel Road Interchange

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

This project, as identified in the Will County and CATS transportation plans, would construct a new interchange at I-57/Stuenkel Road. IDOT has completed a break-in-access study at Stuenkel Road which supports the construction of this project. The next step in the planning process is to identify funding for the project and to begin the design and construction process. University Park has for several years supported the construction of this interchange and has viewed this improvement as critical to the future growth of the Village.

Potential Impacts

This project would provide a direct connection to I-57 and would serve as the primary access to the Village. Currently, access to the Village occurs via the Sauk Trail interchange, located one-mile north of the Village, or via the Monee-Manhattan Road interchange located along the southern Village boundary. A new I-57 interchange would benefit traffic operations at these existing interchanges and would increase overall accessibility to the Village. Given the high truck traffic levels and industrial uses along the I-57 corridor, an interchange at Stuenkel Road could spur additional development and better accommodate truck traffic serving the Village's industrial parks. Furthermore, this project addresses the most pressing transportation issue facing the Village, improving regional access to and from I-57.

Proposed Actions

The construction of the I-57 / Stuenkel Road interchange is critical to the continued growth and development of University Park. The Village should continue to pursue this project as the highest priority transportation improvement. The next step is to have this project included as soon as possible in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Once in the STIP, funding will have been identified for the design and construction phases of the project.

Summary

Improvement Type:	New Interchange
Approximate Project Length:	0.5 miles
Number of Lanes:	To be determined
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	14,000 vpd (Baseline Condition)
Priority:	High Priority
Time Horizon:	Medium (5-10 years)
Implementation:	The Village should work with IDOT to get the I-57 / Stuenkel Road interchange programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Consider an interchange design such as a single point urban diamond that would minimize the amount of land needed for the construction of the interchange and would increase the amount of land available for development.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	High (greater than \$10 million)

Potential Funding Sources:

Federal Funds, IDOT, Local Match

NOTE: One potential state funding option is the Economic Development Program (EDP). The purpose of the EDP is to provide state assistance in improving highway access to new or expanding industrial distribution or tourism developments. The intent is to make available state matching funds that will be a positive contribution in the location-selection process and to target those projects which will expand the state's existing job base or create new employment opportunities. The focus of the program is on the retention and creation of primary jobs. Funding will be available to construct highway facilities that provide direct access to industrial, distribution or tourism developments.

University Parkway Rail Overpass

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

The existing University Parkway at-grade rail crossing (CN-IC rail line) consists of two tracks and approximately 75 feet between tracks and the existing all-way stop at Governors Highway. This location has been previously identified as a location that would benefit from the construction of a grade separated structure.

Potential Impacts

The construction of a rail overpass would eliminate the existing at-grade rail crossing along University Parkway. This would improve east-west connectivity, enhance traffic operations, reduce travel delays, improve traffic safety, and improve existing freight rail operations. Future Metra operations would also benefit should they extend services to the south including the proposed South Suburban Airport. This project would also improve accessibility to the Metra station and GSU.

Proposed Actions

The approval, design, and construction of a grade separated rail structure can take considerable time. It is important to begin discussions with the railroad and the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) about the need for this overpass. As part of the process, it will be necessary to document potential safety benefits that would be achieved from the construction of the rail overpass. This type of improvement could potentially be eligible for funding from the Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF) administered by the ICC.

Plans for constructing an overpass should be closely coordinated with the planned I-57/Stuenkel Road interchange. Once a new interchange is constructed, it will enhance access to the Village and increase traffic along University Parkway.

Summary

Improvement Type:	Grade Separated Structure
Approximate Project Length:	0.3 miles
Number of Lanes:	Consistent with planned widening of University Parkway
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	14,000 vpd (Baseline Condition)- Volumes likely to increase with development of the Thorn Creek Station TOD.
Priority:	High Priority
Time Horizon:	Long (10-20 years)
Implementation:	Coordinate construction of the rail overpass with a new I-57 / Stuenkel Road interchange. Begin discussions with the rail company about the construction of a grade separated structure. Meet with GSU to discuss any potential construction impacts. If possible, coordinate construction with a potential extension of Dralle Road east of Governors Highway to provide an alternate east-west route through the Village and an additional GSU entry.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	High (greater than \$10 million)
Potential Funding Sources:	Federal Funds, IDOT, Rail Company, ICC, Local Match NOTE: One potential funding option is the Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF) administered by the ICC. This program looks to improve traffic safety at existing at-grade rail crossings. Should this corridor be designated for high speed rail, federal funding could potentially be available to construct grade separated structures.

Steger Road Extension

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

This improvement, as identified in the Will County Highway Plan, would extend Steger Road from Cicero Avenue to Crawford Avenue (approximately 1.2 miles). The planned extension of Steger Road would create an additional crossing of the CN-IC rail line that parallels Governors Highway. Given that this rail line is used for both freight and passenger rail service, any new crossing would require grade separation. This rail crossing includes four tracks and Governors Highway is four-lanes wide. This would require a fairly large and costly structure to accommodate rail operations and highway traffic.

Potential Impacts

Analysis of this potential improvement shows that extending Steger Road from Cicero Avenue to Crawford Avenue would not serve as a major east-west corridor for the Village. Steger Road cannot continue east of Central Park Avenue due to existing residential development. Since this roadway extension would not provide a continuous east-west connection through the Village, and given the location along the northern Village boundary,

this project is viewed as a low priority project in terms of improving regional and local access and improving east-west connectivity.

As alternative, the Village should consider extending Steger Road to Governors Highway. This connection would provide an additional east-west local connection that would support the planned Thorn Creek Station development. Furthermore, since this shorter extension would not cross the CN-IC rail line, no grade separated structure would be needed.

Proposed Actions

The Village should support the extension of Steger Road from Cicero Avenue to Governors Highway. This would be a modification to the existing plan that would extend Steger Road from Cicero Avenue to Crawford Avenue which is currently included in the Will County Transportation Plan. This eliminates the need to construct an additional rail overpass and at the same time improves access to the planned Thorn Creek Station TOD.

Summary

Improvement Type:	New Roadway
Approximate Project Length:	0.75 miles
Number of Lanes:	3-lanes (additional turn lanes at Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway)
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	9,000 vpd
Priority:	Low Priority – From a standpoint of improving regional transportation. Development in the area could increase the need to construct this facility.
Time Horizon:	Long (10-20 years) NOTE: Development of the Thorn Creek Station could move this project to a medium or even short-term project.
Implementation:	Modify the proposed improvement in the Will County transportation plan to show the Steger Road extension between Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	Low (under \$ 5 million)
Potential Funding Sources:	County, Local, Private Developer NOTE: Given that this roadway improvement would support the Thorn Creek Station TOD, it is possible that a private developer would consider participating in the construction of this facility to improve access to the planned development.

Dralle Road Corridor Improvements

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

There are two conceptual improvements that have been identified along the Dralle Road corridor. The first is a potential I-57 overpass that would provide a new east-west connection across the interstate. The second is an extension of Dralle Road extending east from Governors Highway to Exchange Street. This extension was identified as a conceptual roadway improvement in the *University Park TOD Study* completed in 2002.

Potential Impacts

The Dralle Road improvements would have significant benefits to the Village’s transportation system. Specifically, these two projects would improve east-west connectivity through the Village and would provide a much needed continuous arterial connection through the Village center. The construction of an I-57 overpass would link the east and west sides of the interstate and this overpass could accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists serving as the primary non-motorized link across I-57. The extension of Dralle Road east to Exchange Street would allow for the development of a south entry to GSU. This roadway extension could also potentially connect with a new north-south arterial helping to further increase mobility within the Village.

Proposed Actions

The Village should meet with GSU to discuss the potential for developing the Dralle Road connection from Governors Highway to Exchange Street. The Village should also meet with IDOT to begin discussions about the construction of an overpass at I-57. Ultimately, these improvements should be included in future transportation plans, including Will County and CATS.

Summary

Improvement Type:	a) I-57 Overpass b) Dralle Road Extension
Approximate Project Length:	a) 0.5 miles b) 1.4 miles
Number of Lanes:	a) 2-lanes with pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. b) Potential boulevard/parkway design with potential for bicycle accommodations.
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	7,000 vpd to 9,000 vpd
Priority:	Moderate Priority
Time Horizon:	Medium (5-10 years)
Implementation:	Work with GSU to discuss the feasibility of constructing the Dralle Road extension. Begin discussions with IDOT regarding an I-57 overpass. Include proposed improvements in the Will County and CATS transportation plan to show extension between Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	Medium (\$5 - 10 million)
Potential Funding Sources:	Local, GSU NOTE: One consideration is that GSU would participate (through funds and/or right-of-way) in the development of this roadway as it would allow for a new south entry to GSU to be constructed.

Monee-Manhattan Road Extension

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

The *Will County Transportation Plan* identifies an extension of Monee-Manhattan Road east from Governors Highway with a connection to Crete-Monee Road just west of Old Monee Road. This improvement, as displayed in the *Will County Transportation Plan*, is no longer feasible given the residential development that has since occurred in the areas east and west of Will-Center Road. A possible alternative improvement would be to extend Monee-Manhattan Road east to Blackhawk Drive where it would connect to Olmstead Drive.

Potential Impacts

The suggested alternative roadway improvement, extending Monee-Manhattan Road east to Blackhawk Drive, would provide a much needed arterial connection through the Village. If constructed, this roadway would improve east-west connectivity and would function as the only direct, continuous connection from Harlem Avenue to Western Avenue. Perhaps the greatest benefit would be the increased access to developable land in the southeast portion of Village. Furthermore, this extension would allow for the development of new north-south arterial connections that would further enhance travel connections and improve mobility within the Village.

A potential drawback is that this project would create a new crossing of the CN-IC rail line. Given the existing and planned rail activity, this crossing would need to be grade separated. The topography near the rail line is such that it might be possible to extend the roadway under the rail line thus allowing the connection to Governors Highway to be preserved.

Proposed Actions

University Park should support this project. This project is not only an important component of the Village's transportation system but it is also critical in the implementation of the Village's *2030 Growth Plan* and the future *Land Use Plan*. This improvement should be included in the Will County and CATS transportation plans. In order to maximize the benefit of this project to the Village of University Park, the Village may wish to coordinate this project with realization of the Zone 1 elements of the *2030 Growth Plan*, which annexes currently unincorporated land containing the path of the proposed extension.

Summary

Improvement Type:	New Roadway / Grade Separated Rail Structure
Approximate Project Length:	3.2 miles
Number of Lanes:	4 to 5-lanes
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	16,000 vpd to 20,000 vpd
Priority:	Moderate Priority
Time Horizon:	Long (10-20 years)
Implementation:	Include in the Will County Transportation Plan and CATS Transportation Plan. Preserve corridor right-of-way so future development does not prohibit the construction of this facility. Identify potential north-south arterial roadway connections that would intersect with the potential Monee-Manhattan Road extension. Support and adopt strict access management guidelines along this corridor to preserve capacity and enhance travel safety for all transportation users.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	High (greater than \$10 million)
Potential Funding Sources:	IDOT, County, Rail Company, ICC, Local Match NOTE: One potential option would be for IDOT to consider the extension of the Monee-Manhattan Road as a possible Strategic Arterial Roadway, thus increasing the possibility of additional funds for this facility.

North-South Arterial Roadway Improvements

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

The lack of arterial roadways through University Park has been previously documented as an obstacle to the future growth and development within the Village. While specific east-west arterial improvements have been identified, such as a Dralle Road extension and a Monee-Manhattan Road extension, the north-south connections are less defined. Potential improvements include the construction of the following north-south roadway projects:

- **Kuersten Road:** This roadway currently ends on north side at Crete-Monee Road. One possible improvement would include a potential extension of this roadway north to intersect with an east-west extension of Dralle Road and create a new south entry to the GSU campus.
- **Old Monee Road:** A potential improvement along Old Monee Road would involve the realignment of this corridor from approximately Hamilton Road directly south to connect to Ohlendorf Road. This improvement would better accommodate future development along a potential extension of Monee-Manhattan Road and would improve traffic operations by providing 1-mile spacing between major arterials and ½-mile spacing between minor arterials.
- **Kedzie Avenue:** This roadway is currently less than 0.2 miles and provides access from University Parkway. A potential improvement would extend Kedzie Avenue

south to Ohlendorf Road. This project would be approximately 2.25 miles and would greatly improve north-south mobility throughout the Village.

- **New Roadway:** Another potential improvement would be the development of a new north-south roadway corridor located between Old Monee Road and a potential extension of Kedzie Avenue. This roadway could potentially extend from a new east-west connection that would be developed approximately 0.3 miles south of University Parkway to Ohlendorf Road.

Potential Impacts

Developing north-south arterial roadways are critical to the on-going growth and development of the Village. It is important to define these arterial improvements so residents and developers clearly understand potential growth areas and appropriate land uses. Without developing this arterial roadway system, it would be difficult for the Village to fully implement the future *Land Use Plan*.

Proposed Actions

The Village should begin to conduct detailed studies to identify potential north-south arterials. These studies would identify feasible alignments and would evaluate right-of-way and environmental concerns.

Summary

Improvement Type:	New Arterial Roadways
Approximate Project Length:	Kuersten Road – 1.7 miles Old Monee Road – 1.5 miles Kedzie Avenue – 2.3 miles New Roadway – 2.0 miles
Number of Lanes:	2-3 Lanes
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	Varies; generally between 5,000 vpd and 10,000 vpd.
Priority:	Moderate Priority
Time Horizon:	Medium (5-10 years) to Long (10-20 years) NOTE: The majority of the north-south roadways will be constructed as development dictates in the southeast portion of the Village. These roadway improvements will likely occur in the mid to long-term.
Implementation:	Conduct detailed right-of-way and environmental studies to identify potential corridors for new arterial roadways. Preserve corridor right-of-way so future development does not prohibit the construction of new roadway facilities.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	Low (under \$ 5 million) NOTE: Individual roadway projects will generally be less than \$5 million. All north-south roadway improvements would likely total between \$10 and \$20 million. Many variables which would be identified in the detailed evaluation and design process would help refine the future project costs.

Potential Funding Sources: Local, Private Developer
NOTE: The majority of these roadway improvements would be constructed by the Village. It is possible that the Village could work with private developers to offset the costs of some roadway improvements (i.e., driveway/property access, turn lanes, traffic signals, etc.)

Intersection and Spot Improvements

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

The Will County Transportation Plan includes planned intersection improvements at Steger Road and Harlem Avenue and Steger Road and Ridgeland Avenue. The existing intersection design is offset rather than a + design, which prohibits a direct and continuous north-south connection.

An analysis of the Village’s roadway network also highlights the need to evaluate additional improvements including intersection improvements along Crawford Avenue and a potential connection of Hickok Avenue, just west of Sierra Court at the existing pedestrian bridge location. The existing all-way stop at Monee-Manhattan Road and Central Avenue is a location that should be studied for the installation of a traffic signal.

Potential Impacts

These improvements would generally improve intersection operations. By themselves, these projects do not directly improve access to the Village or improve east-west connectivity. Instead, these improvements would compliment these larger projects that are intended to increase regional access, improve east-west connectivity, and develop the arterial roadway system.

Proposed Actions

Support the planned intersection improvements in the *Will County Transportation Plan* and continue to plan for and improve additional intersections within the Village. As always, traffic safety should be a high priority to the Village.

Summary

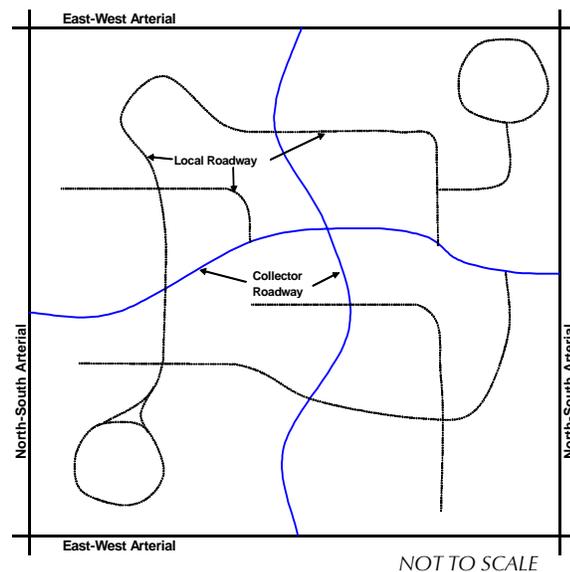
Improvement Type:	Intersection Improvements
Approximate Project Length:	N/A
Number of Lanes:	N/A
Estimated 2030 Traffic Volumes:	N/A
Priority:	Low Priority Generally, these are low priority improvements unless a specific safety concern is being addressed. These projects would generally complement other transportation improvements that improve regional access to the Village, improve east-west connectivity through the Village, and enhance the development of the arterial roadway system.
Time Horizon:	Short (0-5 years)
Implementation:	Support planned intersection improvements and identify additional intersections for improvement.
Order of Magnitude Cost:	Low (under \$ 5 million) NOTE: Individual roadway projects will generally be less than \$5 million. All north-south roadway improvements would likely total between \$10 and \$20 million. Many variables which would be identified in the detailed evaluation and design process would help refine the future project costs.
Potential Funding Sources:	IDOT, Local NOTE: State funding could be available in some cases if the project improves traffic safety. Local funds would otherwise be the primary funding source.

Recommended Roadway Improvements

The purpose of this section is to identify a comprehensive roadway system improvement plan that accommodates the anticipated growth and future transportation needs of University Park. The recommended roadway projects include several individual transportation improvements at various locations throughout the Village. While individual projects help develop the Village's transportation system, it is ultimately the implementation of all the transportation improvements that will provide the greatest mobility and accessibility benefits. Implementing all the transportation projects is a long and costly process and as such priorities need to be established. The following questions were used to help identify the recommended transportation improvements and their priority:

1. Does the project improve regional access to roadways such as I-57?
2. Does the project improve east-west connectivity within the Village?
3. Does the project help develop the Village's arterial roadway network?

Transportation improvements that address these issues will ultimately strengthen the Village's functional classification system by creating a hierarchy of roads that collects and distributes traffic from local neighborhoods to the regional highway system. Major trip generators such as employment and commercial centers should be served by roadways with a higher classification, such as arterials. Residential, neighborhood, and places of relatively low traffic demand should have roadways of lower classification such as collectors and local streets. It is in this manner the future land use plan is integrated into the transportation plan. The figure to the right conceptually displays the hierarchy of roads.



The primary intent of the *Transportation Plan* is to identify improvements to strengthen the arterial roadway system. Once the arterial system is developed, lower roadway functional classifications (i.e., collectors, local roads) will fall into place. Developing east-west and north-south arterials will naturally define areas for development and will ultimately support the Village's future growth and land use plans. The table below summarizes the recommended transportation improvements. Figure 9 displays the location of the roadway improvements.

Project	Description	Improves Regional Access	Improves East-West Connectivity	Develops Arterial System	Improves Local Access
High Priority					
A I-57 / Stuenkel Road Interchange	A new I-57 interchange is critical to the continued growth and development of the Village. This interchange would provide a direct connection to University Park and would support the Gateway Industrial Park adjacent to I-57. The interchange would also relieve congestion at the Monee-Manhattan Road and Sauk Trail interchanges that are currently used to access the Village. This project would also improve access to Governors State University.				
B University Parkway Rail Overpass	The construction of a new I-57 interchange will result in increased traffic levels along University Parkway. As such, it is important that the construction of a rail overpass at the CN-IC rail line be coordinated with the construction of the I-57 interchange. This improvement will improve traffic operations, reduce travel delay, improve safety, and enhance mobility throughout the Village.				
Moderate Priority					
C Dralle Road / I-57 Overpass	The construction of a Dralle Road overpass at I-57 would provide an additional connection between the west and east sides of the Village. This improvement would support the Village's future growth and land use plans which include extending the Village's west boundary to Harlem Avenue. The overpass provides a local connection that would also help relieve traffic levels along Monee-Manhattan Road.				
D Dralle Road Extension	An extension of Dralle Road Extension, from Governors Highway to Exchange Street, is an important project that would improve east-west connectivity throughout the Village center. This extension, along with the Dralle / I-57 overpass, would provide a continuous east-west connection through the Village. This project also would create a new south entry to GSU.				
E Monee-Manhattan Road Extension	An extension of Monee-Manhattan Road, from Governors Highway east to Blackhawk Drive, would create a continuous, direct east-west arterial in the southern portion of the Village. This arterial would support future growth and development within the Village and would allow for the development of north-south arterials to enhance mobility within the Village. This improvement would require a grade separated structure at the CN-IC rail line.				
F North-South Arterial Roadways	The development of north-south arterials within the Village will support future residential and commercial development within the Village. The combination of east-west arterials and north-south arterials will help form the Village's roadway grid which improves mobility, defines areas for development, and outlines appropriate locations for local and development access.				
Low Priority					
G Steger Road Extension	An extension of Steger Road, from Cicero Avenue to Governors Highway, would support the planned Thorn Creek Station TOD. This project would not have significant regional impacts but would improve local connections within the Village, all be it along the Village's northern boundary. This modified extension of Steger Road, as opposed to extending the roadway east over the CN-IC rail line, would not require the construction of an additional rail overpass. While identified as a low priority, it is possible that development of the Thorn Creek Station could speed up the desire to construct this project.				
H Intersection / Spot Improvements	Intersection / Spot improvements are generally projects that address specific traffic operations and/or safety concerns. These projects are identified as a low priority in terms of improving regional access, improving east-west connectivity, and developing the arterial roadway network. However, projects that address traffic safety should be a priority for the Village. Spot improvements identified for potential traffic operations improvements include: Crawford Avenue at University Parkway and Exchange Street, an extension of Hickok Avenue, and a possible traffic signal at Monee-Manhattan Road and Central Avenue.				

Figure 9. Future Roadway Network

Future Transit Service

There are two primary public transportation services within University Park. One is Metra, the rail passenger service connecting to Chicago, and the second is Pace, the regional transit provider of bus service throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. These two public transportation services are an important part of the Village's transportation system and it is important that these services be preserved and strengthened in years to come.

The Thorn Creek Station TOD plan is focused around the existing Metra rail station. This project will enhance the rail passenger service within the Village and with planned bicycle and pedestrian improvements along University Parkway, and within the TOD, this will encourage walking and bicycling. It is also likely that Metra will at some point in the future extend service south to the airport. Another possible service that could impact University Park is the development of high speed rail. These are all important transit projects that would benefit the future growth and development of University Park.

In terms of potential Pace improvements, the development of the roadway network will allow better access throughout the Village. As such, it is likely that Pace improvements will follow the roadway improvements. For example, an extension of Monee-Manhattan Road would allow improved access for Pace to existing and planned residential developments in the southeast portion of the Village. It is important that as the Village plans, designs, and constructs new roadway facilities that the transit operations be considered and adequately accommodated.

Future Non-Motorized Facilities

Non-motorized facilities, or pedestrian and bicycle facilities, are an important elements of the Village's transportation system. Developing trails and sidewalks that connect to desirable destinations such as parks, schools, recreational areas, and commercial areas are important from a transportation perspective but these facilities can also improve overall community aesthetics. Potential non-motorized improvements should include combination of off-road (trails) and on-road (bike lanes, wide shoulders, etc.) facilities.

The Village is currently in the process of designing improvements to University Parkway. These improvements include the construction of sidewalks that will provide better non-motorized connections within the Village. In addition to dedicated non-motorized facilities, the Village should also look for opportunities when constructing new roadways to incorporate on-road bicycle facilities. This could include providing wide paved shoulders and/or on-road bicycle lanes. Figure 6 in the Natural Features section displays potential future year connections that should be explored.

One of the major new trails proposed is along the Monee-Manhattan Road extension. This trail facility could also extend north along Governors Highway to connect to the existing and planned trails just north of Dralle Road. Given that the Monee-Manhattan Road could become a major east-west corridor in the Village, it is important to plan for a multi-use trail that could be used to access commercial and residential areas. This would also benefit future transit (Pace) improvements that could be implemented, given the new access that would be provided by Monee-Manhattan Road extension.

Additional Transportation Actions

Project Development Process

The Village's natural surroundings and environmentally sensitive areas are some of the many attributes that make University Park a great place to live and work. As such, it is important that the transportation improvements enhance the overall character of the Village. Implementation of the transportation improvements will require additional planning and design, cooperation with surrounding communities, coordination with state agencies, and public participation to ensure that the overall development vision, and community goals and objectives, are achieved.

Access and Corridor Protection

As the Village grows, and the transportation infrastructure takes shape, it is likely that there will be numerous requests for additional access (e.g., new public streets, commercial driveways, residential accesses) and these requests may be evaluated by different agencies, the planning commission, public works, and engineering staff. Because of the number of agencies involved, it could be easy to have inconsistent application of access controls and different viewpoints on the need for access restrictions.

Therefore, it is essential that the Village adopt an Access Plan to communicate to all stakeholders the importance of balancing property access with safety and mobility concerns. Routes that provide higher mobility have less access and those that have a high number of access points will have lower mobility. A major purpose of relating access control to roadway purpose is to protect continuous routes and important corridors to the greatest extent possible and to prevent undue restriction of access on local and minor collector routes where access is appropriate. Adequate control of access on routes designed to provide mobility prevents the necessity of expending additional public funds to buy new rights-of-way and establish new corridors as existing corridors become congested or develop safety concerns. The table below displays general access spacing guidelines for various roadway facilities.

Urban public street spacing guidelines

(Speeds Less Than 45 mph)

Type of Public Access	Type of Roadway and Average Daily Traffic Affected by Access ^{(1) (9)}				
	Multi-Lane Divided Arterial or Collector Over 10,000	Multi-Lane Undivided Arterial or Collector 8,000 – 25,000	Two-Lane Arterial or Collector 3,000 – 10,000	Two-Lane Arterial Less than 3,000	Two-Lane Collector or Local Roads Less than 3,000
A. Local: Low-Volume, Non-Continuous Streets ^{(2) (3)}	1/4-mile spacing with no median opening ⁽⁴⁾	1/4-mile spacing ^{(6) (7)} with turn lanes	1/8-mile spacing ⁽⁷⁾ with turn lanes	1/8-mile spacing ⁽⁷⁾	1/16-mile spacing
B. Local: Medium-Volume, Non-Continuous Streets ^{(2) (3)}	1/2-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes ⁽⁵⁾	1/4-mile spacing ⁽⁶⁾ with signals and turn lanes	1/4-mile spacing ⁽⁷⁾ with turn lanes	1/8-mile spacing with turn lanes	1/8-mile spacing with turn lanes
C. Collector: Low- and Medium-Volume Through Streets ⁽²⁾	1/2-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes ⁽⁵⁾	1/4-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1/4-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1/4-mile spacing with turn lanes	1/8-mile spacing with turn lanes
D. Arterial: High-Volume Through Streets ^{(2) (8)}	1-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1/2-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1/2-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes	1/4-mile spacing with signals and turn lanes

NOTES:

- ¹ The urban access guidelines are applicable to State, County and Village roads. **Bold areas** are guidelines that may be modified (see below).
- ² Year 2030 traffic projections. “Low-Volume” denotes fewer than 3,000 vehicles per day. “Medium-Volume” denotes 3,000 to 8,000 vehicles per day. “High-Volume” denotes more than 8,000 vehicles per day.
- ³ Non-continuous streets refer to cul-de-sac or short local streets (less than 1/2 mile) which do not necessarily cross the roadway in question.
- ⁴ Additional access may be permitted in the form of right-in/right-out. These areas should be evaluated on an individual basis.
- ⁵ For four-lane County or Village roads, the guidelines may be relaxed to 1/4-mile spacing.
- ⁶ When retrofitting an existing corridor, direct access may be permitted after considering turning conflicts, speed, accident history and capacity issues.
- ⁷ Continuous left-turn lanes or a raised median with left-turn lanes may be considered if retrofitting an existing corridor and access guidelines cannot be achieved.
- ⁸ Property access off of an arterial street should be minimized.
- ⁹ All access locations should have adequate stopping sight distance, drainage, spacing from adjacent access and alignment.

SECTION 8: IMPLEMENTATION & ACTION AGENDA

The planning process in University Park has just begun. In many ways, formal adoption of the *Comprehensive Plan* is a first step, not the last. Without continuing action to implement and update this Plan, the Village's efforts up to this point will have a minimal lasting impact.

The *Comprehensive Plan* sets forth an agreed-upon "road map" for the next fifteen to twenty years. It is the product of considerable efforts on the part of Village staff and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), and the final Plan represents the consensus of all involved. Immediately after adoption of this Plan by the Village of University Park, it shall be introduced by the Village to key organizations such as School District 201-U, Governor's State University, Will County Center for Economic Development, and other interested groups and organizations, such as the various committees and commissions that will assist with implementing this Plan. Distributing this Plan is an important first step in implementation.

There are several requirements for effective implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*, highlighted below. In addition, at the end of this Section can be found a more detailed *Action Agenda* aimed specifically at implementing the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE & REGULATORY ACTIONS:** The Village shall be guided by a suggested agenda of administrative actions that will help establish a policy framework aligned with the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The Village should also review and revise its regulatory measures, mainly the zoning ordinance, which can enforce this Plan's policies and recommendations.
- **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:** The Village shall utilize project scheduling devices, such as a *Capital Improvements Program*, that allow implementation of the most important public improvements on a priority system, while staying within budgetary constraints.
- **REVIEW & UPDATE:** This Plan shall be subjected to a monitoring process and should be updated periodically to continually reflect local aspirations and opportunities.
- **FUNDING SOURCES & IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES.** In order to implement the *Comprehensive Plan*, various funding sources and implementation techniques shall be utilized. This section provides an explanation of possible funding and implementation options successfully used in other communities.

Each of these implementation components is discussed below, followed by an Action Agenda matrix.

Administrative & Regulatory Actions

These are all high-priority, early action projects that largely represent public policy or administrative decisions. They do not require a significant new allocation of funds and they shall be undertaken within a relatively short time frame. These actions relate to revising and updating local codes and ordinances, follow-up studies and related administrative actions.

Several of these actions are already underway in University Park and shall be continually addressed in order to further the goals and objectives in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Actions Supporting Housing and Residential Uses

- Utilize the *Land Use Plan* to guide the location and type of new housing development within the current Village boundaries.
- Create an annexation plan for the Village (and/or enter into annexation agreements with the County and surrounding communities) that addresses the location and scale of future residential growth outside the current Village boundaries.
- Closely monitor building conditions in the residential areas and strictly enforce all zoning, building, fire safety, and occupancy codes as they apply to all structures.
- Revise the existing zoning regulations to ensure the protection of sound existing development, to reduce adverse influences, and to establish setback, height, density, and parks/open space requirements for new residential development.

Actions Supporting Commercial and Retail Uses

- Utilize the *Land Use Plan* to establish basic functional roles for existing and planned commercial areas.
- Improve the appearance and function of commercial districts by enacting and enforcing sign regulations; establishing a design guidelines program; and ensuring that new commercial development is coordinated with surrounding land uses.
- Use the *Comprehensive Plan* as the basis for a strong marketing effort that highlights the unique advantages and growth opportunities for retailers investing in the Village, and share this with real estate brokers and groups such as the International Council of Shopping Centers.
- Develop marketing materials that highlight the demographic and market based strengths of the Village, such as the growing population and rising incomes.

Actions Supporting Light Industrial & Office Uses

- Continue to create organizational capacity to undertake and direct economic and community development at the municipal level. In addition, the Village should further utilize existing resources, such as the South Suburban Mayors & Managers Association (SSMMA), the Abraham Lincoln National Airport Commission (ALNAC), South Suburban Chamber of Commerce, and the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED).
- Continue to highly prioritize working with the business community, businesses and land owners to realize economic change and physical improvement. This could involve the identification or fostering of a business organization, such as a local Chamber of Commerce, with which the Village could work collaboratively to promote University Park and improve the business environment.
- Continue to consider appropriate development and developer incentive programs (such as low interest loans and tax abatements) as necessary to initiate a high level of investment and development in the Village's commercial and industrial areas. The Village should consider the use of Special Service Areas (SSAs) as a possible tool for economic development in targeted areas.

- Utilize the *Land Use Plan* to guide the location and type of new light industrial and office development within the current Village boundaries.

Actions Supporting Community Facilities

- Identify potential locations and/or reserve sites for community facilities (e.g., municipal buildings, libraries, schools, public works facilities) in newly developing areas of the Village.

Actions Supporting Parks and Recreation Uses

- Ensure the continued development of the Village's parks and open space network by creating an ordinance that governs the dedication of parkland from new residential developments.
- As new roads are built, preserve right of way for non-motorized access and design on-road bicycle facilities.

Actions Supporting Transportation

- Develop a functional street classification throughout the Village's planning jurisdiction that supports current and future development.
- Review and amend the subdivision ordinance to establish standards for the design and maintenance of different street classifications.
- Require sidewalks along all new public streets in the Village, and encourage new residential development to continue to build upon the Village's network of bicycle routes and trails.
- Identify available funding sources or grants for the development and maintenance of the Village's network of bicycle routes/trails and road improvements.

Regulatory & Development Controls

Following adoption of the *Comprehensive Plan*, the Village shall review and update the various development controls, including the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and other related codes and ordinances. For example, the Village will need to review the existing zoning regulations to ensure that they allow for the type and quality of multi-family housing desired in the TOD study area, and possibly alter the zoning map to allow for future development of retail corridors.

Capital Improvements

Another strong tool for implementing the *Comprehensive Plan* is a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). A CIP is updated annually, and establishes priorities and schedules for all public improvement projects within a five-year period.

The CIP typically schedules the implementation of a range of specific projects related to the *Comprehensive Plan*, particularly the restoration and upgrading of existing utilities and infrastructure facilities, including the water system, sanitary sewers, storm water facilities, and the street system. Expansion or improvement of public works facilities would also be included in the CIP.

Every municipality's financial resources are finite and public dollars must be spent wisely. The CIP allows the Village to systematically provide the most desirable public improvements while staying within budget constraints.

Review and Update

In order for this Plan to be maintained and updated in a timely manner, the designation of an agency responsible for coordinating planning activities, receiving community input and comments, and providing and disseminating information regarding the *Comprehensive Plan* is required. While the Village's Plan Commission and the Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for implementing this Plan, Village staff is the most appropriate group to carry out the daily activities of administration.

Village staff shall:

- Make copies of the *Comprehensive Plan* document available for public purchase.
- Provide assistance to the public in explaining this Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects and other proposals, as appropriate.
- Assist the Plan Commission and Board of Trustees in the day-to-day administration, interpretation and application of this Plan.
- Maintain a list of current possible amendments, issues or needs that may be a subject of change, addition, or deletion from the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Coordinate with, and assist, the Plan Commission, all commissions and committees having responsibility for implementing elements of this Plan, and Board of Trustees in the plan amendment process.

A *Comprehensive Plan* is not a static document, and the associated planning and implementation processes shall be continuous. The need for plan amendments is the result of many community influences. Most frequently, these are brought about by changes in attitudes or emerging needs not foreseen at the time of Plan adoption.

Although a proposal to amend the plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the Village shall regularly undertake a systematic review of this Plan. Although an annual review is desirable, the Village shall initiate review of this Plan at least every two to three years. Ideally, this review shall coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and CIP. In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for the fiscal year. Routine reexamination will help ensure that the *Comprehensive Plan* remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.

Funding Sources and Implementation Techniques

While many of the recommended actions called for in the *Comprehensive Plan* can be implemented through administrative and policy decisions or can be funded through normal municipal programs, other projects will require special technical and/or financial assistance.

This section identifies financing tools that the Village shall explore as a means of implementing improvements in this Plan, and also identifies a number of financial programs, grants, and incentives at the state and federal level that are available for assisting in the implementation of key Plan recommendations.

Adopting a *Comprehensive Plan* and using it to guide municipal actions and policies can itself position the Village for continued funding assistance from the State of Illinois. Although Illinois communities are not required to adopt plans, the Local Planning Technical Assistance Act (20 ILCS 662) states that communities with comprehensive plans may obtain preference for funding from state economic development, transportation, planning, and natural resource and agriculture programs. In return, communities that receive State funding are expected to coordinate land use and development regulations with the recommendations in their plans.

General Resources & Funding Tools

Communities have a number of general sources of revenue that can be applied to any corporate purpose, including improvements that will benefit the community as a whole. The largest of these is normally the general-purpose property tax, which primarily funds the Village’s General Revenue Fund. Others include state income tax rebates, motor fuel tax funds, public utility taxes, hotel/motel tax, retailers’ occupational tax, plus various fees, fines and other receipts.

Property Tax

University Park has a high property tax rate as compared to nearby communities, as shown on the table below, which illustrates tax rates per \$1,000 of assessed property value. As the Village increases its sales tax base (see following section, *Sales Tax*), adds to its industrial and office employment base, and diversifies land uses, the tax rate may decrease.

Property Tax Rates in Nearby Will County Communities

Municipality	Township	School Districts	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Crete	Crete	201-U	8.7274	8.6468	8.6436	8.6428	8.3969
Mokena	Frankfort	159 & 210	\$7	\$7	\$7	\$7	\$6
Monee	Monee	201-U	\$8	\$8	\$8	\$8	\$8
Park Forest	Monee	201-U	\$11	\$11	\$11	\$11	\$12
Steger	Crete	194 & 206	\$11	\$11	\$9	\$9	\$9
University Park	Monee	201-U	\$12	\$12	\$12	\$12	\$12

Source: Will County Clerk/Tax Extension Department and URS Corporation

Sales Tax

Increasing the presence of retail development in the village not only adds to the quality of life for Village residents by providing convenient destinations for desired goods and services, but also enhances the Village’s tax base. The table below models potential sales tax revenues for a range of sales performance benchmarks and store sizes. At typical sales performance, the Village could expect to receive \$3,200 to \$5,250 in combined municipal and home rule sales tax revenues per 1,000 square feet of retail space. These revenues, as part of the Village’s General Fund revenues, could be used to fund a variety of services, such as public safety and/or parks and recreation, and infrastructure improvements.

Potential Incremental Sales Tax Revenues from New Retail Development

University Park, Illinois

New Retail Space	Annual Sales per square foot Performance								
	\$200			\$250			\$300		
	MT	HMR	Total	MT	HMR	Total	MT	HMR	Total
1,000	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$3,500	\$2,500	\$1,875	\$4,375	\$3,000	\$2,250	\$5,250
25,000	\$50,000	\$37,500	\$87,500	\$62,500	\$46,875	\$109,375	\$75,000	\$56,250	\$131,250
50,000	\$100,000	\$75,000	\$175,000	\$125,000	\$93,750	\$218,750	\$150,000	\$112,500	\$262,500
75,000	\$150,000	\$112,500	\$262,500	\$187,500	\$140,625	\$328,125	\$225,000	\$168,750	\$393,750
100,000	\$200,000	\$150,000	\$350,000	\$250,000	\$187,500	\$437,500	\$300,000	\$225,000	\$525,000

Source: URS Corporation

1.00% Municipal Sales Tax (MT) rate
0.75% Home Rule Sales Tax (HMR) rate

While large regional shopping areas may be desirable from a tax/revenue standpoint, this type of development should be a longer-term community priority. Implementation activities to attract larger corridor commercial developments will need to include not only marketing and branding activities, but also development of the transportation and infrastructure improvements discussed in the previous sections, to provide easier access for the large market base which was outlined in the 2007 *Retail Site Determination Study*. Additionally, the community outreach component of the planning process indicated a strong desire to improve shopping opportunities within the Village. Therefore, as new residential developments complete within the Village and in adjacent areas, the first priority of the Village and this Plan should be on the development of commercial uses to serve the residents of the community.

Special Service Areas (SSAs)

Special Service Areas are a critical tool for improving, managing, and maintaining a commercial district. They are a mechanism for contiguous industrial, commercial, and residential areas to fund expanded programs and services through a localized property tax levy. Typically, participants are municipalities, non-profit organizations, Chambers of Commerce, or other business/industrial groups operating within clearly defined areas. Services and programs provided within the SSA are in addition to those provided by the Village.

Also known as Business Improvement Districts and Special Improvement Districts, the funds from Special Service Areas can be used for the following types of activities:

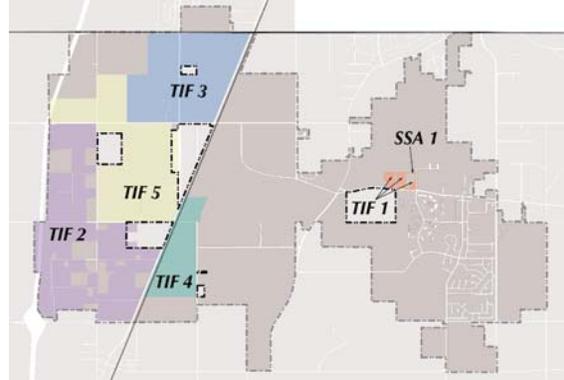
- Maintenance and beautification;
- Security services, including, but not limited to, the development of safety programs;
- Recruitment and promotion of new businesses to the Area and retention and promotion of existing businesses within the Area;
- Coordinated marketing and promotional activities;
- Strategic planning for the general development of the Area;
- Financing of storefront façade improvements; and
- Other technical assistance activities to promote commercial and economic development including, but not limited to, streetscape improvements, strategic transit/parking improvement including parking management studies, and enhanced land use oversight and control initiatives, and others.

The Village has experience using SSA, having created the existing SSA north of Exchange Street encompassing many of the municipal buildings and the Village's only shopping center. In the future, the Village may need to reexamine the current and planned future uses of this SSA, as well as the possibilities for additional districts to support beautification or marketing programs for the Village's commercial or industrial districts.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax increment financing does not generate tax revenues by increasing tax rates; it is a financing mechanism that allows the municipality to capture, for a certain number of years, the new tax revenues generated by the enhanced valuation of properties resulting from the municipality's redevelopment improvements and activities, various redevelopment projects, and the reassessment of properties.

The Village has extensive experience using TIF financing in its commercial and industrial areas. There are currently five TIF districts in the Village, four of which cover the majority of the industrial corridor at the west end of University Park. In addition, there is a TIF district that covers a few key sites (Village Hall, shopping center) within the SSA along the north side of Exchange Street. The Village uses TIF as its main financial incentive to businesses. Funds have been primarily used for infrastructure improvements and property tax rebates. Within the Village, the 2005 equalized assessed value (EAV) of properties with a TIF district is estimated at \$83,862,614 (Will County portion is \$79,982,614; Cook County portion is \$3,880,000). A summary of the current TIFs follows:



- TIF 1: Downtown TIF
 - Adopted in 1986; terminates in 2009
 - Sales tax-based
 - Used in conjunction with the University Park Town Center Special Service Area (SSA)
 - 2005 EAV: \$1,328,914
- TIF 2
 - Adopted 1987; terminates in 2010
 - Located in the far western edge of the industrial area, east of I-57
 - Have sold \$5M worth of industrial bonds
 - 2005 EAV: \$24,370,630
- TIF 3
 - Adopted in 1994; terminates in 2017
 - 2005 EAV: \$4,197,439
- TIF 4
 - Adopted in 1995; terminates in 2018
 - 2005 EAV: \$7,907,150
- TIF 5
 - Adopted in 2001; terminates in 2024
 - 2005 EAV:\$9,623,179

Municipal Bonds

Municipal bonds may also be considered for special projects during various phases of the implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan* that may require more long-term financing.

General obligation bonds (GOB) are supported by the full faith and credit of the municipality and typically offer the benefit of low interest rates. (Actual rates vary based upon each municipality's bond rating). Although GOBs may be fully paid off with dedicated revenues generated from a TIF district, SSA, hotel taxes, etc., any shortcomings in such dedicated revenue would necessarily come from the municipality's General Revenue Fund.

Revenue bonds are supported only by specifically dedicated revenues from one or more identified sources, such as TIF district incremental revenues, SSA revenues, any of the taxes described earlier in the report, or even by a special assessment (a voter-approved tax increase dedicated for financing a specific project). Each of these revenue sources is subject to varying limitations in terms of amounts and intended uses. In the case of revenue bonds, if the dedicated revenues are insufficient to meet the debt service requirements, the municipality has no obligation to make up the difference. Due to their increased risk premium, the interest rates on revenue bonds are higher (sometimes considerably) than GOBs.

Community Development Corporations

Many communities use SSAs or TIFs (as appropriate) to fund the start up and/or operation of a community development corporation (CDC) that can oversee a range of redevelopment activities for a specific geographic area, particularly commercial or business districts. CDCs are often funded through public-private partnerships with financial commitments from local financial institutions or businesses and a public funding source (TIF, SSA, etc.) to provide for both operating expenses and programs, as appropriate.

A central business district CDC is typically an independently chartered organization, often with not-for-profit status that is governed by a board of directors. The directors typically bring expertise in real estate or business development along with a demonstrated commitment to the community. CDCs may undertake traditional chamber of commerce-like activities such as marketing, promotion, workforce development, information management, and technical assistance to small businesses, but may also administer loan programs or acquire and redevelop property in the community. Many communities create CDCs under the umbrella structure of an established chamber of commerce in the community so that missions are complementary and do not overlap.

An example of a distinctive CDC activity is the facilitation or administration of a revolving loan fund or a community lending pool capitalized by commitments from local financial institutions to provide low-interest/low-cost loans. Such funds typically target both new and expanding businesses for such redevelopment activities as interior improvements, façade and exterior improvements, building additions, site improvements, etc. Some state and federal small business assistance programs are structured to work in combination with CDC-administered loan programs. Another distinctive activity of a CDC is property acquisition and redevelopment, which is most successful when the organization is mature in both expertise and capacity (particularly if the CDC intends to manage property after redevelopment).

A potential CDC application in University Park would be to create an organization focused on economic development and business relations. The Village could improve ties to the local business community and use them as a resource in identifying Village needs related to business, and in promoting the Village as a growth opportunity for commercial, industrial and retail businesses. The CDC could also conduct functions similar to a Chamber of Commerce, providing opportunities for business owners in the Village to interact.

Land Dedication Ordinance

Administration of a Land Dedication Ordinance is critical to successful implementation and achievement of both the *Community Facilities Plan* and *Natural Features Plan*. Although considered open space, a property that is used for stormwater management or that is below the flood plain provides limited recreation potential. The Village should not accept these sites as park donations, for the very same reasons developers view these areas as liabilities. Park donations should be “high-and-dry” and suitable for recreational uses. Community parks are not acquired and developed like neighborhood parks. Community parks are not typically provided by one developer, and materialize by administering the Land Dedication Ordinance in a different fashion. Since community parks are larger in size and serve several developments and neighborhoods, the burden of providing a community park cannot be borne by one developer/development. Instead, the Village should accept cash-in-lieu of a land donation where parks are not required or desirable. This often occurs when small parcels are developed and a park donation would be too small (i.e. less than 3 acres), or if an existing neighborhood park currently provides service to the new development. Cash received instead of a land donation can be used to finance the acquisition and development of community parks.

Stormwater Management Ordinance

A growing concern amongst local governments is stormwater management. The Village should adopt a comprehensive Stormwater Management Ordinance based on local best practices. The area’s regional planning agency, CMAP, has prepared model local ordinances for floodplain management and stormwater drainage and detention, and provides assistance to communities in their implementation.

Open Space and Natural Resources Programs

The Village should monitor the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)’s programming and funding as a part of the implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*. A brief description of the most relevant IDNR programs is given below.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administers numerous grants-in-aid programs to help municipalities and other local agencies provide a number of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis to local agencies (government or not-for-profit organization) and are awarded on an annual basis. Local governments can receive one grant per program per year, with no restrictions on the number of local governments that can be funded for a given location.

IDNR grants which may be used by the Village for improvements include: Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD); Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); and the Illinois Trails Grant Programs.

OSLAD and LWCF are similar programs which award up to fifty percent of project costs to local government agencies for acquisition and/or development of land for public parks and open space. Grant awards up to \$750,000 are available for acquisition projects, while development renovation projects are limited to a \$400,000 grant maximum. Written applications for project funding are reviewed on an annual basis and funds are awarded through a competitive process.

The Illinois Trails Grant Programs include five grant programs which can provide financial assistance for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails that are used for public recreation uses (bike paths, snowmobile, off-highway vehicles, motorized and non-motorized recreational trails, etc.). The Illinois Bicycle Path Program is one program under this category and provides up to fifty percent of costs for approved projects (maximum of \$200,000 for development, no limit for acquisition). Another program is the Recreational Trails Program that provides an eighty percent match to a local twenty percent investment in projects for acquisition, development rehabilitation and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trails. Each of these grant programs must be applied for through the IDNR on an annual basis.

Foundation and Specialized Grants

The successful implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan* requires realization of projects that range in scale and scope. Foundation grants are funding source that becomes increasingly significant when issue-specific projects or programs (tourism, performing arts, historic preservation, small business assistance, etc.) are considered.

The Village shall dedicate resources to monitoring and exploring foundation grants as funding tools. An example of a service successfully used by many municipalities and counties is the eCivis Grants Locator (<http://www.eCivis.com>), which is a service provider who matches local government needs with grant types.

Transportation & Infrastructure Improvement Programs

The Village may also utilize programs of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU was appropriated in 2005 as a successor to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and authorizes transportation funding programs for the years 2005 through 2009. The programs are administered through various regional and state agencies and are supported by federal revenues. While the details of funding eligibility vary from program to program, they all generally require that a project have a local sponsor (e.g., the Village), and some evidence of local support of the project. Brief descriptions of the component programs of SAFETEA-LU are described below. It should be noted that these transportation and infrastructure programs might be applied in combination with other funding sources described elsewhere in this Plan.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

These federal formula funds are allocated by the State to coordinating regional councils to be used for a variety to transportation improvements including roads, bridges and transit capital projects. In the Chicago region, these funds are distributed by the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) according to an agreement establishing their geographic distribution.

Projects in this funding category must have a local sponsor and are selected based, among other factors, on a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project among other factors. STP funds are allocated among the following programs: demonstration projects; enhancement; hazard elimination; and urban funds. CATS' 2007 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program estimates a total of \$987 million in STP funds will be available to the region over this six-year period, or an average of \$165 million per year.

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

This funding program is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation and is supported by a 10% set-aside of the STP funds appropriated to the State by SAFETEA-LU. Among the projects that are eligible for this funding include bicycle/pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, landscaping, historic preservation and projects that control or remove outdoor advertising. Federal reimbursement is available for up to 50 percent of the cost of right-of-way and easement acquisition and 80 percent of the cost for preliminary engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering, and construction costs.

To receive an ITEP grant, the project sponsor (e.g., the Village) must submit an application to IDOT which details the project, with funding is awarded on a competitive basis. This is a popular and competitive program, although many nearby communities have successfully used ITEP funding for streetscaping and biking projects. Examples of funding approved between 2004 and 2006 include:

- Village of Richton Park: \$553,000 for Sauk Trail Streetscape Project
- Village of Beecher: \$385,060 for Gould Street Streetscape Improvement
- Village of Matteson: \$191,480 for Historic Downtown Bike Trail
- Village of Crete: \$175,500 for Main & Exchange Street Beautification

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The CMAQ program is also part of SAFETEA-LU and it focuses on projects that provide solutions to regional congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types include transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle/pedestrian projects and projects that result in emissions reductions. These projects are federally funded at 80 percent of project costs.

In the Chicago region, the CMAQ program is administered by CATS. To receive CMAQ funds, the project sponsor must submit an application to CATS, and funding is awarded annually on a competitive basis.

State Funding

The State of Illinois has also historically sponsored funding programs under which municipalities could receive support for capital transportation projects. The most recent large-scale funding program at the State level was the Illinois FIRST legislation, which boosted the funding available from the State from 2000 to 2005. The expiration of Illinois FIRST and the lack of a successor program have reduced the State's ability to help fund local transportation infrastructure projects.

Technical Assistance for Planning and Development

American Planning Association (APA)

APA is the professional organization for professional planners, and offers a variety of training and technical assistance resources for municipal officials. Information about these programs is available online at:

<http://www.planning.org/education/commissioners.htm>

Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development at DePaul University

The Chaddick Institute offers technical workshops on a variety of topics to provide the tools necessary for municipalities to modernize zoning and development-control policies. Leading specialists in the field – planners, architects, attorneys, developers, and entrepreneurs – moderate the workshops. The Institute also offers consulting services to nonprofit organizations and units of government to improve planning, economic development and the quality of life. The Institute can be contacted at chaddick@depaul.edu or 312.362.5731.

Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) / Campaign for Sensible Growth

The Metropolitan Planning Council and the Campaign for Sensible Growth are non-profit and non-partisan organizations dedicated to quality regional planning in the metropolitan Chicago area. Together they produced a three-part educational series for municipal and elected officials in Illinois on key aspects of community planning and development. Among others, several of their recent publications are primers on community planning designed for local municipal officials.

- *Sensible Tools for Healthy Communities* (2004): development review
- *Planning 1-2-3* (2006): how-to guide to the elements of comprehensive planning
- *Retail 1-2-3* (2007): how-to guide for including retail in an economic development plan

These, and many other publications, are available online at:
<http://growinginsensibly.org/resources/publications.asp>.

Urban Land Institute (ULI) / Campaign for Sensible Growth

The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) is a service offered by ULI Chicago and the Campaign for Sensible Growth as part of ULI's national Advisory Services Program. TAPs are 2-day sessions in which a local government or non-profit organization asks ULI Chicago to provide advice on a specific land use issue. Two to three communities are selected each year. Information on the program, as well as reports from past TAPs, are available online at:

<http://chicago.uli.org/Content/NavigationMenu12/Initiatives/TechnicalAssistancePanels/default.htm>

Urban Land Institute and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)'s Great Cities Institute

ULI and UIC are co-developing [Planning Commissioner Online](#), a new training program for plan commission members facilitated by experienced practitioners. A release date has not yet been provided.

Illinois Tax Increment Association (ITIA)

The Illinois Tax Increment Association is a membership association of municipalities and other governmental entities, corporations, partnerships, associations and individuals engaged in or interested in tax increment finance and economic development. About 75% of members are Illinois municipalities that have established TIFs and are now managing them on a day-to-day basis. With the intent of fostering the economic growth of the State of Illinois, ITIA provides its members with numerous opportunities for professional dialogue, education and exchange of information.

For more information, see: <http://www.illinois-tif.com/index.htm>.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

The CMAP was formed in 2006 in the merger between Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NICP) and Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS). This new organization combines the previously separate transportation and land-use planning agencies for northeastern Illinois into a single entity designed to protect natural resources and minimize traffic congestion as the seven-county region plans for the 21st Century and beyond. CMAP provides technical assistance to local governments and has created model ordinances, among other helpful documents and guides that are available the website: <http://www.chicagoareaplanning.org/>.

Action Agenda

This matrix prioritizes projects and actions, specifies the role of the Village and other possible participants, and lists tools, techniques and resources to accomplish the recommended projects and actions found throughout this Plan. Projects and actions under each category are not necessarily listed in order of importance or sequence. Suggested timing for three prioritization categories are defined as follows:

- Priority 1: 1-3 years
- Priority 2: 3-5 years;
- Priority 3: 5 years and beyond.

Project or Action	Role of the Village of University Park	Other Possible Participants	Tools, Techniques and Resources
<i>Housing and Residential</i>			
Protect, maintain and enhance the residential areas throughout the City.	<p>Priority 1: Enforce appropriate land use and zoning policies and building codes.</p> <p>Priority 2: Establish home maintenance grants or low-interest loan programs to assist with the cost of home repairs or improving the visual appearance of homes.</p>	Property owners; Code Enforcement Committee; developers; and lending institutions.	Consistent code enforcement; administrative actions, work with neighborhood associations.
Promote and encourage more dense single-family and/or multi-family residential development in appropriate locations, in particular within the transit-oriented development study area.	<p>Priority 1: Ensure zoning on all parcels permits desired types and densities of development.</p> <p>Priority 1: Ensure that any new multi-family development meets high standards of design and construction.</p> <p>Priority 2: Undertake marketing activities to advertise available sites and opportunities, such as a website that highlights available sites.</p> <p>Priority 3: Release developer “Request for Proposals” for multi-family development on sites owned by the Village, as appropriate.</p>	Property owners; developers; real estate brokers.	Update the zoning ordinance and map; administrative action; work with property owners/developers; RFP.
Provide for a phased, long-term expansion of the Village’s current boundaries.	<p>Priority 1: Create a long-term plan for growth and annexation in cooperation with surrounding communities, Monee Township, Crete Township, and Will County.</p> <p>Priority 1: Develop concurrent plans for infrastructure and community facilities serving the new residential areas.</p> <p>Priority 1: Encourage residential development to occur in phases adjacent to existing developed parcels.</p>	Surrounding communities; Will County; Monee Township; Crete Township, property owners; developers.	Update the zoning ordinance and map; administrative action; work with property owners/developers.

Commercial & Retail

Promote commercial development along key corridors and nodes, with an immediate focus on University Parkway / Exchange Street.

Priority 1: Ensure zoning on all parcels permits desired types of development.
Priority 1: Provide technical assistance, information and cooperation to owners, developers, and builders.
Priority 1: Undertake marketing activities to advertise available sites and opportunities, such as a website.
Priority 2: Assist/encourage parcel assembly by private developers.
Priority 3: Acquire and assemble key properties for redevelopment.
Priority 3: Prepare developer Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Village -owned sites, as appropriate.

Property owners; developers; real estate brokers.

Update the zoning ordinance and map; market available sites; work with property owners/ developers; TIF; SSA.

Promote transit-oriented retail development within a new “town center” commercial district near the Metra Electric station.

Priority 1: Ensure zoning on all parcels permit desired types of development.
Priority 3: Acquire and assemble key properties for development.
Priority 3: Prepare developer Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Village -owned sites, as appropriate.

Property owners; businesses; developers; real estate brokers.

Zoning ordinance and map; marketing; working with property owners/ developers; TIF; RFP.

Explore potential for highway-oriented retail sites near the proposed I-57 interchange at Stuenkel Road.

Priority 1: Identify sites and potential retail types (gas station, truck stop, restaurant, etc.) desired by the Village.
Priority 1: Annex potential development sites to Village.
Priority 2: Ensure zoning on all sites permits desired types of development.
Priority 3: Acquire and assemble key properties for development.
Priority 3: Prepare developer Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Village -owned sites, as appropriate.

Property owners; businesses; IDOT; Will County; real estate professionals.

Zoning ordinance and map; annexation plan; TIF; SSA.

Identify sites for neighborhood commercial & retail amenities near future residential development areas.

Priority 1: Identify key residential areas and intersections in long-term growth and annexation plan.
Priority 2: Identify sites for small-scale neighborhood retail services and ensure that these are integrated into zoning map.
Priority 3: Acquire and assemble key properties for development, as needed.
Priority 3: Prepare developer Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Village -owned sites, as appropriate.

Residents; business owners, property owners, developers.

Zoning ordinance and map; administrative actions; staff time.

Commercial & Retail

Ensure the quality design & function of the Village’s existing & future commercial districts.

Priority 1: Develop and enforce sign regulations and a design guidelines program for the Village’s commercial districts.

Residents; business owners, property owners, developers.

Zoning ordinance and map; design regulations; sign regulations; staff time; SSA; TIF.

Priority 1: Use the development review process to ensure that the development of new commercial uses is coordinated with surrounding land uses, including considerations of visual/traffic impacts and multimodal accessibility.

Priority 2: Utilize available funding resources (e.g., SSA, TIF) for improving aesthetics and infrastructure in commercial corridors.

Priority 3: Acquire property rights/easements and install gateways and signage.

Develop branding/marketing materials to attract businesses into the Village.

Priority 1: Utilize existing reports, such as the Retail Site Determination Report, prepared by Buxton Company in March 2007 to target potential retailers.

Business owners; CDC; consultant, residents; Village staff time

Administrative actions; general funds.

Priority 1: Develop materials that highlight the Village’s market and locational assets.

Priority 1: Participate in planning, real estate, and development professional organizations to cultivate relationships and increase awareness about the Village.

Encourage a “Shop University Park” campaign to increase patronage of local businesses.

Priority 1: Develop a marketing approach, media, and programming plan.

Business owners; Chamber of Commerce, consultant, residents; Village staff time

Administrative actions; general funds.

Priority 2: Implement recommendations in the plan.

Light Industrial & Office

<p>Promote continued development of a diverse set of new businesses adjacent to existing industrial corridor.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Provide financial and technical assistance to interested business owners and property owners.</p> <p>Priority 1: Encourage office park development by zoning for office development, and potentially providing incentives for expanding this business type.</p> <p>Priority 1: Monitor performance of TIF incentives and focus on expenditures (e.g., infrastructure) that provide lasting benefits to the economic development of the Village.</p> <p>Priority 1: Partner with existing organizations (e.g., SSMMA, Will County CED) to promote advantages to businesses locating in University Park and the I-57 Corridor.</p> <p>Priority 2: Foster the establishment of a local or regional business organization (such as a Chamber of Commerce) to work as a partner in improving the Village’s business environment.</p>	<p>Property owners; business community; SSMMA; Will County CED.</p>	<p>Administrative actions; SSA; TIF; Community Development Corporation.</p>
<p>Manage the impact of industrial growth on residential areas and the community’s vision of the future.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Adopt & enforce standards related to noise, odors, dust, and vibrations that can be the result of industrial uses.</p> <p>Priority 1: Establish functional roadway classification system that directs truck traffic away from residential and commercial districts.</p> <p>Priority 1: Provide technical assistance to businesses and property owners on minimizing impacts to the surrounding community</p> <p>Priority 2: Foster the establishment of a local or regional business organization (such as a Chamber of Commerce) to work as a partner in community initiatives.</p>	<p>Residents; Code Enforcement Committee; property owners; business community; IDOT.</p>	<p>Administrative actions; regulatory policy; consider “performance-based zoning;” Community Development Corporation.</p>
<p>Explore additional opportunities for connecting residents with Village employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Utilize economic development programs to foster job training and placement programs for Village residents.</p> <p>Priority 1: Work with employers, the school district and GSU to identify opportunities for matching skills training with job needs.</p>	<p>Residents; School District; GSU; business community/chamber of commerce.</p>	<p>TIF funds; private donations; workforce development programs; administrative action.</p>

Community Facilities

<p>Establish potential needs & identify sites for community facilities in developing areas of the community.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Engage in a facility planning study that compares future growth scenarios with concurrent community facility needs.</p> <p>Priority 1: Explore various funding sources.</p> <p>Priority 2: Begin a phased construction program according to a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).</p>	<p>Elected officials; Public Services and Utilities Committee; Village staff; residents; outside consultants.</p>	<p>GO bonds, general funds, ITEP, OSLAD, administrative actions.</p>
<p>Create a new municipal center in the TOD area that serves as a “landmark” for the community.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Establish needs & identify exact location for new Village Hall</p> <p>Priority 1: Establish needs & identify exact location for new community recreation center.</p> <p>Priority 2: Identify funding source and establish timeline for construction.</p>	<p>Elected officials; Public Services and Utilities Committee; Village staff; residents; consultants.</p>	<p>Land dedication; general funds; GO bonds.</p>

Parks, Recreation & Open Space

<p>Require the integration of parks & open space into the development of new areas of the Village.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Adopt ordinances, such as land/cash dedication and/or impacts that require new development to dedicate open space to the Village.</p> <p>Priority 2: Use Capital Improvement Plan to maintain park & open space assets over long-term.</p>	<p>Property owners; Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; businesses; developers.</p>	<p>Staff resources; consulting services; administrative actions and policies.</p>
<p>Establish a community center that provides numerous recreational opportunities for Village residents.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Work with Village residents to identify potential needs for a new community center (e.g., exercise & wellness programs, meeting space, youth programs, and indoor/outdoor sports facilities).</p> <p>Priority 2: Identify a location and funding sources for a new community center, possibly in collaboration with local hospitals, the School District and/or GSU.</p>	<p>Residents; Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee; area hospitals; school district; GSU.</p>	<p>Staff resources; IDNR Grants; foundation grants.</p>
<p>Identify key environmental assets in the Village and incorporate into long-range open space plans.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Work with local & regional agencies (Forest Preserve District, CMAP) to gain an understanding of the key environmental assets in and around the Village.</p>	<p>Forest Preserve District; Will County; CMAP; IDNR; residents; consultants.</p>	<p>IDNR Grants; administrative actions and policies; consulting services.</p>

Transportation and Infrastructure

Continue to develop & maintain network of off-street bicycle & pedestrian trails.

Priority 1: Engage in a Village-wide bike route planning exercise, including potential routes, prioritization of pathways, maintenance needs, etc.

Priority 1: Engage GSU and Forest Preserve District in planning efforts and coordinate systems.

Priority 1: Explore various funding sources.

Priority 2: Once funding is secured, incorporate into Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and begin a phased implementation program.

Priority 2: Install signage designating the on-street bike route.

Priority 2: Promote cycling for residents as a means of travel by publishing and distributing a trail map (possibly in tandem with other agencies or communities).

Priority 2: Connect bicycle path to surrounding communities.

IDOT; Recreation and Public Works Departments; CMAP; Forest Preserve District; Will County.

SAFETEA-LU; OSLAD; CMAQ; General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.

Develop functional street classification system to support future development.

Priority 1: Develop a plan for an interconnected hierarchy of streets serving future development scenario(s)

Priority 2: Plan and budget for major street upgrades and improvements as part of the CIP.

IDOT; Will County; property owners; business owners.

SAFETEA-LU; TIF; STP; General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.

Support transportation improvements that improve access to I-57.

Priority 1: Collaborate with IDOT to expedite plans for a new interchange at Stuenkel Road.

Priority 1: Design the Dralle Road overpass to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

Priority 2: Increase the presence of the Village for travelers along the expressway corridor – improve signage & wayfinding elements to the Village and GSU.

IDOT; Will County; property owners; business owners.

SAFETEA-LU; TIF; STP; General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.

Eliminate at-grade rail crossings in Village.

Priority 1: Use current traffic & future development scenarios to determine priority for removing at-grade crossings.

Priority 2: Evaluate opportunities to combine rail-to-road projects with IDOT & County objectives, as well as the development of future parcels.

IDOT; Will County; property owners; business owners, Illinois Commerce Commission.

SAFETEA-LU; TIF; STP; General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.

Transportation and Infrastructure

<p>Improve the appearance of key street corridors through streetscaping & boulevard enhancements.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Create a streets & boulevards plan that identifies major community pathways, key commercial and residential streets, and funding sources for streetscape improvements.</p> <p>Priority 2: Use CIP to prioritize and implement streetscaping program.</p>	<p>IDOT; Will County; property owners; business owners.</p>	<p>SAFETEA-LU; TIF; STP; IDNR General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.</p>
<p>Minimize the impact of truck traffic on residential & commercial areas.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Establish functional roadway classification system that directs truck traffic away from residential and commercial districts.</p> <p>Priority 2: Provide incentives for the development of a varied economic base with additional office uses and less reliance on trucking & distribution firms.</p>	<p>IDOT; Will County; business community.</p>	<p>SAFETEA-LU; TIF; STP; IDNR General Fund; Bonds; other local sources.</p>
<p>Support the expansion & extension of Metra services to the Village.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Promote usage of the train to Village residents, and the advantages of Metra service for prospective residents.</p> <p>Priority 1: Promote transit-oriented development in existing station area.</p> <p>Priority 2: Support future plans for additional service beyond University Park and possibly serving South Suburban Airport.</p>	<p>Metra; Regional Transportation Authority; Will County; residents.</p>	<p>Staff; CMAP; CMAQ grants;</p>
<p>Require pedestrian infrastructure & access in future development areas.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Establish minimum requirements for pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.) in new residential developments.</p>	<p>Property owners; business owners,</p>	<p>Administrative actions; General fund</p>

Community Image and Character

<p>Improve the image and appearance of the major corridors, through more attractive signage, parkway landscaping, parking lot landscaping, lighting, and reconfigured sidewalks.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Establish a unified design/character and desired amenities and elements for streetscape improvements.</p> <p>Priority 1: Review and update development standards for all zoning districts.</p> <p>Priority 1: Incorporate anticipated streetscaping costs into of the Village’s Capital Improvement Program.</p> <p>Priority 2: Establish a loan program, providing low interest loans/financial assistance to businesses and property owners seeking to improve the visual appearance of their businesses through landscaping and site improvements.</p>	<p>Will County; IDOT; Public Works Department; Code Enforcement Committee; property owners; business community; developers.</p>	<p>SAFETEA-LU; Illinois Main Street Program; Illinois First Program; other grants; GO Bonds; General fund.</p>
<p>Preserve the Village’s environmental resources as a distinguishing feature of the community.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Partner with GSU & the Forest Preserve District in implementing recommendations of the <i>Thorn Creek Watershed Plan</i>.</p> <p>Priority 1: Ensure that the preservation of environmental assets (forested areas, creek beds, watersheds) is a design feature for future development areas.</p>	<p>GSU; Forest Preserve District; Will County; CMAP; IDNR; residents; consultants.</p>	<p>IDNR Grants; Village Staff; Administrative and policy decisions.</p>
<p>Review sign regulations and develop guidelines that are appropriate to each commercial area.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Undertake an evaluation of existing ordinances, development controls and prepare appropriate amendments.</p> <p>Priority 1: Adopt, implement, and enforce sign regulations.</p>	<p>Code Enforcement Committee; Developers; business and property owners</p>	<p>Administrative actions; policy decisions.</p>
<p>Adopt a landscape ordinance that requires perimeter landscaping, such as turf, shrubs, ornamental trees, shade trees, and seasonal plantings.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Undertake an evaluation of related existing ordinances, development controls and prepare appropriate amendments.</p> <p>Priority 1: Adopt, implement, and enforce landscape regulations.</p>	<p>Developers; business and property owners</p>	<p>Administrative actions; policy decisions.</p>
<p>Improve existing gateway areas with landscaping, lighting, planters, flowerbeds, etc.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Identify gateway locations and prioritize areas by need.</p> <p>Priority 1: Use signage to direct visitors and residents to key community assets (Village Hall, Metra station, commercial districts).</p> <p>Priority 1: Implement gateway improvements as part of the City’s Capital Improvement Program.</p>	<p>Public Works Department, Village staff.</p>	<p>Administrative actions; policy decisions; City staff resources; general funds, capital improvements fund.</p>

Community Image and Character

<p>Undertake active marketing and promotion activities to enhance the Village's image and identity.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Develop a marketing approach, media, and programming plan. Priority 2: Implement recommendations in the plan.</p>	<p>Village staff; GSU representatives; consultants</p>	<p>Business community donations, general fund.</p>
<p>Develop a closer working relationship between GSU and Village.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Fill open GSU board position(s) with a University Park resident. Priority 1: Engage in ongoing collaboration, in addition to issue specific meetings. Priority 2: Consider a strategic planning effort between the Village and GSU that could focus on community image, student housing, improving transportation and infrastructure, and overall community improvement.</p>	<p>Village residents and staff; GSU representatives; consultants</p>	
<p>Review and amend the Subdivision Ordinance to establish standards for rights-of-way and pavement widths, setbacks, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and stormwater management.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Undertake an evaluation of related existing ordinances, development controls and prepare appropriate amendments. Priority 1: Adopt, implement, and enforce landscape regulations.</p>	<p>Developers; consultants, business and property owners</p>	<p>Administrative actions; policy decisions.</p>

Administrative Actions

<p>Implement recommended zoning ordinance studies and revisions.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Prepare recommended zoning and related ordinance revisions as identified to implement recommendations in the <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>.</p> <p>Priority 1: Adopt, implement, and strictly enforce the zoning and related ordinances.</p>	<p>Property owners; Planning Commission; businesses; developers; real estate brokers; residents.</p>	<p>Staff resources; consulting services; general revenue funds.</p>
<p>Utilize a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to address short- and long-term infrastructure improvements and facility planning.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Integrate <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> recommendations into the CIP.</p> <p>Priority 2: Undertake regular review of the CIP to ensure it address community needs.</p>	<p>Public Works Department; Finance Committee; Village engineers; consultants; residents; IDOT; Will County.</p>	<p>Administrative actions and policies; consulting services.</p>
<p>Continue to seek grants, loans, and other sources of intergovernmental funding.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Work with county, state and federal agencies to secure funding to implement Plan recommendations.</p>	<p>Private Foundations; Finance Committee; IDOT; Will County; CMAP; State of Illinois.</p>	<p>Administrative actions and policy decisions.</p>
<p>Establish a process for the regular review and update of the <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Undertake regular review of the <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>.</p>	<p>Residents; Plan Commission; businesses; local institutions.</p>	<p>Administrative actions and policy decisions.</p>

Administrative Actions

Engage other agencies & community groups that may share responsibility for Plan implementation.

Priority 1: Share completed Plan with government agencies & community groups, and discuss shared goals & responsibilities.

Priority 2: Establish cooperative agencies or formal agreements as appropriate.

Will County; Monee Township; Crete Township, Surrounding Communities; SSMMA; Other consultants; Village Staff; Will County Center for Economic Development; all Village Committees and Commissions, including:
 Board of Police and Fire Commissioners,
 Cable Communication Advisory Commission;
 Code Enforcement Commission;
 Community Development Commission;
 Community Recognition Advisory Committee;
 Education Advisory Committee;
 Finance Committee;
 Information Technology Commission;
 Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee;
 Plan Commission;
 Public Safety Committee;
 Public Services and Utilities Committee;
 Senior Citizen Committee;
 Special Events/Human Services Committee.

Administrative actions; policy decisions.

APPENDIX: COMMUNITY-WIDE OPEN HOUSE

As discussed in Section 2, *Community Outreach*, a community-wide open house was held on March 10, 2007. After a brief presentation, participants were invited to circulate through four information stations and provide comments on the Plan exhibits. This section presents the actual, detailed responses of each component.

Also presented in this Appendix are the Open House Agenda and the Comprehensive Plan Input Worksheet.



Community Town Hall Meeting March 10, 2007

Comprehensive Plan Meeting Agenda

9:00 Sign-in and Refreshments

9:10 Mayor McCowan's Welcome and Thank You to the Volunteer Committee

9:15 Comprehensive Plan Presentation

Jim Louthen, Town Builder Studios

Krista Kahle, URS Corporation

Jim Meyer, URS Corporation

9:45 Information Stations:

Station #1: *What is a Comprehensive Plan.....Visioning & Goals/Objectives*

Survey: Post-it Note Graffiti

Station #2: *Heritage, History and Community Analysis*

Survey: Key Issue Questions

Station #3: *Transportation & Circulation*

Survey: Vote for top three infrastructure improvements

Station #4: *Future Plans: Land use, community facilities, natural resources, growth areas*

Survey: Top three Village growth initiatives

Start at Station
#1
*What is a
Comprehensive
Plan*

Next Steps:

April 10th – Public Hearing

I WANT TO HELP WITH UPCOMING VILLAGE INITIATIVES: Contact me!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Vocation\Avocation: _____

Special Interests\Talents: _____



For more information, call David Litton, Village Manager 708.534.6451





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Survey: Key Issue Questions

Station #3: *Transportation & Circulation*

Survey: Vote for top three infrastructure improvements

Station #4: *Future Plans: Land use, community facilities, natural resources, growth areas*

Survey: Top three Village growth initiatives

Start at Station

#3

*Transportation
& Circulation*

Next Steps:

April 10th – Public Hearing

I WANT TO HELP WITH UPCOMING VILLAGE INITIATIVES: Contact me!

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Vocation\Avocation:

Special Interests\Talents:



For more information, call David Litton, Village Manager 708.534.6451





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Station #2: *Heritage, History and Community Analysis*

Survey: Key Issue Questions

Station #3: *Transportation & Circulation*

Survey: Vote for top three infrastructure improvements

Station #4: *Future Plans: Land use, community facilities, natural resources, growth areas*

Survey: Top three Village growth initiatives

Start at Station

#4

Future Plans

Next Steps:

April 10th – Public Hearing

I WANT TO HELP WITH UPCOMING VILLAGE INITIATIVES: Contact me!

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Vocation\Avocation:

Special Interests\Talents:



For more information, call David Litton, Village Manager 708.534.6451





Community Town Hall Meeting March 10, 2007

Comprehensive Plan Input Worksheet

Station #1 – Vision and Goals

At this station, you'll be able to add "graffiti" comments on sticky notes to the Vision Statement and Goals.

Station #2 – Community Heritage

At this station, we'll ask you to respond to some Questions below:

Question #1 – Housing

What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the Village's residential neighborhoods? Are there enough different types of housing? What kind would you like to see more or less of?

Question #2 – Community Facilities

What are your likes and dislikes about the Village's community facilities (library, schools, etc.) and services (utilities, fire protection, police protection, etc.)? Are they conveniently located?

Question #3 – Parks and Recreation

*Do you use the parks and recreation facilities that exist today?
What kind of parks and recreation improvements are needed in the Village?*



For more information, call David Litton, Village Manager 708.534.6451





Community Town Hall Meeting March 10, 2007

Comprehensive Plan Input Worksheet

Question #4 - Relationships

How could the Village leverage the relationships with our local institutions (schools, Governors State University, churches, etc.) to improve the quality of life of the Village?

Station #3 - Transportation

At this station, we'll ask you to vote on your top 3 transportation improvements using "dot" stickers.

Station #4 – Future Plans

At this station, we'll show you proposed plans for the Village, and ask for your comments.

Question #1 – Locations of Future Growth

*What do you think about the proposed locations of future growth in the Village?
There could be new residential neighborhoods, business and industrial parks, retail centers, and Village facilities.*

We'd also like you to share your top 3 growth and improvement ideas for the Village.

- 1.**
- 2.**
- 3.**



For more information, call David Litton, Village Manager 708.534.6451



Actual Participant Feedback

Station #1 – Vision and Goals

At this station, you'll be able to add "graffiti" comments on sticky notes to the Vision Statement and Goals.

- Effective
- It's long
- Emphasize environmental conservation – smart uses of energy; mitigate pollution

Other feedback provided at Station #1

- The relationship with GSU is untapped
- Have we estimated enough school facilities for the future?
- Metra should improve the train station – it is perceived as unsafe; it has poor access; there is often flooding and water in the underpass; it looks unattractive; it will attract more riders if it is improved
- Address GSU
- Utilize Pine Lake
- Access is important
- Water quality for drinking is currently poor – lots of people have to pay for bottled water
- Address veterans in the community – want facilities and services

Station #2 – Community Heritage

At this station, we'll ask you to respond to some questions below:

Question #1 – Housing

What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the Village's residential neighborhoods? Are there enough different types of housing? What kind would you like to see more or less of?

- Housing dedicated for veterans
- Independent living for the disabled
- Housing growth is going in the right direction
- We need to increase the variety of home living options.
- Require brick structures versus frames, due to the high winds in town.
- More starter homes, senior housing, student housing
- Weaknesses: planning & drainage; Strengths: affordability

Question #2 – Community Facilities

What are your likes and dislikes about the Village's community facilities (library, schools, etc.) and services (utilities, fire protection, police protection, etc.)? Are they conveniently located?

- They need to be more maintained and technologically updated.
- They are convenient and appear to be sufficient. However, as the population grows, more services should be added.
- Water improvement is vital.
- The facilities overall are poorly maintained.

- We need to improve on our code enforcement standards in order to clean up our town.
- We need to begin to discuss another police facility on the south or southwest end of town.
- Location is convenient.
- Better lighting of our streets!!!!
- Any plans for water from Michigan Lake?
- Need another maintenance facility and increase the square footage of the new building

Question #3 – Parks and Recreation

Do you use the parks and recreation facilities that exist today?

What kind of parks and recreation improvements are needed in the Village?

- Yes – we use them. More community facilities for youth or community gathering like a Y
- Yes. All of Parks & Recreation should grow as the rest of the community grows.
- I'd like to see Pine Lake developed more fully and maintained. I'd like to see playground equipment for children, updated and well maintained bathroom facilities, and the lake kept clean so that people can fish from the bank without getting their fishing lines tangled.
- I'd also like to see our bike trails refurbished and kept up.
- We need to offer a variety of programming for all ages within our community and stop focusing on basketball. These programs can also be educational, tutorial, and entertaining as well.
- Community center, rental hall.
- More programs.
- Connect our bike path to existing bike path located in the surrounding communities and state
- Get more funding to support the farm

Question #4 - Relationships

How could the Village leverage the relationships with our local institutions (schools, Governors State University, churches, etc.) to improve the quality of life of the Village?

- We need to bridge the gap between the older and new residents, concerning the median age is 31 years old.
- There needs to be more interaction (reciprocal) between the Village and the University
- We need to be more visible and user friendly
- Schools in UP should receive more of the monies given to the Crete-Monee School District
- Build housing for students from Governors State within our community
- Provide a partnership with high school and university to build a medical center, cooking/restaurant school, and trade school for auto, construction, etc.
- Increase amount of scholarship provided to high school students

Other feedback provided at Station #2

- Maintain natural features – parks, open space
- Good uses of energy – don't add to pollution, stormwater runoff

- Good job
- I would very much like to see the infrastructure more complete to outer regions of the community.
- Improvement on water
- More programming (baseball) for parks and recreation
- Make use of Pine Lake
- More visible participation by students and faculty of Governors State
- What is our current employment/unemployment rate?
- Getting better participation based upon community regions
- School-more planning (on East Monee Road?)
- Improve water and sewage
- Community youth center
- Workforce development
- What about a gathering place for youth/residents?
- Rental hall
- We need: 1. job training center, 2. theater district, 3. medical facilities
- We need to work on lowering our tax rate. Are there any businesses coming off the TIF soon? When marketing our industrial park, are the lengths of time TIFs are made available being regulated? We cannot have all chiefs and no Indians when it comes to salaries for employees.
- Have a farmer's market
- Have several movie nights at the park

Station #3 - Transportation

At this station, we'll ask you to vote on your top 3 transportation improvements using "dot" stickers.

1. I-57 interchange at Stuenkel Road / University Parkway (7 votes)
2. Rail crossing on University Parkway (7 votes)
3. Hickok Avenue bridge (3 votes)
4. Dralle Road connection to Exchange Street (2 votes)
5. Monee-Manhattan Road extension (2 votes)
6. University Parkway extension through Forest Preserve (1 vote)
7. Improvement of intersection at University Parkway and Central Avenue (1 vote)

Note: Some people put 3 dots on the board and others only wanted to put 1 dot or 2 dots on the board. Again, the I-57 interchange and Univ. Parkway rail crossing were the highest priorities.

Other feedback provided at Station #3

- Everyone reaffirmed that access to/from I-57 and improving east-west connectivity are the major issues within the Village. As an example, several residents indicated that it is very difficult to give directions to get someone from I-57 to the UP Village Hall area.
- Residents indicated that the existing I-57 interchanges used to access the Village (Sauk Trail and Monee-Manhattan) have congestion problems, and a lot of truck traffic, during peak travel times. This makes it even more difficult and takes longer to get into the Village.

- The top priority that was identified was a new I-57 interchange (some said lets get people into the Village and then fix how they move through the Village).
- Open house attendees indicated that if the I-57 interchange is constructed that it is critical to construct a rail overpass near the Metra station as there would be increased traffic volumes along University Parkway.
- Some residents indicated that in addition to the major improvements that there would need to be several improvements to other existing roadways in the area (Crawford Avenue for example).
- One person indicated that University Parkway should be extended through the Forest Preserve area to provide a direct east-west connection to Western Avenue. They said this has been done in other parts of the Chicago region.
- A few residents indicated that Hickock Avenue should have a direct connection just east of Burnham Drive (currently a pedestrian bridge). Residents living east of this area must currently take Blackhawk Drive to Sandra Avenue to Burnham Drive to get around this area.
- Residents support an extension of Dralle Road south of GSU to connect into Exchange Street. Some indicated that improving the existing 20 mph curve from Crawford Avenue into Exchange Street needs to be improved and would be with the proposed Dralle Road extension.
- The majority of residents understand and support the need to develop additional arterial roadways in the south and southeast portion of the Village. There wasn't a lot of discussion regarding the specific improvements but more that improving the east-west connectivity needs to be addressed. It should be noted that no one voiced opposition to any of the potential improvements as they were displayed on the future transportation graphic.
- It was pointed out by a few residents that regional transportation improvements (i.e., I-355 extension, Illiana Expressway, potential airport) would increase traffic in the UP area placing even more importance on the need to improve the local roadway system.
- A few residents pointed out that they support the idea of developing parkways/boulevards that would better fit with the natural environment that exists throughout the Village.
- Provide larger signs and street signs on the following roads: Crawford/University Parkway, Governors Highway, and Cicero

Station #4 – Future Plans

At this station, we'll show you proposed plans for the Village, and ask for your comments.

Question #1 – Locations of Future Growth

What do you think about the proposed locations of future growth in the Village?

There could be new residential neighborhoods, business and industrial parks, retail centers, and Village facilities.

- Developers who come into the village must commit to marketing their developments in the newspaper so that a more diverse population is made aware of University Park

We'd also like you to share your top 3 growth and improvement ideas for the Village.

- 1) Entertainment in the TOD; 2) Immediate commercial / retail development, especially along Cicero and University Parkway corridor; 3) Insure that the TOD is truly mix use; 4) Complete Phase 1
- 1) I-57 access to Village; 2) development of retail; 3) market village to diverse groups or communities so that we will attract people of different ethnic backgrounds. I notice that developers in our community very seldom advertise University Park in the newspapers
- 1) workforce development and more educational opportunities; 2) retail growth; 3) beautification of the Village
- 1) retail / commercial; 2) technology; 3) education
- 1) Metra Station; 2) Cicero Avenue; 3) Western Avenue

Other feedback provided at Station #4

- A correction is required on the future land use graphic as it needs to be colored orange per the legend.
- The Phase I boundary extension to Ohlendorf is a key-priority.
- Commercial along Cicero and Western is desirable.
- East-west extension of Dralle in the mid-point of the Village is priority.
- Implementing this Plan is vital.