

TRANSPORTATION. URBAN DESIGN. HOUSING. LAND USE. ENGAGEMENT. COMMUNITY GROWTH.

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association AUGUST 2024

PARTNERS & TEAM MEMBERS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are deeply grateful to our elected officials for their invaluable guidance throughout the planning process. Your leadership and vision have been instrumental in shaping this project. Additionally, we thank our partner agencies for their unwavering support and insightful input, which have greatly enriched this endeavor. Finally, we are deeply grateful to the residents for their meaningful feedback and active participation, ensuring that this plan truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

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- » Forest Preserve District of Cook County
- » Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
- » Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
- » Illinois Tollway

On behalf of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA), we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all the residents, partner agencies, member municipalities, and local organizations who participated in this planning project. Your valuable input, commitment, and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping a comprehensive and inclusive plan that reflects the needs and aspirations of our diverse communities.

To the residents who attended meetings, participated in surveys, and shared your insights, thank you for your dedication to improving the quality of life in our region. Your voices have been crucial in guiding our decisions and ensuring that the plan is grounded in the real experiences and desires of the community.

We also want to thank our partner agencies for their expertise, resources, and unwavering support throughout this process. Your collaboration has been vital in integrating various perspectives and ensuring that our plan is both innovative and achievable.

To our member municipalities, thank you for your active participation and leadership. Your commitment to regional cooperation has been the foundation of this project, and your efforts have helped create a stronger, more connected region.

Finally, to the local organizations that contributed their time, knowledge, and resources, we appreciate your ongoing dedication to our communities. Your involvement has enriched the planning process and ensured that we address the unique needs of our area comprehensively.

Together, we have created a plan that will guide the development and growth of our communities for years to come. We look forward to continuing this partnership as we move forward with implementation and work towards a brighter future for all.

Sincerely,

Kristi DeLaurentiis

Executive Director, SSMMA

GLOSSARY

Accessibility: The ease with which individuals can reach essential destinations such as work, school, and shopping, using various modes of transportation.

Active Transportation: Modes of travel, such as walking and biking, that rely on human physical activity for movement, promoting health and environmental benefits.

Affordable Housing: Housing that is considered financially accessible when its cost, including utilities, does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income, ensuring economic sustainability.

Bikeway: A designated path, lane, or route intended for bicycle use, often separated from motor vehicle traffic to ensure cyclist safety.

Brownfield: Abandoned or underutilized properties where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination.

Complete Streets: Streets designed to be safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists, regardless of age or ability.

Connectivity: The degree to which different parts of an urban area are linked by transportation and communication networks, facilitating ease of movement and access.

Density: The number of people, housing units, or buildings per unit area of land, influencing urban form, infrastructure, and resource use.

Green Infrastructure: Systems and practices that use natural processes to manage stormwater, improve air and water quality, and provide environmental and recreational benefits.

Infill Development: The development of vacant or underused parcels within existing urban areas, aiming to optimize land use and revitalize communities.

Justice40 Initiative: The federal environmental justice goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Land Use: The planning and management of land to balance different needs, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses, ensuring sustainable development.

Mixed-Use Development: A type of urban development that integrates residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional uses within a single building or area, promoting vibrant, walkable communities.

Mobility: The ability of individuals and goods to move freely and efficiently within an area, influenced by transportation infrastructure and services.

Mobility Hub: A place where different modes of transportation come together, such as bike share, car share, public transit, and walking paths.

Pedestrian-Friendly: Designed to ensure the safety, comfort, and convenience of walking, often through features like wide sidewalks, safe crossings, and traffic calming measures.

Pedestrian Zone: An area of a city or village reserved for pedestrian use and where vehicles are restricted or prohibited.

Placemaking: A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and management of public spaces, aiming to create quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in.

Public Engagement: The process of involving community members in planning and decisionmaking activities to ensure their needs and preferences are considered.

Streetscape: The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees, and open spaces, that combine to form the street's character.

Sustainability: Practices and policies that meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, emphasizing long-term environmental, economic, and social health.

Third Spaces: Social environments separate from home (first space) and work (second space) where people gather to interact and build community, such as cafes, parks, libraries, and community centers.

Traffic Calming: Measures that reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Walkability: The measure of how friendly an area is to walking, which includes factors like the presence of footpaths, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and the density of amenities.

Wayfinding: The process or activity of ascertaining one's position and planning and following a route.

Zoning: The process of dividing land into zones for different purposes such as residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural.



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SSMMA ORGANIZATION

ABOUT SSMMA

Functioning as the South Council of Mayors, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) is an intergovernmental agency providing technical assistance and joint services to municipal members in Cook and Will Counties. SSMMA members work cooperatively on transportation, legislation, land use, economic development, recycling, purchasing, stormwater and open space planning, infrastructure, human resources, public safety, and housing issues south of the City of Chicago.

COUNCIL OF MAYORS & COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The Council of Mayors' charge is to provide a conduit for communication between local elected officials and regional transportation agencies. The executive committee was organized to formalize and strengthen the input from the region's municipalities regarding regional transportation planning and programming decisions. The Council of Mayors is composed of the chief executives of the 283 municipalities in the sevencounty CMAP region, organized into 11 subregional councils — plus the City of Chicago.

MULTIJURISDICTIONAL PARTNERS

SSMMA relies heavily on its multijurisdictional partners. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is funding the Calumet Triangle Planning Study via the Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Grant Program, which supports the goals of Illinois' Long Range Transportation Plan. This multimodal, and inclusive effort will be led by SSMMA, the consultant team, and many agencies and partners including: City of Calumet City, Village of Lansing, Village of South Holland, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Cook County, Forest Preserves of Cook County, Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Illinois Tollway, Pace, and more.



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MEET THE **SSMMA** STAFF...



CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) is leading a collaborative, multijurisdictional planning process for an area identified for this study as the Calumet Triangle. The study area is generally located within the corporate limits of the City of Calumet City, the Village of Lansing, and the Village of South Holland. It serves as the primary transition to I-394 and the Illinois Tollway. The area is served by the I-94 and U.S. Route 6 cloverleaf interchange and two Strategic Regional Arterials - IL Route 83/ Torrence Avenue and U.S. Route 6/159th Street - which intersect at Calumet City's River Oaks Mall. The Calumet Triangle communities view these two regional arterials as their primary access points to shopping and employment, as well as their gateway to I-80, the principal artery of the nation.

PROJECT BACKGROUND | COMMUNITY INTRODUCTIONS |

The Calumet Triangle is generally bounded by U.S. Route 6 to the north, Torrence Avenue to the east, Ridge Road as the southern terminus, and Wausau Avenue as the western terminus.





INTRODUCING, CALUMET CITY

Calumet City, Illinois, originally established in 1893 as the Village of West Hammond, is located along the Indiana border, directly across from Hammond, Indiana. The city shares part of its northern border with Chicago, near the Little Calumet River, and spans 7.5 square miles, situated about 23 miles from downtown Chicago.

During Prohibition in the early 1900s, the city attracted residents from northwest Indiana due to the activities of bootleggers like Al Capone, leading to a population boom. From 1900 to 1930, the population surged by 600%, doubling again by 1960, and continued to grow until 2000 when it surpassed 39,000. Today, Calumet City has an estimated population of 35,708.

The city's demographics have shifted significantly over the years. Originally predominantly White with Polish, German, and Irish communities, Black residents made up 52.9% of the population by 2000. Currently, Black residents constitute 71%, White residents 9%, and Hispanic or Latino residents 17%. Key employment sectors include healthcare, retail, manufacturing, food service, and education.

Housing in Calumet City mainly consists of detached single-family homes, representing 56% of the housing stock, with multifamily housing making up just over 36%, and nearly 40% of these being buildings with ten or more units.

Today, Calumet City focuses on strengthening its foundation and future. Mayor Thaddeus M. Jones encourages residents to reconnect and involve themselves in local government. The city has initiated a multi-year effort to improve roads, utilities, transportation, and infrastructure. Additionally, investments in recreational spaces and economic development projects aim to make Calumet City an increasingly desirable place to live and work.



HISTORIC DISTRICT

The State Street Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, showcasing the city's rich architectural heritage.



VIBRANT FESTIVALS

Calumet City hosts a variety of community events and festivals throughout the year, celebrating its cultural diversity and community spirit.

OLDEST COMMUNITY CENTER

The Calumet City Community Center, or activities and events for decades.



RIVERBOAT HISTORY

The Calumet River played a significant role in the city's development, with riverboats once being a common sight and a vital part of local commerce.

RECREATIONAL TRAIL

Part of the Burnham Greenway Trail System runs south from State Street, at the northern border of Calumet City, to Lansing, creating a regional connection for residents.

CALUMET TRIANGLE PLANNING STUDY

The Calumet City Community Center, one of the oldest in the region, has been a hub for local



INTRODUCING, LANSING

Lansing, Illinois, originally settled in 1846, lies 27 miles from downtown Chicago with an area of about 7.3 square miles. The Village of Lansing shares a border with Munster, Indiana to the east, Calumet City to the north, and South Holland to the northeast.

Lansing credits its initial growth to the construction of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. After World War II, the character of the Village began to shift from agricultural and industrial to the suburban community it is today. As Chicagoans left for the suburbs after the war, Lansing built lots of housing to accomodate for the population boom. Like many

other suburbs, the construction of expressways spurred growth in Lansing even more. In 1964, the last bit of farmland was redeveloped into a subdivision.

Lansing has a population of 28,713. The median age in the Village is 40.7. The Village is predominantly Black, accounting for 48% of the population. White residents make up 36% of the population. Of the three communities, Lansing has the highest proportion of Hispanic or Latino residents, who make up 19% of the population.

The median household income in Lansing is \$68,766. Key employment sectors

include education, healthcare, transportation, and retail.

Lansing's housing stock is predominantly detached singlefamily housing (73%). Multifamily housing makes up nearly a guarter of the housing, with 12.8% being buildings with ten or more apartments in them.

Today, the Village of Lansing represents a community of pride, progress, and possibilities, served by Mayor Patty Eidam. Community attractions include the Fox Pointe entertainment venue, Veterans Memorial, the Ford Hangar, and the Lansing Municipal Airport.



HISTORIC FORD HANGAR

The Historic Ford Hangar, built in 1927 by Henry Ford, stands as a monument to aviation history and architectural innovation as recognized by the National Register of Historic Places.

PREMIER ENTERTAINMENT VENUE

Opened in 2018, Fox Pointe is an outdoor entertainment venue that hosts a variety of performances, family-friendly activities, and accessible facilities that attract thousands of visitors each year.

WORLD FAMOUS CHOCOLATE & ICE CREAM

Established in 1920, Gayety's specializes in high quality hand dipped chocolates and handmade ice cream made from their 100-year-old recipes.

TORRENCE AVENUE SHOPPING CORRIDOR

Torrence Avenue has been a commercial hub for decades, including The Landing's Shopping Center, as well as numerous smaller retail areas, featuring local businesses and national chains.

REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The Thorn Creek Trail System and Pennsy Greenway both run through Lansing, providing regional connections for transportation and recreational opportunities.



INTRODUCING, SOUTH HOLLAND

With an area of 7.3 square miles, the Village of South Holland shares a border with Dolton to the north, Calumet City to the east, Thorton and Lansing to the south, and Harvey and Phoenix to the west. South Holland is approximately 24 miles from downtown Chicago.

South Holland was founded as an agricultural community by Dutch immigrants in 1846. In the 1890s, the Village became known as the "Onion Set Capital of the World," due to its high commercial production of onion sets. After World War II, farmland was sold to build subdivisions and, later, industrial parks. Since the shift away from agriculture, the suburban character of the Village has remained with a higher proportion of detached single-family housing and a family-oriented, more religious Village lifestyle.

Of the three communities, South Holland has the smallest population (21,287) and the highest median age (42.6). The Village also has the largest proportion of Black residents (80%). White residents make up 12% of the population, while 5% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino.

Of the Corridor communities, South Holland has the highest median household income at \$79,567. Key employment sectors are education, healthcare, transportation, and retail.

The majority (94.8%) of South Holland's housing stock is comprised of detached singlefamily housing (7,683). With multifamily housing making up less than 3% of South Holland's housing stock, most buildings feature ten or more units.

Today, South Holland seeks to become a "model community" that will set the standard to which all cities, towns, and villages will aspire. Mayor Don De Graff has proudly served the Village for more than 28 years.



FAMILY-ORIENTED

South Holland residences are primarily single-family, with well-maintained properties being a hallmark of the village. The village is unique in the sense that there are no apartment complexes.



COMMUNITY OF CHURCHES

South Holland boasts over 30 churches of various denominations, with many businesses and residents choosing to keep Sunday as a quiet day.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

South Holland offers a plethora of recreational opportunities at its 50,000-square-foot community center and 31 parks, ranging from small tot-lots to large community parks and even a sports complex.



HISTORIC DRY TOWN

Previously known as the last dry town and wine sales at a restaurant in 2023.

HIGHER EDUCATION

South Suburban College is located in South Holland, and typically enrolls over 9,000 students per year, offering a wide selection of career education and college transfer credit programs.

Previously known as the last dry town in Illinois, South Holland issued its first liquor license for beer

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

NAVIGATION AND STRUCTURE



The plan is divided into nine chapters, plus the appendices. The first three chapters are intended to serve as the existing conditions report, which detail the relevant background for the study. The following chapters serve as the study's recommendations and implementation strategies. Recommendations are organized by topic, while the implementation strategies are organized chronologically. All other pertinent information is located in the Appendix.



To most effectively utilize this document, begin by reviewing Chapter 1 for an overview of the project. Then, locate the recommendations for the topic that is most relevant to any interests or positions. Recommendations relate to an estimated time of completion. Some individuals may only need to read the appendices.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 provides a background and introduction to the Calumet Triangle Area Planning Study, featuring an overview of the project, goals, and objectives, and SSMMA's role as the lead organization. Next, the chapter explores a brief background on each Corridor community, including the respective geography, history, and unique characteristics, and an overview map. The rest of the chapter explains how to use this plan, from its structure to the intended audience to example applications.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Chapter 2 first dives into demographic data, then identifies vulnerable road users (VRUs). Next, the existing transportation network (e.g., facilities, gaps, barriers) is addressed through a safety analysis, travel market analysis, and transportation facilities capacity analysis. The next section addresses public spaces and placemaking within the Calumet Triangle, including an evaluation of existing streetscapes and public amenities. Lastly, the chapter ends with an existing land use plan analysis and a land use compatibility analysis.

CHAPTER 3: ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Chapter 3 summarizes all engagement methods and their outcomes, beginning with an overview of community and partner involvement. Then, the chapter provides an overview of the technical committee meetings, corridor planning council meetings, and public meetings. The next section details the results from the Calumet Triangle Planning Study Survey, as well as the methodology. Finally, the chapter ends with the key findings related to the community's thoughts on transportation infrastructure, visual preferences, and recreational amenities in the Calumet Triangle.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 4 lists active transportation improvements, safety enhancements, and transit improvements based on community feedback. Active transportation improvements detail proposed pedestrian and cycling infrastructure alongside a network recommendation map and cost estimates. Safety enhancements describe proposed traffic calming measurements and safety improvements. Transit improvements illustrate new transit services, shared mobility, micromobility, and paratransit proposals, a network map of new bus stops and routes, and conceptual designs for multimodal hubs.

CHAPTER 5: LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 5 shares land use goals, and how they align with local and regional plans. This section also entails development proposals, i.e. recommendations for new developments and redevelopment areas.

CHAPTER 6: PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 6 provides placemaking recommendations, including public space and placemaking initiatives, such as enhancements to public spaces and streetscapes, and additional urban design elements to promote active transportation. This chapter also includes a corridor design map, which exhibits proposed public space and streetscape improvements. Aesthetic enhancements, such as landscaping, street furniture, and pedestrian amenities, are explained too.

CHAPTER 7: PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 7 shares programming recommendations, like community events and activities. This also includes suggestions for public engagement events, tactical urbanism interventions, and engagement strategies.

CHAPTER 8: CORRIDOR FOCUS AREAS

Chapter 8 highlights the two focus areas: River Oaks Center and Little Calumet River. River Oaks Center shares a vision and schematic renderings for redevelopment. The Little Calumet River redevelopment options seek to enhance ecological and recreational appeal of the area.

CHAPTER 9: IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 9 strategizes implementation for the recommendations and assigns relevant responsibilities to entities and mechanisms for cooperation. This chapter also identifies potential funding sources and financing strategies, as well as recommendations for municipal code and ordinance changes.

APPENDICES

The Appendices list supplementary tools and resources provided within the plan, references to external documents, studies, data sources, and contact information for support and additional guidance.

INTENDED AUDIENCES

This plan is primarily intended for anyone who lives, works, shops, visits, or is interested in the Calumet Triangle, or any of the infrastructure and face similar three involved municipalities. This may consist of organizations (like SSMMA), municipal staff, planners, community members, developers, and other stakeholders. Different stakeholders may utilize this plan differently, depending on

interests and relevance. This plan is secondarily intended for municipalities that share like transportation-related and social phenomena. Recommendations can transverse beyond the Calumet Triangle, assuming similar conditions.

Some people may draw from the plan's recommendations to

propose certain infrastructure developments or use the recommendations to apply for funding to bring the ideas to life. Others may use the existing conditions report to be the basis of another type of study or encourage them to advocate for another type of improvement to the Calumet Triangle.

BELOW ARE EXAMPLES OF HOW THE PLAN'S RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE APPLIED AND SCENARIOS DEMONSTRATING THE PRACTICAL USE OF THE PLAN IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS:



SCENARIO 1 - RESIDENT

A resident of Lansing works in the Calumet Triangle. They may wonder how this study will impact their daily routine. First, they may want to access the recommendations and maps to determine routes more efficiently and safely. Inspired by the study's emphasis on community engagement, they could also attend public meetings to discuss the Calumet Triangle's proposed changes and provide feedback as a representative of their community. Additionally, the resident could become aware of Pace's fixed routes, utilizing those to travel to work and throughout the region more sustainably.



SCENARIO 2 - MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE

A municipal employee is tasked with updating their municipality's transportation polices or codes. The employee uses data and analysis from the study to support the proposed policy changes and infrastructure investments. They leverage the study's findings to advocate for expanding bike lanes, improving pedestrian safety, and integrating placemaking initiatives into redevelopment plans, and applying for grants to fund these projects. Also, the municipal employee can review progress and outcomes from the study over time. They can adjust strategies as needed based on feedback and data collected from ongoing projects, ensuring the Calumet Triangle and surrounding areas continue to evolve in line with the study's vision.



SCENARIO 3 - DEVELOPER

A developer is planning a mixed-use development project in the Calumet Triangle. The developer should first review the plan to understand current conditions. Then, they can plan the layout of the development to align with proposed new bus stops and road improvements, ensuring easy access for future residents and customers. Additionally, the developer can consider the plan's focus on sustainability and accessibility by including pathways and wayfinding signs within the development.



SCENARIO 5 - TRANSIT AGENCY

A transit agency is focused on optimizing public transportation services within the Calumet Triangle and ensuring that these services are accessible, efficient, and sustainable. They can utilize the study's data and recommendations to improve current bus routes, schedules, and stops, aligning them more closely with the community's needs and preferences. Additionally, they can engage with residents and stakeholders through public meetings and surveys to gather feedback, ensuring that the transit system evolves in response to the community's changing needs and continues to promote sustainable transportation options.

SCENARIO 6 - ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE

An environmental advocate is focused on promoting sustainable practices and reducing the environmental impact within the Calumet Triangle. They can use the study's findings to support initiatives for green infrastructure, such as permeable pavements, urban green spaces, and sustainable stormwater management systems. By attending public forums, they can advocate for these environmentally friendly practices and encourage the incorporation of renewable energy sources in new developments. Moreover, the advocate can engage with the community to raise awareness about the benefits of sustainable transportation options, such as biking, walking, and using public transit.

SCENABIO 7 - ELECTED OFFICIAL

An elected official could use the Calumet Triangle area plan as a strategic tool to guide decisionmaking, prioritize investments, and engage with the community effectively. The plan provides a comprehensive overview of the region's assets, challenges, and opportunities, allowing the official to advocate for policies and initiatives that align with the area's needs and potential. By leveraging the detailed analysis of amenities, such as open spaces and the Little Calumet River, the official can support proposals for enhancing recreational facilities, improving environmental stewardship, and increasing access to green spaces for residents.

SCENARIO 8 - SOCIAL ACTIVIST

A social activist could use the Calumet Triangle area plan as a powerful tool to advocate for social justice, environmental equity, and community empowerment. The plan's detailed analysis of the region's open spaces, natural resources, and municipal boundaries provides a foundation for addressing disparities in access to recreational amenities, environmental quality, and public resources. By highlighting these disparities, a social activist can mobilize community members, raise awareness, and work with local governments to ensure that all residents, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have equal access to the benefits provided by the area's natural and recreational assets.





SCENARIO 4 - BUSINESS OWNER

A business owner operates a retail store within the Calumet Triangle and is eager to understand how the study will affect their business. They can review the plan to identify proposed transportation improvements that might increase foot traffic and accessibility to their location. The business owner can participate in public meetings to voice their support or concerns about specific proposals, such as new bike lanes or parking adjustments. Additionally, they can explore opportunities for business improvement districts or other initiatives that the study might recommend to enhance the commercial viability and attractiveness of the area.







CHAPTER 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA | TRANSPORTATION | PUBLIC SPACES & PLACEMAKING | LAND USE & HOUSING

This chapter serves as the bulk of the
Existing Conditions Report, diving
into background on demographics,
transportation, public spaces and
placemaking, and land use and
housing. Acknowledging existing
conditions provides a baseline
for all analyses and subsequentand mode share, major travel flows,
key trip generators, congestion
points, and roadway conditions.
The next section addresses public
spaces and placemaking within
the Calumet Triangle – defining
placemaking and its importance
for community engagement and
urban revitalization. The section also
includes an evaluation of existing

Demographic data regarding the corridor communities' populations, including population totals, and growth trends and predictions, is shared. This chapter also highlights the definition and identification of vulnerable road users (VRUs), pertinent to this study. Next, the existing transportation network is addressed - including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, and gaps and barriers. This chapter also includes a safety analysis, travel market analysis, and transportation facilities capacity analysis. Together, these analyses reveal high-risk areas for road users, commuting patterns

key trip generators, congestion points, and roadway conditions. The next section addresses public spaces and placemaking within the Calumet Triangle – defining placemaking and its importance for community engagement and urban revitalization. The section also includes an evaluation of existing streetscapes and public amenities. Lastly, the chapter ends with an existing land use plan analysis that details current land use distribution, property values, and vacancy rates. The land use compatibility analysis assesses how current land use supports or hinders transportation objectives and identifies opportunity zones and potential areas for redevelopment through an analysis of market demand and development trends.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA



TOTAL POPULATION

POPULATION GROWTH AND TRENDS

The analysis of demographic data for Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland reveals important insights into the unique characteristics and challenges of each community. By examining factors such as population size, household composition, age distribution, racial and ethnic diversity, and income levels, tailored strategies can be developed to address the specific needs of these areas. The analysis also emphasizes the importance of addressing the needs of vulnerable road users, particularly in areas with higher concentrations of VRU crashes and in communities with lower socioeconomic status, where residents may face greater risks.



POPULATION DYNAMICS

Community Growth: Lansing experienced slight population growth from 2010 to 2020, contrasting with declines in Calumet City and South Holland.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Growing Wealth: South Holland has the highest median income among the three cities at \$79,567. Each community's income levels are rising slowly, too.



TRANSPORTATION

Growing Work-from-Home Trend: Led by South Holland (11.2%), more residents are working from home, alleviating congestion and traffic.

Population Dips: Calumet City and South Holland experienced population decreases (2.6% and 2.7%, respectively) between 2010 and 2020.

Unemployment Rates: Unemployment rates are increasing in each community, particularly in Lansing and Calumet City.

Long Commutes: Calumet City has the longest average commute time at 34.8 minutes. Longer commute times can negatively impact residents' quality of life and raise transportation costs.

The demographic and socioeconomic data for Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland reveal distinct community profiles. Calumet City, with the largest population and smallest average household size, has a median income of \$56,727 and a significant Black population (71.3%). Lansing, with a moderately sized population, shows a higher median income of \$68,766, a more racially diverse population, and a slightly younger median age. South Holland, the smallest of the three, has the highest median income at \$79,567, the largest average household size, and the oldest median age, reflecting a more established community with a significant Black population (79.5%). Transportation patterns also vary, with South Holland having the

FIGURE 01: DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Variable		Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland
Population		35,708	28,713 21,28	
Households		14,412	11,179	7,638
Average Household Size		2.48	2.56	2.72
Disability Population		3,473	3,781	2,782
Median Age		37.6	40.7	42.6
Median Income		\$56,727	\$68,766	\$79,567
Transportation Costs	Median-Income Family	21%	22%	22%
(Household)	Moderate-Income Family	22%	23%	24%
	White (Non- Hispanic)	9.0%	27.8%	11.3%
	Hispanic or Latino	17.1%	19.4%	5.1%
Race and Ethnicity	Black	71.3%	47.2%	79.5%
	Asian	0.2%	2.3%	0.9%
	Other/Multiple Races	2.4%	3.3%	3.2%
	Work at Home	7.7%	8.4%	11.2%
	Drive Alone	68.9%	78.8%	69.5%
Mada of Travel to Work	Carpool	10.7%	5.0%	8.7%
Mode of Travel to WORK	Transit	8.7%	3.9%	6.8%
	Walk or Bike	2.6%	1.7%	1.3%
	Other	1.4%	2.2%	2.5%

highest percentage of residents working from home (11.2%), while commuting times are generally lengthy across all three communities. Transportation costs for moderate-income families are highest in South Holland, highlighting economic pressures despite its higher income levels.

FIGURE 02: POPULATION CHANGE

	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland
Percent Population Change, 2010-2020	-2.7%	2.6%	-2.6%
Percent Population Change, 2000-2020	-7.8%	2.6%	-3.1%

Understanding population growth trends and projections is crucial for long-term planning and sustainability, particularly in communities like Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland, which exhibited differing population trends over the past two decades. Calumet City and South Holland have both experienced significant population declines, with Calumet City seeing a 7.8% decrease from 2000 to 2020 and a 2.7% decline from 2010 to 2020. South Holland also faced a decline of 3.1% over the two-decade period and a

2.6% decrease in the last decade. These trends suggest potential challenges such as economic downturns, outmigration, and declining property values, possibly driven by high property taxes and a shrinking tax base.

In contrast, Lansing has shown resilience with a consistent 2.6% population growth from both 2000 to 2020 and 2010 to 2020. Analyzing these patterns allows for the development of targeted strategies to stabilize and potentially reverse

population declines in struggling communities, ensuring they remain vibrant and sustainable. For Lansing, the focus could be on sustaining its growth by addressing emerging challenges, while for Calumet City and South Holland, strategies might include economic revitalization, improved public services, and incentives to attract new residents and businesses.

FIGURE 03: POPULATION DENSITY

	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland
Population per square mile, 2010	5,155.2	4,174.4	3,031.8
Population per square mile, 2020	5,017.8	3,896.5	2,966.4
Land area in square miles, 2010	7.19	6.79	7.27
Land area in square miles, 2020	7.18	7.46	7.24

Between 2010 and 2020, all three communities—Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland experienced decreases in population density, reflecting broader trends of population decline despite stable land areas.

These reductions in population density occurred even though the land areas of these communities remained largely unchanged. Calumet City's land area saw a negligible decrease from 7.19

to 7.18 square miles, Lansing's land area actually increased slightly from 6.79 to 7.46 square miles, and South Holland's land area remained almost constant, decreasing marginally from 7.27 to 7.24 square miles. The stability in land area, combined with declining population densities, underscores the impact of population decline rather than changes in land use or significant development. This trend may have implications for local economies, infrastructure, and community services, as fewer residents could lead to challenges in maintaining economic vitality and supporting public services effectively. Understanding these shifts is essential for planning future growth strategies, optimizing land use, and addressing the needs of shrinking populations.

FIGURE 04: AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland
Under 18 years	8,673	6,763	4,711
18-24 years	2,980	2,067	1,713
25-34 years	5,075	3,750	2,141
35-44 years	4,518	3,346	2,703
45-54 years	4,737	4,508	3,034
55-64 years	4,812	3,836	3,150
65 years and over	4,913	4,343	3,835
TOTAL	35,708	28,713	21,287

The population distribution across age groups in Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland reveals distinct demographic patterns. Calumet City, the largest of the three communities with 35,708 residents, has a significant youth population, with 8,673 individuals under 18 years old, making up nearly a quarter of its total population. The city also has a notable number of residents in the 25-34 age group (5,075) and a fairly balanced distribution across

groups.

South Holland, the smallest of the three with 21.287 residents. has the largest proportion of older adults, with 3,835 residents aged 65 and over. The community



Demographic information is crucial in creating plans because it provides essential insights into the characteristics of a population, such as age, gender, income, education, and ethnicity. This data helps planners understand the needs, preferences, and challenges of different community segments, allowing them to tailor solutions that are inclusive and equitable. By incorporating demographic information, planners can ensure that their strategies are responsive to the unique context of the community, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

other adult age groups. Lansing, with a total population of 28,713, shows a similar pattern, though slightly smaller in scale, with 6,763 individuals under 18 years old and substantial populations in the 35-44 (3,346) and 45-54 (4,508) age

also has a considerable youth population, with 4,711 individuals under 18.

Across all three communities, the population gradually decreases with age, but each shows a strong presence of both young and middle-aged residents, which is important for maintaining economic stability and planning for future community needs.

HOW DOES DEMOGRAPHIC DATA IMPACT PLANS?

VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs) are individuals who are on the road not in a car, bus, or truck, and therefore the most at risk in traffic. VRUs are generally considered to include pedestrians, fall along Torrence Avenue or bicyclists, children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

Historically, roadway system design has given minimal consideration to vulnerable road users, instead favoring an autooriented design. This is especially true in urban areas, where increased density of motorists and areas, with high concentrations VRUs creates a greater incidence of interaction between the two groups.

Within the Calumet Triangle, there are 16 different clusters of vulnerable road users. Clusters are spots of concentrated VRU crashes. All the clusters either U.S. Route 6. The intersection of Torrence Avenue and 170th Street sees the highest frequency of impacted VRUs, followed by the intersection of U.S. Route 6/162nd Street and South Park Avenue.

However, vulnerable road users are never confined to certain of VRUs extending outside of the Calumet Triangle towards Burnham Avenue, Ridge Road, and

further south on Torrence Avenue.

In addition, it is important to recognize that individuals with lower socioeconomic status tend to have higher vulnerability as users of the roads. Lower socioeconomic status correlates with a higher likelihood of relying on walking or bicycling for transportation due to limited access to personal vehicles or public transportation. This reliance exposes individuals to greater vulnerability, as they interact more frequently with motorized traffic.

of all victims in traffic facilities in dense urban areas are Vulnerable Road Users. Source: Federal Highway Administratior

of all pedestrian deaths are children under the age of 15 years old Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

REFER TO APPENDIX A FOR METHODOLOGIES AND EXPLANATION ON HOW VRU CORRIDORS AND CLUSTERS ARE DETERMINED.

CALUMET TRIANGLE PLANNING STUDY

FIGURE 05: VRU CLUSTERS IN THE CALUMET TRIANGLE

Location	Mode	Justice 40	VRU Crash Frequency Tier	Total VRU Crashes in Cluster
U.S. Rt. 6/River Oaks Dr. and Paxton Ave.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	3 (2 serious injuries; 1 minor injuries)
Torrence Ave. and the Little Calumet River	Pedestrian	Disadvantaged	Low	3 (1 serious injuries; 2 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and 170th St.	Pedestrian	Disadvantaged	Low	11 (3 serious injuries; 4 minor injuries; 4 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and 170th St.	Bicycle	Disadvantaged	Low	3 (1 serious injuries; 1 minor injuries; 1 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and Hooters	Bicycle	Disadvantaged	Low	4 (3 minor injuries; 1 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and I-94	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	3 (1 serious injuries; 2 minor injuries)
Torrence Ave. and I-80	Pedestrian	Disadvantaged	Medium	3 (1 fatalities; 1 minor injuries; 1 no apparent injuries)
Torrence Ave. and 176th Pl.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	3 (1 fatalities; 2 minor injuries)
Torrence Ave. and 178th St.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	3 (1 serious injuries; 2 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and Thorton Lansing Rd.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	5 (1 serious injuries; 4 minor injuries)
Torrence Ave. and Burger King	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	6 (5 minor injuries; 1 possible injuries)
Torrence Ave. and Ridge Rd.	Bicycle	Not Disadvantaged	Low	5 (4 minor injuries; 1 possible injuries)
U.S. Rt. 6/E. 162nd St. and Woodlawn East Ave.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	4 (1 minor injuries; 2 possible injuries; 1 no apparent injuries)
U.S. Rt. 6/E. 162nd St. and Cottage Grove Ave.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	6 (4 serious injuries; 1 minor injuries; 1 possible injuries)
U.S. Rt. 6/E. 162nd St. and S. Park Ave.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	10 (1 serious injuries; 6 minor injuries; 2 possible injuries; 1 no apparent injuries)
U.S. Rt. 6/E. 162nd St. and Wausau Ave.	Pedestrian	Not Disadvantaged	Low	4 (2 minor injuries; 2 possible injuries)

CALUMET TRIANGLE PLANNING STUDY



TRANSPORTATION



CRASH ANALYSIS

The transportation section evaluates walkability, bikeability, and transit use within the Calumet Triangle, highlighting significant gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. It reveals that Calumet City is somewhat walkable, while Lansing and South Holland are more car-dependent, emphasizing the need for improved sidewalks and crossings. The report also includes Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS), Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (LTS), and Bicycle Gap Network analyses to assess and enhance bicycle safety and suitability. Additionally, public transit options are reviewed, with ongoing improvements aimed at increasing accessibility and connectivity; detailed analyses follow below.



PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Residential Access: Sidewalks are most prevalent and continuous within residential areas of the Calumet Triangle, creating neighborhood accessibility.

BICYCLE FACILITIES

Extensive Trail Network: The regional trails offer extensive routes, enhancing overall connectivity between communities.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

Regional Mobility: Between Pace, Metra, Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, and Amtrak, there are many transit operators available mobilizing users across the region.

Sidewalks are not present or connected

along major corridors, like Torrence Avenue, discouraging pedestrians from accessing key destinations.

Network Gaps: Despite several established trails, there are still significant gaps and barriers in the overall bicycle network that deter users from accessing and using them.

First & Last Mile **Connectivity:** While there are many transit options available near the Calumet Triangle, it is be difficult to efficiently reach the stops or stations.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

coverage.

destinations.

Pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and crosswalks, play a crucial role in enhancing accessibility for all residents. They ensure that individuals who are unable to drive, perhaps due to age, disability, or economic factors, still have the independence to access essential services and participate in community life. By improving walkability, these facilities cater to the needs of a significant portion of the population who rely on walking as their primary mode of transportation, as well as serve recreational needs. Pedestrianfriendly environments can significantly improve the quality of life for residents, particularly for those for whom walking is not just a choice, but a necessity.

Infrastructure is essential to improving walkability, however, ineffective infrastructure can also lower walkability if it is unsafe or inefficient for someone to use.

80.7% of the Calumet Triangle is served by sidewalks. The areas served by sidewalks are primarily residential and located west of I-94. East of I-94, commercial areas, like along Torrence Avenue, have lower sidewalk coverage as they tend to











25

Commercial Access:

be more auto-oriented through the incorporation of parking lots and drive-throughs. In the Calumet Triangle, the combination of road classification and land use likely determines the level of sidewalk

A gap in a pedestrian network is the absence of a sidewalk or other accessible facility along a corridor, which lowers walkability. A network gap is a significant deterrent to current and potential users. Bridging these gaps, whether they span many miles or just a block, is vital to creating an interconnected network. More importantly, for those who rely on active transportation modes, gaps in the network create disconnects and reduce the accessibility of key

The largest gaps in the pedestrian network exist along the Little Calumet River and around River Oaks Center, as well as near the interstates. These places are primarily auto-oriented, not anticipating pedestrians' presence.

WALKABILITY INDEX

The Walkability Index is a metric used to evaluate how friendly an area is for walking, based on factors like the availability of sidewalks, proximity to amenities, street connectivity, and safety.

Higher walkability is indicated by continuous, connected pedestrian facilities, in conjunction with lower traffic volumes and speeds, as well as buffers from traffic. Conversely, lower walkability is indicated by fewer, lower quality pedestrian facilities, higher traffic volumes and speeds, and a lack of buffers from traffic. Lower walkability can also stem from residential areas despite often having a continuous sidewalk network. Suburban designs, such as cul-de-sacs, do not prioritize efficient access on foot to places outside of residential areas.

This plan uses the Walkability Index to identify areas of concern by highlighting zones with low scores, where the absence of sidewalks, shared use paths, and other pedestrian infrastructure indicates a need for targeted improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility.





BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bicycle facilities serve communities by providing opportunities for transportation and recreation. Examples of bicycle facilities include on-street bike lanes, off-street paths, and shared use paths.

Providing bicycle infrastructure encourages individuals to bike for shorter trips due to greater convenience. This takes singleoccupancy vehicles off the roads, which reduces traffic congestion and carbon emissions. As a result, air quality improves due to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants. Key facilities include the Sand

The variety of bicycle facilities serves different abilities and preferences. The Calumet Triangle area features paved and unpaved trails, bike paths, and painted bike lanes. The addition or improvement of bicycle facilities connects transportation gaps for the three communities, promoting a more equitable and cohesive region.

The existing bicycle facilities within the Calumet Triangle area include a variety of trails and bike lanes designed to enhance connectivity and promote cycling.

Ridge Trail, a 2.6-mile paved path along U.S. Route 6; the 9.4-mile Burnham/Pennsy Greenway Trail System, which links major areas and offers a continuous route for cyclists; and the extensive 23.5mile Thorn Creek Trail System, which connects various forest preserves. Additional facilities include the shorter Cottage Grove Avenue Bike Lane and East 170th Street Bike Lane, as well as the Little Cal Bike Path, a 2.5-mile paved trail near Gouwens Park. These trails and bike lanes, alongside future projects like the River Oaks Trail and eventual

of a low-income household's budget is spent on transportation, making affordable biking facilities crucial for increased mobility.

increase in student attendance is observed in schools with successful bike and pedestrian Routes to School National Partnership

connections to the Cal-Sag Trail and Lakefront trail, aim to improve overall connectivity and provide safe, accessible routes for cyclists.

Marked routes, also known as signed bike routes, are designated streets with signage indicating that they are part of a bicycle network, but they lack specific bike lane markings. Shared lane markings, or "sharrows," are







SHARED USE PATH

pavement markings that indicate a shared space for both bicycles and motor vehicles on the same lane. Bike lanes are dedicated lanes on roadways specifically for bicycles, marked with painted lines and symbols. Protected bike lanes are similar to standard bike lanes, but include physical barriers, such as bollards or parked cars, to separate cyclists from motor vehicle traffic. Shared use paths are off-road paths designed for use by both cyclists and pedestrians, often found in parks or along greenways. Regional trails are extensive trail networks that connect multiple communities and regions, providing long-distance routes for cyclists and other recreational users.









BICYCLE FACILITY ANALYSIS

Bicycle facility analysis involves assessing and evaluating the suitability and safety of bicycle infrastructure using measures such as the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) and Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) on roadways and at intersections. See Map 5 for the results of the bicycle facility analysis.

BICYCLE LEVEL OF SERIVCE (BLOS)

Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) is a framework used to assess and categorize the comfort and safety levels for bicyclists on roadways. The Bicycle Level of Service framework assigns a letter grade (A through F) to different road segments or corridors, with each rating representing a different level of stress experienced by bicyclists. Grade A corresponds to low-stress routes with minimal interaction with motor vehicles, while Grade F indicates high-stress routes where bicyclists face significant challenges and discomfort.



Offers wide bike lanes or dedicated paths, low traffic volume, and calm speeds, making it suitable for all types of bicyclists, including beginners. Ideal for families, children, and recreational cyclists.



Lacks specific cycling infrastructure, very high traffic and speeds, not recommended for less experienced cyclists. These roads are designed for vehicles with little consideration for cyclists, offering a challenging environment.



Provides adequate bike lanes, moderate traffic, and reasonable speeds, comfortable for most cyclists. These routes feature designated lanes on roads with moderate flow and speeds, offering a safe and comfortable experience.



Unsuitable for cyclists, with no bike facilities, extreme traffic, and high speeds, only navigable by the most experienced cyclists. These routes are highly dangerous due to heavy traffic and high speeds, requiring extreme caution.



Features basic bike facilities, higher traffic volumes, and speeds, suitable for regular cyclists with some experience. These routes may have narrow lanes or sharrows and require more vigilance.

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS (LTS)

The Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) for intersections refers to the categorization of the comfort and safety of cyclists at a particular intersection based on the conditions and infrastructure design. It assesses the stress levels experienced by cyclists when navigating through an intersection. It helps identify the suitability of the infrastructure for different user groups.





Represents intersections that pose minimal stress, suitable for cyclists of all skill levels, including children.

Appropriate for most adult cyclists, these intersections may have more complex layouts or higher traffic volumes, but still maintain manageable stress levels.

	<u></u>		
	LTS 4		

Advised only for very experienced cyclists, these intersections typically involve multiple traffic lanes, high vehicle speeds, or poor visibility.



REFER TO APPENDIX A FOR METHODOLOGIES, FULL RESULTS, AND DATA COLLECTION INFORMATION



Suitable for experienced adult cyclists who are comfortable navigating complex traffic situations and busier intersections.



TRANSIT FACILITIES

The Calumet Triangle is situated between four rail services: Metra's Metra Electric (ME) line, the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District's (NICTD) South Shore Line, Amtrak's City of New Orleans, Illini, Saluki line, and Amtrak's Cardinal line.

As the fifth busiest of Metra's 11 lines, the ME line has daily service to downtown Chicago (Millenium Station) and the south suburbs. Between five to seven miles away, the nearest stations to the Calumet Triangle are Ivanhoe, 147th Street, Harvey, and Hazel Crest. On weekdays, service from these stations to Chicago runs 13 times daily, while service to these stations from Chicago runs 12 times daily. Service increases during the weekend. Note that 147th Street station is temporarily closed to accommodate station rehabilitation. The station has been closed since 2022 and is planned to reopen in fall 2024. Metra continues to increase ridership, seeing its highest average weekday ridership since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, in April, with 159,100 trips.

NICTD's South Shore Line has daily service that extends from downtown Chicago (Millenium Station), along Lake Michigan, to South Bend International Airport with nearby stations at Hegewisch, Hammond, and East Chicago. These stations range from around five to seven miles from the Calumet Triangle. In each direction, service runs around 20 trips per weekday, and nine trips per day during the weekend. However, the South Shore Line

is currently constructing the West Lake Corridor Project as a southern branch extension of the existing route. This project will add four new stops closer to the Calumet Triangle at Hammond Gateway, South Hammond, Munster Ridge Road, and Munster/ Dyer Main Street. The project was first initiated in 2016 and sets May 2025 as the target opening date, with test trains beginning in October 2024. This will greatly expand the Calumet Triangle's access to Chicago and northwest Indiana.

Amtrak's City of New Orleans, Illini, Saluki line has a station in Homewood, Illinois (~ seven to eight miles from the Calumet Triangle). This stop connects to the City of Chicago, as well as to the southern United States with major stops in Champaign-

is returned to local economies for every \$1.00 that's spent on public transportation by local ource: American Public Transportation Association, 2019

increase in retail sales is observed by businesses located near public transportation hubs due to higher foot traffic and accessibility.

Urbana, Carbondale, Memphis, Jackson, and New Orleans. In each direction, the City of New Orleans, Illini, Saluki line offers three trips per day. The Homewood station served 27,650 passengers (arrivals and departures) in 2022. In addition, Amtrak's Cardinal line has a nearby station in Dyer, Indiana (~ eight to nine miles from the Calumet Triangle). This stop connects to the City of Chicago, as well as to the east coast with major stops in Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Washington D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City. The Cardinal line offers three trips per week in each direction. The Dyer station served 989 passengers (arrivals and departures) in 2022.



There are ten Pace bus routes in the Calumet Triangle area. Within the bounds of the Calumet Triangle, Pace routes include:

- Homewood
- » 358 Torrence
- » 364 159th Street

On Ring Road, Calumet City is working with Pace to construct a Park and Ride facility that will



access to Pace Bus fixed services. throughout the collar counties of Chicagoland, covering over 3,600

» 353 – 95th-River Oaks-

allow for transfer to multiple bus routes, as well as paratransit. The facility will provide riders with a covered, 1,400-foot facility with restrooms and an indoor waiting area. The Calumet Triangle is not currently served by paratransit, so this addition will increase accessibility and mobility both locally and regionally. See the image below for the proposed site.



CRASH ANALYSIS

Crash analysis is a critical tool in understanding the patterns and causes of traffic incidents, particularly in areas with high rates of crashes. By examining detailed crash data, including factors such as location, time of day, weather conditions, and the types of vehicles involved, planners and engineers can identify specific risk factors that contribute to crashes. This analysis often reveals trends, such as certain intersections being prone to rear-end collisions or specific times of day with higher accident rates due to traffic congestion. Understanding these patterns allows for targeted interventions, such as installing traffic calming measures, improving signage, or redesigning roadways to enhance safety for all road users.

Furthermore, crash analysis is essential for addressing the safety of vulnerable road users (VRUs), such as pedestrians and cyclists, who are disproportionately affected in traffic crashes. By

focusing on the locations where VRUs are frequently involved in crashes, the analysis can highlight the inadequacies in existing infrastructure, such as insufficient pedestrian crossings or lack of protected bike lanes. This information is crucial for making informed decisions about where to prioritize safety improvements, ensuring that interventions are both effective and equitable. Ultimately, crash analysis helps create safer transportation networks by guiding investments and policy changes that reduce the risk of crashes and protect the most vulnerable members of the community.

GENERAL CRASH TRENDS

The Calumet Triangle study area experienced a substantial number of crashes from 2018 to 2022, with distinct patterns emerging from the data. The overall trend indicates that most crashes occurred during weekdays, particularly in the afternoon and early evening hours. This pattern aligns with typical peak traffic

FIGURE 06: CRASH BREAKDOWN

Most Common Most Common Most Common Area **Total Crashes** Fatalities **Crash Type** Day of Week **Time of Day Calumet Triangle** 916 4 **Front to Rear** 17:00 (5 PM) Friday 12 Calumet City 5,393 Turning 17:00 (5 PM) Saturday 15 Front to Rear 15:00 (3 PM) Friday Lansing 3,103 3.585 17 South Holland Turning 15:00 (3 PM) Friday

periods when roads are busier, leading to increased congestion and a higher likelihood of collisions. The data reveals that intersections are particularly problematic, with a significant number of two-vehicle crashes occurring at these locations.

TIMES & DAYS OF THE WEEK

A deeper look into the timing of crashes shows that weekday afternoons, especially between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., are the most common times for incidents. This period corresponds with afterschool and work commute hours, highlighting the need for targeted traffic management during these peak times. Additionally, there is a notable increase in crashes on Fridays, suggesting that end-ofweek activities and possibly lower driver attentiveness contribute to higher crash rates.

VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists are of particular concern due to their higher injury severity. These incidents often occurred



EXAMPLES OF PERCEPTIONS OF CRASHES

Crashes in the Calumet Triangle can significantly deter active transportation by creating a perception of danger, discouraging residents from walking or biking, especially in areas with a history of frequent or severe accidents. When pedestrians and cyclists are involved in crashes, it often highlights the inadequacies in existing infrastructure, such as the lack of safe crossings, poorly marked bike lanes, or insufficient traffic calming measures. These incidents can lead to a decrease in the number of people willing to use active transportation modes due to fear of injury or worse. Over time, this can result in lower physical activity levels within the community, increased reliance on cars, and a decline in the overall vibrancy and connectivity of the area.

Consider the case of Sarah, a resident of Calumet City who lives near a busy commercial area. Sarah used to walk to nearby shops daily, enjoying the exercise and convenience. However, after witnessing a severe crash at a nearby intersection—where a pedestrian was struck by a car—Sarah became increasingly anxious about her own safety. The intersection, which lacks proper crosswalks and has heavy traffic, now feels too dangerous for her to navigate. As a result, Sarah has stopped walking to the shops and now drives instead, even though it's a shorter distance on foot. This shift not only increases her transportation costs and contributes to traffic congestion, but also diminishes her overall well-being and connection to the community. Sarah's experience reflects how crashes can profoundly impact residents' transportation choices, pushing them away from healthier, more sustainable modes of travel due to safety concerns.

at crosswalks and intersections, where pedestrian and vehicular traffic intersect. The data indicates that many of these crashes happened during daylight hours, suggesting that visibility alone is not the issue; rather, it may be due to inadequate infrastructure or failure to yield by drivers. Enhancing crosswalk visibility and implementing traffic calming measures could mitigate these risks.

ENVIRONMENTAL & LIGHTING CONDITIONS

Environmental factors significantly impact crash occurrences. Poor weather conditions such as rain and snow were present in several crashes, emphasizing the need for better road maintenance and driver awareness during adverse weather. Additionally, a substantial number of crashes occurred during nighttime or lowlight conditions. Improving street lighting and reflective signage could enhance driver visibility and reduce the likelihood of crashes in these conditions.

SEVERITY OF CRASHES

Analyzing the severity of crashes reveals that while many incidents resulted in property damage only, a significant number also led to injuries and, in some cases, fatalities. Crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists were more likely to result in severe injuries, underscoring the vulnerability of these road users. The types of vehicles involved were predominantly standard passenger vehicles, with fewer incidents involving commercial vehicles or trucks. However, the presence of larger vehicles in

crashes often correlated with higher severity, suggesting the need for stricter regulations and monitoring of heavy vehicle traffic in the area.



TRAVEL MARKET ANALYSIS

The Travel Market Analysis examines the current population and transportation patterns within the Calumet Triangle while also projecting future growth and development trends in the area. This analysis is crucial for understanding how the region's transportation needs might evolve as the population and economic activity increase. By considering both present conditions and future expectations, the analysis provides a comprehensive view of potential demand for transportation infrastructure and services, helping planners make informed decisions to support sustainable growth and connectivity within the Calumet Triangle.



COMMUTING PATTERNS

Influx of Residents: The Calumet Triangle's growth is supported by strong community services and housing options. Heavy Reliance on Cars: Auto-oriented communities present challenges, such as increased traffic congestion, wear and tear on infrastructure, and environmental concerns.



POPULATION GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

Carpooling: Carpooling has grown to account for over 10% of commutes in the area, helping to reduce congestion and environmental impacts.

COMMUNITY GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Poised for Growth: The Calumet Triangle is poised for significant community growth, driven by a combination of residential, commercial, and industrial development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & JOB CREATION

Position: The Calumet Triangle is well-positioned for economic growth due to its strong industrial base and strategic location near major transportation routes. Aging Population: As the population ages, there will be increased demand for senior housing, healthcare services, and other amenities tailored to older adults.

Building out Infrastructure: Sustained community growth will require careful planning and coordination to address potential challenges.

Vacancy Rates: It is key to address the high commercial vacancy rates and ensure that new developments align with the community's needs.

CALUMET TRIANGLE PLANNING STUDY

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES CAPACITY ANALYSIS

The overall capacity of the transportation network in the Calumet Triangle is a critical factor in determining the region's ability to support future growth. The Transportation Capacity Analysis examines how well the current network can handle projected increases in traffic, particularly in high-growth areas. This includes assessing the ability of key roadways, intersections, and public transit systems to manage increased demand without significant delays or degradation in service quality. By identifying capacity constraints and potential solutions, such as road widening, intersection upgrades, or enhanced public transit options, the analysis provides a roadmap for ensuring that the transportation network can continue to support the region's economic and community development goals.

CONGESTION POINTS

Congestion points within the Calumet Triangle are areas where traffic frequently slows down or comes to a standstill due to the volume of vehicles exceeding the roadway's capacity. These points are often located at major intersections or along key corridors that serve both commuter and commercial traffic. The analysis of congestion points is vital for identifying where investments in traffic management, signal timing optimization, and infrastructure expansion are most needed.

Reducing congestion not only improves travel times and reduces fuel consumption, but also enhances the overall quality of life for residents and the efficiency of businesses that rely on timely transportation.

HIGH-VOLUME ROADWAYS

High-volume roadways, such as IL Route 6 and Torrence Avenue, are critical corridors within the Calumet Triangle, serving as primary routes for both local traffic and regional transportation. These roadways handle a significant amount of daily traffic, including a substantial share of truck traffic associated with the area's industrial activities. The **Transportation Capacity Analysis** highlights the importance of maintaining and upgrading these high-volume roadways to prevent them from becoming chokepoints in the transportation network. Ensuring that these roads can accommodate future traffic growth, including potential increases in truck traffic, is crucial for the overall mobility and economic vitality of the region.

TRUCK BOTTLENECKS

Truck bottlenecks are a significant concern in the Calumet Triangle, particularly given the area's strong industrial presence. These bottlenecks occur at key intersections and road segments where truck traffic is heavy, leading to delays and inefficiencies in the transportation network. For example, intersections near major



industrial zones often experience frequent congestion due to the high volume of trucks entering and exiting facilities. Addressing these bottlenecks through targeted infrastructure improvements, such as dedicated truck lanes or improved intersection designs, is essential for maintaining the efficiency of the transportation network and supporting the region's industrial economy.

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

The presence of multiple atgrade railroad crossings within the area presents unique challenges, particularly in terms of congestion and potential delays. These crossings often intersect with high-volume roadways, exacerbating bottlenecks and increasing the risk of crashes. The analysis must consider how these crossings impact the overall capacity of the transportation network, especially during peak hours when both vehicular and rail traffic are at their highest. Addressing the issues at these crossings, whether through the implementation of grade separations, improved signaling, or other safety enhancements, is essential for ensuring the efficient movement of goods and people throughout the region. Furthermore, these improvements are critical for reducing delays and enhancing the safety of residents, particularly in densely populated areas where railroad crossings are frequently used.





PUBLIC SPACES & PLACEMAKING

WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

ASSESSMENT OF THE CALUMET TRIANGLE

WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking involves transforming public spaces into vibrant, engaging areas that foster community interaction. It is about creating parks, squares, and streets that reflect the local culture, encourage social connections, and enhance wellbeing. It prioritizes people over infrastructure and aims to create public spaces that are more than just utilitarian; these spaces inspire social interaction and cultural exchange. The goal is to create spaces that people love to be in, whether they are parks, streets, plazas, or even entire neighborhoods. It combines elements of urban planning, architecture, community development, and design to make places that are functional, attractive, and meaningful.

The process of placemaking is one of creating quality public spaces that focus on the experience of the people in them. Effective

public spaces have a unique sense of place and an authenticity that attracts people, businesses, and institutions. Placemaking also combines a distinct mix of uses and activities that create a vibrancy that encourages interactions and creativity. In addition, these spaces are safe, accessible, connected, and welcoming. Examples of placemaking include:

- » Streestscaping improvements
- » Complete Streets Programs
- » Facade Rehabilitation programs
- » Pocket Parks and plazas
- » Murals and other public art campaigns
- » Branding signage and wayfinding
- » Temporary events and activations

"Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired."

Ann Markusen & Anne Gadwa, Creative Placemaking Report, 2010

Placemaking can be implemented at all scales ranging from small incremental improvements to larger scale strategic interventions. However, all placemaking depends on engaging with the community that the place is meant to serve in a comprehensive and authentic way. Developing the principles and goals the placemaking initiative is meant to accomplish is a process that has to be grounded in the needs and desires of the stakeholders and partners. The process of placemaking is not only focused on improving the physical environment, but also enriching the social fabric of the community and the economic value of the place.



PLACEMAKING CASE STUDIES

A great example of placemaking can be seen in the North Collinwood neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio. This area underwent a significant transformation through a public-private partnership that focused on integrating arts and culture into community development. The initiative, supported by The Kresge Foundation, aimed to reverse population decline, rebuild the central commercial corridor, and restore a positive neighborhood identity. By leveraging local artists and cultural organizations, the project successfully revitalized the area, turning it into a vibrant hub that attracted new residents and businesses. This case study highlights how creative placemaking can serve as a catalyst for economic and social revitalization in post-industrial neighborhoods.

Another notable example is the Three Oaks Recreation Area near Crystal Lake, Illinois. This project transformed a former industrial site into a popular recreation destination, demonstrating the power of adaptive reuse in placemaking. The area, once a gravel quarry, was redeveloped into a space that now includes parks, lakes for watersports, and winter activities. This not only revitalized the community, but also became an important economic driver, supporting local jobs and attracting visitors.

A third example of successful placemaking is the revitalization of the Distillery District in Toronto, Canada. Once a defunct Victorian industrial complex, this 158-year-old distillery was transformed into a vibrant arts and culture hub through a thoughtful adaptive reuse project. The developers integrated historic Victorian architecture with modern design, creating a unique destination that now houses retail spaces, art galleries, studios, theaters, and restaurants. This transformation not only preserved the historical significance of the site, but also turned it into one of Canada's most acclaimed cultural centers, attracting millions of visitors annually and driving significant economic growth in the surrounding area. The Distillery District exemplifies how placemaking can blend historical preservation with contemporary needs to create spaces that are both economically viable and culturally enriching (Urban Land Magazine).

WHY IS PLACEMAKING IMPORTANT?

The public realm is an asset that often gets overlooked and treated as an afterthought in most projects. However, when viewed through the lens of placemaking, it becomes a valuable, but underutilized, tool for communities to address challenges like accessibility, diversity, equity and economic vitality. By providing and working towards higher quality public spaces, communities can have access to the necessary jobs and services, to not only survive, but thrive. According to Project for Public Space's report, great places have the ability to build and

support equitable, local economies through:

- » Encouraging small-scale entrepreneurship
- » Economic development
- » Higher real estate values
- » Local business ownership and value
- » Local living wage jobs
- » More optimized municipal services

» Increased tax revenue

ASSESSMENT OF THE CALUMET TRIANGLE

In general, the study area is dominated by typical autooriented development patterns that were designed to facilitate vehicular traffic over all other concerns. Elements include wide vehicular throughways, large intersections, low scale buildings separated by wide setbacks and an overabundance of parking lots. Any pedestrian accommodation or other human centered public

space is minimal and typically retrofitted into an existing context with limited effectiveness. For example, on Torrence Avenue, a sidewalk was incorporated into the landscape setback that separates the parking lot from Torrence Ave (see Figure X below). However, the sidewalk is only on one side of the road and does not protect users from weather conditions or sound from traffic.

There is also no attempt at providing landscaping or other amenities like benches or lighting. Overall, it creates an undesirable experience that discourages people from actually using the sidewalk. This general character represents an opportunity for placemaking and other interventions in the study area to improve the user experience and economic performance.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS REPORT, THE CALUMET TRIANGLE HAS BEEN DIVIDED INTO FIVE ZONES THAT CORRESPOND TO THE EXISTING CHARACTER AND NATURAL BOUNDARIES CREATED BY THE CONTEXT.



TORRENCE AVENUE (SOUTH OF |-94):

This zone of the Calumet Triangle is characterized by traditional auto-oriented development of varying eras. There are older, zero lot line buildings along with newer developments situated behind landscaping and parking lots and everything in between. This variety creates a lack of identity for the corridor that encourages visitors to spend as little time here beyond the specific, transactional needs that they have.

With few exceptions, the sidewalks are right along the street which creates significant challenges to pedestrian comfort based on the speed of traffic. It was noted that some of the newer developments (e.g. Starbucks, Chipotle, etc.) have included upgraded landscaping along the street frontage, which is an improvement.

Lastly, directly south of I-94, there are large swaths of vacant land left investigated.

TORRENCE AVENUE (NORTH OF I-94):

Development in this zone of the project area is generally newer and is typical of auto-oriented corridors. Buildings are typically setback ~75' with a bay of parking included in the setback. Sidewalks are generally provided on both sides of the street and do include a some parkway in between the travel lanes. However, little else is provided in terms of accommodations to pedestrians or cyclists. This is still a challenging environment for people due to the lack of protection from weather, sound, or traffic.

In general, this zone is dominated by what appears to be an overabundance of parking.

"Active open spaces are proven to deliver an excellent return on investment, often supplying far more in benefits than they cost to construct.

Elizabeth Shreeve, Chairman of the ULI Sustainable Development Council

over from the removal of a 'clover leaf' interchange. The potential redevelopment of these parcels is an opportunity that should be

In addition to the street front, there are two other opportunities in this zone that deserve attention. At the intersection of Torrence Avenue and 172nd Street, high voltage power lines cross Torrence Avenue. This land is not suitable for any kind of vertical development, but represents a perfect opportunity for placemaking or other intervention. Currently, there is what appears to be a makeshift parking lot on the northeast corner.

The second opportunity is on the north end as Torrence Avenue crosses the Little Calumet River. During initial investigations, there have been numerous proposals to provide more open space and increase access to the river. This area along Torrence Avenue represents a great opportunity based on the accessibility and visibility that Torrence Avenue provides.

RIVER OAKS DRIVE & Torrence avenue:

This zone of the corridor is dominated by the River Oaks Center and River Oaks West. Combined with these two retail destinations, there is also the Forest Preserve of Cook County directly north of River Oaks Drive. There are little to no sidewalks in this zone and the development patterns are typically either autooriented outlot developments or parking lots.

In terms of opportunities in this zone, the River Oaks Center presents the biggest one. The City of Calumet City has a plan to redevelop the mall and this would likely bring with it a host of improvements to the area. The underutilized parking areas of River Oaks West also present an opportunity to densify and bring more if a variety of uses to the area. Lastly, the Little Calumet River runs along the southern edge of both of these developments and an underutilized asset that should be engaged for recreational uses.

RIVER OAKS DRIVE (EAST OF I-94):

Much like the previous zone, this area is dominated by autooriented retail and there are little to no sidewalks or other pedestrian accommodations. However, there are some multifamily developments in the area, in addition to the golf course. The presence of nonretail uses softens the character of the corridor and creates the opportunity to further diversify the development types in the area.

The vacant parcels north of River Oaks Drive and just east of I-94 represents one of the best redevelopment opportunities in this zone.



THE

Bryant Park in New York City is a shining example of the transformative power of placemaking. In the 1980s, the park was a neglected, crime-ridden space that was largely avoided by the public. Recognizing its potential, the Bryant Park Corporation embarked on a comprehensive revitalization effort aimed at turning the park into a vibrant, welcoming space for all. Key improvements included redesigning the landscape, introducing movable seating, and implementing a robust schedule of events such as outdoor movies, seasonal markets, and cultural performances. These changes were meticulously designed to foster a sense of community and ensure the park's continuous use throughout the day and year.

The transformation of Bryant Park had profound social and economic impacts. Socially, the park became a safe, attractive space where people from all walks of life could gather, relax, and engage in various activities. This shift not only improved the quality of life for New Yorkers, but also enhanced the city's public image. Economically, the park's revitalization led to a significant increase in surrounding property values, as the area became a desirable location for both businesses and residents. The influx of visitors to the park also boosted local businesses, creating a thriving commercial environment that further supported the community.

The success of Bryant Park's placemaking efforts demonstrates how thoughtful design and communityfocused programming can revitalize an underused urban space, transforming it into a valuable public asset. The park's turnaround is now considered a model for urban renewal projects worldwide, illustrating the far-reaching benefits that well-executed placemaking can bring to both communities and local economies. Through strategic interventions and a commitment to creating a space that truly serves its users, Bryant Park has become a cornerstone of urban life in New York City, showing the enduring power of placemaking.

RIVER OAKS DRIVE (WEST OF I-94):

River Oaks Drive west of I-94 continues to be predominantly auto-oriented retail, but it is of a smaller size and character as compared to other zones in the Calumet Triangle. This smaller scale development typology along with sidewalks and other landscape interventions creates an environment that is slightly more pedestrian friendly than other zones. Also, directly behind the retail developments along the corridor is a more diverse set of uses. This is a positive since those uses generate a diversity of activities and traffic patterns.

It is also helpful when looking at trying to diversify the land uses and development types directly located along the corridor.

THE POWER OF PLACEMAKING, CASE STUDY

LAND USE & HOUSING

EXISTING LAND USE PLAN ANALYSIS



Determining how well the

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS

existing land use aligns with transportation goals can provide an outlet for creating change through the municipal processes of zoning appeals and special use permits, in order to better facilitate transportation flow and access. In many instances, Chicagoland's south suburbs are oriented around the automobile, regardless of land use. Developing compatible uses and modes of transportation, supplemented by equitable efforts, can reorient the suburban landscape. While this truly depends on development trends, as well as vacancies, seeking available development initiatives can help prompt sooner and more robust development.



IMAGE 03: HOMES IN SOUTH HOLLAND

EXISTING LAND USE PLAN ANALYSIS

CURRENT LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

The current land use composition of the Calumet Triangle is fairly diverse with distinct concentrations of land use types that are consistent with traditional development patterns with access to a prominent regional transportation network. In addition, the presence of the Little Calumet River, related greenways, and forest preserves create unique opportunities to preserve open space, add recreational facilities, and enhance mixed use concepts that balance connectivity between the built and natural environments.

RESIDENTIAL USES

From a residential perspective, the Calumet Triangle is comprised of established neighborhoods. While the western section in South Holland is primarily defined by single family detached housing that is consistent with the Village's overall character, the residential options in Calumet City and Lansing offer relatively greater housing diversity, including apartments, condominiums, townhouses, housing for older adults, and affordable housing options. The denser housing options are most prominent around commercial areas, including River Oaks Mall and River Oaks West.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES

Commercial and industrial development patterns historically built up along major roadways like IL Route 6/162nd Street,

Torrence Avenue, and the highway interchanges. Much of the commercial and industrial sites developed as single use sites with varying levels of connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods. However, the three municipalities are more cognizant of the significance of mixed use development that maximize the vitality of sites through greater interplay between housing, businesses, services, and jobs. The mixed use approach is reflected in recent developments plans like the South Holland Town Center and River Oaks Mall redevelopment concepts in Calumet City.

ZONING REGULATIONS

The zoning designations and regulations of each municipality are generally supportive of the types of uses that could be pursued as new development or redevelopment are considered for the Calumet Triangle. While the underlying zoning districts are generally supportive of future development in accordance with the permitted and special use lists in the zoning codes of the three municipalities, later phases of this project will include land use recommendations that will suggest potential zoning code amendments to consider additional uses that would help make the Calumet Triangle more viable, particularly in enhanced mixed use settings. In addition, all three municipalities provide for planned unit development (PUD) process that can be utilized to handle development with more creative or complex site design for residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed use.

With a significant portion of the Calumet Triangle west of the Bishop Ford Freeway comprised by established single family residential neighborhoods, future development in South Holland will generally occur along IL Route 6/162nd Street, east of the Bishop Ford Freeway, and around the freeway interchange. One future redevelopment site of note is the former Seton Academy property, which is currently zoned Single Family Residence that may need potential zoning modifications or the PUD process depending on the final redevelopment plan for the site.

Covering the northeast section of the Calumet Triangle, the majority of this area within Calumet City cover the B Commercial Business and FP Forest Preserve zoning districts. Apartments and housing for older adults that sit just outside the Calumet Triangle are zoned R3 Multiple Family Residence, which is important to note given the mix of housing densities around River Oaks Mall and River Oaks West.

The Village of Lansing's residential zoning districts covers the neighborhoods that comprise the southeast section of the Calumet Triangle. The other parts of the Calumet Triangle within Lansing, particularly along Torrence Avenue and the Tri-State Tollway, are zoned for B2 Community Retail and Service, B3 General Business, and M1 Limited Manufacturing.

REAL ESTATE DYNAMICS

The following assessment of real estate dynamics includes property value trends and an evaluation of high and low value areas, which have bearing on future development opportunities.

PROPERTY VALUE TRENDS

As summarized in Figure 07, median home values of owner occupied housing units in the Calumet Triangle have experienced notable fluctuations, particularly when compared to South Holland, Calumet City, and Lansing as a whole, as well as Cook County and Illinois for a broader comparison. From 2000 to 2008, home values in the Calumet Triangle increased by 30.7%, which was middle of the pack in comparison to the three municipalities, but considerably lower than the growth experienced by Cook County and Illinois. Overall growth in that time

frame can primarily be attributed to the housing boom that occurred locally and nationally.

Then, from 2012 to 2017, all segments of the country experienced a significant downturn in home values. Home values in Calumet Triangle declined by 24.2%, which was the highest across the board. In comparison, Calumet City experienced the closest level of home value decline at 17.4%, while the declines for South Holland and Lansing were 11.2% and 12.6%, respectively. The overall decline in home values can mostly be attributed to the slow but gradual rebound from the recession following the 2008 collapse of the housing market.

More recently, home values rose substantially from 2017 to 2022 as the housing market stabilized from the recession and more housing products entered the housing stock, including greater focus on emerging housing topics like Missing Middle, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and housing for an aging population. The Calumet Triangle saw a significant 60.3% increase in home values, which is about triple the increase in South Holland and roughly double the increases in Calumet City, Lansing, Cook County, and Illinois. This 60.3% increase in the Calumet Triangle is partly due to a lower starting point in 2017 to generate the relatively larger increase. While the exact causes for this notable rise in home values is difficult to pinpoint exactly, other possible factors could include closer proximity to the two interstate highways and the outmigration of Chicago residents seeking more space in the suburbs during the pandemic.

The more recent growth in home values provides a strong point to attract new businesses and investment to the Calumet Triangle.

FIGURE 07: CHANGE IN HOME VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES. 2008-2022

	Calumet Triangle	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
Change from 2008 to 2012	30.7%	37.1%	24.2%	26.7%	58.7%	49.3%
Change from 2012 to 2017	-24.2%	-17.4%	-12.6%	-11.2%	-7.1%	-5.8%
Change from 2017 to 2022	60.3%	24.2%	26.1%	20.7%	29.2%	33.1%

HIGH AND LOW VALUE AREAS

As shown in Figure 08, home values within the Calumet Triangle have just as much variance across various sections of the area compared to home values in different neighborhoods within any municipality. For example, about one-third (34.3%) of homes in the Calumet Triangle located east of Torrence Avenue are valued under \$100,000, compared to 28.8% for the area between Torrence Avenue and the Bishop Ford Freeway, and only 16.0% for the area west of the Bishop Ford Freeway. Looking

at homes valued under \$300.000. the values continue to have broad variance, even though all three sections of the Calumet Triangle demonstrate that a large majority of their homes are within this home value range.

This broad variance is also apparent in median home value. Homes west of Torrence Avenue have a median home value in the \$173,300 to \$176,300 range. In comparison, the median home value east of Torrence Avenue is considerably lower at \$117,200. It is important to note that most

FIGURE 08: HOME VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES

	С	alumet Triang	le					
Statistic	West of Bishop Ford Fwy	Between Bishop Ford Fwy & Torrence Ave	East of Torrence Ave	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
Median Home Value	\$176,300	\$173,300	\$117,200	\$125,600	\$158,300	\$181,300	\$293,700	\$239,100
Home Value Under \$100,000	16.0%	28.8%	34.3%	34.1%	18.6%	7.5%	7.5%	15.3%
Home Value Under \$200,000	70.9%	49.8%	81.7%	85.5%	77.6%	60.1%	26.3%	40.2%
Home Value Under \$300,000	95.0%	80.5%	87.7%	96.1%	94.1%	91.3%	51.6%	63.7%
Home Value Over \$750,000	0.3%	2.7%	7.6%	2.0%	0.7%	0.2%	8.7%	5.0%

homes in the Calumet Triangle are west of Torrence Avenue, so there is substantially less homes to normalize the median home value east of Torrence Avenue. However, it should also be noted that median home value in South Holland is \$181,300, which comprises a significant portion of the Calumet Triangle west of Torrence Avenue; for comparison, median home values in Calumet City and Lansing are \$125,600 and \$158,300, respectively.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS

The Calumet Triangle is fairly built out across all three municipalities, particularly with residential, commercial, and industrial development taking advantage of major roadway access and regional mobility via I-94 Bishop Ford Freeway, I-94/I-294 Tri-State Tollway, IL Route 394, IL Route 6/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, and Torrence Avenue. While all three municipalities are well established, there are opportunities for new development or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites in the Calumet Triangle, particularly as older businesses or properties transition, become outmoded or obsolete, or fall into disrepair.

HOUSING MARKET DEMAND

The table in Figure 09 summarizes various housing characteristics that influence housing market demand. Potential housing market demand includes:

> » Housing for older adults: Close to half (49.2%) of all occupied housing in the

Owner Occupied Housing

Renter Occupied Housing

Occupied Housing, Under

Occupied Housing, Age

Occupied Housing, 1

Occupied Housing, 2

Occupied Housing, 3-4

Occupied Housing, 5+

Housing Affordability

Occupied Housing Age 85+

Vacant Housing Units

Occupied Housing,

Median Value

Units

Units

Age 60

60-84

Person

Person

Person

Person

Index

older adults, which could include age restricted living

Calumet Triangle

68.9%

24.6%

6.5%

\$196,262

50.8%

44.8%

4.4%

34.1%

28.0%

27.0%

10.9%

122

Calumet City

48.4%

40.5%

11.1%

\$138,050

60.7%

36.3%

2.9%

35.9%

26.0%

26.7%

11.3%

142

FIGURE 09: HOUSING MARKET DEMAND

Calumet Triangle is occupied
by residents over age 60,
which is comparable to
South Holland (46.6%), but
considerably greater than
Calumet City (39.2%) and
Lansing (38.5%). This points
to the potential for more
housing geared towards

Lansing

64.8%

28.4%

6.8%

\$176,173

61.6%

34.8%

3.7%

29.9%

29.3%

28.6%

12.2%

139

South Holland

79.1%

15.2%

5.7%

\$198,694

53.4%

42.7%

3.9%

22.8%

30.6%

32.2%

14.4%

141

facilities, e.g., independent living for age 55+.

» Rental housing: About one-quarter (24.6%) of all occupied housing units in the Calumet Triangle is comprised of rental units. In comparison, rental units make up 40.4% of total occupied housing units in

Illinois

60.3%

31.0%

8.7%

\$274,127

63.9%

32.8%

3.3%

29.6%

31.6%

28.2%

10.6%

101

Cook County

50.9%

40.4%

8.7%

\$325,501

66.8%

30.2%

3.1%

32.5%

29.2%

27.3%

11.0%

87

Cook County. Compared to South Holland, Calumet City, and Lansing, the 24.6% rental rate in the Calumet Triangle falls roughly in the middle. This suggests that opportunities for more rental housing may be appropriate, but perhaps more so east of the Bishop Ford Freeway to avoid conflicts with South Holland's predominant single family residential character west of the freeway.

» Affordable housing: The housing affordability index has a national average base value of 100, whereas the Calumet Triangle has an index of 122. While this is 22% higher than the national average, that is more indicative of existing housing in the area, as

adults.

FIGURE 10: RETAIL MARKET DEMAND BY INDUSTRY

		Spe	ending Poter	ntial Index (S	PI)	
Industry	Calumet Triangle	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	82	66	86	92	100	102
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	81	64	85	91	102	101
Electronics & Appliance Stores	80	65	86	87	108	102
Building Material & Garden Equipment	80	61	86	90	106	101
Food & Beverage Stores	81	66	84	88	101	101
Health & Personal Care Stores	85	67	88	94	101	102
Gasoline Stations	83	68	87	92	102	101
Clothing & Accessory Stores	81	67	86	88	108	102
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, Books	76	60	82	82	104	101
General Merchandise Stores	81	66	85	88	105	102
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	79	62	84	86	100	101
Non-Store Retailers	80	64	84	88	104	102
Food Services & Drinking Places	78	63	82	84	108	101

CALUMET TRIANGLE PLANNING STUDY

opposed to the affordability of future housing units and the capacity to support a growing base of home seekers that place a premium on affordability. This is particularly reflected in the 87 housing affordability index for Cook County, meaning the county is 13% less affordable than the national average. Adding more affordable housing units to the housing stock in the Calumet Triangle should be pursued, including units catering to workforce housing or housing for older

RETAIL MARKET DEMAND

Retail market demand is measured by a spending potential index (SPI), which is evaluated at the household level representing the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. As the comparison table below illustrates, retail market demand by industry in the Calumet Triangle is below the national average (100 SPI), indicating the potential to add new businesses in the Calumet Triangle to capture additional spending. Of the three municipalities, South Holland and Lansing as a whole are both below the national average, while Calumet City is significantly below the national average (less than 75 SPI). By comparison, Cook County and the State of Illinois are both slightly above the national average (more than 100 SPI).

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The following summarizes how development has evolved in the Calumet Triangle, including residential, commercial, industrial, and other types. Past and present development trends create an overall framework to evaluate opportunities for future development or redevelopment, particularly with respect to the land use policies outlined in the comprehensive plans of South Holland, Calumet City, and Lansing.

RESIDENTIAL

The western portion of the Calumet Triangle west of the Bishop Ford Highway is primarily comprised of residential neighborhoods in South Holland. On the eastern portion of the Calumet Triangle, small residential neighborhoods covering all three municipalities are interspersed on both sides of 170th Street between the Bishop Ford Highway and Torrence Avenue, as well as at the southeastern corner of the triangle south of I-94/I-294. Much of the residential development is stable with pockets of recent growth, such as the 100 Park Place townhouses near South Holland's emerging Town Center and the Torrence Place adaptive reuse of an old bank in Lansing for 48 units catering to low-income households, veterans, and people with disabilities.

Much of the existing housing is single family residential, including about 97% of all housing in South Holland with limited appetite to deviate from this majority composition, per the Village's 2018 Comprehensive Plan. On the other hand, Calumet City and Lansing are more open to encouraging greater housing diversity in accordance with their respective Comprehensive Plans and a regional Homes for a Changing Region report conducted by SSMMA, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC), Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), and Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC).

There is considerable demand for additional housing for older adults, particularly as such existing housing in the Calumet Triangle is fully occupied with wait lists. Smaller housing options with little to no maintenance would enable older adults and empty nesters to downsize without having to move out of the community.

COMMERCIAL

The commercial base in the Calumet Triangle is spread across major roadways, including IL Route 6/162nd Street, Torrence Avenue, and the highway interchanges. While River Oaks Mall, River Oaks West, and the Torrence Avenue corridor are the most prominent commercial districts within the Calumet Triangle, they also represent the evolving nature of commercial areas. In particular, River Oaks Mall illustrates how the regional mall model with large anchors and smaller tenants under a single roof is making way for reimagined mixed use town center concepts that integrate housing, office, and shared community spaces with shops, restaurants, and service

uses. Calumet City continues to consider a variety of options to reinvigorate River Oaks Mall with imaginative concepts like a water park, family friendly uses, residential/commercial mixed use. and the future Blues Water Run recreational facility accessing the Little Calumet River.

The three municipalities are also taking proactive steps to reoccupy vacant or underutilized commercial properties in River Oaks West and along Torrence Avenue. For example, Lansing has added multiple new developments like a Starbucks, Chipotle, Chick-Fil-A, QT Quick Trip, and a Tru by Hilton hotel. Calumet City converted vacant sites into an event center, Wilder Fields, and new restaurants. More potential redevelopment opportunities abound, including vacant or underutilized sites like the old Circuit City and Sears sites in Calumet City, and the older Walmart, Ultra Food, and theater sites in Lansing.

In addition to being open to creative uses in commercial areas, there is opportunity to utilize urban design techniques to create a cohesive image that ties the disparate uses together in a manner that makes them more accessible and inviting for shared community spaces, community events, active recreation, and investment for continued improvement and revitalization. Potential urban design techniques are described in the previous section, Public Spaces and Placemaking.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial sites have a more concentrated presence within the Calumet Triangle. One major industrial concentration is located on the northwest section of the Calumet Triangle, which is part of South Holland's strong industrial base that boasts a workforce of over 50,000 employees, low vacancies, and high revenue generation. Another industrial concentration is situated along the Tri-State Tollway, providing superior regional highway access for industrial users in South Holland and Lansing.

Industrial growth is a major opportunity for the Calumet Triangle. For South Holland, supporting its strong industrial sector is one of the priority recommendations in their Comprehensive Plan. While this includes supporting the vitality of



innovation.



the existing industrial base, it also encourages spaces for innovation and business incubation, which diversifies the industrial base and differentiates the area from the region. The Comprehensive Plans for Calumet City and Lansing also encourage industrial growth, industrial areas to leverage existing infrastructure and established

Industrial growth in the Calumet Triangle increases the importance of monitoring truck traffic routes, creating appropriate buffers with adjacent uses, and coordinating training and preparation of the local workforce for an evolving industrial employment base. There are also opportunities to incorporate unique uses into industrial areas like indoor recreation, breweries, data centers, and spaces for coworking and

OTHER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Beyond residential, commercial, and industrial development, there are other potential development opportunity sites that could bring value to the Calumet Triangle in terms of adaptive reuse, greater multimodal mobility, placemaking and creative site design, and enhanced access to assets like parks, commercial districts, and the Little Calumet River. For example, the former Seton Academy property in South Holland offers strong potential to link to the mix of recreational facilities at the adjacent Gouwens Park and access to the river. Similar opportunities are available at the southern end of the River Oaks Mall in Calumet City, opening up potential to create recreational opportunities along the river and linkages to a trail system that could be established within the ComEd right-of-way to the east.

VACANCIES

Vacancies in the housing stock and commercial marketplace occur at varying degrees in any community. Ideally, these vacancies are not prolonged and eventually get filled, even if other vacancies pop up elsewhere over time. From a positive perspective, vacant properties create opportunities that bring in new uses that reactivate these sites in a manner that bring much needed housing options, goods, services, and amenities to the community.

For example, a QuickTrip gas station and convenience mart redeveloped part of the old parking lot for the former K-Mart along Torrence Avenue in Lansing. A former bank site in Lansing was also redeveloped into 48 units of affordable housing for low-income households, veterans, and people

FIGURE 11: RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATES

with disabilities. Calumet City has its share of successful and creative redevelopments, including turning a former Toys R Us into a community event center, replacing a former Applebee's with another restaurant, and converting a former Target into a Wilder Fields indoor farming facility. South Holland is also utilizing redevelopment opportunities to transform the community, such as building a family athletic center on an old parking lot, among other opportunities to build out their Town Center concept.

Map 10 shows the location of vacant properties and underutilized spaces, which are combined with potential redevelopment areas that are described in the potential redevelopment areas subsection below.

RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATES

The residential vacancy rate in the Calumet Triangle has decreased by almost two percentage points from 6.3% in 2015 Q1 to 4.4% in 2024 Q1, as shown in Figure 11. Moreover, residential vacancies in the Calumet Triangle have been below 5.0% since 2020. By comparison, South Holland and Lansing have experienced similar residential vacancy levels since 2015. However, the residential vacancy rate in Calumet City has hovered in the 9% to 10% range with a 10-year low of 7.9% in 2016. This seems to have little bearing on the relatively low residential vacancy rate in the Calumet Triangle, perhaps indicating that higher instances of residential vacancies occur in the parts of Calumet City that do not intersect with the Calumet Triangle.

	Calumet Triangle	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
2015 Q1	6.3%	9.9%	6.2%	6.1%	4.2%	3.6%
2016 Q1	4.8%	7.9%	4.5%	4.6%	3.1%	2.9%
2017 Q1	4.3%	8.1%	4.8%	4.4%	3.3%	3.0%
2018 Q1	4.6%	8.4%	5.0%	4.4%	3.3%	3.0%
2019 Q1	5.0%	8.4%	4.8%	5.2%	3.4%	3.2%
2020 Q1	4.3%	8.6%	4.6%	4.6%	3.4%	3.2%
2021 Q1	4.7%	9.4%	4.1%	5.0%	3.4%	3.3%
2022 Q1	4.3%	9.2%	4.2%	4.6%	3.3%	3.2%
2023 Q1	4.0%	9.1%	4.2%	3.9%	3.3%	3.2%
2024 Q1	4.4%	9.2%	3.9%	4.5%	3.3%	3.2%

FIGURE 12: COMMERCIAL VACANCY RATES

	Calumet Triangle	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
2015 Q1	16.8%	18.5%	20.1%	12.4%	15.9%	13.4%
2016 Q1	14.8%	16.6%	19.4%	11.6%	14.0%	12.0%
2017 Q1	14.4%	16.8%	21.5%	11.5%	14.4%	12.3%
2018 Q1	14.5%	17.9%	21.7%	11.5%	14.9%	12.5%
2019 Q1	15.0%	18.1%	21.4%	12.1%	15.8%	13.1%
2020 Q1	12.3%	17.8%	19.1%	11.2%	16.4%	13.6%
2021 Q1	12.1%	18.7%	19.1%	12.2%	17.2%	14.5%
2022 Q1	16.0%	18.8%	19.5%	11.9%	16.8%	14.2%
2023 Q1	14.4%	30.3%	19.8%	11.0%	17.8%	14.9%
2024 Q1	15.5%	34.9%	20.1%	12.8%	18.5%	15.5%

COMMERCIAL VACANCY RATES

On the commercial side, Figure 12 illustrates how the vacancy rate for commercial properties in the Calumet Triangle experienced a gradual decline from 16.8% in 2015 Q1 to 12.1% in 2021 Q1 before an uptick to the 14.4% to 16.0% range since then. South Holland and Lansing have both maintained fairly steady commercial vacancy rates. However, commercial vacancies fluctuated substantially in Calumet City from 2015 to 2022 before skyrocketing to over 30% since 2023. Similar to Calumet City's residential vacancies, the Village's significant commercial vacancy rate seems to have little impact on the relatively lower commercial vacancy rate in the Calumet Triangle, again indicating that higher instances of commercial vacancies occur in the parts of Calumet City that are not within the Calumet Triangle.

Residential vacancies are influenced by a range of factors that often relate to the inability of the local housing market to meet the needs of evolving demographics, e.g., lack of housing options for an aging population, young adults and young families, downsizing households, etc. Even as residential vacancies stay relatively low with many vacant properties not staying vacant for too long, there remains a strong need to diversify the local housing stock to provide options that meet varying needs, income levels, and life stages, particularly to retain current residents who wish to stay in the community and not move away due to lack of options.

In the case of commercial vacancies, influential factors include: increasing rents; rising operating costs; competition with e-commerce; oversupply or

VACANCY CAUSES

saturated marketplace; obsolete or outdated spaces; limited infrastructure like broadband; tenant turnover; zoning obstacles; etc. While some of these factors are out of the control of municipalities to address, they have the ability to resolve certain aspects like zoning, public right-of-way improvements, and access to infrastructure. In addition, building a supportive business community and business friendly environment can help commercial properties to navigate many of these difficulties.

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT **AREAS**

Map 10 highlights potential redevelopment areas, including properties that may be vacant, underutilized, or prime for future redevelopment or enhanced site improvements.



DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

South Holland, Calumet City, and Lansing can pursue multiple resources to help facilitate development projects in the Calumet Triangle. The list below summarizes the most prominent development incentive programs offered by federal, state, and local agencies.

- » **TIF Districts:** A Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district enables the cumulative tax increment in a qualified area to support economic development and improvement projects that help local governments reinvigorate blighted areas, jumpstart areas that are struggling economically, and attract private development and investment. The Calumet Triangle intersects multiple TIF districts across the three municipalities:
- » Enterprise Zones: The Calumet Region Enterprise Zone (CREZ) was created to stimulate development in the Chicago Southland region by combining state and local incentives to assist businesses in locating and expanding in a set of designated areas, which includes South Holland, Calumet City, and Lansing. Incentives include sales tax abatement on building materials, real estate tax abatement. discounted local building permit fees, state gas use tax exemption, investment tax credit, manufacturing machinery and equipment sales tax exemption, and utility tax exemption.

» **Opportunity Zones:**

Opportunity Zones were one of the resulting programs from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts of 2017. Based on an analysis of poverty rates, unemployment rates, total number of children in poverty, violent crime rate, and population, Opportunity Zones, which are administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, are areas across the state that would benefit from investment to create jobs and reinvigorate areas most in need. Opportunity Zones incentivize investment through temporary tax deferrals. Parts of South Holland and Calumet City contain three designated Opportunity Zones; however, only one partially intersects the Calumet Triangle.

» RTA and CMAP: The RTA and CMAP offer grant programs that help municipalities to set the stage for development by funding the preparation of plans and infrastructure improvements. The RTA's **Community Planning** Program offers grants for municipalities to create plans and facilitate developer panels that support transit oriented development (TOD) around bus and train facilities. In addition. the RTA has an Access to Transit Program that funds the improvement of access infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists,

and transit riders to safely access transit facilities. CMAP has two technical assistance programs to aid municipalities in their planning and implementation activities: **Planning Technical** Assistance Program (PTAP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- » Municipal Site **Improvement Programs:** Municipalities often offer property owners and businesses funding support to make site improvements and support business relocations or expansions. A façade improvement program is one of the most common programs. South Holland and Lansing each offer façade improvement grants. South Holland also offers a landscape improvement grant.
- » Other Incentives: Other incentives that may be applicable to future development in the Calumet Triangle include: Cook County tax incentives; IDOT transportation grants; IDNR open space and trails grants; financing programs from the Illinois Development Financing Authority (IDFA) and Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA); and the Southland Reactivation Act.

See Map 11 for an overview of the TIF districts and opportunity zones within the Calumet Triangle.

CASE STUDIES

These case studies highlight successful examples of TIF Districts and Opportunity Zones serving as catalysts for community and subarea revitilization in underserved communities.



underserved areas



The Southside Opportunity Zone in San Antonio has leveraged Opportunity Zone incentives to attract significant investment into a historically underserved area. Projects within this zone include the development of mixed-use properties and affordable housing, aiming to stimulate economic activity and improve living conditions for residents. These investments have led to job creation and enhanced local amenities, contributing to the revitalization of the Southside

HUDSON YARDS PROJECT. NEW YORK CITY. NEW YORK

Although not traditionally underserved, the Hudson Yards project in New York City utilized TIF funding as part of its financing strategy. This massive redevelopment project transformed a largely underutilized area into a bustling commercial and residential district. The use of TIF helped fund critical infrastructure improvements, which in turn attracted billions of dollars in private investment. The success of Hudson Yards illustrates the potential of TIF to catalyze large-scale urban redevelopment.

Source: Congress for New Urbanism

CORTEX INNOVATION COMMUNITY, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The Cortex Innovation Community in St. Louis transformed a once-blighted area into a thriving hub of technology and innovation. Using \$10 million in TIF funds, the project attracted over \$155 million in private investment, creating nearly 1,000 jobs and revitalizing the local economy. This mixed-use district now includes research labs, offices, and residential spaces, demonstrating how strategic use of TIF can spur significant economic growth and redevelopment in

SOUTHSIDE OPPORTUNITY ZONE, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

SOUTHSIDE TIF DISTRICT, GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

The Southside TIF District in Greensboro revitalized a deteriorating neighborhood through targeted public investment. TIF funds were used to improve infrastructure, including streetscapes and utilities, making the area more attractive for residential and commercial development. This initiative successfully reversed decades of decline, attracting new businesses and residents to the area, and serving as a model for how TIF can effectively revitalize economically distressed neighborhoods





CHAPTER 3. Focus areas

RIVER OAKS CENTER | LITTLE CALUMET RIVER | PRESERVES & PARKS

This chapter identifies focus areas of the Calumet Triangle, which serve as anchor points for the surrounding communities. The three focus areas include: River Oaks Center, Little Calumet River, and preserves and parks. The opportunities at these identified sites should be leveraged to boost connecitivity and accessibility, recreation, economic activity, sustainability, and to enhance the overall quality of life for residents.

River Oaks Center will be reimagined as a hub for commerce, community, and culture. With vast parking lots designed to accomodate peak shopping periods, such as Black Friday, there is ample space for more productive uses.

Open spaces along the Little Calumet River will be envisioned for redevelopment. Based on the existing conditions, there will be a range of redevelopment options, concluding with a list of potential uses to enhance the ecological and recreational appeal of the river's open spaces. Currently, the Little Calumet River is concealed, with few opportunities to access and enjoy the natural features.

In addition, preserves and parks, such as Brownell Woods and Sand Ridge Nature Preserve, offer ample opportunity for recreation and supplemental development. With connections to regional trails, the Calumet Triangle is surrounded by a number of vast open spaces. Natural amenities should be enhanced to support residents and draw visitors.

RIVER OAKS CENTER

HISTORY



River Oaks Center is a significant shopping mall located at the southeast corner of River Oaks Drive and Torrence Avenue in Calumet City. As the seventh largest mall in the Chicago metropolitan area, **River Oaks Center spans over** 1.28 million square feet and features more than 60 stores, including prominent anchors like JCPenney and Macy's. Since its opening in October 1966, the mall has served as a key retail

destination for residents of Calumet City and the surrounding communities, providing a wide range of shopping, dining, and entertainment options.

The renovation and revitalization of River Oaks Center are crucial to our plan as they directly impact the economic vitality and social wellbeing of the surrounding communities. By updating the mall's infrastructure and enhancing its retail and entertainment offerings, River

Oaks can attract new businesses and visitors, thereby generating increased economic activity and job opportunities. This revitalization effort also aims to create a more vibrant and engaging community space, fostering social interactions and a sense of place for residents.



HISTORY

initial offerings.

The history of River Oaks Center is deeply intertwined with the legacy of its developer, Philip M. Klutznick, who was instrumental in shaping several key shopping centers in the Chicago area, including Oakbrook Center and Old Orchard Shopping Center. Originally designed as an outdoor shopping mall, River Oaks Center featured major department stores like Marshall Field's, Sears, and Edward C. Minas Company. The inclusion of a Jewel supermarket and an Osco Drug store at the south end, along with other notable retailers like Chas A. Stevens and Kroch's and Brentano's, highlighted the mall's

In 1985, River Oaks Center underwent a significant expansion with the addition of a JCPenney store, which relocated from downtown Hammond, Indiana. This expansion included a new wing connecting JCPenney to the main mall and the introduction of a food court on the lower level. The mall's growth continued into the late 1980s and early 1990s when plans were made to further enclose and expand the shopping center. These plans aimed to enhance the mall's appeal by adding more retail space and a second level, though the full scope of these expansions was not realized.

By 1994, the redevelopment of River Oaks Center was completed, with the mall being fully enclosed and an additional 80,000 square feet of leasable area added. This redevelopment attracted new retailers and shifted the mall's tenant mix towards a more upscale offering. This period of growth solidified River Oaks Center's position as the largest mall in the South Suburbs, catering to a diverse customer base with a wide

options.

landscape.

In 2020, JCPenney announced its intention to close as part of a nationwide reduction of 154 stores, but this decision was later reversed, and the store remained open. Around the same time, plans were proposed to introduce a new anchor tenant in the form of the Southland Live Casino. This proposal included a temporary casino in the former Carson's space and a future permanent casino with a hotel. However, the casino proposal faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was ultimately rejected by state regulators in October 2021.



range of shopping and dining

Despite its success, River Oaks Center faced challenges with the closure of key anchor stores. Carson Pirie Scott, later known as Carson's, shut its doors in January 2013, followed by Sears in June of the same year. These closures marked a period of transition for the mall, as it sought new ways to attract visitors and maintain its relevance in a changing retail

River Oaks Center remains an integral part of the Calumet City community, offering various retail options and services. The mall is well-connected by public transit, with several Pace bus routes providing convenient access. As the retail environment continues to evolve, River Oaks Center's management and ownership are focused on adapting to new trends and meeting the needs of its shoppers, ensuring that the mall remains a vibrant destination in the years to come.

REIMAGINING RIVER OAKS

Redeveloping a mall is a complex and challenging process, fraught with numerous pitfalls and complications that can hinder even the most well-intentioned projects. As traditional retail landscapes continue to evolve, many malls face declining foot traffic, store closures, and increasing vacancies, making them difficult to repurpose. Challenges include securing funding, navigating ownership disputes, and meeting diverse stakeholder expectations, all while attempting to adapt the space to modern needs. Additionally, balancing the community's desire for revitalization with the realities of market demand and economic feasibility often proves difficult. Each step in the redevelopment process—from initial planning to execution—requires careful consideration of these factors to avoid setbacks and ensure a successful transformation that meets the needs of both the community and developers.

CASINO PROPOSAL

In 2021, a major proposal aimed to transform part of the mall into the Southland Live Casino, a 150,000-square-foot entertainment complex featuring slot machines, table games, a

music venue, and a 200-room hotel. This plan was expected to generate significant economic activity, including creating over 1,000 permanent jobs and attracting tens of thousands of visitors annually. However, despite the potential benefits, the

casino project ultimately shifted to nearby East Hazel Crest, leaving Calumet City to explore other options for revitalizing River Oaks.



WATERPARK PROPOSAL

Following the casino proposal, another ambitious idea emerged in 2022 to convert the River Oaks site into a mixed-use development featuring a water park. The plan, backed by a \$79 million redevelopment project, included a hotel, restaurants, and a rooftop bar. The city council approved \$22 million in initial funding to begin this transformation, focusing on turning the Sears site into a vibrant entertainment hub. The water park was seen as a key attraction that could draw families and tourists, potentially revitalizing the mall



MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Most recently, in August 2024, Calumet City revisited the idea of redeveloping River Oaks, this time with a focus on creating a modern mixed-use development. This proposal, distinct from the previous water park and casino ideas, aims to demolish the former Sears store and replace it with a development that includes retail, restaurants, and housing. The city, which acquired the Sears site through a no-cash bid, is moving forward with demolition plans and exploring the potential to create an "entertainment district" that would serve as an economic engine for the area. This latest

plan reflects a broader strategy to adapt the mall to contemporary retail and entertainment trends, with an emphasis on mixed-use spaces that can attract diverse visitors and provide economic benefits.

Throughout these various proposals, the underlying goal has remained the same: to reinvigorate River Oaks Mall and restore its status as a key economic and cultural hub in Calumet City. While each proposal has had its unique vision and challenges, they all reflect the city's ongoing commitment to finding a sustainable and impactful solution for the

and positioning Calumet City as a premier entertainment destination in the south suburbs. However, the plan faced challenges, including debates within the city council regarding the water park's feasibility and long-term benefits.

mall's future. Whether through entertainment, mixed-use development, or a combination of both, Calumet City continues to explore new ways to breathe life into River Oaks and secure its place in the region's economic landscape.

The evolution of these ideas highlights the complex and often contentious process of urban redevelopment, where multiple stakeholders and shifting market conditions can lead to changes in direction.

REVITALIZING THROUGH PLACEMAKING & TRANSPORTATION

Placemaking, streetscapes, and transportation integrations are integral to the successful revitalization of a mall, ensuring it is accessible, inviting, and convenient for a broad range of visitors. Efficient transportation options, such as robust public transit links and ample parking facilities, are essential for attracting both local residents and visitors from surrounding areas. Integrating multimodal transportation solutions, including bike-sharing stations

and pedestrian-friendly pathways, can enhance connectivity and encourage more sustainable forms of travel. Furthermore, coordinating with local transit authorities to align bus and train schedules with peak shopping hours can improve accessibility and increase foot traffic to the mall.

Incorporating transportation into the revitalization plan also means considering the flow of traffic within and around the mall. Effective traffic

management strategies, such as dedicated drop-off zones and clear signage, can alleviate congestion and improve the overall visitor experience. Additionally, providing electric vehicle charging stations aligns with the growing trend towards sustainable transportation and can attract environmentally conscious consumers. Enhancing transportation infrastructure not only boosts the mall's appeal, but also supports the local economy by improving access for employees and patrons alike.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INTEGRATION

Public transit integration strengthens links with local transportation, increasing accessibility and attracting more visitors. Coordinating with transit authorities to ensure seamless connections during peak hours can enhance convenience for shoppers.

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

Multimodal transportation solutions promote sustainable travel and enhance connectivity by providing diverse and accessible transit options for all visitors. Additionally, these improvements can reduce traffic congestion, lower carbon emissions, and create a more pleasant and healthy environment for shoppers and the surrounding community.

PUBLIC ART & MURALS

Incorporating public art and murals into the mall's design can significantly enhance its visual appeal and create a unique identity. These artistic elements not only beautify the space, but also engage the community, making the mall a more vibrant and culturally enriching destination.

REPURPOSING PARKING SPACES/LOTS

Integrating open spaces into unused parking areas can transform these underutilized sections into vibrant community hubs. These spaces can be repurposed for green areas, recreational activities, or outdoor seating, providing a more inviting and functional environment for visitors. Such enhancements not only improve the aesthetic appeal of the mall, but also promote social interaction and community engagement.

INTEGRATING MULTIPLE LAND USES

Integrating multiple land uses into malls, such as residential units, office spaces, and entertainment venues, creates a dynamic environment that attracts a diverse range of visitors throughout the day. This mixed-use approach enhances the mall's viability by fostering a live-work-play atmosphere, boosting foot traffic, and ensuring sustained economic activity.

CASE STUDIES

These case studies highlight successful examples of mall revitalization, demonstrating how thoughtful redevelopment can bring economic and social benefits to the surrounding communities.

Northland Center underwent a significant redevelopment, transforming from a traditional mall into a mixed-use space featuring residential units, offices, and retail stores. This project revitalized the area, increased property values, and brought new life to the community.



Valley Fair Mall was revitalized by incorporating a diverse range of retail stores, restaurants, and entertainment facilities, along with significant aesthetic improvements. This comprehensive redevelopment boosted foot traffic and turned the mall into a preferred destination for shopping and leisure.



Source: Valley Fair Mall

THE BLOC. LOS ANGELES. CALIFORNIA

Northgate Mall was redeveloped into Northgate Station, a mixed-use urban center that includes residential apartments, retail stores, office spaces, and a new NHL training facility. The project incorporated sustainable design elements and public transit access.

NORTHLAND CENTER, SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

THE GALLERIA AT WHITE PLAINS, WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK

The Galleria at White Plains was redeveloped to include a mix of retail, dining, and entertainment options, along with enhanced public spaces. The renovation attracted new tenants and visitors, positioning the mall as a central social and economic hub in the city.

VALLEY FAIR MALL. WEST VALLEY CITY. UTAH

The Bloc in downtown Los Angeles was transformed from a traditional indoor mall into an open-air, mixed-use development featuring retail, dining, and office space. The project enhanced the urban experience, increased connectivity with the surrounding area, and significantly improved the mall's appeal.

NORTHGATE MALL. SEATTLE. WASHINGTON

LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

CURRENT CONDITIONS



The Little Calumet River, formerly known as the Konomick River, holds a significant yet untapped potential within the Calumet Triangle region. Historically, this river originally flowed back east into Lake Michigan, but extensive human interventions, including the construction of locks, canals, and dredging, have dramatically altered its course. One of the most notable changes was the completion of the Cal-Sag Canal in 1922, which permanently reversed the river's flow, directing industrial and human waste westward towards the Mississippi River. Despite these modifications, the region has faced challenges with pollution, necessitating the establishment of the first sewage treatment plant to prevent contaminated waters from entering Lake Michigan.

Today, the river is divided into two branches. The main branch starts

at the Thomas J. O'Brien Lock, marking the boundary between the Calumet River and the Little Calumet River, and extends to the Cal-Sag Trail. The east branch begins in Indiana, just north of the I-80 and 421 interchange, flowing east through Indiana into Illinois, eventually merging into the Cal-Sag Canal. This entire project area lies within the Little Calumet River watershed. Stormwater systems are crucial in this process, collecting rainwater and directing it to the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant for cleaning before being released into natural waterways. However, during heavy rains, these systems can overflow, introducing pollutants into the river and impacting its cleanliness and environmental health.

The Little Calumet River presents numerous opportunities for recreation and community

development, making it a key factor in the revitalization of the Calumet Triangle.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The current state of the Little Calumet River, while significantly improved from its historically polluted condition, still presents challenges and opportunities for the Calumet Triangle region. The river has seen a reduction in industrial pollution, but the presence of combined sewer overflows remains a concern. In Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland, the sewer systems consist of both combined and separated systems, with 35 combined sewer overflows directly affecting the Little Calumet River. Between 2019 and 2023, eight overflows were recorded at the 9th Avenue extension and 151st Street, highlighting the ongoing need for infrastructure improvements to prevent future contamination and maintain the river's environmental viability.

Recreational opportunities along the Little Calumet River are currently limited, but hold great promise for expansion. Existing facilities include a 5.14-mile stretch in Indiana with six boat

launches and a few launches in Illinois, such as those at Kickapoo Woods and Beaubien Woods. These areas support activities like canoeing and kayaking, fostering community engagement with the river. However, more can be done to enhance these recreational offerings and make the river a central part of community life. Calumet City's proposed Blues Water Run on Ring Road, with its planned kayak launch, amphitheater, band shelter, and picnic areas, aims to do just that by creating a new, accessible recreational space that draws residents and visitors alike.

The land use surrounding the Little Calumet River within the project area is diverse, including commercial, residential, and open spaces. Commercial activities are concentrated around Torrence Avenue and the River Oaks Center, while open spaces like the River Oaks Golf Course provide natural buffers and recreational areas. Residential areas, including singlefamily and multi-family housing, are predominantly located south



MAGE 08: KAYAKERS ON THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

of the golf course and around River Oaks West. Additionally, several vacant areas near the river present opportunities for development and community projects.

By addressing the current environmental challenges and leveraging the river's potential as a recreational and community asset, the revitalization efforts can transform the Little Calumet River into a vibrant centerpiece for the Calumet Triangle.



MAP 12. LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

Map of the little calumet river in the calumet triangle area. The Little Calumet River plays a significant role in the Calumet Triangle area, serving as both a natural resource and a key feature in the region's landscape. A map of this river within the Calumet Triangle area highlights its course, surrounding land uses, and connections to local infrastructure. This river, which winds through several communities, is an essential component of the area's environmental and recreational planning efforts.

0 0.4 0.8



PRESERVES & PARKS

MAP

CURRENT CONDITIONS



The Calumet Triangle has established access to a wide range of open spaces in surrounding municipalities. Preserves and parks present resources, such as trails, seating areas, water features, play equipment, sports fields, etc. Utilizing these resources to support recommendations makes these spaces a focus area for the Plan.

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County owns many of the surrounding preserves. Preserves tend to take up greater, more continuous space, as compared to parks. However, the use of preserves is often less prescribed, which can open the door to greater opportunities.

enhanced to serve existing residents, as well as attract visitors.

Natural amenities should be



CURRENT OPEN SPACE ASSETS

Note that the following list of preserves and parks is not comprehensive, but instead notes the larger preserves and parks in the surrounding Calumet Triangle area.

PRESERVES

» Brownell Forest Preserve: Brownell Forest Preserve offers a serene natural environment with a mix of woodlands and open spaces. It provides opportunities for hiking, bird watching, and quiet reflection amidst nature.

» Camp Shabbona Woods: Located in a lush wooded area, Camp Shabbona Woods offers camping facilities and nature trails. It's a great spot for outdoor education, camping trips, and experiencing the peacefulness of the forest.

- » Sand Ridge Nature **Preserve:** Sand Ridge Nature Preserve is an ecologically significant area with sand prairies, oak savannas, and wetlands. It is a destination for nature lovers and those interested in rare plant and animal species.
- » Sweet Woods Forest **Preserve:** Sweet Woods Forest Preserve offers a mix of forested areas and open fields, ideal for hiking, picnicking, and exploring nature. It's a great spot for family outings and outdoor recreation.

Lake is a popular

PARKS

» Thorn Creek Greenway: Thorn Creek Greenway connects several natural areas and provides a continuous green space for walking, biking, and nature observation. It's a key corridor for wildlife and offers visitors a scenic pathway through diverse landscapes.

» Wampum Lake: Wampum destination for fishing, boating, and picnicking. Surrounded by scenic woodlands, it's a perfect spot for enjoying waterbased activities and relaxing by the lakeside.

» Lansing Sports Complex:

Lansing Sports Complex is a hub for community sports and recreation. It features multiple sports fields, courts, and facilities for organized sports, making it a key venue for local leagues and tournaments.

» Gouwens Park: Gouwens Park is a family-friendly space that includes playgrounds, sports fields, and picnic areas. It's a great location for community gatherings, casual play, and outdoor activities.

» Paarlberg Park: Paarlberg Park offers a mix of recreational facilities, including walking paths, sports fields, and play areas. It's a welcoming environment for families

and individuals looking to enjoy outdoor leisure activities.

- » River Oaks Golf Course: River Oaks Golf Course is a beautifully maintained course offering a challenging and enjoyable experience for golfers of all levels. The course is set amidst scenic landscapes, providing a peaceful and picturesque setting for a round of golf.
- » Veterans Park: Veterans Park is a multi-use park with playgrounds, open fields, and walking paths. It is a popular location for family outings, community events, and enjoying outdoor activities.





CHAPTER 4. ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY & PARTNER INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW **MEETING OVERVIEW**

Community and partner engagement aims to be transparent, inclusive, and responsive to community needs and concerns. Actively seeking the community's preferences leads recommendations to be more effective and inclusive. In addition, embarking a clear process increases involvement and creates a sense of ownership for the study. Ownership comes with transparency and trust, which will ultimately improve livelihood in the Calumet Triangle area and better tailor transportation solutions.

Not only is public engagement important, but partner involvement has been and will continue to be a huge part of the study. Multijurisdictional involvement has given this study an informative advantage, with all parties feeling a more personal connection to the

project. Over 13 partner agencies have been involved so far including: City of Calumet City, Village of Lansing, Village of South Holland, Epstein, Rudd Resources, SCB, Egret + Ox, CMAP, Cook County, Cook County Forest Preserves, Pace, Illinois Tollway, Regional Transportation Authority, and more. Taking advantage of these partnerships will enable the study to be more impactful.

COMMUNITY & PARTNER INVOLVFMFNT

Creating an inclusive and equitable engagement strategy throughout the Calumet Triangle Corridor Planning and Research Study is a core tenant of the project. This approach ensures that all relevant parties, including the SSMMA, the Village of Lansing, the Village of South Holland, and Calumet City, are not only informed, but actively involved

in the process. Additionally, the strategy integrates traditional in-person methods, such as community events and public meetings, with innovative virtual engagement techniques to reach a broader and more diverse audience. Over a 12-month period from May 2024 to May 2025, engagement will occur in two phases, supplemented by

ongoing technical committee and planning council meetings, as well as online updates. The aim is to build trust with communities and stakeholders, ensuring their input is accurately reflected and considered throughout the project's development. community voices are central to the development and eventual recommendations.



THE CONSULTANT TEAM'S GOALS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INCLUDE:

TRANSPARENCY, INCLUSIVENESS, AND RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

These priorities ensure that the planning process is open and accessible, allowing all community members to see and understand the decisions being made. Inclusivity is key to ensuring that the voices of all community members, especially those historically underrepresented, are heard and valued. By being responsive to community concerns, the process remains flexible and adaptive, ensuring that the outcomes reflect the real needs and aspirations of the community.

ALLOW THE RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES A PLATFORM TO PROVIDE INPUT

This priority emphasizes the importance of creating accessible channels through which community members can actively participate in the planning process. Providing platforms for input ensures that the voices of those directly affected by the project are heard and considered. This approach not only enhances the quality of the planning process, but also empowers communities by giving them a meaningful role in shaping the future of their environment.

ASSIST IN BUILDING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS THAT GOES BEYOND THE COMPLETION OF THE STUDY

Building trust and long-term relationships with the community is crucial for the success of the project and future initiatives. By engaging with the community throughout the process, the project fosters a sense of partnership and collaboration that extends beyond the study's completion. These relationships are vital for ensuring continued community support and engagement in future projects.

DEMONSTRATE THE DEDICATION IN CREATING FEEDBACK LOOPS

This priority underscores the importance of continuously engaging with the community, not just collecting input but actively incorporating it into the planning outcomes. Creating feedback loops ensures that community voices directly influence decisions, leading to outcomes that are truly reflective of the community's needs and desires. This approach also demonstrates a commitment to transparency and accountability in the planning process.

UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF COMMUNITY IN IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS FOR THE STUDY

Recognizing the community's expertise and lived experience is essential in identifying effective strategies and solutions. By tapping into local knowledge, the planning process benefits from insights that may not be visible to outsiders. This priority highlights the value of community-led solutions and the importance of involving residents in all stages of the study to ensure that the outcomes are relevant and sustainable.

"The only way we can truly make a difference in our communities is by actively engaging in civic participation."

Unknown



FUTURE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Over the 12-month engagement schedule through May 2025, in-person engagement will occur in two different phases, supplemented by ongoing technical committee and planning council meetings and online updates provided through the study. Engagement will follow two phases: Understand and Priorities.

PHASE 1: UNDERSTAND

During this phase, May 2024 to January 2025, the project team will gather data on existing conditions, conduct a corridor travel market analysis, complete a corridor transportation facilities analysis, and work on a corridor land use compatibility analysis. The consultant team will analyze the data and engage the public to deepen our understanding and enrich data with lived experiences. This will help to create a relevant definition of the transportation and land use needs in the Calumet Area Triangle that resonates with stakeholders and community members and helps guide the action plan.

PHASE 2: PRIORITIES

Over the priorities phase, January to May 2025, the project team will match proven and emerging solutions to increase accessibility, economic potential, and quality of life for those in the Calumet Triangle area. Before initiating

this phase, the project team will reflect on past engagement and the amount to which underserved and underrepresented groups have been able to participate and share feedback. The project team will then work to select and prioritize solutions and actions that respond to the findings from engagements and data analysis.

UPCOMING EVENTS & **OPPORTUNITIES**

Upcoming events and opportunities for public engagement currently include:

- » Calumet Triangle
- a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Planning Study Survey: See link below; Closes November 4, 2024.

» Heritage Fest: Paarlberg Park, E 172nd St and Paxton Ave, South Holland, IL; September 2, 2024 10:00

» Jazz on the Grass: **Calumet City Public** Library, 660 S Manistee

Ave, Calumet City, IL; September 12, 2024 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m

» L.A.C.E Autumn Fest: Fox Pointe, 18138 Henry St, Lansing, IL; September 27, 2024 TIME

For updates and additional information, visit SSMMA.org/ Calumet-Triangle.



APPENDICES

A. BLOS/LTS METHODOLOGY **B. VRU CALCULATIONS**

The appendices provides additional data, methdology, and resources to supplement the Existing Conditions Report.

A. BLOS/LTS METHODOLOGY

BLOS METHODOLOGY

LTS METHODOLOGY

BLOS METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The main goal of the Intersection LTS is to classify intersections into distinct stress levels, from low stress that is suitable for all cyclists, including children and inexperienced riders, to high stress that only the most experienced should navigate. This classification assists in pinpointing critical areas where interventions can make cycling safer and more accessible, thereby promoting cycling as a safe and practical mode of transportation across urban environments.

SCORING FORMULA

The BLOS is calculated using a formula that incorporates various elements that influence how stressful an intersection is for cyclists:

BLTS = MAX (0, 10 - Speed Penalty - Traffic Penalty + Road Width Benefit + Shoulder Width Benefit - Parking Penalty)

FORMULA COMPONENTS

» Speed Penalty: Applies

 a stress increment for
 speeds over 30 mph,
 acknowledging that higher

speeds increase risk and stress for cyclists.

- » Traffic Penalty: Increases stress for AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) above 3,000 vehicles, as heavier traffic poses greater danger.
- » Road Width Benefit: Awards points for roads narrower than 25 feet, which typically have slower traffic and are perceived as safer by cyclists.
- » Shoulder Width Benefit: Adds points for each foot of shoulder width beyond two feet, providing a buffer zone that enhances cyclist safety.
- » Parking Penalty: Deducts points for parking on either side of the road, accounting for potential hazards like dooring and reduced effective lane width.

BLOS CATEGORIES

The BLOS scores classify intersections into five levels of traffic stress:

- » BLOS A Very Low Stress: Scores greater than 8, ideal for children and inexperienced cyclists.
- » BLOS B Low Stress: Scores between 6 and 8, suitable for majority of adult cyclists.
- » BLOS C Moderate Stress: Scores between 4 and 6, appropriate for confident adult cyclists.
- » BLOS D High Stress: Scores between 2 and 4, only advisable for experienced cyclists.
- » BLOS F Very High Stress: Scores 2 or less, cautiously advisable for experienced cyclists comfortable with heavy traffic.

LTS METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The main goal of the Intersection LTS is to classify intersections into distinct stress levels, from low stress that is suitable for all cyclists, including children and inexperienced riders, to high stress that only the most experienced should navigate. This classification assists in pinpointing critical areas where interventions can make cycling safer and more accessible, thereby promoting cycling as a safe and practical mode of transportation across urban environments.

SCORING FORMULA

The Intersection LTS is calculated using a formula that incorporates various elements that influence how stressful an intersection is for cyclists:

LTS = Base Score - Traffic Control Adjustment + Traffic Volume Adjustment - Crossing Distance Adjustment + Visibility Adjustment

FORMULA COMPONENTS

 Base Score: A starting point that reflects an average intersection's level of stress.

Traffic Control Adjustment: Modifies the score based on the type of traffic control present (e.g., traffic lights, stop signs, roundabouts), with more predictable, cyclist-friendly controls contributing to a lower stress score.

 Traffic Volume Adjustment: Increases stress for higher traffic volumes, as more vehicles can make intersections more hazardous for cyclists.

 Crossing Distance Adjustment: Deducts points for wider intersections, as longer crossing distances increase exposure to traffic and risk.

◄ Visibility Adjustment: Adds points for good visibility at intersections, decreasing stress when cyclists and drivers can easily see each other.

LTS CATEGORIES

The LTS scores classify intersections into four levels of traffic stress:

LTS 1 - Low Stress: Represents intersections that pose minimal stress, suitable for cyclists of all skill levels, including children.

LTS 2 - Moderate Stress: Appropriate for most adult cyclists, these intersections may have more complex layouts or higher traffic volumes, but still maintain manageable stress levels.

LTS 3 - High Stress: Suitable for experienced adult cyclists who are comfortable navigating complex traffic situations and busier intersections.

LTS 4 - Very High Stress: Advised only for very experienced cyclists, these intersections typically involve multiple traffic lanes, high vehicle speeds, or poor visibility.

B. VRU CALCULATIONS

METHODOLOGY

Calculating VRU clusters and corridors involves several steps, integrating both quantitative data analysis and geographic information systems (GIS). First, data on traffic incidents involving VRUs, such as pedestrians and cyclists, is collected. This data typically includes details on the location, time, severity, and type of incident. The accuracy and granularity of this data are crucial for identifying precise locations where VRUs are at higher risk, often requiring coordination with local traffic authorities and the use of police reports.

Once the incident data is collected. GIS tools are used to map the locations of these incidents. These maps help visualize the spatial distribution of VRU crashes and can highlight patterns or hotspots where incidents are concentrated. Spatial analysis techniques, such as kernel density estimation (KDE), can be applied to identify clusters areas where the frequency of incidents is significantly higher than in surrounding areas. These clusters are often found at busy intersections, near schools, or

along heavily trafficked pedestrian routes.

To identify VRU corridors, a similar process is used, but with a focus on linear patterns rather than isolated points. Corridors are typically identified by analyzing the density of VRU incidents along specific road segments. GIS analysis can reveal stretches of road where incidents are frequent, indicating a corridor that may need safety improvements. These corridors often connect or run through multiple clusters and may include main roads, bike lanes, or pedestrian pathways that are heavily used by VRUs.

Once clusters and corridors are identified, further analysis is conducted to understand the underlying factors contributing to the high incidence of VRU-related crashes. This analysis might include examining traffic volumes, speed limits, road design, lighting conditions, and the presence of pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure. By understanding these factors, planners can propose targeted interventions, such as traffic calming measures, improved crosswalks, or dedicated bike lanes, to enhance safety in these areas.

Finally, the results of the cluster and corridor analysis are used to inform urban planning and transportation safety strategies. Prioritizing improvements in identified VRU clusters and corridors can lead to more effective use of resources and a greater impact on reducing VRUrelated incidents. The process of calculating VRU clusters and corridors is thus an essential component of developing safer and more accessible transportation networks for all users.