



CALUMET TRIANGLE

AREA STUDY PLAN



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

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
December 2025 - Final

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the elected officials and municipal staff for their guidance throughout the **Calumet Triangle Area Planning Study**. Your leadership, vision, and dedication have been instrumental in shaping the planning process. Additionally, we thank our partner agencies for their support, input, and coordination, which have greatly enriched the recommendations. Finally, we are grateful to the community members for their meaningful feedback and active participation, ensuring that this plan reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

Partner Communities:

- » City of Calumet City
- » Village of Lansing
- » Village of South Holland

Partner Agencies:

- » Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- » Cook County Bureau of Economic Development
- » Cook County Department of Planning and Development
- » Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
- » Forest Preserves of Cook County
- » Illinois Department of Transportation
- » Illinois Tollway
- » Midwest Underground Railroad Network
- » Pace Suburban Bus
- » Regional Transportation Authority

Project Team:

- » South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
- » Epstein
- » SCB
- » Egret & Ox
- » Rudd Resources

FOREWORD TO THE PLAN

On behalf of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA), we are pleased to share the results of the **Calumet Triangle Area Planning Study**—an 18-month transportation planning effort conducted in partnership with the City of Calumet City, the Village of Lansing, and the Village of South Holland. Funded through a Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), this study focused on the northeast quadrant formed by Interstates 80 and 94 and two key corridors: Route 83/Torrence Avenue and Route 6/159th Street (also known as 162nd Street in South Holland).

This area, known as the Calumet Triangle, plays a vital role in regional connectivity, serving residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreational destinations. The study aimed to develop an inclusive plan to improve transportation access, mobility, safety, and community livability— while identifying strategies that support economic growth and enhance quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The final plan reflects a collaborative effort to address current transportation challenges and capitalize on the area's strategic location and strong infrastructure. It also offers a framework for future development that supports placemaking and regional vitality.

We thank our municipal partners for their leadership and collaboration, IDOT for their funding and guidance, steering committee members for their insights and expertise, and the many community contributors who weighed in and provided input. Your involvement has been essential in shaping a forward-thinking plan that will guide continued progress and improvements to these vital and strategically important corridors and surrounding areas.

As we move into implementation, we encourage all stakeholders to stay engaged and help advance the study's recommendations. Continued collaboration will be key to realizing the shared vision for a more connected, accessible, and thriving region.

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.

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 decision-making 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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) led a collaborative, multijurisdictional planning effort for the Calumet Triangle, a 5.1-square-mile area located in south suburban Cook County. Generally bounded by Torrence Avenue, U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, and a southwestern diagonal border, the Calumet Triangle includes parts of Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland. With the Little Calumet River serving as a central natural corridor, the area offers a unique blend of recreational open space, urban development, and environmental assets.

This planning study aims to strengthen connections between communities, improve transportation safety and access, encourage sustainable land use and placemaking, and foster a sense of identity across municipal boundaries. The study was shaped by two phases of robust community engagement, ensuring recommendations reflect local values and priorities.

The first deliverable presented was the Existing Conditions Report (ECR), which provides insight into demographic trends, transportation gaps, vulnerable road users, land use patterns, and the quality of public spaces within the study's footprint. Posted along with other project resources and information, the Existing Conditions Report is available on SSMMA's project website (<https://www.ssmma.org/calumet-triangle>) and has been incorporated into the plan. The analysis revealed that the study area could benefit from transportation and land use recommendations that focus on economic development. Improving public spaces and increasing active transportation options could serve to close gaps in the system, reduce speeding and crashes, and encourage new development. These findings, in combination with community engagement efforts, lay the foundation for the plan's comprehensive recommendations across multiple areas of focus, including transportation, land use, and placemaking.

Throughout the development of this plan, community engagement occurred with elected officials, public agencies, and the general public. Over 500 people were engaged during the planning process. Common themes from the engagement efforts show that people want to walk, bike, and take transit to access employment centers, medical appointments, and recreational areas, but do not feel supported by current infrastructure or culture to do so. Additionally, community members want to diversify and increase development in the Calumet Triangle area to promote gathering, walkability, and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.

Transportation recommendations focus on enhancing safety for all roadway users, integrating traffic calming strategies, and expanding pedestrian and bicycle networks. Connecting people to key community destinations through the creation of separated, defined pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as ensuring reliable access to transit, will help decrease auto-dependency and encourage people to switch modes, in favor of walking, biking, and using transit. In addition, aligning vehicles' operating speeds with the posted speeds will create a safer travel environment for all road users.

Roadway design standards provide a tool for municipalities to expand improvements beyond these plan recommendations. Through the use of typologies, the dynamic between land use and street function is considered when countermeasures are selected to ensure compatibility.

Land use recommendations align with regional goals and propose redevelopment opportunities that support economic revitalization and sustainable growth.

Placemaking recommendations promote public space improvements, aesthetic enhancements, and urban design strategies that support walkability and community cohesion.

Policy and programming recommendations suggest activation strategies such as community events, educational programs, and public outreach efforts to reinforce local pride and engagement.

Focus areas highlight transformation opportunities at River Oaks Center and along the Little Calumet River, blending economic development with ecological and recreational enhancement.

The plan culminates with an implementation strategy, outlining roles, timelines, potential funding sources, and recommended policy changes to support successful execution.

All together, this plan recommends:

- 32 intersection/roadway projects
- 12 miles of on-street bicycle accommodations
- 9 miles of sidepath
- 13 miles of sidewalk
- 6 miles of riverfront trail
- 10 kayak launches
- A total of approximately \$32,700,000 of improvements that are eligible to be funded with a combination of federal, state, local, and private dollars

This planning study serves as a roadmap to guide collaborative investment and development across the Calumet Triangle. By integrating transportation, land use, and placemaking strategies, the plan aims to create a safer, more connected, and vibrant future for the communities within and surrounding the Calumet Triangle.



1.

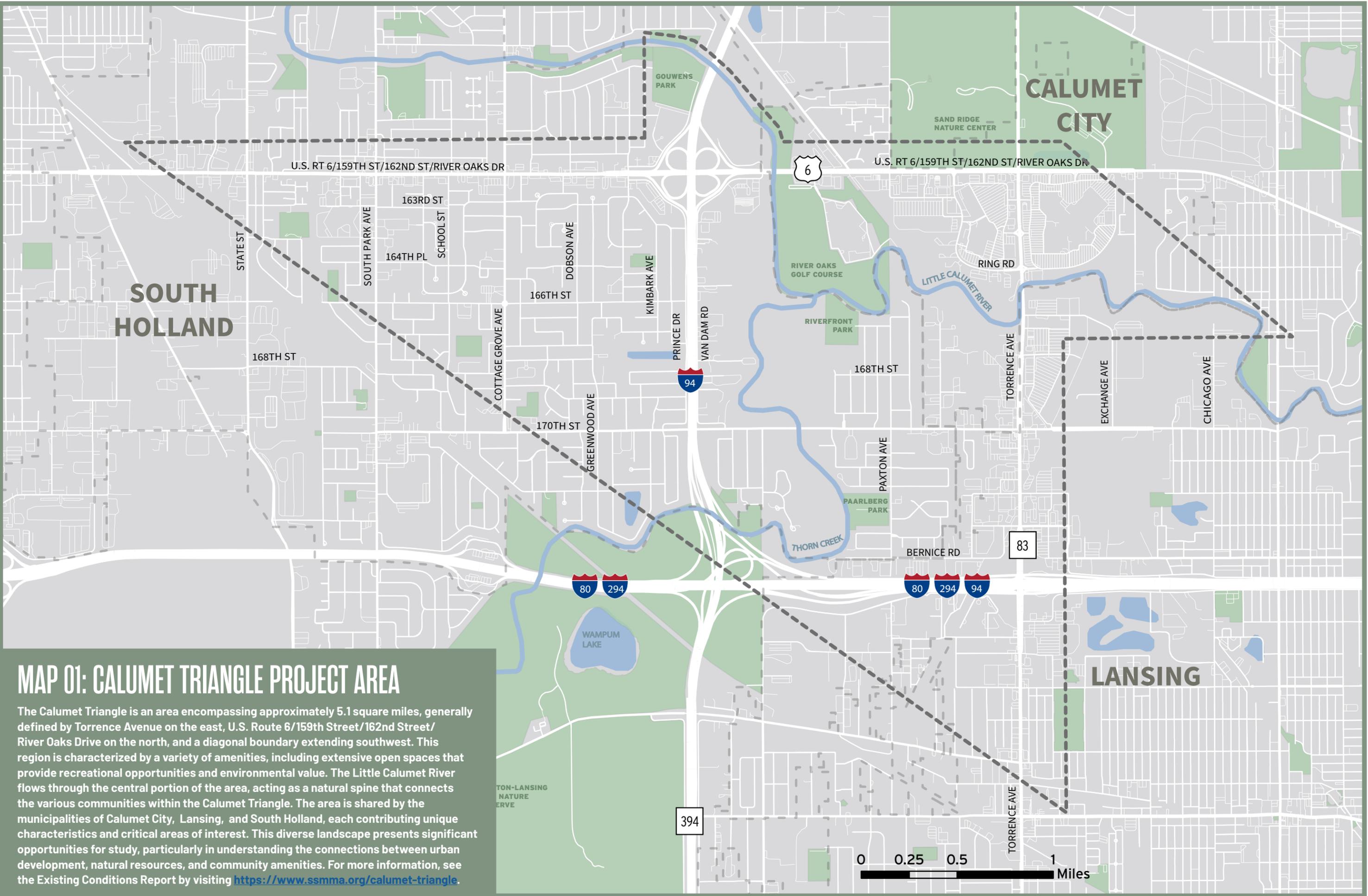
INTRODUCTION

PROJECT AREA | COMMUNITY INTRODUCTIONS | INTENDED AUDIENCES

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) led a collaborative, multijurisdictional planning process for an area identified for this study as the Calumet Triangle. The Calumet Triangle is generally bounded by U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive to the north, Torrence Avenue to the east, Ridge Road as the southern terminus, and Wausau Avenue as the western terminus. This area includes parts of Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland.

The study seeks to identify opportunities for improvements related to transportation, land use,

and placemaking in the Calumet Triangle area. The intent is to guide collaborative investment and development across the Calumet Triangle. By integrating transportation, land use, and placemaking strategies, the plan aims to create a safer, more connected, and vibrant future for the communities within and surrounding the Calumet Triangle.



MAP 01: CALUMET TRIANGLE PROJECT AREA

The Calumet Triangle is an area encompassing approximately 5.1 square miles, generally defined by Torrence Avenue on the east, U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive on the north, and a diagonal boundary extending southwest. This region is characterized by a variety of amenities, including extensive open spaces that provide recreational opportunities and environmental value. The Little Calumet River flows through the central portion of the area, acting as a natural spine that connects the various communities within the Calumet Triangle. The area is shared by the municipalities of Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland, each contributing unique characteristics and critical areas of interest. This diverse landscape presents significant opportunities for study, particularly in understanding the connections between urban development, natural resources, and community amenities. For more information, see the Existing Conditions Report by visiting <https://www.ssmma.org/calumet-triangle>.





“When one triumphs, we all triumph”

Source: Calumet City

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.

1

HISTORIC DISTRICT

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

2

VIBRANT FESTIVALS

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

3

OLDEST COMMUNITY CENTER

The Calumet City Community Center, one of the oldest in the region, has been a hub for local activities and events for decades.

4

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.

5

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.



“A community of pride, progress, and possibilities”

Source: Fox Pointe

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 accommodate 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 single-family housing (73%). Multifamily housing makes up nearly a quarter 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 Brian Hardy. Community attractions include the Fox Pointe entertainment venue, Veterans Memorial, the Ford Hangar, and the Lansing Municipal Airport.

1

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.

2

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.

3

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.

4

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.

5

REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

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



“Faith, Family, Future”

Source: Village of South Holland

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 single-family 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.

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 HISTORIC DRY TOWN**
 Previously known as the last dry town in Illinois, South Holland issued its first liquor license for beer and wine sales at a restaurant in 2023.
- 5 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.

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 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 infrastructure and face similar 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 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.



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 meetings, 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.



SCENARIO 7 - ELECTED OFFICIAL

An elected official could use the Calumet Triangle area plan as a strategic tool to guide decision-making, 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 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.



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 subsequent recommendations to reference and build off of.

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 and 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 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

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.



Source: The Lansing Journal

POPULATION DYNAMICS

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

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

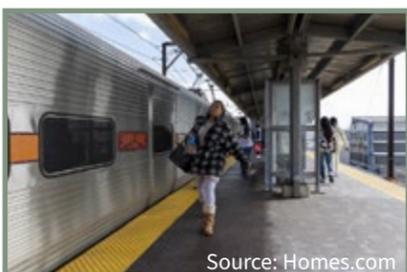


Source: Village of South Holland

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.

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



Source: Homes.com

TRANSPORTATION

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

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

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 01: DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Variable	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	
Population	35,708	28,713	21,287	
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 (Household)	Median-Income Family	21%	22%	22%
	Moderate-Income Family	22%	23%	24%
Race and Ethnicity	White (Non-Hispanic)	9.0%	27.8%	11.3%
	Hispanic or Latino	17.1%	19.4%	5.1%
	Black	71.3%	47.2%	79.5%
	Asian	0.2%	2.3%	0.9%
	Other/Multiple Races	2.4%	3.3%	3.2%
Mode of Travel to Work	Work at Home	7.7%	8.4%	11.2%
	Drive Alone	68.9%	78.8%	69.5%
	Carpool	10.7%	5.0%	8.7%
	Transit	8.7%	3.9%	6.8%
	Walk or Bike	2.6%	1.7%	1.3%
	Other	1.4%	2.2%	2.5%

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%

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

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.

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.

The population distribution across age groups in Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland reveals distinct demographic

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

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 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 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 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?

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.

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, bicyclists, children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

Historically, roadway system design has given minimal consideration to vulnerable road users, instead favoring an auto-oriented design. This is especially true in urban areas, where increased density of motorists and 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 fall along Torrence Avenue or 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 areas, with high concentrations 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.

40%

of all victims in traffic fatalities in dense urban areas are Vulnerable Road Users.

Source: Federal Highway Administration

10%

of all pedestrian deaths are children under the age of 15 years old.

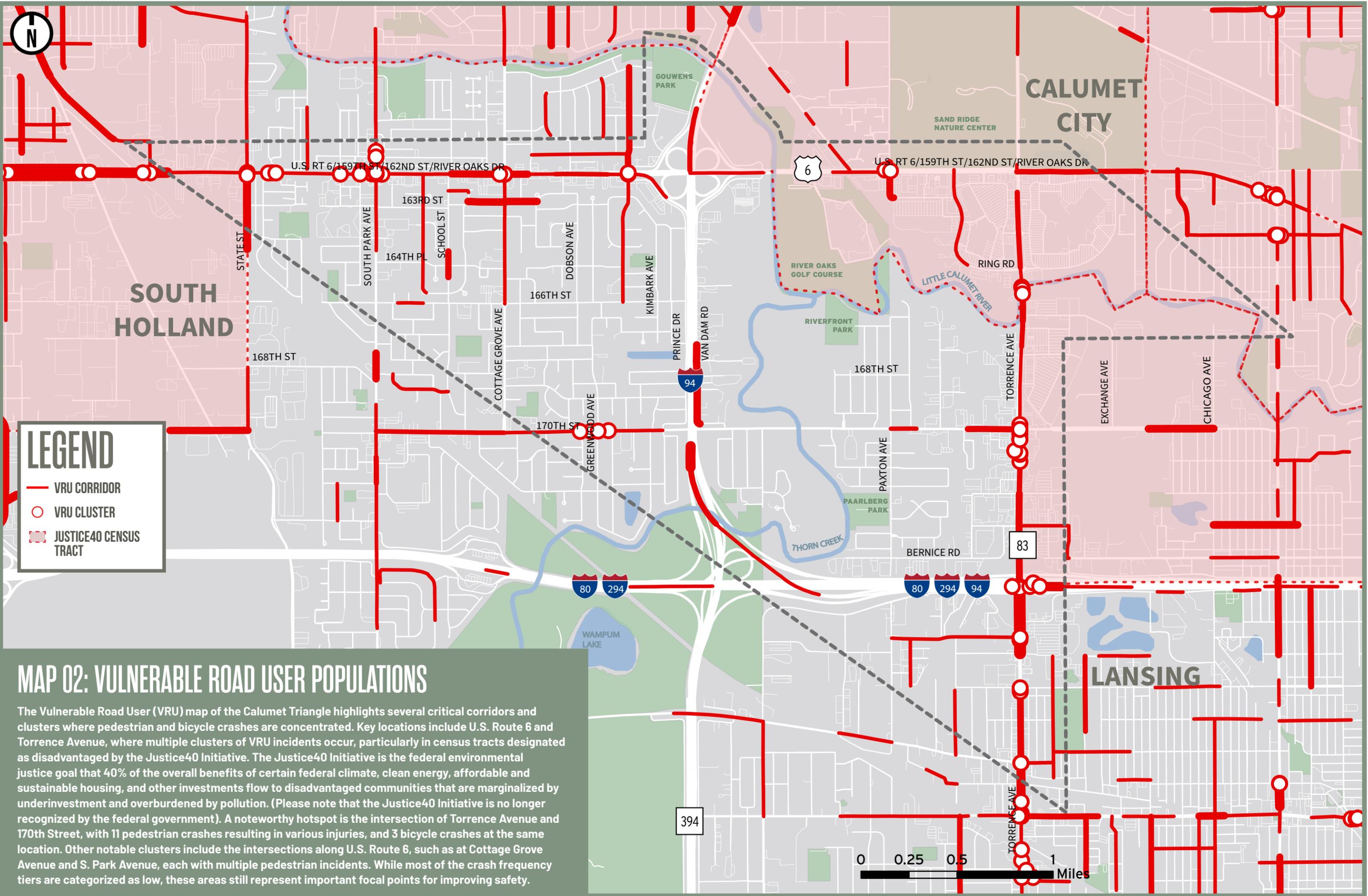
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



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

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)



LEGEND

- VRU CORRIDOR
- VRU CLUSTER
- JUSTICE40 CENSUS TRACT

MAP 02: VULNERABLE ROAD USER POPULATIONS

The Vulnerable Road User (VRU) map of the Calumet Triangle highlights several critical corridors and clusters where pedestrian and bicycle crashes are concentrated. Key locations include U.S. Route 6 and Torrence Avenue, where multiple clusters of VRU incidents occur, particularly in census tracts designated as disadvantaged by the Justice40 Initiative. The Justice40 Initiative is the federal environmental justice goal that 40% 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. (Please note that the Justice40 Initiative is no longer recognized by the federal government). A noteworthy hotspot is the intersection of Torrence Avenue and 170th Street, with 11 pedestrian crashes resulting in various injuries, and 3 bicycle crashes at the same location. Other notable clusters include the intersections along U.S. Route 6, such as at Cottage Grove Avenue and S. Park Avenue, each with multiple pedestrian incidents. While most of the crash frequency tiers are categorized as low, these areas still represent important focal points for improving safety.





TRANSPORTATION

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.



Source: Calumet Memorial Park

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES



Residential Access:

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



Commercial Access:

Sidewalks are not present or connected along major corridors, like Torrence Avenue, discouraging pedestrians from accessing key destinations.



Source: Rails to Trails

BICYCLE FACILITIES



Extensive Trail Network:

The regional trails offer extensive routes, enhancing overall connectivity between communities.



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.



Source: Chicago Tribune

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.



First & Last Mile Connectivity:

While there are many transit options available near the Calumet Triangle, it is difficult to efficiently reach the stops or stations.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

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. Pedestrian-friendly 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 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 coverage.

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 destinations.

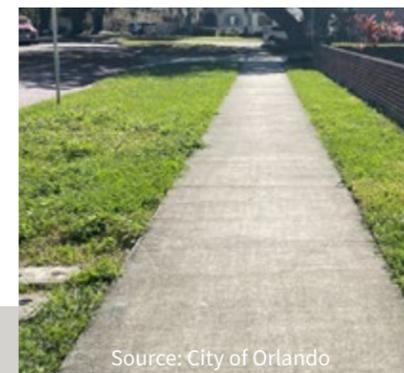
The largest gaps in the pedestrian network exist along the Little Calumet River and around River Oaks Center, as well as near the interstates. These places are primarily auto-oriented, not anticipating pedestrians' presence.

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, sidepaths, and other pedestrian infrastructure indicates a need for targeted improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility.



Source: City of Orlando

SIDEWALKS



Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers

CROSSING FACILITIES



Source: Town of Lovettsville, VA

SIDEPATH

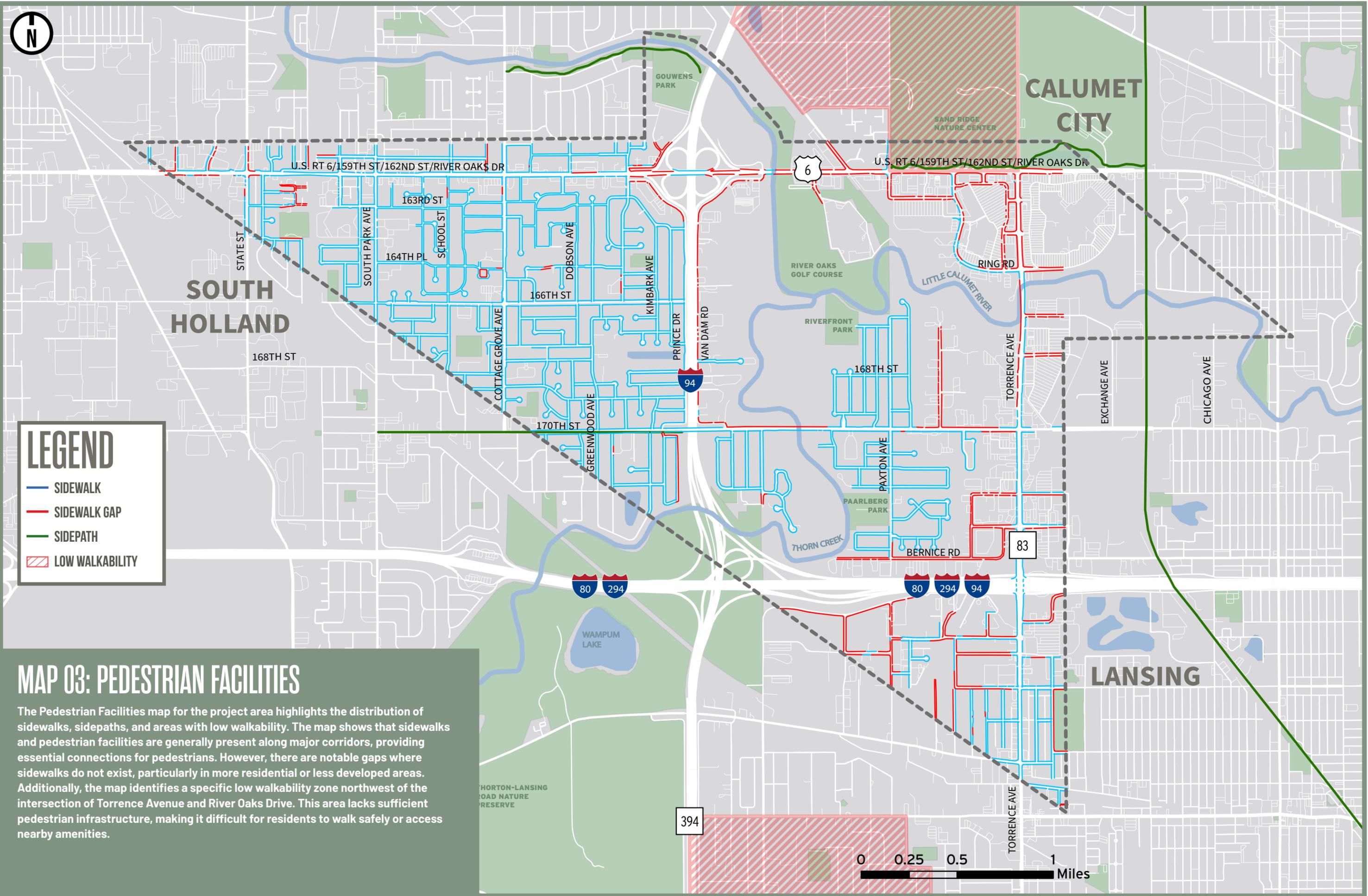


LEGEND

- SIDEWALK
- SIDEWALK GAP
- SIDEPATH
- LOW WALKABILITY

MAP 03: PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The Pedestrian Facilities map for the project area highlights the distribution of sidewalks, sidepaths, and areas with low walkability. The map shows that sidewalks and pedestrian facilities are generally present along major corridors, providing essential connections for pedestrians. However, there are notable gaps where sidewalks do not exist, particularly in more residential or less developed areas. Additionally, the map identifies a specific low walkability zone northwest of the intersection of Torrence Avenue and River Oaks Drive. This area lacks sufficient pedestrian infrastructure, making it difficult for residents to walk safely or access nearby amenities.



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 sidepaths.

Providing bicycle infrastructure encourages individuals to bike for shorter trips due to greater convenience. This takes single-occupancy 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.

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. Key facilities include the Sand 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 23.5-mile 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 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 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. Sidepaths 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.

40%

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

Source: Safe Routes to School National Partnership

20%

increase in student attendance is observed in schools with successful bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

Source: Safe Routes to School National Partnership



Source: Maryland DOT

MARKED ROUTE



Source: Bike Portland

SHARED LANE MARKING



Source: Bike It Lancaster

BIKE LANE



Source: Active Transportation Alliance

PROTECTED BIKE LANE



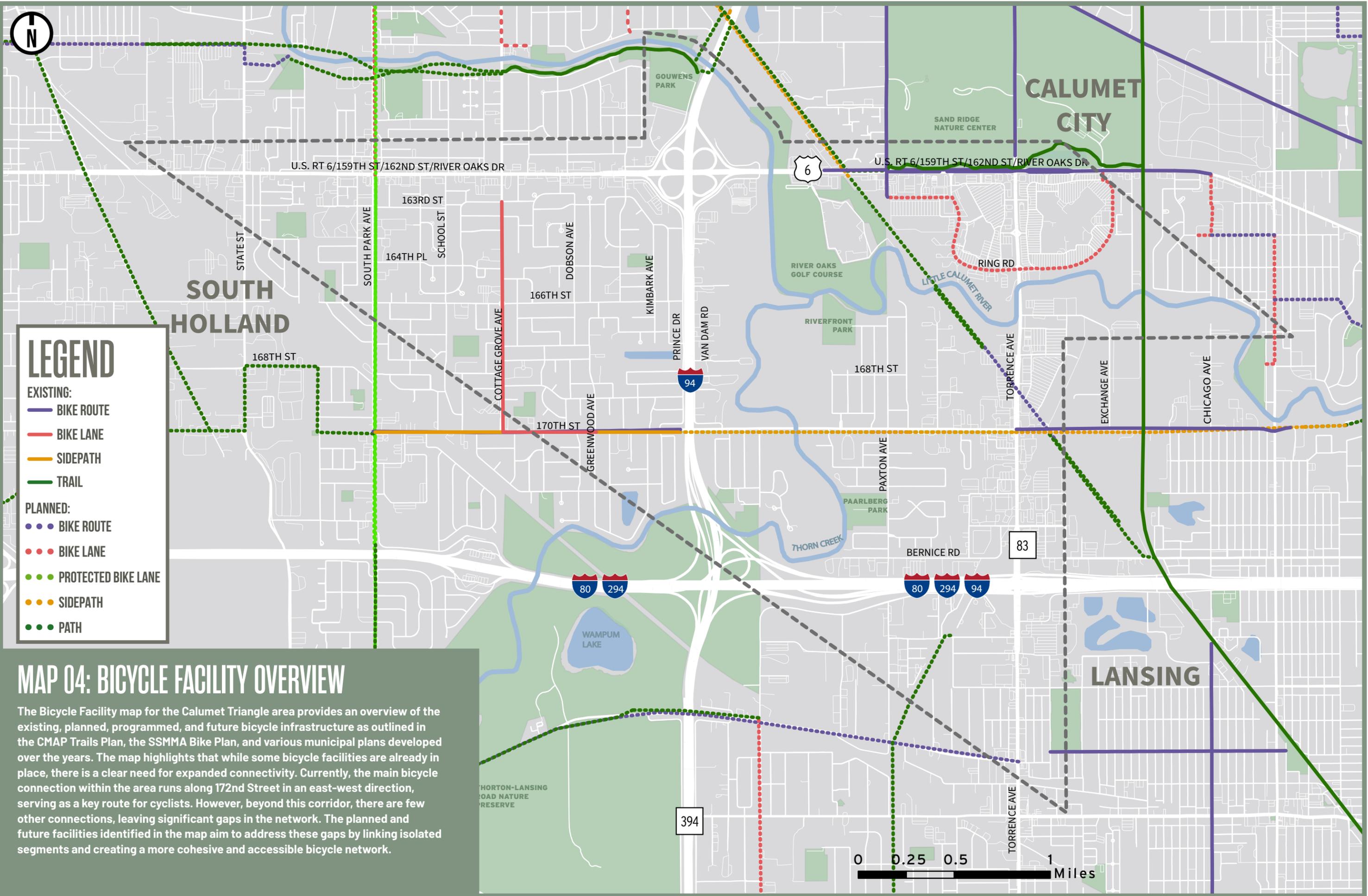
Source: Town of Lovettsville, VA

SIDEPATH



Source: TwinCities.com

REGIONAL TRAIL



MAP 04: BICYCLE FACILITY OVERVIEW

The Bicycle Facility map for the Calumet Triangle area provides an overview of the existing, planned, programmed, and future bicycle infrastructure as outlined in the CMAP Trails Plan, the SSMMA Bike Plan, and various municipal plans developed over the years. The map highlights that while some bicycle facilities are already in place, there is a clear need for expanded connectivity. Currently, the main bicycle connection within the area runs along 172nd Street in an east-west direction, serving as a key route for cyclists. However, beyond this corridor, there are few other connections, leaving significant gaps in the network. The planned and future facilities identified in the map aim to address these gaps by linking isolated segments and creating a more cohesive and accessible bicycle network.

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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 05** for the results of the bicycle facility analysis.

BICYCLE LEVEL OF SERVICE (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.



BLOS A

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.



BLOS B

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.



BLOS C

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



BLOS D

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.



BLOS F

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.

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.



LTS 1

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



LTS 2

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



LTS 3

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

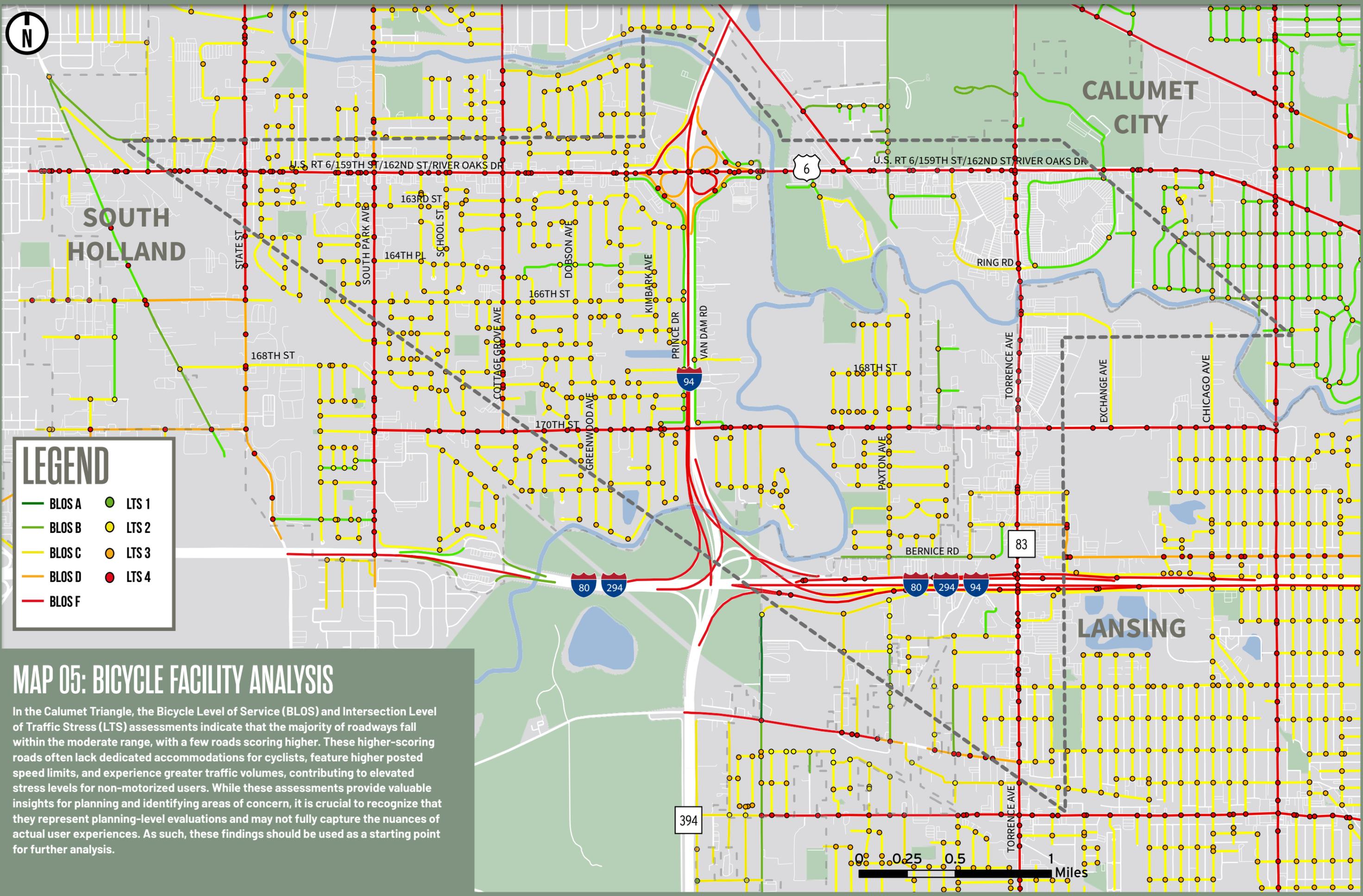


LTS 4

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



REFER TO APPENDIX D FOR BLOS/LTS METHODOLOGIES



LEGEND

- BLAS A
- BLAS B
- BLAS C
- BLAS D
- BLAS F
- LTS 1
- LTS 2
- LTS 3
- LTS 4

MAP 05: BICYCLE FACILITY ANALYSIS

In the Calumet Triangle, the Bicycle Level of Service (BLAS) and Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) assessments indicate that the majority of roadways fall within the moderate range, with a few roads scoring higher. These higher-scoring roads often lack dedicated accommodations for cyclists, feature higher posted speed limits, and experience greater traffic volumes, contributing to elevated stress levels for non-motorized users. While these assessments provide valuable insights for planning and identifying areas of concern, it is crucial to recognize that they represent planning-level evaluations and may not fully capture the nuances of actual user experiences. As such, these findings should be used as a starting point for further analysis.

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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-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.

The Calumet Triangle also has access to Pace Bus fixed services. Pace Bus, the suburban transit provider, offers transit options

throughout the collar counties of Chicagoland, covering over 3,600 miles. All Pace fixed routes are ADA accessible.

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

- » 353 – 95th-River Oaks-Homewood
- » 358 – Torrence
- » 364 – 159th Street

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

\$4.00 is returned to local economies for every \$1.00 that’s spent on public transportation by local residents.

Source: American Public Transportation Association, 2019

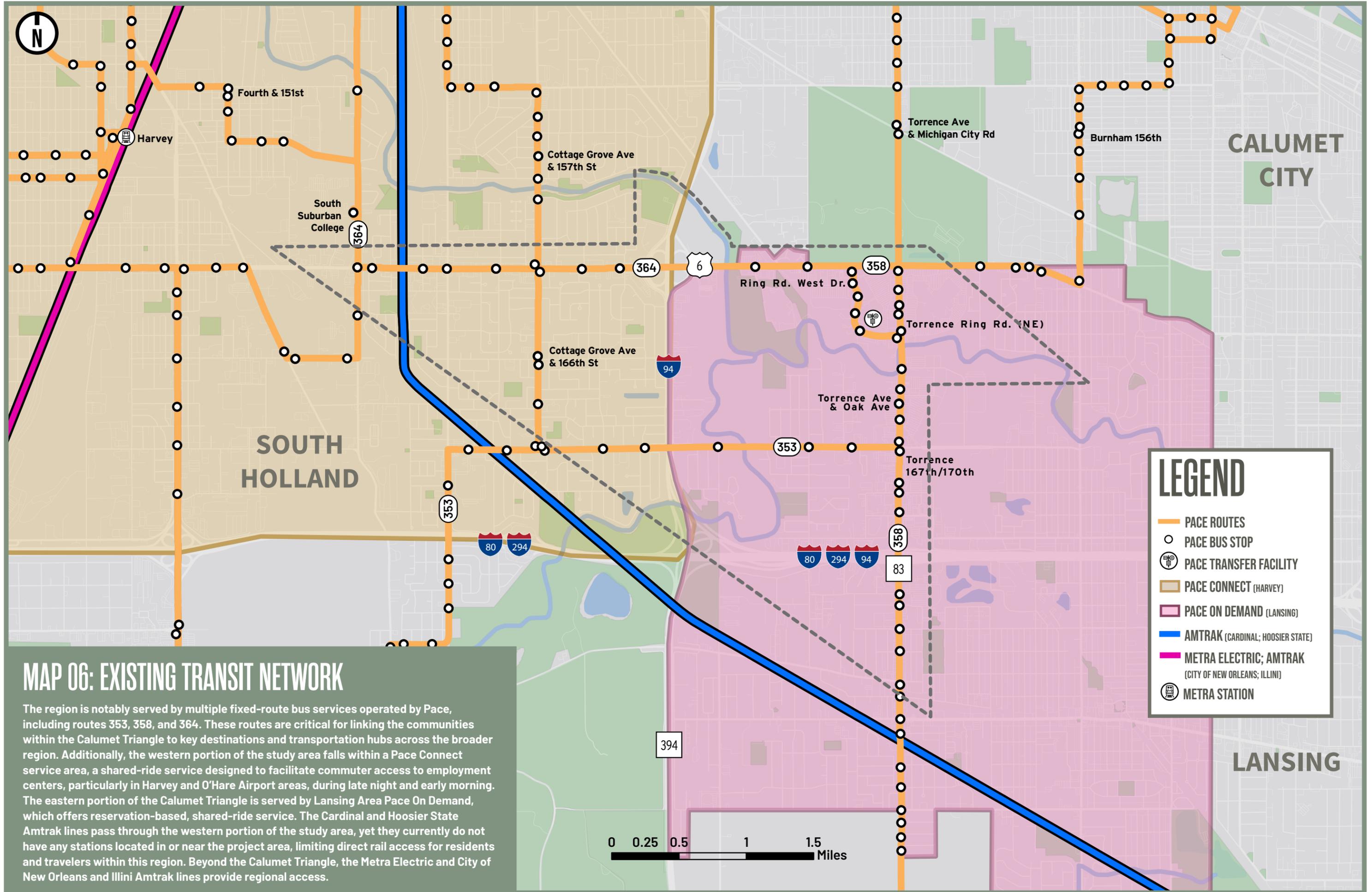
25% increase in retail sales is observed by businesses located near public transportation hubs due to higher foot traffic and accessibility.

Source: Urban Land Institute, 2019



Source: Epstein

IMAGE 01: SITE OF PROPOSED PACE PARK-N-RIDE TRANSFER FACILITY



MAP 06: EXISTING TRANSIT NETWORK

The region is notably served by multiple fixed-route bus services operated by Pace, including routes 353, 358, and 364. These routes are critical for linking the communities within the Calumet Triangle to key destinations and transportation hubs across the broader region. Additionally, the western portion of the study area falls within a Pace Connect service area, a shared-ride service designed to facilitate commuter access to employment centers, particularly in Harvey and O'Hare Airport areas, during late night and early morning. The eastern portion of the Calumet Triangle is served by Lansing Area Pace On Demand, which offers reservation-based, shared-ride service. The Cardinal and Hoosier State Amtrak lines pass through the western portion of the study area, yet they currently do not have any stations located in or near the project area, limiting direct rail access for residents and travelers within this region. Beyond the Calumet Triangle, the Metra Electric and City of New Orleans and Illini Amtrak lines provide regional access.

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 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 after-school 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-of-week 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 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.

FIGURE 06: CRASH BREAKDOWN

Area	Total Crashes	Fatalities	Most Common Crash Type	Most Common Time of Day	Most Common Day of Week
Calumet Triangle	4,671	20	Front to Rear	15:00 (3 PM)	Friday
Calumet City	5,393	12	Turning	17:00 (5 PM)	Saturday
Lansing	3,103	15	Front to Rear	15:00 (3 PM)	Friday
South Holland	3,585	17	Turning	15:00 (3 PM)	Friday



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.

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.

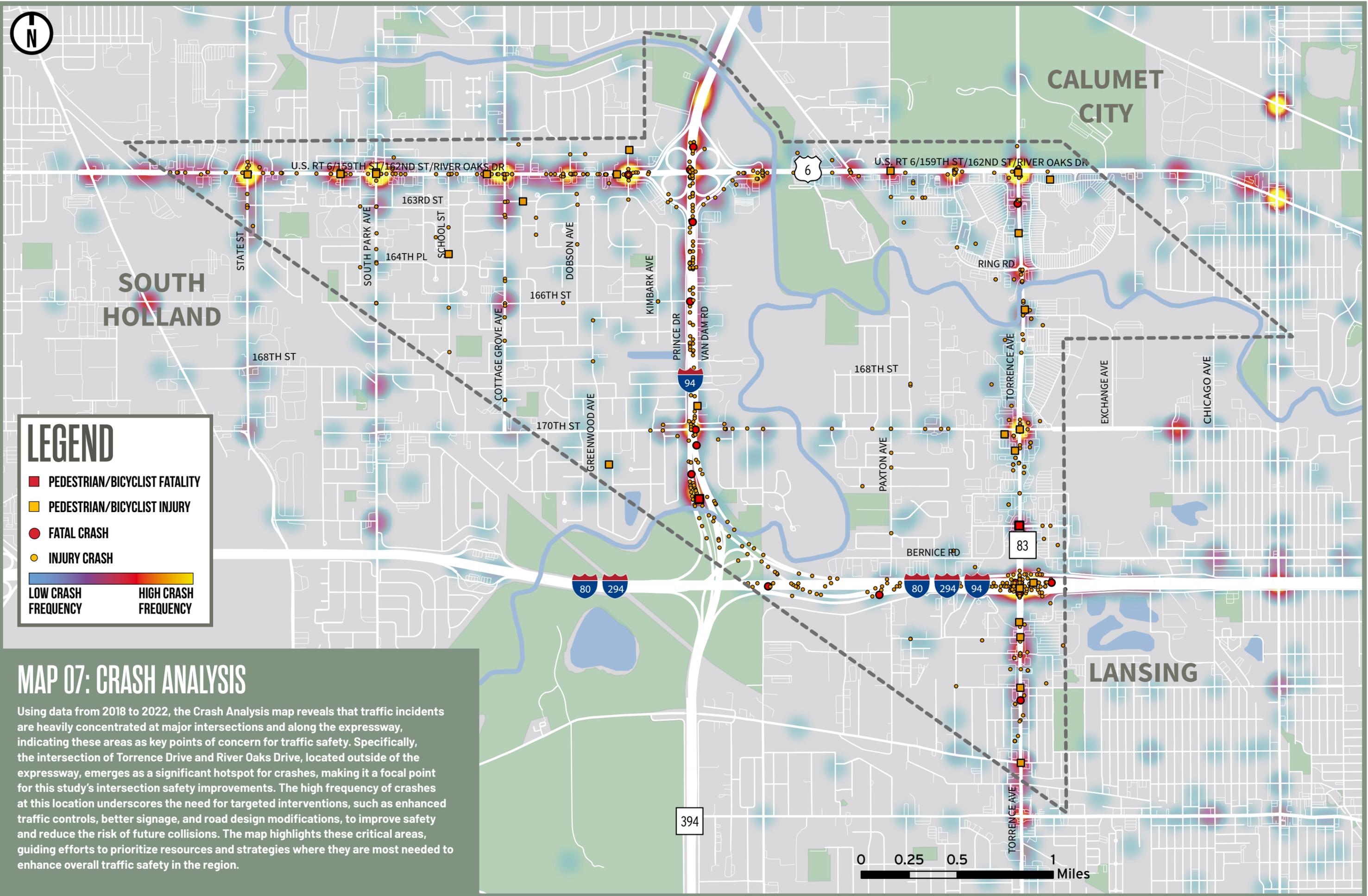
Environmental & Lighting Conditions

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 low-light 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.



LEGEND

- PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLIST FATALITY
- PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLIST INJURY
- FATAL CRASH
- INJURY CRASH

LOW CRASH
FREQUENCY

HIGH CRASH
FREQUENCY

MAP 07: CRASH ANALYSIS

Using data from 2018 to 2022, the Crash Analysis map reveals that traffic incidents are heavily concentrated at major intersections and along the expressway, indicating these areas as key points of concern for traffic safety. Specifically, the intersection of Torrence Drive and River Oaks Drive, located outside of the expressway, emerges as a significant hotspot for crashes, making it a focal point for this study's intersection safety improvements. The high frequency of crashes at this location underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as enhanced traffic controls, better signage, and road design modifications, to improve safety and reduce the risk of future collisions. The map highlights these critical areas, guiding efforts to prioritize resources and strategies where they are most needed to enhance overall traffic safety in the region.



TRAVEL MARKET & FACILITY CAPACITY ANALYSES

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.

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.

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.

Railroad Crossings
The presence of multiple at-grade 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.



Source: Epstein

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.



Source: The Lansing Journal

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.

Aging Population: As the population ages, there will be increased demand for senior housing, healthcare services, and other amenities tailored to older adults.



Source: The Lansing Journal

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.

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



Source: City of Calumet City

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.

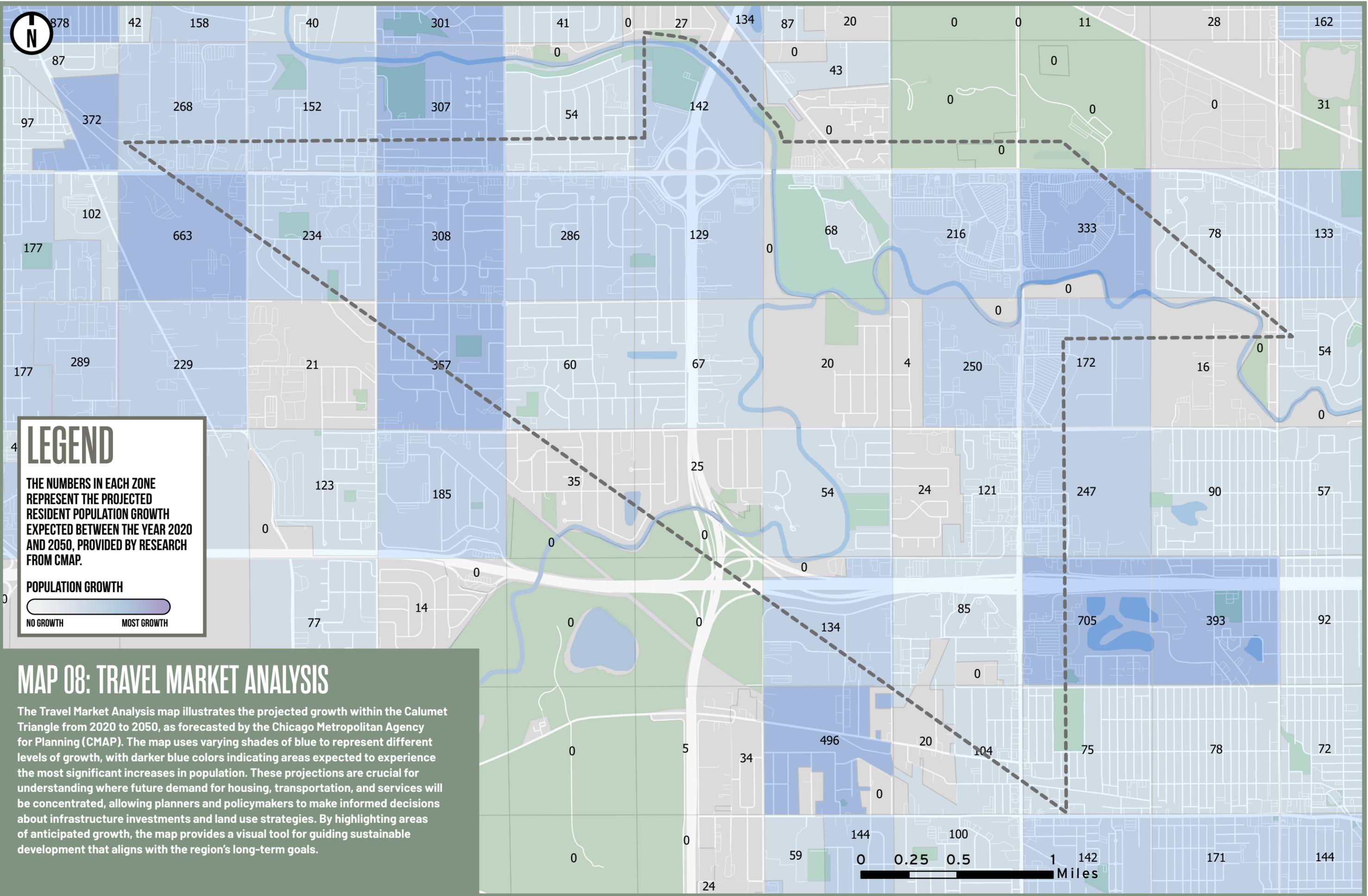
Vacancy Rates: It is key to address the high commercial vacancy rates and ensure that new developments align with the community's needs.

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.

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.



LEGEND

THE NUMBERS IN EACH ZONE REPRESENT THE PROJECTED RESIDENT POPULATION GROWTH EXPECTED BETWEEN THE YEAR 2020 AND 2050, PROVIDED BY RESEARCH FROM CMAP.

POPULATION GROWTH

NO GROWTH MOST GROWTH

MAP 08: TRAVEL MARKET ANALYSIS

The Travel Market Analysis map illustrates the projected growth within the Calumet Triangle from 2020 to 2050, as forecasted by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). The map uses varying shades of blue to represent different levels of growth, with darker blue colors indicating areas expected to experience the most significant increases in population. These projections are crucial for understanding where future demand for housing, transportation, and services will be concentrated, allowing planners and policymakers to make informed decisions about infrastructure investments and land use strategies. By highlighting areas of anticipated growth, the map provides a visual tool for guiding sustainable development that aligns with the region's long-term goals.

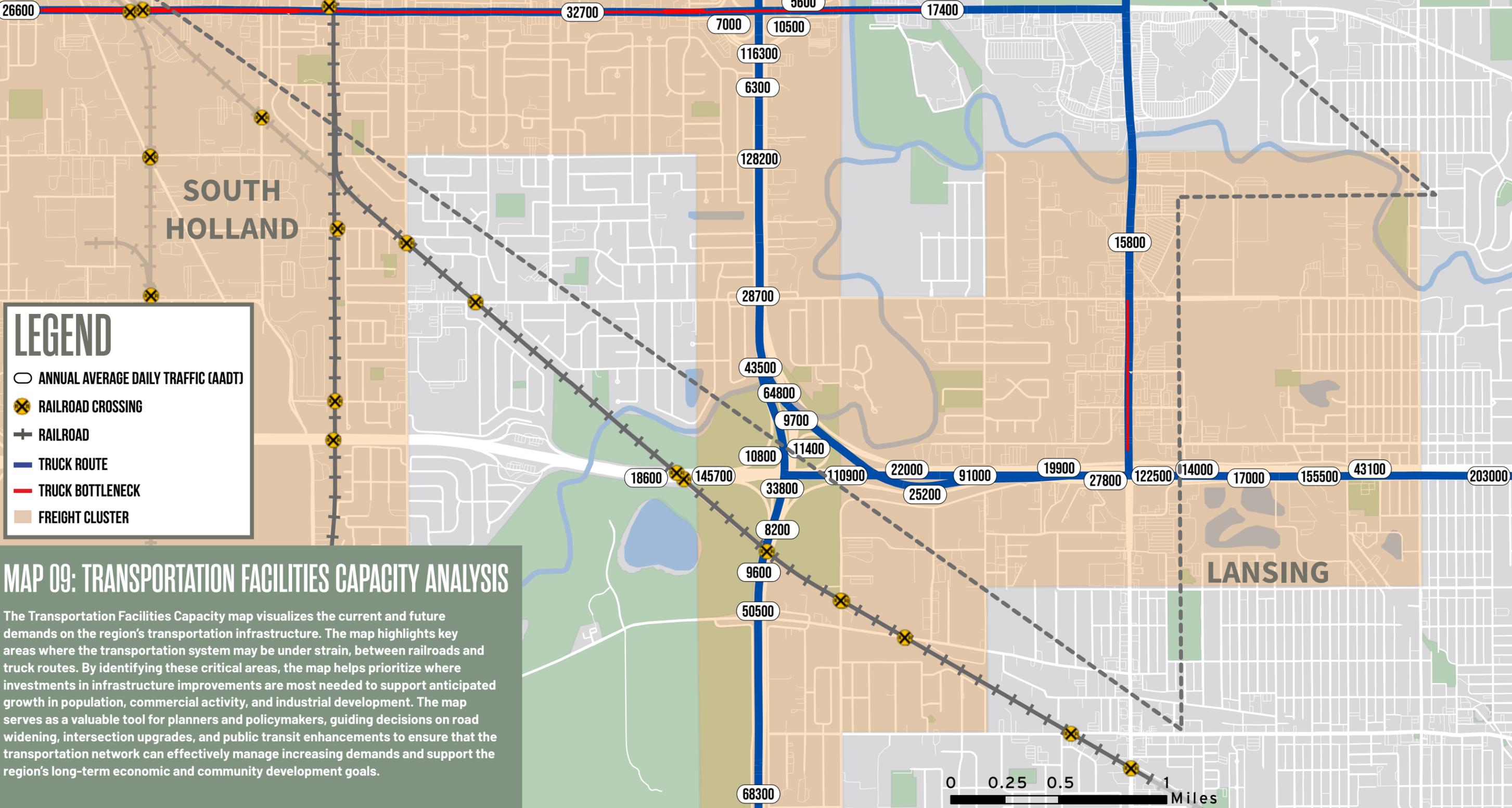




CALUMET CITY

SOUTH HOLLAND

LANSING





PUBLIC SPACES & 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 well-being. 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:

- » Streetscaping improvements
- » Complete Streets Programs
- » Façade Rehabilitation programs
- » Pocket Parks and plazas
- » Murals and other public art campaigns
- » Branding signage and wayfinding

- » Temporary events and activations

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.



IMAGE 02: MURAL IN SOUTH HOLLAND

“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 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).

IMPORTANCE

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
- » Increased tax revenue
- » More optimized municipal services

ASSESSMENT OF THE CALUMET TRIANGLE

In general, the study area is dominated by typical auto-oriented 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 Avenue. 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.

Torrence Avenue (south of I-94):

This zone of the Calumet Triangle is generally 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 discourages visitors to spend more time here beyond their specific, transactional needs.

The sidewalks on the east side of Torrence Avenue are right along the street, which creates challenges to pedestrian comfort based on the speed of traffic. However, some of the newer developments (e.g. Starbucks, Chipotle, etc.) have included upgraded landscaping along the street frontage, which is an improvement. Streetscaping, like landscaping, can increase the greenery and appeal of the area to pedestrians, as well as slow down vehicle travel speeds.

Lastly, directly south of I-94, there are large swaths of vacant land left over from the removal of a 'clover leaf' interchange. The potential redevelopment of these parcels is an opportunity that should be 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 approximately 75 feet 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.

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 a parking lot on the northeast corner that serves the Kia dealership, which took

over the former Best Buy site. The corridor where the parking lot sits is owned by ComEd and should be regularly maintained.

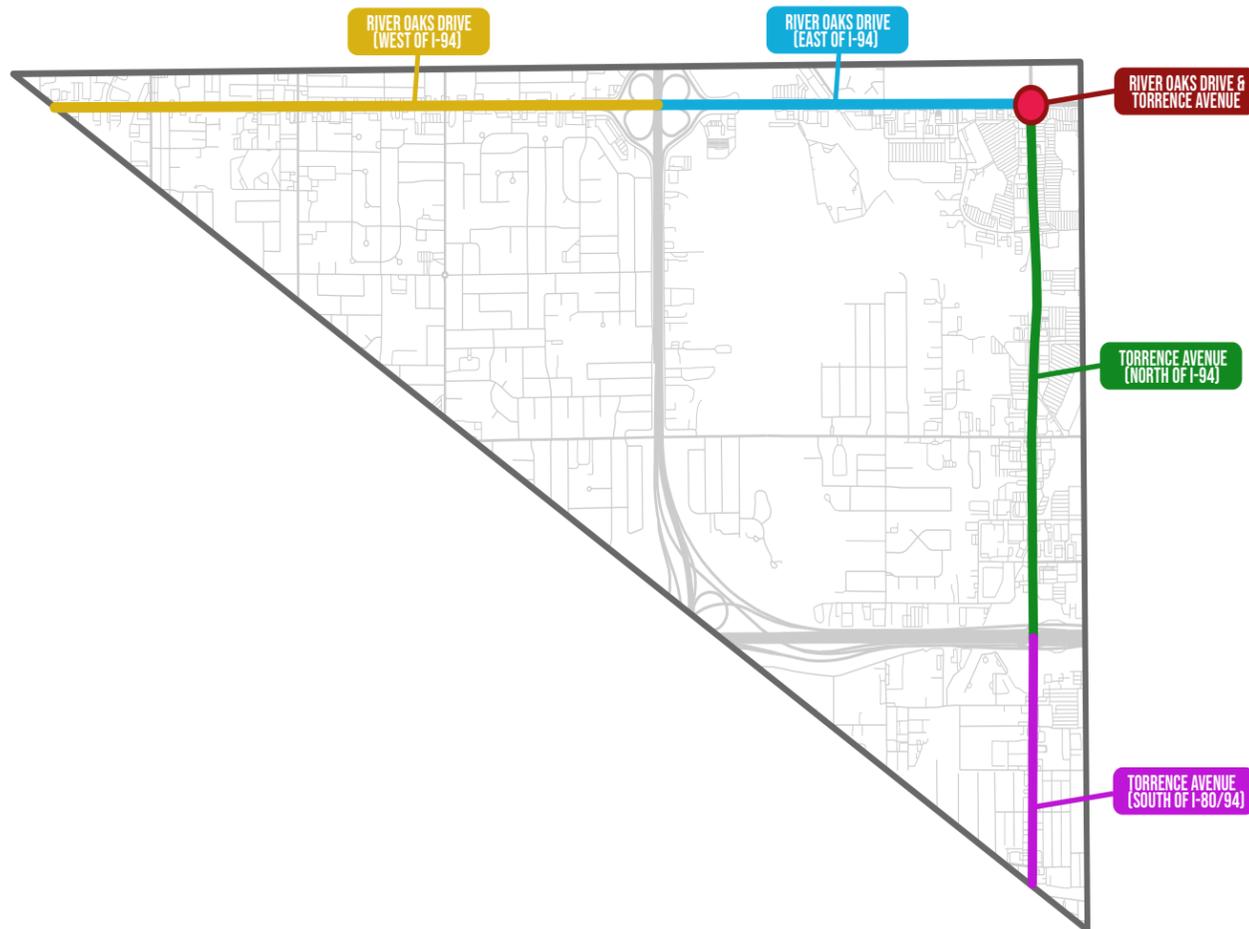
The second opportunity is on the north end as Torrence Avenue crosses the Little Calumet River. During initial investigations, there have been numerous proposals to provide more open space and increase access to the river. This area along Torrence Avenue represents a great opportunity based on the accessibility 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 auto-oriented outlot developments or parking lots.

In terms of opportunities in this zone, the River Oaks Center

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.



“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*

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 of 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 auto-oriented 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.

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.



Source: Google Maps

IMAGE 03: TORRENCE AVENUE AND U.S. ROUTE 6/RIVER OAKS DRIVE/159TH STREET



THE POWER OF PLACEMAKING, CASE STUDY

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 community-focused 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.



LAND USE & HOUSING

This section analyzes land use and housing within the Calumet Triangle. This is accomplished through the comparison of the three involved municipalities, as well as county and state trends. While existing land uses are generally regulated by the zoning ordinances, the real estate market and local initiative can dictate the productivity of these properties.

Determining how well the 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.

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.



Source: Village of South Holland

IMAGE 04: HOMES IN SOUTH HOLLAND

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

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.

FIGURE 08: HOME VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES

Statistic	Calumet Triangle							
	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%

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 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 older adults, which could

include age restricted living 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 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 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 adults.

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).

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

FIGURE 09: HOUSING MARKET DEMAND

	Calumet Triangle	Calumet City	Lansing	South Holland	Cook County	Illinois
Owner Occupied Housing Units	68.9%	48.4%	64.8%	79.1%	50.9%	60.3%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	24.6%	40.5%	28.4%	15.2%	40.4%	31.0%
Vacant Housing Units	6.5%	11.1%	6.8%	5.7%	8.7%	8.7%
Occupied Housing, Median Value	\$196,262	\$138,050	\$176,173	\$198,694	\$325,501	\$274,127
Occupied Housing, Under Age 60	50.8%	60.7%	61.6%	53.4%	66.8%	63.9%
Occupied Housing, Age 60-84	44.8%	36.3%	34.8%	42.7%	30.2%	32.8%
Occupied Housing Age 85+	4.4%	2.9%	3.7%	3.9%	3.1%	3.3%
Occupied Housing, 1 Person	34.1%	35.9%	29.9%	22.8%	32.5%	29.6%
Occupied Housing, 2 Person	28.0%	26.0%	29.3%	30.6%	29.2%	31.6%
Occupied Housing, 3-4 Person	27.0%	26.7%	28.6%	32.2%	27.3%	28.2%
Occupied Housing, 5+ Person	10.9%	11.3%	12.2%	14.4%	11.0%	10.6%
Housing Affordability Index	122	142	139	141	87	101

FIGURE 10: RETAIL MARKET DEMAND BY INDUSTRY

Industry	Spending Potential Index (SPI)					
	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

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 Torrence Place in Lansing with 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 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, particularly around current industrial areas to leverage existing

infrastructure and established truck routes.

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 innovation.

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.



Source: Epstein

IMAGE 05: COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN CALUMET CITY

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

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.

FIGURE 11: RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATES

	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.

Vacancy Causes

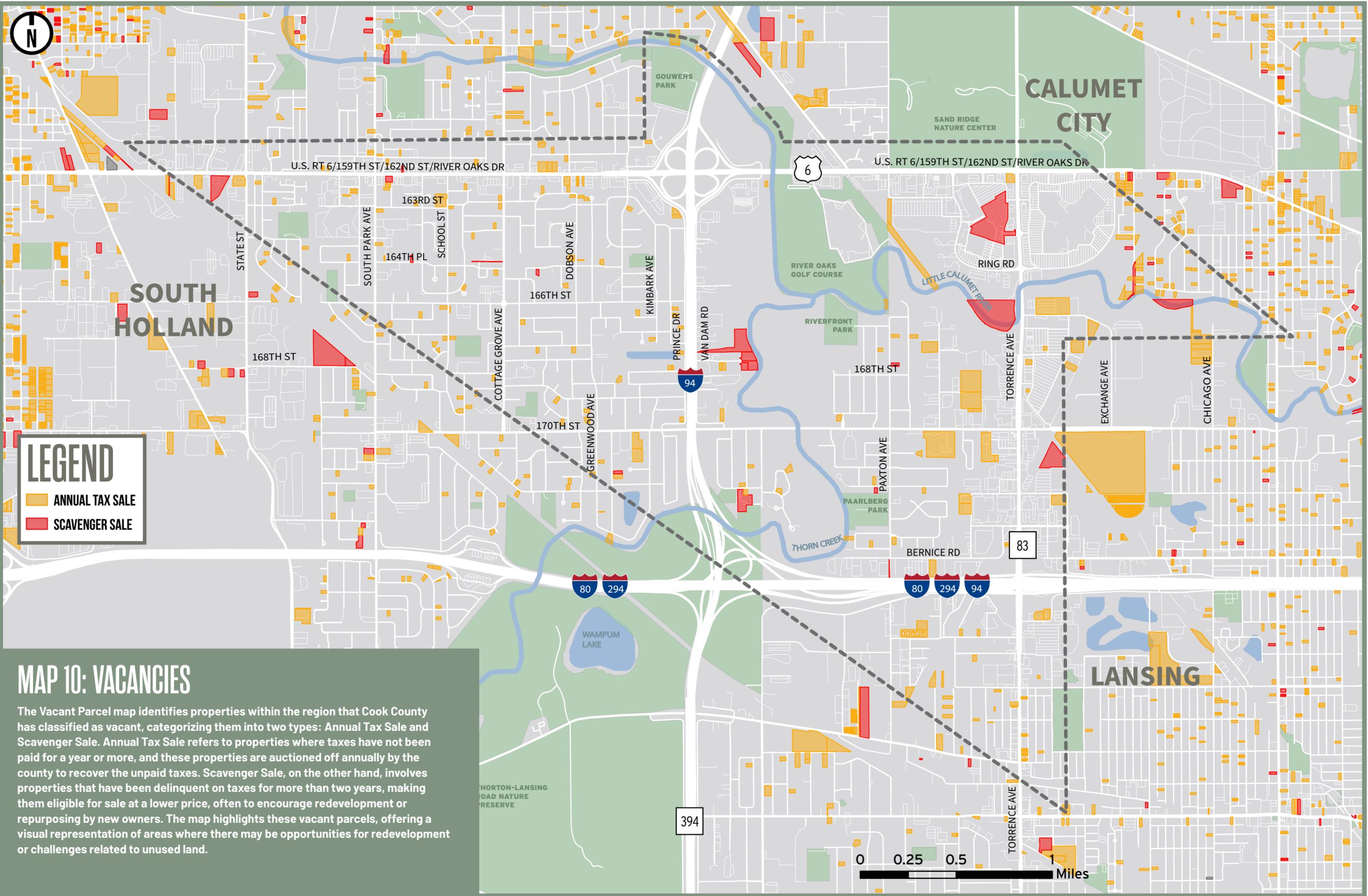
Residential vacancies are influenced by a range of factors that often relate to the inability of the local housing market to meet the needs of evolving demographics, e.g., lack of housing options for an aging population, young adults and young families, downsizing households, etc. Even as residential 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

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.



LEGEND

- ANNUAL TAX SALE
- SCAVENGER SALE

MAP 10: VACANCIES

The Vacant Parcel map identifies properties within the region that Cook County has classified as vacant, categorizing them into two types: Annual Tax Sale and Scavenger Sale. Annual Tax Sale refers to properties where taxes have not been paid for a year or more, and these properties are auctioned off annually by the county to recover the unpaid taxes. Scavenger Sale, on the other hand, involves properties that have been delinquent on taxes for more than two years, making them eligible for sale at a lower price, often to encourage redevelopment or repurposing by new owners. The map highlights these vacant parcels, offering a visual representation of areas where there may be opportunities for redevelopment or challenges related to unused land.



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 revitalization in underserved communities.



Source: Cortex Innovation Community

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 underserved areas.



Source: City of San Antonio

SOUTHSIDE OPPORTUNITY ZONE, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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 community.



Source: Gothamist

HUDSON YARDS PROJECT, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

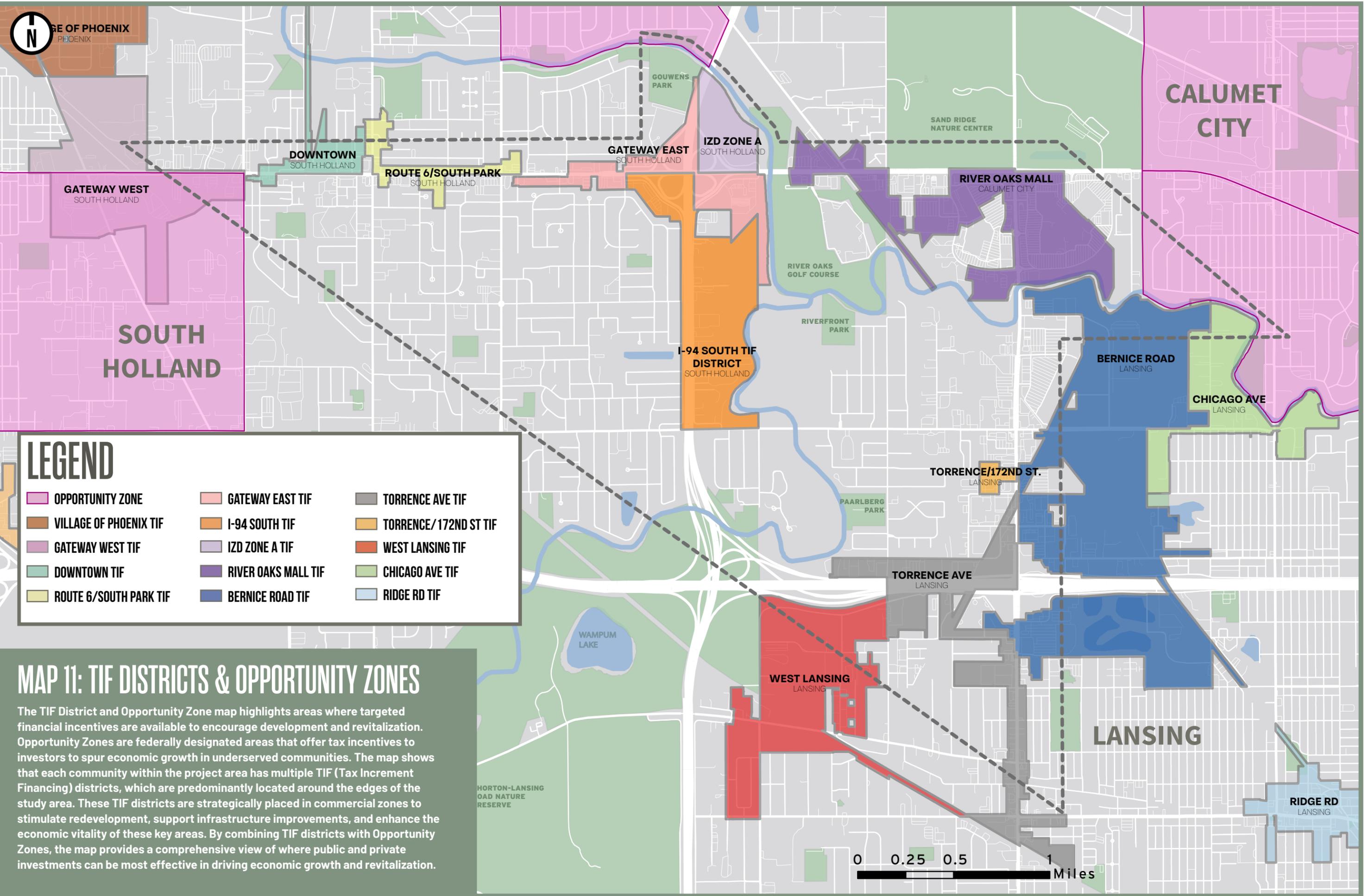
Although not traditionally underserved, the Hudson Yards project in New York City utilized TIF funding as part of its financing strategy. This massive redevelopment project transformed a largely underutilized area into a bustling commercial and residential district. The use of TIF helped fund critical 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

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.

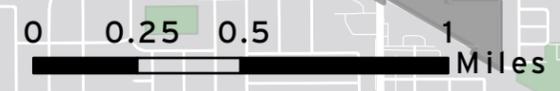


LEGEND

OPPORTUNITY ZONE	GATEWAY EAST TIF	TORRENCE AVE TIF
VILLAGE OF PHOENIX TIF	I-94 SOUTH TIF	TORRENCE/172ND ST TIF
GATEWAY WEST TIF	IZD ZONE A TIF	WEST LANSING TIF
DOWNTOWN TIF	RIVER OAKS MALL TIF	CHICAGO AVE TIF
ROUTE 6/SOUTH PARK TIF	BERNICE ROAD TIF	RIDGE RD TIF

MAP 11: TIF DISTRICTS & OPPORTUNITY ZONES

The TIF District and Opportunity Zone map highlights areas where targeted financial incentives are available to encourage development and revitalization. Opportunity Zones are federally designated areas that offer tax incentives to investors to spur economic growth in underserved communities. The map shows that each community within the project area has multiple TIF (Tax Increment Financing) districts, which are predominantly located around the edges of the study area. These TIF districts are strategically placed in commercial zones to stimulate redevelopment, support infrastructure improvements, and enhance the economic vitality of these key areas. By combining TIF districts with Opportunity Zones, the map provides a comprehensive view of where public and private investments can be most effective in driving economic growth and revitalization.





3.

PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

**COMMUNITY & PARTNER INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW |
MEETING OVERVIEW | SURVEY RESULTS**

The Stakeholder and Public Engagement Summary outlines the outreach efforts conducted to inform and guide the planning process. This chapter highlights the involvement of community members, local partners, and key stakeholders through a range of engagement activities. It includes an overview of participating groups, a summary of public and partner

meetings, and key takeaways from community surveys. Together, these inputs helped shape the plan's priorities, ensuring it reflects the needs, values, and aspirations of those who live and work in the area.



COMMUNITY & PARTNER INVOLVEMENT

Community and partner engagement aims to be transparent, inclusive, and responsive to community needs and concerns by actively seeking the community's preferences leading recommendations to be more effective and reflect the community's priorities, vision, and aspirational goals. In addition, a clear process increases involvement and creates a sense of ownership for the study. Ownership comes with transparency and trust, which will ultimately improve 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 and a commitment to advancing strategies that improve the study area. Over 13 partner agencies have been involved. Partner engagement is a cornerstone of this planning initiative. Taking advantage of these partnerships will enable the study to be more impactful.

Creating an inclusive and equitable engagement strategy throughout the planning process is a core tenant of the project. This approach ensures that all relevant parties, including the SSMMA, Village of Lansing, Village of South Holland, and City of 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.

Engagement occurred throughout the planning process in two phases, supplemented by ongoing steering committee meetings, as well as online updates. The aim was 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.



Source: Rudd Resources

IMAGE 06: BUS TOUR PARTICIPANTS AT THE SSMMA OFFICE

GOALS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INCLUDE:

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 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.

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs



MEETING OVERVIEW

Engagement and touchpoints with involved organizations and agencies, committee members, stakeholders, and the public are crucial to the development of relevant recommendations. This section provides an overview of the meetings that took place over the course of the study.

Public engagement occurred in two different phases, supplemented by ongoing technical committee and planning council meetings and online updates provided through the study. Engagement followed two phases: Understand and Priorities.

PHASE 1: UNDERSTAND

During this phase, from June 2024 to January 2025, the project team gathered data on existing conditions, conducted a corridor

travel market analysis, completed a corridor transportation facilities analysis, and worked on a corridor land use compatibility analysis. The consultant team analyzed the corridor compatibility conditions and engaged the public to deepen understanding and enrich the data with lived experiences. To meet community members where they are at, the engagement approach involved combining public engagement efforts for this project with existing, well-attended community events. Public participation helped to create a comprehensive understanding of the transportation and land use needs in the Calumet Triangle area that resonated with stakeholders and community members and helped guide the action plan.

PHASE 2: PRIORITIZE

Over the prioritize phase, January to June 2025, the project team explored 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 reflected on themes and takeaways from the public engagement efforts and data analyses that occurred during Phase I. The project team then worked to select and prioritize solutions and actions that align with the community's and stakeholders' priorities and will be effective and feasible in conjunction with the surrounding built environment.

FIGURE 13: ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Steering Committee, composed of municipal, county, regional, and state representatives, met throughout the planning process. The objectives for the Steering Committee included:

- » Providing technical guidance for the consultant team in defining the transportation and land use needs
- » Developing analyses, engagement strategies, data interpretation, and understanding any challenges and opportunities in the Calumet Triangle area
- » Contributing to developing and prioritizing projects and actions with assigned responsibilities and timeframes for completion and inclusion in the final study
- » Coordinating and obtaining input from their respective organizations

COMPOSITION

In addition to SSMMA's presence, Steering Committee members consisted of one member from the following organizations or agencies:

- » City of Calumet City
- » Village of Lansing
- » Village of South Holland
- » Cook County Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
- » Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DoTH)

- » Forest Preserves of Cook County
- » Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
- » Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- » Illinois Tollway
- » Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
- » Pace Suburban Bus

MEETING 1

To kick off the project, SSMMA hosted an in-person bus tour starting at SSMMA's office on June 25, 2024 with 27 participants. The bus tour looped throughout the three corridor communities, starting in South Holland, to Lansing, and ending in Calumet City. Representatives from each municipality shared goals, visions, and information on existing and future development, as well as transportation challenges and opportunities.

MEETING 2

The consultant team held a virtual Steering Committee meeting on October 2, 2024.

Topics of discussion during the meeting included key aspects of the study area and associated transportation and mobility considerations, including crash data. The consultant team presented on existing conditions related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, level of stress, transit coverage, vulnerable road users, and focus areas, including the Little Calumet River and River Oaks Center. Discussion centered around the steering committee's

priorities in regards to specific accessibility issues, ongoing and future projects, and unsafe locations within the study area. Safety, public transportation, traffic flow, and accessibility for older adults emerged as the steering committee's priorities. The meeting ended with discussion upcoming public engagement events and ideas for additional events.

MEETING 3

The consultant team hosted a virtual Steering Committee meeting on March 17, 2025.

Topics of discussion during the meeting included updates on the Existing Conditions Report, public engagement, and draft recommendations. Mobility hubs, including micromobility options, electric vehicle (EV) charging, and community gathering spaces, were also discussed. Another topic was the proposed riverfront trail along the Little Calumet River, where steering committee members expressed excitement about potential improvements and long-term recreational uses, and addressing ecological concerns and restoring an important waterway. Additionally, in regards to transportation, there was interest in protected bicycle facilities, an Amtrak station, and dial-a-ride services.

MUNICIPAL & LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS

Municipal meetings, composed of elected officials and staff from municipal governments and local stakeholders in the study area, guided the project's engagement efforts and helped to ensure that recommendations accurately and effectively represent and serve the Calumet Triangle. The objectives of engaging with municipal representatives and local stakeholders included:

- » Providing guidance for the consultant team in defining the transportation and land use needs
- » Developing strategies for engagement
- » Interpreting qualitative and quantitative data
- » Understanding any challenges and opportunities in the Calumet Triangle area

By coordinating and obtaining input from the municipal and local stakeholders' respective networks, the project team was able to gather a comprehensive approach to the study area. Municipal and local stakeholders provided thorough review of the draft plan and helped to outline the next steps for implementation after the plan's approval.

MEETING 1

The consultant team met virtually with the Village of South Holland staff on June 4, 2024 to introduce the project and learn and coordinate goals and plans with the Village.

MEETING 2

The consultant team met virtually

with the City of Calumet City staff on June 7, 2024 to introduce the project and learn and coordinate goals and plans with the City.

MEETING 3

The consultant team met virtually with the Village of Lansing staff on June 7, 2024 to introduce the project and learn and coordinate goals and plans with the Village.

MEETING 4

As a follow up to the bus tour, the consultant team met in-person with the City of Calumet City on July 29, 2024 to learn more about ongoing efforts in the city and take a closer look at specific sites.

Key site opportunities identified during the follow-up tour included the Blues Water Run site, the Pace Park-n-Ride site, and big box retail stores along Torrence Avenue, specifically like River Oaks West. City staff emphasized aligning the plan with development proposals, accommodating older adults, and providing economic diversity and value in the Calumet Triangle.

MEETING 5

As a follow up to the bus tour, the consultant team met in-person with the Village of Lansing on July 29, 2024 to learn more about ongoing efforts in the village and take a closer look at specific sites.

Key site opportunities identified during the follow-up tour included commercial development along Torrence Avenue, the former cloverleaf, and Lansing Sports Complex. Village staff focused discussions on the aesthetics of landscaping and setback requirements for commercial

development, recreational spaces and amenities, and underutilized lots.

MEETING 6

On October 15, 2024, the consultant team met virtually with the Midwest Underground Railroad Network (MURN) to talk about the Little Calumet River and the region's historical significance in the Underground Railroad network.

One of the MURN's goals is to enhance the Little Calumet riverfront with trails, artwork, and wayfinding that interpret the region's history, as well as activate local assets with related educational, cultural, and tourism activities to commemorate the journeys of freedom seekers and the responding support networks. The Calumet Triangle Planning Study aims to incorporate this work into the recommendations.

MEETING 7

The consultant team attended SSMMA's Transportation Committee meeting on April 8, 2025 to provide member municipalities with an overview of the project and key draft recommendations.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS

As part of the first public engagement phase, engagement events offered ways to learn about project goals, existing conditions, transportation, and land use solutions, and provide input. To engage as many community members residing, working, recreating, or traveling within the Calumet Triangle area as possible, events in each of the three corridor communities were planned to piggyback on existing local community events that attract large numbers of community members. This approach allowed the consultant team to meet community members where they are at to get direct feedback and share next steps.

HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION

Hispanic Heritage Fest was held in Calumet City at City Hall. September 14, 2024 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. A few hundred people attended the event. There were live performances, food vendors, face painting, a mini

market, games, and a mechanical bull. The engagement team distributed postcards with QR codes linked to the online survey, engaging with approximately 75 people and providing the opportunity for input.

BREAST CANCER WALK & DRIVE

The Village of South Holland hosted its 7th annual breast cancer awareness walk on October 12, 2024 at Veterans Memorial Park from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The event was a walk and car caravan that recognizes men and women who have survived breast cancer. The consultant team attended the awareness walk, and shared information on the study and provided the opportunity for attendees to weigh in and give feedback, interacting with over 160 people at the event.

FOX POINTE TRICK-OR-TREAT

A family-friendly Trick-or-Treat event took place at Fox Pointe in

Lansing on October 26, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Families were able to trick-or-treat in a controlled environment, with tables of volunteers handing out candy, as well as over 160 QR code links to the online survey.

SAND RIDGE NATURE CENTER: CALUMET HERITAGE DAY

Sand Ridge Nature Center hosted a Calumet Heritage Day celebration in Calumet City on November 23, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attendees discovered the Calumet Region's rich heritage and cultural history through regional activities, interactive displays, demonstrations and guided walks. In addition to these activities, the consultant team had a booth available with interactive exercises to gauge the public's perspective on transportation and land use in the Calumet Triangle area. Postcards with QR codes linked to the online survey were also distributed.



Source: Epstein

IMAGE 07: CALUMET HERITAGE DAY BOOTH

OPEN HOUSE

The Calumet Triangle Planning Study open house was held in-person at the South Holland Community Center on April 26, 2025, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The open house aimed to engage with residents and stakeholders from Calumet City, Lansing, South Holland, and the surrounding area to gather firsthand community input on the study area. Boards and conversation prompts included the Calumet Triangle area's existing facilities, crash data, proposed policies and programs, transportation infrastructure recommendations, and visioning of the proposed riverfront trail. The activities gathered input on mode preferences and existing and future land uses. Overall, 15 people attended the open house, with a handful of residents from the three communities in attendance, as well as elected

officials and staff from the City of Calumet City, Village of Lansing, Village of South Holland, CMAP, Pace Bus, and Midwest Underground Railroad.

OUTREACH

Outreach for the open house included various forms of promotions, including social media posts, a media advisory, newsletters, fliers, and more. The approach involved hand delivery of 400 flyers across Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland. In addition to in-person distribution, the team conducted targeted outreach to key community hubs via phone and email. The team provided digital outreach materials across several school districts, community organizations, and business corridors within the Calumet Triangle.

Mass promotion for this event utilized both digital and physical channels. Digital outreach targeted 35 locations across three municipalities: Calumet City, South Holland and Lansing. These digital promotions were sent to school districts, chambers of commerce, park districts, senior centers, and local community hubs to distribute flyers to their respective communities. Additionally, 125 physical flyers were distributed in Lansing, 155 fliers in Calumet City, and 120 fliers in South Holland. The physical promotion was provided to local restaurants, grocery stores, and more. Organizations and associations that received digital and physical promotions are listed as follows:

- » Wentworth School

- » Calumet City Public Library
- » S.T.E.M. Academy
- » Thornton Fractional North High School
- » Burr Oak Academy
- » Calumet Middle School
- » Calumet City's Kids Academy
- » Schrum Memorial Middle School
- » Thorton Township
- » Calumet City Chamber of Commerce
- » Sandridge Community Center
- » Calumet Memorial Park District
- » South Holland School District 151
- » Taft School
- » South Holland Public Library
- » Eisenhower School
- » Madison School
- » Coolidge Middle School
- » South Suburban College
- » South Holland Business Associations
- » Lan-Oak Park District

- » Lansing Public Library
- » Reavis Elementary School
- » Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce
- » Patti Leach Youth Center
- » St. Anthony Supported Living Community
- » A & Z Home Health Care, Inc
- » Tri-State Village Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
- » Village of Lansing
- » Eisenhower Community & Fitness Center
- » Buford Walker Senior Housing of LSSI

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A series of activity boards were placed throughout the room. When guests walked into the room, they were first greeted by a registration table. They then walked to a series of boards. The boards included information on vehicle crashes, transportation facilities, recommendations on transportation, future land uses, riverfront trail, and existing programs. Each activity board was designed to help the attendees understand the study area better to provide the best information for

residents to vote for. Finally, there were family-friendly branded coloring sheets and giveaways.

Board Activity: “How do you get around now vs. how do you want to get around in the future?”

The first activity consisted of a voting exercise with green and white tokens in jars. The white token represented how people travel now, and the green token represented how people wish to travel in the future. Each jar represented a different mode of transportation: walking, biking, driving, and transit. A clear takeaway from this activity is the desire and need for a transportation network that supports additional modes of transportation beyond driving, in the Calumet Triangle area. Community members currently rely heavily on driving but support the integration of active transportation.

As seen in **Figure 14**, the voting exercise results show a strong desire for more diverse transportation options in the study area. While residents currently depend heavily on driving, the community supports the idea of expanding active transportation and public transit. This is evident in the significantly



Source: Rudd Resources

IMAGE 08: OPEN HOUSE ATTENDEES AT THE SOUTH HOLLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

FIGURE 14: MODE VOTING ACTIVITY RESULTS

Transportation Mode	How You Travel Now	How You Want to Travel in the Future
Walking	1	5
Biking	2	5
Driving	6	3
Public Transit	2	5

high number of green votes for walking, biking, and public transit.

Existing Conditions: Vehicle Crashes

People were generally supportive of infrastructure improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. A key theme of conversation was the addition of traffic calming elements to improve safety around parks and schools. Another takeaway is that people want to see enhancements on the expressway.

Sticky Note Responses:

- » “More playgrounds with cameras.”
- » “Don’t let us lose River Oaks Mall.”
- » “I take sidewalks.”
- » “Lot of I-94 accidents between 147 and 162.”
- » “More bike lanes in South Holland.”
- » “Lack of sidewalks around h.s.”
- » “170th is busy at evening rush hour.”
- » “Safe and inviting bike paths (Similar to Central Park and Indiana).”
- » “Alternative routes to avoid high crash density areas, via non-auto transit means.”
- » “Mass transit has consistency issues.”
- » “Metra station lacks accessibility.”
- » “No speed or red-light cameras, especially around schools.”
- » “More community centers, not just in South Holland.”
- » “Bike rests and stops along

the trail are lacking.”

Envisioning: Existing and Future Uses

On this activity board, participants were invited to explore whether there is too much, enough, or too little of potential land uses by placing a dot sticker to indicate their preferences. The board listed 15 land uses, along with examples, categorized under residential, commercial, recreational/arts/entertainment, office and industrial uses. See **Figure 15**.

The voting results revealed that there is not enough development across all categories: residential, commercial, recreational/arts and entertainment, office, and industrial. In the residential category, most votes indicated a lack of housing options. Similarly, in the commercial category, there was a noticeable need for more businesses.

In the recreational/arts and entertainment category, residents expressed a strong need for these industries. The office category saw mixed responses, particularly regarding healthcare. The same trend was observed in the industrial categories of heavy and light industry, which also saw a stronger preference for “too little” development. This indicates a clear desire among residents for continued, and more diverse, growth that extends beyond just industrial expansion.

Recommendations: Policies & Programs

There were no activities or written comments associated with the Recommendations: Policies & Programs board. However, attendees were generally supportive of the recommended

policies and programs. Age-friendly communities and bike safety curriculum were of most interest.

Recommendations: Transportation Facilities

People were supportive of the proposed transportation facilities. A key theme of conversation was the addition of facilities (e.g. bike racks, benches, wayfinding) to accompany the proposed paths and trails. Another takeaway is that people want intersection improvements to help lower speeds and be accessible to walkers/bikers/transit users.

Sticky Note Responses:

- » “Connect bike and park facilities to Hazel Crest.”
- » “Expand canoe and kayak activities.”
- » “Flashing light stop signs.”
- » “Pedestrian improvements along Torrence and River Oaks; Bus stop improvements e.g. launch pads.”
- » “More bus stops especially by retail areas.”
- » “Side path row issues on Torrence; Side path reroutes south of Lansing on Arcadia”
- » “Conditions of trails (Pennsy and Burnham Greenway) can be improved; Indiana is a good example.”
- » “Lights along trail and sidewalk; wayfinding; water; bike facilities and bathrooms.” (2)
- » “Police call buttons; speeding cameras; red light cameras; low speed limits.”
- » “Benches; public art,

FIGURE 15: MODE VOTING ACTIVITY RESULTS

Potential Uses	Too Much	Enough	Too Little
Residential			
Single Family Homes (EXAMPLES: Standard detached homes, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes)	0	1	5
Multiple Family Homes (EXAMPLES: Condos (for sale), apartments (for rent))	0	1	5
Housing for Older Adults (EXAMPLES: Independent living, assisted living, continuing/memory care)	0	1	6
Commercial			
Restaurants (QUICK SERVICE: Shake Shack, Chipotle, Potbelly; FULL SERVICE: Chili’s, Olive Garden, Buffalo Wild Wings)	0	2	4
Other Food and Beverage (SMALL SHOPS: cafe, bakery donut shop, ice cream; GROCERY STORES: full size grocers, specialty grocers; ADULT BEVERAGES: brewery, winery, sports bar, tavern)	0	1	5
Retail Stores (SMALL SHOPS: boutique or specialty shops, locally owned shops; GENERAL MERCHANDISE: Target, Walmart, Sam’s, Costco; HARDWARE STORES: Home Depot, Lowes, Menards; HOME FURNISHING STORES: Ashley, Walter E. Smith, Crate & Barrel; DISCOUNT RETAILERS: Dollar General, TJ Maxx, Home Goods; AUTOMOTIVE: tires, auto supplies, auto repair)	0	3	5
Other Businesses (PERSONAL CARE: haircare, nails, spa, pet care; FINANCIAL SERVICES: banks, insurance, financial planning; OTHERS: experience-based businesses, businesses for youth, teens, and families)	0	2	3
Recreation, Arts, and Entertainment			
Recreation (INDOOR: swimming, gyms, climbing walls, gymnastics, indoor sports; OUTDOOR: sports fields, river-oriented (kayaking, canoeing, fishing))	0	0	8
Arts and Entertainment (EXAMPLES: creative arts, performing arts, movies, bowling, arcades)	0	0	7
Office			
Healthcare (EXAMPLES: medical offices, urgent or immediate care, specialized care)	0	3	2
Shared Workspaces (EXAMPLES: coworking spaces, open concept offices)	0	1	2
Innovation and Business Growth (EXAMPLES: business incubators, makerspaces, innovation hubs)	0	0	6
Technology (EXAMPLES: tech startups, data centers, research and development)	0	0	5
Industrial			
Heavy Industrial (EXAMPLES: manufacturing, production)	1	3	4
Light Industrial (EXAMPLES: distribution, logistics, warehousing, storage)	0	3	5

making trails safer/more inviting.”

- » “Intersection improvement at River Oaks, east of Torrence near Forest Preserve entrance.”

Envisioning: Riverfront Trail

There were no activities or written comments associated with the Envisioning: Riverfront Trail board. However, attendees were highly supportive of the riverfront trail, expressing the need for recreational spaces like trails, that connect to existing trails and are supplemented by wayfinding, adequate lighting, and other amenities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- » Recreation, arts and entertainment were highly

preferred land uses to bring to the Calumet Triangle area, with many attendees noting the vacancies at the River Oaks Center.

- » Support improvements to the transportation network with new sidewalks, bike trails, and bus stops – supplemented by safety elements, wayfinding, public art, and end of trip facilities.
- » Introduce innovation and technology into the Calumet Triangle to improve access to job and educational opportunities.
- » Focus on reducing vehicle crashes and efficiently managing traffic.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

For anyone who was unable to attend the open house, the boards presented at the open house were made available for comment on SSMMA's website (<https://www.ssmma.org/post/give-us-your-feedback-on-the-calumet-triangle-planning-study>) until mid-June.

The post received just under 300 views with 191 unique visitors. Public comments showed support for the addition of trails and bike infrastructure, but concerns for the feasibility of on-street facilities and on-street parking, as well as accessibility across multi-lane highways.

See **Appendix A** for all public comments provided.



SURVEY RESULTS

An online survey was available from August to November 2024 for community members to provide insight on the strengths and challenges with transportation, placemaking, land use, and housing topics in the Calumet Triangle.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The age of respondents was well distributed, but were mostly female. There was also a wide spread in affiliation to the Calumet Triangle. Most people drive and have regular access to a car, and are also affected regularly by traffic and congestion in the Calumet Triangle.

The two most hazardous intersections in the Calumet Triangle are Torrence Avenue and I-80/I-94 (former cloverleaf), Torrence Avenue and U.S. Route 6/River Oaks Drive/159th Street/162nd Street. Other intersections of concern are Paxton Avenue and U.S. Route 6/River Oaks Drive/159th Street/162nd Street, Cottage Grove Avenue, and Torrence Avenue and 173rd Street.

Respondents identified the lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a weakness of the Calumet Triangle, as well as general walkability and bikeability. Contrarily, the Calumet Triangle's strengths stem from its nearby access to interstates and highways. Respondents rarely walk or bike along Torrence Avenue, or near the Little Calumet River, noting feelings of unsafety due to high traffic speeds and volume, and unaccessibility due to

a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Preferred pedestrian and bicycle facilities include sidepaths, sidewalks, high-visibility crosswalks, and protected or separated bike lanes. Buffered bike lanes or regular bikes lanes were identified as comfortable, but less so than the other facilities.

The majority of respondents thought the transit options in the Calumet Triangle area are average, wanting to see improvements to expanded routes and coverage, increased frequency of service, and better accessibility.

In regards to land use, respondents would like to see an increase in businesses (e.g., retail shops, restaurants), green spaces and urban gardens, public transportation hubs, cultural and arts facilities, and community amenities (e.g., parks, recreational facilities). Respondents noted a high frequency of vacant or underutilized lots in the Calumet Triangle.

The quality of housing stock in the Calumet Triangle was noted as fair. Strengths of the housing stock in the Calumet Triangle include housing that appeals to new families and the value and cost of homes. However, respondents noted housing options for older adults as a weakness, as well as housing that appeals to young professionals. For new or revived residential stock, there was preference for single-family homes, housing for older adults, and townhomes. Apartments were of least interest to respondents.

Respondents do not visit River Oaks Center often, but if they do it is for retail shopping. There were many ideas to improve the River Oaks Center centered around community gathering and programming. Ideas included healthcare facilities and services, community centers and programming (e.g., YMCA), sit-down restaurants, more "current" name-brand retail stores (e.g., American Eagle, Buckle, Bath and Body Works), green space, outdoor markets, public art, local businesses, sports facilities, family-friendly entertainment spaces and venues, and a riverwalk trail. In general, commercial developments that have landscaping, a variety of businesses, and are nearby were deemed most appealing by respondents.

Respondents visit the Little Calumet River semi-regularly during the year, with most people walking or biking nearby. Ideally, people want to see improved trails and pathways, more seating and picnic areas, and better lighting and safety measures along the Little Calumet River.

See **Appendix B** for all survey results.



Source: Rudd Resources

IMAGE 09: OPEN HOUSE ATTENDEES AT THE SOUTH HOLLAND COMMUNITY CENTER



4.

ROADWAY DESIGN

MANUAL

**FACILITY SELECTION GUIDANCE | ROADWAYS | LAND USE |
TYPOLOGIES**

The roadway design manual functions as a guide to design different types of roadways. The roadway design manual incorporates Complete Streets elements under the idea that roads should be multimodal, safe, and accessible. Retrofitting roads should focus on measures for traffic calming, improving safety at intersections,

and enhancing infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.

By including facility selection guidance and descriptions of the types of roadways and land uses seen in the Calumet Triangle, new roads should include guidelines for lane configurations, speed limits, and accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists.



FACILITY SELECTION GUIDANCE

The selection of facilities varies given the context of the roadway and surrounding land use. It is also important to consider the actual use of roadways or areas as compared to their intended use.

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Figure 16 is a tool that was created to introduce a standardized, objective approach to project scoping and bicycle and pedestrian facility selection, aiming to remove subjectivity from the decision-making process by considering annual average daily traffic (AADT) and speed limit of the roadway. However, it is still important to consider the surrounding context and feasibility of the site, as well as the next phases of funding, engineering, and construction.

The highest and most comfortable level of facility is always preferred, but if constraints do not allow the highest level to be constructed, this tool can be used to select the next highest level. The resources used to develop this tool was Chapter 17 of the IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment (BDE) Manual; Chapter 4 of the AASHTO 2024 Bike Guide and the FHWA Small Town Rural Multimodal Networks Guide.

One of the strengths of this tool is how simple and user-friendly it is. To get started, users just need two pieces of information: the speed limit and the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for

a specific road segment. With those inputs, they can easily locate the corresponding point on a chart that suggests the most suitable facility types. For instance, a neighborhood street with a 25 mph speed limit and 2,000 vehicles per day might prompt a recommendation for a bike route for bikes and sidewalks on both sides for pedestrians. This straightforward, data-driven approach helps ensure that the recommendations are practical, context-sensitive, and based on proven best practices.

Note that this tool includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the same chart. Pedestrian facilities include pedestrian lanes, sidewalks, and sidepaths. Bicycle facilities include bike routes, bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, protected bike lanes, and sidepaths.

FIGURE 16: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITY SELECTION GUIDANCE TOOL

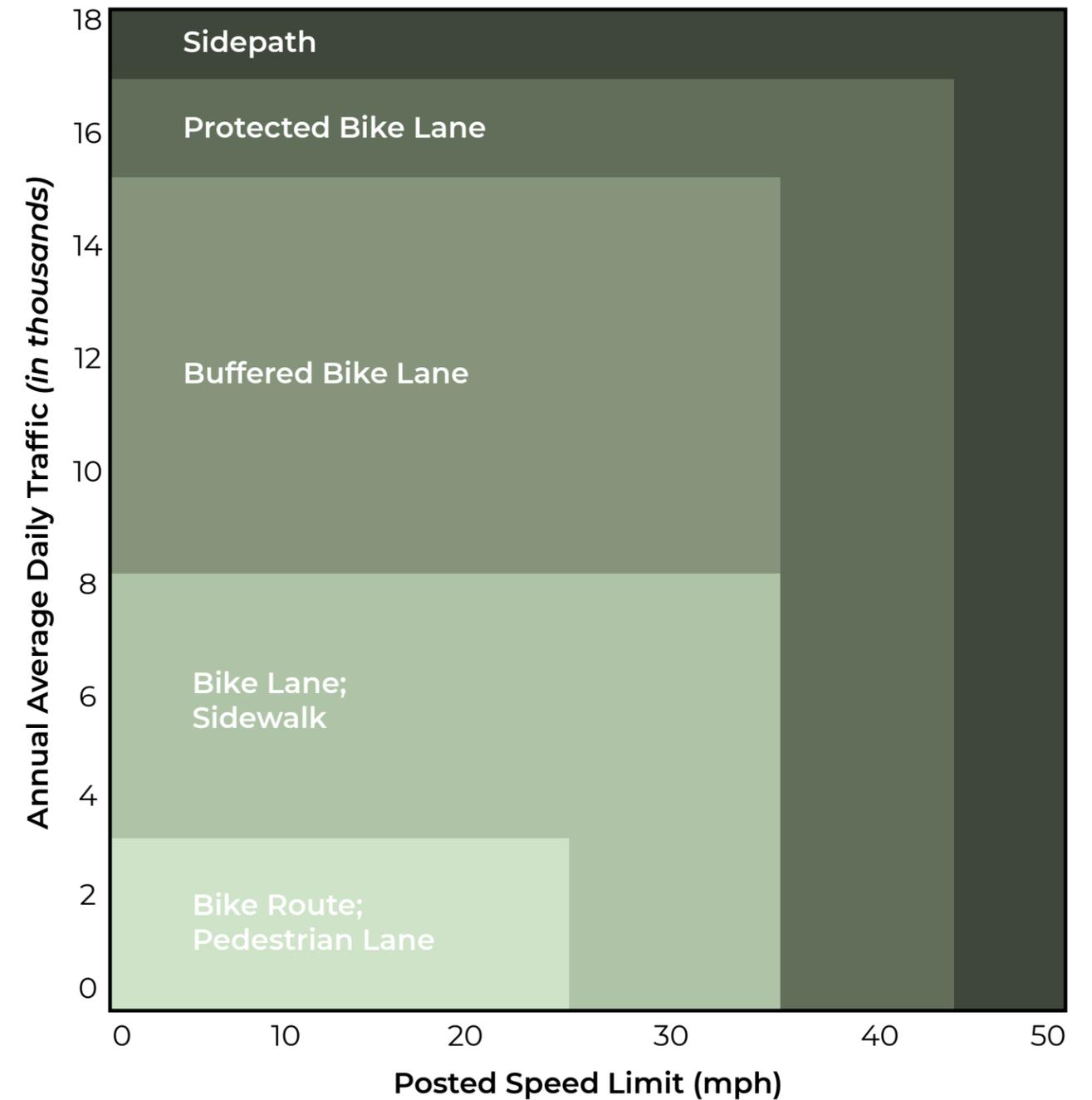


Figure 17 provides an overview of available bicycle and pedestrian facilities, showing which facilities are most appropriate for different locations, as well as cost and maintenance requirements. This table expands upon the information presented in **Figure 16**.

FIGURE 17: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITY SELECTION GUIDANCE TABLE

Facility Type	Description	Where Applicable	Functional Hierarchy				Maximum Speed (MPH)	Maximum AADT	Cost per Mile (USD)	Maintenance Requirements	Key Operational Considerations
			Local	Collector	Arterial	Freeway					
BICYCLE FACILITIES											
Bike Route	A low-speed street prioritizing bicycle movement	Best for residential and low-traffic areas	✓				25	3,000	\$30,000	Periodic sign and paint refreshment	Traffic calming measures and wayfinding signage often required
Bicycle Lane	A portion of roadway designated by striping and signage for preferential or exclusive use of bicycles	Useful on arterial and collector roads with schools and shops	✓	✓	✓		35	8,000	\$50,000	Regular paint upkeep, debris removal	Paint, bollards or other separators may be used
Buffered Bicycle Lane	A bicycle lane with a buffer space separating it from the adjacent motor vehicle lane	Ideal for higher-speed or higher-traffic roads		✓	✓		35	15,000	\$122,000	Regular paint upkeep, debris removal	Buffer can be enhanced with bollards, planters or curb extensions
Protected Bicycle Lane	A bicycle lane separated from motor traffic by physical barriers like curbs, planters, or parked cars	Busy urban areas, especially downtown and commercial districts		✓	✓		45	25,000	\$200,000	Barrier maintenance, street cleaning	Requires regular maintenance and may necessitate changes in street cleaning
PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES											
Pedestrian Lane	A lane within a roadway designated specifically for pedestrian use	Areas with high foot traffic but limited sidewalk space	✓	✓			25	5,000	\$30,000	Surface maintenance, debris removal	Requires clear delineation and proper signage
Sidewalk	A paved path for pedestrians alongside a road	Universal applicability, often in residential and commercial areas	✓	✓	✓		N/A	N/A	\$450,000	Regular surface inspections, ADA upkeep	Regular maintenance and ADA compliance required
MULTI-USE FACILITIES											
Sidepath	A multi-use path located adjacent to a roadway, separated by a buffer or barrier	Any area where extra separation from motor vehicles is desired	✓	✓	✓		55	25,000	\$1,300,000	Regular pathway upkeep, debris removal	Requires clear delineation and may intersect with driveways
Pedestrian Bridge	A bridge designed exclusively for pedestrians and, in some cases, cyclists	Over highways, rivers, or other barriers to pedestrian movement				✓	N/A	N/A	\$2,000,000+ per bridge	Structural inspections, surface upkeep	Accessibility, signage, and connection to other paths are key

INTERSECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

Figure 18 shows the safety issues addressed by specific intersection infrastructure, to allow planners and engineers to target specific intersection safety issues. This table also provides context for the corresponding facilities that are mentioned in **Figure 19**.

FIGURE 18: INTERSECTION INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY OBJECTIVES

INTERSECTION INFRASTRUCTURE	SAFETY ISSUE ADDRESSED				
	Conflicts at Crossing Locations	Excessive Vehicle Speed	Inadequate Conspicuity/Visibility	Drivers not Yielding to Pedestrians in Crosswalks	Insufficient Separation from Traffic
1. High-Visibility Crosswalk Markings	✓		✓	✓	
2. Raised Crosswalk	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3. Advance Yield Here to (Stop Here for) Pedestrians Sign	✓		✓	✓	✓
4. In-Street Pedestrian Crossing Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5. Curb Extension	✓	✓	✓		✓
6. Pedestrian Refuge Island	✓	✓	✓		✓
7. Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)	✓		✓	✓	✓
8. Rightsizing	✓	✓	✓		✓
9. Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parking Restriction on Crosswalk Approach	✓		✓	✓	
Improved Nighttime Lighting	✓		✓		

Figure 07 shows which roadway configurations are best served by said infrastructure, with differentiation between the recommended infrastructure, as well as candidate infrastructure.

FIGURE 19: INTERSECTION INFRASTRUCTURE SELECTION GUIDANCE

Roadway Configuration	POSTED SPEED LIMIT & AADT								
	AADT <9,000			AADT 9,000 - 15,000			AADT >15,00		
	<30 MPH	35 MPH	>40 MPH	<30 MPH	35 MPH	>40 MPH	<30 MPH	35 MPH	>40 MPH
2 Lanes (1 lane in each direction)	#1	#1	#1 #7 #9	#1	#1	#1 #7 #9	#1	Custom	Custom
	2, 4, 5, 6	5, 6, 7, 9	4, 5, 6	4, 5, 6	5, 6, 7, 9	5, 6	4, 5, 6, 7, 9		
3 Lanes with Raised Median (1 lane in each direction)	#1	#1 #3	#1 #3 #7 #9	#1 #3	#1 #3 #7 #9	#1 #3 #7 #9	#1 #3	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9
	2, 4, 5, 6	5, 6, 7, 9	5	5, 6	5, 6	5, 6	4, 5, 6, 7, 9	5, 6, 7	5, 6, 7
3 Lanes with Striped Median or Left Turn Lane (1 lane in each direction)	#1	#1 #3	#1 #3 #9	#1	#1 #3 #7 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9
	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9	5, 6, 7, 9	5, 6	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9	5, 6	5, 6	4, 5, 6, 7	5, 6	5, 6
4+ Lanes with Raised Median (2 or more lanes in each direction)	#1 #3	#1 #3	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9	#1 #3 #9
	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 6, 8	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 6, 7, 8	5, 6, 8	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 6, 8, 9	5, 6, 8, 9
4+ Lanes Without Raised Median (2 or more lanes in each direction)	#1 #3	#1 #3 #6	#1 #3 #6 #9	#1 #3 #6	#1 #3 #6 #9	#1 #3 #6 #9	#1 #3 #6 #9	#1 #3 #6 #9	#1 #3 #6 #9
	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	5, 8	5, 7, 8, 9	5, 7, 8	5, 8	5, 8	5, 8	5, 8

RECOMMENDED INFRASTRUCTURE

Signifies that the countermeasure should always be considered, but not mandated or required, based upon engineering judgement at a marked uncontrolled crossing location.

CANDIDATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Signifies that the countermeasure is a candidate treatment at a marked uncontrolled crossing location.

#1 High-Visibility Crosswalk

#4 In-Street Pedestrian Crossing Sign

#7 RRFB

#2 Raised Crosswalk

#5 Curb Extension

#8 Rightsizing

#3 Yield/Stop Line

#6 Pedestrian Refuge Island

#9 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon



Source: Epstein

ROADWAYS

Street classifications begin with an understanding of the roadway's primary function, including:

- » Traffic volume (low, moderate, high)
- » Speed limits and observed travel speeds
- » Vehicle types (passenger cars, trucks, buses, etc.)
- » Jurisdiction and ownership (municipal, county, state)
- » Functional hierarchy (local street, collector, arterial, etc.)
- » Lane configurations and signalization
- » Freight or transit usage

Understanding these factors helps define the scale and purpose of a road - whether it is intended for local neighborhood access, regional travel, or goods movement.

1

ACCESSWAYS

Permit low volumes of travel, intending to guide traffic to a building or other destination. May also serve as an alternate point of access.

2

STREETS

Serve local travel, permitting lower volumes, and are often used with a destination in mind.

3

AVENUES

Provides local connection to commercial areas, or other local amenities.

4

THOROUGHFARES

Provide through connections to surrounding municipalities.

5

HIGHWAYS

Provide regional and national connections, with high capacity and high speeds.

1 ACCESSWAYS

Accessways are short, low-speed links that guide traffic to a specific destination such as a storefront entrance, loading dock, or cluster of homes. Travel lanes are limited to one in each direction (or a single shared lane in constrained spaces), and design speeds rarely exceed 20 mph. Because drivers are typically headed somewhere they already know, accessways can remain comparatively discreet, sometimes unsigned or gated. Their geometry is tight, with

frequent curb cuts and closely spaced intersections that demand slow, deliberate maneuvering.

Pedestrian activity is modest but important: short segments of sidewalk or shared-surface treatments (e.g., flush plazas) help people move comfortably from parking lots to building entrances. Bicycle accommodation is usually indirect. People biking are either “guests” in the travel lane or dismount to use adjacent

pathways. Transit service is absent, and design priorities lean toward clear wayfinding, compact turning radii, lighting for security, and storm-water treatments that soften the visual impact of parking and pavement.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Travel Lanes:** One or two (one per direction)
- » **Travel Speeds:** Low (20 mph or less)
- » **Intersection and Street Spacing:** Intersections are frequent, with spacing relatively small
- » **Pedestrian Accommodations:** Sidewalks or other pathways are likely provided
- » **Bicycle Accommodations:** Bike routes or lanes may be provided
- » **Transit:** None
- » **Example:** Ring Road



Source: Apartment Finder

IMAGE 10: RING ROAD

2 STREETS

Local streets form the connections of residential neighborhoods and small mixed-use districts. With two travel lanes (one per direction) and posted speeds between 20 to 30 mph, they balance accessibility with safety. Regular block spacing and frequent, right-angle intersections create a predictable pattern that supports comfortable walking and biking. On-street parking, tree lawns, and continuous sidewalks cultivate a “human-scale” environment

ideal for neighbors socializing, dog-walking, and children at play.

Because trips are short and destinations are often known in advance, vehicular volumes stay relatively low, making streets prime candidates for traffic-calming measures such as curb extensions, raised intersections, and mini-roundabouts. Design guidance should emphasize Complete Streets principles:

continuous ADA-compliant sidewalks, clearly marked crosswalks, and, where right-of-way allows, dedicated or shared bicycle lanes. Transit is uncommon, but paratransit or school-bus stops may appear at corners with higher demand.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Travel Lanes:** Two (one per direction)
- » **Travel Speeds:** Low to moderate (20 to 30 mph)
- » **Intersection and Street Spacing:** Intersections are frequent, with spacing being short and consistent
- » **Pedestrian Accommodations:** Sidewalks provided
- » **Bicycle Accommodations:** Bike routes or lanes and signage provided
- » **Transit:** None
- » **Example:** Dobson Avenue, 167th Street, 172nd Street



Source: Google Maps

IMAGE 11: DOBSON AVENUE

AVENUES

Avenues act as spines, linking residential blocks to commercial centers, schools, parks, and civic institutions. With two to four travel lanes and operating speeds in the 30 to 40 mph range, Avenues carry moderate traffic volumes without sacrificing multimodal access. Signalized intersections occur at greater spacing than on local streets, allowing smoother vehicular flow while still providing safe crossing points for pedestrians.

Sidewalks are mandatory and buffered where possible. Buffered or protected bike lanes deliver an intermediate level of cycling comfort. Because Avenues often serve as transit corridors, mid-block bus pull-outs, shelters, and real-time information displays are recommended. Land-use patterns are typically mixed, including small-lot commercial uses, medium-density housing, and community facilities that benefit from higher visibility.

Streetscape elements, such as street trees, lighting, benches, and wayfinding, reinforce their role as everyday connectors.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Travel Lanes:** Two to four (one to two per direction)
- » **Travel Speeds:** Moderate (30 to 40 mph)
- » **Intersection and Street Spacing:** Intersections are spaced out and larger, with spacing inconsistent
- » **Pedestrian Accommodations:** Sidewalks provided
- » **Bicycle Accommodations:** Bike lanes provided
- » **Transit:** Moderate service
- » **Example:** South Park Avenue, Cottage Grove Avenue



Source: Google Maps

IMAGE 12: COTTAGE GROVE AVENUE

THOROUGHFARES

Thoroughfares are high-capacity arterials that stitch together municipalities across the Calumet Triangle and beyond. Four to six lanes (often with landscaped medians) support traffic volumes that exceed local needs, enabling regional trips at 40 to 55 mph. Intersection spacing may vary, but signals are typically coordinated to maintain progression. Freight traffic, emergency vehicles, and

frequent bus service all rely on thoroughfares for efficient movement.

Given these operational demands, pedestrian and bicycle accommodation can be challenging yet critical. Sidepaths or wide buffered sidewalks on at least one side of the right-of-way offer safer options for non-motorized users, while intersection treatments,

such as protected signal phases, refuge islands, and high-visibility crosswalks, address longer crossing distances. Access management curbs reduce conflict points, and transit priority measures (queue-jump lanes, bus rapid-transit stops) improve reliability without widening the roadway.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Travel Lanes:** Two to four (one to two per direction)
- » **Travel Speeds:** Moderate to high (40 to 55 mph)
- » **Intersection and Street Spacing:** Intersections vary in size and spacing, but tend to be large and consistently frequent
- » **Pedestrian Accommodations:** Sidewalks may be on one side of the street or sidepaths may be present instead, or pedestrians may not be accommodated at all
- » **Bicycle Accommodations:** Minimal, off-street if any
- » **Transit:** Frequent service
- » **Example:** Torrence Avenue, U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive



Source: Redfin

IMAGE 13: TORRENCE AVENUE

HIGHWAYS

Highways provide regional and national connectivity. With six to eight controlled-access lanes divided by substantial medians, they are engineered for sustained speeds of 55 to 70 mph. Interchanges replace intersections, using ramps and loops to manage high-speed merges and diverges. Because their primary objective is vehicular mobility, often freight and long-distance trips, highways purposely exclude at-grade pedestrian or bicycle movements.

Highways strongly influence adjacent communities. Design considerations must therefore extend beyond the travel lanes: sound barriers, vegetated buffers, and aesthetic treatments mitigate noise and visual impacts, wildlife crossings and storm-water facilities address environmental concerns, and grade-separated pedestrian or transit bridges ensure safe neighborhood connectivity across the corridor. In select locations, express bus/

BRT shoulders, or managed lanes can introduce high-capacity transit into the highway envelope, providing multimodal benefit without compromising throughput.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Travel Lanes:** Six to eight (three to four per direction)
- » **Travel Speeds:** High (55 to 70 mph)
- » **Intersection and Street Spacing:** Merge for entrances and exits rather than intersections
- » **Pedestrian Accommodations:** None
- » **Bicycle Accommodations:** None
- » **Transit:** None
- » **Example:** I-80, I-94, I-294

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IMAGE 14: I-80/I-294 EASTBOUND AT I-94



Source: SCB

LAND USE

The second key input is the surrounding land use, which influences how people interact with the street. This includes zoning classifications and planning designations, building form and intensity (e.g., setbacks,

height, density), actual use vs. designated use, parcel configuration and access patterns, as well as trip generators, like schools, retail, or industrial facilities.

Land use context informs expectations around pedestrian activity, access needs, parking demand, and aesthetic treatments, helping shape the overall street environment.



COMMUNITY CENTER

A central gathering area that combines public spaces, amenities, and commercial uses to foster social interaction and placemaking.



COMMERCIAL HUB

A concentration of retail, services, restaurants, and civic uses designed to serve a broad customer base and support economic activity.



RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE

A mix of multi-family housing and adjacent commercial, institutional, or recreational uses that support a walkable, neighborhood-scale environment.



RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE

An area primarily composed of single-family homes, often accompanied by schools, parks, or religious institutions.



INDUSTRIAL

Land designated for manufacturing, warehousing, construction, and other large-scale, production-focused activities.



OPEN SPACE

Undeveloped land, often green, intended for public use, recreation, or environmental preservation.



COMMUNITY CENTER

Community Centers function as the civic and cultural hearts of the Calumet Triangle’s municipalities. They combine retail storefronts, public plazas, civic buildings, and green pockets into a tightly knit environment that invites people to gather, shop, dine, and participate in community life. Development intensity is medium to high, with multistory mixed-use buildings framing active sidewalks and “third-place” amenities such as outdoor seating, public art, and performance space.

Because people are the focus, pedestrian and bicycle activity is consistently high, and transit routes often converge here. Street widths are modest, curb cuts are limited to reinforce a continuous streetwall, and parking is dispersed among on-street spaces and small, shared surface lots. Wayfinding signage, pedestrian-scale lighting, and lush streetscapes help reinforce identity and support round-the-clock use.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Central gathering space with commercial uses and open/green spaces; “third places” likely present
- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate to high
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate to high
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate to high
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** On-street and small to medium surface lots
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Moderate-intensity grid network
- » **Example:** Downtown South Holland



IMAGE 15: TOWN CENTER IN SOUTH HOLLAND



COMMERCIAL HUB

Commercial Hubs have a broad array of consumer-oriented destinations, such as big-box retailers, restaurants, medical offices, and lodging, into a single, high-visibility district. Buildings may sit farther from the street behind generous setbacks and large surface lots, reflecting a car-oriented development pattern. Nonetheless, internal pedestrian circulation and transit access remain critical to ensure that shoppers, employees, and visitors can navigate sprawling sites safely and efficiently.

Even with modest building heights, development intensity is medium to high due to the amount of building square footage. Pedestrian and bicycle volumes fluctuate with retail peaks but can be substantial, especially near transit stops. Managed driveways, internal circulation roads, and strategic landscaping break up vast parking expanses, while clear signage directs both motorists and non-motorized users. These hubs often anchor regional bus routes and may evolve toward denser, mixed-use formats over time.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Retail, services, restaurants
- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate to high
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate to high
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate to high, personal vehicles
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** Large surface lots
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Large lots, high number of accessways
- » **Example:** Torrence Avenue



IMAGE 16: COMMERCIAL HUB IN CALUMET CITY



RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE

Residential Multi-Use areas deliver an array of housing types, like apartments, townhomes, small-lot single-family units, interwoven with local retail, community facilities, and places of worship. The mix of uses shortens daily trips and supports a moderate level of walking and cycling, especially along neighborhood connectors and nearby avenues. Street patterns tend toward a medium-intensity grid, providing multiple route options and fostering a sense of permeability.

Development intensity hovers between low and medium, balancing the privacy of residential life with the convenience of nearby services. Transit frequency is moderate, with neighborhood bus routes linking to higher-order hubs. Shared parking, alley access, and context-sensitive infill help preserve neighborhood character while accommodating growth. Streetscape improvements, like trees, lighting, and traffic calming, enhance livability and safety.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Residential multi-family, maybe some single-family, likely near commercial or other
- » **Development Intensity:** Low to moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** Medium surface lots
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Medium-intensity grid network
- » **Example:** Cunningham Apartments



Source: Marcus & Millichap

IMAGE 17: APARTMENT BUILDING IN CALUMET CITY



RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE

Residential Single-Use districts encompass the quintessential suburban neighborhoods of the Calumet Triangle. Detached single-family homes line winding streets and cul-de-sacs or low-intensity grids, offering quiet environments and generous private open space. Pedestrian activity is moderate to low and often tied to school commutes, dog-walking, or recreation; bicyclists share the low-speed travel lanes or use local sidepaths.

Transit service is limited or absent, making personal vehicles the primary mode for longer trips. On-street parking varies by block, and driveways dominate frontage. Strategic interventions, such as sidewalk gaps, crosswalk enhancements, and neighborhood greenways, can boost safety without undermining the low-traffic character residents value.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Residential single-family
- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate to low
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** Low to none
- » **Parking:** Private or on-street
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Low-intensity grid network or pattern of cul-de-sacs
- » **Example:** South Holland neighborhoods



Source: Village of South Holland

IMAGE 18: NEIGHBORHOOD IN SOUTH HOLLAND



INDUSTRIAL

Industrial zones accommodate manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and construction trades that fuel the regional economy. Building footprints are large, setbacks accommodate loading docks, and surface parking handles employee vehicles and fleet equipment. Truck volumes are high, making robust pavement design, wide curb radii, and generous turning lanes essential.

Pedestrian and bicycle activity is generally low but growing as workforce mobility patterns shift. Transit coverage is limited, though last-mile shuttles or demand-responsive services can improve access. Site layouts prioritize security and operational efficiency, yet perimeter sidewalks, lighting, and clear wayfinding enhance safety for workers and visitors. Green buffers and storm-water controls mitigate environmental impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Industrial offices and manufacturing, construction
- » **Development Intensity:** High
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Low
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** Low to none
- » **Parking:** On-street and large surface lots
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Large lots, moderate number of accessways
- » **Example:** Temperature Equipment Corporation



Source: Temperature Equipment Corporation

IMAGE 19: INDUSTRIAL USE IN LANSING



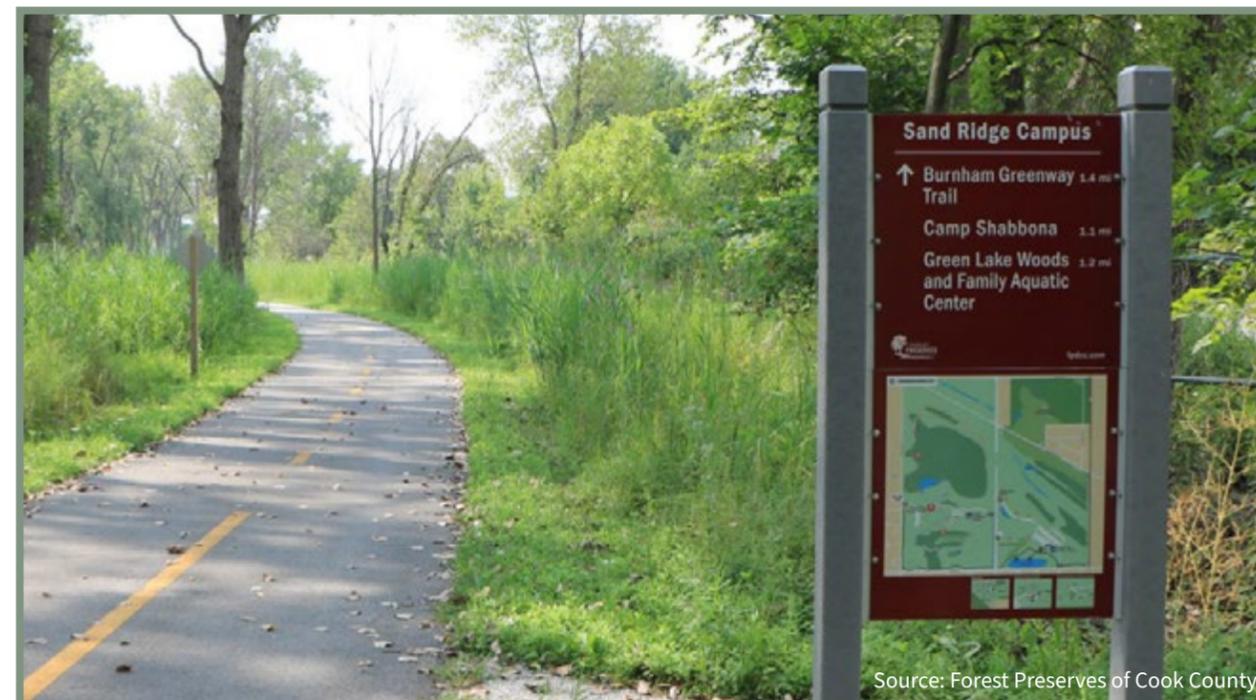
OPEN SPACE

Open Space, including parks, forest preserves, and riparian corridors, offers recreational respite and ecological services within the urbanized landscape. Development intensity is purposely low: built structures are limited to pavilions, restrooms, or visitor centers, while most acreage remains vegetated. Trail networks, picnic areas, and sports facilities attract high levels of pedestrian and bicycle activity, and major sites often host regional greenways.

Transit availability varies but is increasingly important for equitable access. Parking is provided in small lots or along internal park roads, designed to blend with natural surroundings. Street edges should incorporate trailheads, informational kiosks, and safe crossings that knit open space into the broader mobility network, ensuring that ecological assets are reachable by all travel modes.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Main Uses:** Parks and forest preserves
- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** On-street and small surface lots
- » **Street Design & Patterns:** Large linear stretches
- » **Example:** Sand Ridge Campus



Source: Forest Preserves of Cook County

IMAGE 20: SAND RIDGE CAMPUS



Source: SCB

TYOLOGIES

This design guide introduces a typology-based approach to support planning recommendations in areas where infrastructure, policy, or programmatic interventions alone may not sufficiently address the complexity of local conditions. Typologies offer a structured method for analyzing and categorizing street segments and adjacent land uses based on shared physical, functional, and contextual characteristics. These classifications provide municipalities with a set of flexible, broadly applicable design and planning tools that can guide investment, development, and zoning decisions, especially where local street types and land use patterns reflect common suburban forms.

The Calumet Triangle, encompassing the municipalities of South Holland, Lansing, and Calumet City, shares a broadly suburban development context. Therefore, all typologies developed within this framework assume a suburban context — characterized by moderate to low building densities, hierarchical road networks, and a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional land uses. While each community has its unique attributes, this shared context allows for the use of consistent typological frameworks across jurisdictional boundaries.

By combining roadway function with land use context, a comprehensive set of 19 typologies has been developed to

reflect the range of street and land use conditions observed across the Calumet Triangle. These street types are not prescriptive templates, but rather descriptive frameworks that help visualize and understand the form and function of streets, intensity and diversity of travel modes, quality and type of streetscape elements, and the interface between private and public property.

These typologies serve as a foundation for planning and design guidance, shaping recommendations on street improvements, development strategies, zoning updates, and multimodal enhancements.

- 1 COMMERCIAL INTERIORS**
Commercial Hub + Accessways

11 COMMUNITY CENTER CONNECTORS
Community Center + Avenues
- 2 NEIGHBORHOOD COURTS**
Residential Single-Use + Accessways

12 COMMERCIAL CONNECTORS
Commercial Hub + Avenues
- 3 INDUSTRIAL INTERIORS**
Industrial + Accessways

13 AREA CONNECTORS
Residential Multi-Use + Avenues
- 4 PARK ACCESS LANES**
Open Space + Accessways

14 NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTORS
Residential Single-Use + Avenues
- 5 COMMUNITY CENTER STREETS**
Community Center + Streets

15 GREENWAY AVENUES
Open Space + Avenues
- 6 COMMERCIAL STREETS**
Commercial + Streets

16 COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS
Commercial Hub + Thoroughfares
- 7 AREA STREETS**
Residential Multi-Use + Streets

17 AREA THOROUGHFARES
Residential Multi-Use + Thoroughfares
- 8 NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS**
Residential Single-Use + Streets

18 SCENIC BOULEVARDS
Open Space + Thoroughfares
- 9 INDUSTRIAL STREETS**
Industrial + Streets

19 MAJOR HIGHWAYS
Community Center/Commercial Hub/
Residential Multi-Use/Residential
Single-Use/Industrial/Open Space +
Highways
- 10 PARK STREETS**
Open Space + Streets

FIGURE 20: TYPOLOGY MATRIX

		More ← DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY → Less					
		Land Use Context					
		Community Center	Commercial Hub	Residential Multi-Use	Residential Single-Use	Industrial	Open Space
More ← AADT → Less Street Function	Accessways		Commercial Interiors		Neighborhood Courts	Industrial Interiors	Park Access Lanes
	Streets	Community Center Streets	Commercial Streets	Area Streets	Neighborhood Streets	Industrial Streets	Park Streets
	Avenues	Community Center Connectors	Commercial Connectors	Area Connectors	Neighborhood Connectors		Greenway Avenues
	Thoroughfares		Commercial Corridors	Area Thoroughfares			Scenic Boulevards
	Highways	Major Highways					

Typologies are tools that merge roadway function with surrounding land use characteristics to create a comprehensive picture of how streets operate within a community. In the suburban context of the Calumet Triangle (South Holland, Lansing, and Calumet City), these typologies help guide recommendations for areas not specifically addressed by infrastructure projects, policies, or programs. The typologies represent a nuanced understanding of how people move, interact, and engage with the built environment—shaped by road hierarchy, speed, land use, and development intensity. Each typology functions as a snapshot of urban form and transportation demand, offering a template for targeted investments and context-sensitive design.

The benefit of a typology-based approach is its transferability across municipalities with shared context. South Holland, Lansing, and Calumet City, while distinct in governance and demographics, share similar suburban development patterns, regional mobility needs, and economic structures. As such, the typologies provide a unified language for coordinated planning, allowing municipalities to:

- » Align investment priorities for road improvements or redevelopment.
- » Strategically zone or rezone land for compatible uses.
- » Implement consistent standards for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- » Coordinate policies for parking, freight access, or transit service.

- » Identify areas for green infrastructure or heritage preservation.

By focusing on how streets and land uses interact, rather than treating them as separate systems, this framework supports more integrated, context-sensitive planning that reflects the complex needs of the Calumet Triangle's residents, businesses, and travelers.

The typology matrix, as seen in **Figure 20**, shows how land use context and street function interact through the creation of typologies.

1 COMMERCIAL INTERIORS

COMMERCIAL HUB + ACCESSWAYS

Commercial Interiors are internal roads within shopping centers or business parks, often with low-speed limits and focused on access to individual retail destinations. These streets are designed to prioritize wayfinding, short vehicular trips, and pedestrian navigation through plazas, crosswalks, and green infrastructure. They may be shared spaces or have flush curbs to accommodate flexible uses such as outdoor dining and events.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** High
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** Off-street lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Frequent driveways, street furniture, landscaping, low-speed design
- » **Example:** Bernice Road

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Commercial Interiors should focus on narrow two-lane streets with flush curb design, street trees, small storefronts, and outdoor seating.

Transportation

- » Prioritize pedestrian walkability.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Land Use

- » Encourage adaptive reuse of retail buildings.
- » Promote mixed-use infill.

FIGURE 21: COMMERCIAL INTERIOR CROSS-SECTION



2 NEIGHBORHOOD COURTS

RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE + ACCESSWAYS

Typically found in cul-de-sac residential developments, Neighborhood Courts are characterized by narrow lanes, low-speed environments, and limited through access. These courts provide direct access to homes and sometimes feature landscaped turnarounds. Pedestrian access is ensured through sidewalks, while cyclists share the lane due to low traffic volumes. The intimate scale supports strong neighborhood identity and encourages community interaction.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** Off-street or private
- » **Other Key Features:** Narrow lanes, street trees, sidewalks, low-speed, visually pleasing
- » **Example:** 164th Place

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Neighborhood Courts should focus on private/shared driveways, minimal signage, landscaped cul-de-sacs, integrated sidewalks, and green infrastructure.

Transportation

- » Ensure pedestrian and bicycle access through the cul-de-sac.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Housing

- » Support small-lot single-family housing.

Urban Design

- » Include green infrastructure and stormwater-friendly street design.

FIGURE 22: NEIGHBORHOOD COURT CROSS-SECTION



INDUSTRIAL INTERIORS

INDUSTRIAL + ACCESSWAYS

These streets serve the internal circulation within industrial or business parks. Designed for maneuverability of large trucks and loading equipment, they feature wide lanes, minimal landscaping, and limited pedestrian infrastructure. However, accommodations for commuting workers, like sidewalks, transit stops, or bike racks, are increasingly important for equity and workforce access.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Low
- » **Vehicle Activity:** High (trucks)
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** Off-street lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Loading zones, minimal bicycle/pedestrian facilities, truck accommodation
- » **Example:** Valencia Court

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Industrial Interiors should focus on wide turning radii, dedicated pedestrian space, and large curb cuts for loading zones.

Transportation

- » Design for employee safety and access.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.

Land Use

- » Protect industrial land uses.
- » Incentivize modern logistics.

FIGURE 23: INDUSTRIAL INTERIOR CROSS-SECTION



PARK ACCESS LANES

OPEN SPACE + ACCESSWAYS

Park Access Lanes provide direct access to recreational areas, trailheads, or large green spaces. These streets are often scenic, with speed control features and signage to guide users to parking or trail entrances. They may include off-street paths or sidewalks and are increasingly designed to serve not only vehicles but also the growing number of users arriving by foot or bike.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low to moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** Trailhead or park lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Trail access, green infrastructure, end-of-trip bicycle/pedestrian facilities
- » **Example:** Seton Road

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Park Access Lanes should focus on tree-lined streets with wayfinding signs to trailheads, and limited vehicular width.

Transportation

- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.
- » Design for all transportation modes with prioritization of the most vulnerable.

Urban Design

- » Enhance signage and placemaking.

FIGURE 24: PARK ACCESS LANE CROSS-SECTION



COMMUNITY CENTER STREETS

COMMUNITY CENTER + STREETS

Found in mixed-use hubs or town centers, these vibrant streets prioritize pedestrians and social activity. Speeds are low, intersections are tight, and amenities like benches, trees, and public art are common. Design supports transit, cyclists, and walkability while facilitating access to commercial and civic destinations. These are true “main streets” of the community.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** High
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** On-street or shared
- » **Other Key Features:** Wayfinding, third spaces, plazas, streetscaping, public gathering areas
- » **Example:** 161st Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Community Center Streets should focus on mixed-use blocks with crosswalks, café seating, decorative paving, and bike racks.

Transportation

- » Enhance pedestrian realm.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design
- » Integrate transit stops.

Housing

- » Promote high-density housing nearby.

FIGURE 25: COMMUNITY CENTER STREET CROSS-SECTION



COMMERCIAL STREETS

COMMERCIAL HUB + STREETS

Serving as connectors between business destinations and other corridors, Commercial Streets accommodate higher volumes of traffic and frequent turning movements. They are often lined with strip malls or stand-alone retailers. Streetscape improvements, like wider sidewalks, planting buffers, and lighting, are critical to enhance safety and support non-auto users.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate to high
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate to high
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** Varies
- » **Other Key Features:** Access management, pedestrian amenities, green buffers, sidewalk improvements
- » **Example:** 173rd Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of Commercial Streets should focus on landscaped medians, parallel parking, dedicated turning lanes, and overhead signage.

Transportation

- » Manage driveway access.
- » Improve crosswalk visibility.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.

Urban Design

- » Encourage façade improvement programs.

FIGURE 26: COMMERCIAL STREET CROSS-SECTION



AREA STREETS

RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE + STREETS

These are the mid-scale residential or mixed-use streets that provide access to homes, schools, and local institutions. Area streets balance vehicle access with a need for pedestrian comfort, often incorporating sidewalks, crossings, and lighting. They support multimodal travel within and between neighborhoods.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** Driveways/on-street
- » **Other Key Features:** Lighting, safe crossings, residential emphasis, sidewalk connectivity
- » **Example:** Indiana Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of area streets should focus on quiet, single-lane roads with sidewalks, streetlights, and stop signs.

Transportation

- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Slow vehicle speed through street design

Housing

- » Support accessory dwelling unit (ADU) development.

Urban Design

- » Implement Complete Streets standards.

FIGURE 27: AREA STREET CROSS-SECTION



NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE + STREETS

Neighborhood streets are the traditional residential roads. Designed for slow speeds and minimal through-traffic, they feature sidewalks, trees, lawns, and narrow travel lanes. These streets are where children play, neighbors connect, and walking or biking is common. They are central to fostering livable, safe residential environments.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** On-street or private
- » **Other Key Features:** Green buffers, sidewalk continuity, access to parks and trails
- » **Example:** 167th Street, 168th Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of neighborhood streets should be low-stress, providing residents access to their homes. Sidewalks should be included, connecting to parks and paths where possible. Green space and infrastructure should be included when possible. The design should also include tree-lined sidewalks, on-street parking, speed bumps, and green buffers.

Transportation

- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Land Use

- » Consider permitting local businesses within neighborhoods.

Housing

- » Increase affordable housing.

Urban Design

- » Expand tree canopy.

FIGURE 28: NEIGHBORHOOD STREET CROSS-SECTION



INDUSTRIAL STREETS

INDUSTRIAL + STREETS

These high-capacity industrial corridors are intended to handle large vehicles, including semis and delivery trucks. They are often located near rail spurs, warehouses, or logistics centers. While function dominates design, newer approaches aim to incorporate pedestrian safety elements for workers and support emerging multimodal demands.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Low
- » **Vehicle Activity:** High (trucks)
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** Off-street lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Wide lanes, loading docks, sidewalks where feasible
- » **Example:** 175th Street/Volbrecht Road

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of industrial streets should focus on signage for truck routes, sidewalks with limited continuity, and wide roadbeds.

Transportation

- » Separate pedestrian/bike infrastructure from truck routes.

FIGURE 29: INDUSTRIAL STREET CROSS-SECTION



PARK STREETS

OPEN SPACE + STREETS

Park streets are adjacent to large recreational or open spaces and offer multimodal access to these amenities. They feature sidewalks or sidepaths, tree planting, and calming elements. These roads may also serve as connectors between neighborhoods and green infrastructure systems.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low
- » **Transit Service:** None to limited
- » **Parking:** Park-side lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Trails, sidepaths, signage, traffic calming
- » **Example:** 165th Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of park streets should focus on paths, slow vehicle signage, and visible crosswalks to park entrances.

Transportation

- » Slow vehicle speed through street design.
- » Design for all transportation modes with prioritization of the most vulnerable

Urban Design

- » Enhance gateways to parks.
- » Use permeable paving where feasible.
- » Integrate art and signage.

FIGURE 30: PARK ACCESS LANE CROSS-SECTION



COMMUNITY CENTER CONNECTORS

COMMUNITY CENTER + AVENUES

These are high-functioning streets linking key activity centers. While they carry moderate vehicle volumes, design should emphasize attractive, safe, and intuitive multimodal travel. Wayfinding, protected bike lanes, and transit stops reinforce the importance of non-auto users. These streets shape how people approach and experience core community areas.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** High
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Frequent
- » **Parking:** Shared or structured
- » **Other Key Features:** Wayfinding, direct access, off-street bike paths
- » **Example:** South Park Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of community center connectors should focus on tree-lined boulevards with bike paths and bus shelters.

Transportation

- » Improve bus frequency.
- » Create multimodal hubs.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Land Use

- » Zone for mid-rise mixed-use.

FIGURE 31: COMMUNITY CENTER CONNECTOR CROSS-SECTION



COMMERCIAL CONNECTORS

COMMERCIAL HUB + AVENUES

Critical links between business areas and major corridors, commercial connectors must balance vehicular flow with access management. Features include pedestrian islands, coordinated signals, and transit stops. Design should consider retail frontage visibility while integrating bikeways and sidewalk continuity.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate to high
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** High
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** On/off-street lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Signalized crossings, sidewalks, bike lanes or paths
- » **Example:** Exchange Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of commercial connectors should focus on multi-lane streets with bike lanes, pedestrian islands, frequent transit stops, and green infrastructure.

Transportation

- » Add pedestrian refuge islands.
- » Manage curb cuts.
- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Urban Design

- » Design for retail frontages.
- » Include landscaping and green infrastructure.

FIGURE 32: COMMERCIAL CONNECTOR CROSS-SECTION



13 AREA CONNECTORS

RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE + AVENUES

These streets provide regional circulation between commercial and residential zones. They are characterized by moderate speeds, pedestrian-scale lighting, and facilities for walking and biking. Their hybrid nature makes them ideal candidates for context-sensitive design solutions that accommodate many user types without prioritizing one over others.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** On-street
- » **Other Key Features:** Residential/commercial interface, lighting, sidewalks, bike lanes
- » **Example:** Thorton-Lansing Road

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of area connectors should focus on residential edges, mid-block crossings, streetlights, and marked bike lanes.

Transportation

- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

Urban Design

- » Install pedestrian-scale lighting.

FIGURE 33: AREA CONNECTOR CROSS-SECTION



14 NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTORS

RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE + AVENUES

Neighborhood connectors knit together residential enclaves. They are low- to moderate-traffic streets where walking and biking are common, particularly for school or park trips. Signage, speed control, and crossing safety are essential. These routes often serve as low-stress options for active transportation.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low to moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** On-street
- » **Other Key Features:** Pedestrian network, signage, bike routes
- » **Example:** Cottage Grove Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of neighborhood connectors should focus on low-volume streets with wayfinding and pedestrian amenities.

Transportation

- » Create green corridors.
- » Support walking school bus programs.
- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Slow vehicle speeds through street design.

FIGURE 34: NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR CROSS-SECTION



GREENWAY AVENUES

OPEN SPACE + AVENUES

Often found along or adjacent to preserved natural areas, greenway avenues are picturesque, low-speed roads designed with off-street trails or sidepaths for recreational use. The focus is on blending travel with nature access, requiring careful design of crossings and buffer zones.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Low to moderate
- » **Transit Service:** None
- » **Parking:** Trailhead lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Forest preserve buffers, trail crossings, wide sidepaths
- » **Example:** Paxton Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of greenway avenues should focus on sidepaths with vegetative buffers, limited curb cuts, and trail signage.

Transportation

- » Fill sidewalk gaps
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Provide enhancing crossing infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians.

Urban Design

- » Protect natural edges.
- » Integrate environmental education signage.

FIGURE 35: GREENWAY AVENUE CROSS-SECTION



COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

COMMERCIAL HUB + THOROUGHFARES

These are high-traffic arterials serving major retail destinations, often featuring multiple travel lanes and limited access points. Because of their scale and function, these corridors require robust landscaping, sidewalk buffers, signal coordination, and strong wayfinding to manage complexity and support safe pedestrian experiences.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** High
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** High
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate
- » **Parking:** Parking lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Green infrastructure, wayfinding, signalization
- » **Example:** Torrence Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of commercial corridors should focus on high-traffic arterials with sidewalks, trees in grates, and bus turnouts.

Transportation

- » Accommodate larger vehicles, as well as people walking and biking.
- » Manage curb cuts.
- » Fill sidewalk gaps.

Land Use

- » Support TIF/redevelopment programs.

Urban Design

- » Concentrate commercial nodes.

FIGURE 36: COMMERCIAL CONNECTOR CROSS-SECTION



AREA THOROUGHFARES

RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE + THOROUGHFARES

Designed for higher volumes and longer trips, area thoroughfares are key arteries linking different districts. While primarily auto-oriented, they should incorporate sidewalks, crossings, and potentially protected bike infrastructure. They also serve as candidates for transit improvements and rightsizing, depending on evolving needs.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Vehicle Activity:** High
- » **Transit Service:** Limited to moderate
- » **Parking:** Varies
- » **Other Key Features:** Corridor lighting, sidewalks, mixed-mode access
- » **Example:** 170th Street

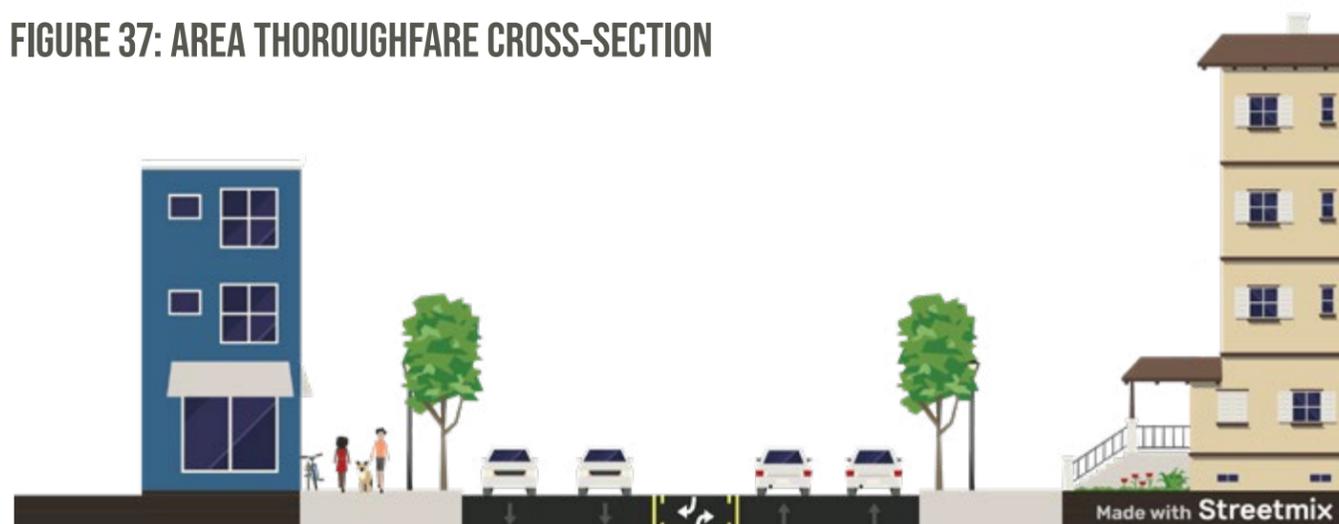
RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of area thoroughfares should focus on mid-sized roads with sidewalks, bike lanes, and moderate speeds.

Transportation

- » Consider rightsizing where feasible.
- » Maintain connectivity to transit.
- » Fill sidewalk gaps.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Provide enhancing crossing infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians.

FIGURE 37: AREA THOROUGHFARE CROSS-SECTION



SCENIC BOULEVARDS

OPEN SPACE + THOROUGHFARES

Scenic boulevards emphasize experience over efficiency. These roadways often border natural features like water bodies or forest preserves and include design elements to slow speeds and preserve views. Trail crossings, sidepaths, and rest areas are common, supporting recreational and scenic travel.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** Low to moderate
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** High
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Moderate
- » **Transit Service:** Limited
- » **Parking:** Trail access lots
- » **Other Key Features:** Forest/nature context, wide sidepaths, intersection safety
- » **Example:** Michigan City Road

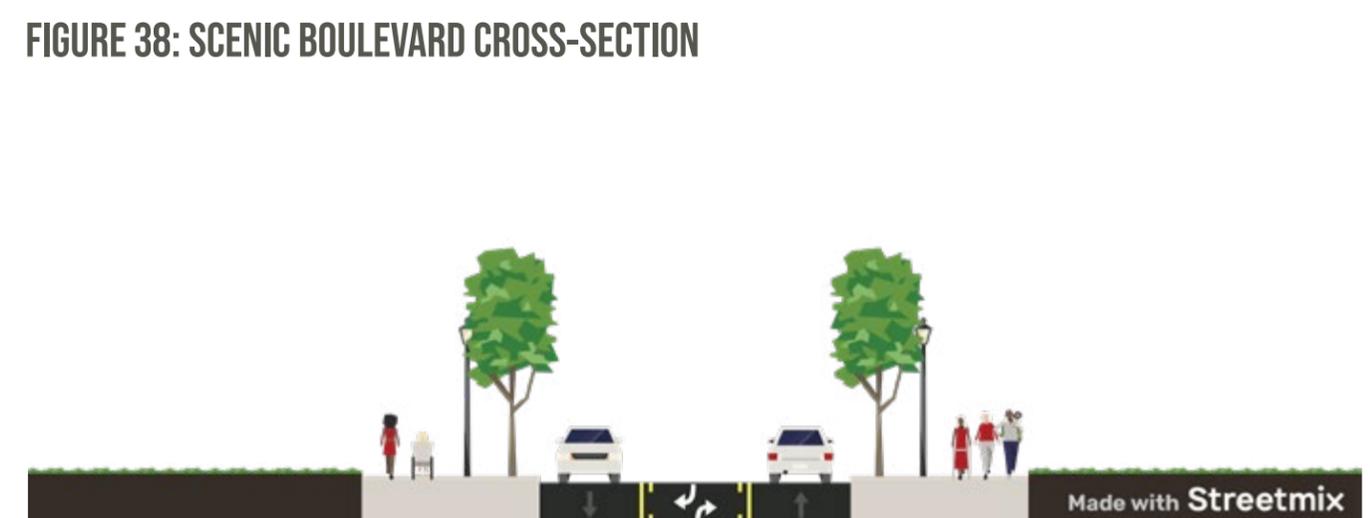
RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of scenic boulevards should focus on curving roads, canopy trees, wide grassy shoulders, and occasional signage.

Transportation

- » Preserve visibility.
- » Reinforce gateway treatments.
- » Street design should keep all travel modes separate from each other.
- » Provide enhanced crossing infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians.

FIGURE 38: SCENIC BOULEVARD CROSS-SECTION



MAJOR HIGHWAYS

COMMUNITY CENTER/COMMERCIAL HUB/RESIDENTIAL MULTI-USE/RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-USE/INDUSTRIAL/OPEN SPACE + HIGHWAYS

These are the region's most intense transportation corridors, accommodating fast, high-volume vehicle movement. While not walkable or bikeable themselves, Major highways require safe crossing infrastructure and efficient integration with regional transit. Design should also mitigate environmental and equity impacts through buffers, lighting, and noise barriers.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- » **Development Intensity:** None
- » **Pedestrian/Bicycle Activity:** None
- » **Vehicle Activity:** Very high
- » **Transit Service:** Moderate to high
- » **Parking:** Park-n-Ride
- » **Other Key Features:** High-speed, access control, transit infrastructure, overpasses for nonmotorized users
- » **Example:** I-94, I-294

RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of major highways should focus on multi-lane freeways with managed lanes, sound walls, high-mast lighting, and green infrastructure to mitigate runoff.

Transportation

- » Incorporate bus rapid transit (BRT) or express bus features.
- » Ensure safe crossings at interchanges.
- » Eliminate barriers to biking and walking.

Urban Design

- » Include green infrastructure to mitigate runoff.

FIGURE 39: HIGHWAY CROSS-SECTION



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5.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

BICYCLE | PEDESTRIAN | INTERSECTION | SAFETY

This chapter outlines proposed improvements to enhance safety, accessibility, and connectivity for all users of the transportation network. This includes targeted recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, intersection enhancements, and roadway safety treatments. Together, these recommendations aim to create a more connected transportation network that supports people walking and biking and reduces conflicts between users.



RECOMMENDED FACILITIES

Infrastructure recommendations are comprised of the facilities related to the expansion and the upgrade of the bicycle, pedestrian, transit, roadway, and river trail networks. **Figure 40** notes the increase in percentage for proposed facilities. The estimated cost of these facilities is also included. Note that the cost estimate is based on the expected cost of the facility on a per-mile basis and does not consider extraneous costs, such as utility relocations, engineering, excessive drainage improvements, or roadway upgrades. **Map 12** and **Figure 41** detail the infrastructure recommendations.

BICYCLE FACILITIES

According to a study by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, in 2021, 52% of car trips taken were less than 3 miles. Providing bicycle infrastructure encourages individuals to bike for shorter trips due to greater convenience. This takes single-occupancy 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. Additionally, there is ample opportunity to provide bicycle facilities for community members to use recreationally.

The proposed facilities consist of bike routes, bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, protected bike lanes, and sidepaths. Planned facilities

stemming from other local and regional plans include protected bike lanes, in addition to bike lanes and side paths. Between the proposed and planned facilities, the network aims to connect people biking across the Calumet Triangle and to key destinations nearby. Due to a high level of stress across the transportation network, supplemented by community feelings of high traffic volumes and speeding, the majority of bicycle facilities are recommended to be buffered, protected, or separated.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The Calumet Triangle boasts extensive sidewalk coverage. See the Existing Conditions Report for an overview of existing sidewalks and sidewalk gaps in the Calumet Triangle. Most recommendations stem off of U.S. Route 6 and Torrence Avenue and fall under municipal jurisdictions. The proposed sidewalks and intersection improvements aim to connect these commercial corridors beyond the Calumet Triangle area, as well as offering safe routes for those who currently walk or roll along these corridors.

Sidewalk gaps near transit, parks, and other community destinations should be prioritized. To preserve individual neighborhood characters, sidewalks are recommended sparingly pending sensitivity. In other pockets of sidewalk gaps,

sidewalks may not be feasible due to right of way constraints or surrounding land use.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Intersection improvements are a large part of a developed pedestrian network. Intersection improvements in the Calumet Triangle largely consist of measures to ensure safe, protected crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, giving them ample time to cross.

While already extensive, expanding the pedestrian network involves filling sidewalk gaps and improving crosswalks and intersections to make it safer for people walking and rolling.

Recommended improvements to intersections largely stem from ensuring safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings and access, and also slowing down vehicular traffic. Ensuring intersections support multiple modes creates a safer environment for everyone. This is especially important for populations, such as children and older adults, who may not be able to drive.

Locations for improvements were also largely informed by the crash history and analysis of an intersection. Similarly, intersections near bus stops were targeted for improvements to accessibility.

ROADWAY SAFETY

Similar to intersection improvement, the rationale behind roadway safety improvements seek to implement traffic calming measures and increase visibility and safety for all road users.

Roadway safety enhancements include:

Implement Traffic Calming in Residential Areas

To address speeding and cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods, the municipalities should consider installing traffic calming measures such as speed humps, mini roundabouts, narrowed lanes, or chicanes. These treatments slow vehicles down and make streets feel safer and more comfortable for people walking, biking, or accessing local destinations.

Consider Rightsizing on Overbuilt Corridors

Streets with excess capacity, like Torrence Avenue, could benefit from rightsizing. Reconfiguring four-lane roads into three-lane configurations (one lane each way plus a center turn lane) can reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety while creating space for sidepaths, sidewalks, or landscaped buffers. According to the FHWA, a road diet can be implemented on a roadway with current and future average daily traffic of 25,000 or less.

Add Lighting and Visibility Improvements

Many corridors within the Calumet Triangle lack adequate street lighting, particularly near bus stops and pedestrian crossings. Installing brighter, energy-efficient roadway and pedestrian-scale lighting and reflective signage at

key locations can improve visibility and reduce nighttime crashes.

Enhance School Zone Safety

Implement safety improvements near schools such as flashing school zone signage, speed feedback signs, raised crosswalks, and crossing guards during arrival and dismissal times. These help protect children and encourage safe walking and biking to school.

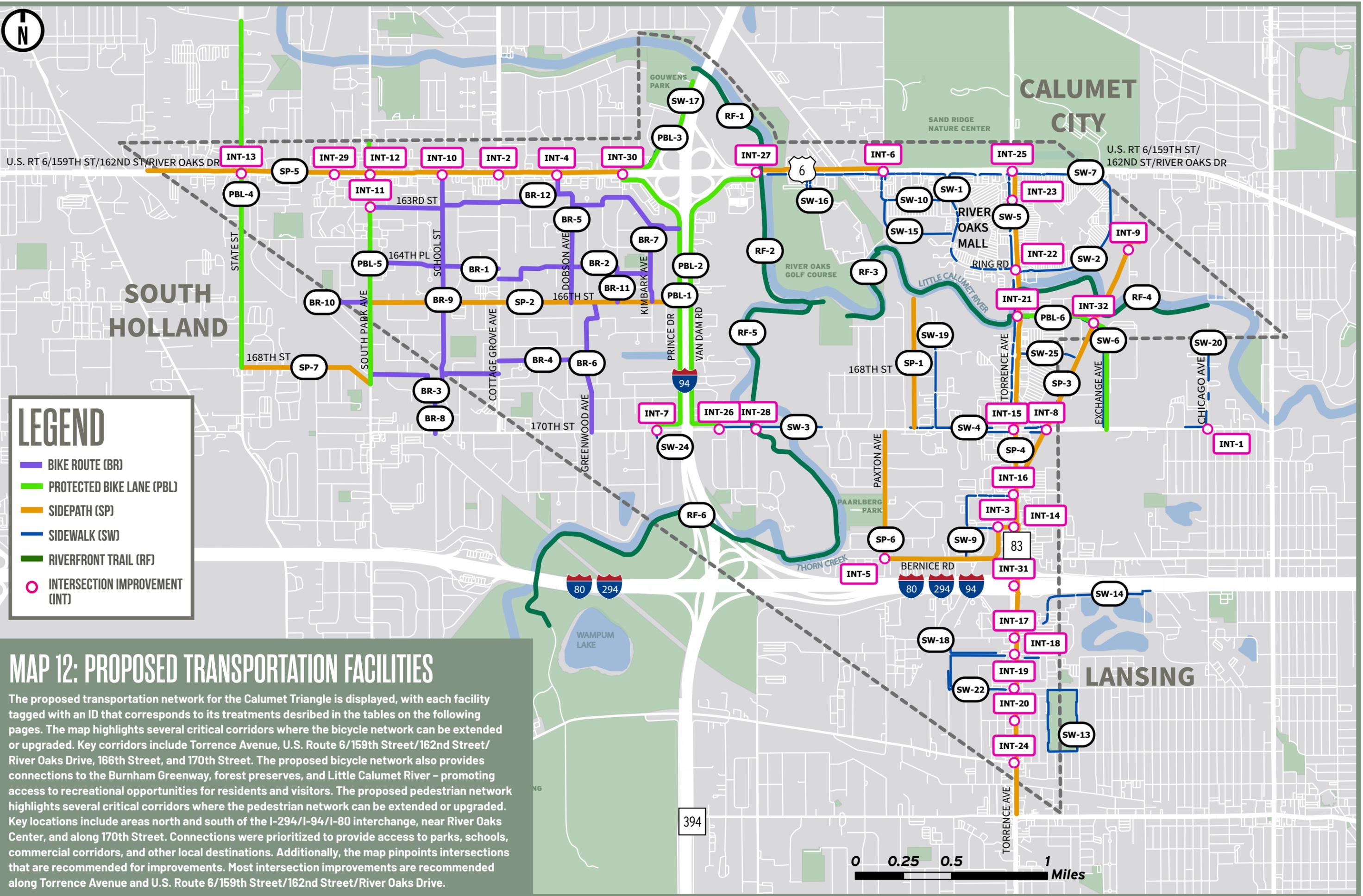
Coordinate Regional Truck Routing and Signage

Given the industrial and freight presence in parts of the Calumet Triangle, municipalities should coordinate regional truck routing to keep heavy vehicles on designated routes and away from residential streets. Improved signage and enforcement can further enhance safety and reduce road wear.

FIGURE 40: NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Facility Type	Existing Miles	Proposed Miles	Percent Increase	Total Cost
Bike Route	3.7	6.10	164%	\$182,000
Protected Bike Lane	0.0	5.92	N/A	\$1,740,000
Sidepath	0.9	9.25	1,028%	\$13,293,000
Riverfront Trail	0.0	6.07	N/A	\$9,213,000
Sidewalks	108.0	13.2	12%	\$6,222,000
Total	112.6	40.54	36%	\$30,650,000

Facility Type	Existing	Proposed	Percent Increase	Total Cost
Kayak Launches	1	10	1,000%	\$515,000
Intersection Improvements	N/A	25	N/A	\$1,538,260
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,053,260



LEGEND

- BIKE ROUTE (BR)
- PROTECTED BIKE LANE (PBL)
- SIDEPATH (SP)
- SIDEWALK (SW)
- RIVERFRONT TRAIL (RF)
- INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT (INT)

MAP 12: PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The proposed transportation network for the Calumet Triangle is displayed, with each facility tagged with an ID that corresponds to its treatments described in the tables on the following pages. The map highlights several critical corridors where the bicycle network can be extended or upgraded. Key corridors include Torrence Avenue, U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, 166th Street, and 170th Street. The proposed bicycle network also provides connections to the Burnham Greenway, forest preserves, and Little Calumet River – promoting access to recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The proposed pedestrian network highlights several critical corridors where the pedestrian network can be extended or upgraded. Key locations include areas north and south of the I-294/I-94/I-80 interchange, near River Oaks Center, and along 170th Street. Connections were prioritized to provide access to parks, schools, commercial corridors, and other local destinations. Additionally, the map pinpoints intersections that are recommended for improvements. Most intersection improvements are recommended along Torrence Avenue and U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive.



FIGURE 41: PROPOSED NETWORK ENHANCEMENTS

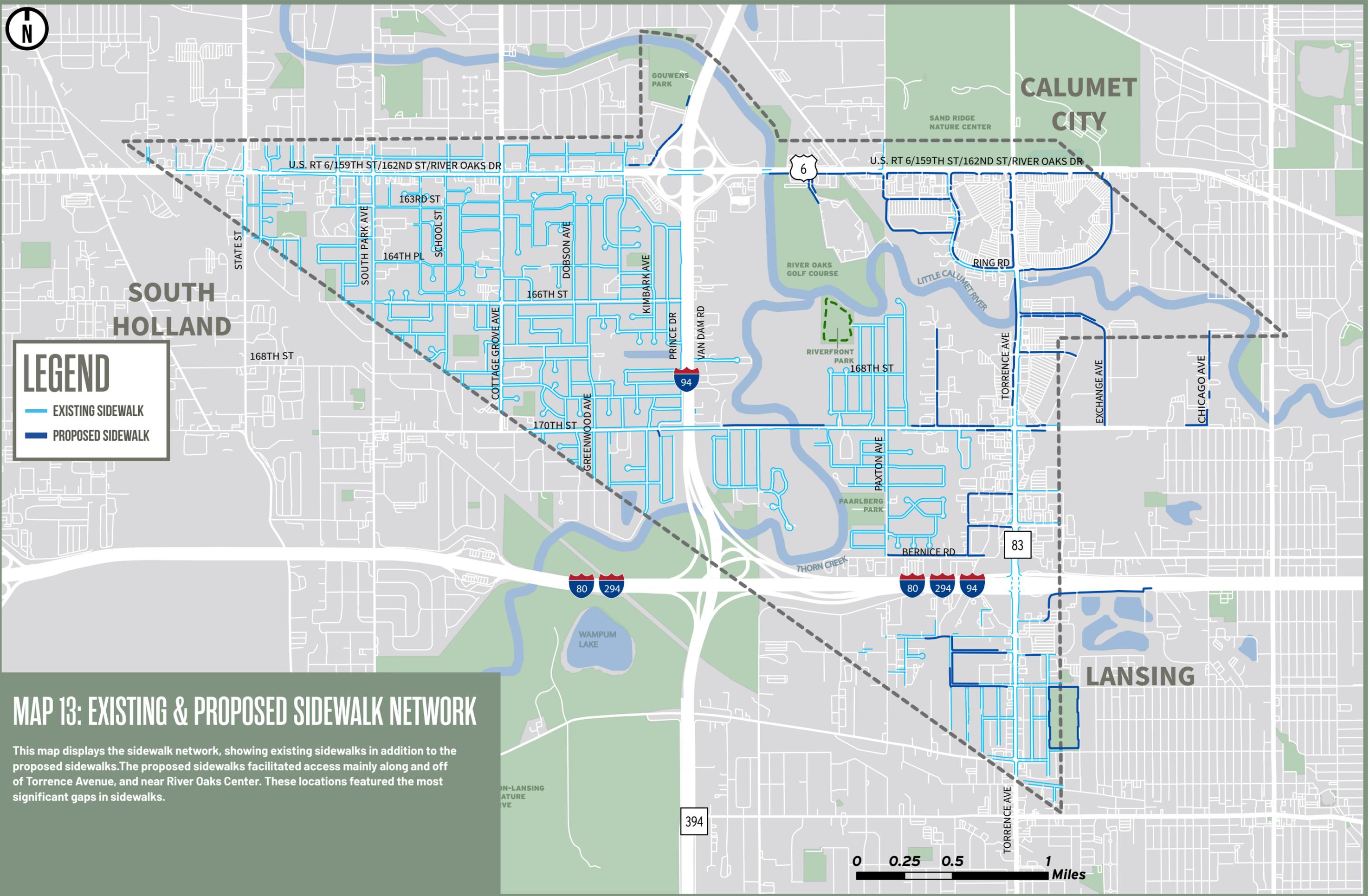
ID	Location	Treatment	Length (mi.)	Jurisdiction	Municipality	Estimated Cost
BR-1	164th Pl. from South Park Ave. to Cottage Grove Ave.	Bike Route (N/S)	0.50	Municipal	South Holland	\$15,000
BR-2	165th St. from Cottage Grove Ave. to Kimbark Ave.	Bike Route (N/S)	0.66	Municipal	South Holland	\$20,000
BR-3	168th Pl. from South Park Ave. to Cottage Grove Ave.	Bike Route (N/S)	0.63	Municipal	South Holland	\$19,000
BR-4	168th St. from Cottage Grove Ave. to Greenwood Ave.	Bike Route (N/S)	0.34	Municipal	South Holland	\$10,000
BR-5	Dobson Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to 166th St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.54	Municipal	South Holland	\$16,000
BR-6	Greenwood Ave. from 166th St. to 170th St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.54	Municipal	South Holland	\$16,000
BR-7	Kimbark Ave. from 164th St. to 166th St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.29	Municipal	South Holland	\$9,000
BR-8	Parkside Ave. from 169th St. to 170th St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.16	Municipal	South Holland	\$5,000
BR-9	School St. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to 168th Pl.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.77	Municipal	South Holland	\$23,000
BR-10	166th St. from Thornton Ave. to School St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.20	Municipal	South Holland	\$6,000
BR-11	Woodlawn Ave./ from 165th St. to 166th St.	Bike Route (W/E)	0.11	Municipal	South Holland	\$3,000
BR-12	163rd St. from South Park Ave. to Prince Dr.	Bike Route (N/S)	1.34	Municipal	South Holland	\$40,000
PBL-1	Prince Dr. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to 170th St.	Bidirectional Protected Bike Lane (E)	1.20	Municipal	South Holland	\$352,000
PBL-2	Van Dam Rd.	Bidirectional Protected Bike Lane (W)	1.22	Municipal	South Holland	\$360,000
PBL-3	Seton Rd. from S Holland Trail to Woodlawn Ave.	Protected Bike Lane (W/E)	0.48	Municipal	South Holland	\$142,000
PBL-4	State St. from 157th St. to 168th St.	Protected Bike Lane (W/E) with Rightsizing	1.80	Municipal	South Holland	\$395,000
PBL-5	South Park Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to 168th St.	Protected Bike Lane (W/E) with Rightsizing	0.93	Municipal	South Holland	\$274,000
PBL-6	Exchange Ave. from Torrence Ave. to 170th St.	Protected Bike Lane (N/S)	0.74	Municipal	Lansing	\$217,000
SP-1	Kinder Morgan Connector from Little Calumet River to 170th St.	Sidepath	0.50	Private	South Holland	\$648,000
SP-2	166th St. from Thorton Ave. to Prince Dr.	Sidepath (N)	0.92	Municipal	South Holland	\$1,197,000
SP-3	ComEd Extension from Burnham Greenway to Torrence Ave.	Sidepath	1.10	Private	Calumet City; Lansing	\$1,390,000
SP-4	Torrence Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to Ridge Rd.	Sidepath (E)	2.5	State	Calumet City; Lansing	\$3,956,000
SP-5	U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	Sidepath (N)	2.34	State	South Holland; Calumet City	\$3,197,000
SP-6	Paxton Ave./Bernice Rd. from 170th St. to Torrence Ave.	Sidepath (E/N)	1.71	Municipal	Lansing; South Holland	\$2,224,000
SP-7	168th St. from State St. to South Park Ave.	Sidepath (N/S)	0.52	Municipal	South Holland	\$681,000

FIGURE 41: PROPOSED NETWORK ENHANCEMENTS CONT.

ID	Location	Treatment	Length (mi.)	Jurisdiction	Municipality	Estimated Cost
SW-1	Ring Rd. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to Torrence Ave.	Sidewalk (N/E)	0.53	Municipal	Calumet City	\$260,000
SW-2	River Oaks Center Dr. from Torrence Ave. to U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	Sidewalk (E/S)	0.88	Municipal	Calumet City	\$325,000
SW-3	170th St. from Van Dam Dr. to Jeffrey Ave.	Sidewalk (N)	0.52	County	South Holland	\$235,000
SW-4	170th St. from Luella Ave. to Torrence Ave.	Sidewalk (N/S)	0.79	County	Calumet City; Lansing; South Holland	\$393,000
SW-5	Torrence Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to 400' N of 170th St.	Sidewalk (W)	1.03	State	Calumet City	\$492,000
SW-6	Exchange Ave. from Torrence Ave to 170th St.	Sidewalk (N/S/W)	1.23	Municipal	Lansing	\$593,000
SW-7	U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. from Van Damn Dr. to River Oaks Center Dr.	Sidewalk (S)	1.35	State	Calumet City	\$647,000
SW-8	Bernice Rd. from Paxton Ave. to Decker St.	Sidewalk (N)	0.48	Municipal	Lansing; South Holland	\$220,000
SW-9	Bensley Ave. from 172nd St. to Bernice Rd.	Sidewalk (E)	0.31	Municipal	Lansing	\$143,000
SW-10	West Rd. from Paxton Ave. to Ring Rd.	Sidewalk (S)	0.27	Municipal	Calumet City	\$135,000
SW-11	172nd St. from Bensley Ave. to Torrence Ave.	Sidewalk (S)	0.18	Municipal	Lansing	\$93,000
SW-12	173rd St. from Bensley Ave. to Torrence Ave.	Sidewalk (S)	0.2	Municipal	Lansing	\$95,000
SW-13	Lan-Oak Park (Arcadia Ave./178th St./Oakley Ave./180th St.)	Sidewalk (N/E/S/W)	0.96	Municipal	Lansing	\$436,000
SW-14	175th St. from 550' E of Torrence Ave. to Bike Xing Way/Burnham Greenway	Sidewalk (N/S)	0.65	Municipal	Lansing	\$304,000
SW-15	Paxton Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to Ring Rd.	Sidewalk (E/S/W)	0.63	Municipal	Calumet City	\$289,000
SW-16	Park Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to Park of River Oaks parking lot	Sidewalk (E/W)	0.23	Municipal	Calumet City	\$120,000
SW-17	Seton Rd. from Woodlawn E Ave. to S Holland Trail/Gouwens Park	Sidewalk (W)	0.34	Municipal	South Holland	\$165,000
SW-18	176th Pl. from 390' E of Rosewood Dr. to Locust St.	Sidewalk (S)	0.13	Municipal	Lansing	\$57,000
SW-19	Huntington Dr. from 380' N of Regency Ct. to 170th St.	Sidewalk (E)	0.46	Municipal	Calumet City	\$223,000
SW-20	Chicago Ave. from Lansing Sports Complex to 170th St.	Sidewalk (E)	0.35	Municipal	Lansing	\$172,000
SW-21	177th St. from Locust St. to Arcardia Ave.	Sidewalk (N/S)	0.59	Municipal	Lansing	\$272,000
SW-22	178th St. from Locust St. to Torrence Ave.	Sidewalk (N/S)	0.43	Municipal	Lansing	\$194,000
SW-23	Locust St. from 176th St. to 178th St.	Sidewalk (E/W)	0.32	Municipal	Lansing	\$149,000
SW-24	Kenwood Ave. from 170th St. to Prince Dr.	Sidewalk (W)	0.03	Municipal	South Holland	\$13,000
SW-25	Oak Ave. from Torrence Ave. to ComEd Utility Corridor	Sidewalk (N)	0.26	Municipal	Lansing	\$125,000

FIGURE 41: PROPOSED NETWORK ENHANCEMENTS CONT.

ID	Location	Treatment	Length (mi.)	Jurisdiction	Municipality	Estimated Cost
INT-1	Chicago Ave. & 170th St.	1 striped crosswalk (W); 1 RRFB (W); 2 curb ramps (NW/SW)	N/A	Municipal; County	Lansing	\$26,360
INT-2	Cottage Grove Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	4 restriped crosswalks (N/E/S/W); LPIs	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$13,400
INT-3	Decker Ave. & 173rd St.	1 striped crosswalks (S); 2 curb ramps (SW/SE)	N/A	Municipal	Lansing	\$11,400
INT-4	Ellis Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	2 restriped crosswalks (E/S)	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$6,700
INT-5	Paxton Ave. & Bernice Rd.	1 striped crosswalk (N)	N/A	Municipal	Lansing; South Holland	\$3,400
INT-6	Paxton Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	1 restriped crosswalk (W)	N/A	State; Municipal	Calumet City	\$3,400
INT-7	Prince Dr. & 170th St.	4 striped crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 2 overhead RRFBs (E/W)	N/A	Municipal; County	South Holland	\$43,400
INT-8	170th St. & ComEd Extension	1 signalized crosswalk (E); 2 curb ramps (NE/SE); LPI	N/A	County; Private	Lansing	\$16,400
INT-9	River Dr. & ComEd Extension	1 striped crosswalk; 2 curb ramps	N/A	Municipal; Private	Calumet City	\$11,400
INT-10	School St. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	3 restriped crosswalks (N/S/W)	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$10,100
INT-11	South Park Ave. & 163rd St.	2 striped crosswalks (N/S); RRFBs (N/S)	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$36,700
INT-12	South Park Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	4 restriped crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 4 refuge islands (N/E/S/W); LPIs; no RTOR	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$205,400
INT-13	State St. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	4 signalized crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 8 curb ramps; LPIs; no RTOR	N/A	State	South Holland	\$45,400
INT-14	Torrence Ave & 173rd St.	4 restriped crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 4 refuge islands (N/E/S/W); LPIs	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$205,400
INT-15	Torrence Ave. & 170th St.	4 refuge islands (N/E/S/W); 4 curb ramps (N/E/S/W)	N/A	State; Local	Calumet City; Lansing	\$208,000
INT-16	Torrence Ave. & 172nd St.	2 striped crosswalks (E/W)	N/A	State; County	Lansing	\$6,700
INT-17	Torrence Ave. & 176th St.	4 restriped crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 4 pedestrian refuge islands (N/E/S/W); LPIs	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$205,400
INT-18	Torrence Ave. & 177th St.	2 striped crosswalks (E/W)	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$6,700
INT-19	Torrence Ave. & 178th St.	4 restriped crosswalks (N/E/S/W)	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$28,400
INT-20	Torrence Ave. & 179th St.	3 striped crosswalks (E/S/W); RRFB (S)	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$10,100
INT-21	Torrence Ave. & Exchange Ave.	3 striped crosswalks (N/E/S); 1 curb ramp (SE)	N/A	State; Municipal	Calumet City; Lansing	\$14,100
INT-22	Torrence Ave. & Ring Rd./River Oaks Center Dr.	3 signalized crosswalks (N/E/W); 3 curb ramps (NE, NW, SW); LPIs; remove slip lanes; widen medians (E)	N/A	State; Municipal	Calumet City	\$37,100
INT-23	Torrence Ave. & River Oaks Center Dr.	4 signalized crosswalks (N/E/S/W); 4 curb ramps (NE, SE, NW, SW); LPIs	N/A	State	Calumet City	\$49,400
INT-24	Torrence Ave. & Thorton-Lansing Rd.	3 restriped crosswalks (E/S/W)	N/A	State; Municipal	Lansing	\$10,100
INT-25	Torrence Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	3 signalized crosswalks (E/S/W); 4 refuge islands (N/E/S/W); LPIs; no RTOR	N/A	State	Calumet City	\$217,100
INT-26	Van Dam Rd. & 170th St.	1 striped crosswalk (N); 2 curb ramps (NW/NE)	N/A	Municipal; County	South Holland	\$11,400
INT-27	Van Dam Rd. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	1 signalized crosswalk (E); LPI	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$8,400
INT-28	Volbrecht Rd. & 170th St.	2 striped crosswalks (S/W); 2 curb ramps (NW/SW); overhead RRFB	N/A	Municipal	South Holland	\$14,700
INT-29	Wausau Ave. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	3 restriped crosswalks (N/S/W)	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$10,100
INT-30	Woodlawn Ave./Prince Dr. & U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr.	1 signalized crosswalk (W)	N/A	State; Municipal	South Holland	\$8,400
INT-31	Torrence Ave. & I-80/I-94 Interchange	8 restriped crosswalks; LPIs; no RTOR	N/A	State	Lansing	\$26,900
INT-32	Exchange Ave. & ComEd Extension	1 striped crosswalk; 2 curb ramps; RRFB	N/A	Municipal; Private	Lansing	\$26,400



LEGEND

- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK

MAP 13: EXISTING & PROPOSED SIDEWALK NETWORK

This map displays the sidewalk network, showing existing sidewalks in addition to the proposed sidewalks. The proposed sidewalks facilitated access mainly along and off of Torrence Avenue, and near River Oaks Center. These locations featured the most significant gaps in sidewalks.

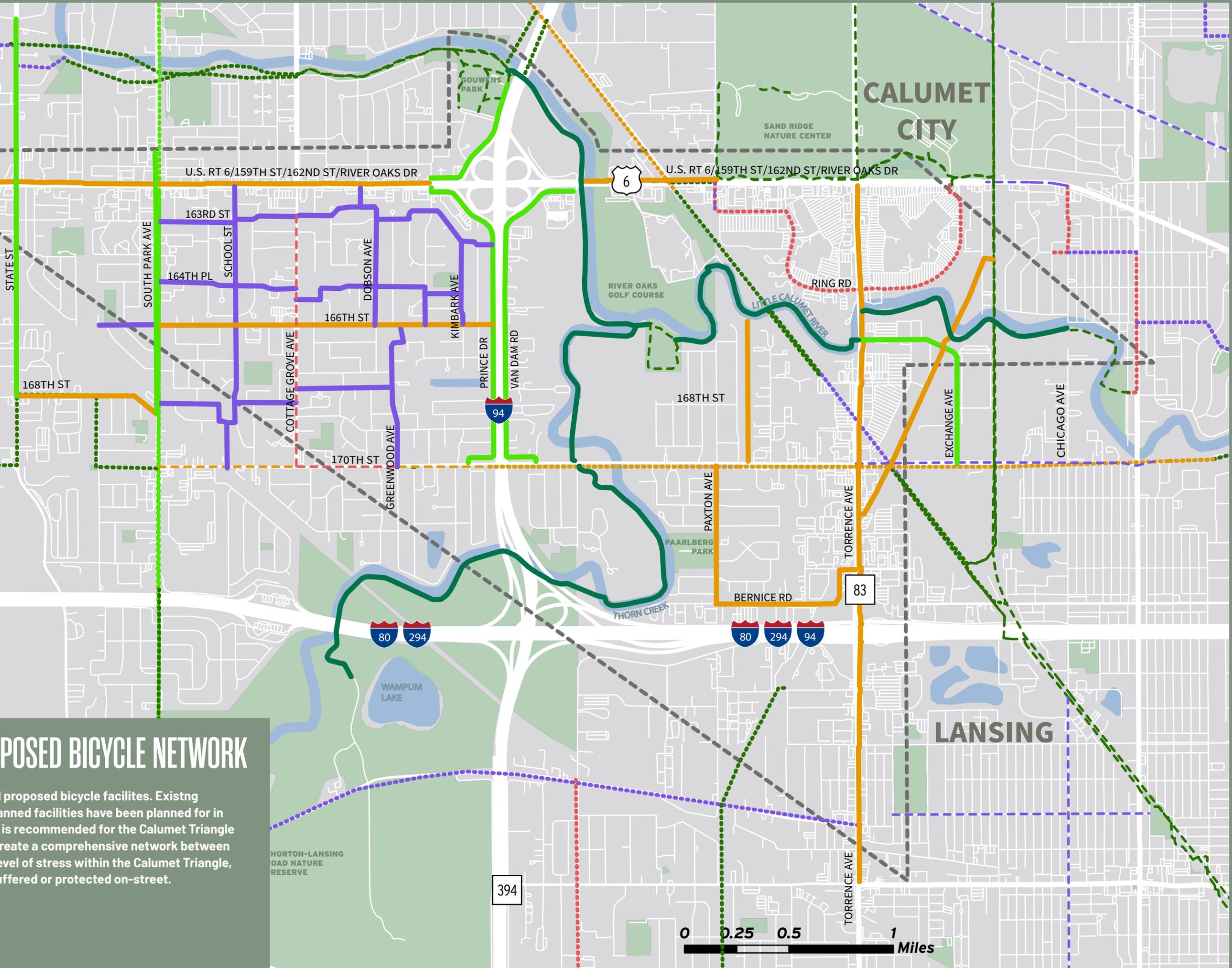


SOUTH HOLLAND

CALUMET CITY

LEGEND

- EXISTING:**
- BIKE ROUTE (dashed blue line)
 - BIKE LANE (dashed red line)
 - SIDEPATH (dashed orange line)
 - TRAIL (dashed green line)
- PLANNED:**
- BIKE ROUTE (dotted blue line)
 - BIKE LANE (dotted red line)
 - PROTECTED BIKE LANE (dotted green line)
 - SIDEPATH (dotted orange line)
 - PATH (dotted purple line)
- PROPOSED:**
- BIKE ROUTE (solid purple line)
 - PROTECTED BIKE LANE (solid green line)
 - SIDEPATH (solid orange line)
 - RIVERFRONT TRAIL (solid dark green line)



MAP 14: EXISTING & PROPOSED BICYCLE NETWORK

This map shows the existing, planned, and proposed bicycle facilities. Existing facilities are already established, while planned facilities have been planned for in another plan. Proposed facilities are what is recommended for the Calumet Triangle study area. The bicycle facilities seek to create a comprehensive network between on-street and off-street. Due to the high level of stress within the Calumet Triangle, bicycle facilities opt to be off-street, or buffered or protected on-street.



IMAGE 21: PROTECTED BIKE LANE

This rendering is based on Prince Drive, which runs parallel to I-94, in South Holland, and shows the addition of a protected, bidirectional bike lane, pedestrian scale lighting, and landscaping. These improvements aim to preserve the existing capacity for auto-travel, while dedicating comfortable, visible, curb protected space for bicyclists. Multimodality should be incorporated on all roadways, where feasible.



6. TRANSIT RECOMMENDATIONS

NETWORK EXPANSION

The Calumet Triangle area has a strong transit network, supplemented by bus and rail service. This chapter presents recommendations to strengthen the public transportation network through targeted improvements. Key recommendations include enhancing transit access and reliability, identifying opportunities for network growth, and establishing a mobility hub to support seamless connections between modes. These efforts aim to improve regional mobility, reduce reliance on single-

occupancy vehicles, and provide more convenient, equitable travel options for all users.



NETWORK EXPANSION

With revisioning of transit in the Chicago region and the potential fiscal cliff, there may be cuts to transit in the Calumet Triangle. As a result, recommendations in this plan propose to maintain and expand on existing service and facilities, supplemented by microtransit and the proposed active transportation network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations include:

Maintain and Expand Transit Coverage: Keeping all existing bus and transit routes in place, while looking for ways to grow service, is a top priority for the Calumet Triangle. Many people rely on public transit to get to work, school, or other daily needs, and reducing service could make travel much harder for them. Instead, the goal should be to build on what's already working. That includes expanding the Lansing Area On Demand service, which currently covers a big portion of the Triangle and connects people to important spots both within and outside the area. As demand increases, this flexible service can help fill gaps and make it easier for everyone to get around.

Leverage the Pace Park-n-Ride for Better Coverage: The new Pace Park-n-Ride and paratransit transfer station near the planned Blues Water Run is a big opportunity to improve how people move around the Triangle. This station, being developed in partnership with Calumet City, will include helpful features like an indoor waiting area and security cameras—making it more comfortable and safer for riders.

Beyond that, it can serve as a key connection point that helps streamline bus routes, reduce transfer times, and expand service into areas that don't currently have much transit access. Amenities at the transfer facility will include an indoor waiting area and security cameras.

Explore Mobility Hub Locations: To make transit even more convenient, the Calumet Triangle should look at adding mobility hubs—places where people can switch easily between modes like buses, shuttles, bikes, and cars. One ideal spot for a hub is the new Pace Park-n-Ride in Calumet City, which is already set to become a transfer point and is close to other future destinations like Blues Water Run. Other possible locations include major roads like Torrence Avenue, especially near shopping centers, job hubs, and high-traffic areas. These hubs help people connect to transit more easily and give commuters more choices beyond driving alone.

Advocate for an Amtrak Station in the Calumet Triangle: Adding an Amtrak stop in the Calumet Triangle, potentially in South Holland, could be an exciting opportunity. It would give residents direct access to regional and national rail service, opening up new travel and economic opportunities. While it would take some planning and coordination, the idea is worth exploring. A feasibility study could help determine if an Amtrak station makes sense based on factors like potential ridership, existing rail lines, and station locations. If it moves forward, it could help establish the Triangle as a true

transportation hub for the region.

Upgrade Pace Bus Stops: Pace bus stops should be enhanced to improve safety, visibility, and user comfort, ultimately encouraging greater transit use. Upgrades should include clear and accessible signage with route information, schedules, and real-time arrival displays where feasible. Stops should also feature seating, shelters for weather protection, lighting for nighttime visibility, and ADA-compliant boarding areas. Where space and ridership warrant, additional amenities such as trash cans, bike racks, and wayfinding signage to nearby destinations should be considered. These improvements will enhance the rider experience and better integrate transit into the surrounding community.

Designate Responsibility for Maintenance of Facilities: To ensure year-round accessibility and safety, it is recommended that any public facility, including transit infrastructure, formally designate responsibility for ongoing maintenance and snow removal. Specifically, all Pace bus stations and stops should be maintained to meet ADA accessibility standards, including timely and effective snow removal. Municipalities, transit agencies, and property owners should clearly delineate who is responsible for these tasks through intergovernmental agreements or maintenance policies. This ensures that individuals with disabilities, older adults, and all pedestrians can safely access public transportation and public facilities regardless of weather conditions.



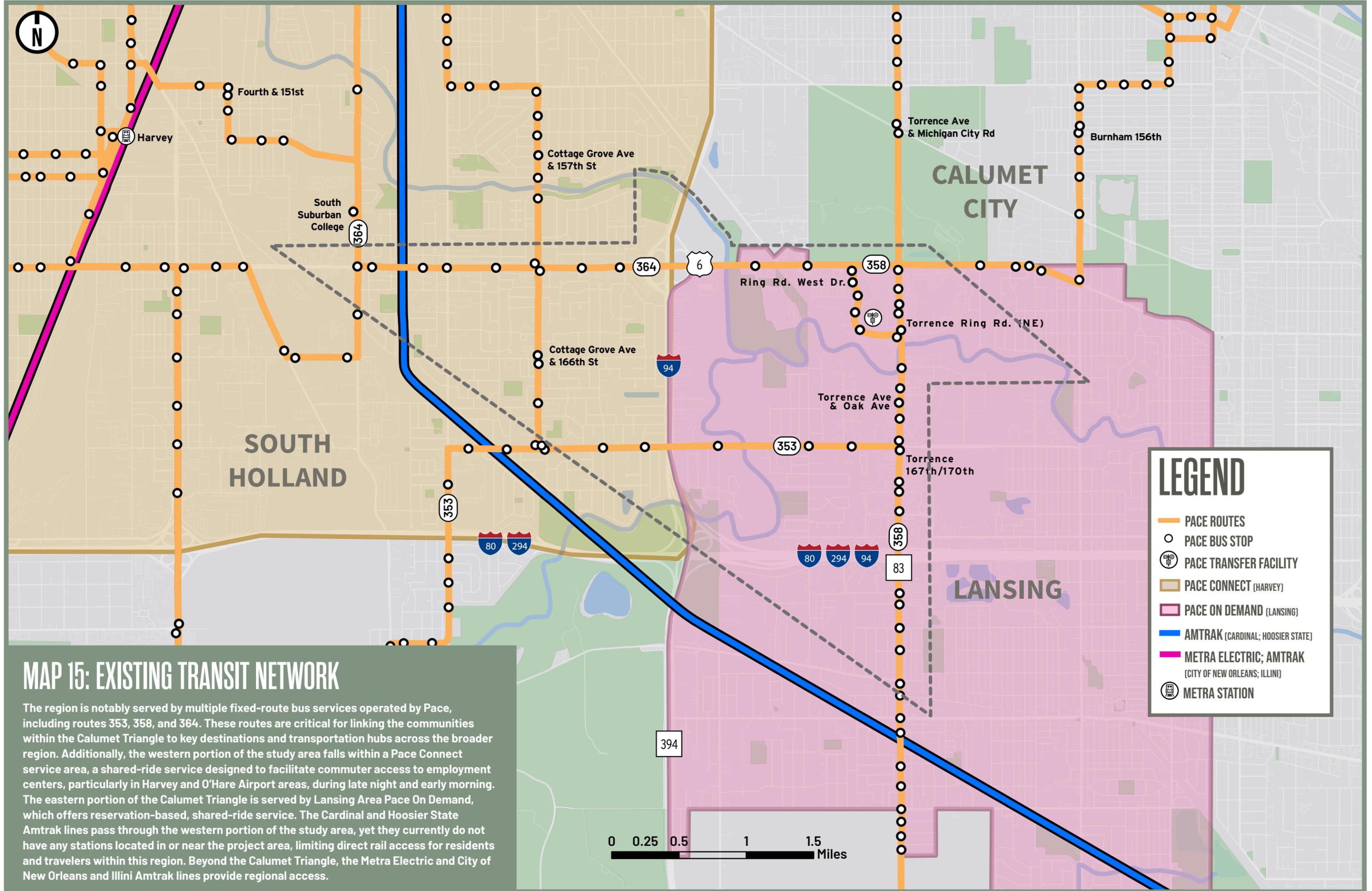
Source: Epstein

IMAGE 22: SITE OF PROPOSED PACE PARK-N-RIDE TRANSFER FACILITY



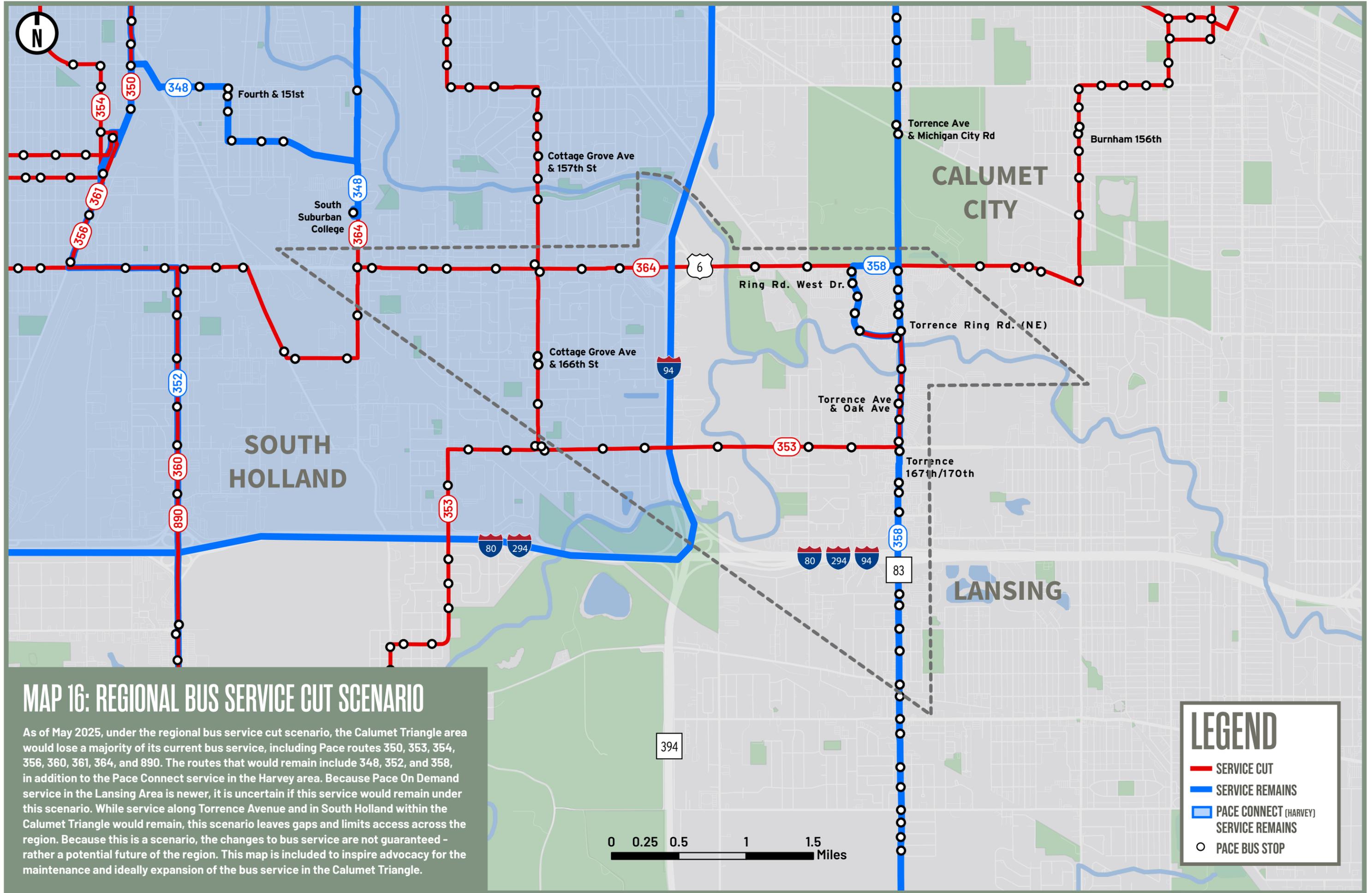
Source: KMI Chicago

IMAGE 23: PACE I-90/BARRINGTON RD. PARK-N-RIDE



MAP 15: EXISTING TRANSIT NETWORK

The region is notably served by multiple fixed-route bus services operated by Pace, including routes 353, 358, and 364. These routes are critical for linking the communities within the Calumet Triangle to key destinations and transportation hubs across the broader region. Additionally, the western portion of the study area falls within a Pace Connect service area, a shared-ride service designed to facilitate commuter access to employment centers, particularly in Harvey and O'Hare Airport areas, during late night and early morning. The eastern portion of the Calumet Triangle is served by Lansing Area Pace On Demand, which offers reservation-based, shared-ride service. The Cardinal and Hoosier State Amtrak lines pass through the western portion of the study area, yet they currently do not have any stations located in or near the project area, limiting direct rail access for residents and travelers within this region. Beyond the Calumet Triangle, the Metra Electric and City of New Orleans and Illini Amtrak lines provide regional access.





7.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

LAND USE GOALS | FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

This chapter outlines the goals and strategic recommendations for managing the land use resources in the Calumet Triangle, from the commercial base, employment centers, and opportunities for mixed use to the housing stock, recreational facilities, and spaces for the community to engage the area in unique ways. This includes integrating aspects of the area that haven't been utilized to

their greatest extent, such as the riverfront, ComEd right-of-way, and other underutilized buildings and sites. Some of the land use and development recommendations in this chapter align with transportation strategies provided in **Chapter 5** and **Chapter 6**, as well as placemaking and public space enhancements described in **Chapter 8**.



LAND USE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Thus far the Design Manual has primarily focused on the transportation infrastructure for the Calumet Triangle. This included transportation enhancements that provide for safe access and increased mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders, including interventions that create a multimodal transportation environment enabling these various users to safely share space with cars, trucks, and buses.

Land use and transportation traditionally go hand in hand as the use and development of land is greatly impacted by the safety and accessibility of the transportation network. The Calumet Triangle will primarily function as a car-centric area, particularly with two interstates (I-90/I-94 and I-294) and two Strategic Regional Arterials (U.S. Route 6/159th Street and IL Route 83/Torrence Avenue). However, the Calumet Triangle is also defined by a broad mix of land uses, access to local recreational opportunities, proximity to the Little Calumet River, and potential for a reimagined mall site, which collectively generate opportunities to reshape the land use planning approach for the area.

The following land use goals and objectives for the Calumet Triangle align with the goals, objectives, and policy recommendations from existing plans from the three municipalities (Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland) and regional partners (Cook County and CMAP). This ensures the goals

and objectives can be achieved, whether independently by one of the three municipalities or collectively through regional collaboration between the municipalities and their partners. In addition, the land use goals and objectives offer renewed perspectives to meet the issues and needs of today regarding housing, commerce, employment, and access to a range of social, recreational, and civic opportunities.

RESIDENTIAL USES

Goal: The Calumet Triangle will provide a diverse housing stock that protects the character of existing neighborhoods, adds new housing options, and supports homeowners and renters by meeting different needs, incomes, and life stages.

Objectives:

- » Build upon existing housing diversity in eastern portion of the Calumet Triangle.
- » Evaluate potential zoning code updates that support a greater range of housing.
- » Balance the maintenance of existing neighborhoods with new residential development.
- » Provide support to homeowners to maintain and improve their properties.
- » Modernize the housing stock by adding new or renovated owner- and renter-occupied units.
- » Pursue housing options

with related health services for a growing senior population.

- » Remove barriers to affordable housing, including workforce and senior housing.
- » Encourage housing in mixed use developments, particularly in the River Oaks Mall area.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL USES

Goal: The Calumet Triangle will advance local economic growth by capturing its share of regional development, supporting existing businesses, and providing spaces that foster business growth, innovation, or creativity.

Objectives:

- » Use locational advantages to capitalize on market demand for new retail and office uses.
- » Explore the potential to establish a cohesive Calumet Triangle branding program for streetscape, signage, and buy-local campaign to support local businesses, boost tourism, and build a renewed identity for the corridor.
- » Integrate outdoor recreation along the Little Calumet River and trail connections as part of efforts to increase commercial growth and tourism.
- » Promote programs and policies that support

business growth.

- » Create spaces for business growth, innovation, or creative spaces, e.g., coworking spaces, business incubators, ghost kitchens, makerspaces, innovation hubs, art spaces, etc.
- » Enhance office areas to make them more inviting and engaging with access to shared community spaces, childcare services, and other amenities that offer opportunities for social, physical, and mental renewal as a means of attracting talent, retaining workers, and creating positive office culture.
- » Ensure major employment centers have safe access and convenient proximity to transit and trail facilities to enhance the range of transportation options for workers.

INDUSTRIAL USES

Goal: The Calumet Triangle will build up its industrial areas with a diversity of users that generate jobs, train the workforce, and provide opportunities for unique users that maximize the utility of large space formats.

Objectives:

- » Use locational advantages to capitalize on market demand for new industrial uses.
- » Coordinate with current and future industrial businesses to pursue local workforce training facilities.
- » Pursue grants to support brownfield remediation that make sites available

for redevelopment.

- » Enable industrial areas to integrate unique users like offices, technology and innovation spaces, indoor recreation, and food-based businesses like breweries and wineries.
- » Coordinate transportation improvements that enhance safe access to and mobility within industrial areas.

MIXED USE & OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: The Calumet Triangle will utilize mixed use development to maximize the vitality of sites through greater interplay between housing, businesses, services, and employment centers.

Objectives:

- » Pursue mixed use development around the River Oaks Mall and River Oaks West areas, particularly adapting lessons learned from reimagined mall redevelopments across the region.
- » Encourage horizontal mixed use formats in areas with existing uses that can be enhanced with infill development of complimentary uses.
- » Encourage vertical mixed use formats for new developments that provide for commercial uses at ground level with residential units above.
- » Explore adaptive reuse of underutilized properties to introduce developments that add housing units,

commercial spaces, offices, and other uses in unique ways while also breathing new life into existing sites that add value back to the community.

- » Leverage TIF funding and other economic development incentives to support improvements to utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

The proposed development program described below is intended to identify potential opportunity sites that will help transform vacant or underutilized spaces into high-value developments that breathe renewed life into these specific sites. Development opportunities should also serve as catalysts for further development and corridor improvements across the Calumet Triangle. In addition, the proposed development ideas for the different opportunity sites evaluate the surrounding context of the respective sites to ensure safe access and connectivity are taken into consideration so that the potential developments properly integrate into the overall Calumet Triangle.

A potential development program for the Calumet Triangle is a starting point for the three municipalities. Partnerships with SSMMA, property owners, development and real estate professionals, transportation agencies, and other local and regional stakeholders will play a critical role in progressing a development from an idea to drawn-up plans to groundbreaking to grand opening. In addition to ongoing conversations and collaboration with partners, a development will require a range of financial and technical support, which are described in the implementation and funding chapter at the end of this document.

As described below, opportunity sites are categorized as either (a) primary opportunity sites; (b) secondary opportunity sites; or (c) other opportunity sites. These sites

are shown on **Map 17**.

PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITES

Primary opportunity sites generally have the strongest potential to have a transformative impact on the overall character of the Calumet Triangle, including revitalizing major vacant or underutilized sites and adding value to the immediate site and its surrounding area. Primary sites typically require a greater level of coordination of multiple partners, resources, and funding. As larger land parcels with multiple moving parts, complex zoning and infrastructure issues, and more stakeholders at the table, a master planning approach would likely be the optimal route to achieve redevelopment of primary opportunity sites. Chapter 6 discusses potential urban design for these locations.

River Oaks Mall

Ranking as the seventh largest mall in the Chicago region, River Oaks Mall represents the Calumet Triangle’s most prominent primary opportunity site. Located on the east side of Torrence Avenue and south of U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, the mall encompasses over 1.28 million square feet. Originally opened in 1966, River Oaks Mall presently has over 60 stores, including JCPenney and Macy’s as the anchor tenants. Over the decades, the mall has undergone significant transformations, including expansions and various redevelopment proposals. While it has seen the departure of some anchor tenants, efforts to revitalize

the have included proposals for a casino, hotel, and potentially a waterpark. These efforts reflect an ongoing interest in enhancing the mall’s appeal and value to the surrounding community.

A more recent idea materialized in August 2024, with Calumet City revisiting the potential to redevelop River Oaks Mall as a modern mixed-use development, which would demolish the former Sears store and replace it with a development that includes retail, restaurants, and housing. Calumet City acquired the Sears site through a no-cash bid with plans to move forward with demolition plans. This would make way for the potential creation of 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.

While the various proposals have varied widely, the primary 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 mall’s future. Whether through entertainment, mixed-use development, or a combination of both, Calumet City continues to explore opportunities to revitalize River Oaks to renew its central position in the regional economy. The evolution of these proposals accentuates the complexities and

often contentious nature of urban redevelopment at a large scale, where multiple stakeholders and shifting market conditions can lead to changes in direction.

With the mixed use development idea as a basis, a detailed redevelopment concept for River Oaks Mall is provided in Chapter 8 of this document. Whichever direction the River Oaks redevelopment takes, the concept can build upon the following aspects of the site and surroundings:

- » Location next to a neighborhood with a mix of residential options.
- » Close regional access to I-94 via US Route 6/River Oaks Drive/159th Street.
- » Transit access via Pace Bus Routes 353, 358, and 364.
- » Proximity to Cook County Forest Preserve properties and Burnham Greenway.
- » Immediate adjacency to the Little Calumet River and proposed Blues Water Run.
- » Location next to potential trail access along the ComEd right-of-way.
- » Access to the commercial corridor along U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive and Torrence Avenue.

Former Seton Academy

Seton Academy was a former Catholic college preparatory high school located in the northeast section of South Holland just north of the I-94 interchange at U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive. Founded in 1963, the school operated for about 53 years before officially closing after the 2015-16 academic year due to declining enrollment and

escalating operating costs.

The former 12-acre campus represents one of the most prominent opportunity sites not only in South Holland but the larger Calumet Triangle area. The site is currently zoned for Single Family Residence but designated for future commercial use in South Holland’s Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 2018 (or two years after the closing of Seton Academy).

While the plans for future redevelopment of the Seton Academy site are a work in progress and haven’t materialized as of yet, there are certain opportunities on which any redevelopment concept should capitalize:

- » Location next to a stable single family residential neighborhood
- » Superior regional access via I-80/I-94
- » Transit access via Pace Bus Route 364
- » Immediate adjacency to Gouwens Park and South Holland Trail
- » Proximity to the Little Calumet River
- » Access to the commercial corridor along U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive

Zone A

Zone A is a vacant 25-acre site located in the northeast section of South Holland just north of the I-94 interchange at U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Village of South Holland had a proposal for a development, which included a sports dome, entertainment facility, and

five-story hotel. Ultimately, the development did not go through due to the pandemic.

Now, the Village is seeking a market driven mix of uses for this site, including:

- » Commercial
- » Industrial
- » Entertainment
- » Hospitality

SECONDARY OPPORTUNITY SITES

Secondary opportunity sites, which include mid-size commercial centers and individual user sites, present opportunities for redevelopment, adaptive reuse, or a range of low to moderate level site improvements. While secondary sites are typically smaller than the three primary opportunity sites described above, that doesn’t necessarily mean they take less effort or coordination for improvements. Redevelopment and adaptive reuse of secondary sites might require a more involved zoning and development review process, such as planned unit development (PUD), like the primary sites. On the other hand, site improvements can usually be handled by a regular development review process.

Mid-Size Commercial Centers

Mid-size commercial centers are the most common along busy commercial corridors and one step down from large commercial centers like River Oaks Mall and River Oaks West. Two notable examples of a mid-size community center in the Calumet Triangle are the Landings and River Oaks West, which are both located along Torrence Avenue.

The Landings, which is located on the east side of Torrence

Avenue north of 170th Street, was built as a traditional suburban shopping center with a set of inline businesses at the rear with a large parking field separating the inline stores from a series of outlot businesses fronting the main roadway. The inline stores at the rear typically have one or two anchor tenants, which is Burlington, Rainbow Shops, and Forman Mills in the case of the Landings.

River Oaks West, which is located on the west side of Torrence Avenue south of U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/ River Oaks Drive, serves as an unofficial commercial sibling to River Oaks Mall across the street to the east. With a similar format as the Landings, River Oaks West is anchored by a few anchor tenants, including Sam's Club, and is surrounded by a large parking field with multiple outlot developments on the perimeter along Torrence Avenue and 159th Street.

Vacancies are common in many shopping centers of this size, but the issue is magnified when the vacancies occur in one of the anchor tenants or outlots that have the highest visibility. The massive parking lots for the Landings and River Oaks West present issues relating to underutilized parking and the appearance of low activity, which can detract from the vitality of the shopping centers overall. Filling vacant spaces is a solution that the market can often fix in due time, such as when the Golden Bear Pancake and Crepery Restaurant replaced the former IHOP space at the Landings.

Aside from complete redevelopment of the entire site, other solutions to revitalize the Landings, River Oaks West, or similar shopping centers include:

- » Façade improvements
- » Sign improvements for tenants and internal wayfinding

- » Modernization of indoor space to meet the needs of today's tenants
- » Flexibility to subdivide current spaces to adapt to different tenant sizes
- » Attraction of unique tenants like indoor youth recreation, healthcare facilities, collaboration spaces for artists and creatives, satellite spaces for government or social services, brewery or winery with a food service component, etc.
- » Conversion of underutilized parking spaces to green space, community gathering areas or additional outlots for development.
- » Addition of more landscaping and sidewalks in the parking lot
- » Enhancement of sidewalk connectivity from the main

roadway into the center, including safe access to Pace bus stops and adjacent residential uses

- » Creation of a plaza or other community space that enable customers to engage for a longer time in the shopping center or businesses to host ancillary sales or services (e.g., shared outdoor dining space for the restaurants, sidewalk sales in an open air plaza, etc.)
- » Connectivity to nearby trails

Individual User Sites

The Calumet Triangle has a multitude of individual user sites with a single tenant, whether it's a retail store, restaurant, commercial service, or other user. Some of these individual user sites – like the Wal-Mart, Ultra Foods, Best Buy, and theater sites – are or were vacant, presenting opportunities for new tenants or even adaptive reuse. For example, the former Target site in Calumet City was converted into a Wilder Fields as a unique adaptive reuse transforming the former retail space into an indoor sustainable farm that grows and sells produce. An example of mixed-use is Torrence Place in Lansing, which

redeveloped a former bank site into a mixed-use building that includes 48 housing units catering to low-income households, veterans, and people with disabilities. Torrence Place also includes a 3,600 sq ft health clinic and pharmacy.

Individual user sites may also utilize some of the solutions identified above for mid-size commercial centers, particularly if low to moderate level site improvements can make a site more attractive and viable. Complete redevelopment is an option as well, which can potentially change an individual user site into a multi-user site depending on space and site design.

OTHER OPPORTUNITY SITES

The map shown in **Map 17** highlights two types of sites, as formally classified by Cook County, that appear in various instances across the Calumet Triangle:

- » **Annual tax sale sites:** These sites refer to properties where taxes have not been paid for a year or more, with the properties being sold at auction every year the county to recoup the unpaid taxes.
- » **Scavenger sale sites:** These sites relate to properties

that have been delinquent on taxes for more than two years, making them eligible for sale at a lower price, often to prompt redevelopment or repurposing by new owners.

Some of these annual tax sale and scavenger sale sites overlap with the primary and secondary opportunity sites described above. This document does not propose potential redevelopment ideas for every annual tax sale and scavenger sale site shown on the map. However, since these sites cover a range of land use types, including residential, commercial, and industrial, redevelopment of any of these annual tax sale and scavenger sale sites will need to adhere to the underlying zoning regulations of the zoning district(s) in which they are situated. Certain sites may require additional zoning steps to accommodate redevelopment, such as rezoning, variances, special use permits, etc. In terms of general land use considerations, redevelopment plans should adhere to not only municipal zoning but also the respective municipality's land use plan in their comprehensive plan to ensure consistency with the overall land use vision of the community.



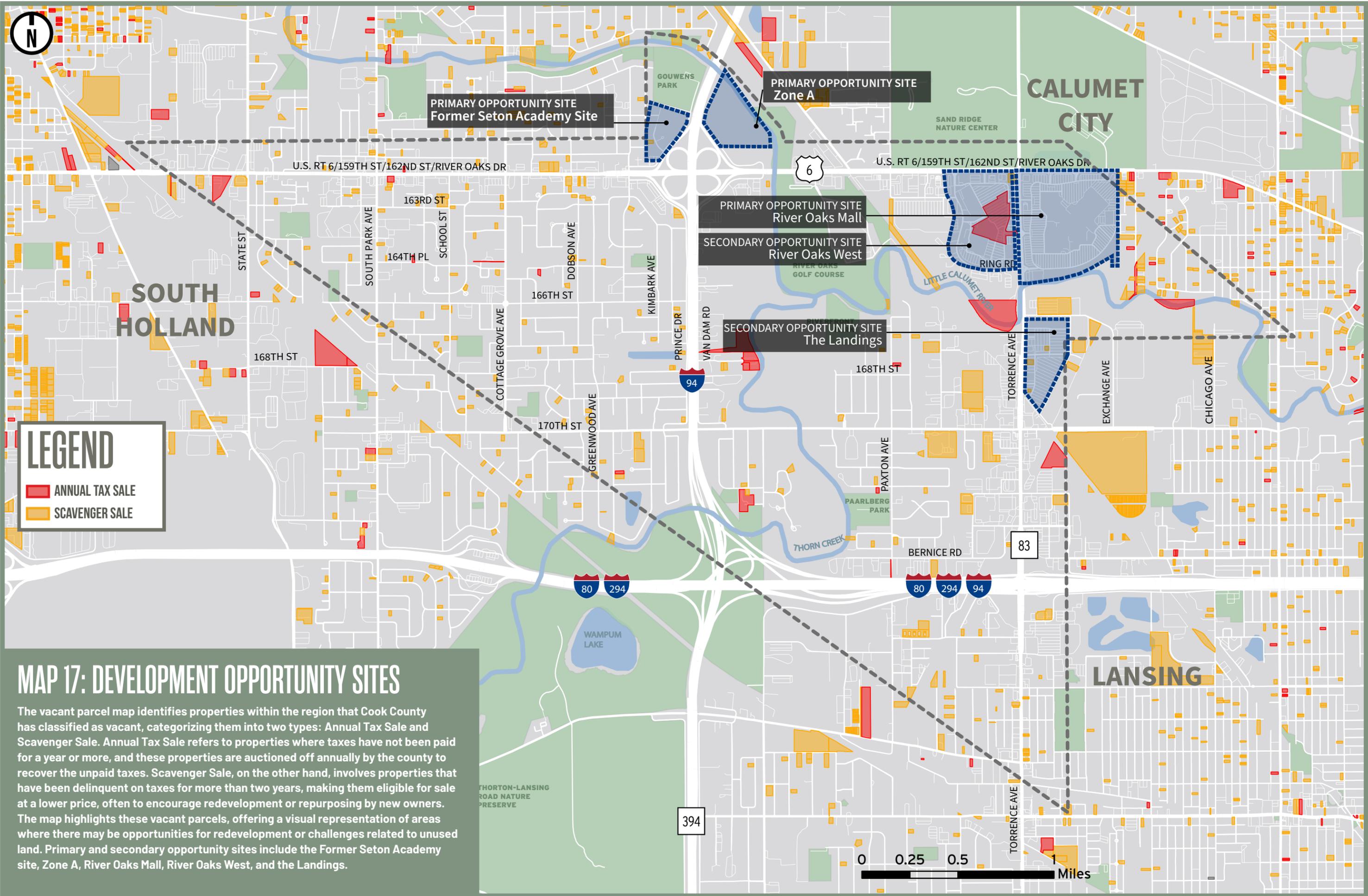
IMAGE 24: EXAMPLE OF CONVERSION OF UNDERUTILIZED PARKING SPACES



IMAGE 25: TORRENCE PLACE



IMAGE 26: WILDER FIELDS



PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE
Former Seton Academy Site

PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE
Zone A

PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE
River Oaks Mall

SECONDARY OPPORTUNITY SITE
River Oaks West

SECONDARY OPPORTUNITY SITE
The Landings

LEGEND

- ANNUAL TAX SALE
- SCAVENGER SALE

MAP 17: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

The vacant parcel map identifies properties within the region that Cook County has classified as vacant, categorizing them into two types: Annual Tax Sale and Scavenger Sale. Annual Tax Sale refers to properties where taxes have not been paid for a year or more, and these properties are auctioned off annually by the county to recover the unpaid taxes. Scavenger Sale, on the other hand, involves properties that have been delinquent on taxes for more than two years, making them eligible for sale at a lower price, often to encourage redevelopment or repurposing by new owners. The map highlights these vacant parcels, offering a visual representation of areas where there may be opportunities for redevelopment or challenges related to unused land. Primary and secondary opportunity sites include the Former Seton Academy site, Zone A, River Oaks Mall, River Oaks West, and the Landings.





8.

PLACEMAKING & PUBLIC SPACE

PLACEMAKING METHODOLOGIES | TYPES OF PLACES | COMBINING PLACES & METHODS

The goal of placemaking involves transforming public spaces into vibrant, engaging areas that foster community interaction. They leverage public infrastructure to create parks and streets that reflect the local culture, encourage social connections and enhance well-being. Ultimately the process of placemaking combines elements of urban planning, architecture, community development, and design to make places that are functional, attractive, and meaningful.

The Calumet Triangle study area with its diverse set of land uses, access to regional transit and proximity to natural resources like the Little Calumet River provides plenty of opportunities for placemaking. This chapter creates a framework for how to leverage those opportunities. It begins by establishing a series of unique placemaking methods, defines types of places and then walks through specific recommendations for the Calumet Triangle study area.



PLACEMAKING METHODOLOGIES

In the Calumet Triangle study area, the challenge lies not in identifying if placemaking is needed - but where and how it can have the greatest impact. This is where structured placemaking methodologies serve as essential tools for identifying the opportunities.

Rather than prescribing a single solution, these methodologies offer lenses through which to evaluate the latent potential of streets, intersections, and public spaces. Whether it's reimagining underused spaces, layering various programming activities, or leveraging existing assets, each approach helps uncover opportunities that may not be obvious through traditional approaches to redevelopment.

This framework includes six complementary strategies:

- » Activating everyday spaces
- » Destination-driven spaces
- » Layered programming
- » Creating economic value
- » A sense of fun and delight
- » Activating multimodal intersections

Each one highlights a different dimension of placemaking, from tactical urbanism to economic regeneration and cultural expression.

Importantly, these methodologies are not meant to operate in isolation. In fact, if multiple methods can be utilized at a particular opportunity, it probably means that the opportunity is that much greater and that site should

be prioritized. Most successful placemaking efforts leverage to support and sustain the place over time.

By using these methodologies as a guide, future community planners and stakeholders can more effectively identify placemaking opportunities that elevate both function and experience to craft a better environment throughout the Calumet Triangle.

ACTIVATING EVERYDAY SPACES

In corridor planning, the focus is often on mobility and street infrastructure—but activating everyday, often overlooked spaces—such as sidewalks, vacant parcels, building edges, bus stops, and underutilized parking areas—offer critical opportunities to enrich the corridor experience and foster a sense of place.

By focusing on small-scale, people-centered improvements, like seating or art installations, planners can help bridge gaps in the corridor's spatial and social fabric. These "lighter" interventions allow communities to test ideas and build momentum without requiring major capital investment.

Activation also supports goals like walkability, safety, and economic vitality - transforming pass-through zones into destinations. Importantly, these interventions when done well can improve accessibility along the corridor ensuring all segments of the community benefit from the investment.

DESTINATION DRIVEN SPACES

Unlike everyday spaces, destination driven spaces are powerful anchors in the placemaking process. Whether it's a bustling plaza, a local market, a cultural venue, or a signature park, these are places people intentionally seek out and help define identity, stimulate activity, and drive economic and social vitality.

When thoughtfully designed, they create a strong sense of arrival and memory, offering experiences that encourage people to return. They become hubs of activity that support informal gathering, programmed events, and spontaneous interaction.

From a planning perspective, destination spaces can catalyze broader revitalization. They draw foot traffic, support local businesses, and increase demand for walkability and transit access. By anchoring a corridor, district, or neighborhood, they help knit together surrounding areas and inspire investment in adjacent spaces.

LAYERED PROGRAMMING

Layered programming is a dynamic placemaking strategy that brings vitality to public spaces by offering multiple uses, activities, and experiences across different times, users, and seasons. Rather than relying on a single function, layered programming creates a diverse and flexible environment that adapts to the rhythms of daily life, encouraging repeat visits and

broader community engagement.

In practice, this might look like a plaza that hosts a farmers market on weekends, lunchtime performances on weekdays, and movie nights in the evening. Or a transit plaza that becomes a pop-up gallery during art festivals and a gathering space for cultural celebrations. This approach encourages collaboration among stakeholders (e.g. community groups, cultural organizations, local businesses, etc.) with each bringing unique energy and programming ideas. It turns public spaces into platforms for community expression and innovation.

Ultimately, layered programming fosters vibrant, adaptable places that evolve with their communities. As a placemaking tool, it shifts the focus from static design to active, ongoing use ensuring that public spaces remain relevant, loved, and well-used over time.

CREATING ECONOMIC VALUE

Placemaking is not just about aesthetics but it is a powerful driver of economic value. When public spaces are thoughtfully designed and programmed to attract people, they stimulate local economies, enhance property values, and encourage private investment. Creating economic value through placemaking ensures that public realm improvements contribute to long-term community sustainability.

Strategic public realm investments often signal confidence in an area's future, encouraging property owners and developers to improve or repurpose nearby buildings. This ripple effect

is especially powerful along commercial corridors, where placemaking can help reposition underperforming areas into active, desirable destinations.

A SENSE OF FUN AND DELIGHT

Placemaking is ultimately about people and people are drawn to places that surprise, delight and invite joy. Incorporating fun and playfulness into the public realm is a highly effective strategy for creating memorable, activated spaces. When a place sparks curiosity or evokes laughter, it becomes an experience.

Fun and delight can be expressed in many forms: interactive art, playful street furniture, unexpected design elements, or colorful wayfinding. These features don't need to be large or expensive. A swing under a bridge, a musical sidewalk, or a pop-up ping pong table can transform an ordinary space into something special. They invite people to pause, explore, and engage with the environment and with each other.

In a planning context, designing for delight helps humanize infrastructure. Along corridors, for example, playful interventions can break up long stretches of hardscape and create moments of interest and relief. These elements also encourage exploration, increase foot traffic, and promote social interaction.

ACTIVATING MULTIMODAL INTERSECTIONS

Places where pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and drivers interact are often some of the busiest and most visible nodes in a corridor.

While traditionally designed for automobile traffic efficiency, these intersections hold tremendous potential as placemaking opportunities. When thoughtfully activated, they can become dynamic, high-impact spaces that enhance safety, encourage engagement, and express community identity.

Placemaking at multimodal intersections can also include programming and amenities: shaded seating, transit shelters with community art, kiosks for small vendors, or even micro-plazas where people can pause. These enhancements invite people to linger, interact, and feel part of the public realm, even in transit-dominated environments.

Crucially, activating these intersections supports mode shift goals by making walking, biking, and transit more appealing. When intersections feel safe, attractive, and interesting, people are more likely to choose non-vehicular travel mode that strengthen the multimodal function of the corridor overall.

TYPES OF PLACES

Successful corridor planning hinges on understanding how different types of spaces function individually and as part of a larger urban ecosystem. A placemaking lens allows planners to identify and elevate key locations along a corridor that have the potential to shape community identity, enhance mobility, and create vibrant public life. This section focuses on three critical spatial types: Nodes, Corridors, and Opportunity Sites.

Each plays a distinct yet interconnected role in shaping the corridor experience. Nodes are the high-impact intersections where activity concentrates and public life flourishes. Corridors are the connective routes that carry people and energy through the corridor, and must be designed as public spaces in their own right. Opportunity Sites represent areas of transition and transformation where targeted investment can unlock economic, and environmental value.

Together, these elements form a framework for implementing placemaking strategies throughout the Calumet Triangle study area.

NODES

Nodes are focal points of activity and identity along the corridor, typically located at key intersections where streets converge. These junctions are critical moments in the urban fabric, acting as both physical connectors and symbolic gateways. In a placemaking context, nodes serve as anchor spaces for community interaction and multimodal transfers which makes them ideal sites for targeted investment.

Given their complexity and visibility, intersections must prioritize safety, accessibility, and comfort for all road users - including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers. Enhancing intersection design through traffic calming measures, high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, and protected bike infrastructure are prime examples of placemaking strategies that can happen at nodes. These improvements not only reduce conflicts and improve safety but also help create welcoming environments

that encourage lingering and interaction.

Placemaking strategies at nodes emphasize human-scale design, cohesive aesthetics, and active street edges. Public spaces such as small plazas, parklets, or transit stops can be integrated with surrounding uses like cafes, cultural venues, or community centers. Visual elements such as public art, lighting, and signage help to establish a unique identity and reinforce a sense of place.

Planning for nodes involves evaluating both current functionality and future potential, addressing barriers to accessibility, and responding to community needs. With focused design and programming, nodes can transform from simple traffic intersections into public spaces that foster a sense of place and neighborhood identity.

Examples of Nodes include, but are not limited to:

- » Intersection of Torrence Avenue and Thornton Road
- » Intersection of Torrence Avenue and 172nd Street

- » Intersection of Torrence Avenue and the Little Calumet River
- » Greenwood Avenue and River Oaks Drive where the planned bike trail crosses
- » South Park Avenue and U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive

CORRIDORS

Corridors are the connective tissue of the urban fabric, linking nodes and opportunity sites into a coherent and navigable whole. In the context of placemaking, corridors are more than transportation conduits. They are linear public spaces that shape daily experiences, define movement patterns, and influence the identity of entire districts. They serve a range of modes and must balance efficiency with safety and comfort.

A well-designed corridor supports placemaking by creating an engaging edge condition along its length. This can include streetscape enhancements such as continuous sidewalks, protected bike lanes, green infrastructure, street trees and other landscaping along with pedestrian-scale lighting. Façade treatments, signage, street trees, and activated ground floors help to humanize the experience and create visual interest.

Corridors can also reconnect neighborhoods, enhance access to jobs and services, and provide space for cultural expression. Strategic improvements along the corridor can incrementally shift perception from “just a road” to “a place to be,” especially when paired with branding, storytelling, and community programming.

Examples of corridors can be found throughout the study area but some examples include:

- » Torrence Avenue between I-94 and the Little Calumet River
- » River Oaks Center Drive / Ring Road
- » U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive West of I-94
- » Frontage along car dealerships on Torrence Avenue

OPPORTUNITY SITES

Opportunity sites are underutilized or transitional parcels within the corridor that hold potential for new development, adaptive reuse, or public realm improvements. These sites often emerge at key junctions and represent the physical and economic leverage points for long-term transformation. When aligned with placemaking principles, opportunity sites become engines for community-driven change and catalysts for mixed-use, inclusive growth.

Each opportunity site presents unique possibilities depending on its location, ownership, market context, and surrounding uses. The planning process involves identifying these sites through physical analysis and community input, then prioritizing them based on their potential to contribute to a larger placemaking vision. Strategies may include infill development that reinforces street edges, pop-up installations to test programming, or conversion of excess right-of-way into plazas and parklets.

Critical to success is aligning development objectives with

community goals. Depending on their unique size and location in the Calumet Triangle area, opportunity sites should accommodate diverse housing types, local-serving retail, cultural institutions, and green spaces. Importantly, community engagement must guide decision-making to ensure these sites respond to local needs and aspirations.

By unlocking the latent value of these locations, opportunity sites can stimulate new investment and activity along the corridor and help transform the corridor into a vibrant and active place.

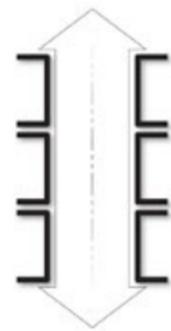
Examples of opportunity sites include, but are not limited to:

- » River Oaks Center
- » The former southwest clover leaf at Torrence Avenue and I-80/I-94
- » Vacant site northeast of U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive and I-94



NODES

NODE



CORRIDOR



OPPORTUNITY SITE



COMBINING PLACES & METHODS

With the types of places and placemaking methodologies defined, the next step is to activate these spaces through a toolkit of placemaking methodologies. These methodologies are not one-size-fits-all solutions, but adaptable lenses through which creative, implementable proposals can be generated and tailored to the unique conditions of each site. The goal is to translate high-level strategies into tangible interventions that elevate public life, community identity, and corridor cohesion. Below are some specific examples that are primary opportunity sites.

PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITES

River Oaks Center

The River Oaks Mall site has been identified as a primary opportunity site in the Calumet Triangle, uniquely positioned for reinvention due to its size, regional visibility, and adjacency to the Little Calumet River. Once a thriving commercial anchor, this site has been the subject of numerous redevelopment efforts and these recommendations are meant to augment those proposals. These placemaking strategies can work with any larger redevelopment effort to restore vitality, foster community connection, and better integrate with its natural surroundings.

Importantly, the mall's edge along the Little Calumet River offers an opportunity to reconnect the site both with nature and the region's transportation networks. By engaging with multi-use trails,

native landscaping, and river overlooks, placemaking efforts can transform a previously overlooked boundary into an asset. This southern edge of the site could host recreational activities such as kayak launches, outdoor classrooms, or nature play areas becoming a Destination-Driven Space and fostering a unique sense of place.

Layered Programming should bring year-round activation. Pop-up vendors, music events, night markets, and wellness programming can bring life to both the riverfront and mall interior spaces. Seasonal events, such as river festivals or light installations, can celebrate the river and anchor the site as a cultural destination.

Integrating the river also enhances opportunities for Creating Economic Value. River access and public realm improvements can stimulate interest in adjacent redevelopment—such as new housing, food & beverage uses, and eco-tourism businesses. A green corridor connecting the mall to nearby trails can boost walkability and encourage new development patterns rooted in sustainability and wellness.

Finally, Fun and Delight should animate the entire experience - from whimsical water features and interactive public art to play structures that reference the region's ecological and cultural history. Above all, improvements should be shaped through inclusive community engagement, ensuring that the riverfront becomes a shared civic landscape. By embracing the river, the River Oaks Mall site can be transformed

into a vibrant, connected, and resilient destination for the entire Calumet Triangle.

Former Seton Academy & Zone A

Situated just north of U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive along the highway, the Former Seton Academy and Zone A sites offer a strategic opportunity in the Calumet Triangle corridor.

The presence of the existing school building at the former Seton Academy provides a powerful opportunity for adaptive reuse - transforming the structure into a community-oriented destination that supports public life, creativity, and economic development. The building itself could serve as a Destination-Driven Space, reimagined as a multi-use civic hub. Options might include a community arts and innovation center, workforce development campus, youth recreation facility, or co-working and small business incubator. By starting small and then layering multiple uses inside the building, such as classrooms, studios, performance space, and shared kitchens, it can support Layered Programming that responds to diverse community needs throughout the day, week and year.

Meanwhile, the 25 acres of open land position Zone A as an apt site for a market driven mix of commercial, industrial, entertainment, and/or hospitality uses, Creating Economic Value as a Destination-Driven Space.

Both sites should be designed to support public realm activity and social gathering. Outdoor spaces can be reprogrammed with shaded

seating, community gardens, outdoor learning zones, pollinator gardens, or small-scale markets. Pop-up events like art fairs, film nights, or health screenings can extend activity outdoors and welcome broader community participation.

Given its proximity to the highway and U.S. Route 6/159th Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, these sites are also well-positioned for Activating Multimodal Intersections. Enhancing pedestrian and bike access from nearby neighborhoods through signage, improved crossings, and lighting can strengthen its connection to the broader corridor network. The site's proximity to the Little Calumet River is also a strategic advantage that should be leveraged. A visible gateway element, like a public art piece or landmark sign, can

help rebrand the site and signal arrival. By celebrating its past while reimagining its future, the Former Seton Academy and Zone A sites can become secondary placemaking opportunities.

SECONDARY OPPORTUNITY SITES

Car Dealerships Along Torrence Avenue

The cluster of car dealerships along Torrence Avenue represents a highly visible corridor segment within the Calumet Triangle study area. While these businesses are economically vital to the community, currently they represent a car-dominated streetscape that diminishes the pedestrian experience. However, these same frontages offer untapped potential for placemaking strategies that enhance the public realm while

reinforcing dealership identity and sales performance.

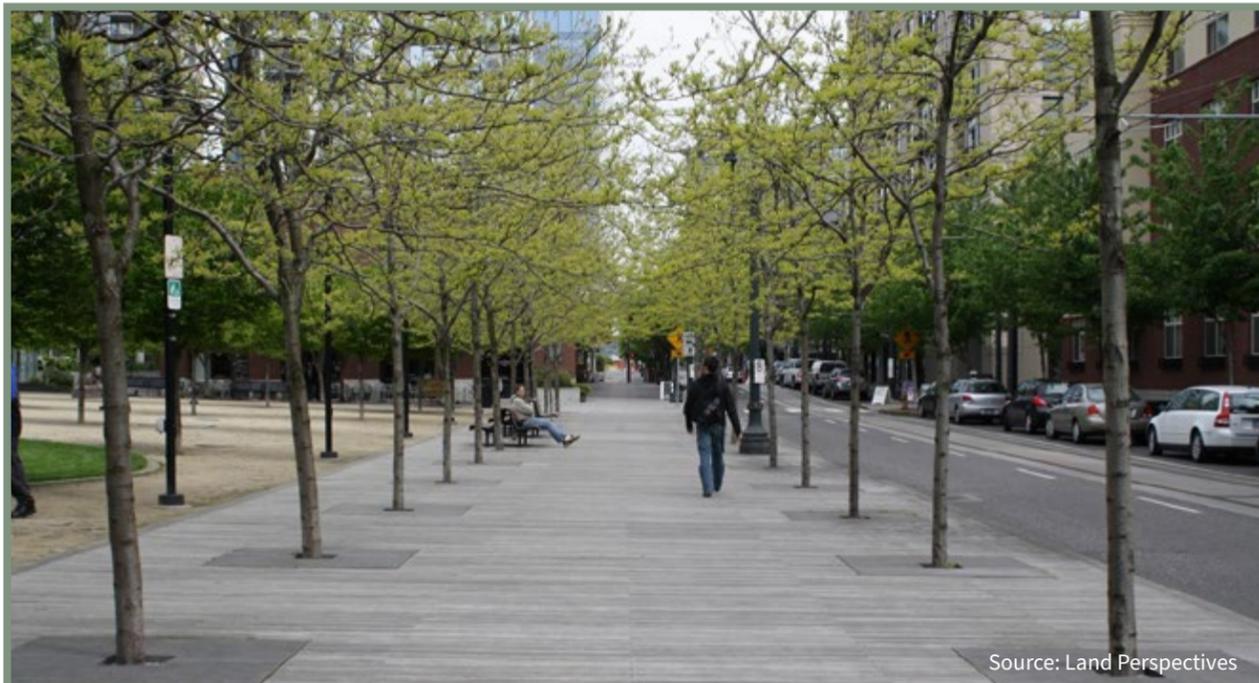
By applying Activating Everyday Spaces, these front-facing lots can evolve into more welcoming and pedestrian friendly environments. Tactics could include reconfiguring the edge zone along the sidewalk with landscape buffers, branded signage, and pedestrian-scale lighting to create a more human-friendly street edge. Raised planters, public art, and interpretive displays could serve both aesthetic and marketing functions—turning passive frontage into an engaging visual corridor that reflects the automotive identity of the area.

Creating Economic Value is especially relevant here. Enhancing dealership frontages not only elevates the public realm but can also improve customer perception and drive foot traffic. Distinctive placemaking elements,



Source: Kuert Outdoor Living

IMAGE 27: EXAMPLE OF CAR DEALERSHIP LANDSCAPING



Source: Land Perspectives

IMAGE 28: EXAMPLE OF A TREE-LINED PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE

such as sculptural displays of featured vehicles, interactive kiosks, or digital marquees, can function as branding tools while softening the boundary between public and private space. These enhancements show that investment in streetscape improvements can support both civic goals and private sector success.

Ultimately, these enhancements can help reframe this stretch of Torrence Avenue from a drive-through zone into a recognizable Corridor Identity—one that communicates pride of place, economic vitality and visual continuity. Through intentional design and collaboration, even auto-oriented land uses can contribute meaningfully to a richer, more connected public realm.

Greenwood Avenue, River Oaks Drive, and the Bike Trail

The planned bike trail crossing at Greenwood Avenue and River

Oaks Drive presents a strategic opportunity to transform this intersection into a vibrant multimodal node within the Calumet Triangle. As both a functional connector and a highly visible location, this intersection can serve as a model for how placemaking and infrastructure investment can work hand-in-hand to enhance safety, mobility, and public life.

Leveraging the Activating Multimodal Intersections strategy, improvements should prioritize comfort, legibility, and engagement for all users—especially cyclists and pedestrians. High-visibility crosswalks, raised crossings, and traffic calming features should be paired with aesthetic enhancements like artistic paving, branded wayfinding, and landscape buffers. These elements improve safety while establishing the intersection as a recognizable gateway within the corridor.

To celebrate the new trail connection, this intersection could become a Destination-Driven Space. A small-scale plaza or rest stop could be created on one or more corners, with amenities such as bike racks, shaded seating, hydration stations, and interpretive signage. If the appropriate operator was identified, this would be an ideal location for a small bike shop that offering repairs and other services. These interventions would offer both practical value to trail users and help connect to the surrounding community.

Layered Programming could further enrich the activation of the site. Seasonal events like bike-to-work breakfasts, youth bike safety classes, or trail clean-up days could activate the space and build community stewardship. Pop-up vendors such as coffee carts or local artisans could turn this into a place where people choose to pause, not just pass through.

Importantly, integrating Fun and Delight into the design will make the space more inviting and memorable. Interactive trail maps, whimsical signage, kinetic sculptures, or even musical pavement could turn the crossing into an engaging experience that sparks curiosity and encourages exploration.

The Landings

The Landings retail center is a typical auto-oriented development with expansive parking lots fronting the street and separating buildings from the public realm. While this format once had its advantages, it now offers a site for reinvention through placemaking and strategic redevelopment.

The sea of parking between storefronts and the public right-of-way undermines walkability, limits community interaction, and contributes to visual disconnection. By applying the Activating Everyday Spaces

methodology, the front edge of the parking lot can be redesigned as a people-first zone with tree-lined pedestrian promenades, seating areas, pop-up plazas, and stormwater landscaping. These enhancements improve comfort and safety for pedestrians while softening the street edge and signaling reinvestment.

Placemaking can also function as a branding tool for The Landings. A redesigned frontage with distinct visual character (e.g. colorful wayfinding, sculptural signage, or gateway elements) can help reposition the center as a vibrant, locally anchored destination. Design interventions that reflect community identity or celebrate nearby assets like the Little Calumet River can elevate the site's character and regional visibility.

Creating Economic Value is a key objective here. By reclaiming underutilized parking areas, The Landings can introduce infill pads for cafes, food trucks or

other flexible retail concepts that activate the street and generate revenue. A central plaza or outdoor dining area could attract foot traffic and extend dwell time, benefiting existing tenants.

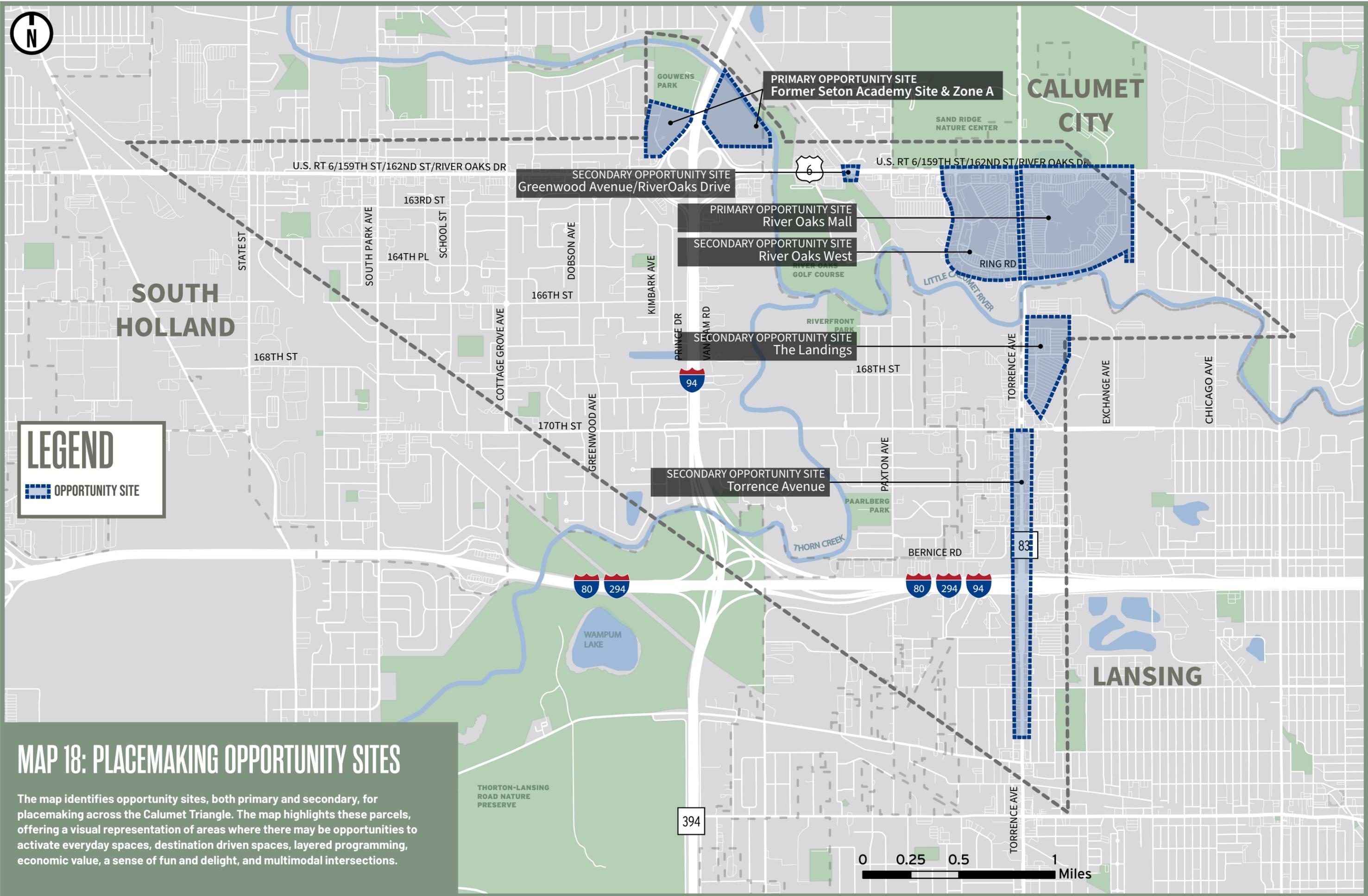
Incorporating Layered Programming—such as weekend pop-up markets, public performances, or wellness activities—will add rhythm and energy to the site, transforming static asphalt into dynamic public space. These interim strategies build momentum for long-term redevelopment while strengthening community ties.

Finally, the introduction of Fun and Delight—via playful seating, interactive art, or seasonal installations—can enhance user experience and encourage repeat visits. By transforming excess parking into public realm assets, The Landings can evolve into a walkable, mixed-use node that anchors community life and fosters inclusive economic growth along the corridor.



Source: SCB

IMAGE 29: THE LANDINGS



LEGEND

 OPPORTUNITY SITE

MAP 18: PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY SITES

The map identifies opportunity sites, both primary and secondary, for placemaking across the Calumet Triangle. The map highlights these parcels, offering a visual representation of areas where there may be opportunities to activate everyday spaces, destination driven spaces, layered programming, economic value, a sense of fun and delight, and multimodal intersections.





9.

POLICIES & PROGRAMS

POLICIES | PROGRAMS

Policies and programs direct non-infrastructure efforts to improve the transportation network and overall quality of life in the Calumet Triangle. They intend to complement the existing and proposed infrastructure, as well as each other. Policies refer to the framework that guides decision-making and future actions, prioritizing community values. Examples include Vision Zero commitments and Complete Streets policies, which seek to create formal obligations to reducing fatalities on the roadways and building networks to accommodate all users. Programs refer to the action-oriented initiatives of policies,

focusing on active engagement of the community. Examples include bicycle safety curriculum and monthly riverfront programming, which aim to educate and encourage community members. The recommended policies and programs are advisable across all municipalities, with some already enacted in the Calumet Triangle area. Having consistent policies and programs across neighboring municipalities will create similar expectations and goals on a regional level, creating a cultural shift towards multimodality and safe travel for all.

POLICIES

VISION ZERO

Establishing a Vision Zero policy extends a commitment to eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries while prioritizing safe, equitable mobility for all. Vision Zero moves beyond traditional safety approaches by incorporating a Safe Systems framework, which acknowledges that human errors are inevitable and designs infrastructure to minimize their impact. Vision Zero focuses on designing streets and systems to prioritize human life and well-being, ensuring safety improvements that benefit residents of all ages and abilities.

COMPLETE STREETS

Creating a Complete Streets policy prioritizes the inclusion of multimodal elements, such as bike lanes, pedestrian crosswalks, and ADA-compliant sidewalks, into roadway design and construction. The benefits of a Complete Streets Policy extend beyond improved mobility. Complete Streets create safer streetscapes by reducing conflicts between modes of transportation, encouraging walking and biking, and lowering vehicle speeds.

See **Appendix C** for a Complete Streets policy template.

BICYCLE PARKING ORDINANCE

A bicycle parking ordinance provides secure and accessible bike parking by establishing clear standards. A strong bicycle parking ordinance should include standards for the type, location, and quantity of bike racks. The best types of racks allow the bike

frame to be locked in two different locations and are compatible with U-locks, offering increased security. Racks should be installed in highly visible and well-lit areas to ensure the safety of both the cyclist and their bike. Where possible, bike racks should also be covered, which is particularly important for long-term storage to protect bikes from weather-related damage. Additionally, the ordinance should set a minimum number of racks required to accommodate the needs of residents, workers, and visitors. For maximum effectiveness, the ordinance should establish tailored requirements based on the type of destination, ensuring that facilities are appropriate for varying levels of bicycle traffic.

BIKE MONTH PROCLAMATION

A Bike Month proclamation raises awareness about the benefits of bicycling and encourages residents to choose biking as a mode of transportation. The proclamation can include a variety of bike-centered events, such as group rides, bike rodeos, and educational programming. Additionally, municipalities can partner with local businesses and schools to host Bike to Work and Bike to School Days, promoting active transportation and engaging the entire community.

See **Appendix C** for a Bike Month proclamation template.

STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

To create aesthetically pleasing, cohesive corridors across the region, communities should

develop landscaping and screening requirements that limit hardscape and promote green space and pedestrian infrastructure. Streetscape elements should include pedestrian infrastructure (i.e. benches), public art (i.e. murals), wayfinding, lighting, etc. All requirements should follow Complete Streets design recommendations.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

An Age-Friendly Community policy is a commitment to make transportation networks, public spaces, and services more accessible to people of all ages. The benefits of an Age-Friendly Community Policy extend beyond infrastructure improvements. By addressing the needs of older adults and young families, municipalities foster a sense of belonging and security, encouraging greater community engagement, while promoting active lifestyles.

See **Appendix C** for a Age-Friendly Community ordinance template.

LAND USE POLICIES

Consider zoning code amendments that advance multimodal, mixed use development within a ½ mile radius of Pace bus corridors.

- » Reduced car parking requirements
- » Bicycle parking standards
- » Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- » Density requirements, i.e., building height, yards, setbacks, lot coverage, etc.
- » Incentives like density, parking, and open space bonuses

» Updated lists of permitted and special uses

Consider zoning code amendments that support a more diverse housing stock, including the following options:

- » Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- » Missing Middle housing, e.g., duplexes, triplexes, townhouses
- » Live/work units
- » Workforce housing
- » Attainable housing, including households making 80% AMI or less
- » Housing for older adults, including independent and assisted living options
- » Residential adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized commercial properties

Enhance municipal incentives and support for property owners.

- » Façade improvements
- » Home maintenance programs
- » Revolving line of credit (RLOC) program
- » Large Business Development Program (LBDP) for major expansion or relocation
- » Participation loan program (PLP) for small businesses
- » Minority, Women, and Disabled Participation Loan Program (MWD/PLP)
- » New markets tax credits (NMTC) program
- » Tax increment financing (TIF)
- » Special service areas (SSAs)
- » Business improvement districts (BIDs)
- » Enterprise Zones (EZs)

Evaluate equitable measures to mitigate gentrification and

displacement.

- » Community benefits agreements (CBAs)
- » Inclusionary zoning practices
- » Rent control zones
- » Support of local entrepreneurs and small businesses
- » Community land trusts (CLTs)
- » Community investment trusts (CITs)
- » Limited equity housing cooperatives (LEHCs)
- » Leveraging of anchor institutions
- » Inclusive financing via credit unions and community development financial institutions (CDFIs)

Integrate transit and evolving mobility options with land use planning.

- » First and last mile transit connectivity
- » Public park-and-ride facilities for Pace and Metra
- » Private park-and-ride facilities for employment centers
- » Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and infrastructure
- » Micromobility, e.g., bikes, e-bikes, scooters, e-scooters, skateboards, etc.
- » Water transportation options via the Little Calumet River

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

A transit-oriented development (TOD) ordinance typically requires transit-oriented development in close proximity to a train

station, bus corridor, or other transit facility, particularly with zoning standards that allow for increased height, higher densities, reduced parking regulations, and other incentives in exchange for more compact site design, safe access to transit, more open space, and affordable housing units. One of the region's most prominent and influential examples of a TOD ordinance is from the [City of Chicago](#), which has built upon years of planning and policy efforts to advance TOD around transit facilities to enact its first TOD ordinance in 2013 with amendments in 2015 and 2019. Chicago's TOD Ordinance laid the foundation for the City's Connected Communities Ordinance, passed in 2022 and amended in 2025, that strengthened TOD zoning provisions to eliminate off-street parking requirements to encourage the use of transit, provide increased density around transit, and expand inclusionary affordable housing within new development projects. Communities like Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland can take similar steps to adopt their own TOD ordinances that align with their respective zoning codes and local policies regarding development and transit access. An adopted TOD ordinance may also be integrated into other policies that support development, affordable housing, and parking.

In addition, Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland should reference RTA's [Transit Friendly Communities Guide](#) as a resource on how to plan transit supportive land uses near rail stations and along bus corridors. It includes diagrams on how to retrofit suburban arterials to be more transit-friendly.

PROGRAMS

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive initiative designed to enhance the safety, accessibility, and convenience of routes for children walking and biking to school. Municipalities should apply for state funding to implement plans, programming, and infrastructure projects related to Safe Routes to School.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE EXPANSION

The implementation of an expanded wayfinding signage program seeks to guide pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers more effectively throughout a municipality or trail system, providing residents and visitors with clear signage that improves ease of movement and encourages exploration of communities and trail systems.

BICYCLE SAFETY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Integrating bicycle safety into the school curriculum is a proactive step toward creating a culture of safe and sustainable transportation in communities. By introducing age-specific, skill-appropriate lessons, students can learn the essential rules of the road, how to navigate traffic safely, and the importance of wearing helmets and using hand signals. Early education would focus on foundational skills, such as understanding traffic signs and maintaining balance, while older students would engage in more advanced topics, such as route planning and defensive biking strategies. This comprehensive approach ensures that students grow up with the confidence and knowledge needed to bike safely.

RIVERFRONT PROGRAMMING

Municipalities, park districts, and other local organizations should work together to establish monthly programming along and around the River Trail to engage and build relationships with the surrounding community. This can include ideas such as movie nights, farmers markets, group walks/runs, bike rodeos, scavenger hunts, concerts, yoga classes, kayak classes, river cleanups, and more. Riverfront programming can also be educational and incorporate local history, such as the Little Calumet River's role in the Underground Railroad.



Source: Alameda County Public Works Agency

IMAGE 30: SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Source: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Fond du Lac

IMAGE 31: BICYCLE RODEO



Source: Riverfront Recapture

IMAGE 32: RIVERFRONT PROGRAMMING



10.

FOCUS AREA

REDEVELOPMENT

RIVER OAKS CENTER | LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

This chapter identifies focus areas of the Calumet Triangle, which serve as anchor points for the surrounding communities. The focus areas include River Oaks Center and the Little Calumet River. The opportunities at these identified sites should be leveraged to boost connectivity 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 accommodate 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.



RIVER OAKS CENTER

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 is crucial to the 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.

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.

HISTORY

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 initial offerings.

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



Source: Deadmalls.com

Center's position as the largest mall in the South Suburbs, catering to a diverse customer base with a wide range of shopping and dining options.

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 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.

In 2021, 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. 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, the casino proposal faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was ultimately rejected by state regulators in October 2021.

Following the casino proposal, another 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 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.

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.



Source: The Times of Northwest Indiana

IMAGE 33: RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED CASINO

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.

1

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.

2

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.

3

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.

4

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.

5

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, SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

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.



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

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.



THE BLOC, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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

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.

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 the various proposals for River Oaks Center, the

underlying goal has remained the same: to reinvigorate River Oaks Center and restore its status as a key economic and cultural hub in Calumet City. 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan recommends advancing the latest redevelopment proposal for River Oaks Center to bring the City of Calumet City’s revitalization efforts into alignment with broader regional goals for the Calumet area. As a centrally located asset with significant redevelopment potential, River Oaks Center represents a key opportunity to reestablish a vibrant economic and cultural anchor in the city. The proposed transformation,

focused on a modern mixed-use development, reflects current best practices for repositioning declining retail properties and responds to community interest in creating a destination that supports commerce, entertainment, and residential needs.

Redevelopment should prioritize flexible, phased implementation to allow for market-responsive design while securing early wins that build momentum. Anchoring the project around a mix of retail, restaurants, and new housing, alongside the planned demolition of the former Sears building, will help attract sustained investment and renewed public interest. The concept of an “entertainment district” offers a theme that can guide future development phases, integrating pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, public gathering spaces, and multimodal access.



Source: Chicago Tribune

IMAGE 34: PROPOSED RIVER OAKS CENTER DEVELOPMENT RENDERING



Source: Chicago Tribune

IMAGE 35: PROPOSED RIVER OAKS CENTER DEVELOPMENT RENDERING



Source: Chicago Tribune

IMAGE 36: PROPOSED RIVER OAKS CENTER DEVELOPMENT RENDERING



LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

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.

See **Map 12** for an overview of how the Little Calumet River spans the Calumet Triangle area.

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 single-family and multi-family housing,

are predominantly located south 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.



Source: Illinois Public Media

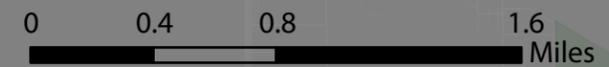
IMAGE 37: KAYAKERS ON THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER



LEGEND
— WATER

MAP 19: LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

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.



The Little Calumet River is an untapped resource of the Calumet Triangle and the south suburbs. Combined with the nature preserves and parks, as well as River Oaks Center, there is great potential to expand on the riverfront for recreational and transportation purposes. Creating a network of river trails in the Calumet Triangle will expand trail connections to existing local and regional trails, like the Burnham Greenway. Locally, the river trail network provides users with direct access to the Little Calumet River and other key destinations, such as Gouwens Park and Wampum Lake. Currently, there is a natural kayak launch located near the northeast corner of Gouwens Park.

Located just south of River Oaks Center, the proposed Blues Water Run would be an ideal trailhead and gathering spot for the river trail. The Blues Water Run seeks to incorporate a multi-use path, kayak launch and pier, dog park, music venue, and seating. These recreational amenities will attract a variety of users, building a welcoming space for the community and providing a newfound identity to the area.

Similarly, leveraging the highly anticipated Pace Transfer Station as a transportation hub for both

the river trail network and the Blues Water Run makes these amenities accessible both locally and regionally.

Additionally, there is a prime opportunity to amplify the region and the river's history with the Underground Railroad as an educational experience. This bridges recreation, education, and culture for trail users. Local historians and organizations have done extensive research and work related to the Little Calumet River's role in the Underground Railroad over the years. Working with these organizations can provide a wealth of knowledge to create educational signage and artwork along the river trail, as well as host educational and cultural events, building community interest and appreciation.

PROPOSED FACILITIES

Launches, Docks, and Piers

Where it is feasible and the ground naturally slopes into the Little Calumet River, if needed, the ground will be reshaped to be appropriate for water trail users of all abilities - creating a natural launch. The width of the launch should be around 8' to 10' and the underwater slope should have a depth of around 6" to 18".

Where a natural launch is not suitable, an ADA-accessible dock and launch should be constructed. The dock should have a maximum height of 9" to 12" above the water. The dock can begin on the ground or be a floating dock, where an ADA-accessible ramp would connect trail users from ground to the dock. The dock would be equipped with an ADA-accessible launch. This launch would either be in the form of a ramp that is fitted with a bar for users to hold onto, or a launch parallel with the dock, fitted with guide rails and rollers, allowing easy access and launch for water trail users.

Another option for areas adjacent to commercial activity and a larger expected volume of water trail users, a pier would be suitable. Similar to the dock, the pier can be either a floating dock with an ADA-accessible ramp leading to the water. The pier will have 10 to 20 slips, with several being ADA-compliant. The ADA-compliant slips would have a safe launch, a short ramp with an overhead grab bar, to assist users with disabilities into their non-motorized boat (NMB). The other slips would not have a ramp, and the kayaks and canoes would be placed directly in the water.

Additionally, public kayak parking would be available to allow riders to take advantage of the commercial activity at the site.

In addition to the already existing natural launch in Gouwens Park, the plan recommends implementing 10 kayak launches and a riverfront trail network (See **Map 20**). These launches would be natural launches, ramps, and a pier. The riverfront trail will travel throughout the study area and will require a few bridges/underpasses to be fully connected (see **Figure 42** for network and cost breakdown).

Parking

Where it is not available, five to ten parking spaces (depending on the size and expected demand of the launch) should be placed nearby. The parking spaces should be 12' wide, to allow for space to remove kayaks and canoes from the roof of a car. The spaces should have a minimum length of 18' to 22' or 40' to 50' (to accommodate for trail users with trailers). The parking spaces should be a short distance from the launches and should be separated from the launches via an ADA-compliant path.

Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage should be present in the parking lots directing trail users to the launch. The sign

should include a description of how to get to the launch and whether or not other amenities are available, such as restrooms. A map of the Little Calumet River Water Trail should be included in the signage, including other information such as hours, emergency numbers, water conditions, and launch conditions. Additionally, signage should be placed strategically throughout the water trail, informing users of the distance to the next kayak launches and what amenities lie ahead, such as restrooms, kayak parking, shopping, and restaurants.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Little Calumet River originates in Gary, Indiana, and flows northwest along the northern boundary of its watershed. At Blue Island, Illinois, it bends northeast and continues in that direction until it meets the Calumet-Sag Channel. From there, water travels westward through the Calumet-Sag Channel into the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, which eventually joins the Des Plaines River and continues to the Illinois and Mississippi River basins. During high-flow events, water from the Little Calumet River can reverse its course and flow into Lake Michigan through the O'Brien Locks and Dam.

The Little Calumet River and the greater Calumet River system have experienced extensive environmental degradation due to decades of industrial activity and urban development throughout the 20th century. Once a hub for steel manufacturing, petroleum refining, and other heavy industries, the river became a repository for untreated industrial waste, stormwater runoff, and combined sewer overflows. This led to the accumulation of toxic sediments laden with heavy metals, petroleum byproducts, and other hazardous substances.

Surrounding lands also suffered. Brownfields and contaminated industrial sites have left a legacy of environmental and public health risks. The degradation of water quality severely impacted aquatic ecosystems, leading to declines in fish populations, habitat fragmentation, and the loss of biodiversity.

In response to these environmental challenges, numerous remediation and restoration initiatives have been implemented over the last few decades. These include:

- » Regulatory and Pollution Control Measures: Stricter environmental regulations and enforcement have led



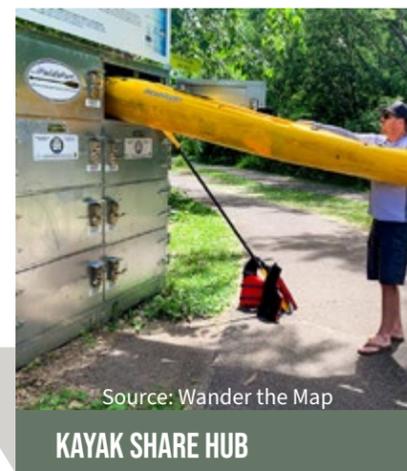
Source: SnohomishTalk

RIVER TRAIL



Source: The Dock Doctors

FLOATING PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



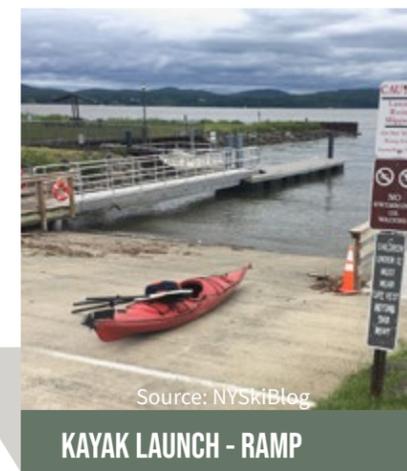
Source: Wander the Map

KAYAK SHARE HUB



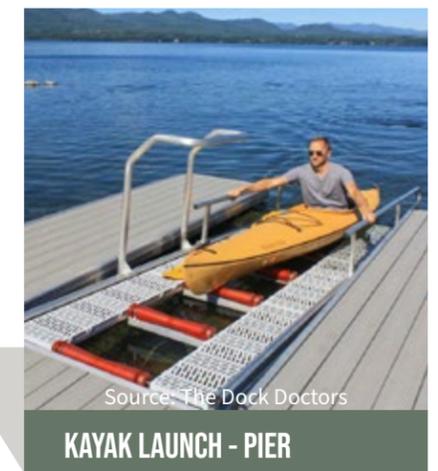
Source: Lake County Forest Preserves

KAYAK LAUNCH - NATURAL



Source: NYSkyBlog

KAYAK LAUNCH - RAMP



Source: The Dock Doctors

KAYAK LAUNCH - PIER

to reductions in industrial pollution. Stormwater management strategies, including the installation of green infrastructure and retention systems, have helped curb runoff and improve water quality.

- » **Habitat Restoration:** Targeted efforts have been made to restore wetlands, riparian corridors, and other natural habitats along the river. These projects aim to support native plant and animal species, stabilize riverbanks, and enhance ecological resilience.
- » **Community Engagement and Stewardship:** Local organizations and agencies have fostered community involvement through cleanup events, environmental education programs, and advocacy for sustainable development. These initiatives help build public awareness and encourage long-term

stewardship of the river.

Recent projects have aimed not only to restore ecological health but also to increase recreational opportunities along the Little Calumet River. Public access to the riverfront has been improved through the development of parks, trails, and paddling routes, supporting both passive and active recreation such as walking, biking, kayaking, fishing, and wildlife observation.

Case Study: Northwest Indiana Trail Network

In northwest Indiana, the Little Calumet River is part of an interconnected greenway system that includes the Little Calumet River Trail, the Erie Lackawanna Trail, and the Porter-Brickyard Trail. These trails link urban areas with natural destinations like Indiana Dunes National Park, creating corridors for both recreation and wildlife. The Little Calumet River Trail is frequently cited for its well-designed amenities, accessibility, and role in promoting environmental

awareness and local tourism.

Case Study: Little Calumet River Community Cleanup

The annual Little Calumet River Cleanup Day, co-hosted by Openlands and local partners such as the Forest Preserves of Cook County, Friends of the Chicago River, and Illinois Paddling Council, exemplifies community-led stewardship in action. The event spans areas from Kickapoo Woods in Riverdale to Gouwens Park in South Holland, engaging residents in river cleanup efforts, paddling education, and environmental programming. Volunteers receive supplies like garbage bags and trash pickers and are offered the opportunity to learn kayaking techniques and enjoy a community lunch. These events play a crucial role in fostering a culture of conservation and civic pride.

Key Priorities

As plans to implement a continuous riverfront trail along the Little Calumet River move forward, ecological considerations

must remain central. Key priorities include:

- » Avoiding sensitive habitats and minimizing ecological disturbance during trail construction.
- » Incorporating green infrastructure, such as bioswales and permeable pavement, to manage stormwater along the trail corridor.
- » Enhancing buffers and planting native vegetation to support biodiversity.
- » Monitoring and maintaining water quality to ensure safety for recreational users and wildlife.
- » Continuing community engagement to build lasting support for the river's ecological health and recreational future.

With sustained investment and thoughtful design, the Little Calumet River can continue its transformation into a regional

asset that balances environmental integrity, public access, and community well-being.

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

During the 19th century, the Underground Railroad was a secretive and loosely organized network of people and places that provided food, shelter, and safe passage to enslaved individuals escaping to free states and Canada. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 criminalized these acts of compassion and made it dangerous to offer assistance, yet many did so, often at great personal risk.

In the Calumet region, the Little Calumet River served as a discreet route into northern Illinois. Freedom seekers arrived near what is now Indiana Avenue in Chicago, continuing their journey under cover of night through barns, basements, and backwoods safe houses. These stories were nearly forgotten, but thanks to the work of local historians and activists,

this chapter of regional history is being revived and preserved.

Around the year 2000, a group of local residents formed the Chicago-Calumet Underground Railroad Effort (C-CURE) to research and promote this history. Though the initial effort eventually became inactive, it was revitalized in 2016. The renewed group, now known as the Midwest Underground Railroad Network (MURN), was officially incorporated as a nonprofit in 2019.

MURN has since expanded its mission to connect with similar organizations across the Great Lakes region. The group works to uncover and document the Chicago-to-Detroit Freedom Trail, a historic migration path of freedom seekers heading toward Canada, and to build partnerships with institutions and communities across Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. MURN is an affiliate of the Calumet Heritage Partnership and has gained national recognition through inclusion in the National Park Service's



Source: Hiking Project

IMAGE 38: LITTLE CALUMET RIVER TRAIL IN HIGHLAND, INDIANA



Source: Larry McClellan

IMAGE 39: OLD PHOTO OF THE TON FARMHOUSE ON THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER

Network to Freedom, joining a registry of over 600 verified Underground Railroad sites across the country.

MURN's goals are rooted in public history and collective memory. These include:

- » Commemorating key sites along the Underground Railroad through monuments, signage, and statues.
- » Incorporating Underground Railroad narratives into local school curricula to ensure that future generations understand the significance of this history.
- » Developing educational tours and cultural programs to engage both residents and visitors.
- » Establishing a formally recognized Freedom Trail between Chicago and Detroit that honors the journeys of freedom seekers.

The African American Heritage Water Trail

In tandem with land-based trail development, the African American Heritage Water Trail launched in 2020, offers another opportunity to connect people to the historical significance of the Little Calumet River. This water trail, which highlights 180 years of African American history in Chicago's south side communities, includes key sites like the historic Ton Farm, an Underground Railroad safe house. The trail has increased regional awareness of this rich heritage and can be expanded to complement a riverfront trail.

The development of a riverfront trail along the Little Calumet River presents a rare and meaningful opportunity: to unite environmental stewardship with historical recognition. This trail can become a public space where families enjoy nature, where students learn about resilience and justice, and where communities gather to celebrate

shared heritage.

Key Priorities

Any riverfront trail developed along the Little Calumet River should be designed not only as a recreational asset but as a living historical corridor. Interpretive signage, interactive exhibits, and public art installations can help tell the stories of those who journeyed along this river in pursuit of freedom. Collaboration with MURN, the Calumet Heritage Area, and local Native and African American communities will ensure these efforts are respectful, accurate, and inclusive.

To implement this vision successfully, local jurisdictions should work closely with the Midwest Underground Railroad Network, the Calumet Heritage Partnership, and Native and African American leaders. Together, they can ensure that the trail is not only ecologically sound but historically rich.

FIGURE 42: RIVER TRAIL NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

ID	Facility Type	Existing	Proposed	Total Cost
RF-1	Little Calumet River Trail	0.0 mi.	0.51 mi.	\$433,000
RF-1.1	Bridge Under I-94	0	1	\$389,000
RF-2	Little Calumet River Trail	0.0 mi.	0.69 mi.	\$583,000
RF-2.1	Bridge Creek Crossing	0	1	\$256,000
RF-3	Little Calumet River Trail	0.0 mi.	1.17 mi.	\$991,000
RF-3.1	Bridge River Crossing	0	1	\$262,000
RF-3.2	Bridge River Crossing	0	1	\$256,000
RF-4	Little Calumet River Trail	0.0 mi.	0.74 mi.	\$625,000
RF-5	Thorn Creek Trail	0.0 mi.	0.77 mi.	\$654,000
RF-5.1	Bridge Creek Crossing	0	1	\$256,000
RF-6	Thorn Creek Trail	0.0 mi.	2.18 mi.	\$1,846,000
RF-6.1	Bridge Creek Crossing	0	1	\$256,000
RF-6.2	Bridge Creek Crossing	0.0 mi.	1	\$262,000
RF-6.3	Bridge Under I-94	0	1	\$2,000,000
RF-6.4	Bridge Under I-294 and I-80	0	1	\$390,000
KL	Kayak Launch	1	11	N/A
KL-1	Ramp	N/A	N/A	\$30,000
KL-2	Ramp	N/A	N/A	\$30,000
KL-3	Pier/Boathouse	N/A	N/A	\$500,000
KL-4	Natural Launch	N/A	N/A	\$15,000
KL-5	Ramp	N/A	N/A	\$30,000
KL-6	Natural Launch	N/A	N/A	\$15,000
KL-7	Natural Launch	N/A	N/A	\$20,000
KL-8	Ramp	N/A	N/A	\$30,000
KL-9	Natural Launch	N/A	N/A	\$15,000
KL-10	Ramp	N/A	N/A	\$30,000



Source: Midwest Living

IMAGE 40: GUIDED CANOE TOUR OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE WATER TRAIL



LEGEND

- WATER
- RIVERFRONT TRAIL
- PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE/ UNDERPASS
- EXISTING KAYAK LAUNCH
- PROPOSED KAYAK LAUNCH

MAP 20: PROPOSED RIVER TRAIL NETWORK

The proposed river trail network for the Calumet Triangle creates a new system of river trail and water amenities. Key connections along the river trail include Gouvens Park, River Oaks Center, and Wampum Lake. Uplifting the Little Calumet River for nature, recreation, and transportation purposes brings a newfound vitality to the Calumet Triangle, with economic ties to surrounding land uses, such as the Blues Water Run and River Oaks Center. On the river, kayakers and small boaters alike can use the Little Calumet River to travel across the Calumet Triangle, as well as connect to river branches in northwest Indiana. The proposed river trail offers cyclists and pedestrians a place to bike, roll, and stroll near the water. Additionally, acknowledging and explaining the Little Calumet River's role in the Underground Railroad through educational signage can inform trail users of the region's historical importance.





IMAGE 41: RIVERFRONT RENDERING

This rendering reimagines the area east of Torrence Avenue just south of River Oaks Center in Calumet City (KL-3). The Little Calumet River weaves through this area and should be utilized to complement the nearby Blues Water Run site. Potential improvements to the space include the addition of a riverfront trail and platform that has ample seating, and kayak and paddleboard rentals. Another improvement includes adding a floating pier, in which people can use to enter and exit their watercrafts - as well as providing a space for people to enjoy the scenic view. Lastly, supplementing the recreational development with new economic destinations, such as a riverfront brewery, provides community members and visitors with options of things to do and creates a sense of place.



IMAGE 42: RIVERFRONT RENDERING

This rendering pulls inspiration from Lansing's Sports Complex. The Little Calumet River runs behind the baseball fields. Potential improvements to the space include the addition of an overlook on the river that has ample seating, lighting, and landscaping. Another improvement includes adding a restroom facility along with a drinking fountain. Lastly, adding a pedestrian bridge from the Lansing Sports Complex over the Little Calumet River would connect to the neighborhood north of the park in Calumet City, allowing people to walk and bike to the park. Currently, the only way to access the Lansing Sports Complex is from Chicago Avenue off of 170th Street, which requires residents in the neighborhood to travel over a mile around to access the park.



11.

IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES | KEY PROJECTS

This chapter discusses implementation strategies, including stakeholder roles, timeline, and funding and financing mechanisms, as well as key projects for involved municipalities to implement.

Key projects, which were selected based on stakeholder and public feedback, as well as for their improvement to connectivity and accessibility, are delineated according to jurisdiction.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

STAKEHOLDER ROLES

The successful implementation of recommendations presented in the plan depend on a coordinated effort among various stakeholders.

Governmental Agencies

Local, regional, and state governments form the backbone of implementation. While SSMMA hosts the plan, it will be up to the participating municipalities to lead project coordination, planning, and scheduling, ensuring alignment with land use policies, transportation goals, and capital improvement programming. SSMMA and the three corridor communities will also seek and manage funding opportunities, including federal and state grants such as those from IDOT and CMAP. Additionally, municipal public works and engineering departments will oversee design, construction, and maintenance of new infrastructure, such as bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and trail connections. Ongoing collaboration with school districts and transit providers will ensure safer school routes and stronger links to bus and rail.

Private Partners

The private sector is essential for expanding access and shaping the built environment. Developers and property owners can embed bike- and pedestrian-friendly features, like bike racks, shared paths, and direct connections to public rights-of-way, into new or renovated sites. Employers can encourage active commuting through incentives, secure storage, and showers, while local retailers and businesses might host events,

sponsor improvements, or co-fund amenities that advance the plan's goals.

Community Organizations

Grass-roots groups, advocacy organizations, schools, and neighborhood associations will drive outreach and engagement. They can champion active transportation by organizing walk- and bike-to-school days, community rides, and public workshops, while providing critical feedback on infrastructure priorities. Non-profits focused on health, sustainability, or equity can weave bike and pedestrian enhancements into broader efforts to improve community well-being, ensuring the plan reflects local values and aspirations.

While community organizations may organize engagement efforts, SSMMA and the three corridor communities should continue public engagement when implementing projects beyond this plan. This will ensure that new infrastructure, policies, and programs truly align with the public's vision for their community.

TIMELINE

Municipalities should review and incorporate recommendations from this plan according to their internal timelines and where it is feasible. SSMMA should support these efforts.

To ensure coordinated and effective implementation of the plan across the Calumet Triangle, each municipality, based on its individual priorities, capacities, and development contexts, should establish a phased timeline

for incorporating the plan's recommendations. While timelines will vary by community, a three-tiered approach (short-term, mid-term, and long-term) can help guide realistic and actionable progress. Throughout this process, SSMMA should act as a facilitator, providing technical support, fostering intergovernmental coordination, and helping identify funding opportunities.

Short-Term (0 to 5 Years)

In the immediate term, municipalities should focus on reviewing the plan's recommendations against existing comprehensive plans, capital improvement programs, and zoning ordinances. Initial steps may include adopting resolutions of support, prioritizing low-cost and high-impact improvements, such as crosswalk enhancements, signage, and sidewalk repairs, and integrating plan recommendations into upcoming street resurfacing or development projects. Communities should also pursue early engagement with local stakeholders, identify potential pilot project locations, and apply for small grants to kickstart implementation. SSMMA can support this phase by hosting steering committee meetings and assisting with early grant writing.

Mid-Term (5 to 10 Years)

During the mid-term, municipalities should begin implementation of more substantial infrastructure investments identified in the plan, such as new trail segments, rightsizing, or intersection reconfigurations. This phase may involve collaborating with regional

partners like IDOT or Pace to enhance multimodal access and connectivity. Municipalities can also begin to adopt or update local ordinances, subdivision regulations, and design guidelines to support long-term walkability and bikeability. SSMMA's role will help with coordinating shared funding applications, facilitating pooled procurement or design services, and monitoring project outcomes.

Long-Term (10+ Years)

In the long-term, the municipalities should fully integrate active transportation and roadway design principles into everyday municipal operations and future planning efforts. This includes embedding Complete Streets policies, requiring active transportation elements in all new developments, and maintaining infrastructure investments through regular upkeep and evaluation. Projects that require significant capital, such as grade-separated trails or new multimodal hubs, may be prioritized at this stage. SSMMA can provide regional benchmarking tools, continued advocacy at the state and federal level, and also measure performance over time.

FUNDING SOURCES

Once infrastructure, policies, or programs have been selected for implementation, identifying appropriate and sustainable funding sources becomes a critical next step. Securing funding ensures that projects move from concept to reality. Funding should align with both the scale of the project and the type of improvements being pursued - whether infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes,

traffic calming measures) or non-infrastructure (e.g., education campaigns, data collection, planning studies).

Figure 43 provides a breakdown of various local, state, and federal grants and programs that can be leveraged to fund both types of projects. In the Chicago metropolitan area, the majority of transportation-related funding comes from federal sources and is distributed through key agencies such as IDOT and CMAP. **Figure 44** provides the opening and closing dates for the call for proposals. The timeline shows current funding opportunities and may change with new funding legislation.

Ultimately, a layered approach to funding, combining regional planning support, federal grants, local financing tools, and private contributions, will provide the most resilient and flexible path to implementing the infrastructure, policies, and programs identified in this plan.

FINANCING MECHANISMS

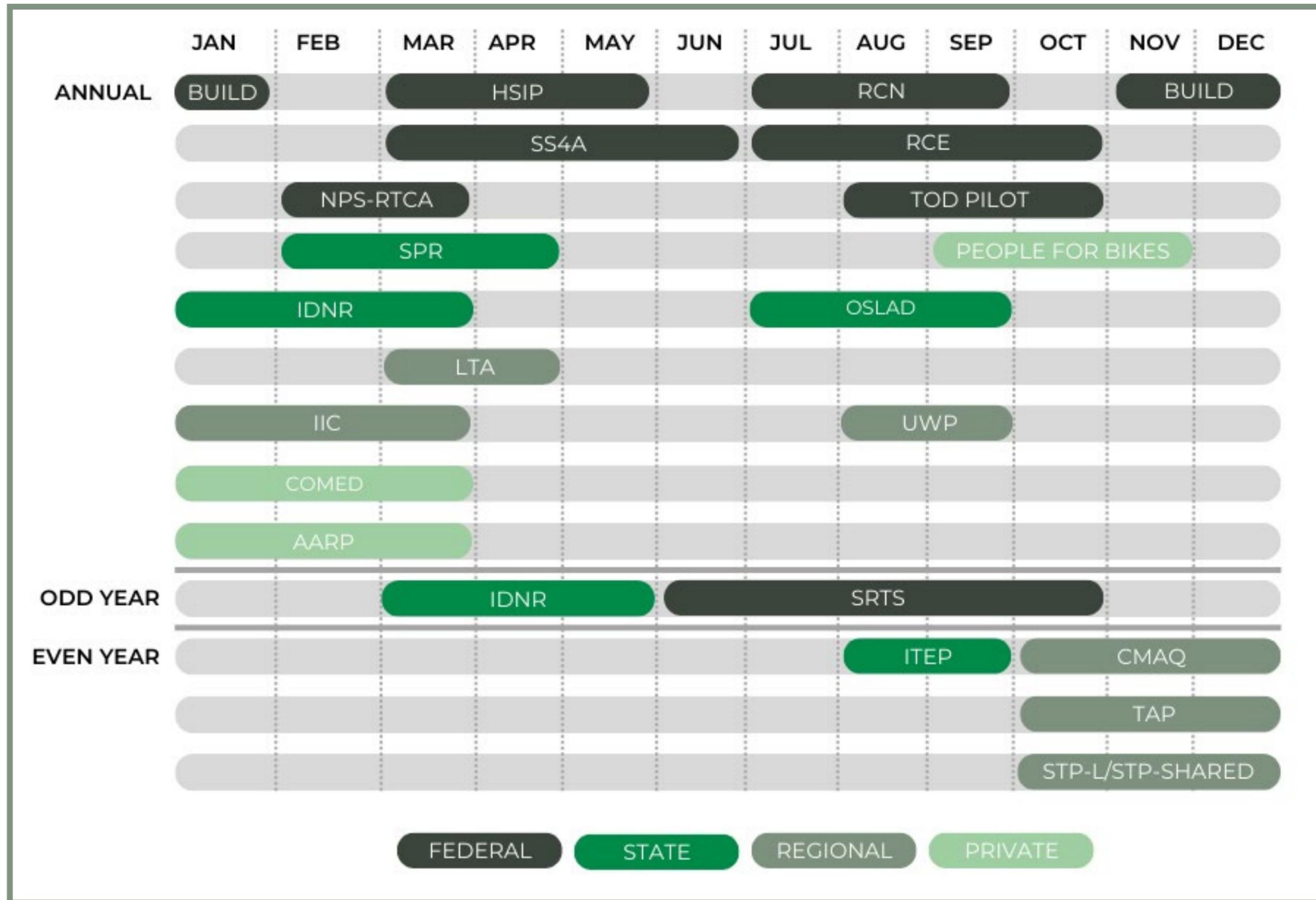
The participating municipalities have several local financing options to advance transportation and public-realm projects. One approach is to establish or expand tax-increment financing (TIF) district, areas where the incremental increase in property-tax revenue generated by rising land values is reinvested directly into streetscape upgrades, trail connections, and other public improvements. General-obligation or revenue bonds offer another tool. By placing a bond referendum on a ballot, the municipalities can give residents an opportunity to approve dedicated funding for specific capital projects.

Beyond traditional public finance, corporate sponsorships, naming rights, and community crowdfunding campaigns can rally local businesses and residents around enhancements that improve day-to-day quality of life. Philanthropic foundations focused on sustainability, public health, or community development frequently award grants that align with bike, pedestrian, and placemaking initiatives. Finally, the municipalities can launch pilot projects or tactical-urbanism demonstrations, such as temporary curb extensions, pop-up bike lanes, or parklets, using modest resources. Successful pilots create visible "proof of concept," building public support and attracting larger, longer-term funding commitments.

FIGURE 43: FUNDING SOURCES BY PROJECT TYPE

Project Type	Call for Proposals (Window)	Bike Parking	Bridges or Tunnels	Educational Programs	Off-Street Bicycle Facilities	On-Street Bicycle Facilities	Planning & Technical Assistance	Safety	Sidewalks	Traffic Calming	Traffic Signals
INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SOURCES											
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	Oct. - Dec. every even year	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	Spring annually	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)	Aug. - Sep. every even year				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
IDNR Bicycle Path Grant Program	Mar. - May every odd year				✓	✓					
IDNR Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD)	Jul. - Sep. annually				✓		✓				
Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (RCE)	Jul. - Oct. annually							✓			
IDNR Recreational Trails Program	Jan. - Mar. annually		✓		✓						
RTA Access to Transit	Fall every odd year	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Surface Transportation Program Local (STP-L)	Oct. - Dec. every even year		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)	Oct. - Dec. every even year				✓	✓			✓		
People for Bikes Community Grant	Sep. - Nov. annually	✓			✓	✓					
INFRASTRUCTURE & NON-INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SOURCES											
AARP Livable Community Challenge	Jan. - Mar. annually	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant	Nov. - Jan. annually		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Invest in Cook (IIC)	Jan. - Mar. annually		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Reconnecting Communities Program and Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant (RCN)	Jul. - Sep. annually		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Safe Routes to School (SRTS)	Jun. - Oct. every odd year	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	Mar. - Jun. annually		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ComEd Green Region Grant	Jan. - Mar. annually				✓		✓				
Outride Community Impact Grant	Spring/Winter annually			✓	✓						
NON-INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SOURCES											
CMAP Local Technical Assistance (LTA)	Annually, likely in Spring						✓				
RTA Community Planning Grant	Annually, likely in Spring						✓				
Statewide Planning & Research (SPR) Funds	Feb. - Apr. annually						✓				
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Pilot Program	Aug. - Oct. annually						✓				
CMAP Unified Work Program (UWP)	Aug. - Sep. annually						✓				
National Park Service - River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA)	Feb - Mar. annually						✓				

FIGURE 44: FUNDING SOURCES TIMELINE





KEY PROJECTS

With the Calumet Triangle intersecting three different municipalities, there is value in identifying key projects for each municipality to tackle. Key projects center around U.S. Route 6/159th

Street/162nd Street/River Oaks Drive, Torrence Avenue, and the Little Calumet River - in response to community and stakeholder input. Additionally, these projects primarily improve transportation

within the Calumet Triangle. These key projects are identified within each municipality below and in **Map 21**. Please note the numbers do not have any sort of priority attached to them.

FIGURE 45: KEY PROJECTS

Project Jurisdiction & Description
CITY OF CALUMET CITY
1. Riverfront trailhead at Blues Water Run near River Oaks Center and trail from Riverfront Park to Torrence Ave.
2. Sidepath along U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. from the I-94 interchange to Paxton Ave. and along Torrence Ave. from U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. to Ring Rd.
3. Sidewalks near River Oaks Center
VILLAGE OF LANSING
4. Riverfront trailhead at Lansing Sports Complex and trail from Torrence Ave. to Chicago Ave.
5. Sidepath along Torrence Ave. from Little Calumet River to Ridge Rd.
6. Sidewalks along side streets off of Torrence Ave.
VILLAGE OF SOUTH HOLLAND
7. Riverfront trailhead at Gouwens Park and trail to Riverfront Park
8. Sidepath along U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. from Van Drunen Rd. to Van Dam Rd.
9. Protected bike lanes on Prince Dr. and Van Dam Rd.



Source: LinkedIn

1. BLUES WATER RUN SITE



Source: Google Maps

2. US 6/159TH/162ND/RIVER OAKS



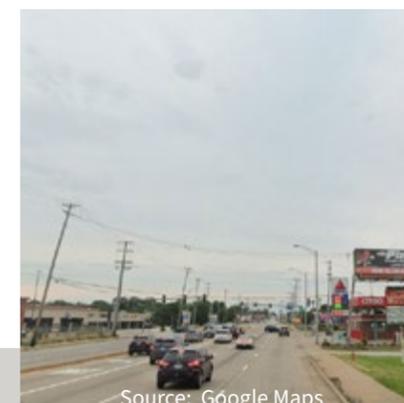
Source: LoopNet

3. RIVER OAKS CENTER SITE



Source: Epstein

4. LANSING SPORTS COMPLEX



Source: Google Maps

5. TORRENCE AVENUE



Source: Google Maps

6. TORRENCE AVENUE



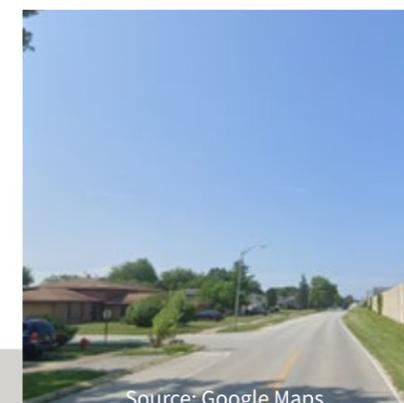
Source: Chicago American Giants

7. GOUWENS PARK



Source: Google Maps

8. US 6/159TH/162ND/RIVER OAKS



Source: Google Maps

9. PRINCE DRIVE

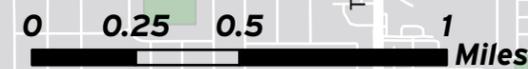


LEGEND

- PROTECTED BIKE LANE
- SIDEPATH
- SIDEWALK
- RIVERFRONT TRAIL
- - EXISTING TRAIL

MAP 21: KEY PROJECTS

The key projects are highlighted with municipal boundaries outlined to show jurisdiction. Often, projects extend across the Calumet Triangle area, involving multiple jurisdictions. These projects were selected based on public and municipal input. Separated and protected facilities were most desired given the high level of stress found within the Calumet Triangle. The sidepaths along U.S. Rt. 6/159th St./162nd St./River Oaks Dr. and Torrence Ave. provide arterial access for people walking and biking, with many destinations adjacent to these roadways. The riverfront trail highlights the first three stretches that connect the three municipalities along the Little Calumet River, with trailheads at Gouwens Park, Blues Water Run, and Lansing Sports Complex. While the trail should eventually extend further south to Wampum Lake, these trail legs are essential to providing recreational amenities and transportation across Calumet City, Lansing, and South Holland. The protected bike lanes on each side of I-94, which acts as a major barrier, offer a key north-south connection in the middle of the study area for people biking. The sidewalks throughout the study area give on-foot access to key commercial, medical, recreational, and institutional destinations in the Calumet Triangle.



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- » **Former Mayor Patty Eidam**
- » **Dan Podgorski**, Village Administrator

Village of South Holland

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- » **Alan Oviedo**, Account Supervisor
- » **Emma Salgado-Diaz**, Account Coordinator



APPENDICES

- A. PUBLIC COMMENT
- B. SURVEY RESULTS
- C. POLICY TEMPLATES
- D. BLOS/LTS METHODOLOGY
- E. VRU CALCULATIONS



A. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was available from May 2024 to June 2024 to provide a chance for the public to provide input on the draft recommendations and boards that were presented at the Open House held in April. With the page having just under 300 views and 191 unique visitors, the public comments are provided below.

General comments:

- » Concerned Taxpayer (May 22): "I'm most looking forward to the trails along the Little Calumet River with the kayak launching points. My only concern with the expanded bike lanes is how will it affect parking, especially on residential streets. Most residential streets are three car widths wide and I have a hard time imagining how will two bike lanes plus the lane of travel plus two parking lanes will reconcile into three car widths wide. As I drive down many streets, I see cars parked on both sides and I don't see how it will be possible to add a bike lane on each side of the street without removing a parking lane and/or making the street one-way. Neither of which would be fair to the homeowners. I would love to see clarification on that."
- » Book'Em (May 22): "I'm particularly excited about the North end trail providing a foot/bike path connection under I-94, plus whatever trail connection is indicated E-W across I-94 just north of the I-80 interchange, although I can't envision the logistics of the latter. I would still like to see the proposed trail or a new bike path on the North end connect directly to the Sand Ridge/Shabonna Woods trails on the North side of 159th, but I understand a sidewalk is technically available at 159th to connect them. I am also wondering why there is a gap in the proposed trail at Volbrecht Road/170th/Thorn Creek. Overall, this is exciting for me as a recreational biker and hiker like me since we don't have easy access to a rails-to-trails bike path as Lansing and much of NW Indiana do currently or simple access to the trails South of Glenwood or other CCFPD areas without taking a car ride to get there. I look forward to opportunities such as these to take longer walks and bike rides from my own neighborhood apart from standard sidewalks and having to navigate stop lights and road crossings the entire way. Thank you."

In addition, two comments were received privately through SSMMA's website.

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B. SURVEY RESULTS

The survey was available in both English and Spanish from September 2024 to November 2024. The questions and results are provided below. For the purposes of this survey, biking is defined as riding a bicycle, tricycle, or recumbent bicycle. Walking is defined as moving on foot or pushing a stroller, and rolling is defined as mobility through the use of a wheelchair, either manual or electric.

1. What is your age group?

- » Under 18 [2]
- » 18-24 [6]
- » 25-34 [3]
- » 35-44 [4]
- » 45-54 [1]
- » 55-64 [3]
- » 65 and over [4]

2. How would you describe your gender identity. Choose all that apply.

- » Male [7]
- » Female [16]
- » Non-binary/non-conforming [0]
- » Prefer not to say [0]
- » Prefer to self-describe [0]

3. What is your connection to the Calumet Triangle? Choose all that apply.

- » I live in Calumet City. [5]
- » I work in Calumet City. [1]
- » I visit Calumet City. [6]
- » I go to school in Calumet City. [0]
- » I own a business in Calumet City. [0]
- » I live in Lansing. [3]
- » I work in Lansing. [2]
- » I visit Lansing. [5]
- » I go to school in Lansing. [0]
- » I own a business in Lansing. [0]
- » I live in South Holland. [3]
- » I work in South Holland. [2]
- » I visit South Holland. [3]
- » I go to school in South Holland. [1]
- » I own a business in South Holland. [1]
- » Other: [3]

4. Please enter your email below if you would like to receive project updates. [CONFIDENTIAL]

5. Please enter your email below if you would like to be entered to win a \$15 gift card to a local business for completing this survey. [CONFIDENTIAL]

6. What modes of transportation do you utilize to get to or within the Calumet Triangle area? Select all that apply.

- » Personal car/truck/motorcycle [15]
- » Ride share (carpool, vanpool) [0]
- » Train [0]
- » Bus [1]
- » Bike or scooter [1]
- » Walking [3]
- » Rolling [0]
- » Other: [0]

7. Do you have regular access to a car?

- » Yes [14]
- » Sometimes [3]
- » No [0]

8. How often does traffic/congestion in the Calumet Triangle area impact you?

- » Daily [3]
- » Once to a few times per week [7]
- » Once to a few times per month [4]
- » Once to a few times per year [1]
- » Never [1]

9. Identify the three (3) most hazardous intersections in the Calumet Triangle area to navigate as a pedestrian, bicyclist, or motorist.

- » Cottage Grove Avenue and U.S. Route 6/162nd Street (near Jewel Osco) [3]
- » Cottage Grove Avenue and 166th Street (near Cottage Grove Christian Reformed Church) [1]
- » Cottage Grove Avenue and 170th Street (near McKinley Elementary & Junior High School) [1]
- » Paxton Avenue and U.S. Route 6/River Oaks Drive (near Chase and Citibank) [4]
- » Huntington Drive and 170th Street (near Illiana Financial Credit Union) [0]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and U.S. Route 6/River Oaks Drive/159th Street (near Mobil) [5]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and Ring Road/River Oaks Center Drive (near Denny's) [3]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and 170th Street (near BP) [2]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and 173rd Street (near QuikTrip) [4]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and I-80/I-94 (former cloverleaf) [4]
- » Torrence Avenue/IL 83 and Ridge Road (near Burger King) [1]
- » Other: [0]

10. When considering the Calumet Triangle area's existing transportation network, identify if each of the following is a strength or weakness.

- » Ability of major roadways to handle traffic [2 😊; 8 😐; 1 😞]
- » Condition of roadways [2 😊; 6 😐; 3 😞]
- » Roadway safety [4 😊; 7 😐; 2 😞]
- » Traffic flow and congestion [0 😊; 9 😐; 1 😞]
- » Access to interstates and highways [0 😊; 3 😐; 8 😞]
- » Pedestrian and bicycle facilities (e.g. sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, etc.) [7 😊; 1 😐; 3 😞]
- » Public transit options [3 😊; 4 😐; 3 😞]
- » Access to regional transportation [4 😊; 3 😐; 2 😞]

» Walkability [9 😊; 0 😐; 2 😊]

» Bikeability [6 😊; 2 😊; 1 😊]

11. How often do you walk along Torrence Avenue/IL 83 for transportation purposes?

» Daily [0]

» Once to a few times per week [1]

» Once to a few times per month [1]

» Once to a few times per year [1]

» Never [9]

12. How often do you bike along Torrence Avenue/IL 83 for transportation purposes?

» Daily [0]

» Once to a few times per week [1]

» Once to a few times per month [2]

» Once to a few times per year [1]

» Never [8]

13. How often do you walk along Torrence Avenue/IL 83 for recreation purposes?

» Daily [0]

» Once to a few times per week [1]

» Once to a few times per month [1]

» Once to a few times per year [3]

» Never [7]

14. How often do you bike along Torrence Avenue/IL 83 for recreation purposes?

» Daily [0]

» Once to a few times per week [0]

» Once to a few times per month [1]

» Once to a few times per year [2]

» Never [9]

15. How safe do you feel walking along Torrence Avenue/IL 83?

» Very unsafe [4]

» Unsafe [2]

» Neutral [3]

» Safe [1]

» Very safe [1]

16. How safe do you feel biking along Torrence Avenue/IL 83?

» Very unsafe [6]

» Unsafe [2]

» Neutral [1]

» Safe [2]

» Very safe [0]

17. Can Torrence Avenue/IL 83 be easily navigated in a wheelchair, with a stroller, or with a walker?

» Yes [1]

» Somewhat [3]

» No [7]

18. What prohibits you from walking or biking in the Calumet Triangle area more often? Select all that apply.

» Destinations are too far away [2]

» Lack of pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure [4]

» High traffic speed/volume [5]

» Not enough time [0]

» Limited mobility or disability [2]

» Too challenging to travel with my children [2]

» I don't walk or bike anywhere. [2]

» I don't visit the Calumet Triangle area. [0]

» Other: [1]

19. When walking, which types of infrastructure would you feel comfortable using? Select all that apply.

» Shared use path [8]

» Sidewalk [10]

» High visibility crosswalk [10]

» Mid-block crosswalk [3]

» Unmarked crosswalk [2]

» Road with paved shoulder [1]

» Road with no shoulder [0]

20. When biking, which types of infrastructure would you feel comfortable using? Select all that apply.

» Shared use path [6]

» Separated bike path [9]

» Buffered bike lane [3]

» Bike lane [3]

» Shared lane [0]

» Road with paved shoulder [0]

» Road with no shoulder [0]

21. How would rate the current availability and convenience of public transit options in the Calumet Triangle area?

» Excellent [1]

» Good [2]

» Average [6]

» Poor [1]

» Very poor [1]

22. What improvements would you like to see in the public transit system? Select all that apply.

» Increased frequency of service [5]

» Expanded routes and coverage [6]

» Improved reliability and punctuality [4]

» Enhanced safety and security measures [4]

- » Better accessibility for people with disabilities [5]
- » Cleaner and more comfortable vehicles [2]
- » Other: [3]

23. How likely are you to use public transit if the proposed improvements are implemented?

- » Very unlikely [3]
- » Unlikely [0]
- » Neutral [4]
- » Likely [5]
- » Very likely [0]

24. Do you have any additional comments about transportation in the Calumet Triangle area?

- » WHY IS THERE A NEED SUDDENLY FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT AND SIDEWALKS AND CROSS WALKS?? SUBURBAN LIFE IS LIKE THAT. WE HAVE ENOUGH CRIME AND VICE OUT HERE SO YOU WANT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE CITY TO HAVE EVEN MORE ACCESS OUT HERE TO SPREAD THE ISSUES THEY BRING FROM THE CITY!!!! SPEND THE MONEY ON MORE POLICE STATIONS AND LOCK UPS!!! WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH COPS NOW AND YOU WANT TO ADD TO THE BURDEN BY MAKING IT EASY ACCESS OUT HERE??? IF YOU DON'T HAVE A CAR STAY WHERE YOU ARE. WHY IS EVERYBODY SO AFRAID TO SAY THE APPARENT TRUTH? YOU'D HAVE TO BE BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB NOT TO SEE THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL!!!! BET THEY AREN'T CRYING FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT IN THE NORTHERN BURBS OF CHICAGO, NO THEY GET TO HIDE UP THERE AND HAVE PEACE.
- » None. Thanks
- » N/a

25. Rate the availability of accessible parks and recreational areas in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [1 Very low; 1 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [4 Very low; 1 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Lansing [0 Very low; 0 Low; 6 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [1 Very low; 0 Low; 3 Average; 2 High; 2 Very high]

26. Rate the ease of navigation with clear and consistent signage in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [2 Very low; 0 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [1 Very low; 2 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Lansing [0 Very low; 3 Low; 4 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [1 Very low; 1 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]

27. Rate the frequency of community events or activities in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [2 Very low; 2 Low; 1 Average; 1 High; 3 Very high]
- » Calumet City [1 Very low; 1 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 3 Very high]
- » Lansing [0 Very low; 0 Low; 3 Average; 3 High; 3 Very high]
- » South Holland [1 Very low; 0 Low; 2 Average; 2 High; 3 Very high]

28. Rate the maintenance of public spaces in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [0 Very low; 2 Low; 4 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [0 Very low; 3 Low; 1 Average; 1 High; 3 Very high]

- » Lansing [0 Very low; 1 Low; 4 Average; 2 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [0 Very low; 1 Low; 2 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]

29. Rate the variety of services and products offered by local businesses in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [0 Very low; 2 Low; 3 Average; 0 High; 3 Very high]
- » Calumet City [1 Very low; 3 Low; 3 Average; 0 High; 3 Very high]
- » Lansing [0 Very low; 1 Low; 4 Average; 3 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [0 Very low; 1 Low; 3 Average; 2 High; 2 Very high]

30. Rate the effectiveness of local policies in supporting small businesses in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [1 Very low; 2 Low; 0 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [1 Very low; 1 Low; 2 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » Lansing [1 Very low; 2 Low; 2 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [1 Very low; 1 Low; 0 Average; 0 High; 3 Very high]

31. Rate the availability of community centers or hubs for resident activities in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [3 Very low; 1 Low; 0 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [3 Very low; 1 Low; 2 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » Lansing [2 Very low; 3 Low; 1 Average; 1 High; 1 Very high]
- » South Holland [3 Very low; 0 Low; 1 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]

32. Rate the presence of public art or cultural installations in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [4 Very low; 1 Low; 0 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » Calumet City [5 Very low; 1 Low; 1 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » Lansing [4 Very low; 2 Low; 0 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [3 Very low; 1 Low; 0 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]

33. Rate the resident engagement with local initiatives and events in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [3 Very low; 1 Low; 2 Average; 0 High; 1 Very high]
- » Calumet City [4 Very low; 0 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 1 Very high]
- » Lansing [2 Very low; 2 Low; 1 Average; 2 High; 1 Very high]
- » South Holland [2 Very low; 1 Low; 1 Average; 1 High; 1 Very high]

34. Rate the sense of community pride among residents in the following locations. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Calumet Triangle [2 Very low; 2 Low; 2 Average; 1 High; 0 Very high]
- » Calumet City [2 Very low; 3 Low; 3 Average; 0 High; 1 Very high]
- » Lansing [1 Very low; 2 Low; 3 Average; 1 High; 2 Very high]
- » South Holland [1 Very low; 0 Low; 3 Average; 0 High; 2 Very high]

35. Do you have any additional comments about placemaking in the Calumet Triangle area?

- » WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR "COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES" THAT'S WHAT PARENTS ARE FOR. YOU START BUSING CHICAGO FOLKS OUT HERE AND YOU HAVE COMMUNITY CENTERS GUESS WHAT??? WHY DO YOU WANT TO TURN THE SOUTHSUBURBS INTO MIN CHICAGO? IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE PEACE IN THE BURBS, STAY IN THE CITY. DON'T COME OUT HERE WITH THE MINDSET OF THE BIG CITY AND DISRUPT WHAT WE HAVE ENJOYED PEACEFULLY AND QUIETLY FOR YEARS. TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR KIDS OR JUST DON'T

HAVE THEM!!!!!!

» None. Thanks

36. What additional land uses would you like to see in the Calumet Triangle? Select all that apply.

- » Community amenities (e.g., parks, recreational facilities) [8]
- » Businesses (e.g., retail shops, restaurants) [11]
- » Residential housing [1]
- » Mixed-use developments [3]
- » Cultural and arts facilities [8]
- » Educational institutions [4]
- » Healthcare facilities [7]
- » Green spaces and urban gardens [9]
- » Entertainment venues [6]
- » Public transportation hubs [7]
- » Office spaces [2]
- » Other: [1]

37. What is the frequency of vacant or underutilized lots in the Calumet Triangle?

- » Many [8]
- » A few [3]
- » Very few [1]

38. When considering existing housing and residential areas, identify if each of the following is a strength or weakness for the Calumet Triangle. Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Character of residential neighborhoods [4 😊; 4 😊; 4 😊]
- » Quality of housing [2 😊; 7 😊; 3 😊]
- » Range of housing options [3 😊; 6 😊; 3 😊]
- » Housing options for older adults [5 😊; 3 😊; 3 😊]
- » Housing that appeals to young professionals [5 😊; 5 😊; 2 😊]
- » Housing that appeals to new families [1 😊; 6 😊; 5 😊]
- » Value and cost of homes [2 😊; 5 😊; 5 😊]
- » Availability of affordable housing [1 😊; 8 😊; 3 😊]

39. What is the overall quality of housing stock (appearance, cost, property maintenance) in the Calumet Triangle?

- » Excellent [0]
- » Good [5]
- » Fair [6]
- » Poor [1]

40. What kind of impact would each of the following types of new residential development have on the community? Indicate your response by marking the proper box.

- » Single family homes [0 😊; 4 😊; 8 😊]
- » Garage apartments/accessory dwelling units (ADUs) [1 😊; 5 😊; 6 😊]
- » Townhomes [1 😊; 4 😊; 6 😊]
- » Apartments [4 😊; 3 😊; 5 😊]
- » Condominiums [1 😊; 6 😊; 5 😊]
- » Duplexes, triplexes, or multiplexes [2 😊; 4 😊; 5 😊]

» Housing for older adults [1 😊; 2 😊; 9 😊]

41. How often do you visit River Oaks Center?

- » Daily [1]
- » Once to a few times per week [0]
- » Once to a few times per month [2]
- » Once to a few times per year [3]
- » Never [5]

42. Why do you visit River Oaks Center? Select all that apply.

- » Work [0]
- » Retail shopping [7]
- » Services [1]
- » Dining [0]
- » Recreation [0]
- » I don't visit River Oaks Center. [5]
- » Other: [1]

43. What do you think would revive River Oaks Center? What businesses or uses would you like to see in the mall? Which businesses or uses would you not like to see? Responses can include ideas like introducing weekly youth programming, large community events, etc.

- » TEAR IT DOWN!!!! MALLS ARE OVER, AND UNSAFE ESPECIALLY IN THAT AREA. I STOPPED GOING THERE 10 YEARS AGO WHEN A YOUNG MAN "ACCIDENTLY" DROPPED HIS GUN IN MACY'S. BUILD SKILLED NURSING FACILITY THERE OR BETTER YET, WOULD BE A GREAT PLACE FOR REGIONAL POLICE LOCK UP SO YOU COULD HAVE A ANNEX TO MARKHAM.
- » None. Thanks
- » Take down the whole mall. It's a dangerous place with most of the stores inside closed. Create a ymca, community organization, or healthcare facility. Nobody goes there and if they do it's not for good reason. If you want to keep stores take down the mall and create a strip mall, where you have new stores that people go to. The stores in the mall are outdated and don't match the demographics of the area.
- » A wider variety of highly frequented stores (i.e. American eagle, buckle, bath and body works)
- » Mixed development: community center with activities/programming for all ages. Medical/dental services. More restaurant options. Or revamp with current store chains that are more popular.
- » Would like to see: Green space in/around parking lots Small "street fair" or farmer's market type events Art installations, especially interactive Large community events Locations for small businesses with a "small town downtown" feel Regular volunteer efforts for cleaning and maintaining cleanliness and beauty Wider array of restaurants, including more sit-down dining options More community center type places More places for people to reserve for things like picnics, reunions, etc. Dog park
- » Sports facility, family entertainment, restaurants, Riverwalk Trail, outdoor venue for music events
- » Large community events.
- » Áreas de comedor, outlets, centros de diversión infantil, seguridad policial.

44. What attributes make a commercial development appealing to you? Select all that apply.

- » Location (close to work or home) [8]
- » Locally owned businesses [3]
- » National chains [6]
- » Type/variety of businesses [9]
- » Adequate landscaping [10]

- » Pedestrian/bicyclist friendly [4]
 - » Accessible by transit [5]
 - » Size and scale of buildings [2]
 - » Design of buildings and overall site [6]
 - » Other: [0]
45. How often do you visit or travel on the Little Calumet River?
- » Daily [0]
 - » Once to a few times per week [1]
 - » Once to a few times per month [4]
 - » Once to a few times per year [1]
 - » Never [5]
46. What activities do you currently participate in at the Little Calumet River? Select all that apply.
- » Walking/jogging [1]
 - » Biking [2]
 - » Fishing [0]
 - » Boating/kayaking [0]
 - » Picnicking [1]
 - » Observing wildlife [1]
 - » I don't visit or travel on the Little Calumet River. [4]
 - » Other: [1]
47. What improvements would you like to see at the Little Calumet River? Select all that apply.
- » Improved trails and pathways [8]
 - » Enhanced water access for boating/kayaking [5]
 - » More seating and picnic areas [8]
 - » Better lighting and safety measures [8]
 - » Increased signage and wayfinding [6]
 - » Environmental conservation efforts [5]
 - » Community events and programming [7]
 - » Other: [1]
48. Do you have any additional comments about land use in the Calumet Triangle area?
- » WHY IS EVERYONE SUGAR COATING THIS MESS? BE REAL AND UNDERSTAND, THE VERY REASON THESE AREAS ARE BLIGHTED, IS THE PUPULATION THAT HAS SETTLED HERE NOW AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU PUT OUT HERE IS WILL HAPPEN AGAIN, WHY MOVE TO THE BURBS TO DEMAND WE SPEND OUR TAXES ON CROSS WALKS AND BIKE PATHS? IF YOU HAVE TO WALK EVERYWHERE, DON'T MOVE OUT HERE. HOW ARE YOU GOING TO MOVE SOMEWHERE AND DEMAND TO MAKE CHANGES BECAUSE YOU REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE R U L E S AND CUSTOMS OF A PLACE YOU HAVE FREELY CHOSEN TO LIVE? MY TAXES NEED TO GO FOR BETTER AND MORE IMPORTANT THINGS.
 - » None. Thanks
 - » N/a

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C. POLICY TEMPLATES

BIKE MONTH PROCLAMATION

A RESOLUTION OF THE [MUNICIPALITY], DECLARING THE MONTH OF [MONTH, YEAR] AS “BIKE MONTH”

WHEREAS, bicycling is an environmentally friendly, cost-effective, and healthful means of transportation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] recognizes the need for alternative transportation options to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and enhance the overall quality of life for its residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] is committed to increasing opportunities for bicycling through the development of bike-friendly infrastructure, policies, and programs; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] acknowledges the efforts of local bicycling clubs, community organizations, and schools in promoting bicycle safety and bicycling as a means of transportation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, Bike Month aims to celebrate the unique power of the bicycle and the many reasons we ride, from commuting, fitness, to simply exploring the community; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] encourages all its residents and visitors to ride their bicycles during Bike Month as a way to foster a more active and sustainable community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of the [MUNICIPALITY]:

SECTION 1. That the month of [MONTH, YEAR] is hereby declared as “Bike Month” in the [MUNICIPALITY].

SECTION 2. That the Board urges all residents to participate in Bike Month activities and to consider using bicycles for daily transportation needs, not just during Bike Month but all year round.

SECTION 3. That the [MUNICIPALITY] continues to support and enhance its bicycling infrastructure, programs, and policies, making the city a leading bicycle-friendly community.

SECTION 4. That this resolution be effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

AGE-FRIENDLY CITY RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE [MUNICIPALITY], DECLARING A COMMITMENT TO BECOMING AN AGE-FRIENDLY CITY

WHEREAS, the global population is aging, with a significant increase in the number of older adults expected in the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] recognizes the value and contribution of its older residents and the importance of creating an environment that supports an aging population; and

WHEREAS, an Age-Friendly City is one that encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) has outlined key features of Age-Friendly Cities that include: walkable streets, accessible housing and transportation options, opportunities for seniors to participate in community activities, and access to key services; and

WHEREAS, the [MUNICIPALITY] acknowledges the benefits of an Age-Friendly initiative that will support all ages, from young to old, and enhance the well-being, health, and engagement of all residents; and

WHEREAS, by committing to become an Age-Friendly City, the [MUNICIPALITY] will engage in a continuous improvement process to make the city more inclusive for its older residents while also benefiting residents of all ages;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of the [MUNICIPALITY]:

SECTION 1. That the [MUNICIPALITY] hereby declares its commitment to becoming an Age-Friendly City.

SECTION 2. That the Board directs city departments to consider and incorporate age-friendly principles in their planning, programs, and policies.

SECTION 3. That the [MUNICIPALITY] seeks to collaborate with local organizations, businesses, community groups, and residents to promote and implement age-friendly initiatives throughout the community.

SECTION 4. That the [MUNICIPALITY] commits to pursuing the World Health Organization’s Age-Friendly Cities designation and will undertake necessary steps to achieve this recognition.

SECTION 5. That this resolution be effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

COMPLETE STREETS ORDINANCE

As envisioned, Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all users of our roadways and trail systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, emergency vehicles, freight and commercial vehicles, and people of all ages and abilities. Furthermore, Complete Streets principles contribute toward the safety, health, equity, economic viability, and quality of life in a community by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation, and retail destinations by improving the transportation environments throughout the [MUNICIPALITY]. It is the intent of the [MUNICIPALITY] to formalize the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of streets so they are safe for all ages and abilities and provide a multimodal transportation network.

The purpose of the [MUNICIPALITY]'s Complete Streets ordinance is to accommodate all road users by creating a road and trail network that meets the needs of individuals by utilizing a variety of transportation needs. Furthermore, this ordinance directs decision makers to consistently plan, design, construct, and maintain streets to accommodate all road users, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, first responders, and users of freight and commercial vehicles.

Diverse Users

The [MUNICIPALITY] recognizes that users of various modes of transportation, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, emergency responders, freight and commercial drivers, are legitimate users of the transportation network and deserve safe facilities. "All Users" includes users of all ages and abilities. While this ordinance applies throughout the community, the [MUNICIPALITY] shall develop plans and set goals to prioritize and ensure successful implementation of Complete Streets in neighborhoods with historic disinvestment, poor health outcomes, and neighborhoods where fewer than 75% of households have access to a car.

Full Commitment

The [MUNICIPALITY] recognizes that all projects, new, maintenance, or reconstruction, are opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. Furthermore, the [MUNICIPALITY] will, to the maximum extent practical, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide a comprehensive and integrated street network of facilities for people of all ages and abilities. While any such Complete Streets projects are being constructed or repaired, the [MUNICIPALITY] shall ensure that appropriate accommodations are provided to support the safe, reliable movement of all road users within the project area, regardless of their preferred mode of transportation.

Clear Exceptions

Transportation infrastructure may only be excluded, upon approval of the Board of the [MUNICIPALITY], where documentation and data indicate that the costs or impacts of accommodation are excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use or future use. Further, any and all documentation or data provided for the purpose of demonstrating a proposed exception must be made publicly available and identified as such via public notice at least 30 days prior to granting said exception.

Design

Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects, as appropriate. All transportation infrastructure and street design projects requiring funding or approval by the [MUNICIPALITY] as well as projects funded by the State and/or Federal government shall adhere to the [MUNICIPALITY]'s Complete Streets ordinance. The [MUNICIPALITY]'s Complete Streets ordinance will focus on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all road users. Complete Streets will be integrated into policies, planning, and design of all types of public and private projects, including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance of transportation facilities on streets and redevelopment projects. To the greatest extent possible, the [MUNICIPALITY] shall work to incorporate native plant species and sustainable landscaping elements into Complete Streets projects.

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D. BLOS/LTS METHODOLOGY

BICYCLE LEVEL OF STRESS (BLOS)

Objective

The main goal of the bicycle 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:

$$BLTS = \text{MAX}(0, 10 - \text{Speed Penalty} - \text{Traffic Penalty} + \text{Road Width Benefit} + \text{Shoulder Width Benefit} - \text{Parking Penalty})$$

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.

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS (LTS)

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:

$$LTS = \text{Base Score} - \text{Traffic Control Adjustment} + \text{Traffic Volume Adjustment} - \text{Crossing Distance Adjustment} + \text{Visibility Adjustment}$$

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.



E. VRU CALCULATIONS

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 VRU-related 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.