CMAP

Robbins Transit Oriented Development and Industrial Areas Plan

SEPTEMBER 2020

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to:

Additional thanks to:

Funding Acknowledgement
This project was supported through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's (CMAP) Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program, which is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and the Chicago Community Trust. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) and CMAP would like to thank these funders for their support for this project.

Unless otherwise specified, all photos are by CMAP staff.

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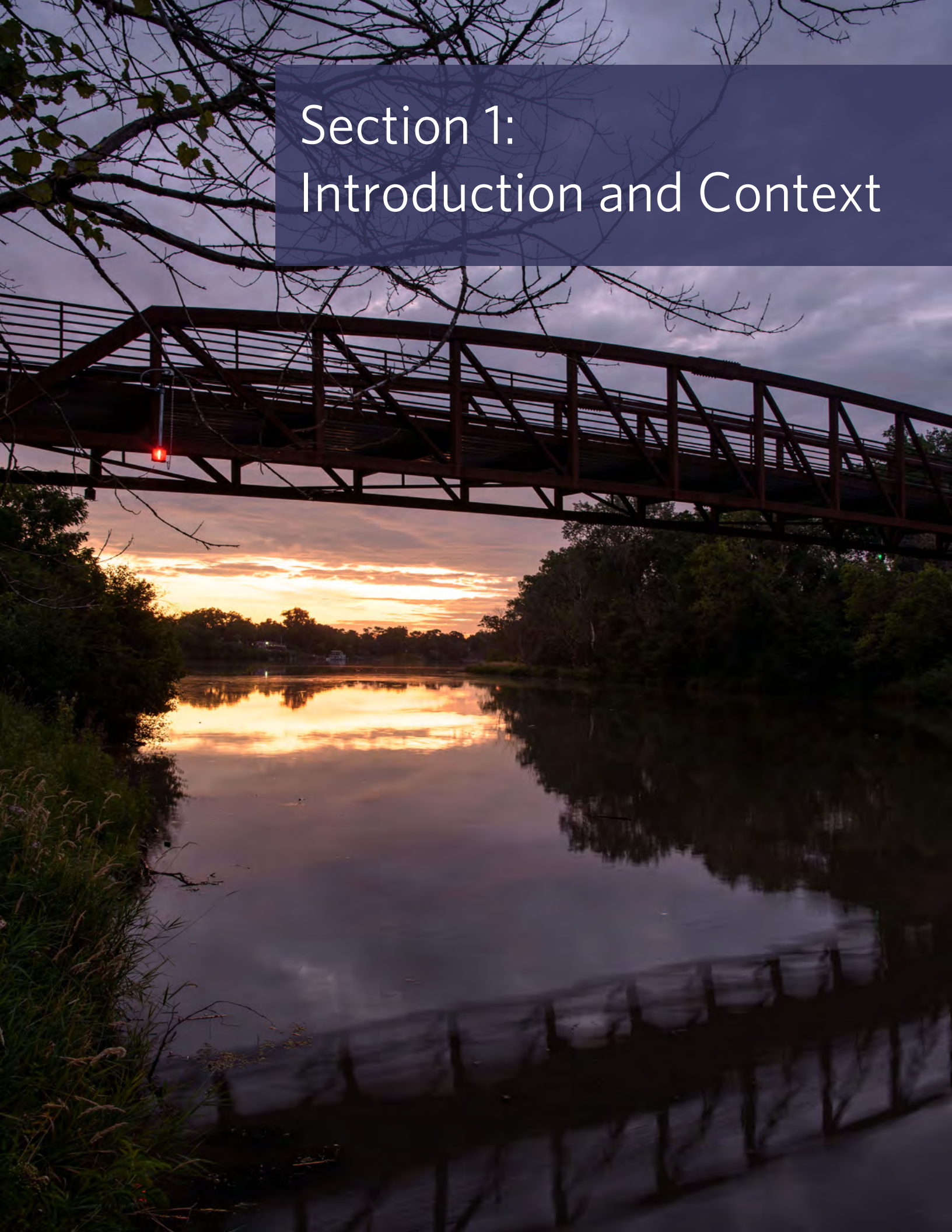


Section 1: Introduction and Context

Robbins Park, a Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) project, is scheduled to open in the fall of 2021. The Park will be a 52-acre stormwater management facility featuring a retention "lake" surrounded by 30 acres of parkland within the Village of Robbins a half mile north of the Robbins Metra Station (as shown in figure 1.0). The project will allow new development opportunities west of the train station by removing land from the Cal-Sag floodplain, as demonstrated by the next two figures.

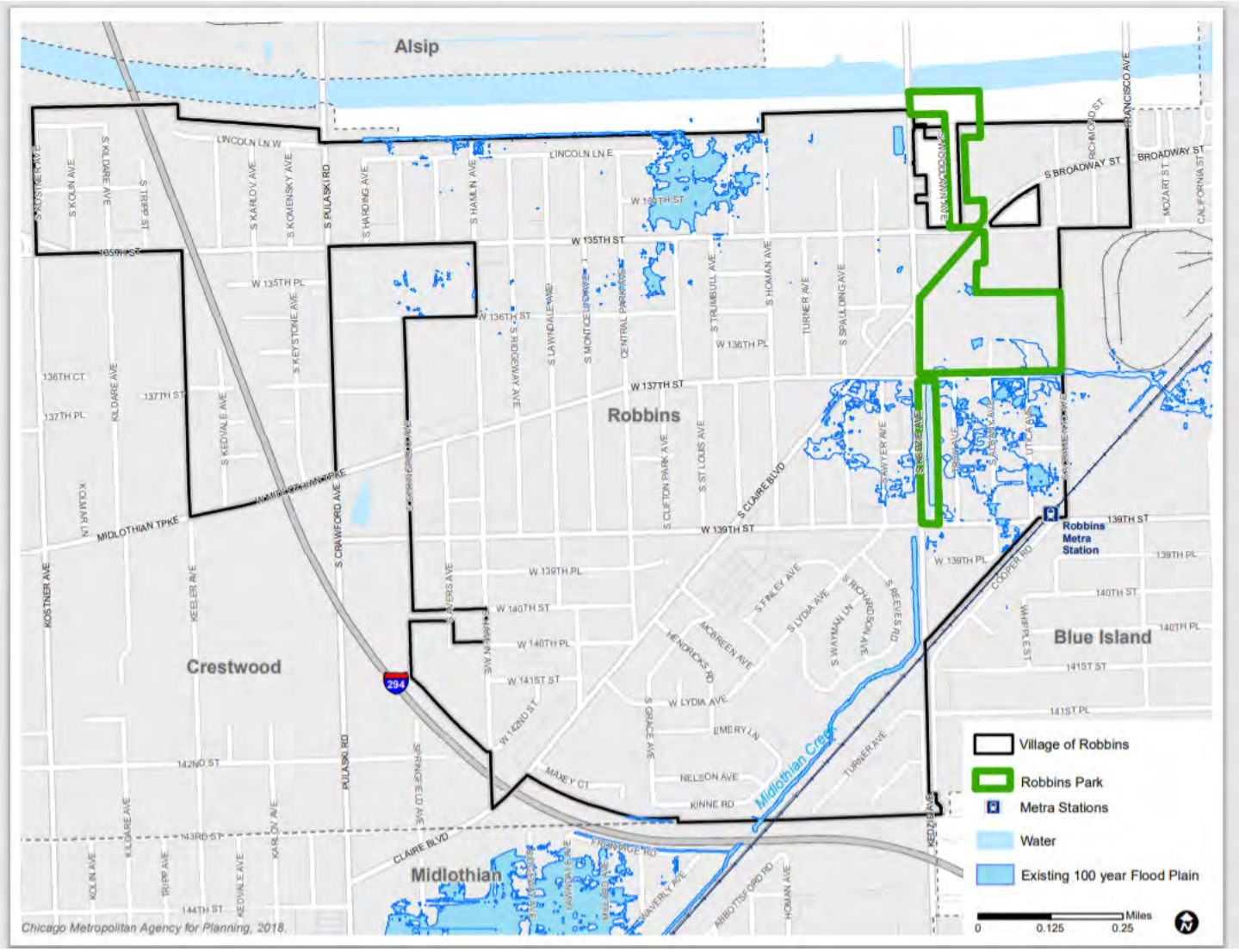


Figure 1.0: Current Cal Sag Flood Plain within Robbins and Future Robbins Park

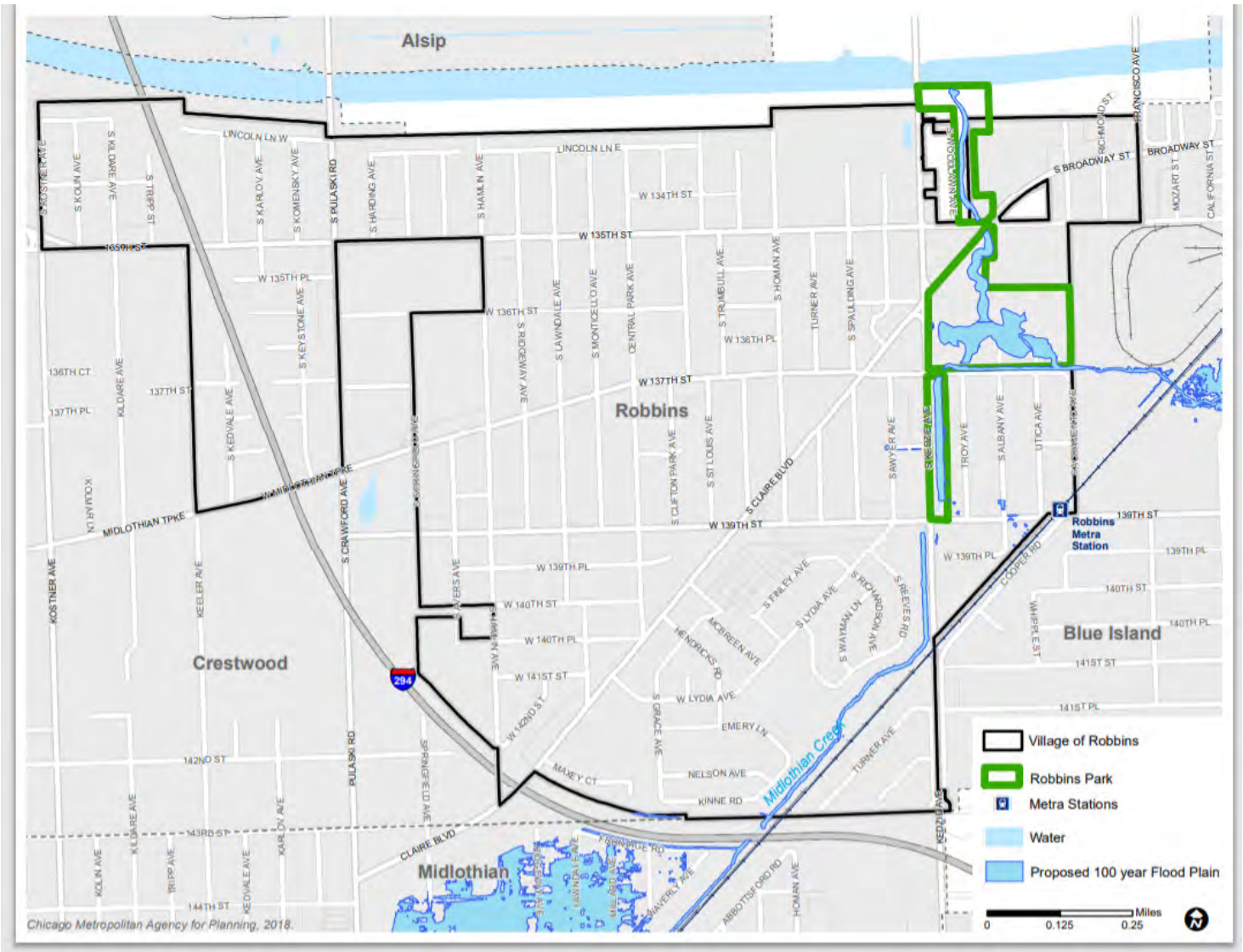


Figure 1.1: Cal-Sag Flood Plain after Robbins Park

The Park's impact of removing land from a floodplain near a Metra Station provides Robbins significant opportunity for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), typically defined as a walkable, moderate to high-density community centered around a transit stop. Proximity to transit provides greater access to regional jobs and destinations, while enhanced density provides a greater pool of residents to support community amenities. To capitalize, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), through CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) Program and the RTA's Community Planning Program, and the Village of Robbins began a community-driven process in 2018 to create The Robbins Transit Oriented Development and Industrial Areas Plan. The Plan targets a primary TOD area within a quarter mile of the Metra station, in Figure 1.3 below outlined in red, and a secondary TOD area that extends west a half mile from the Metra station to Claire Boulevard – an important community "main street", the portion outlined in a dashed red line in Figure 1.3 below. In conjunction, this Plan also incorporates a 17-acre vacant industrial parcel, a former community power plant, to the west of the future Park to additionally draw on the community's development potential (outlined in purple Figure 1.3).

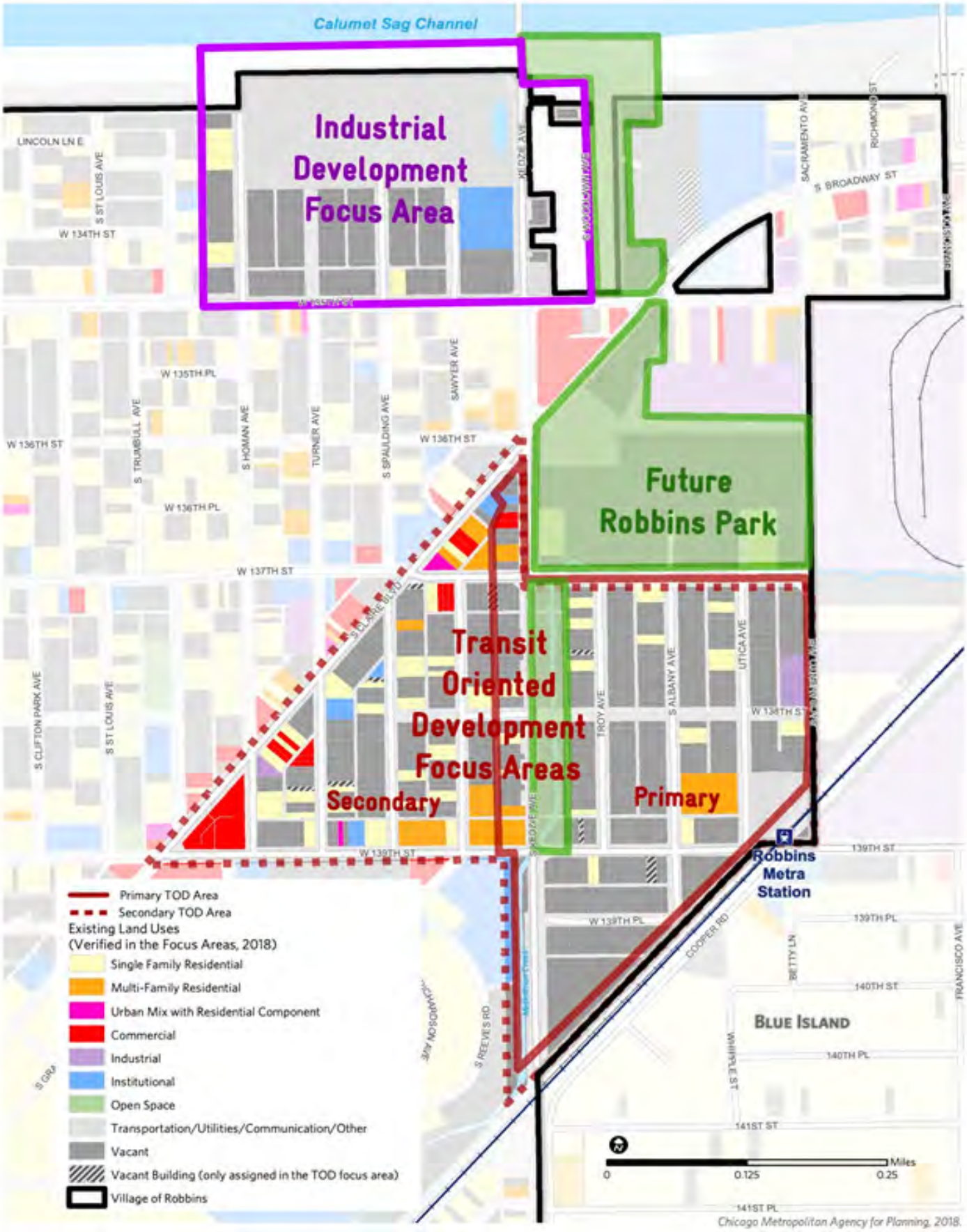


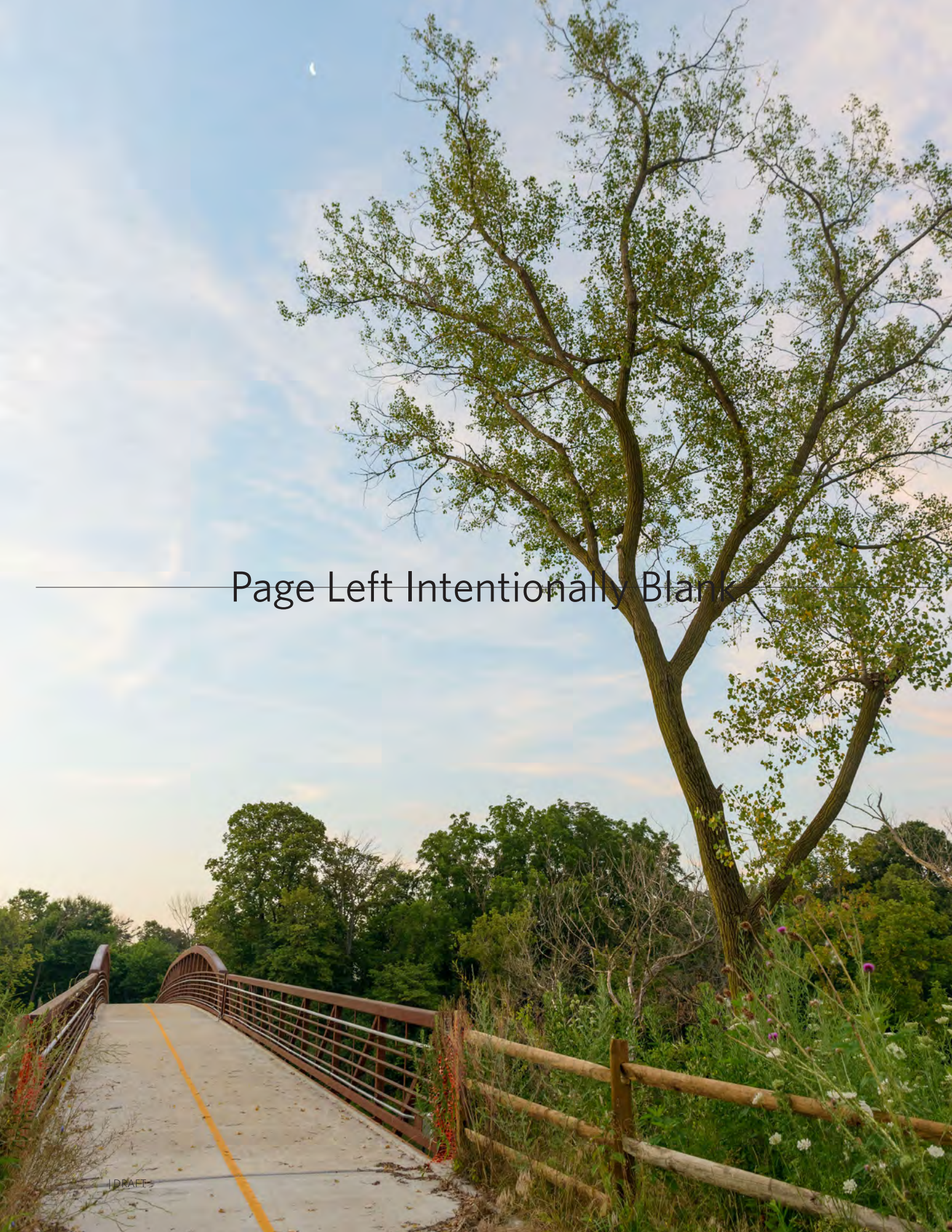
Figure 1.3: Areas of Plan Focus within Robbins with Underlying Existing Land Uses.

The overall Robbins Park project incorporates the three guiding principles of ON TO 2050, the region's comprehensive plan. Robbins Park is a Prioritized Investment to support development and reduce community flooding, which will increase community Resilience and will give Robbins a boost in our region's drive for Inclusive Growth. Furthermore, the Plan incorporates a guiding principle of Invest in Transit, the region's transit strategic plan. Implementing the Plan will Deliver Value on Our Transit Investments by providing a framework for local transit-supportive land uses, better pedestrian and bicycle access to transit services, and higher density infill development with accessible and affordable housing near transit services. This Plan further implements these principles through recommendations built on the community's vision to return Robbins to better days, when it was 'The Model Black Town,' with consideration of Robbins' municipal capacity and resources. The plan is organized as follows:

- *Section 1: Introduction and Context*
- *Section 2: Summary of Existing Conditions Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement*
- *Section 3: Plan Recommendations*
    - *Housing*
    - *Economic Development*
    - *Transportation*
    - *Industrial Areas*
- *Section 4: Implementation*
- *Appendix A: Resource Guide*
- *Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report Overview*
- *Appendix C: Outreach Activities and Results*

Each of the recommendation areas includes a vision statement, introduction, and a set of recommendations. A summary of implementation actions is included in Section 4. Appendix A provides a catalog of additional resources for programs, funding, partnerships, and other assistance related to the plan's focus area chapters. Appendix B is the Existing Conditions Report overview, an interim deliverable for this plan that summarizes current conditions in the area at the outset of the planning process and identifies issues and opportunities for the plan to address. Appendix C includes summaries of the outreach activities and results throughout the process.

After the plan is adopted by the Village of Robbins, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will remain involved for a period of two years to assist with the implementation of specified recommendations. Such assistance may include meeting periodically with Village staff, tracking and monitoring progress in accomplishing the Plan's recommendations, assisting with applications for external funding, and similar activities.



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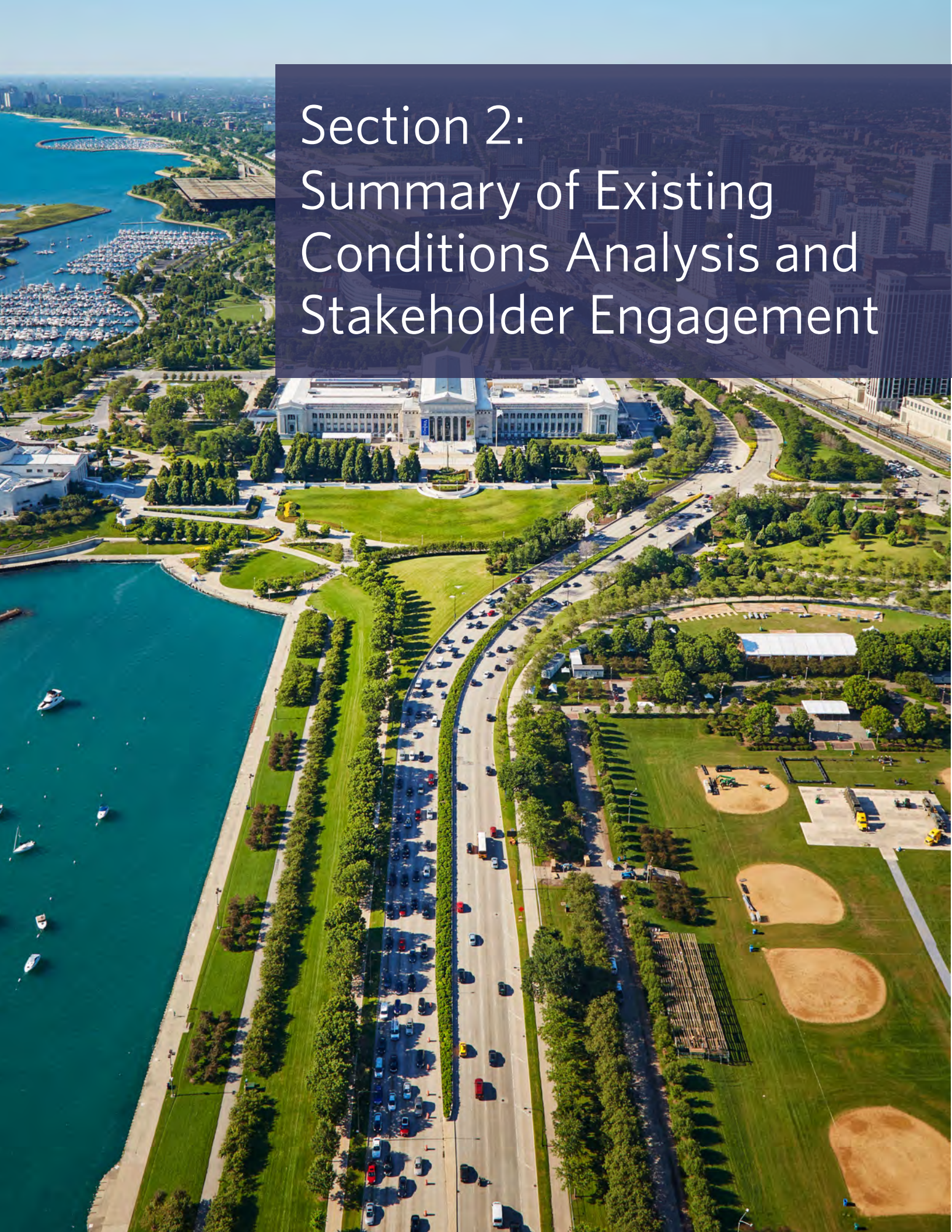
Section 2: Summary of Existing Conditions Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement



The Project Team, through analysis of Robbins' current land use and economic factors, identified a number of local community development opportunities. The Project Team developed an Existing Conditions Report with supporting market studies conducted by Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates (VSKA). Those studies were a retail and housing marketing study (Village of Robbins TOD Plan Market Analysis, February 2019) and an industrial areas study (Village of Robbins TOD and Industrial Area Planning-Industrial Market Analysis, October 2019). The combined analysis resulted in the following key findings:

- There is demand for new homes and apartments in Robbins and surrounding areas, including nearly 600 affordable rental units for seniors, nearly 100 units that can be marketed for families, and more than 700 units for younger buyers.
- Approximately $28 million/year in retail spending by residents is spent elsewhere.
- The Village's location provides abundant transportation options to attract industrial development, including Interstates 57 and 294, Midway Airport, and rail yards.
- The community's physical layout near the Robbins Metra Station supports TOD and a walkable community.

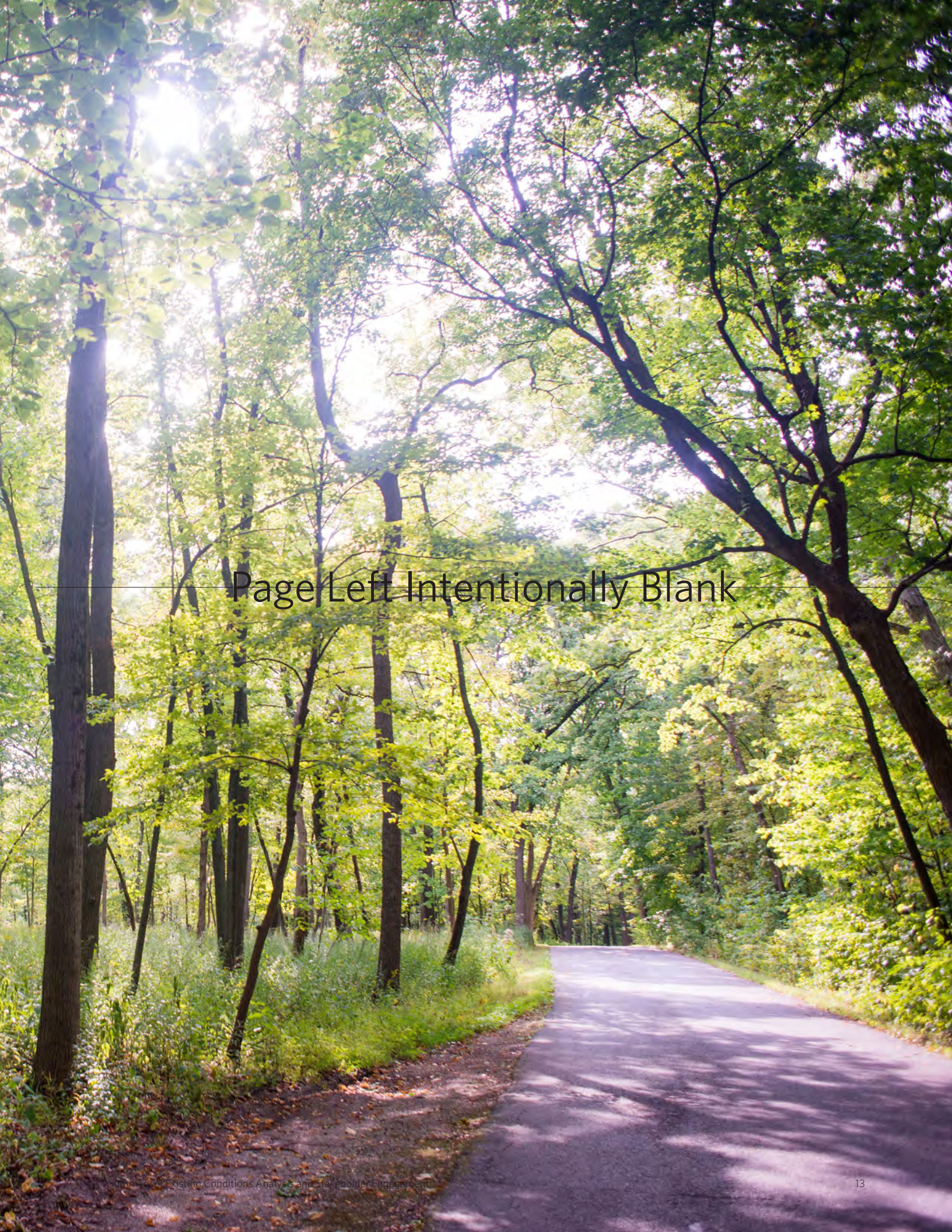
The Project Team analysis also recognized challenges to realize those opportunities, particularly the lack of available infrastructure within Robbins, historic hesitancy of developers to invest in recovering communities, and municipal capacity to implement recommendations, among others.

Community Vision

No community plan designed to uplift an area can be successful without understanding the community's vision. Through the Project Team's outreach efforts, the Robbins Community emphasized their overall vision, to return Robbins to a time of more economic activity and opportunity, and active street life. The history of Robbins provides this baseline. Established during the Great Migration, the area offered a chance to for Black people to build a community away from forced segregated communities like Chicago's "Black Belt". In time, a community with a high concentration of shops and stores grew. Residents further talked of a need for amenities that have disappeared over the years: a grocery store, dry cleaner, restaurants, and pharmacies. As for the kinds of affordable housing needed, residents listed: townhouses and senior apartments as their top priorities, followed by multifamily apartments. With respect to industry, the community voiced their support for any industry that would provide local opportunity and be respectful of the Village. In each step one theme was repeated, to restore Robbins to when it generated pride that is passed down to this day.

The Project Team's outreach phase included multiple steps that heard these sentiments. The team conducted a Steering Committee workshop on April 16th, 2018, stakeholder interviews in the fall of 2018, and a visioning workshop on May 18th, 2019. Additionally, staff spoke with residents during community events such as a regularly held senior brunch on June 6, 2018, hosted an informational tent at the Village's Juneteenth celebration and carnival on June 30, 2018, participated in the Minority Entrepreneurship Interactive Solution Symposium (MEISS) at the Robbins Community Center on March 1, 2019. The Project's Team community outreach done in conjunction with analysis of opportunities and challenges provided pillars to craft eventual recommendations detailed in Section 3.

Figure 2.0: Results from May, 2019 Visioning Workshop



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Section 3: Plan Recommendations

Upon consultation with the Village of Robbins, the Project Team incorporated research, analysis, and community input to draft a Recommendations Memo detailing general recommendations for Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, and Industrial Areas. The Village concurred with the Recommendations Memo at a meeting in Village Hall in November of 2019 and the Project Team proceeded with the full draft plan. Following Village review, the final plan was submitted to the Village of Robbins Board of Trustees for approval. That direction has resulted in the following recommendations, prescribed in the following areas:

Housing. Reduced flooding allows the Robbins community the opportunity to attract investment for a desired variety of housing in both density and price points around the Robbins Metra station.

Economic Development. Increased residential investment, infrastructure, and publicity can lead to neighborhood commercial investment so residents do not have to leave Robbins for basic and other commercial needs.

Transportation. Initiate steps for greater public transportation connections throughout the Village overall, and for the Metra station area to be a true transportation hub.

Industrial Areas. Support existing industrial development plans with strategies to attract additional industrial investment, potentially within the TOD area.

Housing

Vision Statement

Due to the creation of Robbins Park and reduced flooding, the Village of Robbins will have the ability to proactively attract housing investment within the designated TOD area to help satisfy current and future residential housing needs, increase the Village's population, and attract additional investment.

Introduction

Flood damage from the Cal-Sag Channel is a consistent concern and burdens residents with high housing maintenance costs, including the need for large-scale rehabilitation. The flood related depreciation of existing housing further discourages developers from building new housing within the TOD area. Over the years, due primarily to regular flooding, the TOD area has experienced significant disinvestment, which has left approximately 80% of the land vacant. Per the VSKA market study, the remaining housing stock is described as, "generally in poor to fair condition with a few well-maintained properties."

Currently, housing in Robbins is largely single-family detached homes (75%) and housing costs, despite its low price relative to the region, put a large burden on residents. More than 30 percent of Robbins renters are living in severely unaffordable housing, meaning more than half their household income goes towards rent, despite median rents between $800-900. Adding new housing units and types in the TOD area, which was previously unappealing for residential development due to flooding, will help address affordability challenges in the community.

The Park is designed to provide 100-year-flood protection, greatly reducing the threat of flooding in the TOD area. The study area will largely be removed from the Midlothian Creek floodplain, significantly increasing its desirability and suitability for residential and commercial development. Notably, property owners with a federally-backed mortgage will no longer be required to purchase flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Housing recommendations seek to attract and support new development to the TOD area, a long-standing

Market Potential

The housing market analysis conducted for this project found that while some subsidies may be needed to kick-start investment, there is significant market demand for senior housing , families, and singles within the market study area (a 10-minute drive from the Robbins Metra station.) Subsidies could include free or low-cost sales of Village-owned land or property tax abatement in exchange for development, outlined further below in Recommendation H.5. Based on current inventory, demand for affordable senior rental housing is significant. The market area could support 450-600 apartments for households 55+ with incomes under $40,000 and 60-100 units for households with incomes of $40,000-$54,000. Additionally, the analysis found significant demand for affordable rental housing for younger households. It estimated demand in the market area for 400-600 units for households with incomes under $50,000 and 100-200 units for those with incomes up to $75,000.

For owner-occupied housing, realtors reported moderate demand for housing in Robbins, particularly three-bedroom homes in the $140,000-$160,000 range, as well as one-story ranches or duplexes targeted towards seniors in the low-$100,000s. Some range of affordable housing programs for developers and homebuyers would likely be necessary to build new homes in this prices range, outlined further in Recommendation H.5.

This section of the Plan identifies opportunities to facilitate new TOD area development opportunities and strengthen the local housing market. Recommendations reflect community desires, past village planning, and market realities to help inform what could be supported in short, medium, and long-term phases of redevelopment.

Recommendations

H.1 Pursue Necessary Infrastructure within the TOD Area

While Robbins Park will provide flooding relief within the TOD area, it does not mean development can immediately occur upon the Park's completion. Necessary residential supporting infrastructure must be built. The need for fully understanding Robbins' infrastructure shortcomings has been a long-standing priority. The 2009 Metropolitan Planning Council's Robbins Economic Development Vision and Strategy recommended the village "Perform an analysis of infrastructure, including pipe location and capacity, in addition to the electric grid and phone cable lines." This has not yet been done.

At a minimum, it is known that the existing sanitation sewer system in the TOD area is not capable of supporting new residential development, which is likely a result of the community's initial development, when streets and homes formed organically and in many cases were built before a universal sewer system could be established. Modern infrastructure such as suitable sanitation and stormwater sewers will be essential to support significant, modern multi-family housing development. Robbins' staff believes the existing system could support some light manufacturing if such an enterprise did not produce significant wastewater, however, any multi-family housing development or mixed use would require substantial updates to the sanitary sewer system.

There are two avenues to pursue the needed development: Village wide system funding through government grants, or have infrastructure provided through a private development, as detailed in recommendation H.4. The Village dedicating staff to such an effort, without a full-time planner, would be challenging. In addition, with the present economic environment and expected loss of revenues due to the needed response to the pandemic, municipal budgets will be further burdened, providing additional hurdles.

Despite these capacity challenges, Robbins needs to make the TOD area as ready for development as possible, to build on the opportunity presented through the investment of Robbins Park. Pursuing grants to fund infrastructure improvements should be a priority and will help attract more interest from developers. While developers may be willing to fund site improvements and infrastructure expansion, it is also the case that it may be viewed as a 'development penalty' and could dissuade otherwise interested developers.

With respect to grants, Federal Emergency Management Agency funds can provide funds to partially implement a better stormwater system. Federal transportation funding that incorporates complete street elements and also updates the stormwater system might be another way to address just the TOD area. These funding avenues could be pursued in tandem and be further supplemented with federal grants from the Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes Funding program, as well as the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency State Revolving Fund and MWRD grants. Coordination must further occur with regards to federal and state grants between MWRD and the Village, with either joint submissions sent in or an understanding of who will apply. Without such coordination, unnecessary competition can occur for limited funds. The Park will not be complete until 2021, in the interim, the Village must strive to make progress to enable desired development after flood mitigation.

H.2 Establish a Modern Zoning Code

Efficient development can be streamlined with a modern Village-wide zoning code, which is easier to administer and for investors to understand. As with infrastructure, a modern zoning code has been a long identified priority. The 2009 Economic Development Vision and Strategy report by the Metropolitan Planning Council recommended a zoning code update to promote residential density around the Metra station. As noted, streets and homes within Robbins formed organically along with shops, grocery stores, churches, and social clubs that emerged along main streets like Claire Boulevard as the Village grew. Outreach efforts indicated that Robbins location away from overt segregation in Chicago impacted the community's reticence about government control of land as the community initially developed. The continued absence of a formal zoning code, however, hinders future investment.

A village-wide zoning code update must be a goal, particularly as Robbins Park is completed and private investment becomes feasible and attracted. While an immediate zoning code update done internally is beyond the Village's capacity, ways to accomplish this task should be identified and pursued. Funding and support for a zoning code update is available through various grant programs, including CMAP's Local Technical Assistance program, see Resource Guide. In addition, Cook County's Invest In Cook and the RTA's Community Planning Program provide grants for zoning code updates for subareas around transit stations.

H.3 Create Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay designation for TOD area to facilitate desired development

Stakeholders, the Village, and Robbins residents have all expressed a long-standing desire to see multi-family residential development around the Metra station. At the May 18th, 2019 visioning workshop, residents expressed a preference for townhomes, senior apartments, and mixed-use housing options to be developed in the area. A large amount of existing vacant land in the TOD area offers "blank-slate" development opportunities in the area to build such projects. In contrast to Village residential goals, however, a large portion of the area surrounding the Metra station, (generally east from Kedzie Avenue, south from 137th St. and north of 139th Street) is currently zoned for industrial use, which is reflected in some surrounding land uses. The Village needs to craft development regulations to facilitate and attract creative development to capture this sentiment. The Village has already stated their intention to develop this area through a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, which in contrast to by-right development, can facilitate a creative development responsive to changing markets and include a variety of housing types. Through a PUD, interested developers submit an application for the full development project often requesting specific regulation relief such as use, height, density, or setbacks, among others. In return for bulk and use regulation relief, the developer often provides the Village with public benefits such as open space, infrastructure, or affordable housing units. This type of process allows the developer to be creative and flexible while working with the community.

To further facilitate development, Robbins should designate the TOD area on the Village's zoning map as a future PUD overlay district. On the zoning map this area can be designated with hashmarks over the existing zoning designation, and in the legend identified as a "Future PUD". An updated zoning map that signals PUD opportunities in the TOD area can alert developers that flexibility is allowed and encouraged to invest in this area. The zoning map update should also note other new potential area uses, including commercial development on Kedzie Avenue (between 137th street and 139th street) which is explored further in the economic development section.

The Village should also make the map accessible on the Village website. Greater accessibility and transparency with clear, easy-to-understand designations communicating how development will proceed helps put the community on a business- and development-friendly footing. Many communities market themselves as "business friendly", a place where investment is welcome. Part of earning such a designation means providing clarity in the development process.

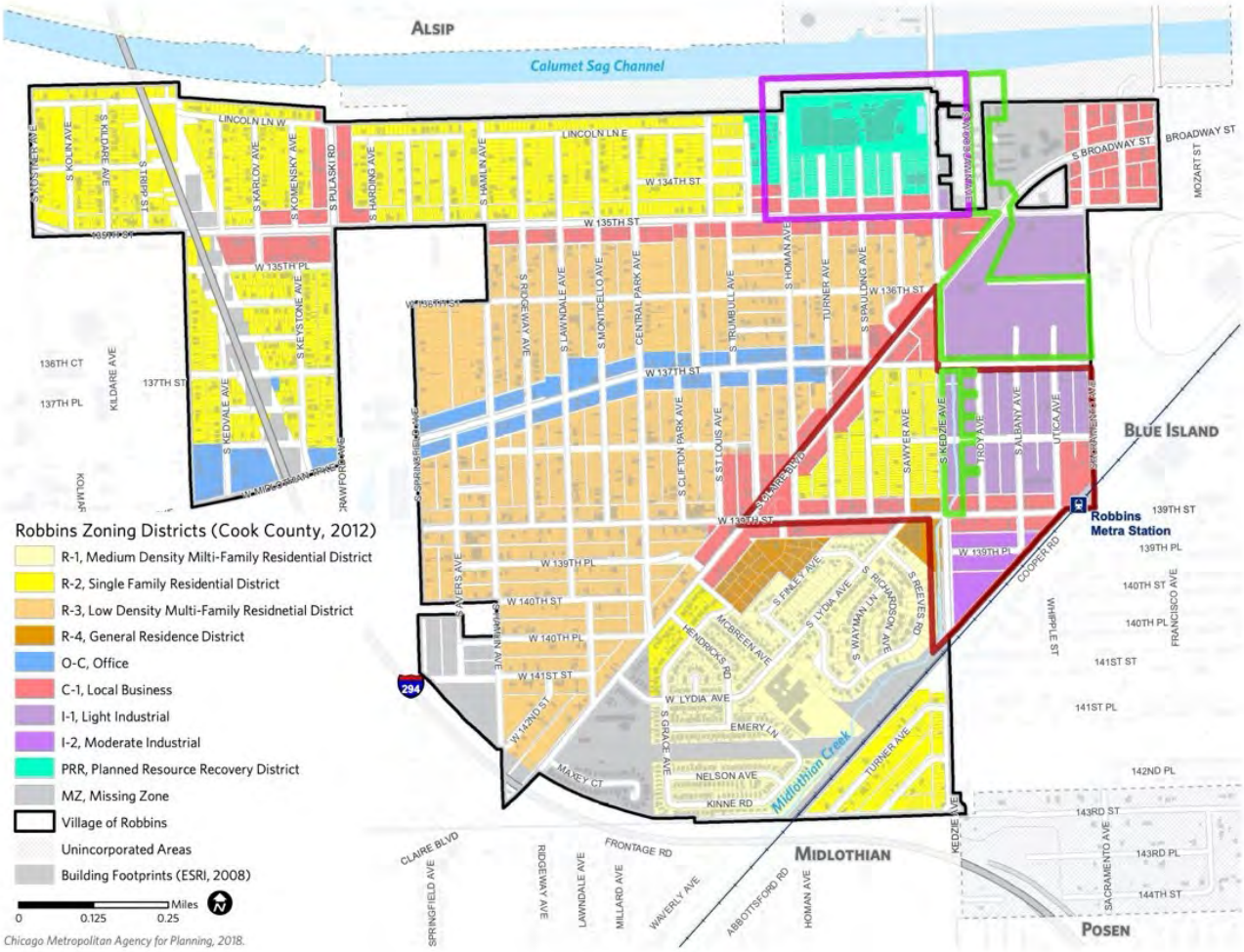


Figure H.1: Robbins Zoning Districts

H.4 Establish and publicize criteria to facilitate new, high-quality multi-family housing

With 284 communities within the greater Chicago area, years of local disinvestment, and a housing industry that often seeks opportunities similar to past successes, future development opportunities in Robbins will need to be actively publicized. A proactive signal to attract investment is to post a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for development teams as Robbins Park nears completion. An RFQ would proactively describe the projects the Village is looking to attract and approve. Additionally, this allows a developer to tailor their initial proposal to Robbins' vision. For developers, this removes uncertainty while leading to streamlined negotiations between the Village and the developer. A local example of an RFQ for development of municipal owned land is included in the Resource Guide.

Outline desired housing types, units, and target rents

The RFQ should outline the Village's vision for housing in the area and make clear the types of development proposals that would be approved. Desired housing types should be reflective of local needs as well as market conditions.

As discussed, there is a high need for more affordable housing options in Robbins for all ages. Median household income in Robbins is $30,285, and 46 percent of households have incomes of $25,000 or below. The RFQ should reflect the need for affordable housing development for these households and recommend the use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funds as a part of Phase 1 development in the area. Further discussion of phasing development is found in Recommendation H.5.

Additionally, the proximity of the proposed PUD to the Metra station and existing commercial corridors creates the opportunity for higher densities than typical in Robbins. Housing types from courtyard apartments, fourplexes, rowhomes, and other 'gentle density' options could be supported here and would help provide higher rate of returns for housing developers and property owners than single-family homes. Apartments near the Metra station would be appealing to the 32 percent of Robbins residents who commute into Chicago, providing the opportunity for 'workforce housing' that markets towards residents with moderate incomes. These units could charge higher rents while offering more amenities or higher quality finishes and help fund further affordable housing development with the higher rate of return to the developer. Finally, adding density in this area makes future commercial and mixed-use development more feasible, as businesses locate closer to where their customers live. A relatively dense mix of rental housing types, targeting a combination of affordable rate and workforce housing tenants with commensurate rents, would serve as an achievable vision for the PUD.

Pay particular attention to crafting infrastructure and design principles for PUD designation

As noted, a PUD process allows the Village to outline expectations for developers interested in the TOD area. This includes not only type and number of units, but also infrastructure and design principles that developers must include in their qualification submissions. Upgrades to utilities, streets, and landscaping will be necessary to support new development in the subarea, and can be outlined within the PUD. If the Village has not upgraded the area's infrastructure, their qualification submission should detail partners (engineering firms) they will have on their team and potential needed support (i.e.. tax abatement, TIF, discounted land sales, etc.) to proceed on any project.

This strategy builds on past work done by the Village of Robbins and its partners. MPC's 2009 report recommended analyzing physical infrastructure needed to support new development in the area, and the 2007 Robbins Comprehensive Plan recommendation requiring potential developers to construct new streets and landscaping in new developments. Requiring these improvements through the PUD process gives the Village input over the shape and form of development-supporting infrastructure.

Design principles can govern the form and shape of the planned unit development while providing developers with a sense of certainty. One example of a PUD design criteria is to thoughtfully connect new development to existing neighborhoods, Robbins Park, and the Metra station through a mix of transportation improvements. PUD design principles can also include building orientation, exterior building materials, street and streetscape improvements, desired traffic flows, and more. Again, this is also a business-friendly step, giving developers clarity and predictability of the design elements the community seeks, rather than being surprised by unstated design requirements during the development approval process.

An RFQ could also include the following:

- Housing type
- Number of targeted units
- Density and compatibility with existing land uses
- Specific commercial amenities as a part of a mixed-use development
- Active transportation and amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Vehicular access and parking facilities
- Requirement to purchase Village-owned property for an agreed price
- Requirement to develop the site and complete public improvements within a given time frame

Give special consideration towards sidewalk and landscaping enhancements in developer agreements

Improving the pedestrian experience in the TOD area has been a long-standing desire of the community and something the Village and partners have been trying to advance. Currently, 46 percent of roads within a half mile of the Robbins Metra station at 139th St. do not have sidewalks, according to analysis of CMAP's 2018 Regional Sidewalk Inventory. The Robbins Comprehensive Plan recommends construction of supportive sidewalks and landscaping as a conditional requirement for development approval in the area. Additionally, past plans including the Regional Transportation Authority's Pedestrian Access plan (2012) and MPC's 2009 report, both support improving existing sidewalks and creating a continuous network throughout the area. Residents again pointed out the poor condition and lack of traditional sidewalks in many parts of the TOD area during this planning process. To improve sidewalks within Robbins will take a two-pronged approach: public sector grants (as discussed further in Recommendation H.1) and inclusion in developer agreements.

Sidewalk construction and landscaping, emphasizing green infrastructure strategies, should be given special consideration in the PUD requirements and design principles. While many Village destinations are accessible within a 15-20 minute walk from the Metra station, improving sidewalk segments would shorten the walking time, create a safer pathway, and encourage more residents to walk. Additionally, sidewalks can have the biggest impact when they connect transit with existing amenities and in areas with significant population or employment. Improvements to the sidewalk network surrounding the Metra station will improve Metra access for pedestrians and support the higher number of residents and pedestrians in the neighborhood as the subarea develops.

Attend and participate with organizations that foster affordable housing development.

Communities long overlooked will need to attract development attention, and initiate networking opportunities that can lead to community investment. Along with publicizing newly allowed development opportunities on its internal website, Village staff should proactively engage with community development networks. The Illinois Housing Council (IHC) is a non-profit, member-based organization that focuses on the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Illinois. Along with being a resource for affordable housing development tools, the organization sponsors 10 networking events throughout the year bringing developers, non-profits, and government agencies together. The IHC, unlike official government agencies who must worry about direct conflict of interests, is also able to place municipalities in direct contact with a variety of developers familiar with a specific region or type of project. The annual membership cost for a government official is $300.

H.5 Use a Phased Development within the TOD area

While the vision for housing development in the subarea is ambitious yet achievable, development is unlikely to happen quickly. Rather, development is likely to happen in several phases, even after the Park and with infrastructure, as initial development helps bring residents to the area and generate further residential demand. To that end, land assembly efforts in the area should continue and the village should convey the need for phased residential development to stakeholders, residents, and potential developers. The following strategies outline steps to take to advance this vision.

Continue land assembly efforts

The Village, in coordination with the Cook County Land Bank authority and the South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority, has been proactive in acquiring a majority of vacant parcels and tax delinquent properties in the subarea. By acquiring these parcels, the Village has made it simpler for future development to occur in the form of the PUD. Potential developers know they are obtaining land free of outstanding tax delinquencies and do not have to negotiate with individual landowners to acquire property. Land assembly and acquisition efforts should continue, and the village should prioritize parcels that could complete cohesive blocks available for a PUD RFQ. The timeline for consolidation of parcels should be by the time Robbins Park opens in fall of 2021.

Recognize and support phased development to improve market interest and potential

As noted, there is significant demand for new rental units for both families and seniors in Robbins and the surrounding market area. However, with a high amount of vacant land and relative lack of current residential uses in the area, the community should understand that phasing development to improve market interest and potential over time will be necessary.

Affordable housing, funded through LIHTC, should be targeted for the early phases of residential development in the subarea, both because it is the most needed residential type, and it is the most marketable in terms of attracting tenants and producing a return on investment. After the success of one or two LIHTC-funded developments in the subarea, market interest in workforce housing, market-rate housing, and commercial development is likely to increase.

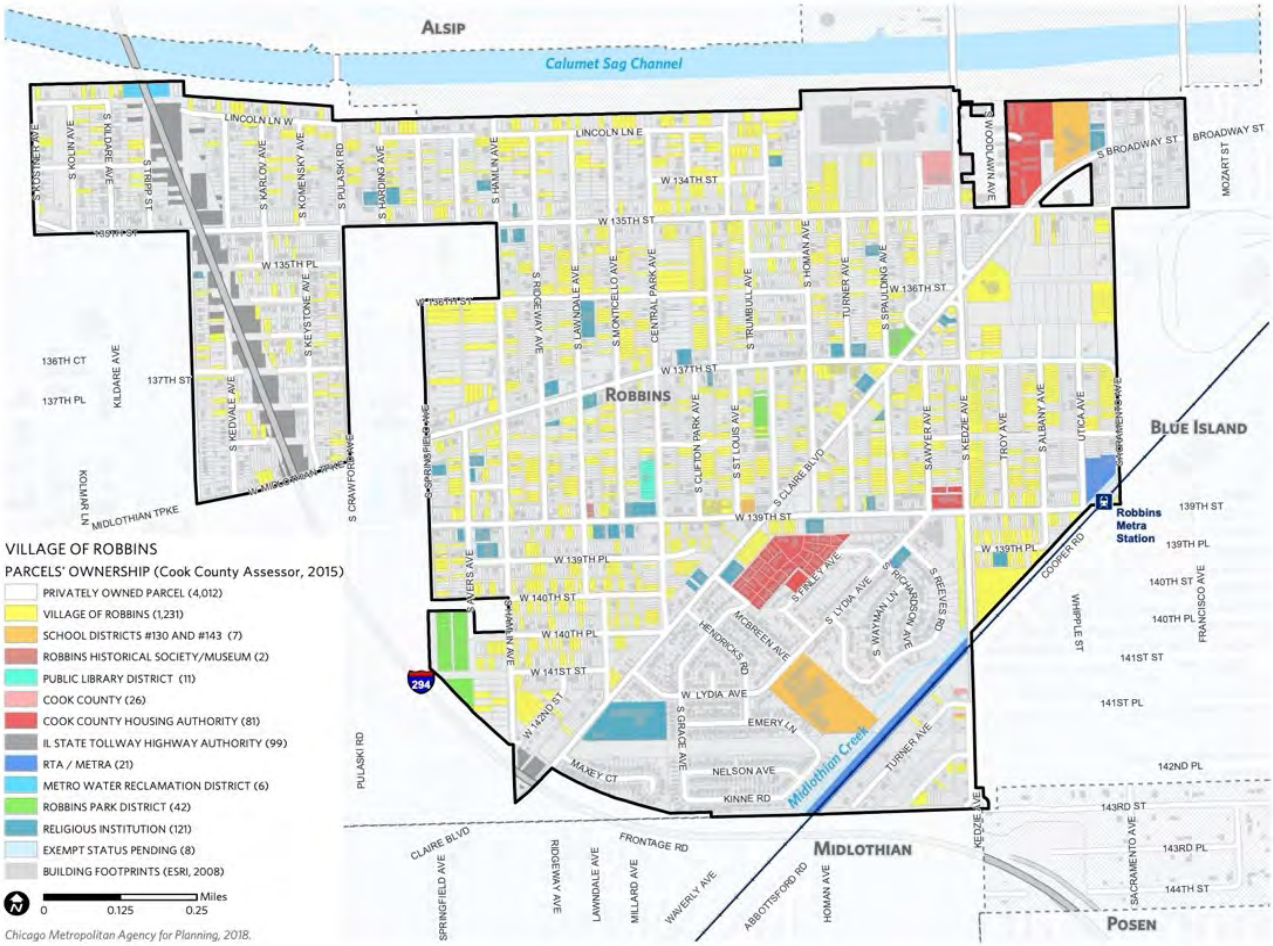


Figure H.2: Parcel Ownership

LIHTC buildings traditionally have capped rents at 30 percent of household income at a mix of income levels. The most typical LIHTC buildings are affordable for households up to 60% of area median income (AMI), which for a family of four in Robbins, is up to $50,000. Roughly two-thirds of Robbins households have incomes under this threshold, providing a large pool of potential residents who would be well served by this type of development. As a condition of LIHTC, rents must be kept affordable for a 15-year initial "compliance period" and a subsequent 15-year "extended use period." Additionally, the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) is likely to expand the LIHTC program in Illinois to include units affordable up to 80% of AMI, which would reach those who need workforce housing who may see the appeal of living near the Metra station. Finally, a mix of income levels in the early LIHTC developments will also help make the neighborhood more economically diverse.

A recommended early step is to contact IHDA staff who partner with municipalities and developers on applications for LIHTC funding. Eventual applications for LIHTC funding should contain a detailed discussion of planning efforts, including community participation and identified housing sites and needs, and IHDA staff can help ensure the applications contain the necessary information. LIHTC eligibility is graded on a 100-point scale, and a project may gain up to 10 points by demonstrating tangible connections to local planning initiatives.

Successful early development will raise awareness of market opportunities available in Robbins and boost developer interest in investing in the community. In later phases of development, it is more likely to see market-rate rentals and for-sale townhome or rowhome development. As for-sale development is attracted, programs offering assistance to prospective homebuyers such as down-payment assistance and financial counseling could help residents move into owner-occupied housing.

The market analysis outlined potential phases of development in the area and the steps to be taken within each, shown in Table 1.

Complimentary External Planning Efforts

The Village has undergone several planning efforts in recent years that produced valuable recommendations outside the focus of this Plan. As this Plan and Robbins Park refocus community resources, it is important not to lose sight of previous planning efforts and recommendations. Further, there are current local planning initiatives underway that can support the focus areas of this plan, yet are outside the specific geographic boundaries of this plan. Such efforts are noted at the end of each plan focus area as Complimentary External Planning Efforts.

Table H.1: Potential Residential Development Phases

	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
RESIDENTIAL	• Continue to assemble and prepare land for residential uses • Begin recruiting developers • Apply for LIHTC funding for one or two projects • Identify funding for home repair programs • Plan for transitional uses on vacant land such as green lots, community gardens, sports fields, etc. • Begin a homeownership and financial counseling for prospective homebuyers	• Continue preparing land for development • Recruit for-sale housing developers • Begin with 25-30 for-sale single-family or townhomes • Continue to develop for-sale properties based on demand • Continue to provide financial counseling and marketing to prospective homebuyers • Focus on establishing and ratcheting up comparative sales to increase the viability of market-rate homes over time	• Pursue developers for for-sale and rental housing with shallow subsidies • Monitor market absorption to plan for additional housing types (townhomes, detached single-family homes, etc.)

Foster maintenance of the housing mix west of Kedzie Ave. through home repair programs

Through community outreach, residents expressed a desire to retain the existing mix of housing types and price points west of Kedzie Avenue. Many properties in the area would benefit from assistance programs for home maintenance, infrastructure improvements, and further flood mitigation efforts. The Village should foster the rehabilitation of existing multi-family units that are in need of improved maintenance, or external façade or infrastructure improvements. In addition to adopting policies that improve and maintain the quality of Robbins' existing housing stock, the Village should continue to explore opportunities to create new housing types that may appeal to a wider demographic as well as improve conditions for long-time homeowners.

IHDA offers a variety of funding and assistance programs for home construction, buying, and repairs. Additionally, the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) maintains a *Community Resource Guide for Housing and Community Development* programs for municipalities, development, and homeowners and renters. The list outlining relevant IHDA programs as well as the MMC guide are included in the *Resource Guide.*

Implement the Rain Ready residential cost-sharing program for storm prep and recovery

The 2017 Rain Ready Plan from the Center for Neighborhood Technology established "a roadmap for reducing flooding issues in a way that strengthens neighborhoods and businesses, and brings new life to vacant areas of town." The plan explored problem flooding and how strategic policy changes and coordinated investment in green and grey infrastructure could mitigate chronic flooding issues in the Village.

The plan recommended the establishment of a residential cost-sharing program to help homeowners recover from past storms and prepare for future storms. Under the outlined program, residents would receive financial support for a complete home inspection and improvements targeted to reduce risk, like check valves, overhead sewers, and a rain garden. While the capacity to implement this program within the Village is not present in the short-term, it should remain on the horizon as a long term goal.

Economic Development

Vision Statement

A vibrant neighborhood is the foundation to support local commercial businesses that provide amenities and job opportunities to the community. Robbins Park will enable investment within the TOD area, with the revitalized neighborhood serving as a catalyst for overall economic development and building on the local untapped market for both good services and employment.

Introduction

The Chicago region as a whole cannot thrive if communities that have endured substantial disinvestment do not have the same opportunities for economic growth as other parts of the region. Due to the lack of retail businesses in Robbins, residents leave the community to meet their shopping needs, which also results in lost tax revenue for the Village. According to the Robbins TOD Plan Market Analysis, Robbins currently has a significant retail gap of $28.3 million, primarily in grocery stores, general merchandise stores, and restaurants. The commercial market in Robbins presents an opportunity if underutilized parcels can be developed. The future Robbins Park and its ability to mitigate flooding in the TOD area and facilitate investment presents a chance for the Village to capitalize on its dormant potential. With time, the Village's retail market should further grow as residential and industrial development occurs within the TOD area increasing further the local commercial market. Successful economic redevelopment would allow residents to shop locally, increase local tax revenue, and provide local job opportunities.

The following recommendations outline steps the Village of Robbins can take to spur economic development in the TOD area, and capture some of the retail spending currently going to surrounding communities. Recommendations in this plan build on opportunities, such as Robbins Park and a large amount of Village owned vacant land in the TOD area, and focus on positioning Robbins to attract and implement future development. However, closing the retail gap and attracting investment to the Village will take a dedicated process, and the Village should continue to communicate to the community the multi-year nature of this plan.

Recommendations

E.1 Market Available Land for New Development

To build a "business friendly" reputation, the community should take proactive measures to attract development to specific areas and parcels through marketing and other strategies. These steps build on recommendations discussed in the Housing section such as removing development obstacles, zoning changes, and land assembly. A community ready for investment still must attract those able to invest.

Market properties suitable for redevelopment on the Village's website

Village staff is already working with PROCHAMPS, a private company that helps local governments address property abandonment and maps vacant properties within the municipality. Robbins should build on these efforts and market suitable parcels or groups of parcels on the Village website. Parcel information posted on the website should include parcel size, zoning designation, as well as information about available incentives, such as the Cal-Sag Enterprise Zone and Cook County property tax incentives. Such identification can also point to future plans for the Village such as previously mentioned PUD designated areas and links to community desires for development. Robbins should also identify a single point of contact to answer questions from interested parties about the available sites or incentives, in order to help streamline the development process. Several municipalities in the south suburbs, including the City of Blue Island and the Village of Richton Park, have sections of their websites dedicated to providing available site information to potential businesses and developers. Examples of these websites can be found in the *Resource Guide*.

Attend retail trade shows to promote Robbins to potential businesses

To further advertise Robbins as a "business friendly" community, the Village should consider attending local retail trade shows to highlight the TOD area and other development opportunities. Local annual trade shows, such as **Chicago Deal Making**,[1] hosted at Navy Pier annually in October give municipalities a chance to network and market their communities to a wide variety of retail businesses. Examples of past show attendees include Circle K, Jersey Mike's, Famous Footwear, and local land developers. Several municipalities in the south suburbs, including Matteson, New Lenox, and Orland Park have recently attended and exhibited at this trade show. Granted, in the current environment these shows may be cancelled this year. The Village should consider attending the Chicago Deal Making trade show when it is scheduled again to make connections with potential businesses. Upon attending initially, the Village should explore the idea of having an exhibitor booth in subsequent years, to market Robbins' development opportunities. Costs associated with attending and exhibiting at the trade show are outlined in the *Resource Guide*.

E.2 Attract Small Businesses and Social Enterprises

Throughout the community engagement process, Robbins residents expressed a desire for small-scale convenience retail to serve the community's daily needs. The retail market analysis shows that the Village is experiencing retail leakage in a number of categories, including grocery stores ($4.5 million) and restaurants ($1.9 million.) While these categories historically have been hard to attract to disinvested communities, they represent tangible opportunities for growth, as local demand for these goods and services exceeds the available supply. This situation presents opportunities not only for traditional retail businesses, but also for social enterprises. Social enterprises, such as coffee shops or restaurants, can include job training components with a mission of uplifting the community.

Attract a small-scale social enterprise café or restaurant

With a large number of vacant parcels, opportunity exists to foster enterprises other than a traditional business model. With current low demand and an abundance of vacancy, properties should be available for lower rates than competitive market rates as owners seek to get parcels back into service. Additionally, this may provide incentive for owners to work with entrepreneurs on flexible development arrangements. One such model that may capitalize on such an environment is a social enterprise, which uses commercial strategies to address a basic unmet need or solve a social problem.[2] A social enterprise can offer jobs or training to help individuals gain work experience, while providing residents and visitors with retail options. In Robbins, a social enterprise such as a café or restaurant, could capture local demand for these types of establishments, while providing a social service component that supports residents and families at all income levels. A number of funding sources are available for a potential social enterprise such as the Chicago Community Trust, which offers grant opportunities to Chicago area non-profits. Another potential resource is Benefit Chicago, which collaborates with the Chicago Community Trust. Benefit Chicago provides loans to social enterprises in the Chicago region, focusing on underinvested communities. Details about both funding sources are outlined in the Resource Guide. As with an RFQ for a PUD, the Village can post an RFQ for a social enterprise with the responsibility on applicants to develop a feasible business plan, with the understanding that the Village can provide support, such as a streamlined permitting process and identification of potential locations, at the later stages of conception.

Facilitate small-scale convenience retail along the west side of Kedzie Avenue

Small-scale retail options, identified in the market analysis as convenience retail, fast food, sandwich shops, quick casual restaurants, or laundromats, can be used to kick-start the market until a larger development is feasible. While resident feedback has consistently noted a desire for such retail near the Metra station, based on the Robbins TOD market analysis, the immediate Robbins Metra station area is not a likely location for retail, given the lower traffic counts and visibility along this part of 139th Street. The west side of Kedzie Avenue, north of 139thStreet, is a more suitable place for small scale convenience retail development, given its higher traffic counts and proximity to the future Robbins Park. Locating convenience retail in this area would meet the needs of residents and visitors. As more housing is developed in the TOD area, and Robbins Park starts to attract more people to the community, the Village should consider incentives to attract and allow expanding retail and commercial development along Kedzie Avenue.

E.3 Identify and Evaluate the Use of Incentives to Attract Development

Community development includes municipal actions that help attract and facilitate private sector investment in areas where the 'natural' market forces are not strong enough. As such, attracting businesses and development to the Robbins TOD area may require incentives until a stronger market is established.

List available state and local incentives and evaluation criteria on the Village's website

The Village should explore, evaluate, and understand the type of incentives that could attract desired commercial development. Potential tools for stimulating the market include reduced rents to new businesses, ground leases, or even free land. Other incentives could include tax assistance through the Cal-Sag Enterprise Zone (Figure E.2), which provides sales tax abatement for project building materials, a potential TIF District if the Village decides to create it, as well as Cook County's property tax incentives. A more detailed overview of state and local incentives available in Robbins is located in the Resource Guide.

The Village should consider listing state and local incentives on the Robbins website, to clearly communicate which incentives are available and the different conditions for each. Information about the incentives should include eligibility and application requirements, as well as benefits to the developer or business. Regardless of the type of incentive being offered, the Village should ensure that any new development is in line with the community's vision, and provides economic development opportunities to Robbins' residents, as discussed below.

Case Study: Inspiration Kitchens in East Garfield Park

Inspiration Kitchens is a non-profit social enterprise that provides a 13-week foodservice training course and healthy, affordable meals to East Garfield Park residents. The enterprise is housed in a 7,315 square foot former factory, and consists of a restaurant, kitchen, and offices. The 80-seat restaurant offers an affordable menu, and free meals for working poor families. The project was financed with the help of a private donor, which covered construction and some operating costs, as well as a $520,000 "bridge loan" made by the Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF), a not-for-profit lender.[3]

Figure E.1: Inspiration Kitchens in East Garfield Park, Chicago

Source: tripadvisor.com

Establish criteria for using local incentives to attract development to the Village

When considering development incentives, the Village must target its funding resources towards meeting community goals. Measurable community goals must be articulated in development incentive agreements, such as the number of jobs, residential units, or taxes revenue created that will be create community benefits. Explicit benchmarks will allow the Village to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the project. If a development is not meeting the agreed upon goals, the Village must ensure that the local incentive agreement includes a "claw back provision", which allows Robbins to recover incentive funds.

The Village must further assess the fiscal impact of a development proposal before local incentives are allocated. Municipalities often perform their due diligence through an assessment of the applicant's figures by staff or a Village-selected consultant, at the applicant's expense, as part of the initial incentive agreement. For example, if the Village decides to renew its TIF district and use public funds for a development, an outside consultant could provide objective insight into the fiscal impact of the development, and evaluate whether the benefit of the project outweighs the public contribution. Robbins can require the developer to enter into a reimbursement agreement with the Village to cover the outside review expense. CMAP is currently working on a Local Incentives Policy Guide, which could help Robbins evaluate the use of local incentives to meet community goals.

E.4 Explore Urban Agriculture as a Potential Use for Vacant Land

Urban agriculture can provide many benefits in Robbins such as reclaiming vacant land for healthy food production, growing a locally sourced produce market for restaurants and grocery stores, as well as providing workforce training and jobs for residents. Previous plans, including the 2004 Opportunities Analysis and Brownfields Site Identification and Priorities recommended establishing community-supported agriculture that would revitalize vacant lots and generate jobs. More recently, the Village explored the idea of creating an urban agriculture and horticulture district along 135th Street west of Kedzie Avenue, which would utilize vacant land for greenhouses, open farming, and support workforce-training activities. Building on this momentum, Village owned vacant land in the TOD area offers an opportunity to turn vacant lots into a productive landscape, and develop complementary food industry activities, such as light food processing. Urban agriculture in the TOD area can also act as an interim use, which can aid in cleaning up land and making the area more marketable for future development.

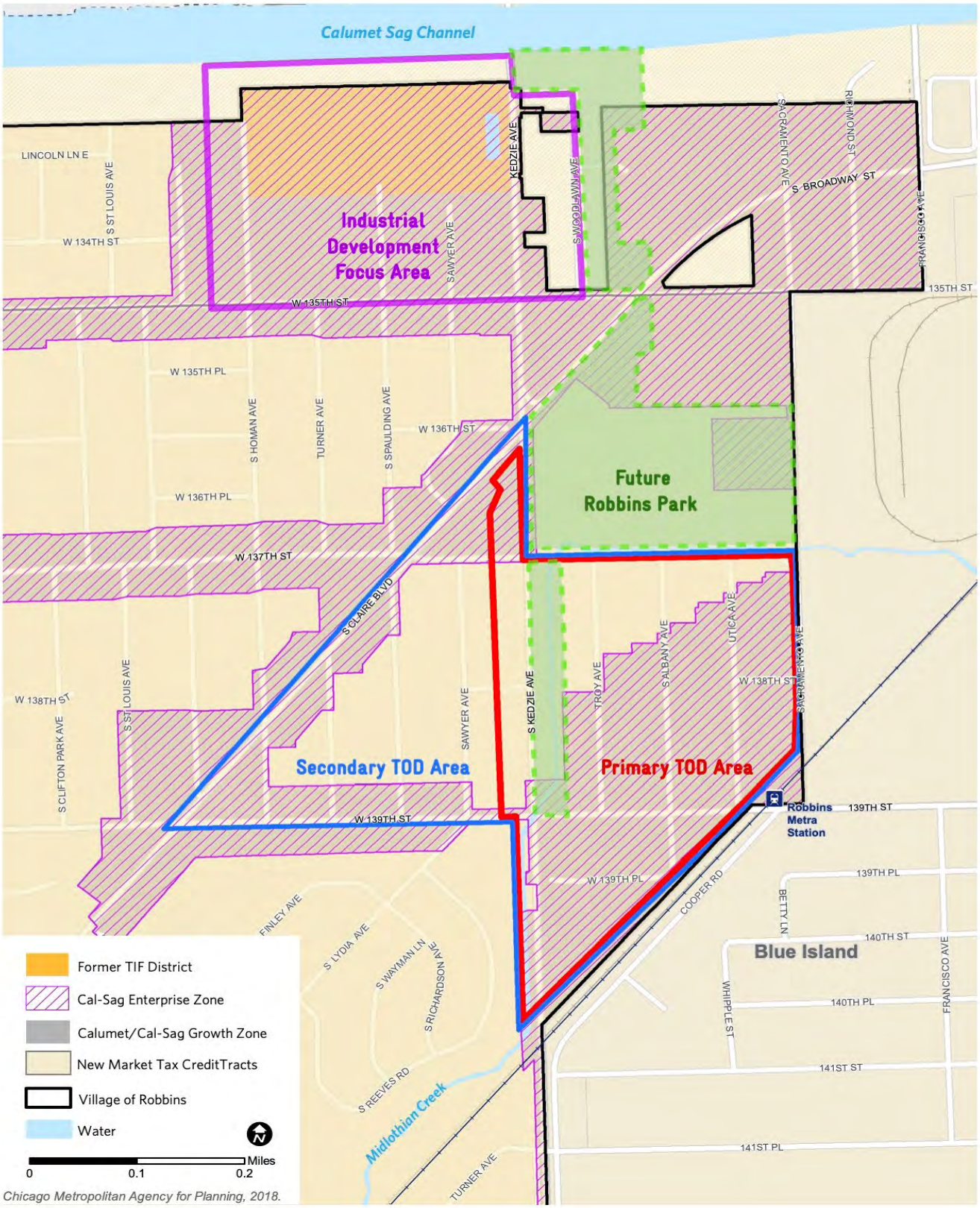


Figure E.2: Existing Tax Credit Incentive Opportunities in Robbins

Case Study: Growing Home

Growing Home is a social enterprise that operates two urban farms in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood. Aside from growing food in previously vacant neighborhood areas, Growing Home provides a job training program focused on various aspects of the food industry, including food production, packing, and sale of produce. The majority of Growing Home's funding comes from grants, in-kind donations, and contributions. In 2017 and 2018, the organization received funding through government contracts with the City of Chicago, Cook County, as well as the US Department of Agriculture. The program provides 25 hours per week of paid on the job experience, and job placement assistance. Program participants are prepared for positions at urban farms and growing facilities, as well as wholesalers, grocers, and restaurants.

Figure E.3: Growing Home Urban Farm in Englewood, Chicago

Source: map.lisc-cnda.org

Identify and prepare vacant land for urban agriculture

In order to repurpose vacant land for urban agriculture, the identified sites will need to be inspected, cleaned and remediated of any soil contamination. As previously mentioned, remediating contaminated land within the TOD area would also make the land more marketable if the Village decides to make urban agriculture an interim use. Robbins should seek out available funding sources to cover costs of site remediation. A potential funding source is the Illinois Brownfield Redevelopment Loan Program, administered by the Illinois EPA. The program offers low interest loans to support efforts by local governments and private entities to clean up brownfield sites that have been assessed for contamination. Moreover, the program provides assistance to local governments in the form of Brownfield Representatives that can help the municipality secure public and private financial assistance, and guide potential loan recipients through the brownfield cleanup and redevelopment process.[4] More details can be found in the *Resource Guide*.

Support workforce training in the food industry

Any effort to utilize vacant land for urban agriculture could also consider a workforce training component that would allow residents to develop job skills in the food industry, including food production, marketing, and sale of local produce. Collaborating with organizations that provide workforce development, such as OAI, Inc. could ensure that urban agriculture projects not only revitalize vacant land within the TOD area, but also provide valuable skills to Robbins residents. The Village already has a relationship with OAI, Inc. who will be helping with plant maintenance for Robbins Park. OAI will install 10 acres of native wetland and prairie plantings. Workforce development is an important goal and OAI will work with the Village of Robbins and the selected contractor on making local hires to complete this component of the Robbins Renewal Project. Residents will also be notified of any related job trainings hosted by OAI or partners. The Village should continue to foster this relationship and seek out similar organizations, in partnership with OAI, to collaborate around workforce. training opportunities.

Complimentary External Planning Efforts

Robbins Cultural District

Robbins municipal staff continue to plan for commercial corridor development, especially along Claire/Broadway located between the future Robbins Park and the northern industrial focus area. Anchoring the approach is the creation of a cultural district that will amplify Robbins' history and continued promise as a space of Black self-determination, Black economy, and Black prosperity.

The cultural district strategy has three main components:

1. **The Claire Broadway corridor is reconstructed as a complete street, with improved lighting and drainage; bike lanes that connect to regional bike trails; and inviting plantings and street furniture.**
2. **Robbins' cultural heritage is celebrated through walking tours, wayfinding, and historic markers/signs that draw from an online archive of oral histories, maps, and ephemera currently being developed in partnership with StoryCorps, the Field Museum, Northwestern University, and the Robbins Historical Society. These efforts are connected to and will benefit from regional, Field Museum led efforts to create a Calumet National Heritage Area.**
3. **New businesses are attracted and cultivated through incubation programs, favorable leasing, and other strategies. Policies are implemented that incentivize owners to live in Robbins and encourage existing residents to support Robbins businesses. Regular events are planned to draw destination shoppers/diners to Robbins.**

The corridor, outside the boundaries of this Plan's focus, can serve as a bridge between and be supported by a revitalized industrial area to the north and an active residential TOD area on the eastern portion of Robbins.

Consider a New Sports Facility to Draw Investment to Robbins

While not a consideration from a previous plan, a sports facility was discussed in the initial planning process for this plan. While the capacity of Robbins and overall market makes this recommendation simply not feasible at this time, the project team did wish to note the idea was discussed and may be warranted when further investment has occurred. Facilities that offer exercise, recreation, and team sports opportunities can be effective in attracting people to the community, engaging the community's youth, as well as encouraging more economic development and jobs. A sports facility could complement the future Robbins Park and attract visitors that can support future commercial development within the Village. However, it is important to consider the market demand for such a facility, as well as the building and operating costs. Several sports facilities already exist near Robbins, including the newly built Pullman Community Center. The sports facility in Pullman was funded with a combination of investments, grants, and donations from major sports teams, such as the Chicago Bears and Chicago Cubs. The project is also being financed by new market tax credits provided by Citibank, U.S. Bank, and NCIF.[6] Building such a facility in Robbins would likely require public funds or private philanthropy to cover any gaps in capital expenses. While a potential economic development consideration, it should be considered a long-term option.

Transportation

Vision Statement

Improving the multimodal nature of Robbins' transportation system will be a key to the success of Robbins in the future. Providing enhanced and additional transportation options in the Village will support not only current residents, but also any future residents who are drawn to the area by increases in economic development, housing options, and job opportunities.

Introduction

A modern transportation system in Robbins is indispensable. Residents must be able to travel quickly and easily around Robbins, as well as the larger Chicago region, to sustain the economy and quality of life. Businesses must be able to count on the timely delivery of their goods. While the scale of Robbins is walkable and various local transit options exist, including Pace and Metra, residents do not benefit from a fully realized, abundant, multimodal transportation system. The right improvements to existing transportation assets would greatly improve pedestrian mobility and access to regional destinations. Transportation recommendations in the plan focus on how to improve bus connections for residents, strategies to better facilitate walking, additional connections for people using bicycles, and linking the Little Calumet River to the Village transportation network.

Recommendations

T.1 Improve bus connections throughout the Village.

Residents expressed a need for more connections to transit services and for added circulation throughout the Village. Improving the multimodal nature of Robbins' transportation system will be a key to the success of Robbins in the future. Providing enhanced and additional transportation options in the Village will support not only current residents, but also any future residents who are drawn to the area by increases in economic development, housing options, and job opportunities. Until Pace can consider changes to bus routes currently serving Robbins, the Village can work to establish its own local transit services to meet the needs of residents, local employers, and visitors.

One cost-effective way to establish a circulator is to partner with Pace which has two programs to assist with providing passenger vehicles for local transportation services, saving the municipality up-front capital costs associated with the purchase of a vehicle. These two programs are:

- Municipal Vehicle Program – For an initial deposit of $1,000 and a monthly fee of $100 per vehicle, Pace will provide a passenger van to use for the transportation needs of the Village. Pace provides the routine maintenance needed in this program while fueling the vehicle is the responsibility of the Village.
- Locally Based Program – For an initial deposit of $1,000 and a monthly fee of $100 per vehicle, Pace will provide a paratransit style van to use for the transportation needs of the Village. In this program Pace is not responsible for required routine maintenance or fueling. Further information is located in the Resource Guide.

The circulator would assist with resident mobility and connections, especially to key destinations including the Metra station and locations along 135th Street and 139th Street. The service can be established to operate a set schedule following a set route, similar to that of a traditional Pace bus route, or it can be established to provide general circulation on demand, with passengers calling or using an app to request a trip. The circulator could also do both, servicing a set route and schedule during peak travel times of the day, especially to meet Metra trains during morning and afternoon commute times, and operating on demand during off-peak travel times as well as on evenings and weekends.

Table T.1: Comparison of Pace Programs

	Pace Locally Based Program	Pace Municipal Vehicle Program	Pace Metra Feeder Program
Open to...	Local Governments	Local Governments	Individuals / Groups (5-13 participants)
Vehicle Ownership	Pace	Pace	Pace
Vehicle Type	Paratransit Vehicle	Passenger Van	Passenger Van
Driver	Village of Robbins provides drivers and approved by Pace	Village of Robbins provides drivers and approved by Pace	Volunteer driver whose monthly cost is waived (Backup drivers receive $10 per month discount)
Costs	Monthly rate $100 $500 vehicle security deposit	Monthly rate $100 $500 vehicle security deposit	$58 per month per passenger – can use pre-tax dollars through RTA Transit Benefit Program
Vehicle routine maintenance provided by...	Village of Robbins	Pace	Included in monthly participation costs
Fuel provided by...	Village of Robbins	Village of Robbins	Included in monthly participation costs
Vehicle washes provided by...	Village of Robbins	Village of Robbins	Included in monthly participation costs
Vehicle insurance provided by...	Village of Robbins	Village of Robbins	Included in monthly participation costs
Allowed Distances	N/A	N/A	600 miles per month max.
Guaranteed Ride Home	N/A	N/A	Participants are eligible for up to $125 per year for personal emergency trips
Wheelchair Accessible	Yes	Yes	Upon Request
Capacity	12 passengers	7 passengers	13 passengers

Improve transportation options to the Robbins Metra station

Robbins' much higher carpool work commute usage (23.9 percent of trips) than the overall Cook County rate (9 percent of trips) suggests that residents and employers are already accustomed to sharing rides and may benefit from additional shared-ride connections to the Metra station. Robbins should work through established programs with area employers to promote transit and provide connections to their workplaces from the Metra station for those employees commuting to Robbins for employment, especially when future opportunities for economic and industrial development occur. One program for area employers to participate in is the Metra Feeder Vanpool program through Pace. This program would allow for a Pace van to remain parked at the Robbins Metra station (upon approval to do so) for arriving passengers who can ride the last portion of their commute to the workplace together. At the end of the workday the participants would also ride together back to the Metra station and park the vehicle until the next shift. There is a minimum of five participants needed to start the feeder service with the maximum of 13 participants per van. The monthly cost is $58 per participant except for a volunteer driver, whose monthly costs are waived, and a backup volunteer driver who receives a $10 per month discount. The monthly costs include the dedicated use of the vehicle, fuel, maintenance, insurance van washes, and emergency roadside assistance. Participants are also eligible for a guaranteed ride home in case of a personal emergency while at work requiring them to leave work early before the rest of the vanpool participants. The guaranteed ride home allowance is for up to $125 per year for alternative transportation. For an additional savings, participant costs can be paid with pre-tax dollars through the RTA's Commuter Choice Benefits Program. Program information can be found in the Resource Guide.

Figure T.1: Sample Vanpool Feeder Vehicle

T.2 Improve TOD area walkability through grants

To ensure an inclusive transportation network, policies must allow and enforce transportation infrastructure and modes that benefit users, regardless of age, need, and ability. In March 2019, the Village of Robbin instituted the Robbins Complete Streets and Green Infrastructure Policy recognizing Robbins' rich history and bright future based on a transportation network connecting people to, from, and throughout Village destinations. The policy establishes that transportation facilities for all users are planned for throughout various Village initiatives, and that infrastructure and street design funded by the Village, utility, private development, or other agencies approved by the Village of Robbins will adhere to this policy.

Metra's mode of access data to the Robbins station shows only 33 percent of passengers walk to the station. Residents pointed out the poor condition and lack of traditional sidewalks in many parts of the Robbins TOD area as barriers that create difficulty for pedestrians to safely walk in the area. While many Village destinations such as churches, businesses, the post office, and library are accessible within a 15-20 minute walk from the Metra station, improving sidewalk segments would shorten the walking time, create a safer pathway, and encourage more residents to walk. While some sidewalk improvements within the TOD area are likely to occur concurrent with redevelopment (as discussed in Recommendation H.4), additional improvements can be initiated by the Village such as brightly-painted crosswalks, pedestrian signal beacons (countdowns), additional lighting at the Metra station and along main thoroughfares, and curb bump-outs and gutters through grants.

Improve sidewalk connections and build additional sidewalks.

A continuous well-maintained sidewalk network along all Village roadways is important to full pedestrian mobility, especially to key destinations. Completing sidewalk infrastructure where missing segments currently exist, repairing existing sidewalk segments that have fallen into disrepair, and installing curb-cuts and tactile warnings for ADA accessibility will ensure all residents and visitors can easily and safely walk throughout the Village to access transit services, housing, jobs, and retail destinations.

Robbins applied for funding through the RTA's Access to Transit program in 2020 for sidewalk improvements along 139th Street heading west from the Metra station, where sidewalk currently exists. A future application could be strengthened by connecting sidewalk projects to the broader sidewalk system that leads toward the Metra station. Concurrently, construction of an improved neighborhood sidewalk system for the TOD area should be included in the PUD requirements of a private developer.

Further, improvement that provides a direct connection to transit, could be considered for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funding through CMAP as an access to transit project. Maintenance projects such as replacement-in-kind, however, are not CMAQ eligible. The RTA does help some projects each programming cycle provide match as CMAQ requires a 20% local match as do most Federal programs.

In applying for grants, prioritization of locations for sidewalk improvements is an important strategy. The Village should focus on making access improvements to key destinations such as transit services, employment and retail nodes as well as corridors throughout the Village that are already heavily used by pedestrians and bicyclists.

Metra station

The Robbins Metra station has generally good access along the main arterial, however, additional improvements can be made to provide safer pedestrian crossings. The Village should improve intersections with high-visibility crosswalks to improve motorist visibility of pedestrian crossings and to provide a signal to drivers where people may be crossing on foot. Additional pedestrian crossing improvements should be made to the railroad crossing at 139th Street to improve safety and pedestrian visibility. New railroad crossing material was installed in 2016 to create a smooth and skid-free crossing surface (a past recommendation of the RTA Pedestrian Access Improvement Plan), especially for motorists, but the installation of additional pedestrian amenities should be added. Amenities such as flexible delineator posts, along 139th Street at the railroad crossing as well as striping a clearly defined pedestrian pathway across the railroad tracks will further separate pedestrians and commuters from automotive traffic at the crossing.

Passenger comfort after arrival and while waiting at the Metra station for the next train is also important to improving the accessibility and attractiveness of walking or riding a bicycle to the station. The Village should continue to work with Metra to enhance the station and platform area with benches, bike racks, additional lighting, and improved signage that will denote commuter parking areas that will guide safe passage across the railroad tracks for pedestrians.

Along Pace bus routes

As noted, Pace bus routes cover several road segments within the study area. The northernmost route travels along 135th Street between Claire Boulevard and Crawford Avenue which has many intersection improvements that were completed in 2018 and 2019. In addition to these intersection improvements pedestrian countdown signals at all signalized intersections will support added mobility comfort. Some bus stops along 135th Street need added infrastructure such as concrete pads and furniture to support accessibility and add comfort while waiting. There is one gap in sidewalk along 135th Street at the NW corner of Claire Boulevard which needs to be addressed.

The westernmost bus route runs north and south along Crawford Avenue. This route does not have a complete sidewalk network and would benefit from sidewalks on both sides of the street, especially from 139th Street south to the Midlothian Turnpike.

The Midlothian Turnpike between Crawford Avenue and Springfield Avenue would benefit from a complete sidewalk network on both sides to facilitate access to Pace bus service and to the Delta High School on the northeast corner.

137th Street has a complete sidewalk network on both sides of the street but lacks bus stop infrastructure at bus stops between Springfield Avenue and Central Park Avenue. Central Park Avenue also has a complete sidewalk network on both sides of the street but lacks bus stop infrastructure at most bus stops between 135th and Claire Boulevard.

Claire Boulevard between 139th Street and 140th Place has sidewalk gaps, especially on the north side of the road, which should be filled to complete pedestrian access along the corridor. The section of Claire Boulevard between Francisco and Kedzie Avenues lacks sidewalk and other pedestrian infrastructure nearly through the entire stretch. Add infrastructure here in addition to bus stop amenities is greatly needed.

139th Street between Kedzie Avenue and Central Park Avenue, and Kedzie Avenue from 135th Street south to the municipal boundary both have a continuous sidewalk on both sides of the street but improvements can be made to add bus stop infrastructure at some stops and improvements to facilitate pedestrian crossings at major intersections with pedestrian countdown signals and high visibility crosswalks.

Key Corridors and Nodes
Many important destinations in Robbins are already located near transit services and have pedestrian access, including elementary schools, Delta High School, the Robbins Open Air Market, the Robbins Health Center, and the Robbins post office. Special attention should be given to ensure pedestrian access exists to other key locations in the Village such as the Robbins Community and Youth Workforce Center and Celebration Park on Trumball Avenue. The block where the center and park are located has no sidewalks at all, other than directly in the front of the center, and serves as an example location for the Village to prioritize the construction of sidewalk infrastructure and other pedestrian amenities.

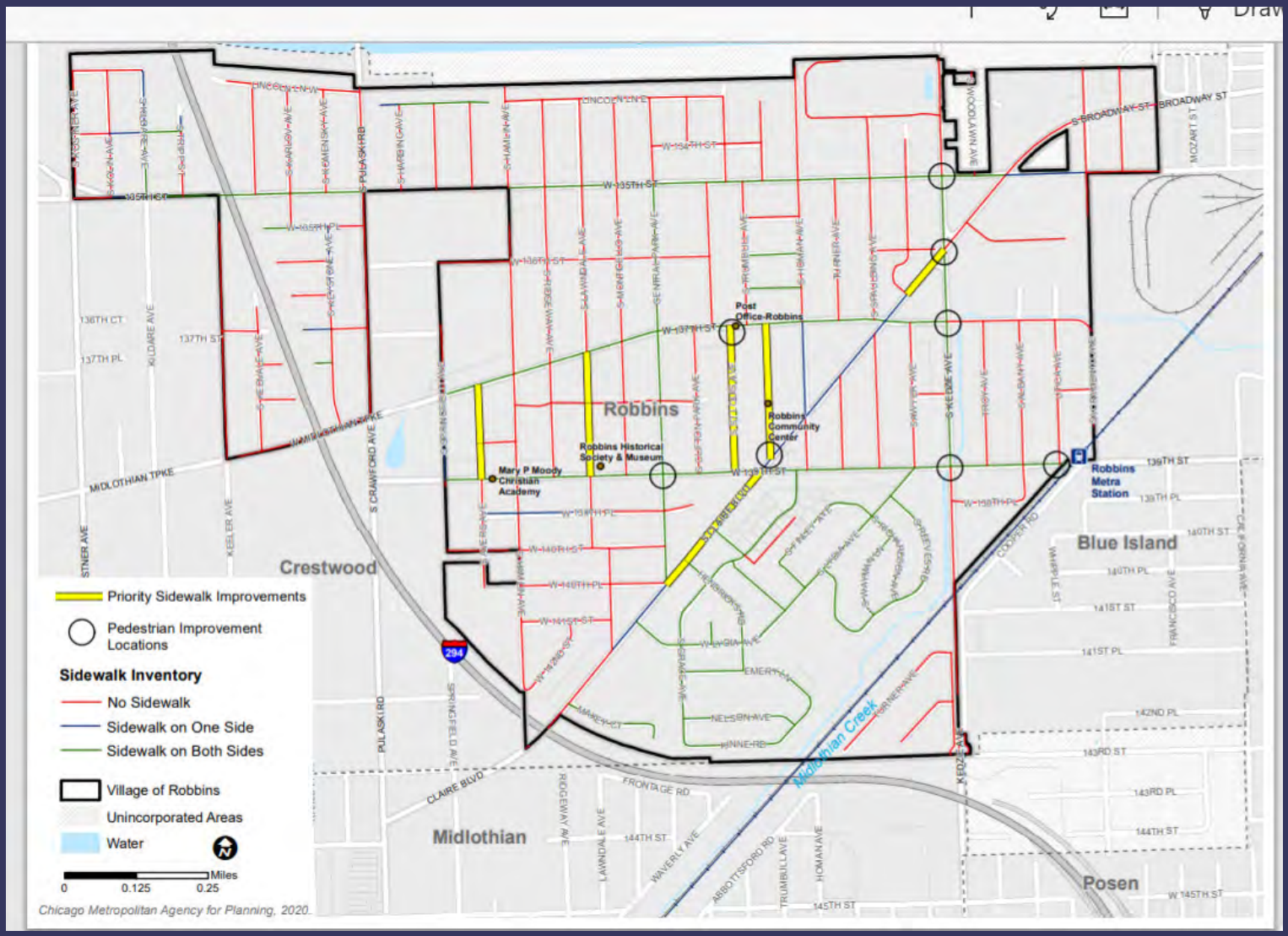
Enhance intersections for pedestrian crossings and safety.

Encouraging residents and visitors to walk more frequently instead of using an automobile, as well as attracting more people to Robbins, will require improvements to be made at key locations and intersections throughout the Robbins study area. The recent pedestrian improvements along 135th Street included five distinct intersection improvements that added striped crossings, improved curb-cuts and tactile warning surfaces to assist people with vision disabilities. These types of improvements should be expanded along the rest of 135th Street as well as throughout the Village and at intersections along the key corridors of 137th Street, 139th Street and Claire Boulevard.

- **At Pace bus stops –** Bus stop locations throughout the Village should be priority intersections for added pedestrian crossing infrastructure. People arrive to and depart from bus stops from all directions so infrastructure crossing facilitating four-directional travel at intersections adjacent to bus stops is needed.
- **Along Kedzie Avenue** – Kedzie is a major north/south arterial with some of the highest traffic volumes in Robbins, creating a barrier to residents walking east and west through the community. The Village should explore additional pedestrian infrastructure at key intersections with Kedzie Ave to improve safe and accessible pedestrian crossings, including the intersections with 135th Avenue, Claire Boulevard, 137th Avenue and 139th Avenue. Due to the size of these intersections the Village should consider including amenities that shorten the pedestrian crossing, such as curb extensions, pedestrian crossing refuge islands and porkchop refuge islands, in addition to traditional painted crosswalks and curb cuts.

While some of these improvements have already been identified above and in previous plans, many historical issues, such as funding sources and municipal capacity, hindered past implementation of these recommendations and prevented Robbins from overcoming existing walkability gaps.

Figure T.2 Candidates for Prioritized Sidewalk and Pedestrian Improvements



T.3 Continue bike trail connections and create Village-wide bikeways.

The Village should strive to provide safety and comfort for bicyclists throughout Robbins, including the TOD area. Doing so will expand residents travel options and provide health benefits. Currently there are no bicycle facilities, such as on-street lanes or off-street paths, located in the study area. Sidewalks are being used along major roadways, such as Kedzie Avenue and 139th Street, by cyclists as well as pedestrians. This mix poses dangerous conditions with sidewalks designed wide enough for pedestrian use only. Residents expressed interest in a bikeway connection to the existing Calumet-Saganashkee Channel ("Cal-Sag") trail being constructed to the north of the Village, as well as designating preferred bikeway routes along 137th or 139th Streets, and along Claire Boulevard.

Resident desires for bikeway routes on 137th Street, 139th Street, and Claire Boulevard align with data from fitness tracking devices which show recreational bicyclists are using these same routes. Chicago's Active Transportation Alliance also identifies four roadways most conducive for bicycling in the study area: 135th Street, 137th Street, Claire Boulevard, and Kedzie Avenue, giving each a level of biking comfort rating. Claire Boulevard is given the highest comfort rating and serves as an excellent route to use that is suitable for bicyclists of all levels.

Establish north/south and east/west bikeways as a framework foundation for a future bike network.

139th Street and Claire Boulevard have narrow rights-of-way that carry low volumes of traffic and present an initial opportunity to establish the bicycle network throughout Robbins. The Village should establish 139th Street and Claire Boulevard, both municipal roads, as initial bikeways in the Village. Doing so will create an east/west and north/south backbone system from which additional bikeway connections can be installed in the future. There are two steps the Village should take in this establishment upon funding being established.

- Installing shared lane markings, or "sharrows" along with standardized bike route signage along 139th Street will create an east/west bikeway through Robbins and provide added access to many destinations in Robbins, including several churches, the Village of Robbins Open Air Market, Pace bus stops and the Robbins Metra station. Shared lane markings should be positioned on the section of travel lanes where bicyclists should ride and the signage should use national standards for bicycle signage, including the standard green color, bicycle symbol, rectangular shape and directions to three key destinations.

Figure T.3: Sharrow Example

- In advance of the proposed Natalie Creek Trail being constructed, the Village should designate Claire Boulevard as a "Bike Boulevard," creating the north/south branches of the initial bicycling framework. The Claire Bike Boulevard should include pavement markings, standardized bike route signage and perhaps traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds (speed humps or mini traffic circles) that, when combined, create an environment for people driving cars and riding bikes to use the same roadway and travel at the same or similar speeds. Special treatments may be needed at the intersection with Kedzie Avenue to allow for safe crossing of this busy arterial corridor. This north/south bikeway will provide added access to key destinations in Robbins including bus stops, the Family Dollar, Horace Mann Elementary and Kellar Middle Schools, and the future Robbins Park. Establishing a non-motorized connection between the two schools was an item of resident feedback and discussed at the 2019 planning charrette for this project. Designating the roadway as Bike Boulevard will also act as a safety net should the Natalie Creek Trail alignment be shifted away from Claire Boulevard, or should the construction experience significant delays.

Again, as funding is not immediately available in the Village's general budget, third party grants will need to be pursued to further these goals. The initial recommendation is to understand the application process and requirements, which CMAP and the RTA can support through the implementation process.

Add more bike parking Village-wide.

In addition to designating bikeways and installing infrastructure improvements, providing more end of trip bike parking at key Village destinations and along designated bike routes also plays an important role in encouraging people to bicycle throughout the Village. According to a 2012 Virginia Tech study of commuters in the Washington, D.C., region, those with access to bicycle parking at work were more than 1.5 times more likely to commute by bike than those without.

Choice of bike rack and bike rack design is an important consideration since not all bike racks provide equal utilization and security. Bicyclists need bike racks that allow them to lock both a wheel and the frame to the rack and that do not limit accessibility. The most easy to use bike rack is the standard inverted-U or inverted-circular rack that can accommodate two bikes, thereby making it easy to access a bike from either side, and that enable the user to lock both a wheel and the frame, providing the best security.

Figure T.4: Bike lane Example

The Village should work with Metra to increase bicycle parking at the Robbins Metra station and strategize for proper location of bike racks. There is bicycle parking located at the commuter parking lot, however, it is limited to one rack with a capacity of four to five bicycles and is inconveniently located, requiring bicyclists to walk to and from the station platforms and the parking lot to access their bicycle. Locating additional bicycle parking at the station, closer to or on the platforms, would make using a bicycle to access transit service more attractive and feasible. The inbound platform near the stationhouse is wider than the outbound platform and would be an attractive location for additional bicycle parking.

While the Village does not have an adopted bicycle plan, the Village should reference the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) and South Council of Mayors (South Council) Complete Streets and Trails Plan for additional biking network priorities and design recommendations when implementing designated bikeways within the Village. In addition to the plan identifying key corridors for future bikeways, it also serves as a guide the Village can use to promote a Complete Streets approach to transportation planning and programming.

As noted, the Village has explored grants in the past and should continue to explore potential funding sources. Like the funding sources listed above for pedestrian improvements, Access to Transit, Invest in Cook, STP, and TAP funding can also be used for bicycle infrastructure improvements. While these government-backed funding sources are well-known and good for the Village to pursue, private and less well-known funding resources should also be considered. One such private source is "The PeopleForBikes Foundation," 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to help make every bike ride better. The foundation's Community Grant Program provides funding for important projects that support bicycle infrastructure and funding for targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride. Types of bicycle infrastructure funded through the foundation include bike racks, bike repair stations, bike storage, bike parking and bike paths, lanes and bridges.

T.4 Connections to the Little Calumet River:

Residents expressed interest in creating recreational opportunities along the Cal-Sag. A boat launch, kayak share, fishing locations, and other recreational activities would increase traffic to the nearby waterway, encourage fun modes of transportation, and present opportunities to learn about Calumet area wildlife. Other municipalities and organizations along the Cal-Sag have leveraged their natural resources adjacent to the channel for recreational opportunities and can serve as an example to the Village, such as the Lake Catherine Nature Center in the City of Palos Heights. The nature center offers a variety of activities including hiking, cycling, nature watching, environmental programs and a venue for public events. The forthcoming Robbins Park will provide a catalyst and a foundation for furthering such recreational opportunities.

In addition to Robbins Park serving as a venue for future recreational activities, the Village should explore partnering with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District in the development of a neighborhood linear park on the south side of the Cal-Sag channel from Pulaski Avenue, east to the Robbins Community Power Facility, with pedestrian access from neighborhood side streets along Lincoln Lane. Doing so preserves the open space along the channel while offering additional green space for nearby residents to enjoy. The Village should encourage low or no-cost "soft" programming at the park such as fishing, birding, barge watching, and nature or historical talks. This recommendation is consistent with the ***RainReady Calumet Plan*** which identified an opportunity to connect Robbins to the Cal-Sag in this portion of the Village.

Funding sources for additional green space along the Cal-Sag could come from community donations, corporate and foundation giving such as the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, and by forming partnerships with agencies who can provide technical assistance in leveraging funding such as Friends of the Chicago River.

Industrial Areas

Vision Statement

Attracting industrial development to dormant industrial land would provide necessary, desired employment opportunities for Robbins residents. A strengthened, revitalized industrial sector and its workers additionally produces demand for local retail and residences enhancing community development synergies overall.

Introduction

Robbins' high unemployment rate (22.9 percent) reflects, in part, a lack of local job opportunities. Along with future retail employment from captured local retail demand, current vacant industrial areas must be restored to job providing centers. The two areas of industrial potential are a 17-acre vacant site to the west of Kedzie Ave., a former community power plant, and a triangular parcel south of 139th Street. While the desire for Robbins' Industrial areas to be productive has remained consistent over the numerous recent planning efforts, the concepts and recommendations for areas have changed over time. The 2004 Opportunities Analysis and Brownfields Site Identification and Priorities report advocated a mix of office, greenhouses, educational venues, and supporting commercial, while the 2009 Economic Development Vision and Strategy plan recommended residential, recreational, and office rather than heavy commercial ,defined as fabricating large products from involving flammable or explosive materials and processes. In contrast, the current focus for the vacant 17-acre former Power Plant is as an aerobic digestor, as proposed by the property owner, and light industrial uses within the TOD area south of 139th Street. Initiating steps that facilitate and attract industrial investment would further develop the economic base of Robbins and strengthen neighborhood stability.

Market Potential

The industrial market analysis found several industry clusters in the south suburbs: transportation, distribution and logistics; metal, machinery and equipment manufacturing; chemicals and related materials; food manufacturing; and business to business services. The market study also suggested that the 17-acre site could be developed for manufacturing, logistics, cold storage, a truck terminal, or an indoor agricultural use. This is not to diminish the intention for the site as an aerobic digestor, only to note other industrial opportunities exist in case development circumstances change.

Recommendations

I.1 Prepare for Desired Development

While momentum for an aerobic digester at the vacant 17-acre site has begun, a formal development plan has not been submitted to the Village for approval. The Village has, however, approved the property owner's request for a Class 6B property tax abatement from Cook County, and the owner has pledged $175 million in equipment and $50 million in building upgrades to help advance the project and create 60 new jobs. In addition, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) submitted a federal EPA grant to assist with the cost of environmental cleanup. These steps are indicative of the project moving forward.

The Village must establish development guidelines for the site, early in the redevelopment process before concepts are finalized, which will provide certainty and clear expectations to the property owner/developer. These guidelines should voice how the site will blend with or be buffered from the neighboring Robbins Park and the residential area to the south. While these issues will be reviewed in the development review process, establishing and communicating criteria now, through either official policy or a resolution, facilitates a more efficient development review process.

Examples of development guidelines the Village should establish include buffering criteria (such as a fence, berm, or landscaping), ingress and egress points into the site, truck traffic routes, and other site considerations and improvements. If the current proposal does not continue to advance, the guidelines can be included in a future RFQ for site development.

Facilitate light industrial development, such as food manufacturing and processing, in the TOD area

In addition to the 17-acre industrial parcel, appropriate industrial uses may be compatible within the designated TOD area. Light industrial development is often characterized as activities contained entirely within a building, along with any resulting noise, odor, smoke, heat, and glare, and vibration. In keeping with those characteristics, such uses would be compatible with nearby residential areas. An example of such an industry with a strong market in the south suburbs is food and beverage manufacturing and processing, which provides a variety of employment activities for workers lacking specialized skill sets. Parcels east of Troy Avenue, between west 137th Street and west 139th Street, which are already zoned for light industry, should also be considered for these uses. In addition, light industrial produced wastewater could be put into the current storm system/watershed. While the Village expects to approve development through PUD's, local zoning regulations must be updated to indicate desired development, including a zoning use category and designation where light manufacturing is allowed. Sample language is included in the *Resource Guide*.

I.2 Market Robbins' Geographic Advantages

In a metropolitan region with 284 municipalities it can be difficult for a community to stand out and attract developers. Through various planning efforts, the geographic location of Robbins is consistently noted as an asset, however, this advantage has yet to be fully realized in local marketing efforts. Much as the Village is currently moving toward marketing individual parcels (Rec E.3), the Village should market its general advantages as well.

The location of Robbins can offer the industrial sector several logistical benefits such as access to I-294 and the Blue Island rail yard in less than seven minutes, and to Midway International Airport and rail lifts at nearby intermodal facilities roughly 30 minutes or less. Further, a business will have access to Lake Michigan water at a time when other communities are reassessing their locally sourced water.

These advantages should be noted on the Robbins website and in promotional materials for networking events and trade shows. The Village website currently links to gettoknowrobbins.org, which provides a community overview and information, however, there is no mention of these advantages. Robbins should add additional content under "Advantage Robbins" or a similar heading with information to help promote the community such as the retail spending gap and untapped residential markets. Publicizing such advantages presents an opportunity to developers, rather than waiting for them to discover Robbins potential.

may be an issue for some residents, the Village can work with the local library or establish a terminal at Village hall to provide access. CMAP can work with Village to establish such a section on the website through the implementation process. This builds on Robbins motto of "Learn By Doing" and further signal to businesses that Robbins has another resource, its workforce.

I.3 Facilitate Training

Residents consistently noted a desire for industrial site development to include job training. There are two strategies the Village should pursue: leverage development review processes and amplify third party efforts. As noted in the urban agriculture recommendation (Section E.4), job training is a third-party responsibility, and the Village can help to advancing job training through development. Through the negotiation of incentives and PUD agreements, the Village can negotiate for the inclusion of apprenticeship programs and hiring from the community. The Village should also be transparent about its support for such initiatives and community amenities, so that developers aren't caught by surprise by these requests.

The Village can also tap into third party providers and amplify job training opportunities. The Village website can provide residents access to various job training programs by the state, local community colleges, and area non-profits under a "resident resources" or similarly titled menu option. While internet access may be an issue for some residents, the Village can work with the local library or establish a terminal at Village hall to provide access. CMAP can work with Village to establish such a section on the website through the implementation process. This builds on Robbins motto of "Learn By Doing" and further signal to businesses that Robbins has another resource, its workforce.

Endnotes

Economic Development

1. https://www.icsc.com/attend-and-learn/events/details/chicago-deal-making-2020
2. https://benefitchicago.org/
3. https://inspirationkitchens.org/about-us/
4. https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/cleanup-programs/brownfields/Pages/default.aspx
5. http://growinghomeinc.org/about-us/
6. https://www.rejournals.com/pullman-community-center-closer-to-completion-on-chicago-s-south-side-20180503

Section 4: Implementation

The following tables outline steps and responsibilities to implement the focus area recommendations. Within each area, the recommendations have been ordered by time frame from short term to long term. Because the catalyst for this Plan is Robbins Park, the subsequent timeframe definitions are influenced by the Park's completion:

- Short Term: Can be implemented immediately with little or no additional resources needed, 0-1 year
- Medium Term: Can be implemented with some outside or additional ascertained internal resources
- Long Term: Extensive resources needed and/or dependent on securing outside funding, 3 years and beyond

Housing Implementation

Recommendations	Partners	Initial steps	Resource/Funding Options
Short Term			
Establish a Future Planned Unit Development Overlay District (H.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Phase	Finalize updated map borders; Prepare Village Board of Trustees Resolution updating zoning map with PUD dashed area.	Resource: Village staff, CMAP can update map upon consultation with Village
Make Zoning Map Accessible on website (H.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins	Identify place on website for zoning map, suggested place is under "Government" tab	Resource: Village IT Staff
Continue Land Assembly Efforts (H.5)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partners:* South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (SSLDBA) & Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA)	Map exists of current Village owned property, identify parcel gaps that would allow for contiguous ownership of spaces and focus resources on acquisition	Resource: Village and partner organizations
Medium Term			
Attend and Participate with organizations that foster affordable housing development (H.4)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins	Contact local organizations that participate, starting with Illinois Housing Council	Resource: Village general funds for any membership fees

Housing Implementation Cont'd.

Recommendations	Partners	Initial steps	Resource/Funding Options
Long Term			
Pursue Necessary Sewer Infrastructure in TOD area (Rec. H1)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* Grant providers	Staff continue to prepare to apply for applications, use Future partner coordination meetings with MWRD to better align applications to not compete for funds	Resource: Village Staff & CMAP continuing staff Funding Sources: Grant partners such as Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Revolving Loan Funds
Establish a Modern Zoning Code (H.2)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* Grant providers	First step may be to apply for a program that would provide a code within the TOD area, to provide a base to build off of the entire Village	Resource: CMAP LTA, Invest in Cook, RTA Community Planning Program
Outline and Establish an RFQ for future Development (H.4)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Phase	Establish criteria desired for future residential development	Resource: Village staff time and CMAP time; ECR, Plan, Market Analysis
Draft and Post RFQ (H.4)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins	Use RFQ sample from Resource Guide to understand what should be included	Resource: Village staff
Apply for housing and development rehabilitation assistance program funds (H.5)	*Lead:* Developer *Partner:* Village Staff	Through networking meetings target developers familiar with LIHTC	Resource: Networking Meetings, Developer past experience.

Economic Development Implementation

Recommendations	Partners	Initial steps	Resource/Funding Options
Short Term			
Market properties suitable for redevelopment on the Village's website (Rec. E.1)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partners:* PROCHAMPS	Compile data of Village owned property into one dataset to be available to update and post on website. Properties within TOD will not be posted until Park is complete and desired development concept finalized	Resources: Understand contract with PROCHAMPS and see if it can be ongoing
Medium Term			
Attend local retail trade shows to promote Robbins to potential businesses (Rec. E.1)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* Local Established Trade Shows	Contact shows to get on mailing list for future shows to attend	Resource: Village funds for membership dues
List available state and local incentives on the Village's website (Rec. E.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins to Post *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Phase	Gather incentives already offered such as Cal-Sag Enterprise Zone, Calumet/Cal-Sag Growth Zone, New Market Tax Credits; Decide website location to post, suggestion is on Get2Know Robbins link	Resource: ECR, Market Studies, CMAP Staff to assist Village staff in writing up narrative for posting on Village site.
Establish criteria for using incentives to attract development to the Village (E.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Phase	Upon publication, review CMAP Incentive Guide.	Resource: CMAP Implementation Guide, if incentive granted through a PUD—consultant hired to analyze proposed incentive.
Long Term			
Identify and prepare vacant land for urban agriculture (Rec. E.4)	Lead: Village Staff Partner: Identified community stakeholders	Identify correct Brownfield grant to apply for among various IEPA and EPA grants (Assessment Grants, Revolving Loan Fund, Clean-Up, Multi-purpose)	Resource: Village staff time with CMAP Implementation
Solicit for a small-scale social enterprise café or restaurant	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Phase	Draft RFQ for placement on Village website based on sample within Resource Guide Identify potential locations	Resources: CMAP can assist Village in drafting an RFQ
Support workforce training in the food industry (Rec. E.4)	Partner: Future businesses, specifically Aerobic Digestor, future light industrial businesses that use incentives	Have meeting with OAI about following up its grant work to provide local training for Robbins Park about additional partners.	Resources: Village has leverage to work with any business that uses available incentives.
Facilitate small-scale convenience retail along the west side of Kedzie Avenue (Rec. E.2)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins	Make sure proper zoning is in place.	Resources: Village staff

Transportation Implementation

Recommendations	Partners	Initial steps	Resource/Funding Options
Short Term			
Develop Light Manufacturing Definition Criteria (Rec. I.1)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Staff	Review and tweak provided Light Manufacturing Criteria from Resource Guide.	Resource: Resource Guide
Establish Site Development Criteria for 17-acre Industrial Parcel (Rec. I.1)	*Lead:* Village or Robbins *Partner:* Community Stakeholders, CMAP Implementation	Consideration of factors from report: truck entrance routes, buffering, etc.	Resource: Village Staff, CMAP Implementation team
Medium Term			
Update Robbins Website highlighting Robbins Advantages (Rec. I.1)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins IT Staff	Establish a tab on Get2Knowrobbins.com about Robbins advantages, move position of location written under government to this section	Resource: Village Staff and ECR and Market Studies
Update Robbins Website highlighting Job Training Opportunities (Rec. I.2)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins	Provide links to established Cook County and State of Illinois sites from Robbins webpage.	Resource: Robbins IT Staff
Secure job training opportunities within agreements with developers that use incentives (Rec. I.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* CMAP Implementation Staff	Work with implementation team on sample agreements	Resource: CMAP Resource Guide for examples of developer agreements
Facilitate light industrial uses, such as food manufacturing and processing, in the TOD area (Rec. I.3)	*Lead:* Village of Robbins *Partner:* MWRD	Village to confirm definition of Light Manufacturing	Challenges: Continue to assemble land, market toward developers

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