

Greater Downtown Master Plan

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC
March 21, 2005

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Executive Summary

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC

March 21, 2005

Why this Plan was Prepared

Downtown Oak Park is the historic heart of a diverse and vibrant community with a rich assortment of resources. In the late 20th century, the downtown experienced a decline in quality and vitality compared to Oak Park's residential neighborhoods.

A Proactive Community Strategy

The Village has seen a period of downtown growth and activity since the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program was initiated in 1983 and a Central Business District Master Plan was approved in 1994.

This master plan updates the 1994 Central Business District Master Plan and builds upon the strengths and weaknesses of Oak Park's recent developments. It is a tool that will help Oak Park's leaders proactively plan for the future rather than reactively respond to development pressures.

This master plan brings certainty to developers, businesspeople and neighbors during the project review and approval process by providing a clear vision of the community's goals.

Furthermore, the master plan will aid Oak Park in determining how to extend the TIF program and identify specific TIF priority projects that will leverage the greatest return on public investment.



Study Area Aerial

Public Process

Oak Park's Greater Downtown Master Plan process was driven by valuable input from public participants interested in the short- and long-term future of the village. A summary schedule is shown below.

Outreach

The master plan was built upon a foundation of extensive public outreach. The series of interviews and small "focus groups" held with a wide range of citizen and government groups throughout the project were of great importance. Approximately 50 separate meetings were held over the months with the following groups:

- *Business community* – Downtown Oak Park Business Association, Oak Park-River Forest Chamber of Commerce, Oak Park Development Corporation, South Marion Street, and The Avenue Business Association.
- *Retail community/local business owners* – Downtown Oak Park, The Avenue, and Marion Street.
- *Neighborhood citizens groups* – Harlem-Ontario Community Association, Holley Court neighbors, Neighbors United to Save South Marion Street (NUSS), and REDCOOP.
- *Property owners* – including those developing Whiteco and RSC projects (and their representatives/architects).
- *Design community* – Oak Park Architectural League, Community Design Commission, Arts Council, and Arts Advisory Commission.
- *Historic preservation* – Historic Preservation Commission, and Historical Society of Oak Park & River Forest.
- *Local governments and civic organizations* – River Forest, Forest Park, Visitor's Bureau, League of Women Voters, Oak Park Housing Center, Oak Park Township, and Cap the IKE Committee.
- *Transportation agencies and groups* – CTA, Metra, Pace, IDOT, Union Pacific, P/T Commission, Oak Park Cycle Club and Regional Transportation Authority.
- *Taxing bodies* – School District 97, School District 200, Park District, and Library District.
- *Oak Park government* – Oak Park Plan Commission, Village Board trustees and Village staff.



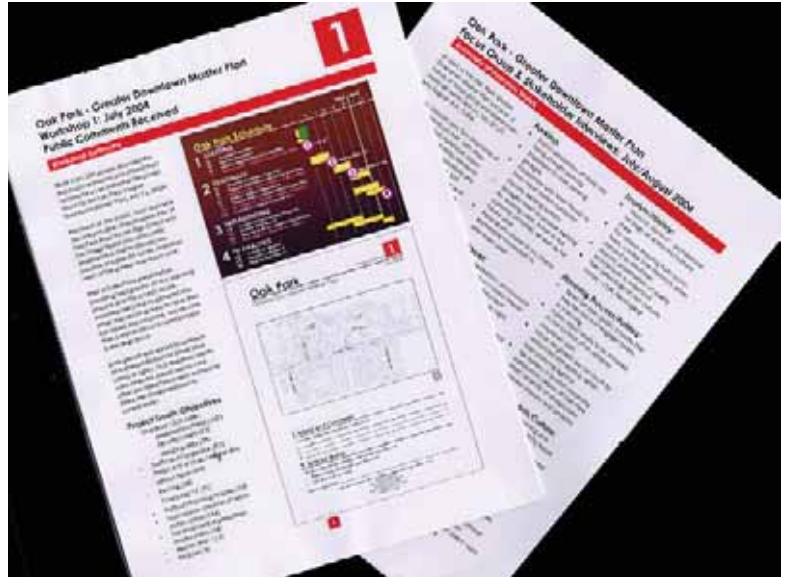
Workshop Attendance

To ensure a successful public process, it was important to have high attendance at all workshops. Information on meeting and workshop dates, times and locations was distributed to the community through:

- Postcard mailings sent to all area households and businesses.
- Newspaper articles and cable television announcements.

Additionally, the Village website served as a source of information throughout the project by posting:

- The project schedule.
- Workshop response sheet tallies, public comments, summary notes, PowerPoint presentations and lists of attendees.
- Focus group summary notes.



Public Response - Summary Notes

Master Plan Development

Development of the master plan included three stages – starting, designing and implementing – described below. Analysis of the TIF plan also occurred simultaneously.

Starting

During this step, existing information was gathered and meetings with local experts were held to gain additional knowledge. Steps included:

- Collecting background information on existing conditions, site availability, history, current projects, policies, and base maps, etc.
- Determining opportunities and constraints.
- Establishing project goals and objectives.

Designing

All public workshop sessions were interactive. Citizen participants were asked to respond to specific development alternatives.

- The average attendance at each workshop was approximately 100.
- Over 289 response sheet ballots were returned for the first three meetings.
- Each meeting included a one-hour presentation followed by a one-hour small group discussion and workshop.

Implementing

Public meetings with the Village Board were held to identify, discuss and rank catalyst projects.

TIF Analysis

The accomplishments and benefits of the TIF program and its extension were discussed and evaluated. Results are included in the special report that accompanies the master plan document: the *Amended Oak Park Greater Downtown Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project and Plan*.

Oak Park Response Sheet **1**
Greater Downtown Master Plan July 2004

I. Issues and Concerns
List your three top issues and concerns:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

II. Special Areas
On the map above, please note areas you believe:
• Present special design opportunities
• Are areas of concern
Name (optional): _____

Workshop 1 Response Sheet

Area 1 Response Sheet
Village of Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan November 03

A Housing and Retail
• Parking Expansion
• Housing (200 units)
• Retail (100 units)

B Housing and Retail
• Parking Expansion
• Housing (200 units)
• Retail (100 units)

C Housing Only
• Parking Expansion
• Housing (150 units)

Other Please record your suggestions below:

Workshop 2 Response Sheet

Response Sheet **3**
Workshop #3
Village of Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan
November 10, 2004

Land Use/Circulation:	Yes	No	Other
1. Public Room Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Retail/Parking Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Housing Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Street Improvements:	Yes	No	Other
4. Lake Street (Marion to Forest)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Lake Street Civic/Cultural Area (Forest to Oak Park)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Station Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Westgate (Station Street to Marion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Station Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Oak Park (Lake to Pleasant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. North & South Boulevards (typical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

Name (optional): _____

Workshop 3 Response Sheet

Incorporating Concurrent Projects

The Greater Downtown Master Plan included the review and evaluation of several ongoing projects in Oak Park. Guidance on project development was provided and the projects were incorporated into the overall master plan to ensure compatibility with its fundamental concepts and land use and public realm frameworks. Through this process, each project's potential was maximized to benefit the Village as a whole.

Projects Underway

- **Whiteco** – Residential mixed-use development, with a proposed Trader Joe's retail space, high-density apartments (rental, as stipulated by the Village) and parking at Harlem and Ontario.
- **The Residence at the Oak Park Opera Club** – Residential and retail mixed-use development with parking located on South Boulevard.
- **RSC Building** – Preservation of the Drechsler Building incorporated into a new mixed-use retail/health club/condominium building on Lake Street.



RSC Development

Guiding Principles

The master plan is based on the community's core beliefs and guides future development in the greater downtown area.

Citizens identified their issues, concerns and goals for the Village in group discussions and through written comments on ballot response sheets. These responses were tallied and summarized to become a comprehensive list of guiding principles. These principles were subsequently affirmed at each workshop and used to evaluate plan alternatives.

The project's guiding principles established by the community follow:

- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Preserve historic small-town feel.
- Revitalize retail.
- Address building height and density.
- Improve parking supply.
- Provide high-quality design.
- Identify financial project implications.
- Improve planning process.
- Enhance pedestrian environment.
- Provide additional open space.
- Revitalize Marion Mall.
- Improve transit usage.



Drechsler Building

Capacity Diagram

The capacity diagram is a snapshot of the character and intensity of development anticipated to occur by 2020.

A Vision for Build-out

The capacity diagram depicts development that is realistic and economically feasible.

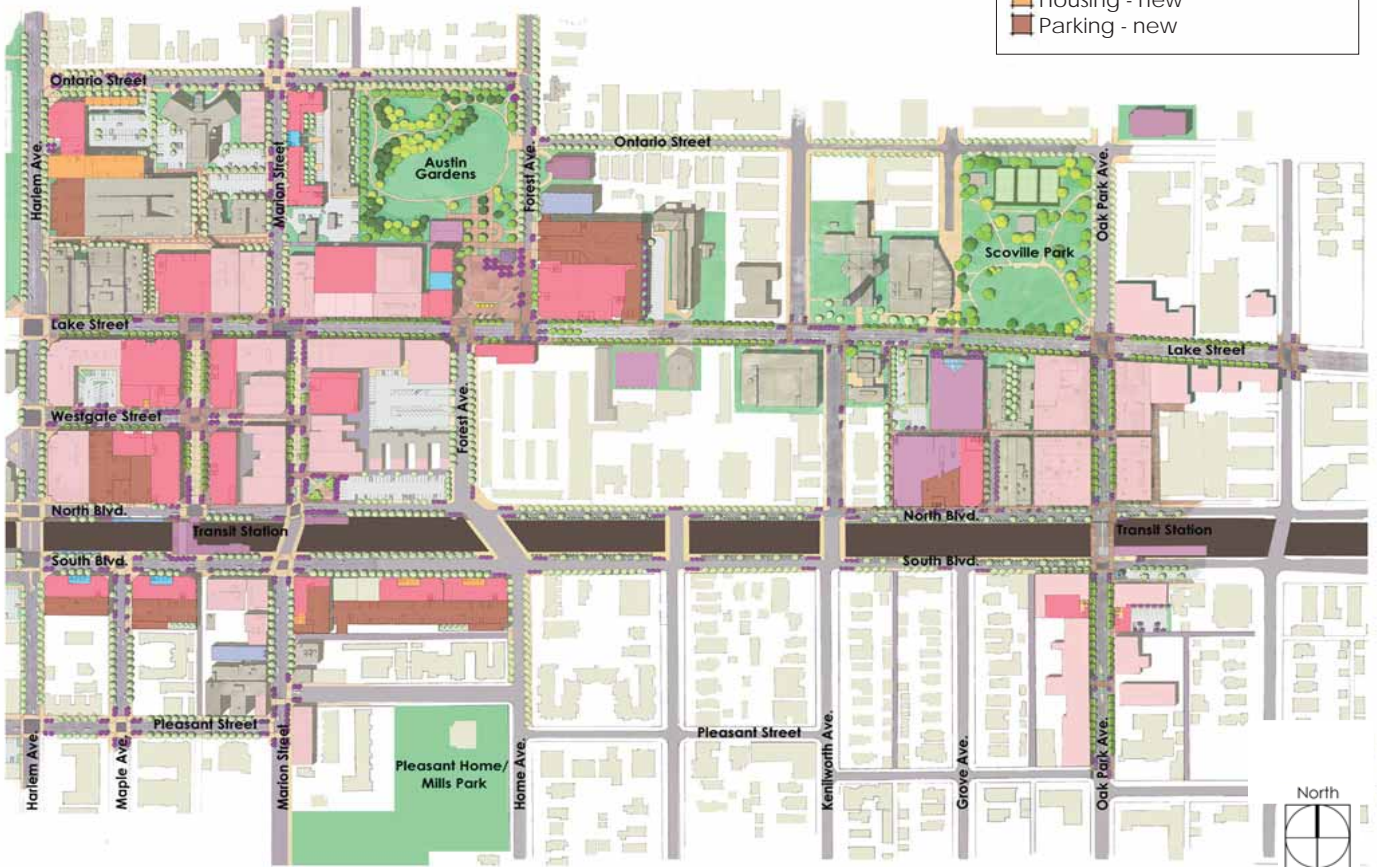
- The diagram illustrates architectural design schemes that could be built on each site.
- All of the development shown on the capacity diagram responds to the fundamental requirements necessary to attract investors. As an example, market acceptable parking ratios have been applied to development schemes.

How the Diagram is Used

The capacity diagram is used to identify the total private investment possible. These private costs are compared to the required public investment costs to determine the return on public investment ratio. The resulting ratios ultimately help prioritize project phasing and identify the taxing potential based on new development opportunities.

New Development Capacity Summary

- Retail (New): 207,000 SF
- Retail (Rehab) - 78,000 SF
- Office (New) - 121,000 SF
- Office (Rehab) - 40,000 SF
- Residential - 1,200 units
- Civic/Cultural - 20,000 SF
- Parking structures - 3,000 spaces



Build-out Capacity Diagram

The Fundamental Concept

The Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan is simple in its essence. Its primary purpose is to fulfill the community's goals. The plan reflects the guiding principles established by the community. It maintains and enhances the high quality of life that is the village's heritage and history. Its fundamental concepts include:

Revitalize Retail

The plan reclaims Lake Street's prominence as a major retail district in the Chicago area by providing:

- Primary Retail Anchors.
- A Pedestrian Retail Loop.
- Secondary Local Retail.
- Parking.

Reduce Traffic Congestion

Reduce auto traffic congestion by:

- Adding new routes to disperse traffic.
- Opening Marion Street to automobiles.
- Creating a new Station Street.

Improve Transit Usage

- Facilitate access to and transfers between Pace bus, shuttle bus, CTA and Metra.
- Provide new transit facilities and amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Locate new Station Street to provide a direct link between Metra/CTA transit station and Lake Street.

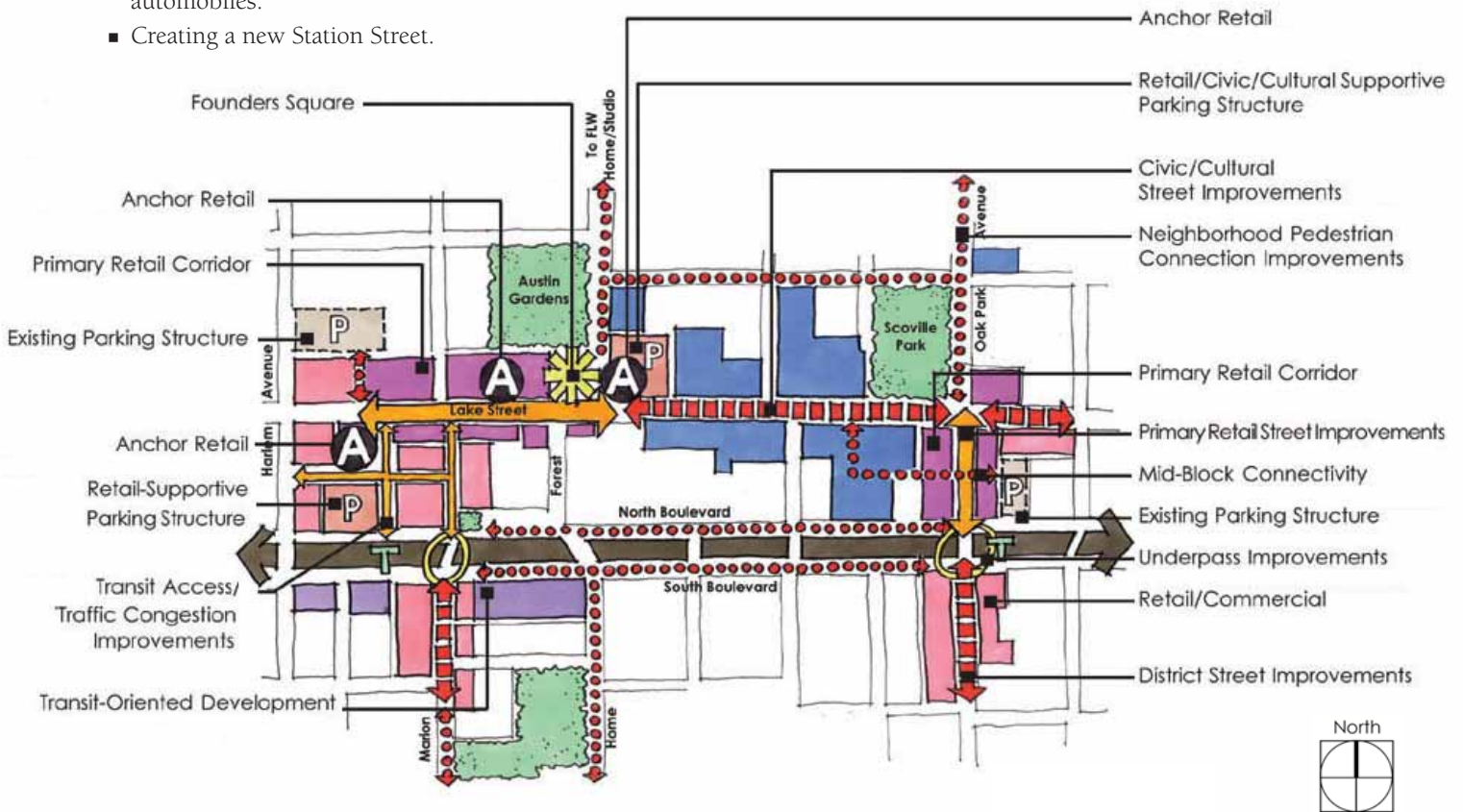
Provide Additional Open Space

The plan establishes additional open spaces and outdoor space for public assembly.

- Founders' Square creates a new Village "living room."

Enhance Pedestrian Environment

- Improve pedestrian passage under the elevated railroad tracks to knit the northern and southern parts of the Village together.
- Make pedestrian street improvements to link retail districts and neighborhoods.



Fundamental Concepts Diagram

Land Use Framework

Downtown Oak Park's historical retail areas – along Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue – and its arts, cultural, civic and institutional uses are all strengthened by the land use configuration established in this framework.

Strategy for Growth

The framework maintains and strengthens existing uses while providing for reasonable retail and housing growth. New development is planned to maximize existing roadway, traffic and parking infrastructure. The framework creates a cohesive downtown consisting of primary and secondary retail, parking, housing, office and civic uses.

The Land Use Framework promotes a mix of uses, both vertically and horizontally. For example, mixed-use

buildings with housing on upper floors support the primary retail uses and relate to nearby transit services.

New development sites and historic building renovation opportunities are identified for local and national retailers and businesses. Development should be transit- and pedestrian-oriented.

Uses proposed by the Land Use Framework are allowable under the current zoning ordinances; the framework adds specificity to the existing policies, making development more consistent with downtown objectives.

Existing private property planned for open space or roadway uses would operate as is until acquired by a public entity or transferred to public use by easement, dedication or other means.



Land Use Framework Diagram: All Floors

The Public Realm Framework

Much of Oak Park’s downtown is in the public realm – the Village’s streets and sidewalks. It is this land that helps create a memorable identity for downtown. The Public Realm Framework:

- Improves access within and through downtown for automobiles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians.
- Establishes the character of and creates a setting for adjacent development.
- Creates a coherent and appealing system of streets, open spaces and transit facilities that are easily navigable and understandable to visitors, residents and workers alike.

Primary Retail Streets

Primary retail streets are identified through the use of distinctive paving, street furniture and lighting to signal their importance as shopping corridors. These streets include:

- *Lake Street* – The historic downtown retail corridor stretches a comfortable quarter-mile walking distance.
- *Oak Park Avenue* – Retail corridor with an abundance of unique local retailers and restaurants. Public realm improvements should be consistent with the adjacent high-quality architecture.

- *Marion Street* – Opened to automobile traffic between North Boulevard and Lake Street. This portion of Marion incorporates a curbsless and flexible “European” design. The street could be temporarily closed or have limited vehicle access to allow for street fairs, farmer’s markets, sidewalk sales or other similar uses.

Secondary Retail Streets

Secondary retail streets are identified through the use of complementary but distinct paving, street furniture and lighting to signal their role as shopping corridors and transit and neighborhood connectors. Key secondary retail streets include:

- *Station Street* – A newly developed street that links the transit station directly to Lake Street with a terminus at the Drechsler Building.



Public Realm Diagram

Pedestrian Emphasis Streets

These streets provide comfortable connections between retail districts and adjacent neighborhoods. Streetscape improvements should clearly signify each street's prominence as a major pedestrian route. Signature street trees, lighting and enhanced sidewalks and intersections should complement retail streets. Additional special elements are required for the following pedestrian streets:

- *North and South Boulevards* – Screen elevated train lines with upright evergreen landscaping.
- *Forest to Chicago (outside study area) to Oak Park Avenue to Lake Street Loop* – Establishes a tourism loop between retail districts, train stations and major attractions such as the Frank Lloyd Wright home and studio.



Founders' Square Perspective

Arts and Cultural Corridor

Lake Street Corridor – This corridor provides a pedestrian-friendly linkage between the two major retail districts – Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue. Abundant landscaping should be provided to allow the corridor to serve as a backdrop for the historic architectural character along its edges and as a spine for a central tourism loop.

Public Squares

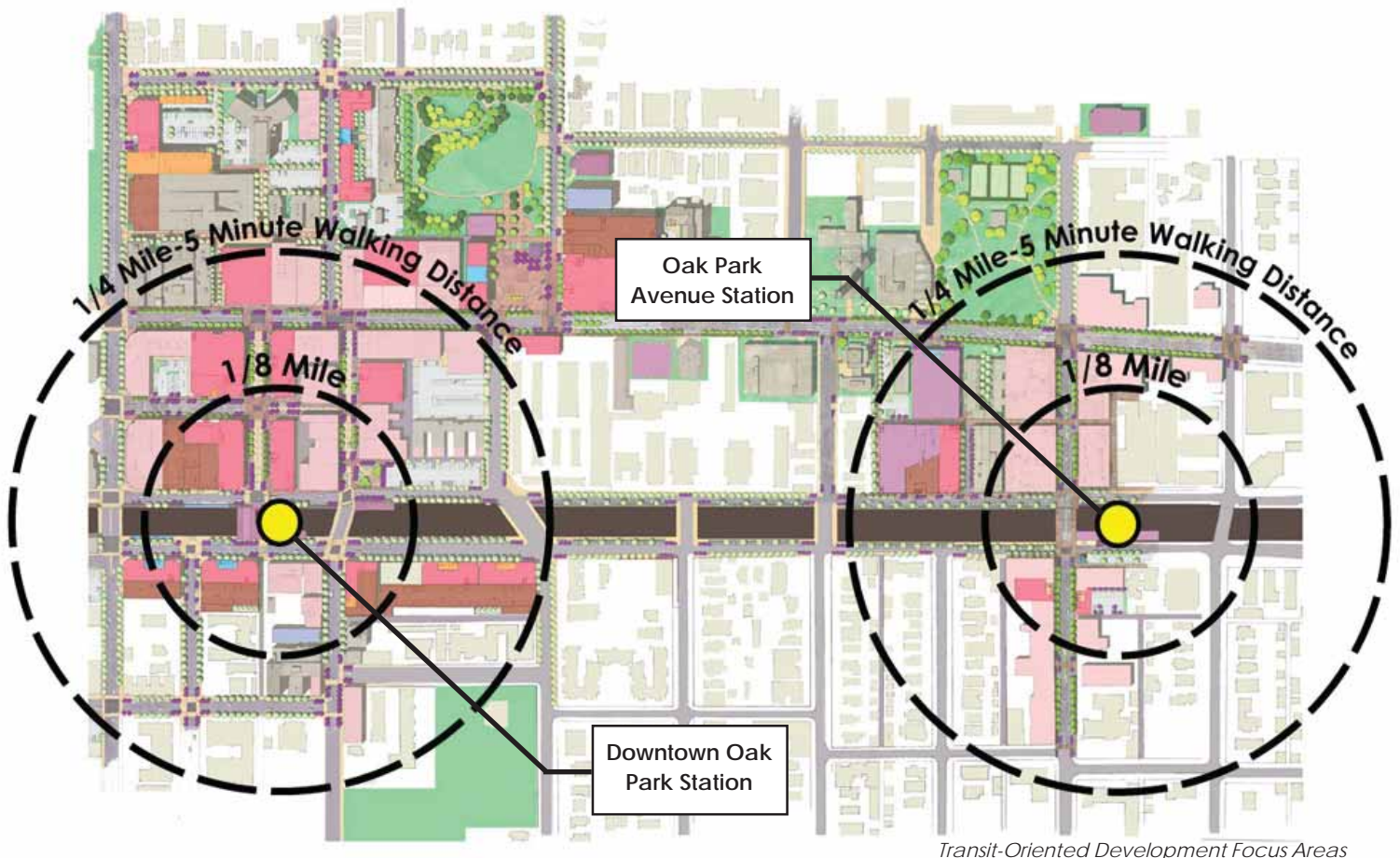
Two strategically located public squares will provide assembly spaces for civic activities:

- *Founders' Square* – the Village “living room” offers active gathering space along the downtown primary retail street.
- *Station Square* – serves as a gateway/threshold to Oak Park from the transit station.

Intermodal Station Area Framework

The Intermodal Station Area Framework provides a strategy to maximize and leverage the abundant transit options available in the downtown area. The plan identifies:

- **Transit-oriented land use improvements** – Transit-supportive retail, high-density housing, neighborhood services and parking within one-quarter mile (walking distance) of stations.
- **Transit access improvements** – Improves transit access for pedestrians and vehicles by developing a new Station Street and “re-streeting” of Marion Mall and Westgate Street.
- **Transit station improvements** – Provides new “kiss and ride” and Pace bus-loading facilities along South Boulevard.



Transit-Oriented Development Focus Areas

Key and Catalyst Projects

Public infrastructure improvements set the stage for private investment and improve the quality of life for area residents.

Key and catalyst projects are identified below.

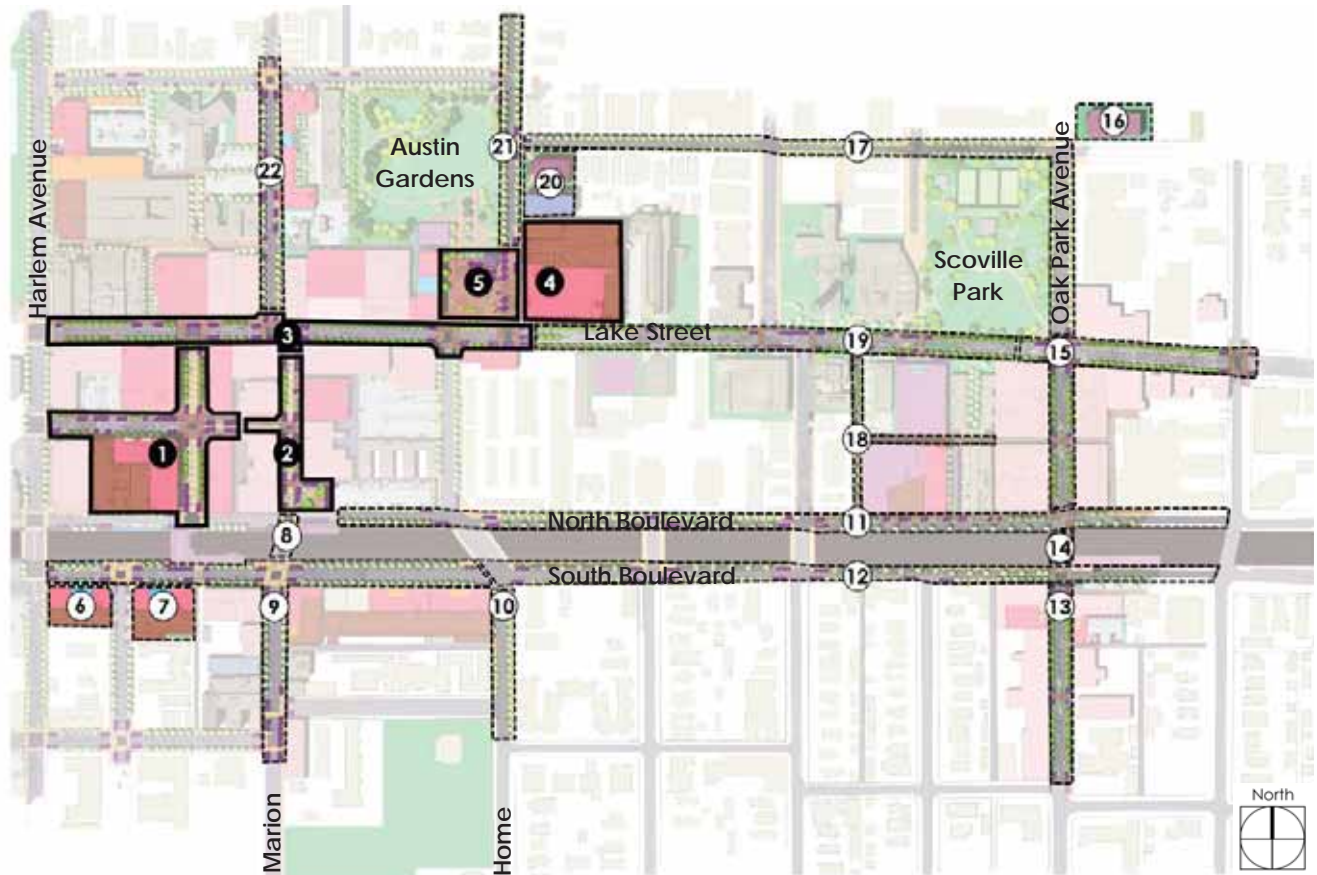
A Menu of Priorities

Not everything can be built at once. Of the many key projects identified, the five catalyst projects listed will help create widespread and sustained downtown revitalization. The catalyst projects should:

- Be located strategically to spark the greatest amount of new development and renovation.
- Result in a return on investment of at least six private dollars of development for every one public dollar spent.

Key and Catalyst Projects: ○ Key Projects ● Catalyst Projects

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ● 1 Station Street Area Redevelopment | ○ 12 South Boulevard Streetscape |
| ● 2 Marion Street Opening | ○ 13 South Oak Park Avenue Streetscape |
| ● 3 Lake Street Streetscape | ○ 14 Oak Park Underpass Enhancements |
| ● 4 Lake & Forest Parking | ○ 15 Oak Park Avenue Streetscape |
| ● 5 Founders' Square | ○ 16 Arts Building/Hemingway Renovation |
| ○ 6 Office Mixed Use | ○ 17 Ontario & Oak Park Streetscape |
| ○ 7 Office Mixed Use | ○ 18 Mid-Block Connectivity Improvements |
| ○ 8 Marion Underpass Enhancements | ○ 19 East Lake Street Streetscape |
| ○ 9 South Marion Street Streetscape | ○ 20 19th Century Club Renovation |
| ○ 10 Home Avenue Streetscape | ○ 21 Forest Avenue Streetscape |
| ○ 11 North Boulevard Streetscape | ○ 22 North Marion Street Streetscape |



Catalyst and Key Projects

Implementation

Three implementation steps are necessary to take the Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan from vision to reality: 1) adoption of the plan, 2) regulatory review, and 3) pursuit of catalyst projects.

Adoption of the Plan

The formal adoption process was initiated in November 2004 and is anticipated to be approved no later than March of 2005.

The TIF program amendments will need to be adopted to provide a major source of funding for the plan's public improvements.

In addition, Development Guidelines prepared to accompany the Greater Downtown Master Plan must be adopted as a supplemental document.

Design Commission

Currently, projects are often reviewed by a number of different agencies, including the Oak Park Plan Commission or the Historic Preservation Commission. Development of a Design Commission would relieve these groups of this responsibility.

A Design Commission should be created to review all major projects within the Greater Downtown Master Plan area. Minor projects should be reviewed by Village staff.

Regulatory Review

The Village will be responsible for carrying out the changes to the codes, standards and guidelines identified in this plan. The plan calls for Land Use and Public Realm frameworks that are consistent with existing zoning policies and adaptable to the Village's Planned Development Ordinance.

Catalyst Projects

Through its public process, the Greater Downtown Master Plan has identified five catalyst projects. To be implemented, these should be incorporated into the Village's TIF Plan, Capital Improvement Plan and coordinated with CTA, Metra and Pace plans and capital programs.

Financing

Tax Increment Financing

Oak Park's TIF program instituted in 1983 has been instrumental in spurring growth in downtown and improving the quality of life for residents. It should continue to be used to implement public projects, strengthen the existing downtown retail and leverage private development in downtown.

The master plan outlines a strategy that ensures future spending of tax increment funds will be coordinated and planned and occur within a reasonable and defined time period. TIF improvement projects will continue to spur private investment in new and rehabbed development in an organized, rather than piecemeal, manner.

Continuing Need for TIF

While much has been accomplished in the project area, many comprehensive improvements are still required to sustain revitalization. Continuation of TIF will help implement catalyst and key projects identified in the master plan.

The master plan identifies \$461.7 million in private investment. \$68.8 million in public investment is required to leverage this development. TIF has proven to be the most reliable and frequently used funding source for leveraging this type of development in Illinois and across the nation. By developing these projects quickly, improved areas can be "carved out" of the TIF district and returned to local and state taxing bodies.

Additions to TIF Area

The following sites have been added to the original 1983 TIF boundary to create a sound and coordinated method for implementing the Greater Downtown Master Plan:

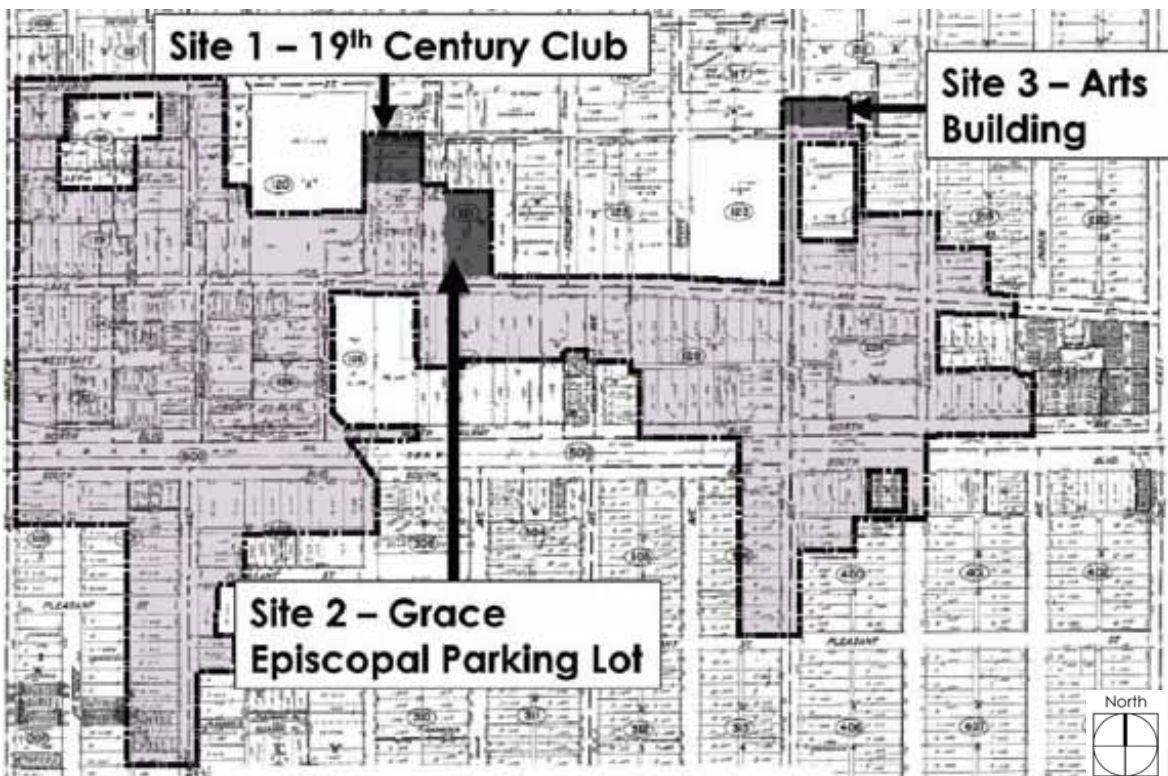
- Arts Building/Hemingway Museum.
- 19th Century Club.
- Grace Episcopal Church parking lot.

Addition of these parcels will enable recognized landmarks to be rehabilitated using tax increment funds.

Other Funding Sources

Other funding sources may include:

- Bonds
- General funds



TIF Boundary with 2005 Amendment Additions

Background

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC
March 21, 2005

Introduction

The master plan ensures ongoing healthy and vibrant downtown development while protecting and preserving the qualities that give Oak Park its distinctive identity.

Preserving Oak Park's Exceptional Character

A major challenge for any town is how to manage ongoing change. The task is especially daunting in Oak Park due to its extraordinary architectural character and history. The master plan charts a course for controlling change and enhancing the special qualities that make Oak Park the unique and wonderful place it is today.

Based on the community's vision, the Greater Downtown Master Plan sets out a realistic agenda that public officials, private investors and the community can follow and implement.

Continuing Momentum

Growth in the greater Chicago area from the 1970s through the mid-1990s tended to "leapfrog" over Oak Park. Recently, development interest in the Village have increased. Ongoing downtown projects include:

- RSC mixed use/health club/residential on Lake Street.
- Whiteco retail/residential at Harlem and Ontario.
- The Residence at the Oak Park Opera Club on South Boulevard.

The Master Plan Framework

With renewed interest in downtown development, this master plan is timely in that it establishes and guides the development of publicly- and privately-owned parcels by outlining specific land uses. With formal adoption by the Village Board, this document will provide the legal authority to guide downtown development.



Existing Building Entry at 1103 Westgate



Marion Street South of Lake, Circa 1903 (Hist. Society of OP & RF)



132 N. Oak Park Avenue, Circa 1903 (Hist. Society of OP & RF)

Community Process

The Oak Park community contributed considerable time and effort to the planning process.

Public Meetings

Hundreds of people participated in four public workshops held from July 2004 through February 2005. Each public meeting included a presentation and workshop where attendees could express their views. Written comments and quantifiable preferences listed on the workshops' "ballot response sheets" were tallied and used in development of the master plan. This clear and constructive feedback drove each stage of the process.

Outreach

Local newspaper articles, the cable access TV station, and the Village's newsletter and website publicized meeting dates and results. In addition, the Village mailed out postcards to 25,000 households announcing each meeting. Blank meeting response sheets were posted on the website, offering those unable to attend the opportunity and means to provide input.

Stakeholder Discussion Sessions

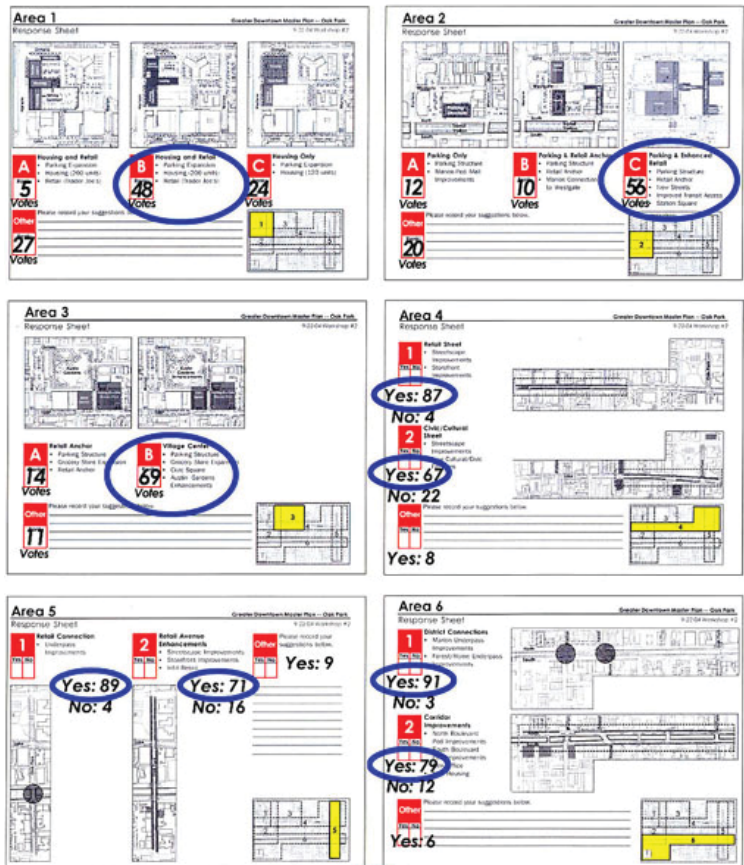
Focus group meetings and interviews were held with a wide range of individual and group stakeholders – business and property owners, citizens, neighbors, retailers, the design community and government groups. Nearly 50 sessions were held over the course of the planning process. Plan recommendations were provided by the Oak Park Plan Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, the Oak Park Architectural League (OPAL) and many other organizations. OPAL held a study session and charrette on October 30, 2004 to develop ideas on plan development. (See Executive Summary for complete list of stakeholder session participants).

Other ongoing projects received special attention during the master planning process, including the Whiteco, RSC and Oak Park Opera Club mixed-use/residential developments. Citizens, Village staff and elected officials, designers and special interest groups met to discuss these projects at different times during their design and approval process.

Oak Park - Greater Downtown Master Plan Workshop 2: September 22, 2004 Public Comments Received

2

Workshop Summary - Tally of All Votes Received (121 ballots)



Response Sheet Tally from Public Workshop

Existing Conditions

The existing physical conditions of greater downtown Oak Park were determined and used as a starting point for the planning process.

Inventories of historic buildings and existing retail, office, housing, open space, parking, and civic/institutional/cultural uses were developed. From these inventories, base maps were created and used to develop alternatives. Street evaluation diagrams were made to address the current pedestrian environment and needed key street improvements.



Storefront Evaluation-Marion Mall



Storefront Evaluation-Lake Street

Existing Policies and Regulations

Existing regulations, including the Village of Oak Park Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Planned Development Ordinance were reviewed. Master plan recommendations generally comply with these existing policies. Where recommendations do not comply, changes to the existing policies and regulations will need to be made to be consistent with master plan directives.



Zoning Districts

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| B-1/B-2 General Business | Public ROW |
| B-3 Central Business | R-1 Single Family |
| B-4 Downtown Business | R-2 Single Family |
| Penimeter Overlay Dist. | R-3 Single Family |
| Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic Dist. | R-4 Single Family |
| Frank Lloyd Wright Historic Dist. | R-5 Two Family |
| Transit Overlay Dist. | R-6 Multiple Family |
| | R-7 Multiple Family |



Existing Zoning and Historic Districts

Tax Increment Financing Program (TIF)

Oak Park's TIF program was instituted in 1983. It has spurred growth in downtown and improved the quality of life for residents. Oak Park has realized a continued improvement in assessed downtown property values and has improved its existing retail. Oak Park's downtown ground floor vacancy rate was 30% in 1983 versus 1% in 2004.

Oak Park TIF Accomplishments

- 1988-1990 "Re-streeting" of Lake Street.
- Construction of Holley Court and the Avenue public parking garages.
- Property assembly, site preparation and other incentives for the Shops of Downtown Oak Park (1997) and Euclid Terrace (2002).
- RSC mixed-use/Drechsler Building preservation project (in process).

A full analysis of the history and future need for TIF is provided in the accompanying *Amended Oak Park Greater Downtown Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project and Plan*.



Lake Re-streeting 1988-1990



Euclid Terrace - 2002

Historic Resources

Oak Park is recognized nationally for its high-quality historic architecture. This unique and valuable asset serves as a standard of excellence for ongoing planning and architectural design in the downtown.

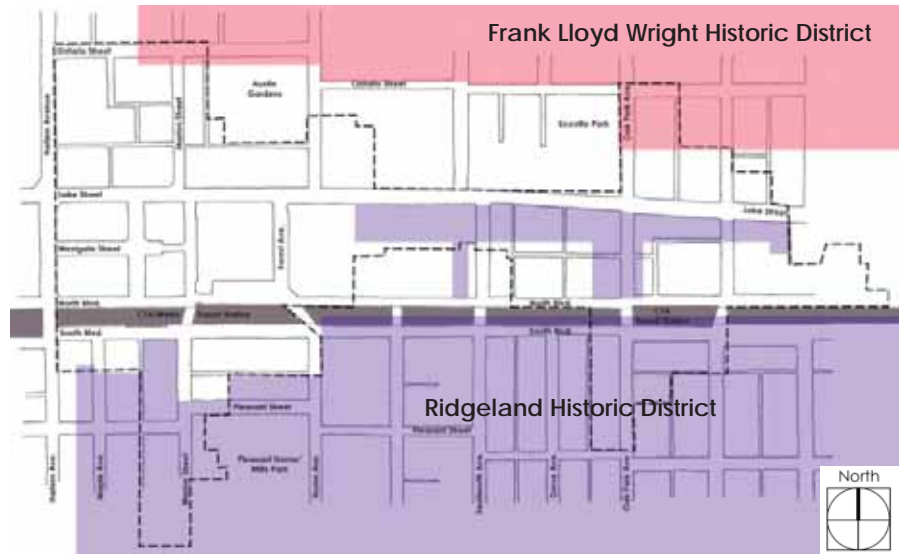
An Architectural Legacy

Oak Park's historic architecture is highlighted by its many significant and historic structures, including the Unity Temple designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and located within the study area.

Historic interest groups provided ongoing guidance and information during the planning process. Groups include:

- Oak Park Architectural League (OPAL).
- Historic Preservation Commission of Village of Oak Park.
- Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.

The Historic Preservation Commission completed a survey of downtown's historic resources, identifying "landmark" buildings – buildings that are significant on their own – and those that "contribute" to the character of downtown as a whole. While not adopted, this and other documents provided by these groups have been invaluable in the development and assessment of design options.



Downtown Historic Districts



Unity Temple

Opportunities and Constraints

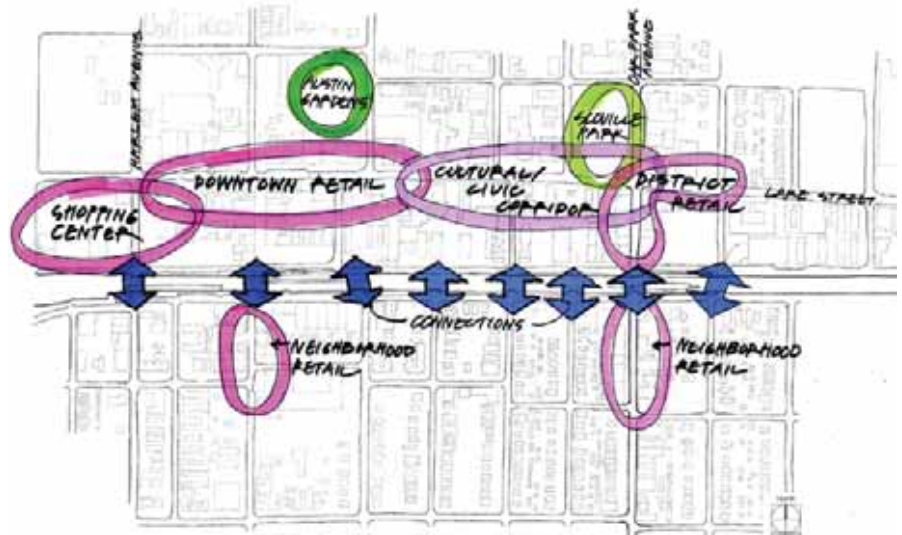
Downtown Oak Park's strengths and weaknesses were assessed in terms of physical and market potential. Where possible, the plan builds upon the downtown's strengths and overcomes or minimizes its weaknesses.

Strengths

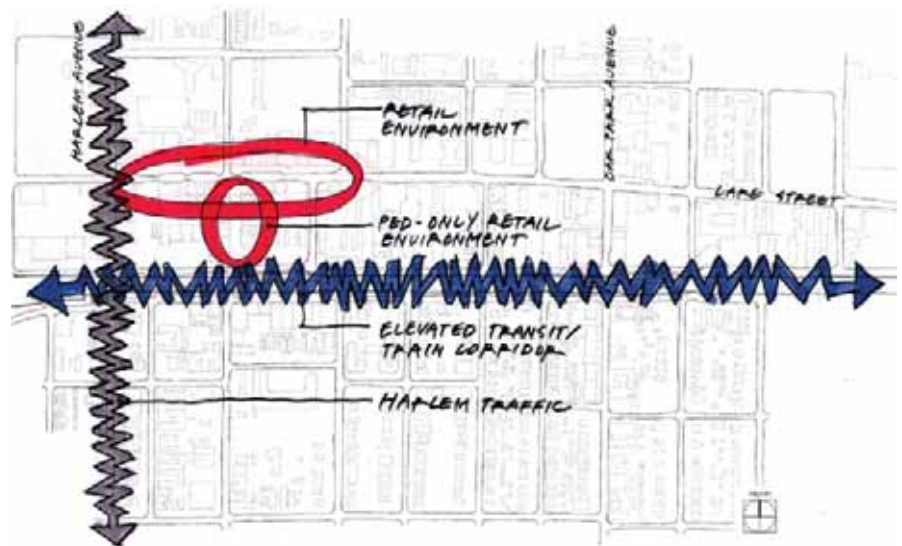
- Extensive transit options.
- Rich stock of historic, attractive buildings.
- Many gardens and parks.
- Mix of national and local retailers on Lake Street.
- Strong existing local retail on Oak Park Avenue.
- Cultural/civic/institutional uses on Lake Street.
- Historic landmark buildings, such as Unity Temple, nearby residential districts, and other national visitor attractions, including Frank Lloyd Wright home and studio and the Hemingway Museum.
- 52,000 people living within 4.5 miles of the Marion transit stop.

Weaknesses

- Auto congestion along Lake Street, especially at intersection with Harlem Avenue.
- Existing street furniture, landscaping and amenities do not meet high quality architectural standards.
- "Tired," poor condition of Marion Mall.
- Physical and psychological barrier created by the elevated train corridor.
- Physical barrier and environmental impacts created by high traffic volumes on Harlem Avenue.
- Poor access and exposure to downtown Pace/CTA/Metra transit.



Opportunities Diagram



Constraints Diagram

Public Realm Framework

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC

March 21, 2005

Overview

The Public Realm Framework establishes an identifiable “sense of place” for Oak Park, building upon the Village’s unique character and architectural heritage.

A Memorable Downtown

The downtown public realm is a collection of outdoor spaces that provides an open and inviting atmosphere for workers, residents and visitors alike. Together, the streets, open spaces and pathways of the Public Realm Framework form a coherent downtown environment.

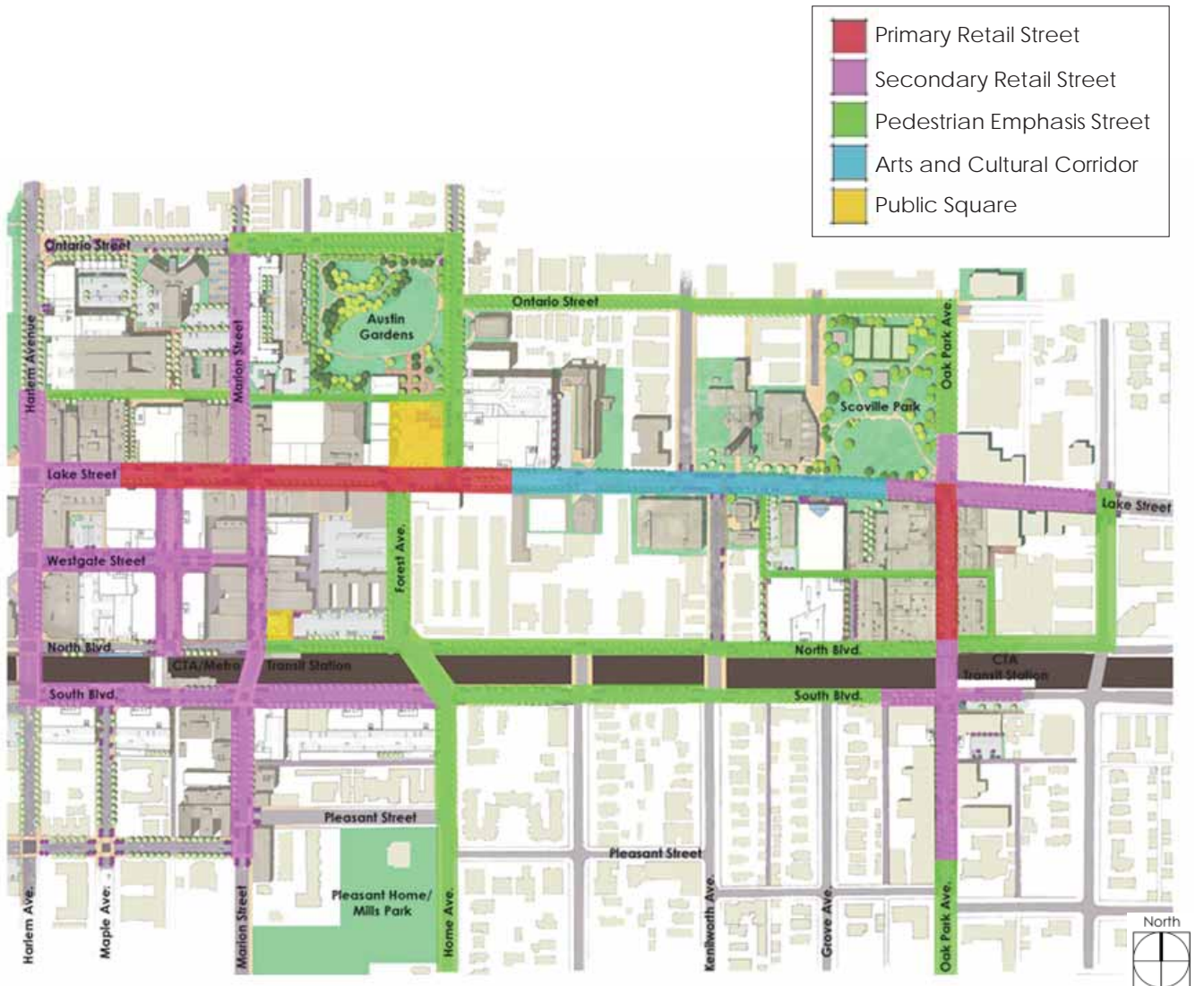
Linking Land Use and Transportation

The framework identifies a series of new and/or enhanced public infrastructure elements that will:

- Improve pedestrian access.
- Serve as a focus for development.
- Strengthen connections between the transit station and downtown.
- Facilitate transfers between transit options.

The pages that follow describe public realm elements identified on the framework diagram below.

The framework depicts the community’s vision for improving infrastructure on existing rights-of-way and constructing new infrastructure on private property. These improvement concepts would require further design refinement, review and approval.



Public Realm Framework

Primary Retail Streets

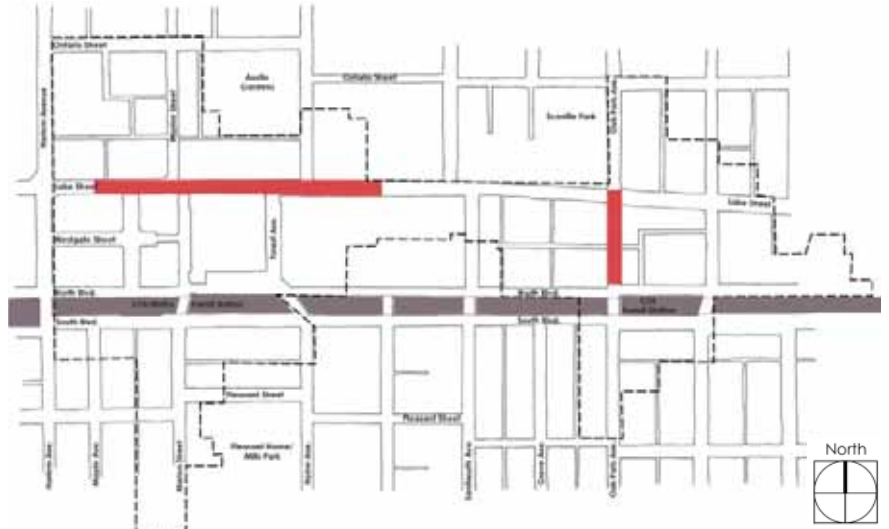
The creation of successful retail streets has been one of the most desired yet least understood aspects of urban revitalization. The way in which the retail street fits into the public realm must adhere to specific guidelines. Oak Park's Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue both offer a strong foundation on which to build a successful retail environment.

Rigorous Compliance

Unlike housing or office development in Oak Park, either of which can be successful within a varied street setting, a successful retail street requires disciplined compliance with fundamental public realm requirements. To support successful primary retail spaces, the street must provide:

- On-street parking.
- High drive-by auto traffic – 8,000 to 20,000 cars/day (as on Lake Street).
- A walkable length – ideally, five-minute walk/one-quarter mile maximum.
- A comfortable pedestrian environment with sidewalks, landscaping and street furniture.

Coupled with land use requirements for compact retail development, retail can be successful. With the erosion of one or more of these requirements, retail will not succeed.



Primary Retail Streets Diagram

Street improvements will help define Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue as primary retail streets that encourage vigorous retail uses on adjacent parcels.

Downtown Primary Retail

Lake Street

The following featured improvements will give Lake Street an identifiable character as a retail hub:

- High-quality distinctive paving (brick or concrete pavers) for sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks.
- Street trees and landscaping.
- Distinctive, high-quality, pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures.
- A coherent and tasteful system of signs oriented to both the pedestrian and vehicles.

Oak Park Avenue

Street improvements to the Oak Park Avenue primary retail zone will be similar to those outlined above for Lake Street.



Lake Street – Primary Retail



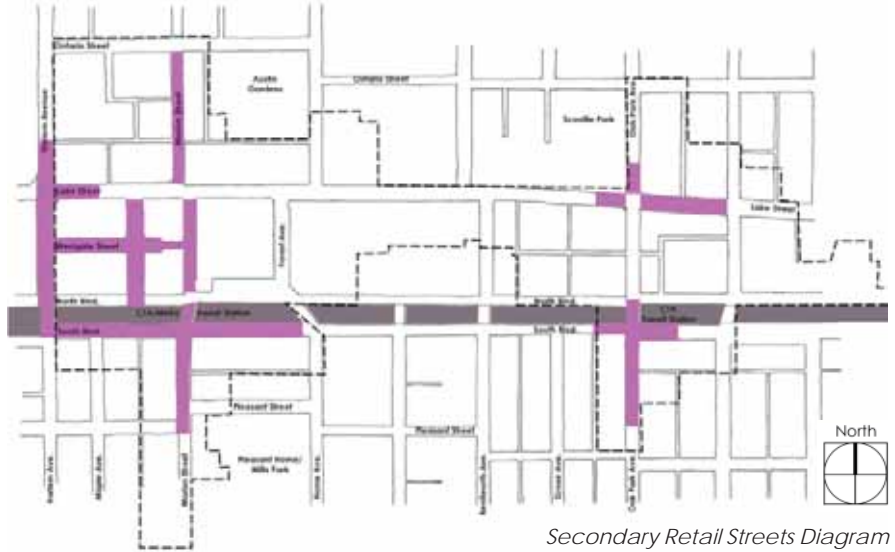
Oak Park Avenue – Primary Retail

Secondary Retail Streets

Oak Park's downtown primary retail streets, Oak Park Avenue between Lake Street and North Boulevard and Lake Street between Harlem and Forest, will be complemented and supported by surrounding secondary retail streets. These streets will be appropriate for adjacent retail, residential and other commercial uses. The secondary retail streets should:

- Provide an intimate pedestrian scale.
- Use distinctive streetscape elements – paving, street trees, street furniture and lighting.
- Have similar improvements to those recommended for primary retail streets, though not as extensive (Marion, Station and Westgate streets are exceptions). For example, secondary retail streets should have similar street trees and lighting to those of primary retail streets, but incorporate different paving improvements (i.e. concrete sidewalks instead of brick, painted crosswalks instead of concrete or brick).
- Provide on-street parking whenever possible.

Secondary retail streets are identified on the diagram to the right.



Secondary Retail Streets Diagram



South Boulevard

Marion Street

It is only recently that Marion Street between Lake and North Boulevard has been a pedestrian-only mall. Opening this block of Marion to vehicle traffic would return it to its traditional role as a vehicle-accessible retail street.

Re-streeting the pedestrian mall would not compromise its pedestrian-friendly character. In fact, its character would be enhanced by distinctive high-quality paving and a curbless design, giving it a “European” feel and allowing flexibility in use. Vehicle traffic could be temporarily limited or prohibited during special festivals, markets or other events.



Marion Street – 2004



Historical Photo: Marion Street

Station Street

The new Station Street creates a north-south link between the transit station and Lake Street. It benefits the greater downtown in several ways:

- *Improves transit access* – creates the ability to add to the Pace bus and village shuttle routing at the Marion Street transit station.
- *Reduces auto congestion* – decreases auto traffic in the downtown retail core by offering another roadway within the block at Westgate, Lake, North Boulevard and Harlem.
- *Creates a pedestrian scale* – breaks down the long block from Harlem to Marion into more intimate shopper-friendly lengths.
- *Adds to retail space options* – increases the amount of retail street frontage available.



*Approximate New Station Street Alignment
From Transit Station Looking North*

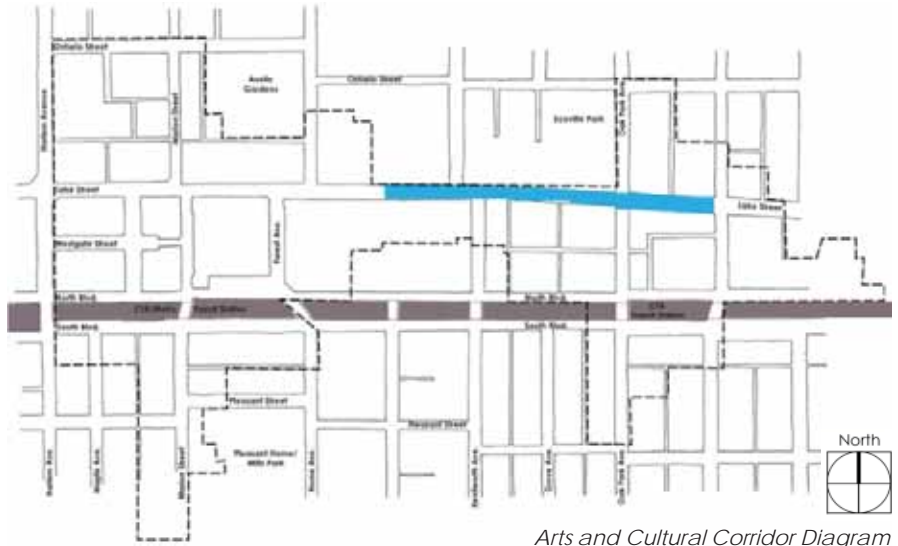
Arts and Cultural Corridor

Lake Street between Forest and Oak Park Avenue is an arts/cultural/civic street linking the Village's two primary retail districts and establishing a setting appropriate for the abundance of cultural, civic and institutional buildings in this part of downtown.

This segment of Lake Street is the "spine" of a central tourism loop, connecting not only the retail districts but also the nearby historical and architectural highlights of the Village.

To create an appropriate setting for these civic and cultural buildings, the Lake Street design may provide:

- Lush, green, visually-subdued landscaping on sidewalks and setbacks.
- High-quality street furniture.
- Combination street lights and poles.
- A wayfinding system scaled to pedestrians, not automobiles, that includes compatible historical markers.
- High-quality sidewalk and crosswalk materials.
- Street trees consistent with those on the primary retail segment of Lake.



Arts and Cultural Corridor Diagram



Lake Street

Pedestrian Emphasis Streets

Several downtown Oak Park streets will receive a “pedestrian emphasis.” These streets are intended to complement the retail streets and provide an organized downtown pedestrian loop and connection to adjacent residential neighborhoods and historic districts.

The pedestrian emphasis streets will:

- Provide landscaping improvements, including special street trees, to screen the elevated train tracks.
- Create well-defined corridors that use consistent elements such as “signature” trees and link downtown with residential areas.
- Include well-designed lighting and paving – scored concrete sidewalks and crosswalks are examples.
- Include an extension of the existing mid-block paved pedestrian alley from Oak Park Avenue west to Unity Temple and extending north to Lake Street. Design with similar paving treatment as existing pedestrian alley.



Pedestrian Emphasis Streets Diagram



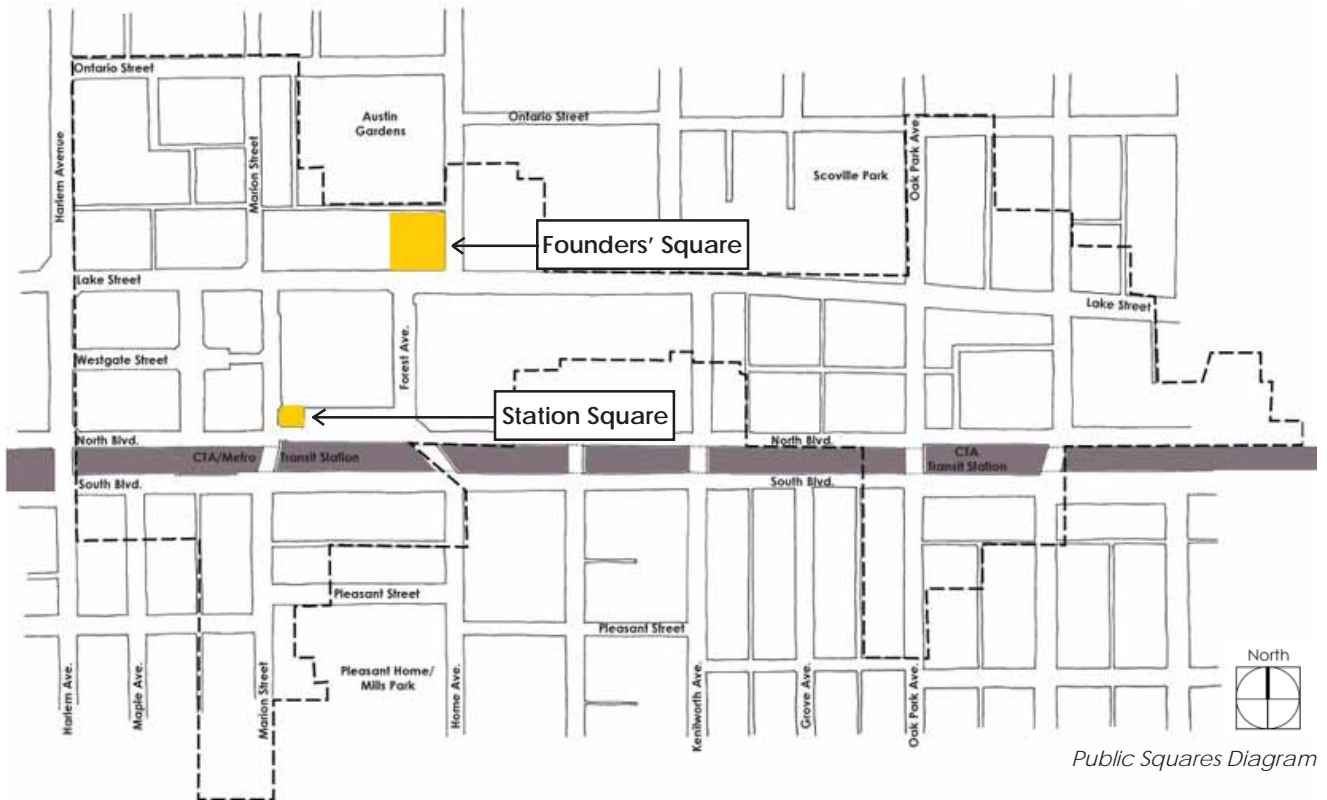
South Boulevard

Public Squares

Public squares are an essential part of a successful downtown. Designed correctly, they can create a setting for reinvestment and improve the quality of life for office workers, neighbors, visitors and tourists.

The Oak Park public squares diagram describes outdoor spaces that are:

- Open to public use during all seasons and all hours.
- Sited as a focus of activity and development.
- Adaptable to a variety of active and passive uses, community gatherings and individual activities.



Public Squares Diagram

Founders' Square

Founders' Square is a new open space at Lake Street and Forest Avenue, south of Austin Gardens. The square is identified as a catalyst project (details are offered in the Implementation section of this document). Founders' Square will be:

- The village "living room," providing the major civic assembly space in downtown.
- Accommodating to a variety of public gatherings and year-round events.
- An appropriate location for a visitors' bureau or kiosk.
- A gateway to the Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District to the north.
- The focus of new and existing adjacent retail buildings.
- A dignified setting for monuments, public art and other historic pieces.
- Constructed of high-quality, durable and low-maintenance materials.



Founders' Square Site

Station Square

Station Square is located at the foot of North Marion Street across from the transit station. It is identified as a catalyst project (details are available in the Implementation section of this document). Station Square will be:

- A threshold into downtown for commuters and visitors arriving from the transit station.
- A direct connection between transit and the downtown retail core.
- A civic gathering place adjacent to Marion Street – in a sense replacing the former Marion Mall.
- An appropriate setting for a visitors' booth or kiosk.
- Smaller-scaled and more intimate than Founders' Square.



Station Square Site

Land Use Framework

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC

March 21, 2005

Overview

The Land Use Framework is an assembly of land uses that creates a unified and coherent whole – a place where people will want to live, work, shop and play. The land use framework builds upon and strengthens existing desirable development patterns. It provides a strategy for new infill development and renovation of existing structures that is economically viable and consistent with the community objectives.

Economic Viability

The Land Use Framework responds to the following essential requirements:

- Development sites respond to proven fundamental real estate needs for housing, employment, retail and parking.
- All development is transit- and pedestrian-oriented.

- Downtown historic buildings are preserved and renovated wherever possible.

Long Range Plan

In some cases, new uses are identified for parcels that already have another viable use. Where this occurs:

- Existing businesses, property owners or tenants will be allowed to remain as long as they wish.
- Existing uses and structures designated as open space or other uses may continue to operate until acquired by a public entity or transferred to public use by easement, dedication or other means.



Lake Street, 1930

Retail

Retail Revitalization

In the past, downtown Oak Park served as a regional shopping destination for the Chicago area. Over time and for a variety of reasons, downtown's prominence has been diminished and it has been supplanted as a regional shopping destination by shopping malls and other retail developments.

Reestablishing Oak Park's place as a major retail destination starts with understanding the fundamental retail requirements for retail sites and buildings. Applying the principles that promote different organization patterns, architectural character and varying shop sizes creates modern retail developments and anchor sites that possess character and charm.

The Retail Framework responds to these critical requirements while respecting and maintaining the historic building fabric that supports many local, independent retailers.

Recipe for Success

The Retail Framework builds upon downtown Oak Park's unique qualities, including its:

- Wealth of historic buildings and infrastructure of existing retail uses.
- Adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Cultural and architectural tourism attractors.
- Convenient regional access via CTA/Metra/Pace Transit.

Retail Hierarchy

The Retail Framework creates a primary retail zone and secondary retail zone.

Each retail zone is:

- *Compact and walkable* – extending no more than 1/8 mile in length.
- *Street-oriented and active* – retail uses activating ground floors of buildings on both sides of streets.
- *Served by adequate parking* – especially on-street parking.
- *Highly visible* – exposed to drive-by automobile traffic that ensures retail viability.

Retail (New): 207,000 SF
Retail (Renovated): 78,000 SF



Retail Framework

Primary Retail

Historically, Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue have served as the primary retail streets for the Village of Oak Park. The Retail Framework maintains and strengthens this historic pattern.

Retail Vitality

The Land Use Framework establishes Lake Street, between Harlem and Kenilworth avenues, and Oak Park Avenue, between Lake Street and North Boulevard, as the primary retail streets.

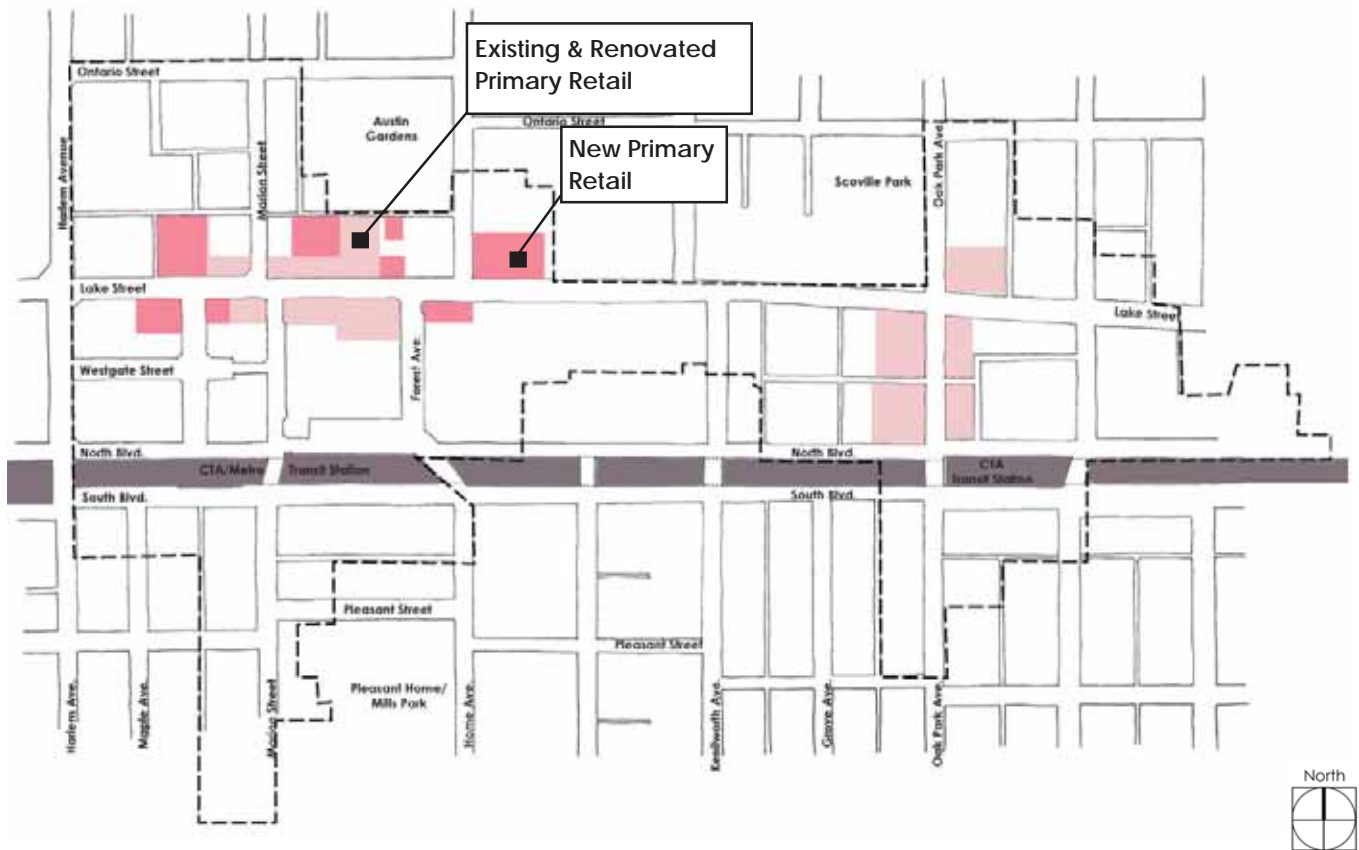
The framework:

- Provides new sites with large floor plates for anchor retail uses. Anchor retail sites are strategically located to draw additional customers to existing local retail businesses within the core retail district.

- Maintains a mix of parcel sizes that will accommodate both local and national retailers.
- Suggests relocating non-retail ground-floor uses to other sites downtown and replacing them with retail uses over time.
- Provides additional development sites that can offer diversity to the current mix of retail uses.



Anchor – Lake Theatre



Primary Retail Framework

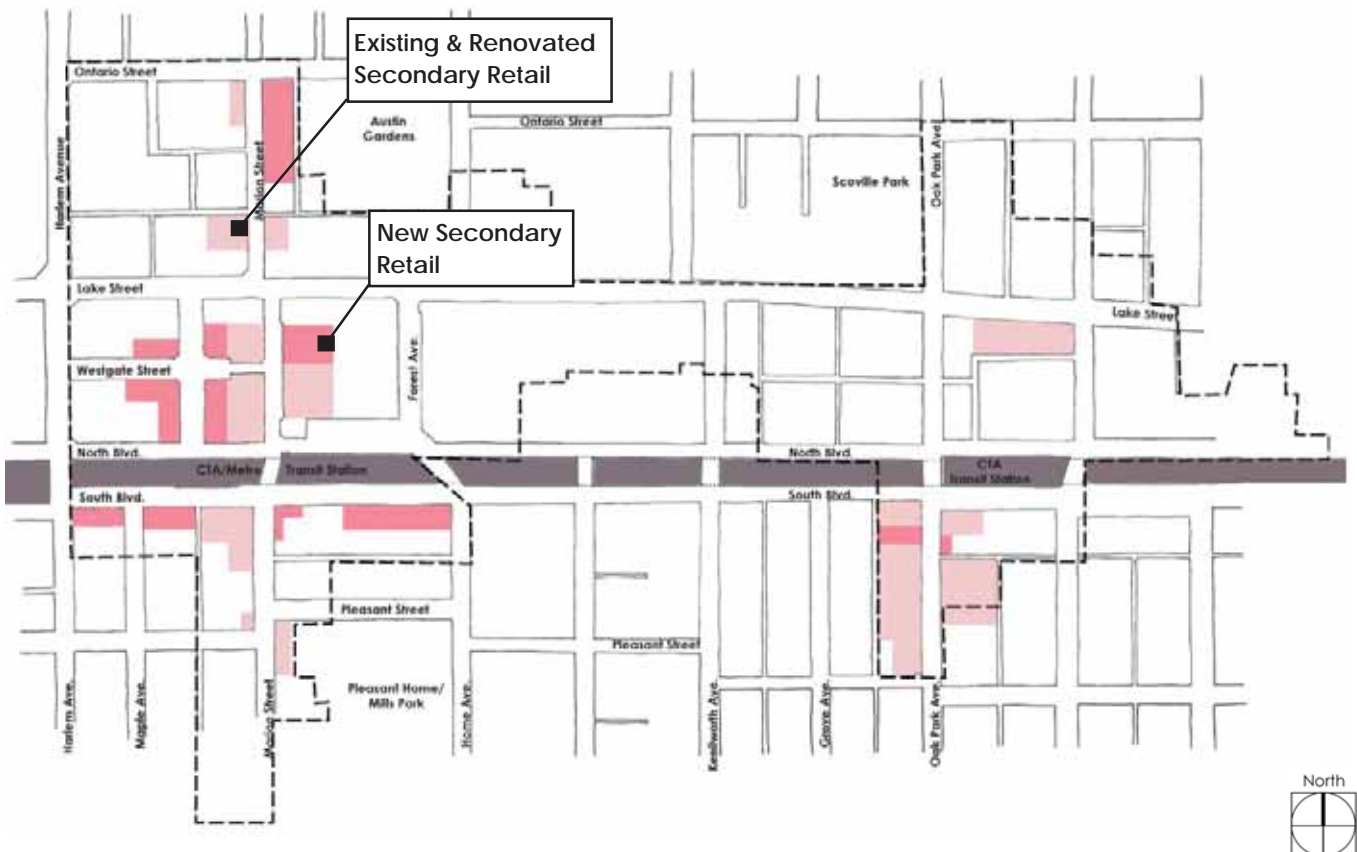
Secondary Retail

Oak Park's secondary retail streets will be located adjacent to the two primary retail streets. These areas are for retail uses that do not require the rigorous requirements of exposure or floor plate size. As retail demand grows, these areas provide sites for retail expansion and infill. These streets should be characterized and mainly occupied by locally-owned and -operated retail shops and commercial businesses.

Secondary retail includes services and uses that support and strengthen downtown office and residential development such as office supply stores or dry cleaners.



South Boulevard



Secondary Retail Framework

Housing

The Housing Framework meets the current and future demands of downtown Oak Park. It brings economic vitality to downtown by fostering 24-hour activity and lively, active streets. Urban housing residents help financially support downtown retail, restaurants and other services.

Housing Demand

Existing housing options in Downtown Oak Park are limited and few vacant or redevelopable parcels are available. As a result, housing costs are rapidly escalating and new and affordable housing is needed.

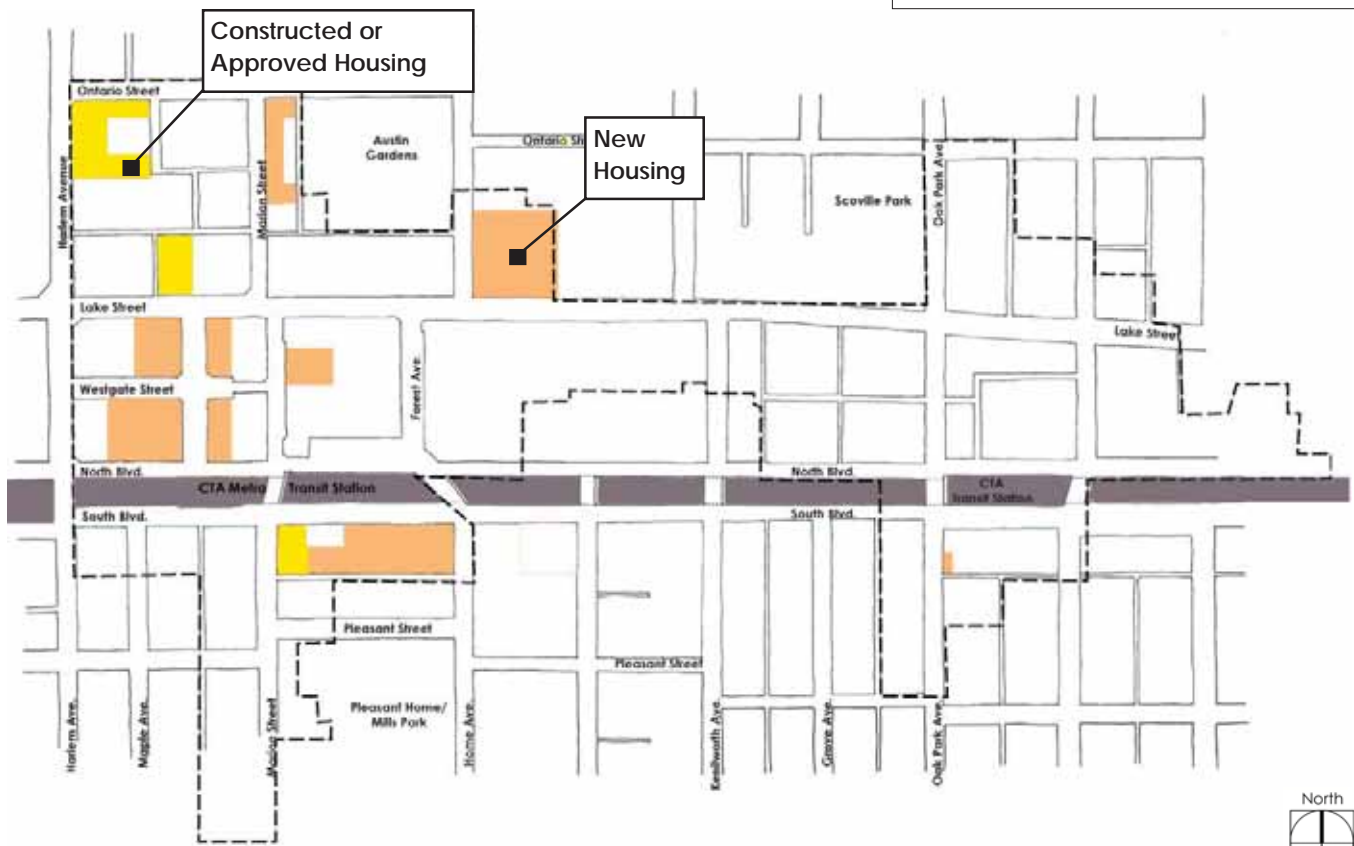
Housing in downtown Oak Park is highly desirable to a new demographic due to the adjacent transit and access to goods and services. This new demographic includes “empty nesters”– 50- to 60- year old people moving out of single-family homes – and 20- to 30- year old urban-oriented singles who prefer downtown amenities to the maintenance associated with detached, single-family dwellings.

As illustrated below, “Constructed or Approved Housing” includes projects which may not receive ultimate approval.

Key requirements for the Housing Framework include:

- Building housing over retail and/or parking.
- Locating housing within walking distance of transit.
- Locating housing near amenities.
- Providing parking on-site.

**New Housing:
1200 units**



Civic/Institutional/Cultural

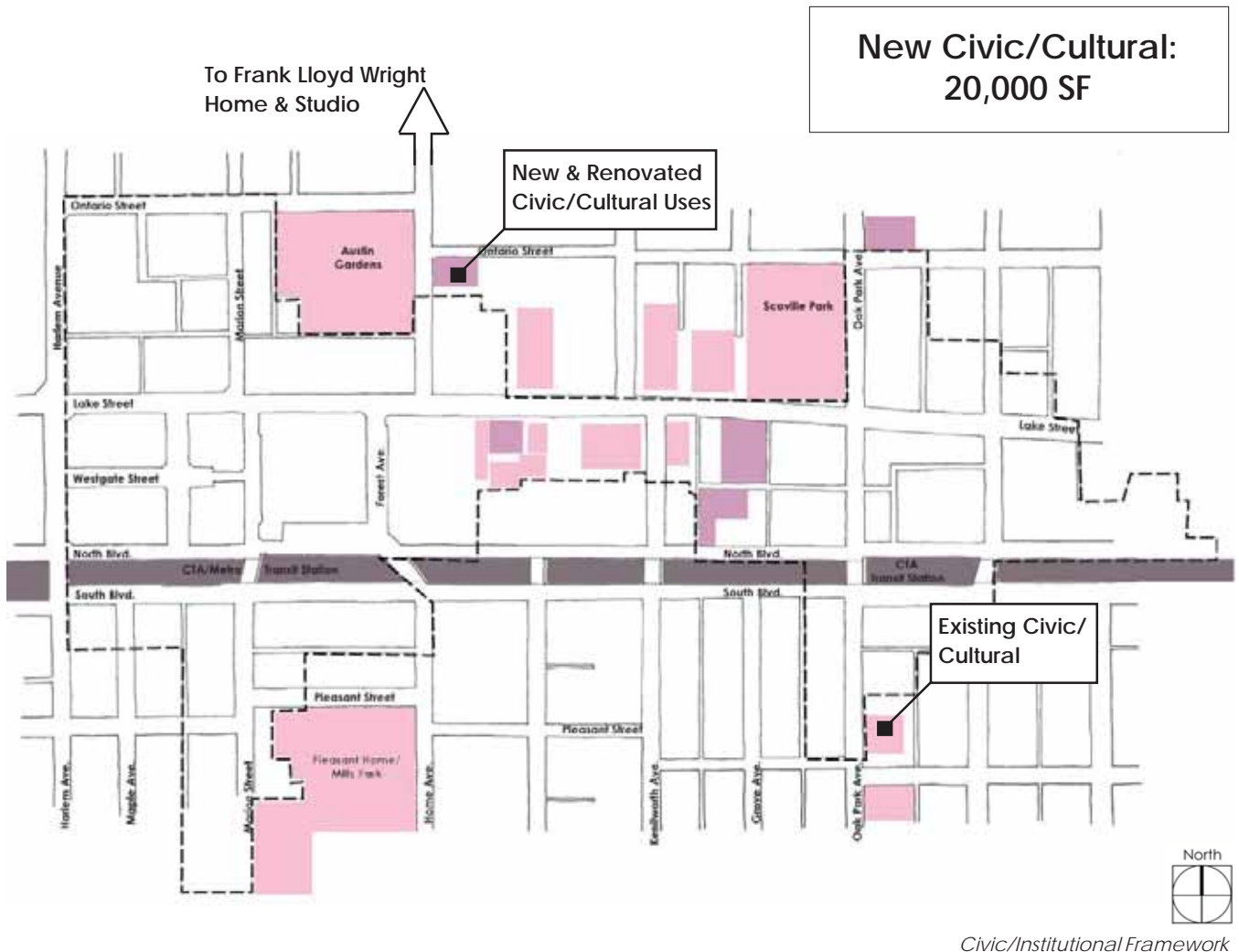
Providing additional civic, institutional and cultural uses is necessary to maintain a healthy downtown. These uses provide essential jobs and draw thousands of visitors.

The Civic/Institutional/Cultural Framework combines existing civic and cultural attractors to:

- Create a unified and distinct district.
- Provide a linkage between Oak Park's Downtown and Avenue business districts.
- Provide an amenity for existing and future residents.
- Increase customers for restaurants and retail businesses.



Oak Park Public Library



Civic/Institutional Framework

Employment

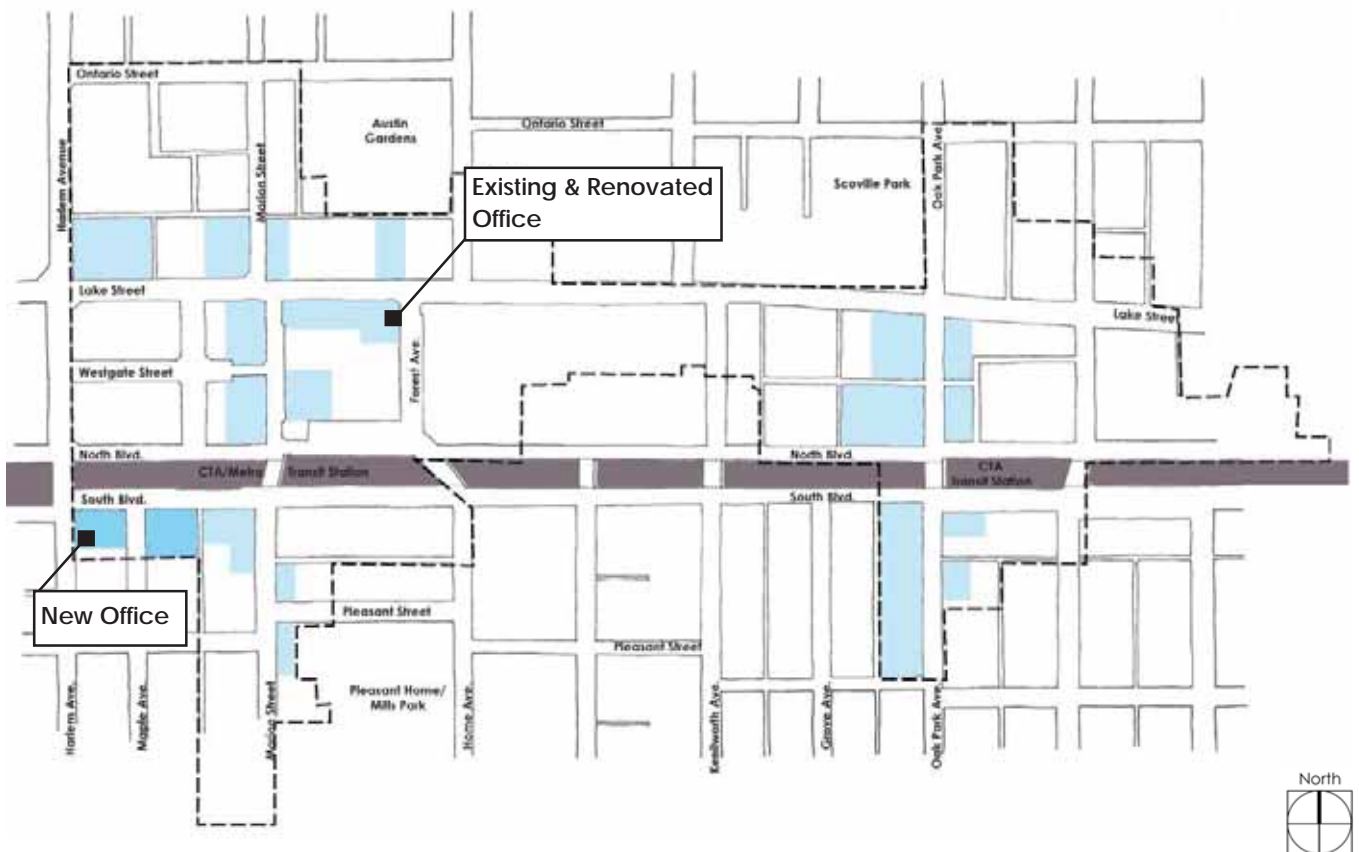
Office development in Oak Park is perceived as highly desirable because of its historic neighborhoods, proximity to downtown Chicago and convenient transit access.

Currently, offices are located in older structures and dominated by professionals, banks and similar tenants. No new office buildings have been built during the last few years. Most existing office buildings are occupied when parking is provided and have higher vacancy rates when it is not.

The Office Framework provides new office development sites with floor plate sizes and configurations to attract “Class A” tenants. The framework:

- Links offices to transit and keeps retail and business services within walking distance.
- Provides sites with adequate areas for parking.
- Promotes nontraditional home-occupation or live-work job opportunities within renovated or new mixed-use buildings.

Office (New): 121,000 SF
Office (Renovated): 40,000 SF



Employment Framework

Squares & Open Space

To attract new development, it is essential to create new open space near downtown and maximize the use of existing open spaces such as Austin Gardens and Scoville Park.

Open space should be publicly owned and maintained or provide public access and use.

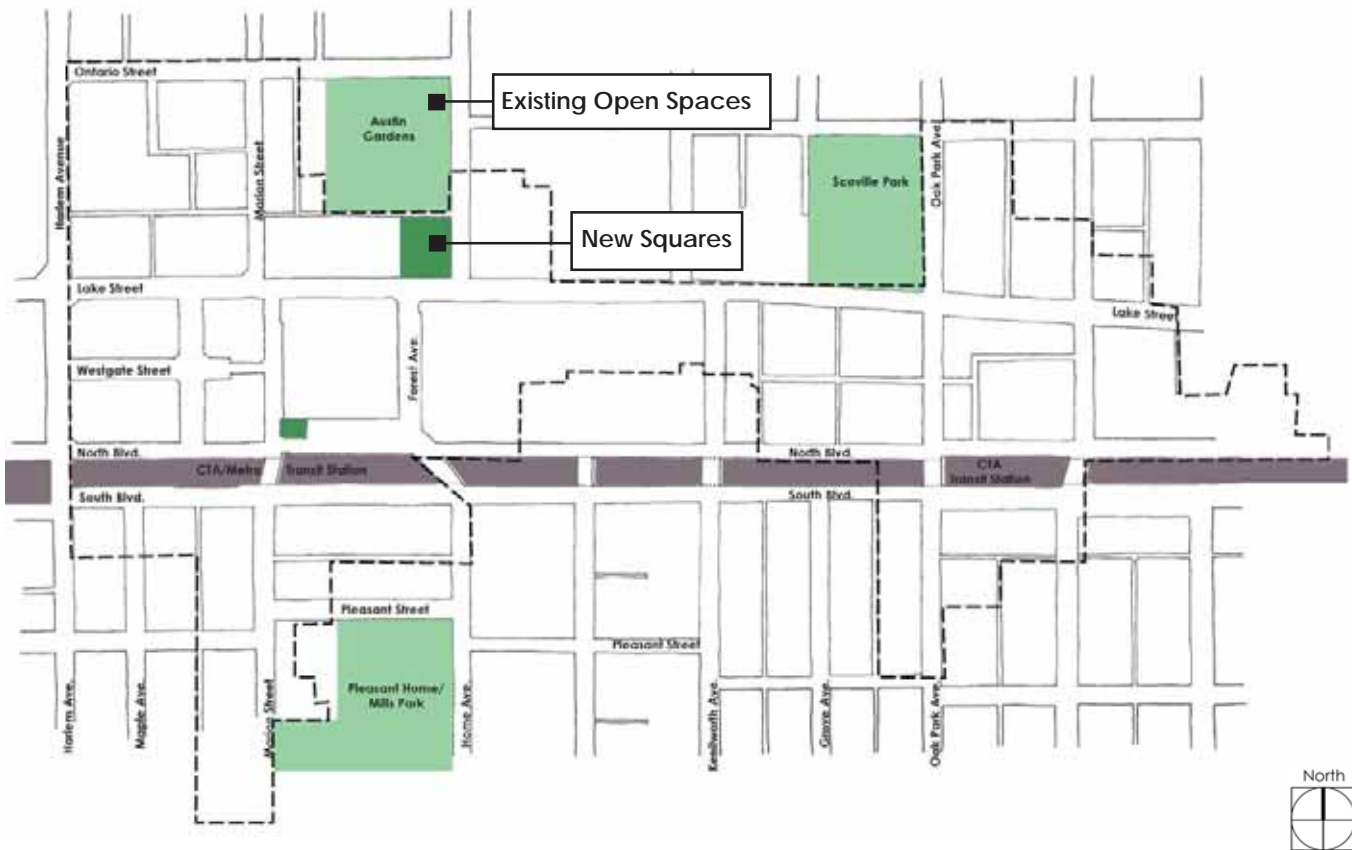
See the Public Realm Framework section of this document for further description of public squares.

Catalyst for Change

The Open Space Framework identifies two locations for new public squares. The framework:

- Celebrates and maximizes exposure to Oak Park's existing open space.
- Provides a continuous system of linked open spaces that organize and create a focus for new development.
- Accommodates a variety of activities and uses.
- Links adjacent neighborhoods.

**New Squares:
47,000 SF**

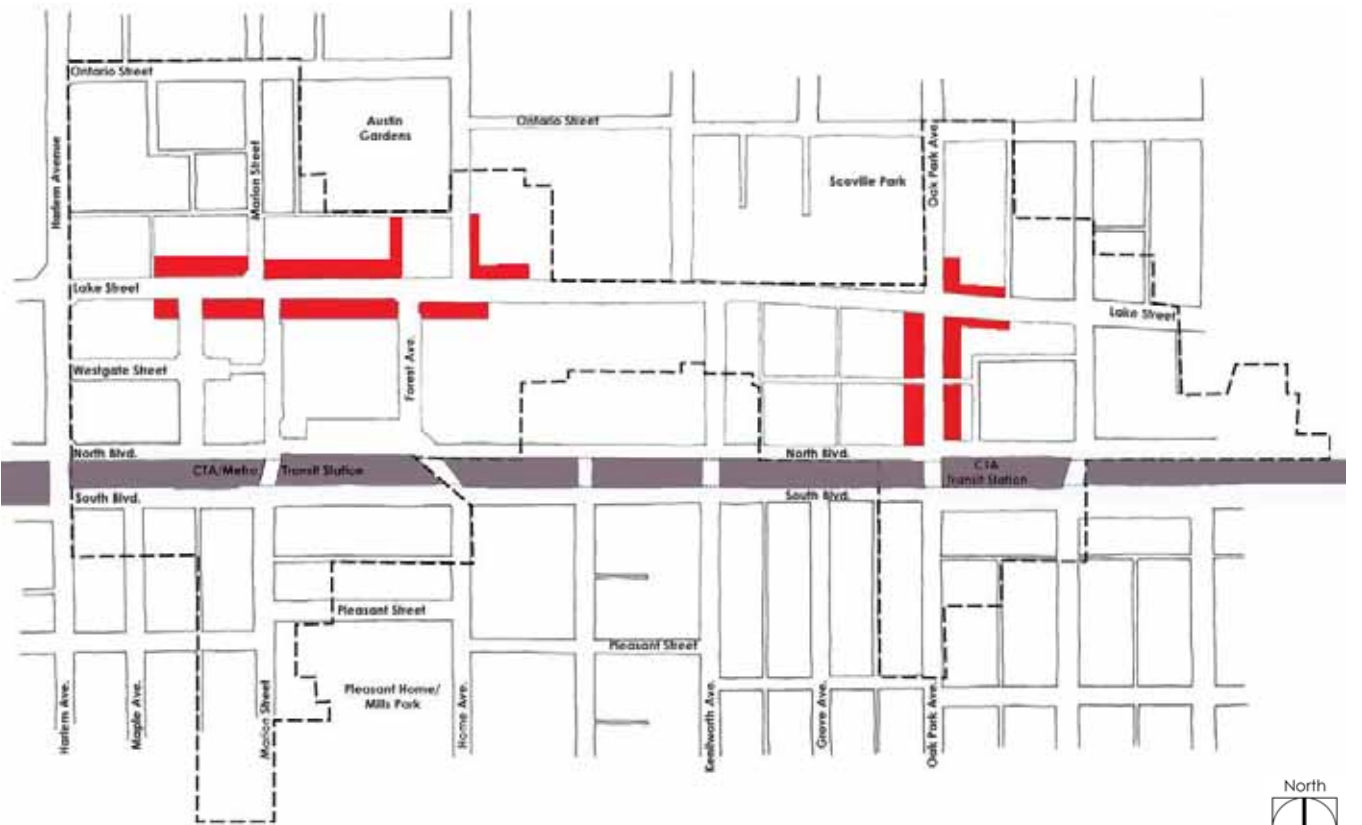


Open Space Framework

Retail Development Standards

Ground Floor Retail

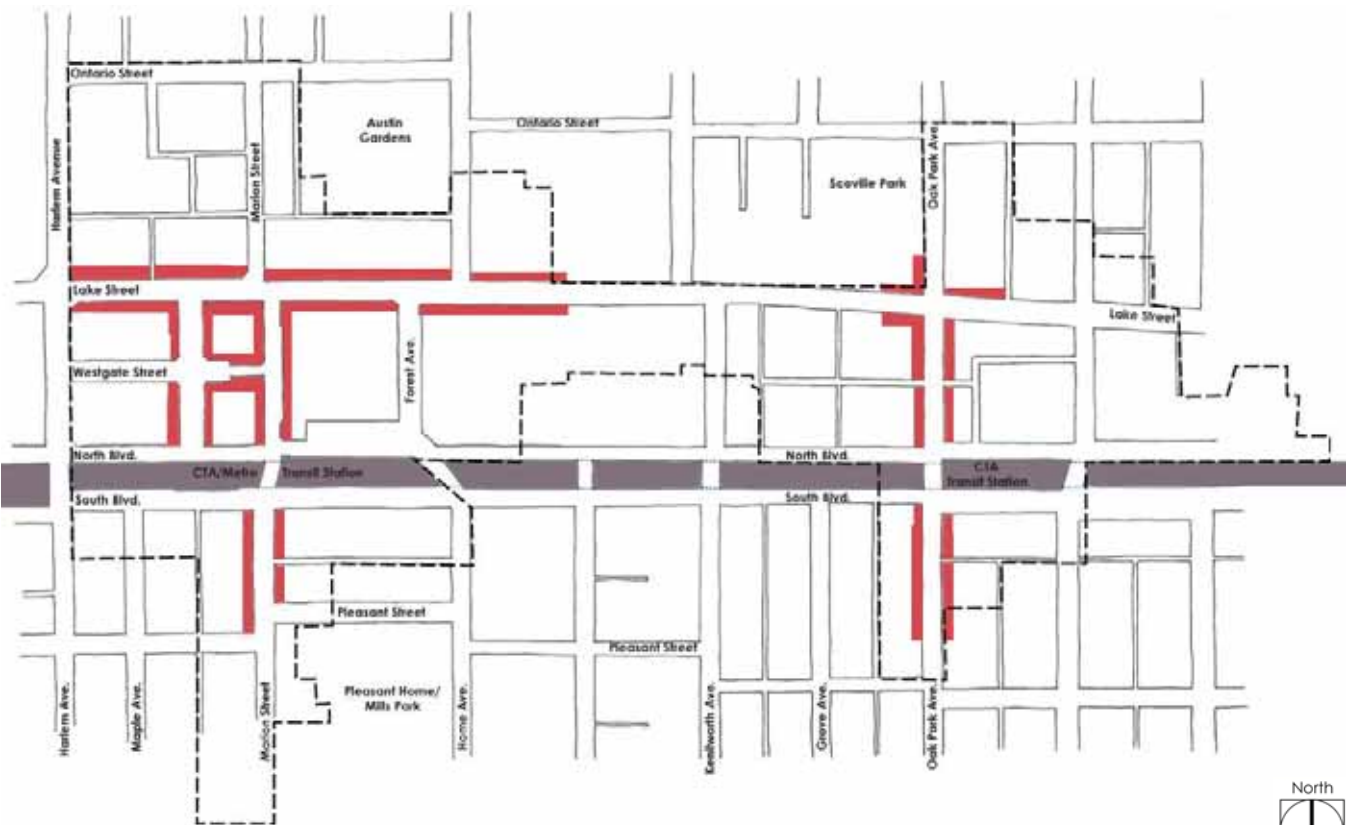
Successful retail streets are not interrupted by inappropriate uses. To maintain a vibrant retail atmosphere, continuous edge-to-edge storefronts are required. Inappropriate uses that disrupt the retail corridor should be discouraged (i.e. real estate offices and banks).



North
Ground Floor Retail

Build-to Lines

Consistent minimum setbacks along the street will create a “street wall” and provide a comfortable sense of enclosure for the pedestrian. Construct buildings up to the right-of-way line. Prohibit forecourts, gardens or other setbacks.

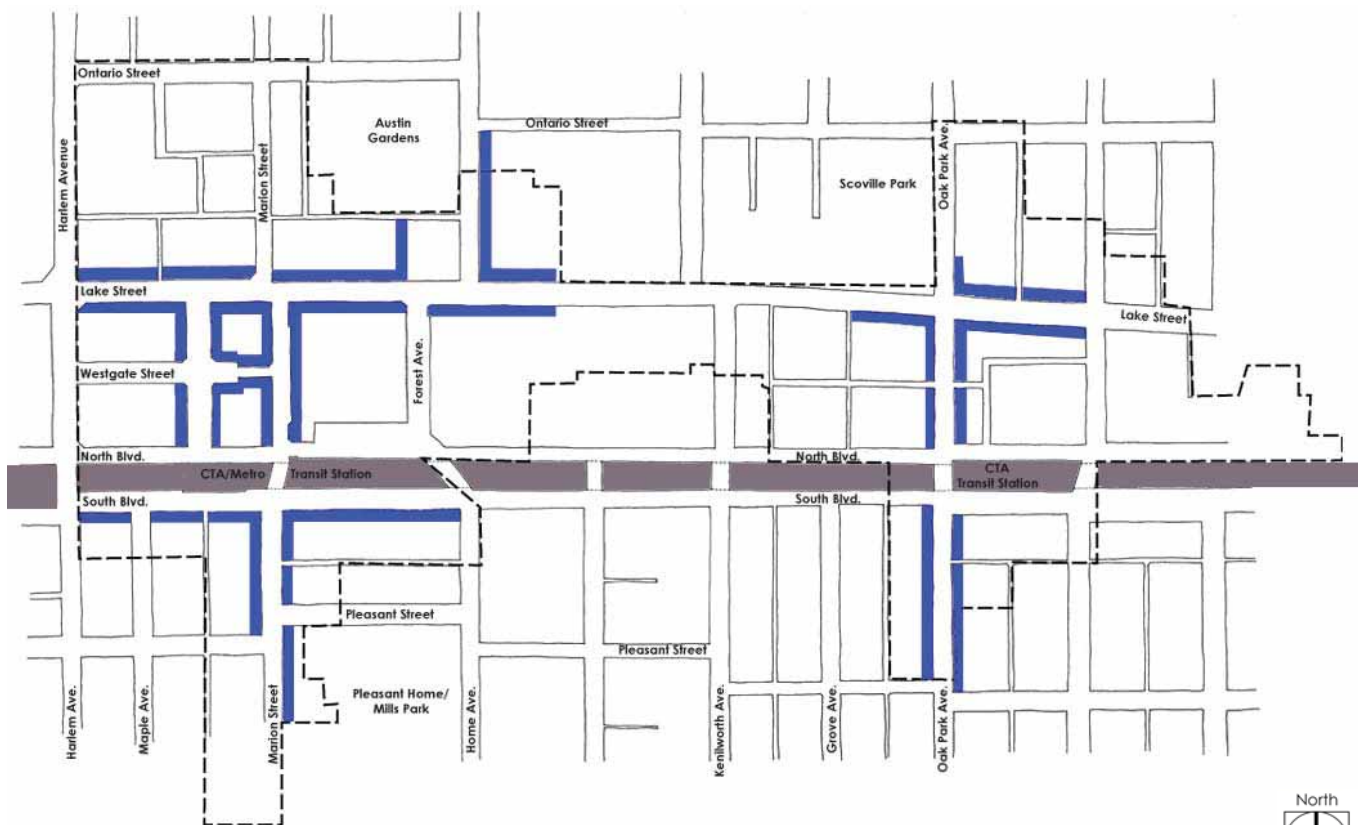


North
Build-to Lines Diagram

Active Edges

Focus building activity at street level to animate the public realm and provide a sense of security for pedestrians both day and night. To create active edges:

- Front doors should face the street or public spaces.
- Retail ground floor openings (windows and doors) should comprise a minimum of 75% of the building's front facade.
- Ground floor retail windows and doors should open to views in and out of the building without obstructions (i.e., no tinted or obscured glass).
- Curb cuts (into parking lots or structures) should generally be located at mid-block.



Active Edge Diagram

Height Standards

The allowable building heights along Lake Street are 125', which is considerably higher than the existing Marshall Fields building on Lake. An examination of building massing and heights along Lake Street indicates that buildings higher than Marshall Fields would be disruptive and incompatible with the character of the street. Since one of the study objectives is to maintain Oak Park's unique character, it is suggested that no buildings be higher than the Marshall Fields building. Setting this height standard will help preserve continuity and not erode Oak Park's village character.

Height increases are suggested on two sites on South Boulevard. At the corner of Harlem and South Boulevard, heights increase from 45' up to the height of the Marshall Fields building. At the corner of Marion and South Boulevard, building heights are increased from 45' to the height of the new Opera Club building. Both of these height increases are appropriate because of their proximity to transit facilities and location on the edge of the downtown.



Allowed Building Heights



Allowed Building Heights and Potential Changes

Intermodal Transit Station Framework

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC

March 21, 2005

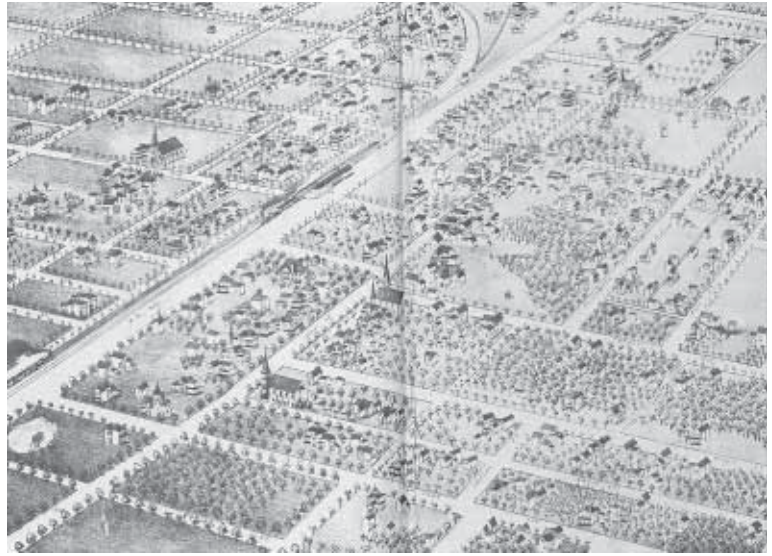
Background

The Village of Oak Park is well served by a variety of transit options. Transit is a key part of its heritage. The Galena & Chicago Union Railroad came to Oak Park in 1848, the first rail line to extend west of Chicago (illustrated in map at right, from 1873). That same route is used to this day.

Today, transit in Oak Park involves several different agencies offering shuttle bus, suburban bus, city bus, commuter rail and rapid transit. These bus and rail systems converge in downtown, where over 1,500 interagency transfers occur daily. The vast majority of these transfers are from Pace buses to either CTA rapid transit or to Metra commuter rail services. The two formerly separate rail stations, Metra Union Pacific West Line and the CTA Green Line, are now combined and called the Oak Park Transportation Center.

Plan Objectives

The primary objective of the Intermodal Transit Station Framework Plan is to increase transit ridership by improving transit facilities, increasing access, and adding transit-supportive development within 1/4 mile (five-minute walk) of the transit station. The plan emphasizes the Oak Park downtown transit station. The intent is to provide development that is less auto dependent to help relieve traffic congestion concerns within the downtown area.



Oak Park Circa 1873, Showing Railroad Line (Hist. Soc'y of OP&RF)



Oak Park Transportation Center – 2004

Transit-Oriented Development Principles

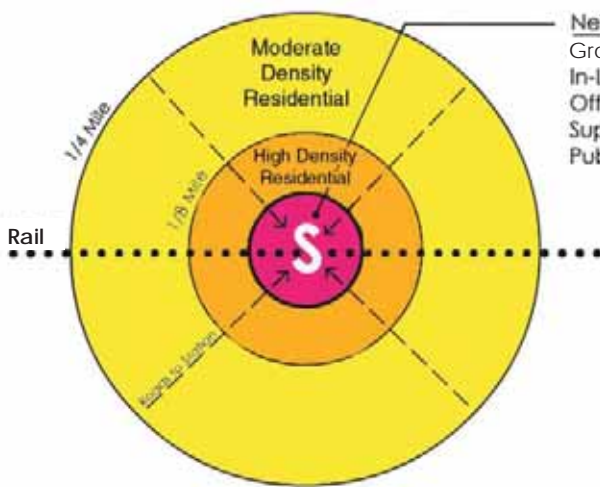
The Village of Oak Park has many of the characteristics of an ideal transit-oriented development (TOD). The Greater Downtown Master Plan reinforces this TOD strength and addresses the characteristics that are lacking or need improvement.

The existing area adjacent to the station already boasts some of the retail and neighborhood services that should be located at a transit hub. The Greater Downtown Master Plan locates a public gathering space – the new Station Square – across from the transportation center.

The Oak Park Transportation Center has the benefit of serving a 360-degree radius of retail, office, commercial and residential development. However, pedestrian access is severely hampered by traffic on Harlem Avenue and the elevated rail tracks crossing over Harlem Avenue and other streets. The master plan seeks to correct this and other deficiencies to allow transit to better serve the Village.

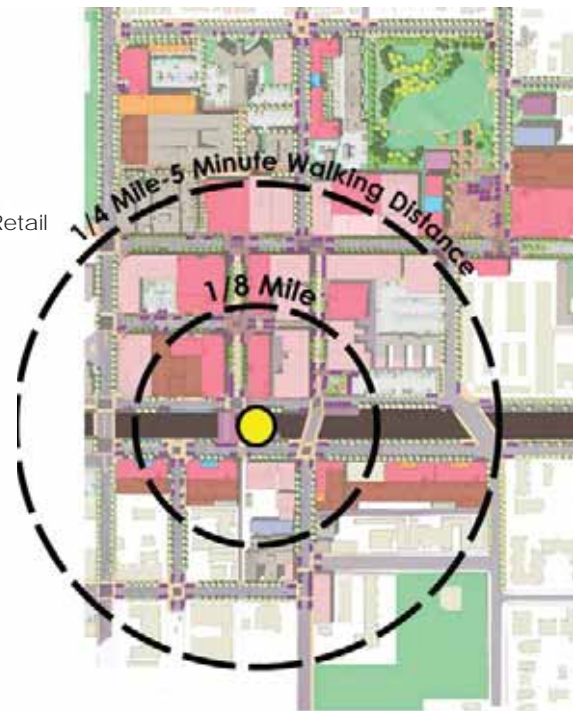


CTA Transit Station



Ideal Transit-Oriented Development Diagram

- Neighborhood Hub
- Grocery Store/Anchor Retail
- In-Line Retail Shops
- Office
- Support Services
- Public Gathering Area



Transit-Oriented Development Area

Intermodal Facilities

Several improvements to Oak Park's intermodal transit facilities have been proposed but not implemented; this master plan recommends these and other improvements be made.

- *Bicycle station* – New parking structure and/or ground floor retail space or new Station Square would provide bike parking and possible bike maintenance/repair/sales facility.

Proposed

- *Bus canopy on North Boulevard* – For Pace bus patrons at station stop.
- *Kiss and ride* – Passenger drop off areas on South Boulevard and in parking lot adjacent to new Station Square.
- *Station Square* – Bus info/kiosk located in new square, which would act as threshold and downtown gateway for transit passengers at Marion Street.
- *Bus stop/pull-out area* – New Station Street and/or Marion Street would allow bus stop adjacent to Transportation Center.



Existing Bike Parking



Oak Park Transportation Center Intermodal Facilities Proposed

Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning

Transit-supportive land use planning in the station area will help to increase ridership and maximize the benefits transit brings to the quality of life in Oak Park.

Existing

Oak Park has a limited amount of existing retail, commercial and residential uses in its downtown within easy walking distance (five minute walk) to the Oak Park Transportation Center.

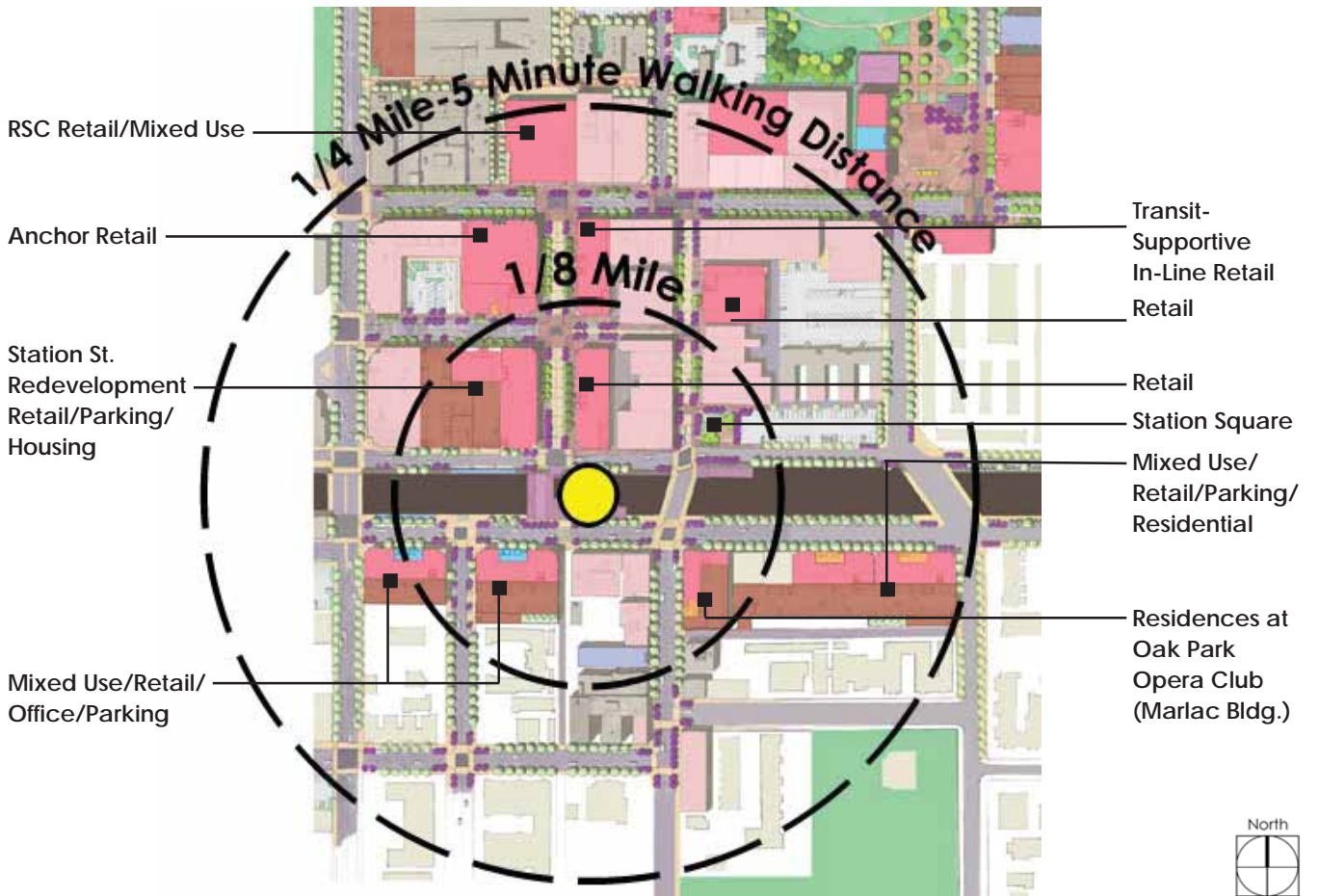
A few residential uses, including high-density, courtyard and mid-rise buildings are located within a 1/4 mile of the transit station.

Proposed

We are proposing additional housing, retail and office space within a 1/4 mile radius of the transit station.

- *High-density housing* – High-density housing will be located over ground floor retail stores or office/commercial uses; not only does the higher downtown residential population potentially increase transit ridership, but it also supports the local businesses and provides a possible workforce for downtown jobs.
- *Transit-supportive retail* – New ground-floor retail and services will be located along Station Street with an anchor retailer located at the intersection of State and Station streets.

- *Transit-supportive office* – New Class A office space will be located directly adjacent to the transit station at the intersection of Harlem and South Boulevard, replacing the existing Village-owned parking lots.



Proposed Transit Oriented Land Uses

Circulation/Access

Circulation patterns in the downtown station area can be changed to improve pedestrian access and transfers between transit systems. Proposed changes incorporate those suggested in the Regional Transit Coordination Plan.

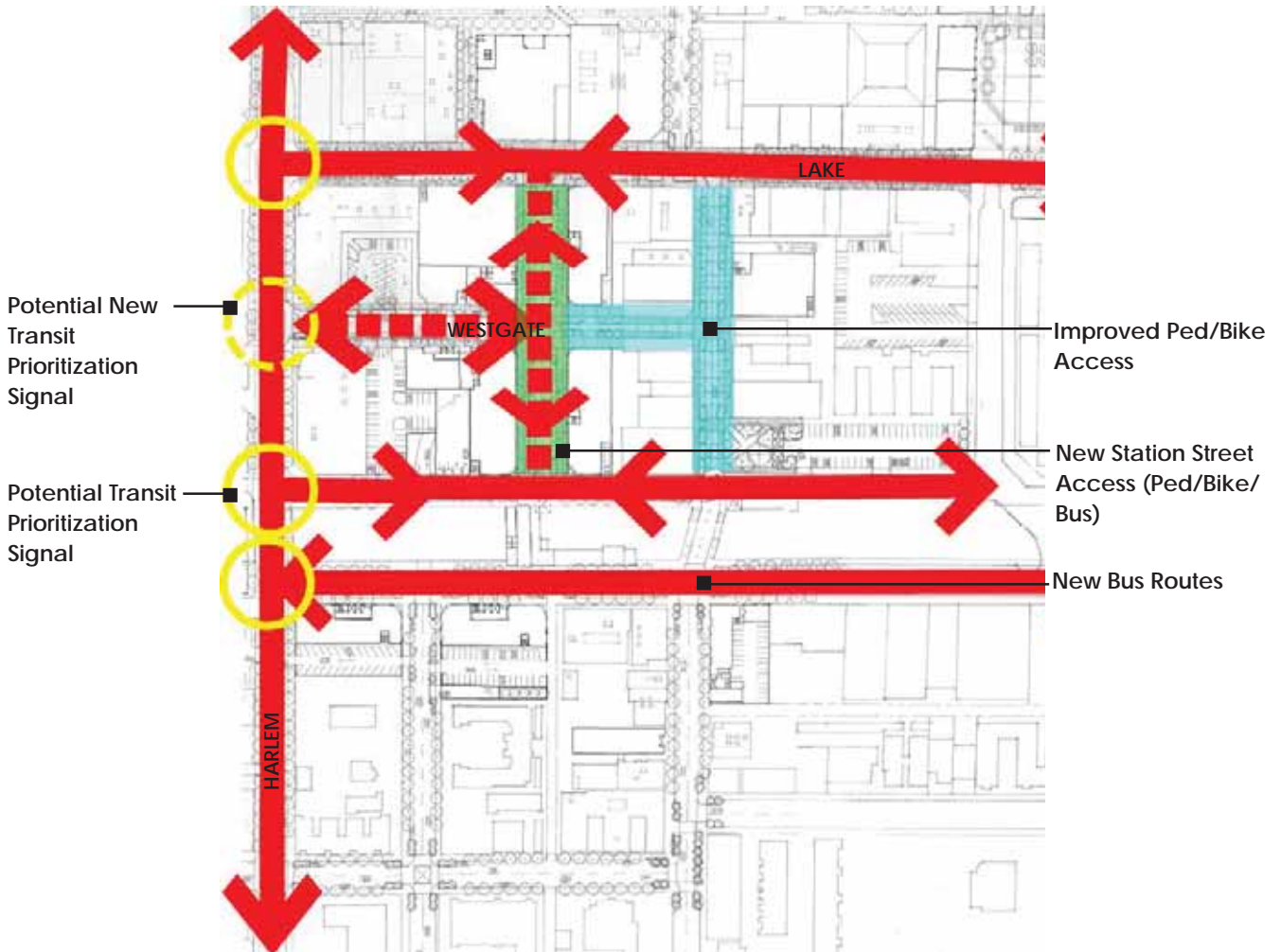
Proposed

Pedestrian, bicycle, transit and automobile traffic patterns may be improved by the following changes – all of which would require further planning and study:

- Possible realignment of South Boulevard adjacent to transit station.
- Signal prioritization for buses at key intersections on Harlem.
- Additions to street grid (new Station Street and Marion Mall opened to

vehicle traffic) create potential for direct bus access to Station Street from Lake Street.

- Direct pedestrian connection from transit station to primary retail segment of Lake Street via new Station Street.
- Improved access for bicycles on re-streeted Marion.
- Park and Ride. No future park and ride locations are anticipated at the city-owned lots on South Boulevard adjacent to Harlem Avenue. However, an additional floor could be added to the parking garage on Station Street if transit agencies desire a park and ride facility.



Implementation

Village of Oak Park
Crandall Arambula PC
March 21, 2005

Overview

The Village of Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan provides an ambitious strategy for improving community livability and strengthening downtown Oak Park. The implementation plan prescribes a realistic and timely strategy for positive change.

It is important to seize the opportunity to honor the tremendous commitment, time and energy that citizens, business people and agency staff have devoted to the creation of this plan.

This implementation strategy is founded on the principle that public dollars must be spent on projects that will leverage significant private investment and spark widespread and sustainable reinvestment in the downtown.

The implementation strategy includes five sections:

- Organization
- Policies, regulations and guidelines
- Top priority projects
- Catalyst projects
- Action plan



Lake Street

Organization

Implementation of this plan will require focused, aggressive efforts by the public and private sectors over the coming years. For this plan to be successful, a comprehensive, consistent and coordinated effort will be required.

Managing Implementation

The key entities will be responsible for the following:

Village of Oak Park

- Develops and implements Urban Renewal activities, such as attracting developers, assisting in site assembly and review and approving development plans.
- Constructs public infrastructure and amenities.
- Provides public parking in the downtown to relieve existing demand or as an incentive to induce private development.
- Administers loan and grant programs contributing to downtown revitalization.
- Participates in retail recruitment outreach and marketing programs.

Downtown Business Associations

- Provide an education curriculum for downtown businesses in the areas of advertising, customer service, marketing and visual merchandising.
- Provide information on available small business loan and grant programs.
- Develop information on the downtown area, including specific information on retail buildings and spaces.
- Create an effective leasing brochure for the downtown.
- Participate in retail recruitment outreach and marketing programs.

Property Owners

- Focus on building renovations and tenant upgrades by taking advantage of available loan and grant programs.
- Continue to support the implementation of the Greater Downtown Master Plan.
- Provide the information required to create an effective leasing brochure for the downtown.
- Participate in retail recruitment outreach and marketing programs.

Policies, Regulations and Guidelines

The Village will be responsible for carrying out any relevant changes to policies and regulations.

Master plan recommendations generally comply with the Oak Park Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Planned Development Ordinance. Where recommendations do not comply, changes to the existing policies and regulations will be made to be consistent with master plan directives.

Policies, regulations and guidelines will need to be updated to comply with the master plan, including the height requirements in the land use framework.

Plan Adoption

The downtown master plan should be adopted as an overlay district and regulate all development in downtown. Development Guidelines should be adopted as a supplemental document that supports the master plan.

Design Commission

A Design Commission should be created to review all projects within the Greater Downtown Master Plan area. Minor projects should be reviewed by Village staff. The Design Commission should be appointed by the Village Board and comprised of architects, landscape architects, engineers, real estate developers and citizens at large. The commission would provide recommendations to the Village Board for all projects, using the Development Guidelines as an exclusive evaluation tool. Project size thresholds are described within the Development Guidelines.

Top Priority Projects

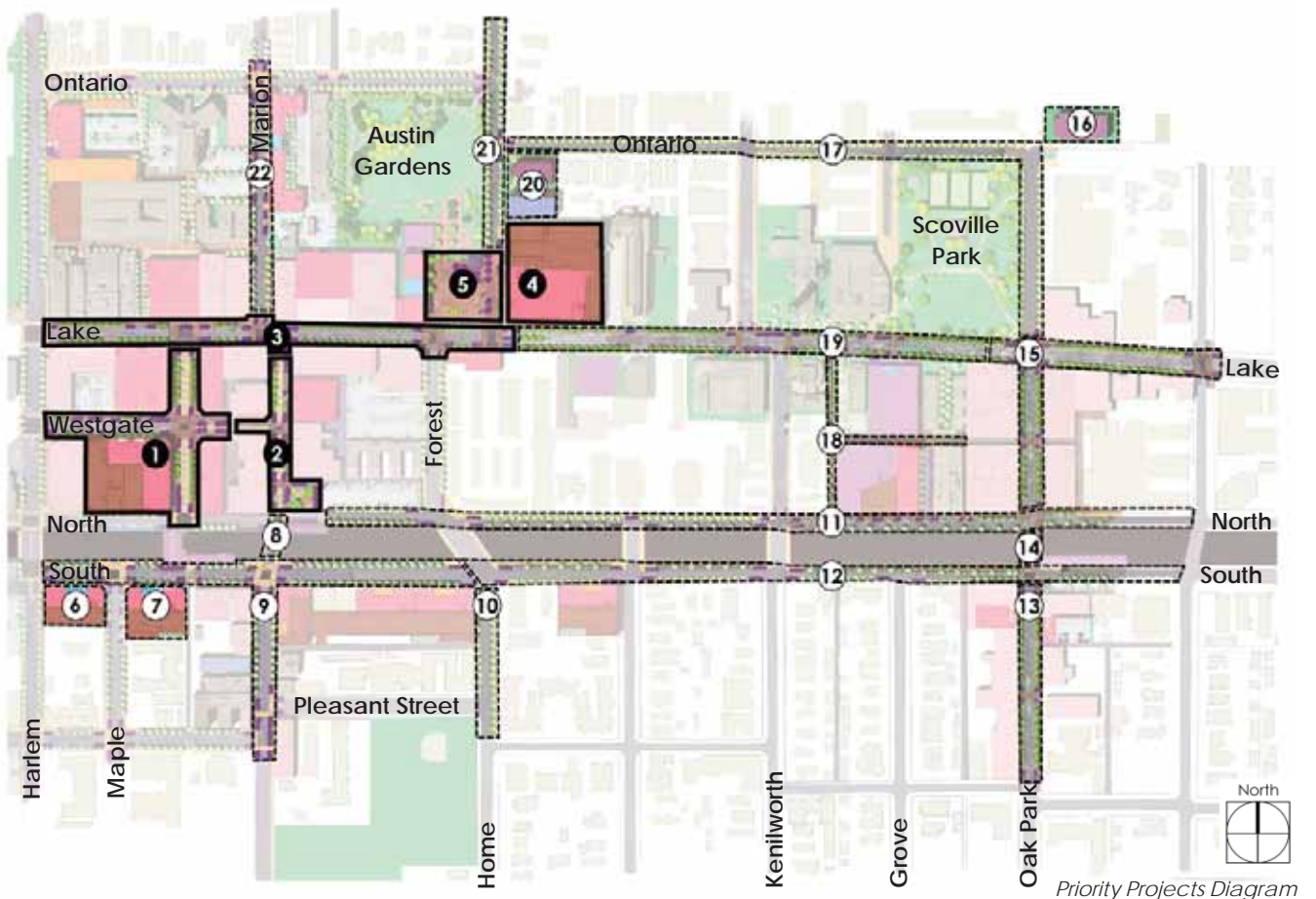
Public Projects

Projects include strategically-located streetscape improvements, mixed-use parking structures, underpass enhancements and historic public building renovations.

These and all other priority projects are located on the diagram below and described on the following pages.

Key and Catalyst Projects : ● Catalyst Projects ○ Key Projects

- 1 Station Street Area Redevelopment
- 2 Marion Street Opening
- 3 Lake Street Streetscape
- 4 Lake & Forest Parking
- 5 Founders' Square
- 6 Office Mixed Use
- 7 Office Mixed Use
- 8 Marion Underpass Enhancements
- 9 South Marion Street Streetscape
- 10 Home Avenue Streetscape
- 11 North Boulevard Streetscape
- 12 South Boulevard Streetscape
- 13 South Oak Park Avenue Streetscape
- 14 Oak Park Underpass Enhancements
- 15 Oak Park Avenue Streetscape
- 16 Arts Building/Hemingway Renovation
- 17 Ontario & Oak Park Streetscape
- 18 Mid-Block Connectivity Improvements
- 19 East Lake Street Streetscape
- 20 19th Century Club Renovation
- 21 Forest Avenue Streetscape
- 22 North Marion Street Streetscape



Public and Private Investment

Top priority projects identified on the previous page yield potential investment in all areas which can be summarized as follows:

Total Public Investment: \$68.8 million
Total Private Investment: \$461.7 million
Investment Ratio: 7/1

The \$68.8 million in public investment represents a “menu” of top priority and catalyst projects to be planned and accomplished over time. These projects could stimulate an estimated \$461.7 million in private investment, including retail, office, residential, and parking uses.

Investment ratios identify the level of private investment expected to be stimulated from the public investment in catalyst projects.

The priority projects were identified based on the following considerations:

- Ability to improve the quality of life for Oak Park residents.
- Ability to maintain and strengthen existing retail development.
- Ability to draw significant numbers of people to the downtown.
- Ability to stimulate new development.
- Ability to be implemented quickly (carved out of TIF district).

Project Descriptions

Key Projects

1. Station Street Area Redevelopment. New Station Street, mixed-use parking structure and streetscape improvements.

2. Marion Street Opening. Pedestrian improvements and opening of Marion Street Mall to automobiles. Incorporates flexible design requirements.

3. Lake Street Streetscape. Streetscape enhancements such as distinctive paving, street furniture and lighting to signal its importance as a primary retail street.

4. Lake & Forest Parking Structure. Mixed-use parking structure.

5. Founders’ Square. Civic “living room.”

Catalyst Projects

6 & 7. Office Mixed Use. Redevelopment of parking lots into Class A office space (approximately 121,000 SF) with ground floor retail (approximately 22,000 SF) and parking at grade and below.

8. Marion Underpass Enhancements. Sidewalk, wall and ceiling improvements.

9. South Marion Street Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

10. Home Avenue Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

11. North Boulevard Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape, lighting and elevated train screening improvements.

12. South Boulevard Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape, lighting and elevated train screening improvements.

13. South Oak Park Avenue Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

14. Oak Park Underpass Enhancements. Sidewalk, wall, ceiling and lighting improvements.

15. Oak Park Avenue Streetscape. Streetscape enhancements such as distinctive paving, street furniture and lighting to signal its importance as a primary retail street.

16. Arts Building/Hemingway Renovation. Historic building renovation.

17. Ontario & Oak Park Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

18. Mid-Block Connectivity Improvements. Paving and pedestrian lighting.

19. East Lake Street Streetscape. Significant landscape improvements to highlight its importance as a arts and cultural corridor.

20. 19th Century Club Renovation. Historic building renovation.

21. Forest Avenue Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

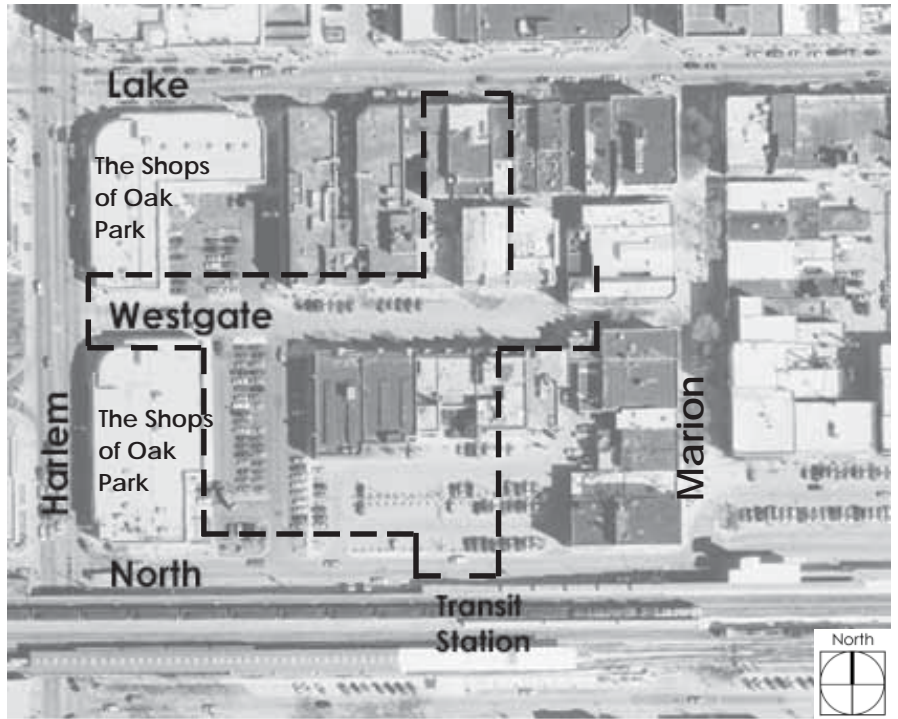
22. North Marion Street Streetscape. Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements.

Catalyst Projects

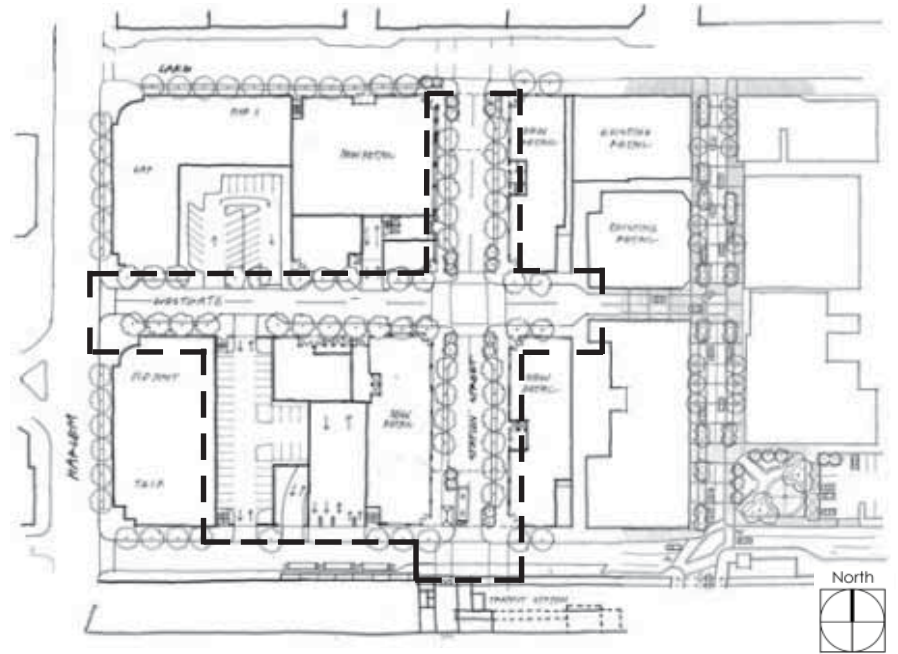
1. Station Street Area Redevelopment

Development of catalyst project area elements will:

- Improve traffic circulation in downtown by providing new access routes into and out of the district.
- Provide viable new retail space for local and national retailers.
- Provide an easily-accessible, shopper-friendly garage directly linked to the primary retail streets.
- Provide a large reserve of parking to satisfy current and future retail and office needs.
- Improve pedestrian access to and visibility of transit station.
- Reestablish a village street grid character into the Shops of Oak Park development.



Site Aerial - Existing Conditions



Proposed Site Plan

1. Station Street Area Redevelopment (cont'd)

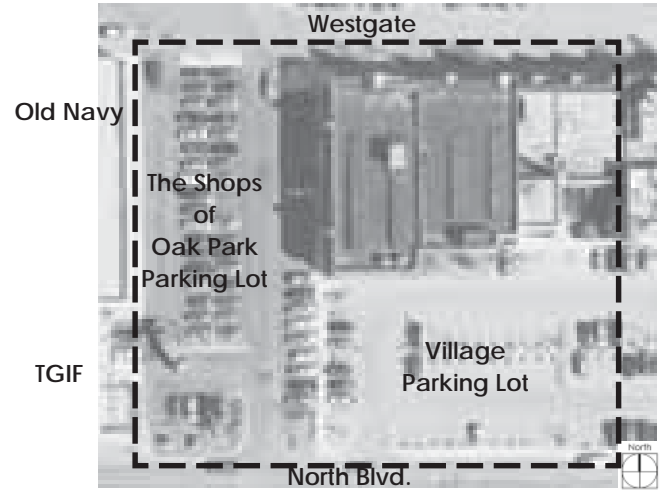
Village Parking Structure

The new Village Parking Structure will:

- Measure approximately 242' by 210'.
- Include 528 parking spaces.
- Provide 12,000 SF of ground floor retail.

Additional uses could include:

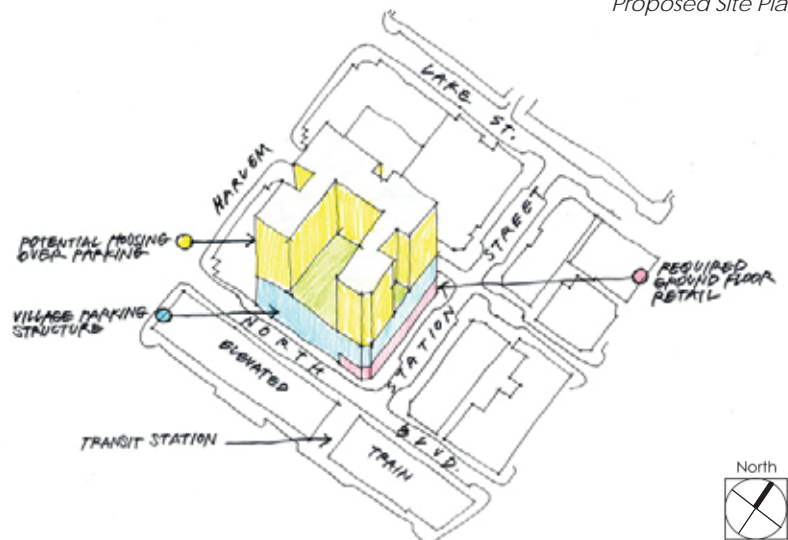
- High-density housing above parking (138 units).
- Residential parking below grade (159 spaces).



Site Aerial - Existing Conditions



Proposed Site Plan



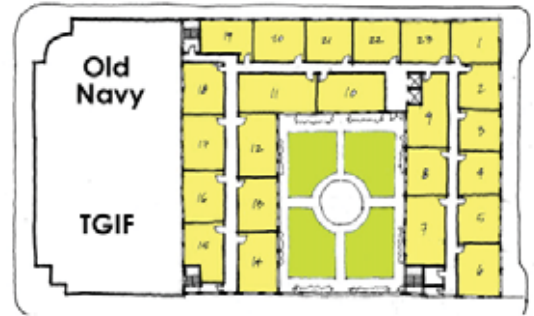
Site Axon

1. Station Street Area Redevelopment (cont'd)

The following concepts are provided for descriptive purposes only.

Housing (optional)

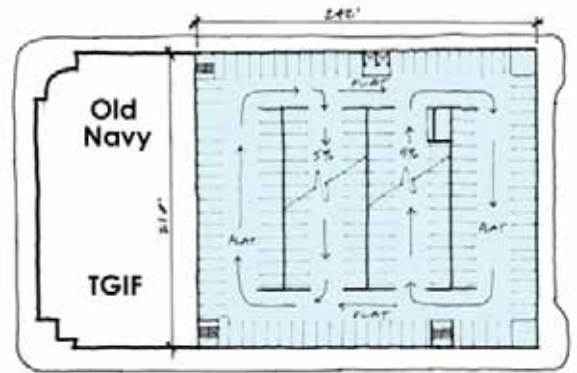
Up to six floors of rental apartments or owner-occupied condominium units over parking structure. Provide rooftop garden amenity.



Typical Residential Level

Parking Structure

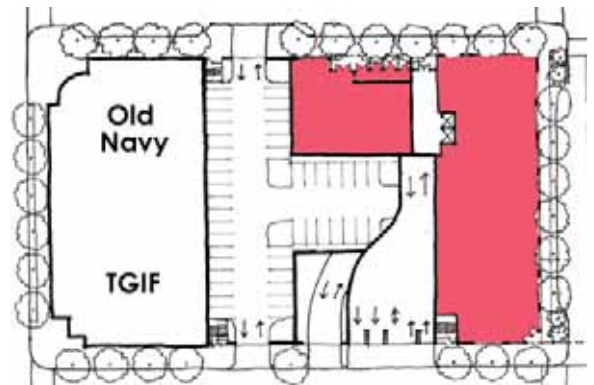
Easily navigable four-bay, one-way travel, 242' wide by 210' long structure. Automobile access should be located along North Boulevard. Vertical circulation (stairs and elevators) should be located away from building corners but within direct and convenient access to primary and retail streets.



Typical Parking Level

Ground Floor Retail

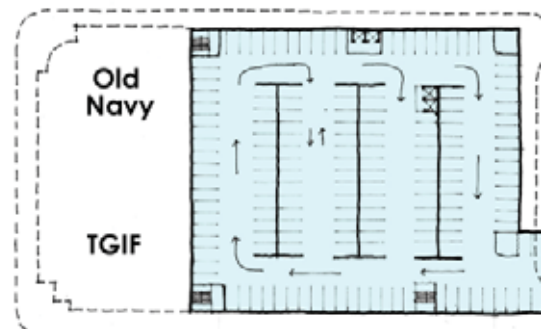
Provide ground floor retail space lining Station and Westgate streets.



Ground Floor Level

Basement Level Parking

Secure, private parking reserved for residential tenants and guests only. Provide separate vertical circulation for residential use only.



Basement Level Parking



1. Station Street Area Redevelopment (cont'd)

New Station Street

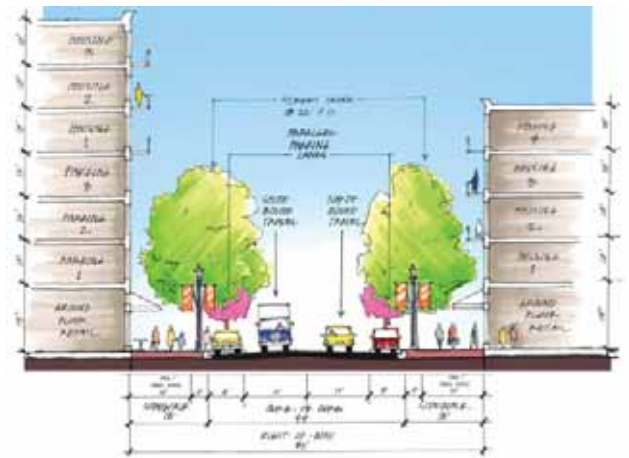
- Approximately 500' length of 80' wide new street construction.
- Provide visual linkage between North Boulevard Transit Station and Drechsler Building facade on Lake Street.
- Brick and/or concrete paver constructed sidewalks, intersections and parking lanes.
- Canopy street trees, ornamental flowering trees and corner curb extensions.
- Ornamental pedestrian-scaled street lighting.

Westgate Street

- Streetscape design materials to match Station Street.
- 70' right of way.
- Improvements for approximately 400' of existing street/driveway.



Street Improvements

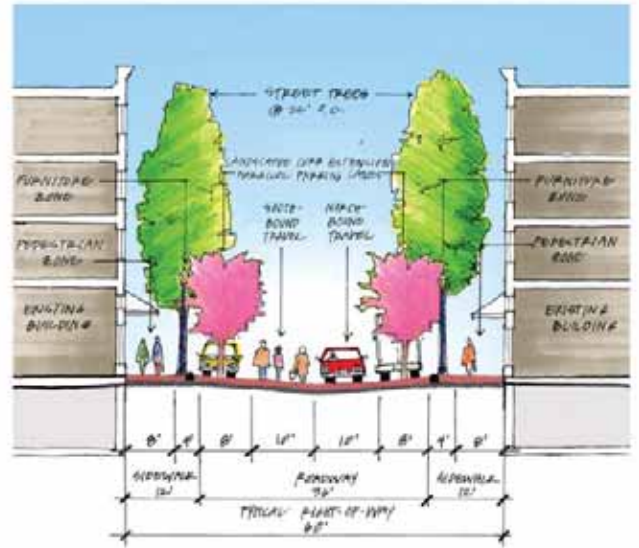


New Station Street Section

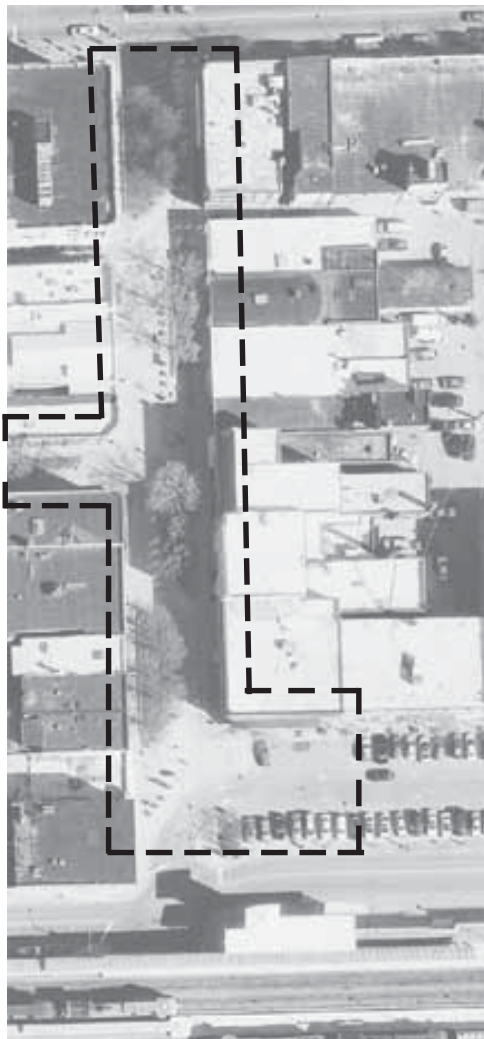
2. Marion Street and Westgate

Marion Mall would be opened and restreeted from Lake Street to North Boulevard. The street would:

- Include a curbsless “European” design that would enable it to be closed for festivals, street fairs, sidewalk sales, or other events.
- Be designed with “traffic-calming” elements to ensure low traffic speeds (15 mph design).
- Include new Station Square at the intersection of North Boulevard and Marion.



Proposed Marion Street Section



Existing Marion Street

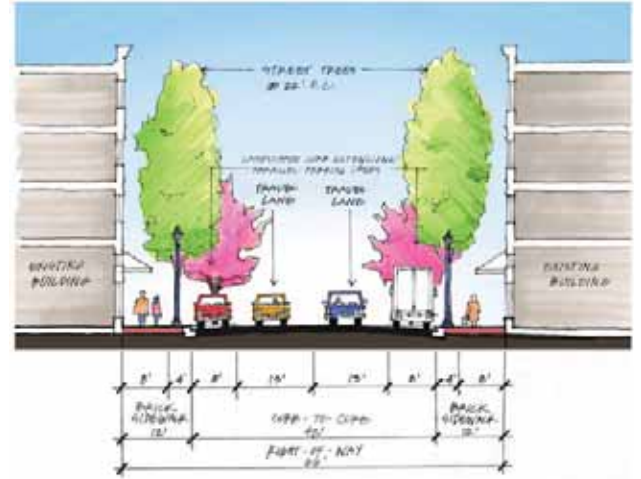


Proposed Marion Street

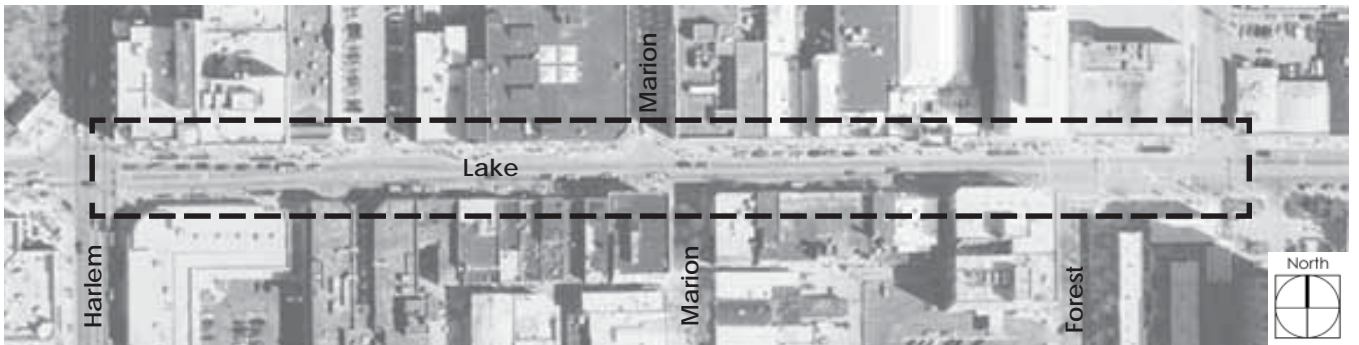
3. Lake Street

Streetscape enhancements would be constructed for approximately 1,100 feet of Lake Street between Harlem and Forest. Improvements would include:

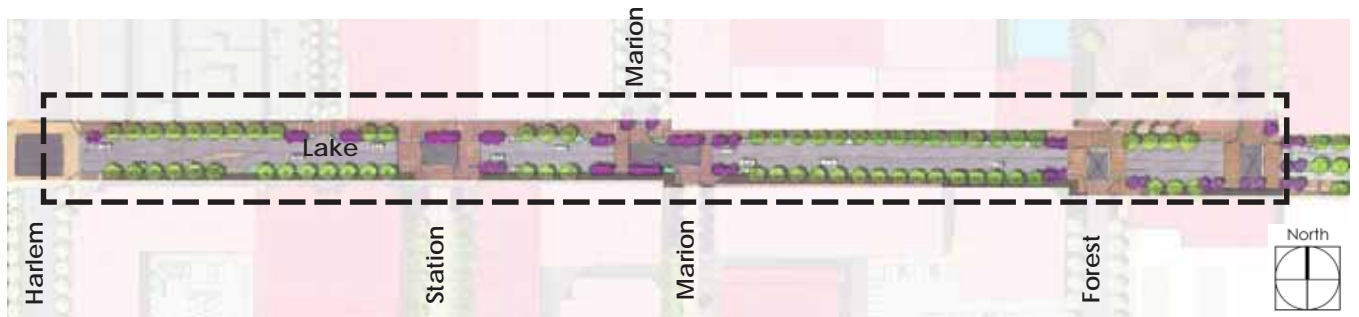
- Sidewalk Paving – brick or concrete pavers.
- Street Furniture – ornamental benches, trash receptacles, bollards, newspaper “corrals.”
- Landscaping – broad canopy and flowering ornamental trees.
- On-Street Parking – along all block faces where feasible.
- Crosswalks – brick or concrete pavers.
- Street Lighting – historic ornamental fixtures.
- Transit Facilities – specially designed Pace and Oak Park shuttle shelters.



Proposed Lake Street



Existing Lake Street



Proposed Lake Street

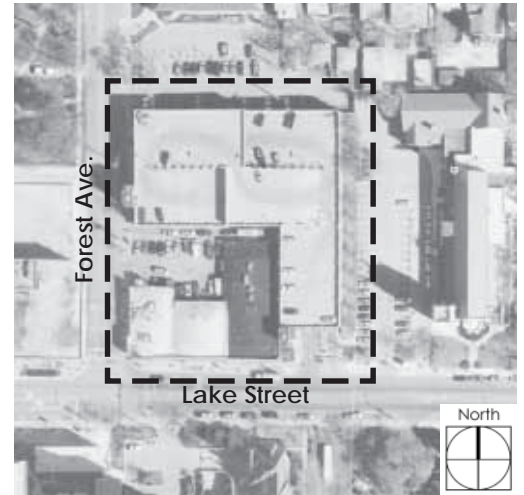
4. Lake & Forest Site

A new “shopper-friendly” parking structure will replace the existing Village-owned structure and provide adequate spaces for future retail, employment and cultural demand. The structure would include:

- 750 parking spaces.
- 25,000 SF of retail space for relocation of existing uses (grocery, pancake house, etc.) and new retail.

Additional development might include:

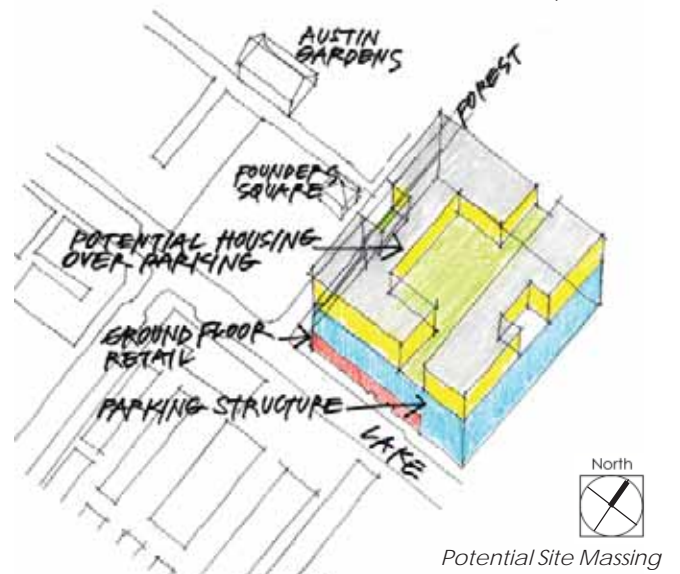
- 180 residential condominiums or apartments over the parking structure.
- 180 basement level parking spaces for residential tenants.



Existing Site



Proposed Site



Potential Site Massing

4. Lake & Forest Site (cont'd)

The following concepts are provided for descriptive purposes only.

Residential Housing

Approximately three floors of apartments or owner-occupied dwellings over the parking structure and lining Forest Avenue's street frontage.

Parking Structure

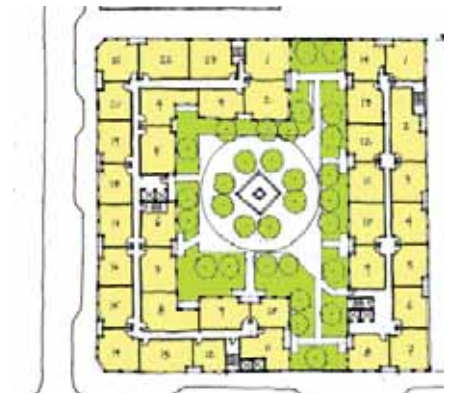
Four bays with one-way travel lanes. Vertical circulation (stairs and elevators) serving Lake Street should be located at mid-block (not at corners) to provide easy access.

Ground Floor Retail

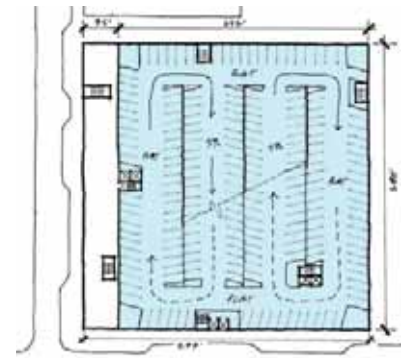
Large floor plate, 24,000 SF of retail use. Priority should be given to existing displaced uses to occupy new development. Retail primary entrance should be located at the intersection of Lake and Forest.

Basement Parking (optional)

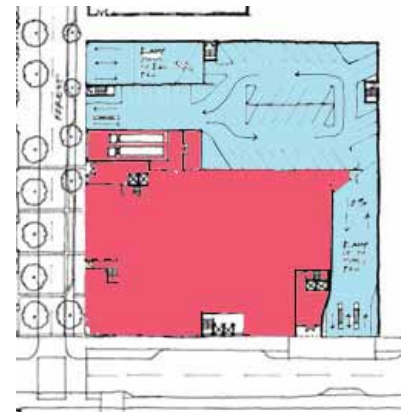
Secure, gated parking with private elevators for residents and guests.



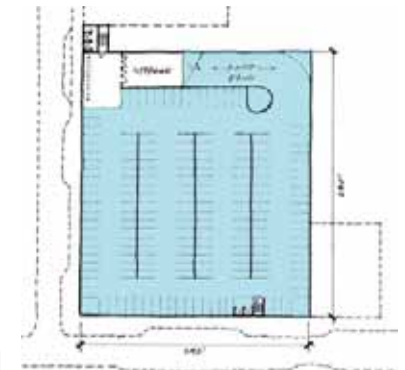
Typical Residential Roof Level



Typical Parking Garage Level



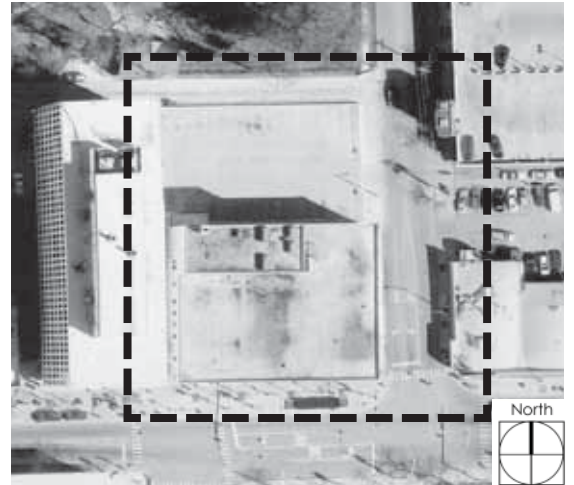
Ground Floor Retail and Parking



Residential Basement Parking

5. Founders' Square

- Approximately 150' by 170' public open space.
- Simply designed brick surface to provide flexibility and the ability to program multiple uses in all seasons.
- Canopy trees along edges
- Variety of seating areas – benches, ledges, steps.
- Ornamental pedestrian-scaled lighting.
- Pavilion scaled for small retail/visitor bureau uses.
- Public art.



Existing Founders' Square



Proposed Founders' Square



Founders' Square Perspective

Action Plan

Initial Actions Schedule

A time schedule identifies the initial actions to be taken for each public project as well as for on-going development, marketing and promotion efforts.

The five catalyst projects all are begun either during the first 120 day period after adoption of the master plan or in the period from four to twelve months. Other projects follow according to priority, feasibility and efficient phasing.

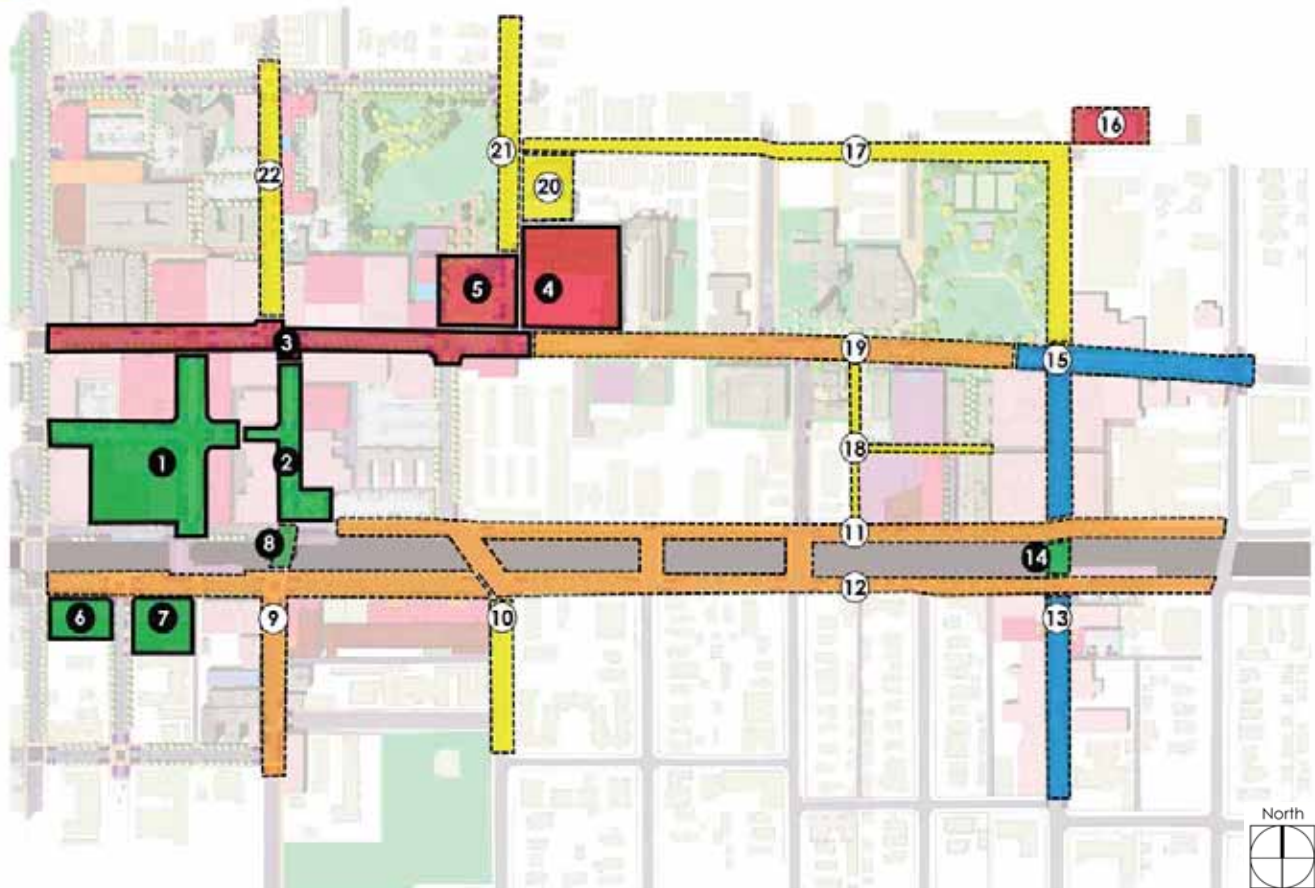
Action Charts

Action charts detail the 22 public projects identified as key and catalyst projects, providing detailed description of the project components and benefits, implementation responsibilities and follow-through schedule.

The action plan diagram below illustrates when each of the projects should be initiated, and accompanies the draft Initial Actions Schedule and draft Action Chart, which are on the pages that follow.

Initial Actions - Key

- First 120 Days
- Four to Twelve Months
- One to Two Years
- Two to Three Years
- Four to Ten Years



Action Plan Diagram

PUBLIC PROJECTS - INITIAL ACTIONS SCHEDULE												
Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan												
Project		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013		
The First 120 Days												
All	Policies, Codes & Ordinances: Initiate Updates	[Green bar]										
All	Design Commission: Establish to review projects in Greater Downtown	[Green bar]										
All	Training Sessions: Conduct education/ orientation for Design Commissioners	[Green bar]										
All	Historic Buildings: Initiate process for identifying and registering key historic buildings in Greater Downtown	[Green bar]										
All	Transit Route Structure: Transit Agencies Review routes for Greater Downtown	[Green bar]										
1	Station Street, Westgate & Parking Structure: Initiate Development Process	[Green bar]										
2	Marion Street/Station Square: Initiate Design Process	[Green bar]										
6 & 7	VOP-Owned Properties on South Blvd.: Initiate development process for office/mixed use & parking	[Green bar]										
8 & 14	Marion & Oak Park Underpasses: Initiate discussions with UP for design of underpasses	[Green bar]										
Four to 12 Mos.												
3	Lake Street: Initiate Design Process	[Red bar]										
4 & 5	Forest & Lake: Initiate Development Process	[Red bar]										
16	Arts Building/ Hemingway Museum: Initiate renovation feasibility analysis	[Red bar]										
One to Two Years												
13 & 15	Oak Park Ave.: Initiate design process for avenue between Lake and Pleasant	[Blue bar]										
Two to Three Years												
9	South Marion Street: Initiate design process for South Marion and adjacent South Blvd. (between Harlem and Home)	[Orange bar]										
11	North Blvd.: Initiate design process	[Orange bar]										
12	South Blvd.: Initiate design process for South Blvd. east of Home	[Orange bar]										
19	Lake Street: Initiate design process for Lake between Forest & Oak Park Ave.	[Orange bar]										
Four to Ten Years												
10	Home Ave.: Initiate design process	[Yellow bar]										
17	Ontario & North Oak Park: Initiate design process	[Yellow bar]										
18	Mid-Block Pedestrian/Auto Facilities: Initiate design process	[Yellow bar]										
20	19th C. Club Building: Initiate feasibility analysis & renovation	[Yellow bar]										
21	Forest Avenue: Initiate design process	[Yellow bar]										
22	North Marion Street: Initiate design process	[Yellow bar]										
Ongoing												
All	Design Commission: Review of projects	[Purple bar]										
All	Marketing & Promotions: Improve competitiveness of local businesses & recruit new businesses	[Purple bar]										
All	Historic Buildings: Restorations	[Purple bar]										

PUBLIC PROJECTS ACTION CHART

Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan

Project	Description	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule
1-A PARKING STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New mixed use, "shopper-friendly" parking structure easily accessible & directly linked to the primary retail streets. Provides a large reserve of parking to satisfy current and future retail and office needs. 12,000 SF retail at ground floor level. 242' x 215' footprint. 528 parking spaces (min. in above-grade structure) 159 below-grade parking spaces for potential housing above garage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate development process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
1-B STATION STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New street improves traffic circulation downtown, providing new access routes into and out of district. New construction approximately 500' length. Special brick and for concrete pavers for sidewalks, intersections and parking lanes. Increases retail street frontage available in downtown core. Improves pedestrian access and visibility to transit station from Lake Street, leading directly to transit entrance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate development process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
1-C WESTGATE STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reestablishes intimate, village-scaled street grid character into the Shops of Oak Park development. Streetscape improvements between Harlem & Marion (approximately 400' length). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate development process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
2-A MARION STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening of Marion Street Mall to automobiles from Lake Street to North Boulevard. Incorporates flexible design requirements allowing street to be closed for special events. Increases viability of retail along Marion. Distinctive, high-quality paving and curbless "European" design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
2-B STATION SQUARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New public square adjacent to transit facility at intersection of North and Marion. Provides threshold into Greater Downtown from CTA/Metra trains. Possible location for visitors', transit and bike facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
3 LAKE STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 1100 feet of Lake Street between Harlem and Forest. Streetscape enhancements such as distinctive paving, street furniture and lighting. Improves transit access. Enhances pedestrian experience. Signals Lake Street's importance as a primary retail street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>4-12 Months: Initiate design process.</p> <p>1-2 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>
4 PARKING STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New mixed use, "shopper-friendly" parking structure will replace the existing village-owned structure at Lake and Forest. Approximately 750 parking spaces - adequate supply for future retail, employment and cultural demand. 25,000 SF retail space for relocated existing uses and new retail. 180 below-grade parking spaces for potential housing above garage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>4-12 Months: Initiate development process.</p> <p>1-2 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.</p>

Note: The public projects listed here are based on community input and technical analysis, but are not binding. Timelines, project costs and implementation process/sequence/roles may vary from this matrix.

Public Projects Action Chart - cont'd

Project	Description	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule
<div style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 5 FOUNDERS' SQUARE </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New civic "living room" at intersection of Lake and Forest. • Possible location for visitors' bureau or kiosk. • Gateway to Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District. • Constructed of high-quality, durable, low-maintenance materials. • Approximately 150' x 170' flexible design suitable for various uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>4- 12 Months: Initiate design process.</p> <p>1-2 Years: select contractor & begin construction</p>
<div style="background-color: #76b82a; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 6 OFFICE MIXED USE </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of Village-owned parking lot into Class A office space (approximately 33,000 SF). • Retail (approximately 5,500 SF) at ground floor. • Parking at grade and below. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction</p>
<div style="background-color: #76b82a; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 7 OFFICE MIXED USE </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment of Village-owned parking lot into Class A office space (approximately 33,000 SF). • Retail (approximately 5,500 SF) at ground floor. • Parking at grade and below. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction</p>
<div style="background-color: #76b82a; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 8 MARION UNDERPASS </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk, wall, lighting and ceiling improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>First 120 Days: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-12 Months: Select contractor & begin construction</p>
<div style="background-color: #e67e22; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 9 SOUTH MARION </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>2-3 Years: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-10 Years: Select contractor & begin construction</p>
<div style="background-color: #f1c40f; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 10 HOME AVENUE </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>4-10 Years: Initiate design process.</p>
<div style="background-color: #e67e22; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> 11 NORTH BOULEVARD </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk, landscape, lighting and elevated train screening improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>2-3 Years: Initiate design process.</p> <p>4-10 Years: Select contractor & begin construction</p>

Note: The public projects listed here are based on community input and technical analysis, but are not binding. Timelines, project costs and implementation process/sequence/roles may vary from this matrix.

Public Projects Action Chart - cont'd

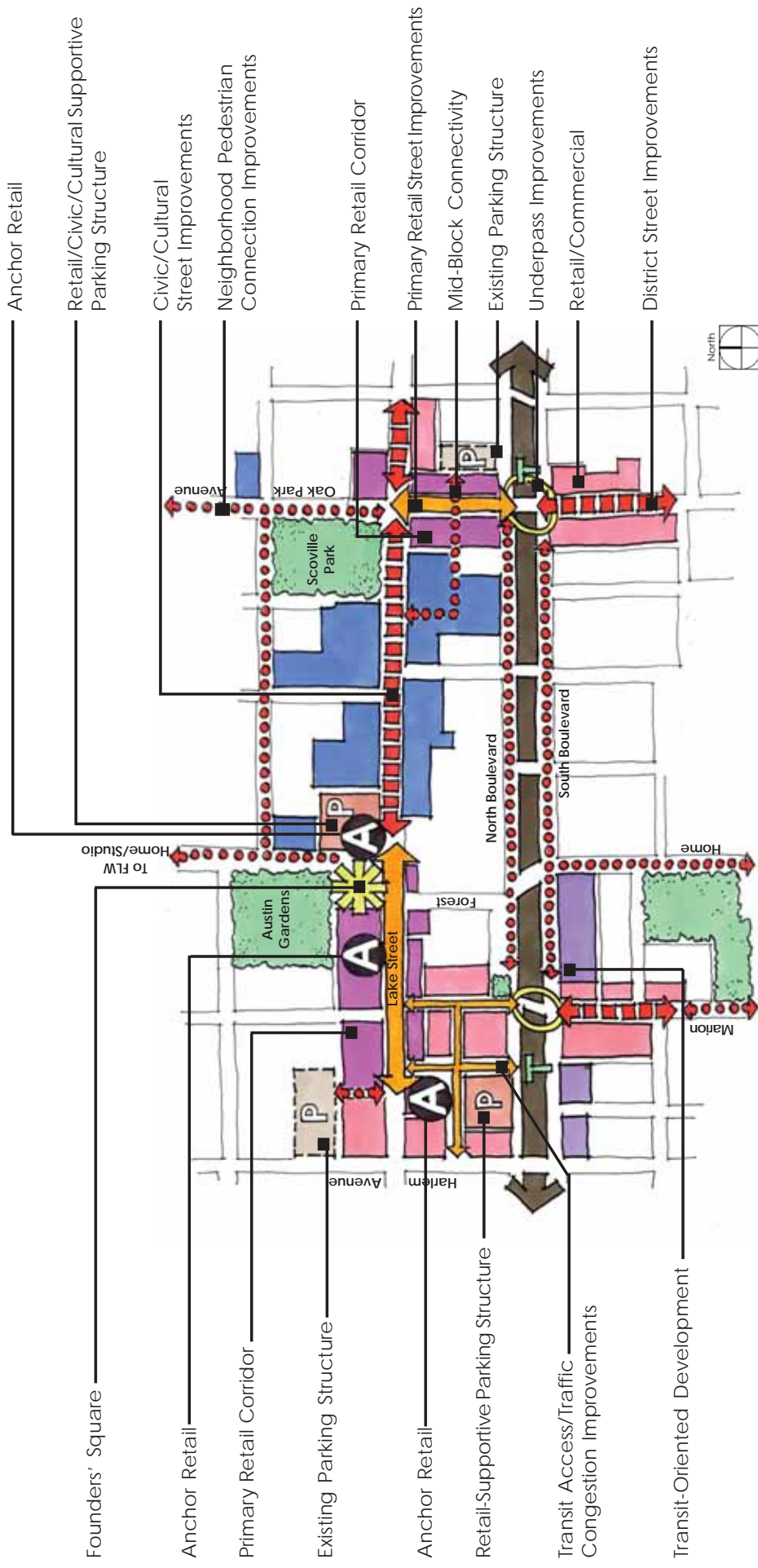
Project	Description	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule
12 SOUTH BOULEVARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk, landscape, lighting and elevated train screening improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	2-3 Years: Initiate design process. 4-10 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.
13 SOUTH OAK PARK AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements. Signals Avenue's importance as a secondary retail street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.
14 OAK PARK AVENUE UNDERPASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk, wall, ceiling and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	First 120 Days: Initiate design process. 4-10 Months: Select contractor & begin construction.
15 NORTH OAK PARK AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetscape enhancements such as distinctive paving, street furniture and lighting. Signals Avenue's importance as a primary retail street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.
16 ARTS BUILDING/ HEMINGWAY RENOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic building renovation. Possible civic/cultural uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	4-12 Months: Initiate feasibility analysis & renovation 1-2 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.
17 ONTARIO AND OAK PARK INTERSECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.
18 MID-BLOCK CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paving and pedestrian lighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction.

Note: The public projects listed here are based on community input and technical analysis, but are not binding. Timelines, project costs and implementation process/sequence/roles may vary from this matrix.

Public Projects Action Chart - cont'd

Project	Description	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule
19 EAST LAKE STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant landscape improvements. Highlights importance as an arts and cultural corridor. Highlights importance as an arts and cultural corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction
20 19TH CENTURY CLUB RENOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic building renovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction
21 FOREST AVENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction
22 NORTH MARION STREET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk, landscape and lighting improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	1-2 Years: Initiate design process. 2-3 Years: Select contractor & begin construction

Note: The public projects listed here are based on community input and technical analysis, but are not binding. Timelines, project costs and implementation process/sequence/roles may vary from this matrix.



Founders' Square

Anchor Retail

Primary Retail Corridor

Existing Parking Structure

Anchor Retail

Retail-Supportive Parking Structure

Transit Access/Traffic Congestion Improvements

Transit-Oriented Development

Anchor Retail

Retail/Civic/Cultural Supportive Parking Structure

Civic/Cultural Street Improvements

Neighborhood Pedestrian Connection Improvements

Primary Retail Corridor

Primary Retail Street Improvements

Mid-Block Connectivity

Existing Parking Structure

Underpass Improvements

Retail/Commercial

District Street Improvements

Fundamental Concept Diagram Oak Park Downtown Master Plan

Village of Oak Park, Illinois

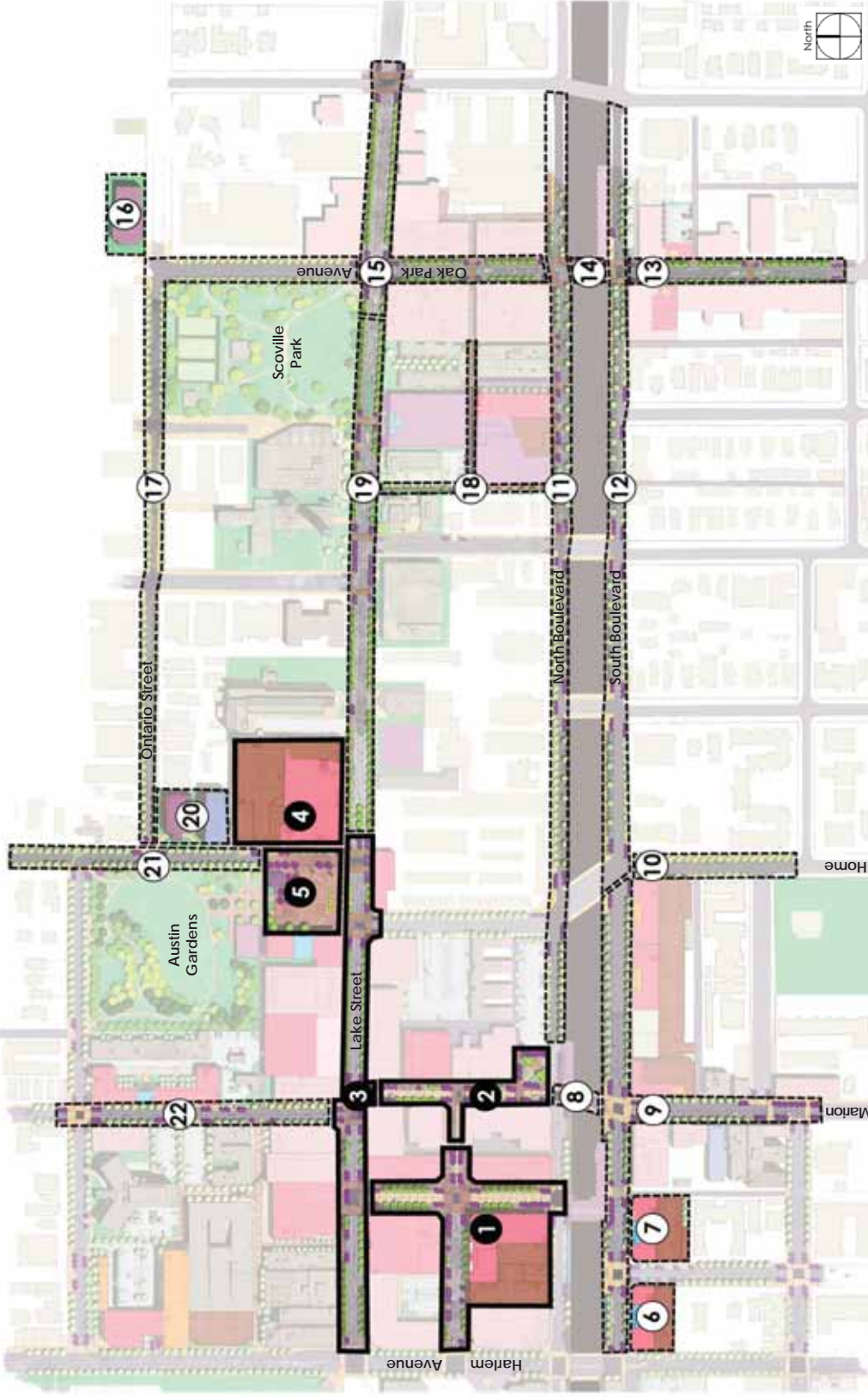
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2020 Capacity Diagram Oak Park Downtown Master Plan

Village of Oak Park, Illinois
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Key and Catalyst Projects Diagram

Oak Park Downtown Master Plan

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