

# **Village of Oak Park, IL Market Assessment /Retail Strategy**

**September 15, 2008**

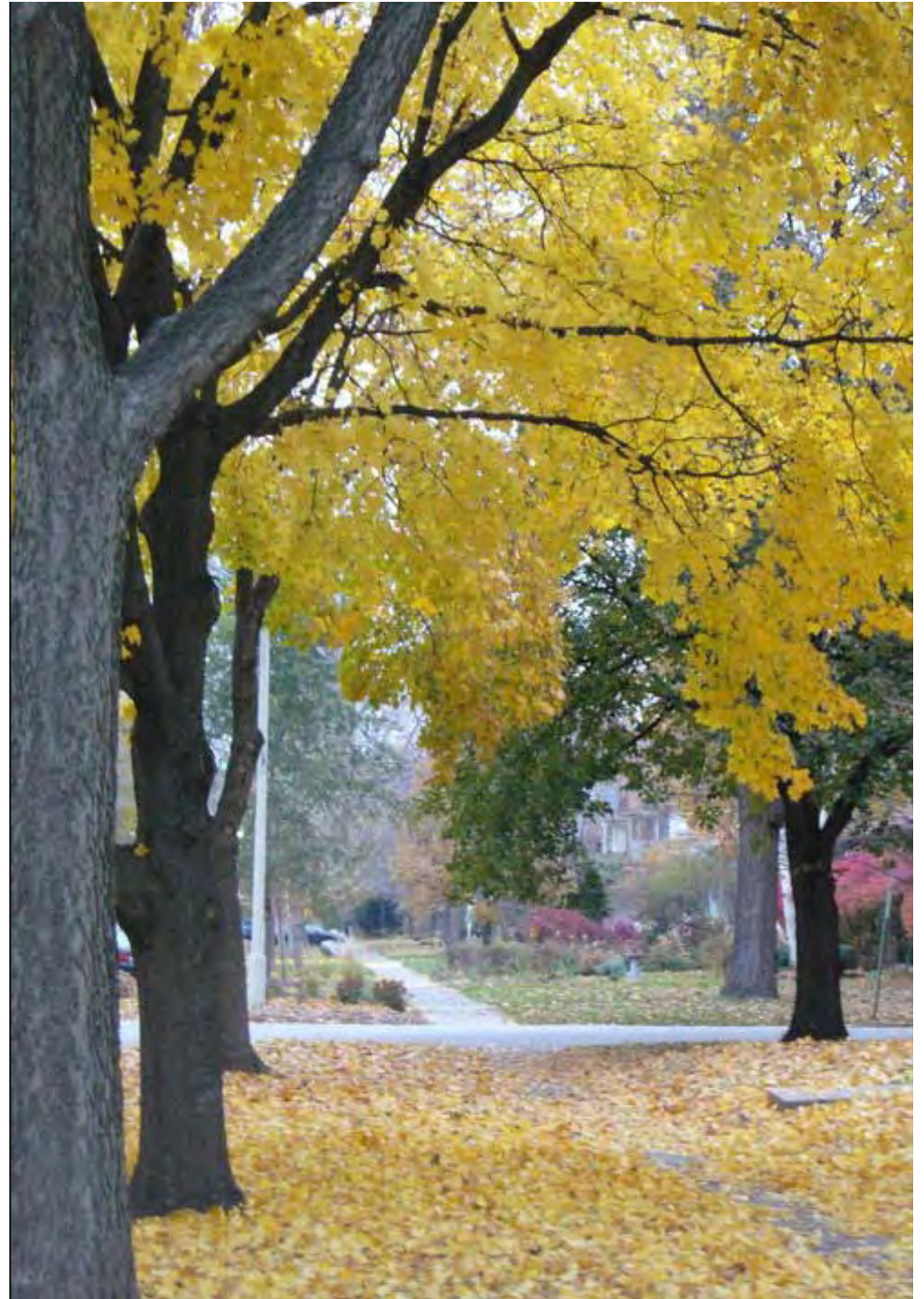
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## ADDENDUM

# Executive Summary

## Section 1.0 Objectives

- ❑ **The first objective of the retail market assessment is to reduce the risk of the investment that Oak Park** will make to achieve the benefits expected of retail expansion. The Village, its retailers and developers all have limited funds to support and expand retail development, especially in this volatile market. They must invest where there is the least risk and highest return.
- ❑ Successful retail expansion (which includes foodservice and consumer services), can deliver two broad benefits to a community:
  - A short-term 'hard dollars' benefit: Sales and property taxes, parking, business permit and other direct revenues that would mitigate direct taxes on residents in the short tem.
  - A more long term benefit: A vibrant amenity that drives homebuyer preference for Oak Park, increases local jobs, retains move-up buyers, spurs home improvement, attracts increasingly higher quality residents--which in turn drives market purchasing strength and therefore commercial investment in retail—as well as other sectors.
  - **Currently, Retail sales tax revenue accounts for nearly 70% of total Village sales tax revenue, and therefore it is a crucial economic driver for Oak Park.\***

Section 2.0 Study Process (Please see full report)

Section 3.0 Methodology (Please see full report)

Section 4.0 On a Macro-economic level, retail risk is at a cyclic high at the time of this report and will be volatile for the next 2-3 years.

- ❑ **Economists do not agree on when we will hit the bottom of this recession.** Recovery is estimated by most respected retail sources in late 2010 or 2011, barring any major new negative developments. The impact on Oak Park's retail is that when/if the recovery happens, the retail landscape may be quite different: store closings will leave hundreds of prime vacant spaces that will be in competition with Oak Park's current and new spaces. Quality retailers who have resumed expansion will seek the best proven spaces, in the strongest trade areas, for the best prices.
  - Because of this volatile retail market, and the fact that 7 million square feet of new retail space is currently under development in the Chicago market, 4Insights strongly recommends a thorough market update from the developer on the competitive landscape—as well as what retail sectors consumers are buying, *before the final amount of retail space—and tenant mix--for the new Colt site development is finalized and introduced to the leasing market.*

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## Section 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews

- ❑ To determine which benefit of retail expansion was most important to key Oak Park Stakeholders--and their vision for Oak Park retail--4Insights conducted **58 individual interviews**, most were one hour. The majority consensus was in favor of the broader, long term benefits created by a vibrant retail sector--with recognition that it would require continued investment and monitoring by the Village in order to yield the financial payback. The Stakeholders, however, cautioned that individual retailers, and districts, needed to ultimately be strong enough to “make it on their own,” as the Village could not provide continuous subsidies.
- ❑ **In order to achieve those benefits, the Stakeholders contributed hundreds of ideas—leading mentions were:**
  - **Recognize that both retailers and consumers have lots of options besides Oak Park.** We need to be competitive and make an investment in Downtown. Have a plan and “stick to it”, with a road map and action plan of how to get it done. Leadership has to be unified and consistent—not reactive to individual proposals or opposition groups. Plan an annual capital budget.
  - **Be willing to invest and partner with retailers and developers.** Be active in land assemblage, demolition and remediation.
  - **Focus on where retail is most likely to succeed**—make the investment there. Get the “Core” retail right first—Downtown, the Avenue, the Corridors. Make Downtown a larger retail district by better connecting Lake St. with Marion St. and The Avenue with unified streetscape and a dedicated shuttle.
  - **Recognize that retail may not be able to succeed in every neighborhood district** . The failure rate proves that retail survival in these districts is difficult. Other uses may work very well in the neighborhoods where retail doesn’t—such as offices, professional, medical, educational, or business-to-business enterprises--and be more of a credit to the neighborhood instead of empty storefronts.
  - **Need a cluster of “magnet” retailers—with some nationals** to show we can attract and support them. Madison and Roosevelt need major national anchors. Include some retail for everyone—moderate stores.
  - **Capture more spending from visitors** —get them to come Downtown--and from the high school and college students.
  - **We need to be more responsive to business and consumers**--answer complaints from our businesses, residents and visitors—they all can easily go elsewhere.

# Executive Summary

## Section 5.0, cont'd

- **The Stakeholders' perception of barriers and challenges for retail expansion—highlights:**
  - **The deep, narrow configuration of most of our retail spaces, the cost of rehabbing them,** and developers who use first floor parking for their condo residents. Many non-retail businesses currently take up our prime retail spaces.
  - **Small neighborhood districts that compete and don't have adequate visibility and parking** --and the neighbors who don't want the traffic, noise, parking. Most districts have no place for expansion. Store hours are that limited and inconsistent.
  - **Parking was the most-mentioned issue for current retailers and shoppers.** Residents have options for suburban-type, free surface parking. In the Village, they feel that there are not enough spaces; rules frequently change; time limits are not long enough; signage is sometimes confusing; there is no one consumer liaison for complaints; owners, employees, and construction workers taking up prime spaces--and more expensive than other shopping options right around Oak Park.
  - **The Village development process needs to be more streamlined,** specifically regarding strict zoning and code interpretation; finality of decisions; delays by neighborhood opposition or preservation issues; restrictive signage ordinances; and communication within departments, to individual businesses and business district associations.
  - **Higher rents, and especially higher property taxes,** plus SSA's in Downtown, add up to a higher cost of doing business than competing communities.
  - **Unattractive streetscapes** on Lake St. due to visibly empty storefronts.
  
- **And their perceptions of Oak Park's strengths**
  - **Unique assets as a community:** history, architecture, arts, diversity, education, recreation, great ethnic restaurants, central location to Downtown for work or shopping--in 15 minutes by auto or public transit.
  - **Strong demographics**
  - **Out of town guests rave about Oak Park**--residents are much more critical.
  - **It's safe to shop here** at any time of day or night.



# Executive Summary

## Section 5.0, cont'd

### □ Stakeholders' concerns about Retail development

- **Preservation** of Oak Park's unique historic and art/architectural heritage and design.
- **Overbuilding** and developing too much retail that can't succeed. Ending up as another "cookie cutter" mall.
- **Rent increases** that will drive out independent retailers.
- **Property owners** who will lease to less than the best tenants.
- **More traffic congestion**, especially near Lake and Harlem. High density housing that will make it too crowded like other transportation oriented developments. No plan to deal with that congestion.
- **A vertical mall that may "wall in" customers**, instead of connecting them with other Downtown retailers
- **Height and density is the big issue**—neighbors fear that it will clog their streets.

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Demographic and Lifestyle Profile, and Shopping Patterns

- **Consumers do not shop by city boundaries**. However, it is useful to look within Oak Park first, because it has several customer bases that are critical to supporting its retail. The first base is its *Residents*.
- **Demographically, Oak Park resident households are divided equally between three broad income groups: Upscale, Midscale and below Midscale**. Each has different shopping patterns, as confirmed by the Consumer Survey. One third, (7,380 households) are Upscale, earning \$100K+. Half of these households (3,690) are termed 'wealthy,' earning over \$150,000. *While incomes are very high, density is suburban—not the high urban density of a Lincoln Park or Bucktown.*
- When combined with similar income households in adjacent River Forest, **Oak Park's affluent households are an "upscale island" surrounded in all directions by consistently more Midscale communities**---and the lower income households to the east of Austin.
- **The other 1/3 of Oak Park's residents are Midscale to Upper Midscale**, clustering in the \$50s-\$90's range. There are about the same number of households as the Upscale residents within Oak Park—but the **difference here is that they are not an "island"**—they are surround by thousands more Midscale consumers just like them in the neighboring communities of Cicero, Berwyn, Elmhurst, and Chicago. So together, **Midscale residents and adjacent non-residents are a much larger and broader base of customers for Oak Park retail.**
- **The pool of potential Oak Park retail customers (households) increases by 5 times in just 10 minutes** of drive time from the center of Oak Park, because of I-290 access, and the major arterials spanning Oak Park. Therefore, *a mix* that will attract both these *Upscale and Midscale* customers is very important to the overall retail strategy for Oak Park.

# Executive Summary

## Section 6.0 Customer Bases, cont'd

- ❑ The flip side of this easy access is that Oak Park and surrounding community residents have access in minutes to a huge number and variety of competing retailers. ***Therefore, Oak Park must create a large enough contiguous retail offering to be competitive—and create a distinct retail identity—from massive competition just minutes away. This is the foundation of Oak Park Retail Strategy.***
- ❑ Lifestyle Segmentation provides much more specific information about residents' *lifestyles and lifestages (detailed in Section 6.3)* that helps predict their buying patterns. **The good news is that 89% of Oak Park residents are found in just 5 Lifestyle Segments, which makes it possible to develop a cohesive retail strategy that will appeal to almost all of its residents, as well as similar residents in adjacent communities.** While Oak Park is prized for its schools and family amenities, it is important for retail planning to note that *only 1/3 of resident households have children under 18 at home.*
- ❑ Besides its own residents, and those of surrounding communities, **Oak Park retail should take advantage of several other crucial customer bases to support its retail.** These are:
  - (1) Workplace Population within a 10-minute drive of Oak Park is as large as its resident household base.** Most Oak Park retailers cater in some degree to these workers—as they are in the area about 250 days per year. The crucial hooks for these workers are: a retail mix geared to their time-pressed buying habits; quick and easy motorist access, and low cost parking—with enough time to eat and run errands or browse. (Details are in Section 6.4)
  - (2) Daytime Population adds thousands more non-employee resident and non-residents who are in Oak Park for other purposes,** mostly for its service institutions, e.g. post office, library, park, schools, police station, churches, Village Hall. These consumers can be captured with a similar retail mix that appeals to the Workplace Population. (Section 6.5)
  - (3) Visitors to Oak Park's historic and other attractions are not currently captured for retail to full potential.** Conservatively, more than 100,000 visitors visit Oak Park annually. Capturing more of their spending for Oak Park will require several elements. Among them are: (a) new graphically-unified directional and information signage to attractions and parking; (b) kiosks at El stations, that *route visitors through Downtown as well as The Avenue*, exposing them to the entire Combined Central Business District (CCBD) retail offering; (c) a more unified marketing program among all attractions, retailers and the Village. In addition, if Oak Park is to present itself as a major visitor destination, it needs a *central presence that is visible to both motorists and pedestrians disembarking from the El/Metra.* Relocation of the Visitor Center to the new development at the corner of Lake St. and Forest Ave. allows immediate visibility for motorist and pedestrians, as well as being *a daily, visible landmark for both Residents and the Workplace and Daytime Populations to get information on Oak Park attractions, events, and shopping/dining information.*
  - (4) Motorists on Oak Park's high traffic corridors are another key customer base** for auto-driven, single-stop and impulse retail. Madison Street has the potential of assembling sites large enough to develop some of the *big box and discount retailers* that would attract the large base of *Midscale consumers that surround Oak Park in other communities, with high visibility, easy access via the corridor, and free parking.*

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## Section 7.0. Retail Preferences—4 Insights Consumer Survey

- 5,000 surveys were mailed to the 5 Target (highest-density) Lifestyle Segments in and around Oak Park. Nearly 500 of the returns were tabulated. 76% of respondents were Oak Park Residents.
  - Shopping was tied with “eating dinner” and “Lake Street Theater” for “most often reason for visiting Downtown Oak Park” (22%), for both upscale and midscale income respondents. (For people who do not work Downtown.)
  - Upscale non-residents who visited downtown spent more per visit (\$51) than upscale OP residents (\$37), which is significant, because both groups visit with the same average frequency of 5.4 visits per month.
  - Half of consumers polled were shopping Downtown Oak Park with the same frequency as last year. Of those shopping Downtown *more often* (20%), the leading reason was *travel time or distance*. The second reason was “favorite restaurants” (16%). **Of those shopping less often, the primary reason was “the variety of stores and merchandise” and “parking convenience”**—at 20% each. The largest group of write-in comments (25%) also centered around parking—all were negative, as is the case with most shopper surveys in urban settings who also have access to free surface suburban-type parking.
  - Downtown Oak Park ranks behind Oak Brook Mall for *upscale* respondent shopping frequency--and behind North Riverside Mall with *midscale* respondents. Downtown Oak Park’s strongest ratings were for home decorative items; the gifts/jewelry/accessories category; and *when consumers intended to combine dining with their shopping trip. This is very important, because parking garage and meter times should allow for sufficient uninterrupted time to take advantage of this combined spending trip.*
  - Only about 17% of upscale and 14% of midscale respondents shopped *boutiques, which give them a much narrower customer base*
  - About 40-50% overall of both *upscale and midscale* respondents shopped at *discount stores for apparel*, especially children’s apparel. The average percent of their discount shopping was 25%.
  - Generally, the stores wanted by both residents and non residents indicate a *quality and value-oriented shopper* over trendy and designer or luxury fashion brands. The most-wanted categories were for a *general merchandise type discount store* (Target, TJMaxx, Marshall’s), shoe stores, women’s apparel and general clothing. Trader Joe’s topped the list of grocers. Casual dining topped the list of restaurant types wanted—led by Potbelly. Socializing and entertainment concepts were requested.
  - The Avenue was visited by respondents more for *dining*--and more by *upscale* than *midscale* respondents. The Avenue is perceived as more of a place to socialize, walk, and obtain neighborhood type personalized services and unique merchandise. Retail categories wanted for The Avenue were led by apparel (38%).
  - **A very important finding for Village-wide retail strategy is that the respondents did not appear to have a clear concept of what Neighborhood District they lived --or shopped in.** On average, 25% shop in their neighborhood district 2-3 times per month, and another 25% shop once per month—the highest frequencies reported. Upscale residents spent an average of \$32 per trip, and Midscale residents spent \$26 per trip— **indicating that most of their daily living purchases are made outside of the Neighborhood Districts.** Write-in retail ‘wants’ for the Neighborhood Districts differed significantly from those for Downtown and the Avenue. They were confined to daily living convenience items: groceries, restaurants, coffee shops and a hardware store topping the list.



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## 8.0 Consumer Demand

- ❑ **Consumer Demand** is based on government reports, combined by commercial data (e.g., Claritas) re-sellers in an attempt to estimate the opportunity for new retail. 4Insights does not use them to develop retail strategy, but they are included here, as many brokers, and some retailers request them. These reports can *underestimate* consumer demand, especially in trade areas such as Oak Park with large CDB's, that have strong retail customer bases from Workplace and Daytime populations, Visitor and motorist traffic—because their retail “demand” is not included in this calculation. But these reports also do *not* factor in other factors critical to retail success—e.g. the location of competition, visibility and parking. With that caution:
  - Consumer Demand reports for Oak Park's 10-minute drive time trade area indicate the highest opportunity for these retail categories: (a) General Merchandise stores; (b) Warehouse Clubs and Superstores (c) Full Service Restaurants; (d) Pharmacies; (e) Home Furnishings; (f) Radio/TV/ Electronics. *All apparel categories, according to Consumer Demand are flat or in oversupply, e.g. no opportunity.*

## 9.0 Retail Competition

- ❑ **In the competitive retail marketplace, Oak Park's location is a double-edged sword—between two massive retail hubs**, in just 15 minutes from Downtown Chicago by auto or mass transit; and also from the major suburban retail hub in Oak Brook. In between is an overwhelming amount and variety of the nation's leading retailers detailed in Section 9.0, with another 7 million square feet of retail space currently under development in the Chicago metro market. Even the extensive new retail development in the Chicago Loop competes for Oak Park residents' spending, near their Downtown workplaces.
  - Within a 4-mile radius of Oak Park are 3 regional shopping centers and 12 large community/power centers that serve as retail hubs, in addition to hundreds of free-standing and retail clusters that line major corridors from the suburbs into the trendy neighborhoods of Chicago and the West Loop.
  - Also competing for Oak Park's retail tax dollars are neighboring communities' shopping centers, new mixed use developments and Forest Park's recently renovated Madison 'main street'. Their close proximity to Oak Park, synergistic clusters of dining and shopping options, environments that are pedestrian-friendly, and offer free or low cost parking, are as challenge to more dated, congested and costly shopping districts.
  - **Therefore, Oak Park must carve out a very clear reasons to shop its retail over heavy, quality competition.**

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## 10.0 Market Positioning for Oak Park vs. Competitors

□ **The Central Business District, as with all Downtowns, drives the image of the Village and the identity of its retail districts to consumers. Therefore, it is the foundation for a Village-wide retail strategy.**

- Because of the magnitude of competitors within a 10-15 minute drive, **Oak Park must define a clear and unique identity for its *central retail core***, which 4Insights terms (for this Study only), as the *Combined Central Business District, (CCBD)*, which includes Downtown, South-Marion Street and The Avenue.
- **Many of Oak Park's *points of difference* as a retail destination are already in place:** It is an “urban” suburb, at the transition where urban Chicago neighborhoods meet the ‘first ring’ suburbs. As such, it has an urban street grid, with authentic city buildings; El /Metra stations; a real, working central business district, not a prefabricated main street or lifestyle center; a walkable, tree-lined CCBD; high pedestrian and vehicular activity on the street; and a diverse mix of eclectic residents--singles, families and couples--who are highly-educated and live in this blend of sophisticated urban and suburban lifestyles.
- **Another *real point of difference* that sets a unique stage for retail is Oak Park's visible assets of art, architecture and history.** It is NOT the typical manufactured shopping center like those that surround it –North Riverside, Forest Park Plaza, and Oak Brook mall. *It is the only community among its suburban neighbors that can offer consumers this authentic, sophisticated (but also family friendly) “city” experience.*
- **This “eclectic, urban suburb” atmosphere is the key point of difference upon which to build the retail strategy.** But it must start in the atmosphere--the look of the storefronts; visible areas of socializing; the “feel and pulse of the place.” A walled-in vertical shopping center would “wall-in” this energy and people flow—instead of integrating it.
- **The retail mix in the CCBD should follow with the same eclectic feel—a balance between the popular national brands that anchor the district—along with carefully selected independents** who make it “real” and different from the standard mall mix. The retail mix, of course, would be matched to the targeted customer bases identified in this Study.
- **The CCBD, as a combination of retail and business, will be visited for food, personal service and socializing--** the “great third places,” with sit down casual and white tablecloth restaurants, quick-serve casual food for lunch, coffee shops and breakfast stops, wine bars, taverns, music and the movies, for after-hours life on the street. Its racial and ethnic diversity should be turned into a greater retail asset though an array of creative, entrepreneurial, ethnic foodservice, as in the Chicago neighborhoods.
- **This unique image of the “eclectic urban suburb” should unify the current three Districts of the CCBD and that is how it should be marketed.** While each will retain its name and build its signature focused tenant mix, a unified marketing campaign with consistent graphic images, should drive the marketing programs. The mix of retail should be balanced as *one complete shopping experience—not one choice over the others by the consumer.* These districts should work together to create the largest, totally integrated, contiguous, walkable, and lively district in the area—one that no other community can possibly duplicate.

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## 11.0 Retail Strategy—By Business District

- ❑ **To fully understand the unique retail environment in each of the Oak Park Business Districts, we grouped them into four major classifications:**
  - Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue—The ‘Combined Central Business District’ (CCBD)
  - Corridors: Madison St. and North Ave. and Roosevelt Road
  - Specialty District: The Oak Park Arts District
  - Neighborhood Districts
- ❑ **Highlights of the specific Retail Strategy for each of these classifications follows:**

### 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue: Combined Central Business District (CCBD) Strategies

- ❑ **Unify the CCBD in the mind of the consumer as a *single shopping destination***, with many choices than can be combined in a single trip, through a unified, graphically consistent streetscape, banners, and prominent, highly visible signage that connects the districts and defines their retail offering. A dedicated shuttle should run continuously during peak shopping hours between The Avenue and Downtown. Parking options should be part of this unified, consistent identity program.
- ❑ **Strategically, over time as spaces become available, focus the tenant mix:** (Specific tenants are in Section 11.1)
  - **Downtown/South Marion focuses on the Central Business District-type mix, where Workplace, and Daytime Population is the greatest:** quick and casual, moderately priced foodservice, convenience and errand purchases, and browsing. Since most available spaces are small, focus on independent concepts of the caliber identified by 4Insights: proven, popular or new, favorably-reviewed, moderately-priced concepts from the Chicago Neighborhoods and suburbs, that will add to Oak Park’s ‘points of difference’ as *“unique, eclectic, and diverse urban experience in the suburbs.”*
    - **National brands focused on apparel and accessories, should anchor the Colt project** (where sufficient sized spaces are available) to set the tone for the rest of the CCBD leasing. At least one signature brand restaurant should also anchor the Colt project.
  - **The Avenue focuses on neighborhood entrepreneurial dining, services and retail specialty stores—including a focus on teens**, since it is near the high school, Scoville Park, library and on commuter pathways to the El/Metra. Its specialty stores will also be able to *capture Oak Park’s attraction visitors on these pathways as well.*
    - Over time, non-retail businesses should be gradually relocated to upper floors, in order to free up more street level storefronts to accomplish the retail strategy.
    - Reduce the duplication of similar stores with Downtown & Marion St. A gradual re-distribution of them throughout the CCBD will reinforce each cluster’s distinct’s identity with synergistic—not directly competitive stores.

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## 11.1 CCBD, Strategies, cont'd

- **Target initial leasing for the CCBD at Lifestyle Center or mall-type price points** and toward updated conservative to progressive tastes—but not designer exclusive. *Some boutiques can be intermixed in categories* that have broad appeal, such as women's and teen's accessories, home décor, gifts, food specialty, and others that are conducive to browsing, impulse buys, and gifts that would attract the three important customer bases of Workplace, Daytime, and Visitor populations. Apparel boutiques, when added to the CCBD mix, should not be luxury price points, and should be able to build their own clientele to draw customers to the CCBD, rather than depending on walk-by traffic.
- **Immediately cover all vacant storefront spaces** with professionally designed window signage.
- **Maintain minimum parking limits at 3 hours** at all locations possible, to allow combined shopping/dining and cross shopping between The Avenue, Downtown/South-Marion. Keep parking as low cost, or validated, as possible—as most other Oak Park competition has free or low cost surface parking.
- **Streamline the Village's development and permitting processes** to shorten the opening time for all new or expanding tenants.

## 11.2-11.4 The Corridors: Madison St. Roosevelt Rd. and North Ave. Strategies

- **Madison St. is the best positioned location for discount and other big boxes** that will attract the large base of Midscale residents in and around Oak Park identified in this study—and be large sales tax generators for the Village. (Importantly, *almost half* of Oak Park's *Upscale* residents also shop discount for some categories.)
  - The major challenge for retail expansion is that only 13% of the business are consumer retail, and they are scattered along the 2-mile corridor. Consequently, they are "island" businesses that survive on their own clientele, and auto-driven single destination or impulse stops.
  - Since larger, contiguous retail is needed, the redevelopment scenarios of 3 major retail nodes that are currently being studied are the catalysts needed to revitalize the corridor as a retail destination. As these scenarios are finalized, more specific tenants can be targeted. (A list of long-range recommended tenants for both big-box and smaller in-line spaces is in section 11.2).
  - For maximum retail success, the largest possible clusters are recommended, rather than a series of smaller, disconnected clusters on the ground floor of residential developments. Island clusters discourage "park one, shop twice" shopping, and don't offer shared parking advantages.
  - The targeted tenants should be complementary to the current Madison St. and the CCBD retail mix.

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### 11.2-11.4 The Corridors: Madison St., Roosevelt Rd. and North Ave. Strategies, cont'd

- ❑ **Roosevelt Road retail expansion opportunities are currently limited to convenience-based, mixed use, infill developments.** Retailers will most likely be independent merchants rather than national chains.
  - Only a small number (12 businesses, or 10% of the businesses) are consumer retail.
  - The flow is non-contiguous, scattered between non-retail and light industrial uses along the 1.5 mile corridor, making them auto-driven destination stops
  - There is significant retail competition with a 1-2 mile area
  - Current retail spaces in most buildings are not conducive to today's retail criteria and would require extensive renovation.
  - Recently a new streetscape plan was completed for the Roosevelt Rd. corridor. However, no development with retail space is anticipated in the next 2-3 years that could serve as a catalyst for additional retail tenants or clusters.
  
- ❑ **North Avenue retail expansion is limited by small lot sizes, older space configurations and limited parking.**
  - Only 9% of this 150-business district along the 2-mile stretch of the south side of North Avenue (Oak Park's ownership) are consumer retail, with only six that drive destination traffic and anchor the district.
  - **North Avenue's old buildings do not have the space configurations**, despite high traffic volume, (twice that of the other corridors), or parking to attract national or larger independent retailers. Fragmented property ownership makes it difficult to assemble larger, more contiguous sites. The highest potential site may be the 3-block area from Harlem to Forest Avenue due to existing vacancies and possible departure of other retailers, but there is sizable competition at the North Ave./Harlem intersection and beyond.
  - **Currently, there are no significant retail developments anticipated in the next 2-3 years.** Stakeholders interviewed expect the district to transition more into residential in the next 2-3 years, possibly with convenience-oriented small retailers on the street level.



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## 11.5 The Oak Park Arts District Strategies

- **The Arts district 's challenges are limited visibility and access, landlocked boundaries, restricted parking, and artist/owners who are not full time operators:** therefore its retail will continue to be challenging, especially in the depressed 2-3 years ahead.
  - **Preserve and strengthen the Arts component of the district to create an important *point of difference* for the Village of Oak Park as a unique destination.** A larger cluster of artists workshops, studios, showrooms and galleries, perhaps consolidated into a larger common area or cluster of spaces, would make greater impact—and most important, it would provide a staffed and maintained facility with consistent operating hours.
  - **Strengthen the Arts District's current image as a place to dine and socialize in the arts atmosphere.** Recruit 2-3 local food concepts and convert small vacant spaces into food-based places to socialize: tea room, wine bar, tavern, music lounge.
  - **Fill other vacant spaces as they arise with non-retail tenants,** that require less parking and be assets to the neighborhood, while providing new daytime employee and clientele populations to patronize the primarily food-based district businesses.
  - Rather than let quality stores close or leave the District, consider assisting re-location where pedestrian and browsing traffic are much higher, especially on the pathways to the El/Metra station on Oak Park Ave.
  - **Continue pursuing a small Art Theater or other small entertainment venue** to drive evening traffic to the restaurants and artists' co-op showroom. Parking issues with the neighborhood would have to be addressed.
  - **Better define the district geographically** through consistent and well-designed décor, signage and streetscape.

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## 11.6-11.9 Neighborhood District Strategies

- ❑ **The current division of Oak Park’s retail districts into many small, competing districts is counter productive to retail success.** 4Insights analyzed each of Oak Park’s Neighborhood Districts, using consistent retail success criteria. Each Neighborhood District, while having distinct assets, operates under one or more of the retail challenges listed below, and detailed by district in Section 11.5 to 11.8:
  - **Landlocked locations** with little options to expand stores or parking—and parking restrictions on side streets. Non-contiguous spaces that break the retail flow and discourage cross shopping. The series of cul-de-sacs on neighborhood streets also impacts district-to-district cross shopping flow from adjacent neighborhoods.
  - **True consumer businesses make up a very small portion of the business cluster**, which does not make for a strong retail destination—therefore, each business is really “on its own” without the synergy of strong co-tenancy. Consumers make a single destination trip, rather than “park once, shop twice.” Also, many owners are artists with other commitments, causing hours of operation to be irregular and confusing to potential customers.
  - **Trade areas remain very small** because the same categories of retail are duplicated very close by—with the result that the customer base per District is very small. Consumers have duplicate options under 5 minutes away.
  - **Low visibility, low traffic locations** so that some Neighborhood Districts cannot attract the important incremental customer bases that the CCBD enjoys from passing pedestrians or motorists, office workers, or visitors to daytime institutions.
  - **Extremely tight operating budgets** that do not allow for professional interior and window merchandising. Several buildings and storefronts are in disrepair.
  - **Long and narrow retail space configurations** in most buildings that are not suited to attract national tenants or even local independents--without expensive renovation
- ❑ **The marketing of these many Districts is confusing** to both visitors—and residents, and fragments Oak Park’s retail identity in the minds of consumers. *In the Consumer Survey of almost 500 respondents, most were not able to identify their own neighborhood business district.*
- ❑ **Therefore, other lower-risk options than consumer retail stores should be considered for neighborhood districts** to reduce vacancies and turnover. They include professional and medical services, business-to-business companies, educational and other institutions and agencies, and street level offices of companies and other organizations.
- ❑ These non-retail businesses will demand less parking, and have a successful longer tenure that allows them to add beautification to their storefronts. They will also add employee and client populations that can help support the remaining retail businesses.

# 1.0 Study Objectives

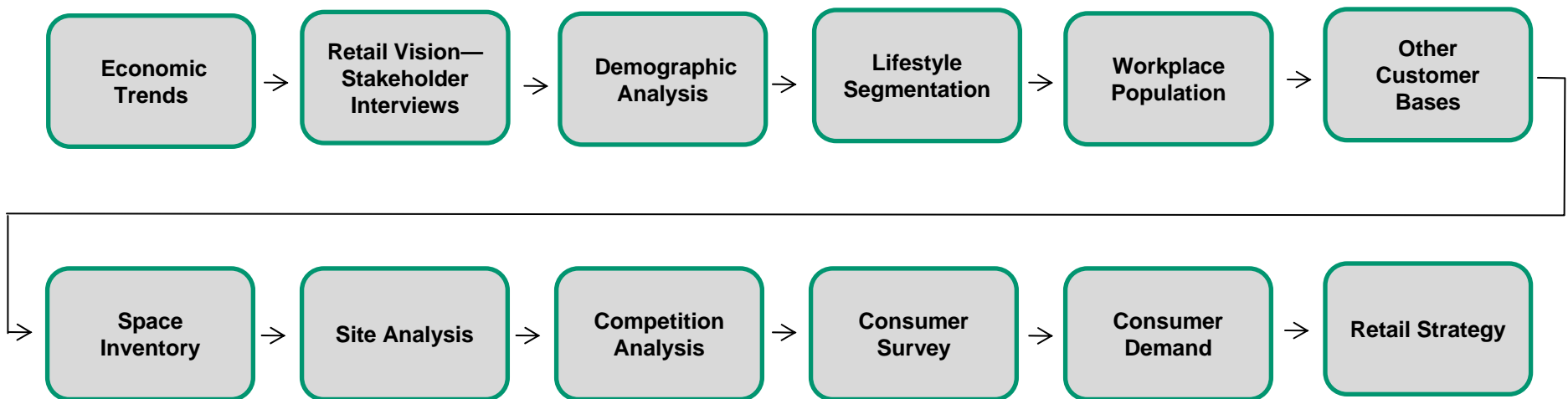
- ❑ **4 Insights Objectives for this Study were as follows:**
  - To confirm key Stakeholders' vision for Oak Park retail and to identify the specific benefits that The Village expects from the retail sector, as well as any issues that stand in the way.
  - To analyze the current and future consumer market in order to identify, locate and map the highest potential customer profile for Oak Park retail.
  - To analyze the retail competition in order to identify the strongest market positioning for Oak Park retail.
  - To audit the physical premises and interview a sampling of business district retailers, in order to identify any changes necessary to improve retail performance and contribute to the comprehensive vision for Oak Park's retail sector (which includes foodservice and consumer services ).
  - To identify the highest potential tenants for future recruitment.
- ❑ **The ultimate benefit of any market analysis is the *reduction of investment risk*. The benefits of a market-driven, successfully executed retail strategy accrues to all parties:**
  - (1) Village government will reap sales and property tax increases over time, to mitigate tax burdens on resident/business tax increases—which is especially important for Oak Park to remain competitive.
  - (2) Current businesses will enjoy increased customer traffic and sales because they are now part of a stronger retail cluster.
  - (3) Village residents will enjoy expanded shopping, dining, and services options close to home;
  - (4) The developer and other financial partners, along with the new retailers attracted, will enjoy new revenue and positive brand image.
- ❑ **There is also another *more intangible benefit* of a successfully planned and executed market-driven retail strategy: the improved attractiveness of the Village on a quality of life basis that encourages other important, long-range economic benefits, including:**
  - (1) Homeowner attraction, retention, property improvement, and active community involvement
  - (2) Further attraction and investment by non-retail businesses, because the shopping/dining package is a strong amenity for workforce recruitment
- ❑ **Village of Oak Park Stakeholders also expressed a consensus view in this Study on the primary benefit they expect from retail growth: *improved quality of life and successful long-term business investment over short-term Village revenue*.**

*The one key point to keep in mind when estimating retail potential is that neither the Village leadership nor its residents can mandate the type of retail that will succeed. It is ultimately the consumer—both resident and non- resident--who votes with his or her wallet from among a myriad of other competing retail options.*

## 2.0 4Insights, Inc. Study Process

4Insights, Inc. uses a unique combination of *market analysis* and *retail industry experience* to create the highest potential Retail Strategy for our Clients.

Our partners combine state-of-the-art market research techniques with their more than 25 years each experience in the retail, shopping center, and restaurant industries.



## 3.0 Study Methodology

### Study Components:

By integrating these 12 Study components, 4Insights can find and evaluate specific retail customer bases in Oak Park--and determine their buying power and preferences.

1. **RETAIL TRENDS OVERVIEW:** The retail potential of any given trade area is always affected by national consumer confidence and spending, which determines retail success and expansion. In Section 4.0 of this Study Report, 4Insights summarizes the national and local trends which are likely to affect Oak Park Retail Development in two years from the date of this study, or mid-year 2010, based on currently available retail industry data. Because of the current recession and retail market volatility, the recommendations in this Study should be thoroughly reviewed and updated before proceeding with major future retail development in 2010 and beyond.
2. **Stakeholder INTERVIEWS:** In addition to being financially successful, the retail component of Oak Park should coincide with the vision of its residents, as closely as the retail market allows. Therefore, 4Insights conducted 1-hour interviews with more than 50 carefully selected individual Stakeholders. A summary of these discussions is in Section 5.0.
3. **DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS:** 4Insights analyzed syndicated market data within Oak Park boundaries and beyond into neighboring communities that could provide incremental retail customers. Demographics were only the starting point, because this data is not specific enough for retail planning--and can even be misleading. Further, demographics only represent the *resident* customer base, which in the case of Oak Park, is only *one* of several key customer bases for each significant retail cluster (Section 7.1).
4. **LIFESTYLE SEGMENTATION:** The resident market was then further segmented using Lifestyle analysis (Claritas Prizm NE 2007) which reveals more about the characteristics of the resident customer base, e.g. where specific lifestyle groups live; how many of them there are--and their buying patterns. From this information, 4Insights zeroed in on 5 Target Customer Segments, mapped their locations, and provided a profile of each of them (Section 7.2).
5. **WORKPLACE POPULATION ANALYSIS:** Employee population is the lifeblood of the majority of Oak Park retailers. Therefore, 4Insights analyzed the Workplace Population --and also applied standard buying pattern studies to determine what daytime employees would purchase most often (Section 7.3).
6. **DAYTIME POPULATION:** In addition to residents, and Workplace Populations, Oak Park retailers depend on spending by consumers who are there for some other purpose. This "Daytime Population" includes EI and Metra commuters, local resident and non-resident visitors to institutional magnets such as the library, post office, parks, medical offices or business meetings as well as non-resident visitors to historic attractions, to name a few. 4Insights identified them and the types of retail that attract them (Section 7.4).



## 3.0 Study Methodology, cont'd

### □ Study Methodology, cont'd

7. **RETAIL BUSINESS SPACE INVENTORY:** In order to know what retail spaces were available currently and in the near future (2-year timeframe), 4Insights conducted a space-by-space inventory of ***over 1,000 street level businesses in all 12 Business Districts, both retail and non-retail***. We then met with Village and OPDC staff to confirm this inventory and what future space assumptions (new development/re-development, road construction, etc.) should be made for retail planning (Section 11).
8. **RETAIL SITE ANALYSIS OF ALL 12 OAK PARK BUSINESS DISTRICTS:** ***Since the specific site characteristics of each Business District's retail cluster is the first determinant of retail planning and success***, 4Insights made on-site inspections of each of the Business Districts, rating their potential against specific, consistent, observable criteria. Internal operations and data were not included in this physical site assessment. This data was combined with the Retail Business Space Inventory above for the District by District Retail Strategy development—Section 11.
9. **COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS:** The size of the trade area for each of Oak Park's significant retail clusters is determined by the competition—e.g. our Target Customer Segments' choice of other options for similar merchandise (or services) within a convenient distance. Given the same ease of access, ***the larger, higher quality, and more unique the retail cluster is from its competition—the larger the estimated trade area (draw area) for consumers***. Therefore, 4Insights completed a competitive analysis for each of the major types of retail clusters found in Oak Park: (1) The Central Business District (Downtown/Marion/The Avenue); (2) Neighborhood Business Districts; (3) The Corridor Retail (Madison, Roosevelt and North Ave) and (4) Specialty District (Harrison Street Arts District) (Section 9.0).
10. **CONSUMER DIRECT MAIL SURVEY:** Even the highest quality syndicated market data is based on national norms and averages. However, each U.S. region, and each community has its own unique personality, which is reflected in its retail buying patterns. Therefore, 4Insights developed a mail survey to 5,000 of the consumers targeted by our Lifestyle Segmentation. Surveys were coded so that responses could be tied to these specific Lifestyle Groups. We received a total of 500 surveys suitable for tabulation. Details are in the Consumer Survey (Section 7.0).
11. **CONSUMER DEMAND ANALYSIS:** Consumer Demand, like Demographics, affords very generalized view of consumer spending power vs. retail store sales in any given area. 4Insights regards Consumer Demand only as a very general starting point for retail potential, because it does not reflect competition location or consumer buying preferences. Nor does the demand side reflect *non-resident* planned retail spending (Section 8.0).
12. **RETAIL STRATEGY AND TENANT RECOMMENDATIONS:** All of the preceding components result in the final deliverables of the 4Insights Study: (1) A comprehensive retail strategy for the Village of Oak Park (Section 10.0); and (2) Specific recommendations for all of the Village-designated Business Districts (Section 11.0).

## 4.0 Macro-Economic Overview

Retail potential in Oak Park will be affected by both macro and micro factors during the next *very volatile and unpredictable 2-3 year period*— the time horizon for the 4Insights' Study.

- The current retail situation in Chicago is tied to the most volatile national environment for retail in the past decade. Most experts agree that we are in a national recession—but opinions vary widely as to how long it will take the national economy, housing market—and retail—to recover. Their views are summarized in this section.
- Three constituencies must be moving forward for retail in Oak Park to expand:
  - Consumers must be willing to spend.
  - Retailers must be actively expanding their outlets .
  - Developers' construction and financing costs must make new development feasible.

### National Overview:

□ **Consumer spending** is currently under attack from several macro factors: rising energy and food costs, job loss, high personal debt, plummeting home values and high interest rates- all which reduce discretionary retail spending even for *affluent* shoppers. In their August 8, 2008 Mid-Year Economic Recap and Forecast, The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) said:

- "The U.S. economy is—in our view—in a recession...searching for the bottom point in the cycle should be the focal point of our outlook."
- ICSC cites that the near term outlook for the U.S. economy has improved modestly in August, 2008, in three factors that are supporting growth: (a) the sharp drawdown in retail inventories; (b) decline in crude oil prices and (3) strengthening of the U.S. dollar that will help contain non-fuel import prices.
- **However, ICSC feels that the threat to consumer spending may be more long term, into 2009:**
  - "Housing demand still needs to truly stabilize, and auto demand must recover. But the long term trends in money supply growth signal that *core inflation may only be taking a breather in late 2008, before a more rapid increase in 2009.*
  - If so, ICSC forecasts that long term interest rates will be driven higher...and the Fed will surely follow with *higher short term* interest rates. *Under this scenario, the U.S. economy is in for a bumpy ride well into the future with possibly an even more severe correction in 2010.*"
  - **ICSC concludes: "Until the *core* (non-food, non-energy) inflation is tamped, upward pressure in interest rates will linger and be reinforced by sluggish spending by businesses and consumers facing an uncertain environment. This is the essence of the ICSC U.S. economic forecast through 2010."**

## 4.0 Macro Economic Overview, cont'd

### Other Economic Prognosticators Generally Agree with ICSC:

- **Merrill Lynch states that the recession started in January '08 and does not expect it to end before mid 2009.** "We are heading into the first consumer recession since 1990-91. *There will be a period of frugality. It means that fashions are going to change—we will live in smaller houses, drive smaller cars, and live more frugally...*and then we will get personal balance sheets down to more comfortable levels before we can actually embark on the next cycle."
  - **The National Retail Federation, as always, is more optimistic: It predicts that retail industry sales (which exclude automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants) will increase 3.5 percent from last year.**
    - "Consumers will be under financial stress from high energy costs, the fallout from the housing slump, and sluggish employment and income growth...shoppers will seek to pay down debt, spend more in line with income growth, and approach discretionary purchases with more restraint." NRF expects sluggish first half sales to eventually give way to stronger sales in the third and fourth quarters.
    - NRF also states: "Retailers will once again be forced to market to *more practical consumers, many of whom will be looking to trade down,*" said Wells. "Even areas of past high growth like luxury goods and online shopping will feel the pressure."
  - **The types of merchandise that consumers will buy is also different in 2008:**
    - Reuters expects "big ticket" items, like furniture will face pressure throughout 2008, while electronics and computers should fare better. Apparel is forecasted to have an average year, less than 2007, unless a big fashion trend emerges. "Consumers will be buying less discretionary items and more staples..they are going to be more practical."
- **The Retail Sector**—7,100 major store closings are forecasted nationally by the end of 2008. These closings, bankruptcies, and cancelled expansion plans—according to The CoStar Group—are more pronounced among specific property types: "Shopping centers (strip, neighborhood and community centers—not regional malls) experienced the most dramatic rise (in vacancies), increasing 210 basis points over the last nine quarters at mid year 2008."
- "This is somewhat surprising, considering that grocery-anchored neighborhood and community centers are generally accepted by the industry as the most recession-proof property type. However, **this category is also the most vulnerable to "Mom and Pop" or local/regional tenants having a prolonged period of a slowdown in sales.**"
  - In the foodservice subset of the retail sector, sales have dropped most in 'sit-down' concepts from casual to fine dining. Consumers are not just 'trading down" they are opting to eat at home— *56% say they will dine out less frequently in the next 90 days (from 9-01-08). 43% will choose a less expensive restaurant.* Even quick serve and fast casual places are suffering because food and transportation inflation have forced them to increase prices to newly price-sensitive customers.

## 4.0 Macro-Economic Overview, cont'd

- **The Development Sector:** Developers are finding much fewer viable projects, as retailers have cut back on their expansion plans, as rents have softened, as financing costs have increased, and as debt has become more difficult to obtain, which has also tended to lower real estate valuations.
  - According to Co Star, Inc: ***“One of the most prevalent trends we heard coming from the retail estate investment trusts (REITS) second quarter conference calls (7/2008) was their decision to put off planned new retail development until 2010 or later.*** In accordance with the economic downturn, 24.5% less retail space started construction during the first half of this year, so a dramatic decline in deliveries should be expected in 2009--especially when the high level of expected delayed or cancelled projects is factored in.
  - ***But there may be a bright spot to developments being delayed, according to Inland Real Estate Corporation:*** “We are finding that *healthy retailers continue to selectively plan for new stores, focusing primarily on stable markets with attractive demographics* in place. They are taking this opportunity to reposition existing units *in proven markets* ...looking for alternative locations to replace stores that were originally planned for new developments now delayed as a consequence of the credit market turmoil.”
  - ***High gas prices are also driving retail estate in new directions, which bodes well for a transportation-oriented development,*** such as Oak Park’s Colt site project. The cost of long suburban commutes has literally doubled, resulting in higher growth nearer city centers. “Transit oriented development is big and getting bigger,” according to Coldwell Banker Commercial NRT.
  - To combat sprawl and traffic congestion, municipalities across the U.S., including regional Chicago, are now looking at implementing aspects of the model smart code (higher densities and pedestrian-friendly mandates). “This would have never happened just a few years ago, when anti-activist neighbors would have shot it down,” according to American Capital, LLC.

Sources: Merrill Lynch Economic Analysis Conference Call Report 8-15-08; International Council of Shopping Centers Mid Year Retail Forecast, August 8, 2008; Co Star Mid Year 2008 National Retail Estate Report, August, 2008; Reuters Retail Report 1/14/08.; National Retail Federation 2008 Forecast; Merrill Lynch Economic Conference Call, August 15, 2008.

## 4.0 Macro Economic Overview, cont'd

### Chicago Market Overview:

- ❑ The Chicago retail market in the second quarter of 2008 remained much the same as in the first quarter, with a vacancy rate of 8.3% and a positive absorption of a half-million square feet (SF). The amount of vacant *sublease* space has also trended up over the past four quarters.
- ❑ A total of 25 retail buildings with 1 million SF of retail space was delivered to Chicago market in Q2 2008, with 522,418 SF absorbed. **However, 7.6 million retail SF was still under construction at the end of the quarter.**
- ❑ **Shopping Centers specifically, (which cover Community, Neighborhood and Strip Centers),** comprise a total of 3,623 projects with 163,768,843 SF. Chicago area vacancy rates have been rising, going from 9.3% to 10.5% in the last 4 quarters. *Shopping centers account for 50% of all current vacancies*—most likely because the smaller, weaker national and independent retailers are more often found in these smaller centers. *Rental rates generally have risen* in from \$16.39 PSF one year ago to their current \$16.85.
- ❑ **Shopping Centers in the Oak Park Area\*** in Q2 2008 comprise 703,879 SF of gross leasable area (GLA) in 23 properties, of which *only 1.8% was vacant, 8.7% better than the Chicago area.* Net absorption year to date was negative (5,122). *Rental rates were higher than the Shopping Center average at \$18.23.*
- ❑ The Power Center (big boxes) vacancy rate was 9.4% in Q2 2008, up from 6.1% one year ago. Rental rates at Power Centers over the past year rose from \$18.22 to \$21.43. At Q2 2008, there were 1.25 million SF of new constructions.
- ❑ **Even high end Chicago retail districts are feeling the consumer spending cutbacks**
  - There are now more vacant retail storefronts on The Magnificent Mile than at any time in the past 16 years, according to Crain's Chicago Business. "And things are likely to get worse before they get better, as retailers vacate big box style storefronts in the area this year, while few new merchants are taking up the space." In addition, the massive new retail space coming on board on State Street will further increase space for new retail, especially new big box formats.
  - *Many of the trendy, high end fashion and home boutiques in the major "Bucktown" cluster at the intersection of North Ave., Milwaukee Ave. and Damen, in Chicago's upscale neighborhoods are going out of business,* due to soft sales and invasion by national designer stores. If this broad, established collection of boutiques in the bulls-eye of affluent fashion-forward shoppers cannot make it in this market, it is doubtful that new clusters, in Oak Park or elsewhere, will not face extreme challenges until the fashion market recovers, if then.\*\*



## 4.0 Macro Economic Overview, cont'd

- ❑ Brisk **home and condominium sales** recovery will be necessary to re-ignite furniture, accessories, and other home-related retail sales, and that **recovery is not estimated until at least 2010**, due to foreclosures, plummeting home values, unsold inventory, and tightened financing for mortgages. The hope is that Congress' recent housing bill will hasten the national recovery.
- ❑ **Condominium sales in Chicago** in the first half of 2008 plummeted 73% to a new low. The figures would have been even worse without at the Chicago Spire development, which accounted for half of the units sold. In Oak Park, the number of homes sold dropped 10% in 2007 and 63% so far in 2008. During the same period, foreclosures rose from 159 in 2007 to an anticipated 200 by the end of 2008. Oak Park's condominium market is actually faring worse. Average sales prices declined by 17% in the first 6 months of 2008 compared to last year—a \$50,000 reduction. 135 condos were sold in Oak Park so far this year, compared to 625 in 2006. As of August 6, there were 402 condos on the market. Oak Park's housing market is also not expected to recover until 2010, which currently has a two-year supply of inventory.
- ❑ *The home foreclosure market does not seem to be driving a significant increase for apartment rentals in Oak Park*, according to the Oak Park Regional Housing Center, which lists about 1,000 rental units, about 1/3 of the Oak Park rental inventory. This is a cautionary note for the planned apartment construction on the Colt Property site. Rental landlords are reluctant to accept people who have experienced foreclosures. Rent increases are estimated at under 10%.
- ❑ Even with the slowdown of new development projects, condos are not expected to recover until well into 2009 depending on a rebound of the national economy. Developers who aren't (or can't) delay new projects will add 9,528 new units by the end of 2009.

### The Bottom Line for Oak Park:

- ❑ Because the Colt Project is a transit-oriented development within about 15 minutes from Downtown Chicago, it is in one of the strongest development sectors for revival in the next market upcycle. To minimize risk, however, we recommend carefully monitoring economic conditions for the cautioned “second downturn” in 2010. ***In our view, the highest risk strategy would be to rely on retail lease commitments before late 2010 or early 2011.***
- ❑ However, *with 7.6 million SF still under construction in mid year 2008—and even if much of this is in Downtown Chicago—there will be lots of vacant space to choose from by retailers when expansion levels resume—and they will opt for the strongest, proven markets, the strongest retail clusters--where they can make the best rent deals on existing vacant space. It is more risky for a retailer to bank on new construction, especially where there are long timelines and lack of knowledge of co-tenants, than it is to look for quickly available existing space—at negotiable rents.*

## 4.0 Macro Economic Overview, cont'd

- ❑ **Oak Park's advantage of being 15-minutes from both Downtown Chicago to the east, and the Oak Brook retail hub to the west, is a double edged sword.** When the 7.6 million SF of new retail space comes on line in the next two years—added to the vacant space available in existing malls due to tenant defaults— *there will be very formidable competition to Oak Park's new and existing retail space in the leasing market within a 15-minute ride by auto or public transportation.*
- ❑ Before the total retail square footage and the tenant mix for the Colt site development is finalized in 2009-10, a very *thorough update* should be made on available space inventories, rental rates and the opening dates of competitive developments now in the pipeline in the trade areas defined in this study.
- ❑ In addition, Downtown's proposed Colt property development should take care not to "overshoot" consumer spending demand in 2010-11, for two reasons:
  - First—it's important to be able to absorb (lease) a pre-set amount of retail gross leaseable area (GLA). The Colt development should be designed to be flexible enough to adapt the total amount of retail square footage to what the current market is able to support at that time. *Empty, unleased spaces send the wrong message.*
  - Second, *the type of retail mix should not be too upscale* for consumers in the recovery stage of the market cycle, who may be still more quality and price conscious, and less brand driven. *Upscale apparel boutiques would be the most risky choice for first-round leasing, given the "entrenchment" phase of consumer spending that may persist through 2011.*

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews

### 5.1 Methodology

- ❑ 58 Stakeholder interviews were completed by 4Insights, Inc. for this study. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. 42 interviewees were supplied by the Village staff and completed in May/June, 2008. The others were generated by 4Insights, Inc. as the study progressed. A list of interviewees is in the Addendum to this report.
- ❑ A discussion outline, prepared by 4 Insights, was used as the starting point for each interview, but the specific subtopics varied by the expertise and opinions of each Stakeholder. The discussion outline focused on: (1) the Stakeholder's vision for Oak Park retail, both for Downtown/Marion and The Avenue, as well as the neighborhood districts and the corridors; (2) The benefits expected from retail expansion; and (3) what was necessary to make retail succeed in order to deliver these expected benefits.
- ❑ The summary points below represent the major points expressed by the interviewees to each question. All are anonymous.
- ❑ *NOTE: Some of the Stakeholder Comments that were specific to individual Business Districts will appear in Section 9.0, Retail Strategy.*

### 5.2 Stakeholder Opinions of the Vision and Benefit of Oak Park Retail (Consensus)

#### ❑ **THE VISION FOR OAK PARK RETAIL:**

**The Village should focus its efforts on Downtown Oak Park/Marion St/The Avenue to make it a unique, walkable destination for both residents and non-residents, with an appropriate mix of local independent and national retailers from moderate to upscale price points.** The uniqueness of the retail mix and the architecture that makes Oak Park distinct from its neighboring communities should be preserved, but treated flexibly enough to allow for quality retail and mixed-use development. If not, Oak Park will continue to lose resident spending and retailers to neighboring communities. The Neighborhood retail districts that cannot support retail should have unsightly vacant spaces rehabbed into non-retail businesses that are an asset instead of a blight to them.

#### ❑ **TWO MAJOR BENEFITS OF RETAIL TO OAK PARK:**

First, revenue growth: Stakeholders want to keep current resident spending in Oak Park—and attract new money to the Village to increase sales tax revenues and commercial property values. In this way, retail growth could forestall increases in Oak Park's already high property taxes, which discourage both residents and retailers from locating or remaining there.

- ❑ Second, "quality of life:" Stakeholders feel that successful retail will elevate the vibrancy and attractiveness of Oak Park, especially in Downtown, offering convenience and enjoyment to residents, and distinguishing Oak Park from other communities as a great place to live, visit and operate a business.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.3 What the Village needs to do to achieve these Objectives and attract and/or strengthen retail:

1. *Develop an up-to-date Master Plan that shows prospective retailers/developers that we have a vision and roadmap—a known strategy that really will happen—to our mutual benefit. We need to plan a whole district for retail—not just react to individual proposals.*
2. *Have an implementation plan and stick to it. Developers won't take a risk in a community that has a changing climate.*
3. *Be more nimble and flexible to react to changing retailer or developer needs and the changing economics. Retailers have lots of options besides Oak Park.*
4. *Be more "retail and developer responsive."*
5. *Have the willingness and funds to invest and partner with retailers and developers to beautify the streetscape and develop new parking to make it happen.*
6. *Offer parking that is visible, better signed, with clearer directional signage for shoppers to find it quickly, for free or low cost.*
7. *Ensure parking meters have enough time for shoppers to comfortably shop and dine without interruption.*
8. *Encourage leading national retailer deals to illustrate that Oak Park can attract national upscale stores and restaurants. National retailers who have the "deep pockets" to serve as anchors to the retail districts. They can advertise and generate traffic.*
9. *Attract upscale renters, not just condo buyers—they are the professional Gen X'ers we want Downtown.*
10. *Officials must be willing to take a consistent position for attracting some national retailers that may be unpopular at the outset. Residents' opposition does not go unnoticed by developers and retailers.*
11. *Focus on the major retail clusters as a foundation—Downtown, Marion, The Avenue. Vision it as one large retail district. Also focus on Madison—slower traffic, easier to cross shop, some great old buildings, and we get revenue from both sides of the street. Maybe some sites on Roosevelt, but the traffic moves too fast.*
12. *Recognize that all retail may not be able to succeed in every neighborhood district where there is low customer traffic and visibility.*
13. *It would be better for the neighborhood districts to convert unleaseable, vacant, unsightly retail space into other uses, such as professional offices or business-to-business firms that will be an asset to the neighborhoods instead of a blight.*

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.3 To Achieve these Objectives, (cont'd)

14. Have a *cluster of "magnet" retailers* in order to attract customers and tenants—no retailer wants to be "first in."  
They look for demonstrated success of other retailers.
15. *Connect north and south Marion to Downtown to create a larger retail district.* We can replace the neighborhood service stores there now with true retail businesses. Residential combined with offices and retail would add vibrancy.
16. *Annually, plan and budget a definite amount for capital improvements .*
17. *Carve out a unique environment for Oak Park's retail identity around the image of "Diversity, Arts, Architecture."*
18. *Be active in land/property assemblage and demolition or remediation of unusable buildings on Madison Avenue and Roosevelt, especially Madison and Oak Park Avenue, to trigger additional opportunities.* We can do both funding and grants for corridor development. We need to be creative, especially on Madison, such as creating a "green corridor cluster."
19. *Put retail shops on Lake Street—don't contain them in a Lifestyle Center.* The Harlem/Lake stores should get consumers to flow easily into the rest of Downtown.
20. *Attract more young families—the Gen X'ers—who are going where prices and taxes are lower. 25% of new home buyers are current residents, moving up. We need to retain these residents.* Most of the others come from Chicago. They are in transition from a single to a family life.
21. Residents *pick Oak Park for proximity to public transit access to Downtown Chicago.* Another major factor is its location midway between Rush and Loyola Medical Center—many are medical professionals. If they have kids, they will pay the higher property taxes for schools.
22. *We' would be better at attracting younger buyers without kids if we had a more lively evening CBD.* They do not express concerns about security. *We need entertainment for both adults and kids:* sports bar, micro brewery, blues and jazz club. Chuck E. Cheese, comedy club, a signature restaurant, a gardening store , Play it Again Sports, a Children's Museum, and Lucky Strike Lanes. We also need men's apparel, like those in the new Yorktown Mall.
23. *Oak Parkers are not fashion trendy—they are price and quality conscious.* New homebuyers don't ask about the malls—they already know where everything is—and they know they have anything they want available to them—and it's only 17 minutes to Downtown or Oak Brook.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.3 To Achieve these Objectives, (cont'd)

24. *Attract a hotel with meeting space, but not on Lake St.* where it will add to parking demands—put it on I-290. We desperately need a hotel Downtown to capture visitors for overnight stays, so they spend more. We also don't have any function space to attract meetings and their attendees to Oak Park. (NOTE: Stakeholders were divided on the need or sustainability of a hotel, and whether it should be located in Downtown, on the corridors, or on I-290.)
25. *Understand what we need to do to support current ground floor retail,* so it will succeed in the mixed use developments here. The Master Plan stipulates the mixed use areas, but we need to know which retail can be supported in them.
26. *Ensure that new retail space in mixed use developments is designed properly for retailers*—and that architectural designs don't sabotage retail needs. We need *standards* for retail space to demand from developers.
27. Obtain *professional guidance on evaluating the retail portion of proposals* from developers, especially for Madison and Roosevelt, so that we know what kinds of space is necessary and what retail will actually work.
28. *Capture more spending from visitors* to Oak Park—we need to find ways to get them to come into our retail areas, not just go to the attractions and leave.
29. *Capture spending from the 3,000 college and high school students* who are right near the major retail districts. *Build better pedestrian crossings* on Roosevelt Road to support retail development. Parking is a major problem—there are few pocket parking lots off the roadway and none behind buildings.
30. *Include moderate stores in the retail mix*—look at the stores that survive, very few are upscale.
31. *Don't allow any more non-retail businesses on the ground floor*—they break up space we need to form continuous retail flow. Most of our neighborhood districts are not primarily retail.
32. *Attract fine dining restaurants*— but not all national chains. Most restaurants here cater to the lunch crowd—dinner type restaurants are needed.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.3 To Achieve these Objectives...(Cont'd)

33. We need to promptly answer complaints from our businesses, our visitors, and our shoppers, because they can easily go elsewhere where there is easier, free parking.
34. Keep our *retail clusters serving all types of residents*. If the cluster serves just one type of resident, there is no reason for other shoppers to go there.
35. The *Gateway program* will help identify our gateway intersections and get better retailers there.
36. *Identify and prepare new spaces for retail development and keep these spaces for top line tenants*. Specify what will be required of the developer/re-developer if the space or building has an historic designation. There is a balance between saving historic elements and rehabbing the rest of a building.
37. *We need major anchors on Madison, Roosevelt and North*—but also more concepts that bring people together.
38. *Stores that attract teens for spending*, but not for loitering. They can be loud in groups and distract customers.
39. The success of some upscale boutiques on The Avenue prove that *the upscale customer will come to Oak* for unique goods—and these unique shops would also capture more of the tourist dollar than we are now getting. The Farmer's Market generates upscale customers from Hinsdale and Elmhurst.
40. Downtown has to have more height—it's near a transit station, so it can look like a real TOD with high density right up to the street.
41. *Unite Downtown and the Avenue by signage, unified streetscape and a dedicated shuttle*. The Avenue is perceived as more of a place to dine. But we need to get rid of the overlap of store categories between them—there are about a dozen currently. We need enough store categories to enable the shopper to make multiple stops in one trip. This will also differentiate the Avenue from Downtown and give it a distinct focus and image, worth the extra walk from Downtown.
42. *Upgrade the empty retail spaces, especially in our neighborhoods—they may not necessarily be able to support consumer retail, so rehab them into non-retail spaces*, like professional offices, live/work units, that will be an asset to the neighborhood, not an empty black eye. We have done well with our apartment stock, so it stays strong and is not a blight on the neighborhoods—why not do this with struggling neighborhood retail districts?
43. There are too many disjointed and confusing signs in Oak Park—for direction, for rules, and for attractions. We need a simple, consistent program.



## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.3 To Achieve These Objectives ...(cont'd)

44. *We need more office space to support our retail.*
45. Realize that our consumers are moms with kids—they *drive to retail, not walk*, unless it is a summer Saturday. They go between big boxes, school, malls and the major supermarkets. *They have a high cost of living here, and are more value and price conscious than brand conscious...*but they want the same restaurants that they enjoyed as singles in the Chicago neighborhoods like Bucktown, Lincoln Park. *The teens are more brand conscious*—they shop at Abercrombie and Urban Outfitters at Oak Brook.
46. *Allow special events here*, they are very important to our merchants. We need more foot traffic.
47. *Residents need to be supportive*, even if change affects them somewhat, like more congestion and competition for parking spaces—otherwise, forward movement on development will be very slow to happen and Oak Park will be left behind its neighboring communities. *Retailers don't have to come here...they have lots of other less expensive and easier choices.*
48. The Arts District is an important Gateway...but the two parts are not united by streetscape or major signage —people don't know where to park or how to proceed between sections.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.4 Concerns about Retail Development:

1. It's important to *preserve* Oak Park's unique historic and art/architectural heritage and design.
2. *Residents are divided in their opinions* about national chain stores and big boxes—they want to shop here, but they are afraid of losing our independents and/or becoming a cookie-cutter "mall."
3. There is a fear of *overbuilding* and developing too much retail that can't succeed.
4. Many are concerned about *rent increases* that will drive out independent retailers.
5. Others worry that *property owners* will lease to any tenant who will pay a higher rent, *compromising the quality of the retail mix* and the atmosphere of Downtown—and use up important spaces needed for more high quality tenants.
6. *More traffic* has already congested areas near on Lake near Harlem—neighbors also worry about more neighborhood traffic.
7. More *high density housing downtown will make* it too crowded and congested, like the other transportation-oriented developments along the Green Line.
8. Any new retail development should be connected to current street retail, and not be 'walled in.'
9. *The biggest community issue is height and density*—neighbors fear that density will clog their streets.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.5 Current Barriers or Challenges to attracting retail development:

1. The *configuration of current vacant retail spaces*—too long and narrow, or too small for most national/regional chains, with small loading areas, no rear doors, and no adjacent parking; and costly to rehab. New mixed use developments have been designed for residential dimensions—not retail, and developers use first floor parking for residents, not retail customers. The Village does not enforce this policy of no first floor parking for residents.
2. *Many non-retail businesses* are mixed in with retail—taking up the ground floor.
3. The *condition* of many of the spaces, storefronts, and streetscapes. They can be upgraded with modest spending.
4. Small *competing neighborhood districts* instead of fewer, larger districts with adequate parking. There is frequent turnover after the Village has made an investment in them through grants, or OPDC loans. If the neighborhood retail districts expand, they would have to spill into and congest the residential areas, which neighbors may not like. Residents want their favorite store right near their homes, but there is a trade off they must expect.
5. *Parking is perceived as the number one problem* for current retailers—and shoppers: Not enough spaces; operating times and fees vary and they are frequently changed. Parking is not clearly signed directionally (the parking symbol is too small ). It's more expensive than other shopping options, and inconvenient to keep feeding the meters. Most people don't know about--or use--the parking meter key program. Parking in decks discourages quick trips for lunch or errands. There's no consumer liaison to answer parking-related complaints in the Police or other Village Department. There is not enough parking for employees, who then take spaces in front of stores.
6. *The entitlement and permitting processes needs to be streamlined.* There should be one department /or person/ that intercepts all new business requests and streamlines the process for current or new businesses. The process should take no more than 3 months for current retailers and 1 year for new development. We need to give developers a reliable estimate of how long our process will take at the outset, and be consistent in our decisions. We need to be flexible in zoning and code interpretation.
7. On *Roosevelt Road*, private developers have been building "one-off" condo developments and none have retail. These *developments without ground floor retail break up any future retail flow.*
8. *Merchants have inconsistent operating hours* —and are all not open evenings.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.5 Current Barriers or Challenges, (cont'd):

9. Some *Property owners, especially absentee landlords*, accept immediate rents over attracting the “right” tenant. They will lease to the highest offer and break up the larger spaces in order to get multiple rents.
10. *Oak Park's higher cost of doing business and cost of living* discourages new younger residents in peak purchasing years , as well as entrepreneurial businesses.
11. *The Arts District is split in two. There is not enough retail to draw people in, no place to expand, and the neighbors don't want more parking.* This retail is out of sight, out of mind. The shops hours are limited and erratic. What about a real artists colony, with studios upstairs and showrooms downstairs? Harrison Street is a gem, but they are very small boutiques and most are artists, not business people.
12. *Preservation issues.* There is a middle ground here and a need for flexibility, so that we don't delay or discourage development, and yet keep our historic edge--if we don't want to have to keep raising property taxes to fund Village services.
13. Many residents can't decide *whether they want to be more Urban or Suburban*—they want independent shops and places to walk around, but they buy at the shopping centers and big boxes.
14. *Downtown and the Avenue are landlocked*—hard to expand.
15. It's soon going to *cost more to shop here than in Oak Brook*, when Cook County raises the sales tax from 9% to 10% and when you add in the parking expense here—we *have to realize that people can easily go elsewhere to shop.*
16. We recognize our great demographics, but are not aware of the limitations of site configurations .
17. Our business district associations cannot do the marketing for every retailer—they ultimately have to make it on their own merits.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.5 Current Barriers or Challenges, (cont'd):

18. Our *Retail is scattered*—there are *too many small neighborhood clusters and lots of vacancies*. And it's a long walk on Lake from the Downtown district to The Avenue—there should be a trolley on Lake Avenue in constant motion.
19. *Only a small portion of Oak Park residents have the disposable income to shop boutiques*—most of the residents have families, school tuition, and high property taxes—residents shop the big box discounters who have more convenient parking and hours of operation. Most residents don't buy trendy fashion.
20. Currently, *most retail is geared to Baby Boomers, not Gen X'ers*, and there are few places for teens from the high school and college students to come and spend money here. Nightlife would attract Gen Xers.
21. Marion Street should be the model of what we can do on Lake. Large signs or window films should be attached to vacant windows as billboards that say “coming soon” --or have messages to promote special events.
22. *Signage ordinances* should limit the types of signs that retailers want and need.
23. *Neighborhood opposition* to a variety of retail requirements works against recruiting top line retailers.

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### 5.6 Oak Park's Strengths

1. My *out of town guests rave* about Downtown's Marion Street—once you make the investment, people like it and will come.
2. We have *unique assets* as a community: diversity, our arts and architecture features, and our great ethnic restaurants.
3. We have lots of daytime foot traffic and the Farmer's Market brings lots of people on Saturdays, but need more evening activity.
4. *Oak Park has great schools, recreation programs, transportation* and location between Chicago and Oak Brook, and diversity, so it attracts young families. However, it is not getting Gen X singles, because of property taxes and little nightlife for them.
5. *Safety downtown is not perceived to deter shopping*—but sometimes retailers complain about loud groups of teens in front of their stores. Also, some people won't park in the decks at night. Visitors want to be back on the EI before dark, heading back to Chicago.
6. *Good utility service* provided to businesses vs. other communities.

### 5.7. Model Communities--Features that would benefit Oak Park

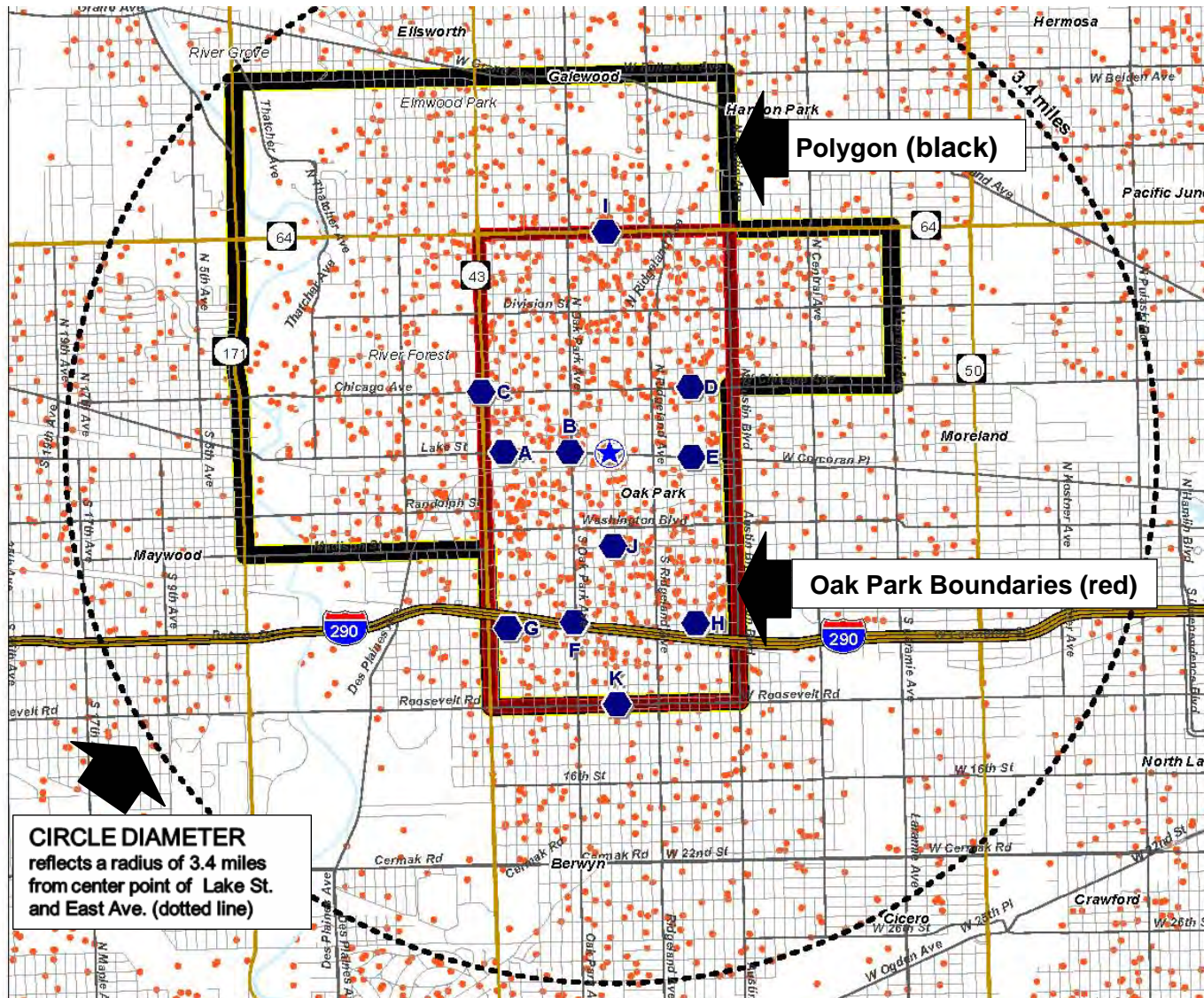
1. Old Town in Chicago—with a Nine West store right next to a “mom and pop” store.
2. Highland Park —trees, wide streets, a great mix of retail, attractive.
3. Evanston—eclectic, diverse, high energy.
4. La Grange—a good combination of national and local stores
5. Naperville—high energy, great mix of stores, great places to walk around
6. Forest Park—inviting streetscape, unique boutiques, lively restaurants and taverns, free or low cost parking

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Demographic Overview

### 6.1 Geographic Trade Area Measurements

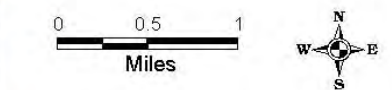
- ❑ **Five different geographic measurements** were used by 4Insights to *determine potential trade areas and analyze the highest potential consumer profiles* for Oak Park retail.
  1. Oak Park Village Boundaries
  2. A radius of 3.4 miles (e.g. a nearly 7-mile diameter circle from the center point of East Ave. and Oak Park Ave)
  3. Drive time of 10-minutes (the most-often reported distance by respondents to the 4Insights Consumer Survey, which equals approximately 5-miles from the center point of Oak Park Ave and East Ave)
  4. Drive time of 15 minutes (approximately 8-10 miles from the same center point)
  5. *Polygon area* (created by 4Insights) that extends beyond Village Boundaries slightly to the north and west, primarily into River Forest. The Polygon's boundaries were determined using Lifestyle Segmentation, described in the next section. It shows where most of the highest density, or "Target" Lifestyle Segments, in the Village of Oak live within--and just beyond--its borders. *This information is crucial to retail planning, as Oak Park needs to draw more close-in non-resident consumers.*
- ❑ Using these comparison methods, the charts that follow indicate that the **demographic profile is most similar between the residents of Oak Park and the extended area of the Polygon, primarily toward River Forest.** *Oak Park residents are less similar to the residents in the radius area or the 10-and 15-minute drive times, which are more moderate.*
- ❑ **Polygon residents, therefore, are very important to retail planning and success.** *This means that the same retail mix in Downtown/Marion/The Avenue is likely to appeal to these residents who are so close to Oak Park's boundaries that they are also likely to be the most frequent visitors to Oak Park's major retail districts. **Therefore, the Polygon is the #1 target trade area for Oak Park retail planning.***
- ❑ The number of households within Oak Park's Village boundaries is 22,142--the *lowest* of all of the geographic measures—the radius, drive time and the Polygon. The Polygon trade area, which extends beyond Oak Park boundaries, doubles the number of households to 45,040—*also important for retail planning and tenant recruitment.*





-  Oak Park New Trade Area
-  Oak Park Village Boundaries
- 2008 HH w/ Incomes \$100K+**
-  1 Dot Represents 10 Households
-  Business District Location Midpoints
- A. Downtown/Marion
- B. The Avenue
- C. Chicago/Harlem
- D. Chicago/Austin
- E. Lake/Austin
- F. South Town
- G. Garfield/Harlem
- H. Arts District
- I. North Avenue
- J. Madison Street
- K. Roosevelt Road
-  Lake St & S East Ave

**HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS OF \$100,000+ INCOME HOUSEHOLDS.**  
 Village of Oak Park Boundaries are in RED. The irregularly-shaped figure in BLACK is the POLYGON, drawn by 4Insights to show the greatest concentration OF \$100K+ households.



**nielsen** Map Produced by:  
 Nielsen Claritas Inc. 2008

**CIRCLE DIAMETER**  
 reflects a radius of 3.4 miles  
 from center point of Lake St.  
 and East Ave. (dotted line)

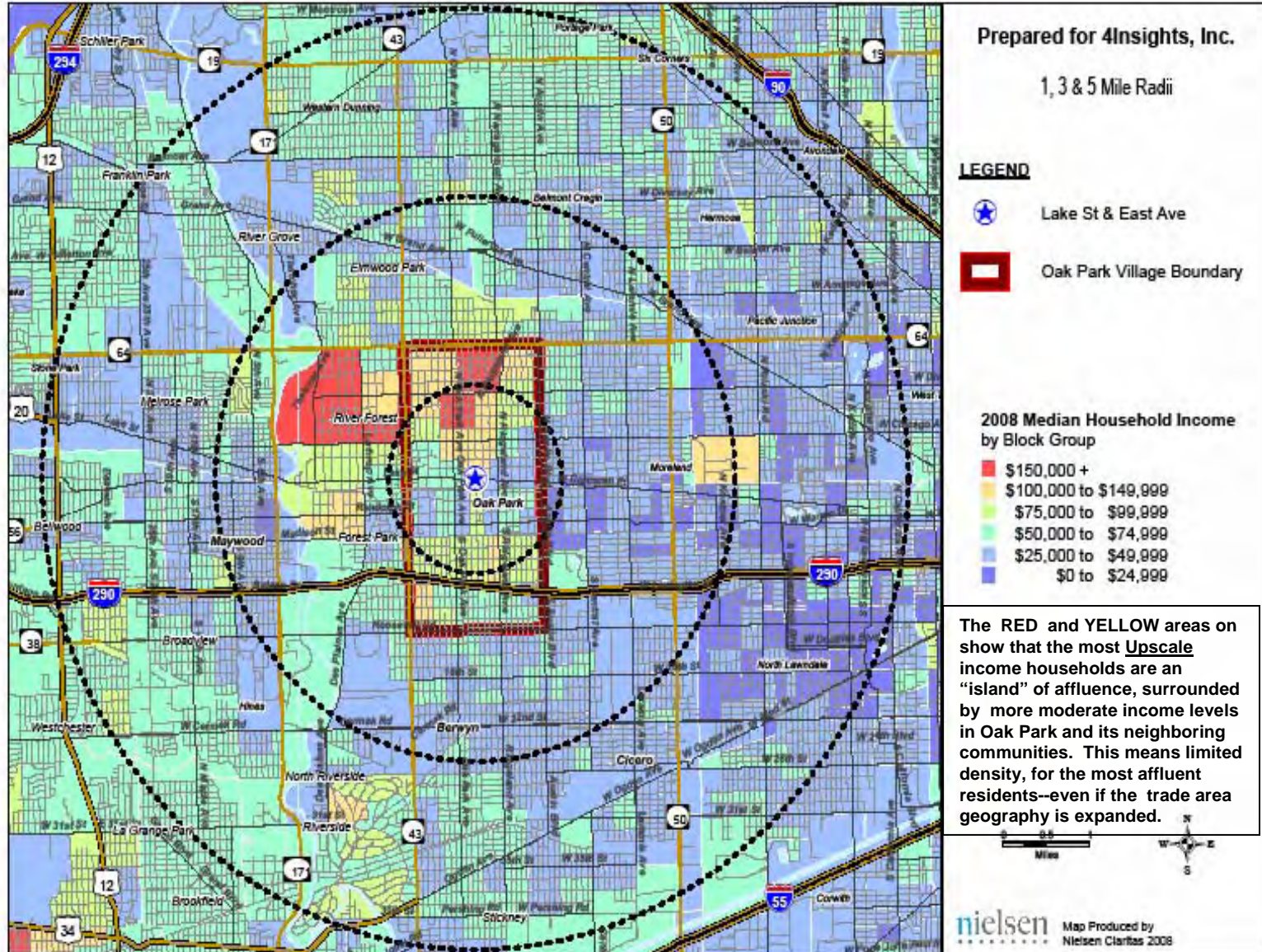
## 6.0 Customer Bases--Demographics

### 6.2 Demographic Profile--Summary:

- **Oak Park household incomes are split three ways: The first 1/3--** or 7,100 households --are upscale, earning over \$100,000 household income. Half of these (3,550 households) are *wealthy*, earning over \$150,000.
- While they are extremely affluent, ***these households, (which cluster in Oak Park and River Forest), are an 'island' of affluence, surrounded by much more midscale communities*** in Berwyn, Cicero to the south' and in Chicago north of North Avenue; and east of Austin. (See Map, next page). Household income levels to the west do increase—but at this geographic distance, Oak Brook's massive retail hub becomes a more convenient trip for them--with broader upscale options than Oak Park.
- **The second 1/3** (7,380 households) of Oak Park Residents are midscale to upper midscale, earning in the \$50s-\$90s range. While their number of households within Oak Park's boundaries are the same as upscale households (7,830)—*they are joined by many more midscale households located all around Oak Park, who will be easier to attract due to proximity.* These non-residents could be attracted to big box retail that was a quick drive away on the corridors of Madison and Roosevelt. Suitable space would have to be assembled.
- The last 1/3 of Oak Park households earn below midscale (\$50,000) .
- The number of households, both affluent and midscale, increases 5 times in just 10-minutes of drive time from the center of Oak Park (East Avenue at Lake Street), because of access to I-290. *While this may open a large pool of non-resident customers for Oak Park, it also is a double-edged sword*—for it also eases access to the number of retail options that are available just 10 minutes away for residents in and around Oak Park. ***Oak Park will have to create a sufficiently large enough contiguous retail cluster and a unique identity to differentiate itself from this massive nearby competition.***
- Oak Park household types are also split into thirds: 1/3 have children under 18 at home; 1/3 live in two-person households; and 1/3 live alone.
- 66% of Oak Park residents are white, 24% are African American and 4% are estimated to be Hispanic households.
- Also important to note that almost half of households in Village Boundaries are renters (44%).
- Education levels are extremely high and unmatched by other communities



## Oak Park, IL 2008 Median Household Income



## 6.0 Customer Bases—Demographic Overview

### 6.2 Demographic Profile--Summary

- **While lowest in household density, Oak Park residents are the highest in other demographic characteristics compared to the larger geographies in the radius of drive times.**
  - Oak Park residents are the most affluent: Household median income of \$69,200, and Median *Family* income of \$98,200. Important note: 56% are “family” households (which means two more relatives living together—with or without children). Therefore, **56% of households actually have much higher imedian ncomes of \$98,200.** Polygon residents are close behind Oak Park, with median income of \$62, 600 and Family income of \$79,200.
  - Incomes in the 5- and 10-minute drive times and the 3.5 mile radius areas, are all lower --with median household income of \$47,000 for all three. These wider geographic areas pick up more varied and more lower income ranges, although they hugely increase the number of households captured.
  - For example, the 10-minute drive time captures 115,422 households, a five-fold increase over Oak Park’s Village boundaries. And the 15-minute drive time captures 14 times more households (317,455).
  - *While these density increases are impressive, 3 considerations limit their potential as frequent Oak Park retail customers:*
    - Freeway travel allows quick drive time into the high-density residential areas of the Chicago neighborhoods—so huge numbers of additional households are captured with every additional minute of drive time.—but it also enables quick travel time to other retail destinations.
    - Heavy Competition: Because these neighborhoods are so dense, and many of them affluent, there is a myriad of significant retail that serves them---so they have little reason to travel beyond their neighborhoods to Oak Park.
    - Traffic congestion and parking access: Consumers who have to travel I-290 either east or westbound to Oak Park have to contend with the traffic backups on I-290 approaching Harlem Avenue, and then also on Harlem Avenue northbound to Lake St. Parking access is also not immediately visible, as it is on suburban mall-type parking lots.
  - ***Therefore, the most frequent customers will always be the ones in closest proximity to Oak Park . Because the closest customers to Oak Park (in the Polygon area) are very similar to its own residents, they should be the prime target for retail strategy in the Downtown/Marion/The Avenue cluster.***

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Demographic Overview

### 6.2 Demographic Profile – Geographic Trade Area Comparisons

2008 Demographic Comparison—cont'd					
	OP Boundaries	Radius-3.5 Miles	Polygon	Drive-10 Min.	Drive-15 Min.
<b>Population 2008</b>	<b>49,666</b>	460,321	117,330	<b>348,867</b>	<b>978,122</b>
• Population 2013 (est.)	47,800 (-3.8%)	445,321 (-3.2%)	113,661 (3.1%)	336,682 (3.4%)	958,803 (2.0%)
• White Alone	<b>54%</b>	40%	52%	<b>34%</b>	41%
• African American Alone	<b>24%</b>	38%	37%	<b>48%</b>	33%
<b>Households 2008</b>	<b>22,142</b>	148,899	45,040	<b>115,422</b>	<b>317,455</b>
• Households 2013 (est.)	<b>21,502 (-2.9%)</b>	142,244 (-3.8%)	43,612 (-3.2%)	111,013 (-3.8%)	<b>310,497 (-2.2%)</b>
• Average Household Size	<b>2.23</b>	3.08	2.57	2.98	<b>3.03</b>
• 1-Person Household	<b>38%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>25%</b>
• 2-Person Household	29%	24%	28%	25%	25%
• 4 or More Person Household	12%	15%	13%	33%	34%
• Have Children <18 at Home	31%	44%	36%	43%	42%
• % Family Households*	<b>56%</b>	70%	63%	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>
• <b>Hispanic/Latino Households</b>	<b>04%</b>	26%	08%	19%	<b>28%</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>38.72</b>	<b>32.86</b>	<b>36.98</b>	<b>33.20</b>	<b>33.02</b>
• % Age 25-34	12%	13%	12%	13%	14%
• % Age 35-44	16%	15%	15%	15%	15%
• % Age 65+	10%	10%	11%	10%	10%
• % Age <18 years	24%	29%	26%	29%	28%
• % Age 18-24	07%	10%	09%	10%	10%

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Demographics

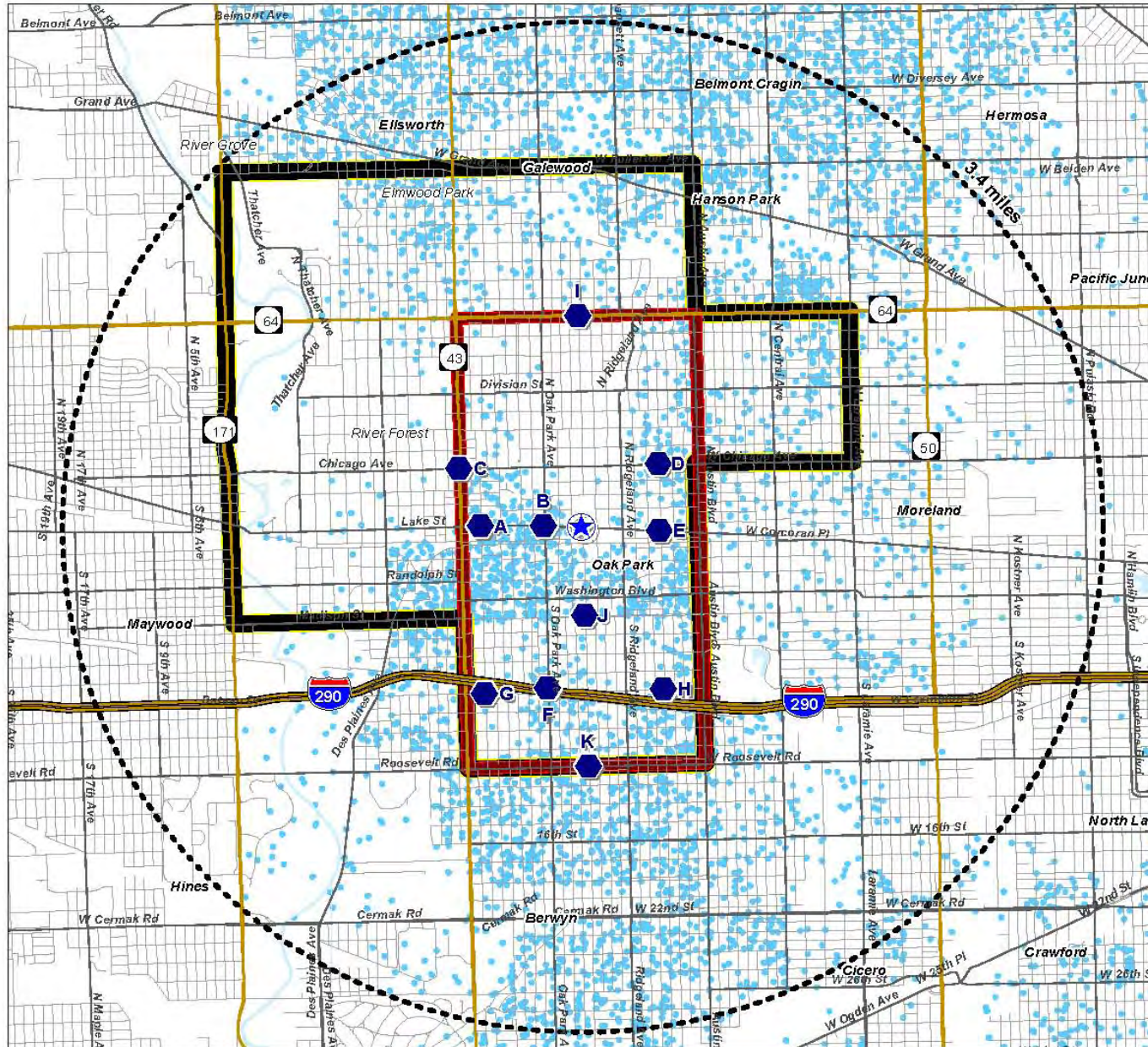
### 6.2 Demographic Profile –Geographic Trade Area Comparisons, cont'd

2008 Demographic Comparison					
	OP Boundaries	Radius-3.5 Miles	Polygon	Drive-10 Min.	Drive-15 Min.
<b>Median Household Income *</b>	<b>\$69.2</b>	\$46.7	\$62.6	<b>\$47.4</b>	<b>\$46.4</b>
• Under \$50K	36%	54% CHECK	40%	39%	<b>53%</b>
• \$50-\$74.9K	19%	20%	19%	19%	19%
• \$75-99.9K	13%	11%	12%	11%	11%
• \$100-\$149.9K	<b>16%</b>	10%	15%	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>
• \$150k+	<b>16%</b>	16%	13%	<b>07%</b>	<b>06%</b>
• Median <b>Family</b> Income	<b>\$98.2K</b>	\$53.9K	\$79.2K	<b>\$55.2K</b>	<b>\$53.6K</b>
• <b>Average Family Income</b>	<b>\$129.0K</b>				
<b>Median Housing Value</b>	<b>\$349.6</b>	\$247.1	\$293.1	<b>\$244.8</b>	\$250.7
• Values \$500K+	<b>24%</b>	<b>ADD HERE</b>			
• Owner Occupied	56%	53%	60%	52%	52%
• 1 or 2 Units	50%	61%	60%	60%	60%
• 3 to 50 Units	50%	39%	40%	40%	40%
• Built before 1939	63%	41%	45%	41%	35%
<b>Occupations</b>					
• Management, Business, Finance	<b>20%</b>	10%	16%	11%	<b>10%</b>
• Professional & Related	<b>41%</b>	17%	30%	21%	<b>17%</b>
<b>Use Public Transportation</b>	<b>22%</b>	16%	19%	18%	<b>16%</b>
• One Vehicle Per Household	48%	41%	45%	42%	40%
<b>Education</b>					
• Bachelors Degree	31%	11%	22%	12%	11%
• Master's or Higher	31%	8%	20%	10%	07%





# Oak Park, IL

Lifestyle Segments with Median HH Incomes of \$52K - \$55K (42% of Total HHs)




Prepared for 4Insights Inc

## Legend

-  Oak Park New Trade Area
-  Oak Park Village Boundaries

## 2007 PRIZM Target Group HHs

 1 Dot Represents 10 Households

PRIZM Segments:  
 29 American Dreams (18%)  
 16 Bohemian Mix (17%)  
 26 Cosmopolitans (07%)

## Business District Location Midpoints

- A. Downtown/Marion
- B. The Avenue
- C. Chicago/Harlem
- D. Chicago/Austin
- E. Lake/Austin
- F. South Town
- G. Garfield/Harlem
- H. Arts District
- I. North Avenue
- J. Madison Street
- K. Roosevelt Road

## Lake St & S East Ave

3.4 Mile Radius



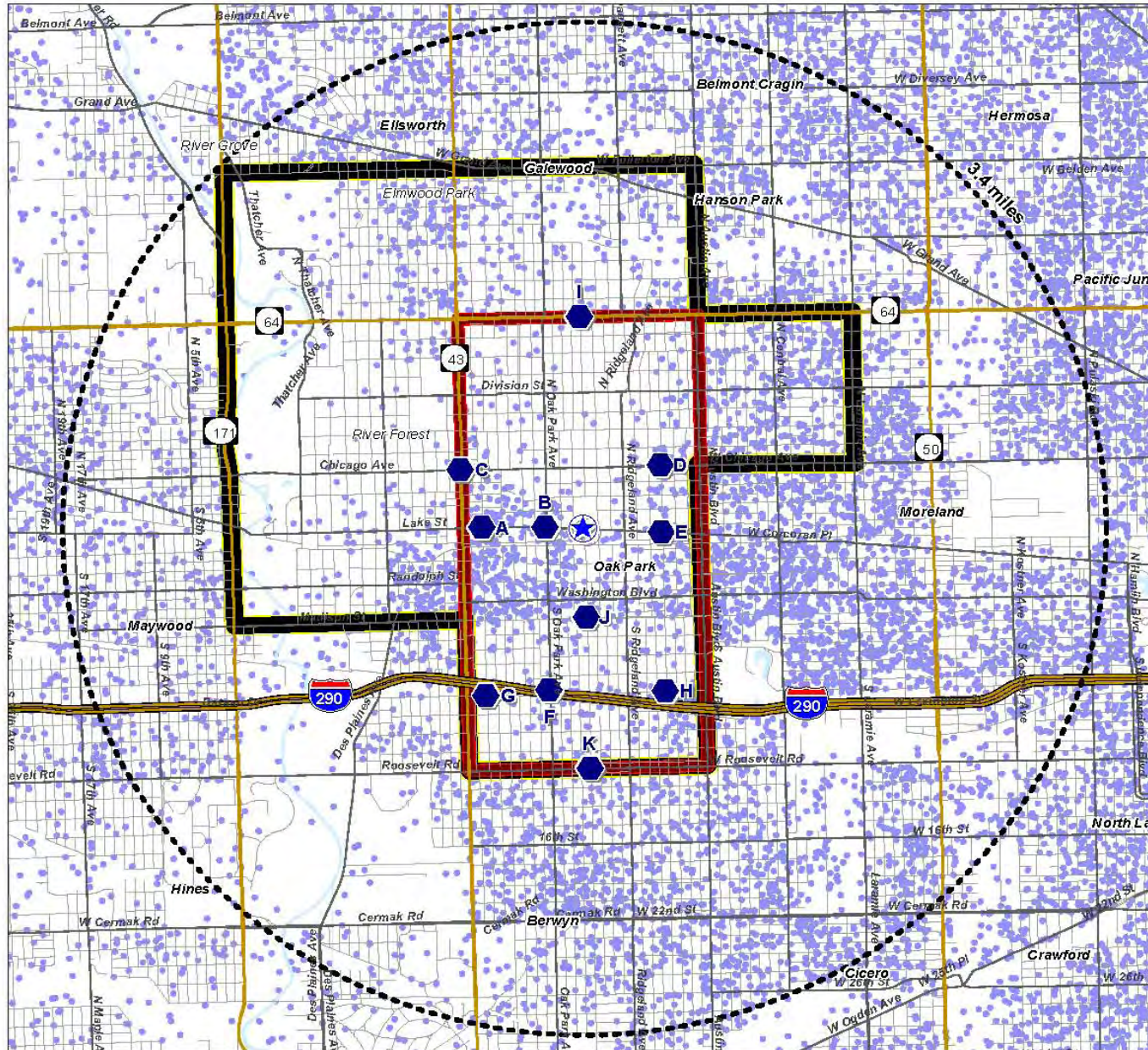
**nielsen**

Map Produced by:  
Nielsen Claritas Inc. 2008





# Oak Park, IL

## Households with Incomes of < \$49.9K




Prepared for 4Insights Inc

### Legend

-  Oak Park New Trade Area
-  Oak Park Village Boundaries

### 2008 HH w/ Incomes < \$49.9K

 1 Dot Represents 10 Households

### Business District Location Midpoints

- A. Downtown/Marion
- B. The Avenue
- C. Chicago/Harlem
- D. Chicago/Austin
- E. Lake/Austin
- F. South Town
- G. Garfield/Harlem
- H. Arts District
- I. North Avenue
- J. Madison Street
- K. Roosevelt Road

### Lake St & S East Ave

3.4 Mile Radius





## 6.0 Customer Bases--Lifestyle Segmentation

### 6.3 Lifestyle Segmentation differs from Demographics

- ❑ **Lifestyle Segmentation** differentiates consumers—beyond demographics--*into what they buy*, based on their *lifestage and lifestyle*. The photo strip below illustrates that households earning the same income spend it very differently. There are 65 different segments in the Claritas *Prizm NE* system.
- ❑ **The *highest potential segments* for any retail cluster are those with the greatest number of *qualified households that live closest to the retail site*.** (Chart, next page)
- ❑ Lifestyle segmentation is especially useful in the Oak Park trade area because it can profile both Residents and its Workplace Population. These two important customer bases can then be analyzed to see what retail/food/and service mix could attract both of them to Oak Park retail.
- ❑ Lifestyle Segmentation *does not*, however, profile transient visitors, such as business or leisure visitors —all of whom can add substantial spending power to Oak Park retail.
- ❑ The photos below illustrate how resident consumers earning the same household income can be classified into Lifestyle Segments that can help predict their retail preferences. Factors including their age, housing, education, family situation, recreational and other interests will determine their retail purchasing patterns.



## 6.0 Customer Bases—Lifestyle Segmentation

### 6.3 Target Resident Lifestyle Segments —Village Boundaries

- ❑ The **Top 5 (highest density) Lifestyle Segments** within Oak Park boundaries, comprise 89% of the total households. Of this 89%, about half are Upscale and half are Midscale households. All are ethnically diverse.
- ❑ **Upscale Segments: Two of the highest-earning Segments make up 41% or 9,078 households** within Village boundaries: First is *Money & Brains* (\$103,080 adjusted household income).\* **At 31% of all Village households (6,864), *Money & Brains* is the highest density segment and therefore the major target of retail strategy.** The second Upscale Target Segment, *Young Digerati*, with adjusted household income of \$98,479, comprises 10% of total Village households, or 2,214 households.
- ❑ **Midscale Segments comprise 48% of Oak Park Lifestyle Segments:** *American Dreams* (19%); *Bohemian Mix* (20%); and *The Cosmopolitans* (09%). These Midscale Segments' adjusted median household incomes are in the \$60's, and they are more likely than in the Upscale Segments to have children. (Approximately 1/3 of ALL Oak Park households have children under 18 at home). Compared to 2007 Prizm estimates, 2008 saw the Midscale segments increase by 2-3%, while the Upscale Segments decreased by the same amount. (Detailed Segment descriptions and maps follow, on the next page).

HIGHEST DENSITY <u>RESIDENT</u> LIFESTYLE SEGMENTS-- OAK PARK BOUNDARIES (RANKED IN ORDER OF HIGHEST HH DENSITY FROM CENTER POINT OF LAKE & EAST AVENUES)								
TARGET SEGMENTS Segment # / Name	Prizm '08 Med HH Inc	Adjusted Med HH Inc*	Age	Kids <18	College Level	Rent/ Own	Ethnicity**	HHs/ Mkt % Total: <b>22,142</b>
<b>07 Money &amp; Brains</b>	\$85,900	\$103,080	45-64	Some w/ Kids	Graduate	Own	W-A-H	<b>6,864 31%</b>
29 American Dreams	\$53,400	\$64,080	35-54	High % Kids	Some Col.	Own	W-B-A-H	4,206 19%
16 Bohemian Mix	\$52,483	\$62,979	25-55	Some w/Kids	Graduate	Rent	W-B-A-H	4,428 20%
<b>03 Young Digerati</b>	\$82,066	\$98,479	25-44	Some w/Kids	Graduate	Own	W-A-H	<b>2,214 10%</b>
26 Cosmopolitans	\$55,018	\$66,021	55+	High % Kids	Some Col.	Own	W-B-A-H	1,992 09%
<b>Total Target Lifestyle Segment Households / Percent of Total Village Households</b>								<b>19,704 / 89%**</b>

Source: Claritas , Inc. *Prizm NE* 2008

\*\*Numbers and % may not agree due to rounding.

\*\*Ethnic Mix Key: W=White; B=Black; A=Asian; H=Hispanic (Ethnicity per segment is based on national models derived by Claritas, Inc., and may vary in local markets.

\*NOTE on Adjusted Median HH Incomes: 4Insights has applied a 20% premium on median incomes listed for each lifestyle segment above for the following reasons: (1) Household incomes in major market s like Chicago are substantially higher than nationally-modeled incomes in the Prizm system, according to Claritas, Inc. (2) The 4Insights Consumer Mail Survey reported *AVERAGE HH* income ranges for Upscale OP Resident respondents of \$123,000 —and for Midscale Residents : \$72,667. Demographics report *AVERAGE* incomes are \$28,000 higher than *MEDIAN* incomes, in Oak Park, due to a small but very affluent core of residents. 4Insights considered all of these factors in computing its income adjustment factor of +20%. It is important to note that these adjusted incomes apply to the Target Lifestyle Segments only—and will not match the demographic breakdowns for the entire Village of Oak Park.

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Lifestyle Segmentation

### 6.3 Target Customer Segments—Detailed Descriptions

#### □ Upscale Households—41% of total OP Households

- **Money & Brains is the key Resident Lifestyle Segment for retail planning--31% of OP Households.**

Money & Brains is a mid-life segment, with an adjusted income of \$103,080. (See note, previous page for explanation of “adjusted income.”) They are mostly age 45-64. *Money & Brains*’ age profile (41% age 45-54; 26% age 55-64) according to Prizm NE corresponds satisfactorily with the respondents to the 4Insights Consumer survey, who are 41% age 35-49 and 24% age 50-59. Some of these Upscale households have children under 18 at home, who are most likely to be teens. Money & Brains residents have post-graduate degrees, lead sophisticated, intellectual, but not necessarily “trendy” life styles. Their income also corresponds satisfactorily with the 4Insights’ Consumer survey, as their average HH incomes reported in the Survey was \$123,000, which corresponds to Oak Park’s demographic average Family household income of \$129,018.

*Money & Brains* are primarily home owners. They shop full price department stores Nordstrom, Macy’s, Bloomingdale’s and Neiman Marcus--but they also shop at Costco and BJ’s Wholesale Club for basics. They index high for purchasing men’s business suits, watches and Godiva chocolates. Their passion is travel, both foreign and domestic. They index high for California Pizza Kitchen and quick serve concepts, such as Au Bon Pain, most likely near their workplaces.

- **Young Digerati is the other highest density Upscale resident household—10% of total Oak Park households.**

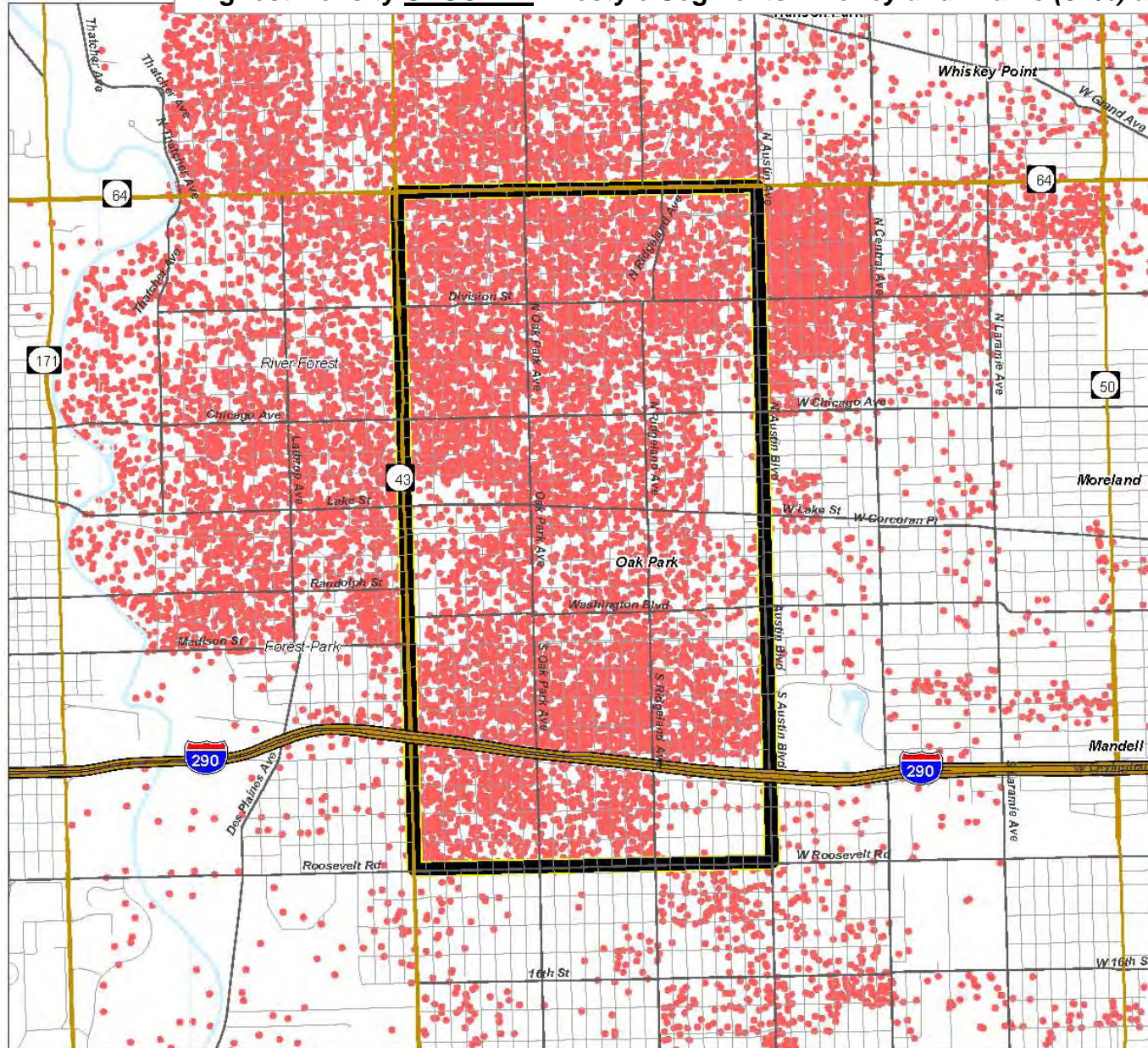
This Segment has an adjusted income of \$98,479. They are younger, age 25-44, and some have children, who are more likely be under 12 years old. They are home owners and highly educated. They are the tech-savvy Gen X’ers living an urban lifestyle on the suburban fringe in condos and apartments.

This is the segment most likely to shop boutiques and hang out at fitness clubs, casual restaurants, brew pubs, and coffee bars. Favorite stores are Banana Republic, J.Crew and the more fashion-forward department stores. They also index high for work apparel purchasing, sportswear and equipment as they are athletically and socially active. A lively social scene and nightlife would attract them.



# Oak Park, IL

Highest Density UPSCALE Lifestyle Segments: *Money and Brains (31%)* and *Young Digerati (10%)*




Prepared for 4Insights Inc

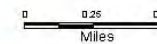
### Legend

 Oak Park Trade Area

2007 PRIZM Target Group HHs

 1 Dot Represents 1 Household

The dominant Upscale Lifestyle Segments make up **41%** of the households in Oak Park—and this dense concentration to adjacent communities to the north, north/east and northwest. These affluent residents must also be targets for Oak Park Retail.



Map Produced by:  
Claritas Inc. 2008

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Lifestyle Segmentation

### 6.3 Target Customer Segments—Detailed Descriptions

#### □ Midscale Households = Midscale—48% of Oak Park Households (\$60s median HH income.)

- **American Dreams is one of the two highest-density Midscale Segments--19% of OP households**

Their adjusted median household income is \$53,400\*. Age 35-54, they are mostly households with children under 18 at home. They are homeowners, highly ethnically diverse and live in multilingual neighborhoods, often as first generation immigrants.

They have some college education and are in white collar, service type occupations. Almost half have children under 18 living at home, about equally split between grade school and high school. They shop at Marshall's, Costco and Macy's and Express, Victoria's Secret and The Limited—some shop Banana Republic. They index high for Las Vegas trips, fast food, and family national chain dining establishments.

- **Bohemian Mix is the other highest density Midscale Segment--20% of OP households** They earn an estimated \$62,979 adjusted median HH income. They cover a broad range of ages from 25-54. Some households have children under 18 at home. *They tend to be renters*, as this segment is a collection of mobile urbanites—a progressive-thinking mix of singles, couples, and families ranging from students to professionals.

They are the free-thinking 'early adopters' who are the first to check out the latest movie, laptop, microbrew or nightclub. Their homes and fashion tend toward urban and funky rather than suburban and preppy. They index higher than average for athletic shoes, laundromats, rap music, iPods, owning a hybrid car and smoking.

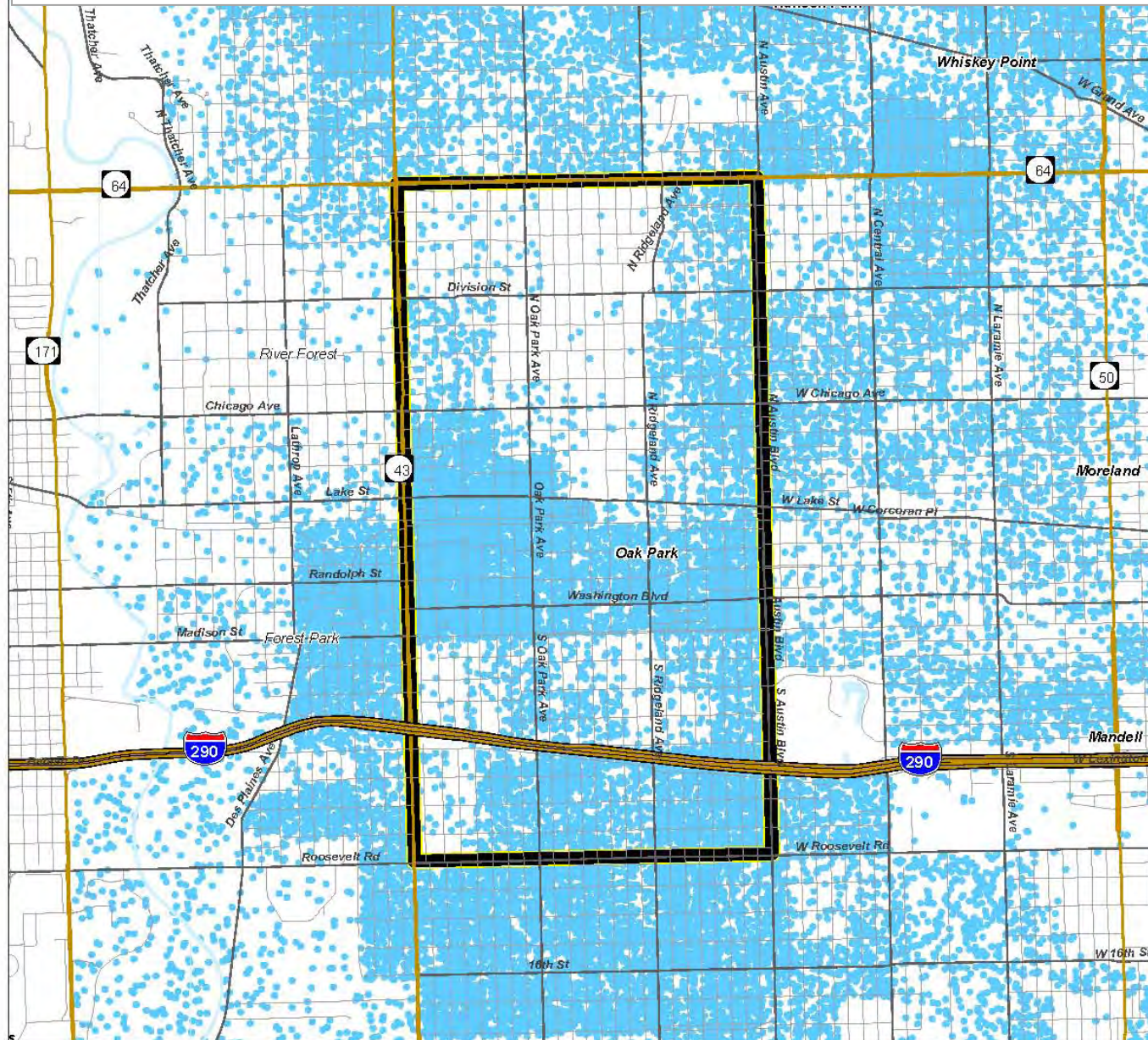
- **The Cosmopolitans—09% of OP residents.** They earn adjusted median HH incomes of \$66,021. They are older, most age 55+, and are most likely to be Empty Nesters who enjoy an active social, community and leisure lifestyles. They own older homes, which they have lived in for a long time. These urbane couples are found in -- or on the fringe of --larger cities. They have some college, work in white collar and service occupations and are very ethnically diverse.

They index high for domestic travel by railroad and cruise ship; buying classical music, shopping at Sears, Saks Fifth Avenue and Costco; and ordering from the Home Shopping Network and the Reader's Digest Association,. Many have a Medicare/Medicaid card.



# Oak Park, IL

Highest Density **MIDSCALE** Lifestyle Segments: *American Dreams* (19%); *Bohemian Mix* (20%); *Cosmopoitans* (9%)




Prepared for 4Insights Inc

## Legend

 Oak Park Trade Area

2007 PRIZM Target Group HHs

 1 Dot Represents 1 Household

The three highest density Midscale Segments cluster from Lake Street south in Oak Park and east toward Austin. More Lifestyle segments like them are found in adjacent communities south (Berwyn and Cicero) east (Forest Park) North (Chicago), and to a lesser extent, east of Austin.

These neighboring midscale residents should also be targets for Oak Park **Midscale** retail--especially along the high traffic corridors, especially Madison and Roosevelt Rd.

0 0.25 0.5  
Miles



Map Produced by:  
Claritas Inc. 2008



## 6.0 Customer Bases--Workplace Population

### 6.4 Workplace Population—Demographic Profile

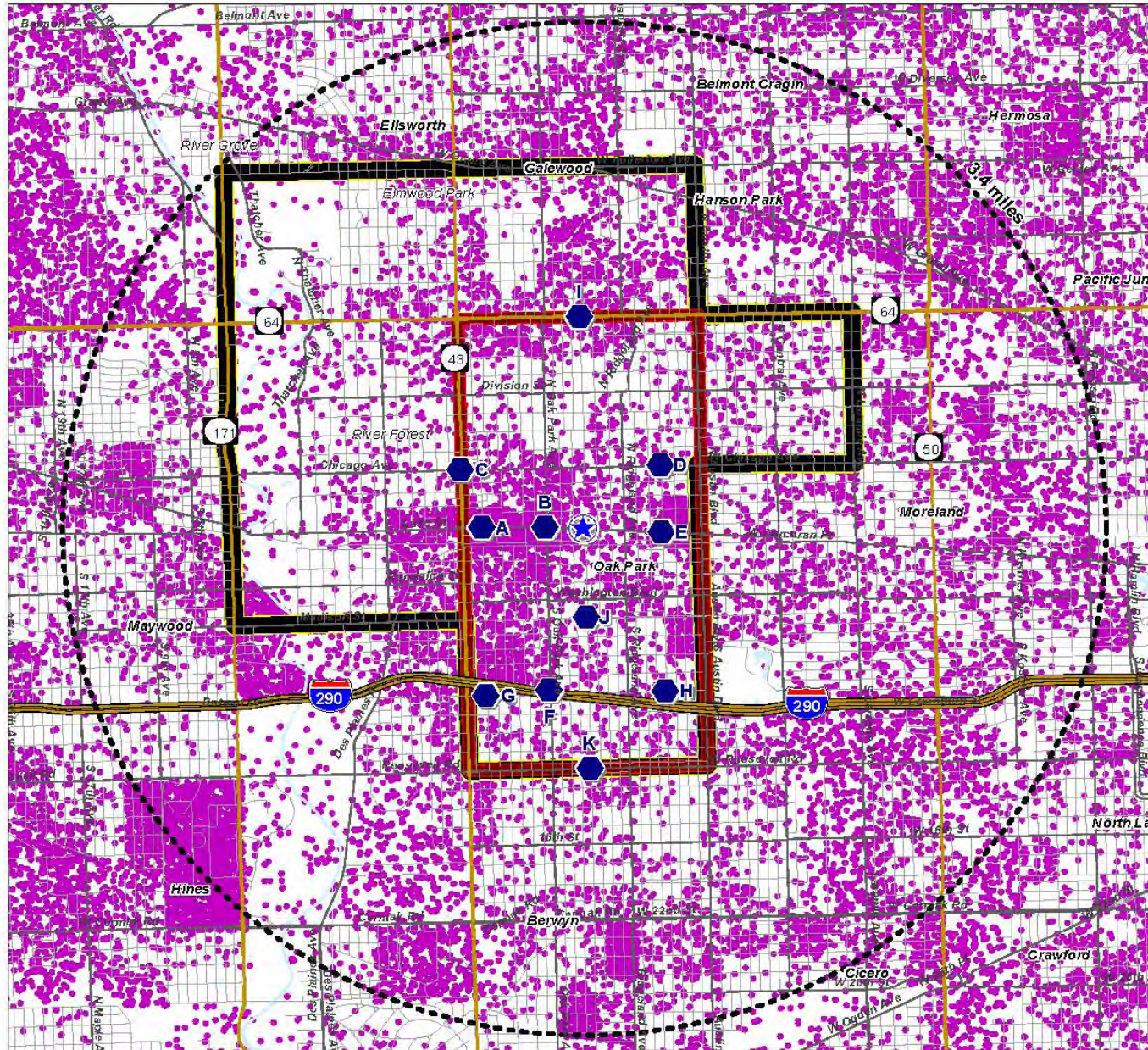
- ❑ **Oak Park's 29,516 Workplace Population, made up of residents and non-residents, is a crucial customer base for retail .**
  - (1) It provides Oak Park retailers with thousands of “captured” resident customers who are in or near retail areas for more than 200 days per year—and are hungry, need to run errands, buy gifts and browse to relax—and have money to spend.
  - (2) It captures non-residents who otherwise may *not* make a trip for Oak Park retail
  
- ❑ Some categories of Workplace Population are more likely to leave their place of employment and venture into Oak Park's CCBD or, to a lesser extent, its neighborhood retail districts. The good news for Oak Park is that 4Insights estimates about 2/3rds, or 20,000 workers in the categories below, are potential customers before, during, or after the workday.
  
- ❑ The Industry Chart (right) also shows the importance of retail jobs to the Village: One -third (10,118) of the Workplace Population within Village boundaries are retail-related workers, generating additional tax dollars for the Village.\*

Workplace Population—Village Boundaries			
By Occupation	Total: 29,516	By Industry	Total: 29,516
<u>Executive/Professional</u>	<u>11,047</u>	<u>Retail*</u>	<u>4,409</u>
• Management	2,100	• Eating and Drinking Places	1,839
• Sales & Marketing	2,613	• Retail Stores	2,035
• Health/Legal/Social	3,449	• Auto Dealers/Gas Stations	228
• Engineer/Science/Computer Prof.	560	• Building Materials/Garden Supply	307
• Educators	1,668		
• Journalists/Creative Professionals	657		
<u>Administration &amp; Support</u>	<u>8,872</u>	<u>Finance*</u>	<u>2,194</u>
• Management Support	886	<u>Public Administration</u>	<u>1,292</u>
• Admin-Clerical Support	6,008		
• Technical Support	1,978		
<u>Service Personnel</u>	<u>4,966</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>18,231</u>
• Health Care Professional	1,159	• Personal Services*	1,083
• Food & Beverage	2,168	• Business Services*	2,432
• Personal Services	1,219	• Health Services	8,947
• Protective Services	420	• Educational Services	2,291
		• Legal & Social Services	1,955
		• Other	1,523
<u>Trade &amp; Labor</u>	<u>4,631</u>	<u>Other Industries</u>	<u>3,393</u>
Construction, Wholesale, etc.		Construction, Wholesale, etc	

(\* ) Indicates Industry categories assumed to have retail employees





# Oak Park, IL Workplace Population




Prepared for 4Insights Inc

### Legend

-  Oak Park New Trade Area
-  Oak Park Village Boundaries

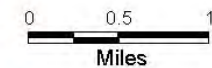
### 2008 Workplace Population

 1 Dot Represents 10 People

### Business District Location Midpoints

- A. Downtown/Marion
- B. The Avenue
- C. Chicago/Harlem
- D. Chicago/Austin
- E. Lake/Austin
- F. South Town
- G. Garfield/Harlem
- H. Arts District
- I. North Avenue
- J. Madison Street
- K. Roosevelt Road

 Lake St & S East Ave  
3.4 Mile Radius



nielsen

Map Produced by:  
Nielsen Claritas Inc. 2008



## 6.0 Customer Bases--Workplace Population

### 6.4 Workplace Population—Lifestyle Profile

- ❑ Lifestyle Segmentation provides a much closer look at the profile of Oak Park’s Workplace Population. The good news for retail planning is that HALF of the Workplace Population within a 5-minute drive of Oak Park is made up of the same Target Customer Segments as Oak Park residents. The two Upscale segments, Money & Brains and Young Digerati are 24% of the 34,700 workers within a 5-minute drive distance of Oak Park. *Money and Brains is still the most important segment in the Workplace at the 5-minute drive time (20%), just as they dominate the Resident profile of Oak Park.* The 3 Midscale segments together account for an even larger share of the workforce within a 5-minute drive--*American Dreams, The Cosmopolitans, and Bohemian Mix, together represent 29%.*
- ❑ **That means the same retail mix that appeals to Oak Park residents will also appeal to over half of workers in the 5-minute drive.**
- ❑ The total number of Workplace Population almost doubles in just 2 more minutes of drive time (7 minutes) to 60,000. And more good news is that our same Target Lifestyle Customers still dominate the mix—the Upscale Target Segments are 20% of workers and the Target Midscale Workers are 28%. That means the pool of workers that could potentially be attracted to CCBD retail/food tenants has doubled—and half of them are still the same type of customer that dominates Oak Park residences.
- ❑ At the 10 minute drive time, the number of workers more than doubles again to 133,000 but this time the Workplace Population becomes much more diversified with lower income households. Oak Park’s two Target Upscale segments drop to 12% of workers, but its Midscale segments maintain their share of the workers at 26%. \* (See note below)
- ❑ **The bottom line is that the Workplace Population in the key 5 and 7-minute drive times most closely resemble the Target Customer segments in Oak Park and the Polygon area (e.g. River Forest) and therefore, should be the Target Customers for the Workplace-type retail planned for Oak Park’s CCBD.**
- ❑ **There are 4 important retail planning implications for Workplace Populations:**

- *Workers buy in a very narrow range of retail, dominated by foodservice, errand running, browsing and impulse items, e.g. books, music, drug store items, cards and gifts—and personal services, from watch repair to haircuts.*
- *Quick, close in, easy and free or validated parking is essential for their frequent, time deprived visits.*

\*NOTE: Within a 10-minute drive time Oak Park’s Workplace Population of 133,000, is a suburban density. More urban areas, such as Bucktown, have more than one million workers within a 10-minute drive.



Workplace Populations within 5-7-10 minutes drive time from Oak Park (Lake St. & East Ave.)

## 6.0 Customer Bases—Daytime Populations

### 6.5 Daytime Populations

- ❑ **Daytime Customer Bases are crucial to the success of Oak Park retail** because, just like Workplace Populations, they are an opportunity to attract incremental customers and spending. While Daytime Populations are concentrated in the Downtown/Marion/The Avenue area, other retail clusters also benefit from their locations in the vicinity of specific Daytime consumers (e.g. the Chicago/Harlem district). While they are impossible to quantify, they represent a singular opportunity for Oak Park, as none of its competing adjacent suburbs have a daytime draw as large as Oak Park.
- ❑ All of these Daytime Customer Bases share one commonality: *Their presence in Oak Park is not primarily for shopping or dining...they are here for some other reason--but may be attracted to shop/dine while here.* They fall into three major categories:
  - (1) Local residents and local non-residents who are in the retail districts to visit one of Oak Park's institutional magnets: schools, library, Village Hall, Scoville Park, special events, churches and temples, medical and other professional appointments, business meetings, arts/non-retail entertainment, the farmer's market, and a host of other non-retail reasons.
  - (2) Visitors from outside of the Oak Park trade area who come for its many attractions, let by the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio, Unity Temple, The Hemingway House, Pleasant Home, and others. The Frank Lloyd Wright attractions alone account for 75,000 visitors annually. A large part of Oak Park's local and national image is based on its historical heritage.
    - *Currently Oak Park's retail businesses are not taking full advantage of this potential,* based on the 2008 Oak Park Heritage Tourism Assessment and 4Insights' interviews and onsite observations. A unified program, in concert with the Village and all of Oak Park's attractions and arts organizations, needs to strategize on making Oak Park retail an integral part of the tourism experience. (Strategies to accomplish this are in Section 11.0)
  - (3) Pass-through Motorists, on Oak Park's heavily trafficked corridors and arterials can be lured to impulse stops, especially for dining, quick serve, or take-out. Passing motorists also are notorious errand runners, who pull over check something off of their to do list, from the hardware store to a new watch battery at the local jewelers. The retail strategy in Section 11.0 addresses the type of retail that we recommend to attract these motorists.
  - (4) El and Metra Commuters can be attracted to more than just coffee. As proven on Marion St. and Oak Park Ave., a variety of convenience and specialty stores can succeed along pedestrian routes between parking garages and the commuter rail stops. A again, with the goal of a \$5 purchase daily from El/Metra commuters...at just the Harlem stop, 3,889 riders per day can mean more than \$5 million for Oak Park retail annually. (3,889 riders x 261 weekdays x \$5.00)

## 7.0 Consumer Survey

### 7.1 Survey Methodology

- ❑ According to 2008 Lifestyle Segmentation Resident Households within Oak Park boundaries. **89%** of the households were made up of 5 dominant (highest density) Segments. There is almost a 50/50 split between **Upscale Segments (41%)** who earn Median adjusted\* HH Incomes of \$98,479 to \$103,000) and **Midscale Segments (48%)** whose adjusted *household incomes clustered in the \$60s*.
- ❑ 4Insights then extended the map to see where else these segments could be found near Oak Park Village boundaries. The Polygon Map (next page) shows where the highest concentration of these dominant Oak Park segments were located *outside of Village boundaries*, in neighboring communities—most to the northwest (Map follows). A total of 5,000 surveys were mailed to these 5 Target (highest-density) Segments—1,000 to each segment.
- ❑ The 500 returns tabulated represented 76% (368) Oak Park residents, and 24% (114) Non-Residents. *The survey responses coincide with the Lifestyle Segmentation above, in that half of Oak Park Resident respondents were Upscale incomes, (52%) and half were Midscale Incomes (49%). The same was true for Non-Resident Survey Respondents. **This proportion of Upscale to Midscale is key to retail planning.***
- ❑ In general, the Consumer Survey analysis reports on the *shopping differences between Upscale and Midscale Respondents--whether or not they are Oak Park Residents*. This is done for two reasons:
  - First--***household income, not city boundaries, is the most important factor for retail strategy, when distances to shopping are equal;***
  - Second--*only 24% of Respondents to this survey were Non-Residents*, because we selectively mailed to only those who were most like the dominant residents of Oak Park (e.g. our 5 Target Lifestyle Segments). *However, when there are significant differences between Oak Park Resident and Non-Resident responses in the survey, it is noted in this report.*
- ❑ Following is a more detailed description of the Survey Respondents and the PrizmNE 2008 Target (highest-density) Resident Lifestyle segments to which the Consumer Survey was mailed--and therefore who are the “predominant voice” of the survey response. This respondent profile be more affluent than the Oak Park census-based Demographic profile, which incorporates the entire base of households, and only within Village Boundaries.

\*Median Adjusted Household Incomes, as stated previously in this report, are Claritas Prizm NE 2008 estimates for these specific Lifestyle Segments, to which 4Insights has added 20%, based on the results of our Consumer Survey mailed to these specific Segments; and the fact that large regional markets such as Chicago have higher income levels than national models.

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

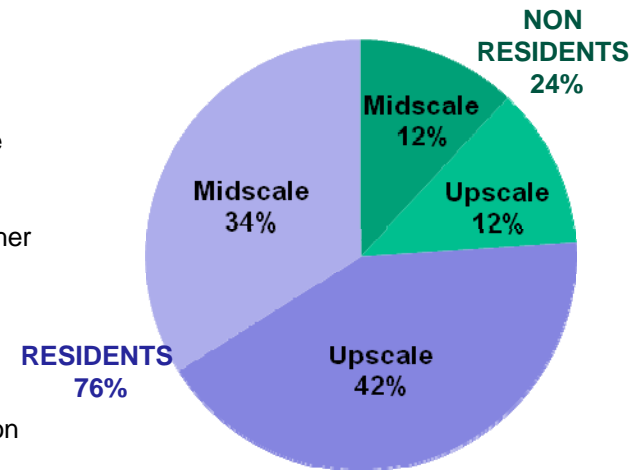
### 7.2 Respondent Profile

#### Income

❑ Non Resident Survey respondents are 24% of total survey respondents. They are the most affluent, with 50% earning \$150,000+. The median income range for these Upscale Non Residents was \$100-150,000. Their average income was \$128,676.

❑ OP Resident respondents were slightly less affluent. 36% earned \$150,000+ and another 30% earned \$100-\$149,000. The median income range for OP Upscale Residents was \$123,050.

❑ For Midscale Respondents, on the other hand, both Resident and Non Resident respondents had income in the same mid-range segment of \$50-\$7.5K. This range corresponds well to the income ranges of their Lifestyle Segment descriptions in Section 6.0. Average income for Midscale OP Residents is \$72,667 and for Non-Residents is \$72,941.



Survey Respondents' Income Breakout

#### Gender & Education

- ❑ 73% of the Upscale Respondents, and 70% of Midscale respondents were Female.
- ❑ Upscale Oak Park Residents and Non-Residents in the Polygon area are extremely highly educated, with an average of 59% reporting post graduate degrees. Midscale OP Residents report 39% post graduate degrees and 29% of Midscale Non Residents do as well.

#### Point of Origin

- ❑ Almost all respondents come to Downtown Oak Park and The Avenue *from Home* (94-96%). Only 1-3% work or manage a business in Downtown. The only exception are Midscale Non Residents—17% come to The Avenue from other sources.
- ❑ For those who drive to Downtown Oak Park, 88% of Upscale Respondents and 85% of Midscale respondents drive under 10-minutes to get there. The balance drove between 10-20 minutes. No one drove farther. *The average trip time was the same for Residents and Non-Residents at 9 minutes.*
- ❑ ***1/3 of both Upscale and Midscale survey respondents take the El or Metra to work, making them a high potential retail opportunity along pedestrian routes from parking areas to boarding stations in near retail clusters.***

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.2 Respondent Profile, cont'd

#### Age of Respondents

- ❑ For *Upscale* OP Resident Survey respondents, the largest age segment was 35-49 (43%). The next largest age segment is age 50-59 (22%). Therefore, 65% of opinions in the Upscale responses are from ages 35-59.
- ❑ *Midscale* OP Resident respondents' largest age segment was younger— 25% were in the 25-34 age segment.
- ❑ *Midscale Residents were generally younger than Upscale Residents in all age segments through age 70.* At age 70+ Midscale Residents exceeded Upscale residents by a wide margin (23% vs. 03%).
- ❑ This means that the *Midscale* responses in the Survey will reflect *25% younger opinions* and, by contrast, *25% senior opinions who are age 70+*. For OP Upscale respondents, this is not the case—only 3% were over age 70.

#### Household Composition

- ❑ 23% of Upscale respondents and 46% of Midscale respondents live in “Singles” households. This could be due, in part, to the 25% of Midscale Respondents who are over the age of 70.
- ❑ About 1/3 of both Upscale and Midscale respondents live in “Couples” households *without* children.
- ❑ However, *many more Upscale respondents live in family households* with children over 18 than Midscale Respondents (39%-17%). When asked another way, 61% of Upscale households reported no children in the household, while 82% of Midscale households reported no children. Again, this could be due to the 25% of Midscale respondents who were at 25-34, and the other 25% who were over age 70—while the majority of the Upscale residents were in more usual childbearing age ranges of 35-49.

#### Employment

- ❑ *Important to retail planning is that only 6% of Upscale OP Residents are full time homemakers. Since 39% of Upscale respondents reported having children over 18 in the household, the vast majority of respondents are family households with two working parents or other caregivers.* This does not lend itself to a lot of “browsing” activity during the daytime by stay-at-home Moms. Few Upscale Residents were retired (12%). Many more Midscale Residents were retirees (30%). This fact corresponds to the higher percentage of 70+ respondents among Midscale residents referred to previously in the “Age” section.

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy

#### A. Downtown Oak Park Visitation and Spending:

1. Downtown Oak Park has a *high visitation frequency*, with **Upscale respondents**, both Non Residents and Residents, visiting **most often, at 5.4 visits per month**—that is, more often than once per week. Midscale respondents visited less often at 4.4 times per month, with Midscale Non residents visiting least often at 3.9 times. *This high visitation rate is an opportunity to turn visits into increased spending per visit.*
2. **For Upscale respondents, the reason for visiting Downtown Oak Park, however, was not primarily shopping. Shopping at specific stores (24%) was closely followed by eating dinner (22%) and the Lake Street Theater (22%).** In fact, Non-Resident respondents were *slightly more likely* to visit Downtown for all three purposes than were Oak Park Residents, by 2 to 6%. But only 7% of Upscale respondents visited Downtown OP to have lunch. (These visits did not include trips to work—only 1-3% of respondents either worked or managed a business in Downtown Oak Park).
3. **Midscale respondents visited Downtown for the same three reasons as Upscale respondents--**also led by the Lake Street Theater (20%), followed by eating dinner (19%) and shopping at specific stores (18%). They were *more likely to eat lunch* than Upscale respondents and make stops for medical services, by a few percentage points.
4. **Upscale Non Residents spent the most per visit (\$51.) Upscale OP Residents spent considerably less (\$37),** which is significant because they visit with the same frequency as Non Residents.
5. **Non-retail “magnets” and services** attracted 17% of visits from Upscale respondents, and 22% of Midscale respondents, indicating an *opportunity to encourage spending combined with these visits through the right store mix, location near the “magnets” and convenient parking.*
6. Most Resident respondents who visited Downtown Oak Park came with other adults, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the time. For the rest, Upscale Residents and Non Residents are more like to visit Downtown with children than Midscale Residents. These children are more likely to be under 10 years old than teenagers.
7. **Approximately half of respondents are shopping and dining in Downtown Oak Park with the same frequency as last year.**
8. **Of those that are shopping MORE OFTEN (20%), the leading reason was “travel time or distance” (35%) for Upscale respondents, especially for Non Residents.** Clearly, being close to home is driving their visit frequency. (94% of Upscale respondents came directly from home to Downtown OP—which is significant because it means that *Downtown was a planned destination trip.* The second reason for shopping more often was “favorite restaurants.” (16%).
9. **For Midscale respondents, “travel time” was tied with “favorite restaurants” and “atmosphere/ambience” (all 16%)** as reasons for visiting Downtown MORE OFTEN. 86% of Midscale residents come to Downtown OP directly from home.



## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

10. For respondents shopping LESS OFTEN (30%) the leading reason for *Upscale* respondents was the “variety of stores and merchandise” and “parking convenience (both 20%). “Quality of stores and merchandise” was the second reason, especially for Upscale Non Residents (17%).

- *Midscale* Respondents also cited *parking convenience* as the main reason for shopping LESS OFTEN (26%)—but Non Residents were more negative about parking, citing it as a reason for shopping and dining less in Downtown (37%). The next highest reason for visiting less was the same as their Upscale counterparts: “variety of stores and merchandise” (18%).

**B. Where respondents shopped for various categories of retail merchandise. The differences fell along income lines, rather than Resident vs. Non Resident:**

11. **For women’s apparel**—Upscale respondents clearly preferred Oak Brook Mall (43% for casual and 55% for work/dressy apparel). Upscale Non Residents were slightly more likely than OP Upscale Residents in their preference for Oak Brook Mall, by about 4% overall. *Upscale* respondents second choices for women’s apparel were River Forest Town Center (9%) and North Riverside Mall (9%). Downtown Chicago also attracted 9% of OP Upscale Residents.

- *Midscale* respondents shopped equally at North Riverside Mall and Oak Brook Mall for women’s casual apparel (23%), but they also preferred Oak Brook Mall for work/dressy apparel (38%). This difference indicates a preference for more moderately-priced apparel among Midscale Residents and Non Residents. It is also noteworthy that the highest percentage of shoppers who went to Downtown Chicago for dressy apparel were not Upscale respondents, but Midscale Oak Park Residents (18%).

12. **For teen’s apparel**-- Only 11% of the respondents reported shopping for Teens, so the sample size for this question was small (51). Of these, **Oak Brook Mall was the clear favorite by Upscale respondents (41%) and OP Residents (36%). Downtown Oak Park** was second (17%), most likely because of Old Navy and The Gap. North Riverside Mall was third for Upscale Non Residents—but they also reported doing a full 24% of their teen shopping in a variety of “Other” locations. Upscale OP Residents, however, cited “Other Chicago Neighborhoods as their third choice for Teens (15%).”

- *Midscale* OP Residents also shopped mostly at Oak Brook for teen’s apparel (40%). Tied for second place was Downtown Oak Park and North Riverside Mal (27%).

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

13. **For children's apparel**— Only 19% of respo of respondents reported shopping for Teens, so the sample size for this question was small, about 50 responses. **Upscale Respondents, particularly Non Residents, reported a wide variety of locations for children's apparel shopping.** 30% of their shopping was done in "Other" locations, followed by *23% done in Downtown Oak Park*. Third ranked was Oak Brook Mall at 17%.
  - **Midscale respondents, however, ranked North Riverside Mall first (29%),** followed by a tie for second place between Downtown Oak Park and Oak Brook Mall at 18%. They did not report a strong preference for "Other" locations.
14. **For men's apparel**— **Upscale respondents, both OP Residents and Non-Residents, favored Oak Brook Mall (46%).** Their second ranked was tied between North Riverside Mall (13%) and Downtown Chicago (12%). For Upscale Non-Residents, Downtown Oak Park captured 10%.
  - **Midscale respondents had different shopping patterns: North Riverside Mall (27%) was tied with Oak Brook Mall at (26%)** for men's shopping. Midscale Non Residents in particular preferred North Riverside, probably because of proximity to their residences.
15. **For shoes**— **Upscale respondents favored Oak Brook Mall (51%), especially Non Residents (60%).** For second choice, OP Upscale Residents chose Downtown Chicago (13%) and "Other" locations (21%).
  - **Midscale respondents had different shopping patterns. Only 24% of Midscale OP Residents chose Oak Brook** first, while 37% of Midscale Non Residents did. Second choices for Midscale respondents were "Other" locations, and third was North Riverside Mall at 17%. Downtown Chicago was fourth, with OP Residents leading Non Residents in their preference for Downtown Chicago at 15%.
16. **For home decorative items**—**Upscale respondents preferred Oak Brook Mall (33%),** especially Upscale Non-Residents (38%). *Second was Downtown Oak Park (17%).* Third choice among Upscale respondents was "Other" locations. OP Upscale Residents especially preferred "Other" locations (24%).
17. **For gifts, jewelry, accessories**—Upscale respondents preferred Oak Brook Mall (33%), especially Upscale Non Residents (45%). Second choice was Downtown Oak Park for Upscale Residents at 26%--and Non Residents at 21%. "Other" locations was the third choices, indicating a wide range of shopping choices for these respondents.
  - Midscale respondents had different shopping patterns. They shopped mostly in Downtown Oak Park (26%), then at Oak Brook (22%) and third at North Riverside and "Other" locations (15%).

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

#### C. How much of total shopping for various retail categories was done at Discount Stores (Target, TJMaxx, Marshall's).

18. **For women's casual apparel**— Across all respondents, only about 1/3 never shop at discount stores for women's casual apparel. The average is 25% of shopping is done at discounters by both Upscale and Midscale, and by Residents and Non Residents.
  - This indicates a **value-orientation and price sensitivity in 25% of total, by both Upscale and Midscale respondents.**
  - Also confirming this orientation is that **the top-mentioned write-in stores in the survey were Discounters:** Target and TJMaxx.
  - For **women's dressy/work apparel, about half never shopped discount.** The average percent of discount shopping was 18% for *Upscale* respondents and 16% for Midscale respondents.
  - **For shoes-** Almost half never shopped discount. The average percent of discount shopping was about 20%.
19. **For teen's apparel---** Among respondents with children under age 18 at home, about 2/3 of respondents never shopped discount. The average percent of those who did were: 19% of Residents and 24% of Non-residents shopped discount for teen apparel. Midscale responses were slightly higher.
20. **For children's apparel**— Of respondents with children, almost 1/3 never shopped discount. The average percent of discount shopping was **49% of Upscale Residents and 43% of Midscale Residents shopped discount stores for children.** We cannot be certain if the respondents who shopped at the more moderate stores at North Riverside mall included them as "discount" stores in their responses.
21. **For men's apparel and shoes**— Half of the respondents never shop discount for men's apparel. The average percentage of Discount shopping was similar across the board of Upscale, Midscale, OP Resident and Non resident, ranging from 17-21%.
22. **For home decorative items**— About ¼ never shop discount. The average percent if Discount shopping was also similar across the board, in the 24%-29% range. 20% of Upscale and 22% of Midscale respondents did more than half of their total shopping at Discounters.
23. **For gifts, jewelry and accessories**— About 40% never shop discount. The percent if Discount shopping was also similar across the board, in the 18%-21% range.

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

#### D. Boutique Shopping Patterns (Defined in the survey as “small, fashionable, independent stores”)

**24. For boutique shopping— Survey respondents were not frequent boutique shoppers.** An average of 17% Upscale respondents and 14% Midscale respondents shopped boutiques. This finding indicates that boutiques in Downtown or elsewhere in Oak Park will have a narrow niche of customers to support their business.

- For locations OUTSIDE of Oak Park in which their favorite boutiques were located, **the leading mention was Forest Park**, with mentions by 31% of *Upscale* OP Resident and 33% of *Midscale* OP Residents. **Second was Downtown Chicago**, with mentions by 17% of Upscale OP Residents and 27% of Midscale OP Residents. **Third most-mentioned was Oak Brook Mall**, by both Upscale and Midscale OP Residents (12/10%). Bucktown’s large cluster of boutiques received 7% of the mentions from Upscale respondents, 2% from Midscale respondents.

#### E. Dining Preferences

**25. Visited most often for a *sit-down dinner* OUTSIDE OF OAK PARK** --A total of 100 different cities and neighborhoods were mentioned. **Chicago (Downtown) ranked first with 33% of *Upscale* OP resident mentions, followed closely by Forest Park at 30%**. Oak Brook ranked a distant 3<sup>rd</sup> with 9% Upscale OP Resident mentions.

- ***Midscale* OP Residents also mentioned Chicago (Downtown) most often (36%)**, then Forest Park (21%) and third, Oak Brook (10%)

**26. Average price for a dinner check at respondents' favorite restaurant** (for one person, without alcohol and tip). *Upscale* Respondents spend an average of \$20. However, the *specific price range* with the highest percentage response (39%) was between \$14-\$18. Upscale Non Residents were the most likely respondents to spend \$25+, at 29%.

- ***Midscale* respondents' spending for dinner was lower-- \$17 average**. However, the specific price range with the highest percentage of their responses was *also \$14-\$18*. Their average was lower because there were fewer respondents in the higher price ranges, e.g. only 15% spent \$25+.

**27. When having lunch or dinner was planned as part of a shopping trip, *Upscale* Non Residents chose Oak Brook Mall first (41%)**, followed by 34% for *Downtown Oak Park*. OP Upscale Residents also preferred Oak Brook Mall at 39%, followed by *Downtown Oak Park* at 28%. *These strong “second place” rankings for dining combined with shopping indicate an opportunity to encourage shopping combined with dining—but the parking limits in garages and meters should allow for a 3 hour time limit so as not to require shoppers to “feed the meter” in between.*

- ***Midscale* respondents had different responses. OP Midscale Residents preferred a shopping with dining trip in Oak Park (44%)** over Oak Brook Mall (17%). Midscale Non Residents ranked Oak Park and Oak Brook Mall almost equally at (32/30%)

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

#### F. Additional Retail or Personal Services wanted in Downtown

28. The most mentioned write-in retail categories are in the left Table. 57 different categories of retail outlets were mentioned, but because these are “write-ins,” some categories are general and may overlap with other categories mentioned. The total of write-in mentions is 530. **Clearly, a Discount store, shoes, women’s apparel and general clothing are most wanted categories.** The grocery category most likely would have been less of a top mention after the opening of Trader Joe’s.
29. The right table lists the most mentioned specific store names. **Discounters Target, TJ Maxx and Marshall’s lead the list**—with 17 mentions of Target coming from the Upscale respondents and 23 from the Midscale respondents. For TJ Maxx, there were 9 Upscale and 11 Midscale write-ins. For Marshalls, 7 write-ins from Upscale and 8 from Midscale respondents. ***This confirms again that Upscale respondents shop Discount stores and big box mass-merchandisers almost as much as Midscale.***
30. **Trader Joe’s** (opening soon) received the second most specific name mentions. A total of 307 specific store names were written in for this question.

Top 12 Retail Categories Wanted	Total # Mentions ( 530)
1. Discount Store	83
2. Shoes	51
3. Women’s Wear	49
3.A Grocery	49
4. Clothing	47
5. Department Store	31
6. Retail	28
7. Men’s wear	17
8. Gift Store	8
9. Electronics	9
10. Cosmetics	6
10.A Sporting Goods	6

Top 13 Specific Names Wanted	Total # Mentions ( 307)
1. Target	40
2. Trader Joe’s	33
3. TJ Maxx	20
4. Marshall’s	15
5. Macy’s	11
6. Crate & Barrel	10
6.A. Nordstrom’s	10
7. Banana Republic	9
8. Kohl’s	7
8.A J. Crew	7
8.B Carson’s	7
9. Anthropologie	6
10. Ann Taylor	5

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

#### G. Restaurants wanted in Downtown Oak Park—Categories and Specific Names

28. In the left Table, **Casual dining led the 467 write-in mentions for wanted foodservice categories.** 100 different categories were represented in the write in responses. Most names suggested were national chains.
29. **Potbelly was the clear winner in specific names mentioned** with 29 out of 128 different names and 281 total mentions. Restaurants wanted were spread widely, as evidenced by the low number of write-in mentions on the right Table. However, **8 of the 10 specific names with the highest mentions are for casual dining or walk-up quick serve concepts, e.g. Pot Belly.**

Top 11 Food Categories Wanted	Total # Mentions (407 )
1. <b>Casual Dining</b>	<b>34</b>
2. <b>Italian</b>	<b>30</b>
3. <b>Sandwich</b>	<b>28</b>
4. <b>Steakhouse</b>	<b>25</b>
5. <b>Seafood</b>	<b>23</b>
6. Chinese	20
7. Grocery	17
8. Deli	15
9. Fine Dining	10
9.A Vegetarian	10
10. Mexican	09

Top 10 Food Names Wanted	Total # Mentions ( 281)
1. <b>Potbelly</b>	<b>29</b>
2. <b>Red Lobster</b>	<b>7</b>
3. <b>PF Chang's</b>	<b>6</b>
3.A Sweet Tomatoes	6
4. <b>Jamba Juice</b>	<b>5</b>
5. Lou Malnati's Pizza	4
5.A Outback Steakhouse	4
5.B Olive Garden	4
5.C Ruth Chris	4
5.D Weber Grill	4

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Survey Highlights Impacting Retail Strategy ,cont'd

#### H. Why Respondents visited Downtown vs. why they visited The Avenue—Write-in Mentions.

30. **Downtown Oak Park is visited for three major reasons, almost equally:** (1) All forms of dining, at 19% of the total of **610** mentions; (2) bookstores at 16%; and (3) The Lake Street Theater at 16%. All other reasons fairly equally dispersed among the remaining 350 mentions, at only 1-2% each, led by the Library, Bakery, Banking, Clothing, Exercise, and Gift items.
- **Upscale respondents were more likely to visit Downtown for the Bookstores and Theater than Midscale Respondents—indicating an opportunity to turn these leisure visits into more retail/dining spending.**
  - Residents were also more likely to visit Downtown for these two reasons than *Non Residents*.
  - Residents and Non-Residents visited Downtown about the same amount for dining.
31. **The Avenue is visited more for dining, with 37% of 418 write-in responses referring to some form of eating.**
- ***Upscale* respondents were somewhat more likely to visit the Avenue than Midscale respondents.**
  - **Residents were substantially more likely to visit The Avenue than non residents**, judging by the quantity of their write-in responses.
  - **The Avenue appears to be more a place for residents to dine, socialize, walk, and obtain daily living services than does Downtown Oak Park.**
  - **Obtaining Personal Services was the second leading reason at 9%**, when individual mentions were grouped together.
  - The other reasons for visiting the Avenue were equally dispersed in very low percentages, led by the Library and shopping at 3% each, and followed by bread, books, salon/haircut, ice cream and taking a walk.
  - Only a very few mentions of ambience, atmosphere, or security were found in the write-ins as reasons for visiting The Avenue over Downtown Oak Park.

## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

32. **Retail categories wanted for The Avenue in the write-in mentions are led by apparel categories (38% combined mentions).**

- Much fewer Midscale respondents submitted write-in responses for retail categories or specific stores wanted in The Avenue.
- Leading individual write in categories were Women's (10%), Shoes (8%) Discount Store and Men's wear (5%) with Department stores, Children's wear, and Hardware - all at less than 5%.
- Specific retailers named in the write ins were so dispersed that no one name exceeded 3%. The leading individual retailers named, in rank order, were Banana Republic, TJMaxx, Carson's and Target. They were followed by Trader Joe's, White House/Black Market, and Crate and Barrel.
- **The write-in mentions also included several big box and discounters, that when combined totaled 18% of total respondents.** These names included Bed, Bath & Beyond, Best Buy, Costco, DSW Shoes, Home Depot, Kohl's, Linen & Things, Marshalls, Office Depot, Nordstrom Rack, and Sam's (spirits).

### I. Neighborhood Business District Shopping

33. **Survey Respondents do not appear to have a clear concept of their own Neighborhood Business District.** This survey question was designed to determine whether Oak Park residents had an awareness and loyalty to the concept of their own neighborhood district. The names in the write-in responses were so varied that it appears that most residents are unaware of their official District designation. Of the write-in 124 responses were received, the largest share (13%) were from Downtown—however, it was impossible to be certain even of this fact, based on the variety of name designations used in the write-ins.

34. **Because the definition of their own Neighborhood Business District appears to be unclear to the survey respondents, the following question that probed their shopping patterns in their Neighborhood District may not be statistically accurate.** Respondents seem unaware of their boundaries of the various Business Districts, and may, therefore, be crossing shopping throughout Oak Park neighborhoods. With that caveat, the results are as follows:

- The neighborhood shopping patterns of both Upscale and Midscale Oak Park residents are similar overall.
- **25% on average shop 2-3 times per month, and another 25% shop *less than* once per month—the highest frequency rates reported.**
- 15% of both Upscale and Midscale Residents shop *more than* once per week, and another 15% shop about *once* per week. Only 7% do not shop at all in their neighborhood district.
- Their average spending, however, is not the same. *Upscale OP residents spend an average of \$32 per trip*, while *Midscale Residents spend an average of \$26 per trip*. The highest spending range, however, is similar, with 40% of both Upscale and Midscale Residents spending \$10-\$24 per trip. Spending levels differ because more Midscale Residents (24%) spend under \$10 per trip than Upscale Residents (13%), and fewer Midscale Residents spend over \$50 per trip.



## 7.0 Consumer Survey, cont'd

### 7.3 Write-In Comments

**35. The 286 write-in comments from Residents regarding their preferences for retail to be added to their Neighborhood Districts is not useful for retail planning for three reasons:**

- Because the majority OP Residents in the previous question did not identify themselves with one of Oak Park's official Neighborhood Business Districts, it is not possible to cross tabulate their suggestions to specific Districts. The response ranking suggests that this was the case, because many of the respondents' write-in retail "wants" are already operating in some of the Neighborhood Districts. Note that the 'most wanted' categories center around neighborhood type goods and services.
- Many of these residents may be referring to Downtown Oak Park or the Avenue as their "Neighborhood" Business District.
- Lastly, with 286 responses and 12 Business Districts, the sample size for each district would be too small to be a reliable indicator, even if the responses could be correlated to a specific Business District.

Top 12 Retail Categories Wanted	Total # Mentions (286)
1. Grocery	25
2. Restaurant	23
3. Coffee Shop	15
3.A Hardware	15
4. Discount Store	11
5. Bakery	7
5.A Retail	7
6. Deli	6
6.A Shoes	6
7. Clothing	5
7.A Book Store	5
7.B Boutiques	5

Top 8 Specific Names Wanted	Total # Mentions (173)
1. Target	7
1.A. Trader Joe's	7
2. Starbuck's	6
3. Certified Foods	5
4. WalMart	4
5. Ace Hardware	3
5.A Caribou Coffee	3
5.B. TJ Maxx	3
All other write-in names were 2 or less mentions each.	

## 7.0 Consumer Survey

### Write-In Comments--General

- ❑ 134 write in remarks were received in the General Comments section of the questionnaire. Of these, 120 were OP Residents, equally split 60/60 between Upscale and Midscale incomes.
- ❑ **The largest class of write-in comments involved parking (25%) of total responses—all were negative.** *(Note: The consumer survey was done before the announcement of new parking regulations in July. Please note that most input about parking in central business district surveys is usually negative, especially when there are free surface parking options nearby).*
- ❑ Write-in comments included:
  - Overpriced meters that have to be fed in short time intervals, and parking rates generally—were most often cited. Meter patrol much too aggressive, as are parking restrictions.
  - Inconsistent fees and time limits
  - “I go where there is close, convenient parking, like malls or non-metered streets.”
  - Less strict overnight zoning for visitors and residents. “When I invite a friend over, I have to chase them out by 11:00p.m.”
  - “Congestion and cost factor into my choice of shopping venue.”
  - “I would go more often if there were parking, especially on my way home from somewhere else.”
  - “I hope there is a plan to deal with increased traffic congestion with new developments at Lake and Harlem.”
  - “Parking is a problem, particularly for apartment goers.”

## 7.0 Consumer Survey

### Write-In Comments--General, cont'd

- The next largest class of comments centered around the retail:
  - "We need an inexpensive children's toy store."
  - "I love Oak Park!" (3 comments)
  - "Downtown Marion has beautiful renovation, but needs better boutiques and stores. 10,000 Villages is great"
  - "A diversity of family-friendly restaurants would be more of a regional attraction for OP."
  - "With the increased Cook County tax, I make almost all of my purchases outside."
  - "I think we should look at Oak Park as a community, not separate parts like The Avenue or Downtown."
  - "Lots of work and attention needed for the Arts District." The Village needs to support these businesses."
  - "Please bring in popular commercial retail (Eddie Bauer, Pottery Barn)—you can still retain OP's quaintness and increase sales, just look at Naperville."
  - "Please stop allowing banks, real estate and other such businesses to take up good retail space on the street."
  - "Roosevelt Road needs stronger police presence to cut down on drivers turning it into a 2-lane highway...speeding cars pass out of control on the right side of drivers, on the whole stretch of road from Harlem to Austin. I drive it every day to work."
  - "We need more bike racks everywhere!"
  - "We need more quality restaurants and bars." "No chains like Bennigan's, please."
  - "More independents (5 mentions)—but not too pricey. The key is to attract reasonably priced, but good quality stores."
  - "Teens love H & M and Forever 21—it would be nice not to have to shop outside of OP."

## 8.0 Consumer Demand

### Consumer Demand can mislead retail strategy in trade areas like Oak Park

- ❑ Consumer Demand reports are widely used for determining the opportunity to add new retail to a given geographic trade area. They can be misleading for several reasons:
  - The **“demand side data”** only captures the demand of **residents of the defined geographic area**. “Demand” is amount that these residents say that they spend for specific categories in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey. These line item, *self-reported expenditures* are then added up to report, for example, a \$90 million “consumer demand” for dining at full-service restaurants. In the case of Oak Park, however, there are several other equally important customer bases whose reported spending would not be included in this demand total, such as: non-resident (out of the trade area) Workplace Population; non-resident Daytime Population; non-resident Visitors to its attractions and events, who, if surveyed, might say that they spend an additional \$20 million in the trade area.
  - Conversely, the **“supply side”** government reports are based on **actual sales generated by retailers in the defined geographic area**. Therefore, these numbers do include all of the spending by the non-resident Workplace, Daytime and Visitor populations. For example, in this case, lets say that the supply (sales) for all full service restaurants is \$100 million. .
  - The resulting difference looks in Oak Park’s opportunity for retail expansion like this:

Resident Spending (Self-reported)	Non-Resident Spending	Actual Retail Sales (from Sales Tax)	Retail Expansion Opportunity
\$90 million	Not Included	\$100 million	<b>-\$10 million</b>
\$90 million	\$20 million	\$100 million	<b>+\$10 million</b>

- ***The inclusion of non-resident Workplace, Daytime and Visitor populations, if included in these government Consumer Demand reports, would actually indicate an opportunity for more retail in Oak Park.***

## 8.0 Consumer Demand

### Highest/Lowest Opportunity Retail Categories within 10-minutes from Oak Park

- ❑ The exact amount of retail spending (demand) by non residents (Workplace, Daytime, and Visitor Populations) is not possible to estimate. National studies indicate that all three of these populations spend highest in: (1) food service, (2) browsing type items, (3) impulse buys and (4) convenience (daily living) errands. To gain maximum benefit from these non-resident populations, Oak Park's CCBD mix should be weighted with these categories.
- ❑ The Chart below indicates the **retail categories with highest and lowest potential for retail expansion**, according to the Consumer Demand reports, which are used by some retailers and brokers for site selection. *At 15-minutes, there is virtually no demand in most retail categories suitable for Oak Park.* Therefore, the chart below uses the 10-minute drive time area.
- ❑ The big boxes and superstores would obviously generate the most sales tax for Oak Park– but the size of their sites and parking requirements may preclude them from consideration for Oak Park, even on the corridors.

Consumer Demand For Retail Stores--10 minute Drive from Oak Park k							
Highest Opportunity (Gap) (\$ in millions)				Lowest Opportunity (Surplus) (\$ in millions)			
Retail Category	Consumer Demand	Retail Supply	Opportunity (Gap)	Retail Category	Consumer Demand	Retail Supply	Opportunity (Gap)
Warehouse Clubs/Superstores	264.6	83.0	181.6	Men's Clothing	11.3	24.1	(12.8)
General Merch. Stores	306.9	108.2	198.7	Women's Clothing	46.1	42.1	4.0
Radio, TV & Electronics	67.1	36.1	31.0	Children's/Infant's	11.4	11.0	0.4
Home Centers	171.0	61.5	109.6	Clothing Accessories	4.0	9.0	-5.0
Office Supplies/Stationery	23.4	9.6	13.8	Shoes	34.0	33.0	1.0
Computer & Software	22.4	5.2	17.2	Luggage/Leather	2.5	.80	1.7
Gifts, Novelties & Souvenirs	18.4	11.6	6.8	Sewing/Piecegoods	4.4	1.9	2.5
<b>Full Service Restaurants</b>	<b>209.6</b>	<b>148.0</b>	<b>61.6</b>	Florists	8.2	6.2	2.0
Cosmetics	8.6	2.6	6.0	Used Merchandise	10.0	16.0	-6.0
Optical Goods	11.0	2.0	9.0	Drinking Places	20.7	23.8	-3.1
Sporting Goods	30.0	18.0	12.0	Special Foodservice	38.5	61.7	-23.2
Pharmacies/Drug Stores	215.3	165.3	50.0				
Jewelry	31.0	24.0	7.0				
Home Furnishings	51.7	23.0	28.7				
Nursery & Garden Centers	34.0	2.3	31.7				



## 9.0 Retail Competition Overview – The Process

### 4Insights' On-Site Competitive Assessment Process

1. After identifying and locating all potential customer bases, the next step is to assess the current and planned retail competition for these Target Customers to determine future opportunities or “retail gaps” for the Village of Oak Park at large, as well as for each individual business district.
2. The location of these retail competitors throughout the market area, relative to the Target Customers defined previously, determines the final retail strategy recommendations.
3. 4Insights analyzed major retail clusters in a 9-mile radius from Downtown Oak Park, including the major shopping hubs of Oak Brook Mall and Downtown Chicago--reported by Survey respondents to be among their major shopping destinations.
4. The on-site market tour observed and analyzed:
  - The locations of all *significant retail centers* that could potentially impact Oak Park's retail strategies as a whole and for the individual business districts.
  - The location of all *major retail clusters or “hubs”* that represent key shopping destinations for *primary shopping needs*.
  - An overview of the *individual retailers, especially high profile* big box, mass merchandisers, supermarket chains and *department stores*, as well as *significant convenience and specialty stores* that illustrate consumer shopping preferences and will ultimately influence key strategy decisions.
  - *Store composition within each property* to determine market area pricing thresholds, merchandise styling trends, and overall taste levels.
  - *New retail developments*, either planned, under construction, or still in development, which will further impact retail strategy decisions.

### Business Inventory of Oak Park

1. In addition to this Study, The Village requested that 4Insights prepare a complete business inventory for each of Oak Park's 12 business districts. It identified 1,010 street-level businesses, including retail, *non-retail* and vacant or available space, based on our on-site exterior visual inspection of each district. Each business is documented with street address, primary business category and then sub-categorized by business/merchandise specialty.
2. This inventory serves as the basis for profiling each of the Village's business districts to help create individual retail strategies, which are found in Section 11.0.

## 9.1 Retail Competition Overview

Oak Park residents enjoy a wide array of robust, progressive, leading retailing and food concepts from Downtown Chicago and its neighborhoods to the suburbs.

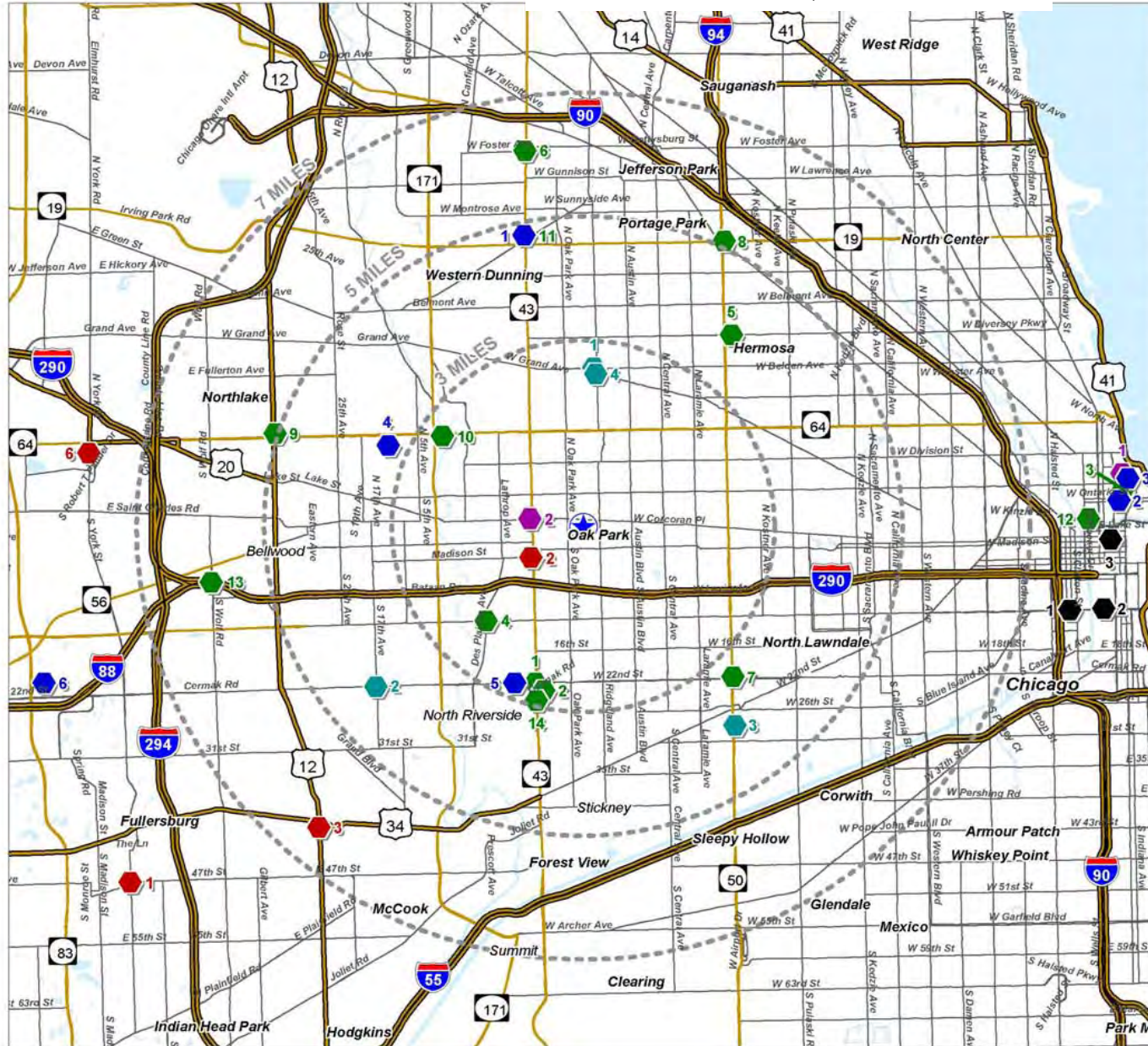
### Retail Centers within a 9-Mile radius area of Oak Park (map follows)

- ❑ In order to determine the appropriate retail strategies for Oak Park's various business districts, it is important to first understand where Oak Park shoppers currently shop—and for what. Based on the Consumer Survey, and the Lifestyle profiles of Oak Park residents, it is clear that they have an appetite for a broad variety of merchandise along with an extraordinary number of retail options to satisfy them.
- ❑ Sandwiched between Chicago's renowned urban-to-upscale retailing to the east and more suburban shopping options to the west, Oak Park residents are well positioned to take advantage of all options. The 4Insights Consumer Survey indicates that Oak Park shoppers cover almost a 9-Mile radius area that stretches as far as Downtown Chicago to the east and Oakbrook Mall to the west.
- ❑ A metropolitan area this large represents an overwhelming amount of retail. The overview that follows will first provide a brief 'macro' view of the retail landscape. Second, we zero in on the *major retail centers* that are *primary competition*. Third, we spotlight closer-to home *key retailers* that consumers use for their primary shopping.
- ❑ The 9-mile radius area from Downtown Oak Park features retailers and merchandise at every price point from discount to luxury in retail center formats that range from strip centers, to open-air malls, massive power (big box) centers, lifestyle centers, corridor retail on major arteries, and the unique urban mix in Chicago's famous neighborhoods.
- ❑ Within a 5 mile radius, retailing options continue to be plentiful, but are confined primarily to daily living needs and more moderately-priced discretionary purchases. In general, for more upscale merchandise, name brand fashion retailers and luxury brand concepts, consumers must travel farther toward the 9-mile radius.
- ❑ The *Consumer Survey, however, indicates that Oak Park shoppers tend to have a more "suburban" versus "urban" shopping profile*. That is, they shop more often at more conventional malls (Oak Brook Mall, North Riverside Park Mall and River Forest Town Center that provide easy access and free parking) than urban boutique type street retail. They also favor more *mainstream merchandise and pricing* over trendy, or luxury fashion brand shopping.
- ❑ The intense competition for Oak Park merchants will only increase—with 1 million SF of new retail delivered to the Chicago market in the second quarter of 2008, and 7.6 million more SF currently under construction—both in traditional shopping venues, on urban streets and corridors, and suburban central business districts. Many of these surrounding suburban downtowns are actively pursuing both national and independent retail.
- ❑ *Even assuming that the national and Chicago retail market recovers by 2010-11, which at this point in time is not a certainty, Oak Park 's challenge will be to differentiate itself from this myriad of easily accessible competition in order to capture the Target Customers identified in this study.*

# Retail Competition

## Oak Park, IL

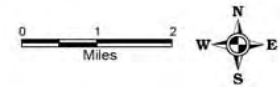
Prepared for 4Insights Inc  
3, 5 and 7 Mile Radii



### Legend

- ★ Site Location
- Downtown Shopping District
  - 1 Hinsdale
  - 2 Forest Park - Main Street
  - 3 La Grange
  - 4 Wheaton\*
  - 5 Downers Grove\*
  - 6 Elmhurst
  - 7 Libertyville\*
  - 8 Highland Park\*
  - 9 Evanston\*
- Community Center
  - 1 Cermak Plaza
  - 2 Cermak S.C.
  - 3 Chicago Place
  - 4 Forest Park Village Center
  - 5 Hall Plaza
  - 6 Harlem - Foster S. C.
  - 7 Hawthorne Works S.C.
  - 8 Marketplace at Six Corners
  - 9 Melrose Crossing
  - 10 Melrose Place
  - 11 Norridge Commons
  - 12 The Shops at the Mart
  - 13 West Point Center
  - 14 North Riverside Park Plaza
- Lifestyle Center
  - 1 The 900 Shops
  - 2 River Forest Town Center
- Power Center
  - 1 Bricktown Square
  - 2 Broadview Village Sq.
  - 3 Cicero Marketplace S.C.
  - 4 The Brickyard
- Regional/Super-Reg. Shopping Center
  - 1 Harlem Irving Plaza
  - 2 The Shops at North Bridge
  - 3 Water Tower Place
  - 4 Winston Plaza S.C.
  - 5 North Riverside Park Mall
  - 6 Oakbrook S. C.
- Proposed Development
  - 1 Joffco Square
  - 2 Roosevelt Collection
  - 3 Block 37 - proposed

\*Locations are outside of mapped area.





## 9.2 Retail Competition Overview – Regional/Super-Regional Centers

Survey results indicate Oakbrook Mall ranks highest as the “shop most often” venue for most key merchandise categories

- ❑ Within a 9-Mile radius area there are 6 Regional/Super-regional size shopping centers, e.g. over 500,000 SF of gross leasable area with one or more full-line department stores.
- ❑ 3 are conventional Suburban-type regional malls – *Oakbrook Mall, North Riverside Park Mall and Harlem Irving Plaza*– and 3 are luxury-oriented centers located in Downtown Chicago -- *The Shops at North Bridge, Water Tower Place and The 900 Shops*.
- ❑ Combined, they feature virtually all of the retail industry's leading department store chains -- *Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's, Marshall Field's, Bloomingdales, Nordstrom, Lord & Taylor, Carson Pirie Scott, Kohl's, Sears and JCPenney*.
- ❑ Their distinction, aside from offering broad selections of the nation's leading national retailers, is that they feature highly desirable *store categories* that are insufficiently represented in Oak Park or nearby communities, such as teen apparel retailers.
- ❑ Furthermore, these centers are surrounded by large clusters of complementary retail, making them important retail “hubs” or prime shopping destinations for Oak Park residents.
- ❑ *Oakbrook Mall, nearly 9 miles west of Oak Park, ranked highest among Consumer Survey respondents as to where they “most often shop” for key merchandise categories, e.g. women's, men's, children's apparel, gifts, home decorative items as well as shopping visits combined with dining—43% for Upscale Respondents, and 23% for Midscale.*
- ❑ River Forest Town Center (RFTC ), adjacent to Downtown Oak Park, and North Riverside Park Plaza, 3 miles away, are generally second in mall shopping frequency. Midscale residents generally shop more at North Riverside. Harlem Irving Plaza located approximately 5 miles north, is generally third in mall shopping frequency.
- ❑ Downtown Chicago earned only 9% of Upscale respondent shopping for women's apparel, the same as both RFTC and North Riverside Mall. Midscale respondents visited Downtown more often for their *dressy* apparel than did Upscale respondents, at 18%.

### Oak Park Residents' Primary Shopping Destinations

1. Oakbrook Mall	2,090,000 SF Super-Regional	Largest and best overall “suburban” mall and major retail hub and favorite of Oak Park Upscale residents. This open-air shopping complex offers most comprehensive mix of mid-price to luxury brand retailers addressing strong family , Baby Boomer to Generation Y & X segments. Anchors: Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Lord & Taylor, Marshall Fields, Sears and Bloomingdale's Home Store.
2. North Riverside Park Plaza	1,200,000 SF Super-Regional	Older enclosed shopping center with focus on Midscale households and second tier national chain retailers. Surrounding retail includes Kohl's which is among Midscale OP residents favorite stores to shop. Anchors: Carson Pirie Scott, JCPenney, Sears.
3. Harlem Irving Plaza	640,000 SF Regional	Enclosed shopping center with moderate mix of second tier national chain stores and limited apparel offering. Targets middle income households. Anchors: Kohl's, Carson Pirie Scott, Best Buy and Target. Surrounded by multiple retail centers making it an importing retail hub to the north.

## 9.3 Retail Competition Overview – Power/Large Community Centers

- ❑ There are 12 large Community Centers/Power Centers throughout the 9-mile radius area –with more under construction—that are prime shopping destinations or important *retail hubs* for consumers' daily living goods and services. They contain convenience, specialty and personal service type tenants in addition to one or more big box retailers.
- ❑ These power centers and the complementary retail that typically surrounds them, contain the industry's leading big box retailers, mass merchandisers, home improvement stores, supermarket chains, national specialty stores and food concepts.
- ❑ All of the industry's most sought after big box leaders have multiple locations within an approximate 4-mile radius. The number of units per featured store nearly doubles at the 9-Mile ring.

Store	# Locations--4 Mile Radius	Store	# Locations --4 Mile Radius
Target	5	Wal-Mart	2
Kmart	2	Menards	3
Home Depot	4	Lowe's	1
Best Buy	3	Circuit City	1

- ❑ Power Centers closest to Oak Park that feature the most comprehensive offerings of significant national stores are listed below. They are first-choice destinations for Oak Park residents for daily living goods.

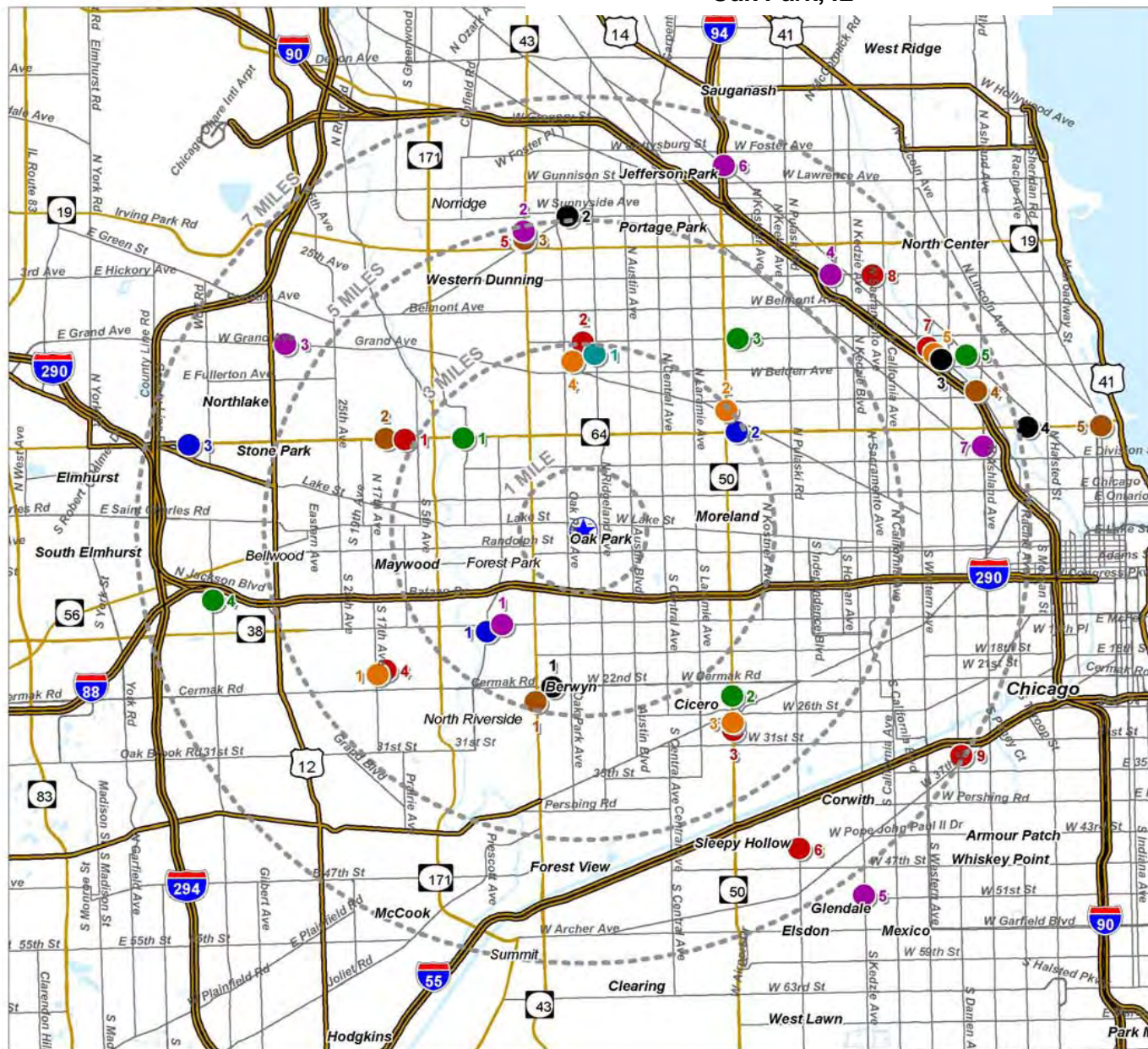
1. The Brickyard	600,000 SF	Relatively new power center located within 3 miles north of Oak Park with a very strong mix of key big box players plus a growing list of strong national chain specialty stores, service businesses and eateries. Key retailers include: Target, the only Lowes within 8 miles, Jewel-Osco, Office Max, Marshalls.
2. Broadview Village Square	750,000 SF	L-shaped plaza with powerhouse collection of big box and assorted specialty stores located 4 miles southwest of Oak Park near North Riverside Plaza – a favorite among Oak Park residents. Key retailers: SuperTarget, Home Depot, The Sports Authority, Office Max, PetSmart, Pep Boys.
3. Cicero Marketplace	600,000 SF	About 4 miles southeast of Oak Park this large strip center features the only Sam's Club in an 8-Mile range plus powerhouse mix of industry's best big boxes : Target, Home Depot, Office Max, A.J.Wright and Food 4 Less with a Menards home improvement store near by.
4. Winston Plaza	375,000 SF	Old shopping center slightly more than 3 miles northwest of Oak Park. Home to strong mix of big box players – Best Buy, Office Max, Grand Market – with Target and Jewel-Osco across the road.

- ❑ In addition, 2 large community-type centers are planned within an 8-mile radius from Oak Park that will add more big box stores to the marketplace. Although they will draw few Oak Park shoppers, they do contain stores that could be considerations for Oak Park's corridors. They include: *Roosevelt Collections* (Target, Whole Foods) and *Joffco Square* (Best Buy, Bed, Bath & Beyond, furniture retailer).

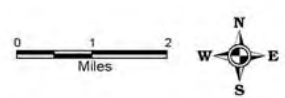


# Major Retailers Oak Park, IL

Prepared for 4Insights Inc  
1, 3, 5 and 7 Mile Radii



- Legend**
- ★ Site Location
  - Target
  - Wal-Mart
  - KMart
  - Menards
  - Home Depot
  - Lowe's
  - Circuit City
  - Best Buy



## 9.4 Retail Competition Overview – Alternative Shopping Centers & Districts

- ❑ **River Forest Town Center** (Harlem at Lake) is one of Oak Park’s major competitors—but could also be a *significant asset* to its redevelopment strategies, because it helps create a larger retail cluster destination. This convenience/specialty oriented, open-air lifestyle center of approximately 100,000 SF, has raised the standard for retailing in the area with national brand retailers.
  - Among Upscale Consumer Survey respondents, RFTC (and North Riverside Mall) ranked second to Oak Brook (9% vs. 43% for Oak Brook) as “shopped most often” for women’s casual apparel. Midscale residents rank RFTC equally with Oak Brook mall women’s casual apparel. RFTC’s major advantage over Downtown Oak Park, is of course, free surface parking, easy access and visibility of its stores from the Harlem/Lake intersection.
  - RFTC features the largest cluster of national chains in the area, including the only Whole Foods within an 8 mile radius. Almost all are national brands led by Chico’s, Ann Taylor Loft, Children’s Place, and Panera Bread.
  
- ❑ **Suburban Downtown shopping districts in neighboring** communities are also competitors to Oak Park.
  - Respondents to the 2008 4Insights’ Consumer Survey and Stakeholder Interviews as well as the 2007 Oak Park Focus Groups mentioned a wide variety of Central Business Districts as desirable shopping alternatives.
  - The Communities of Forest Park, Evanston, Hinsdale, La Grange, Elmhurst, Downers Grove, Highland Park, Wheaton, Naperville, and Libertyville, received the most mentions. Consumers liked their cohesive blend of retail, restaurants, personal and professional service businesses in environments that are conveniently accessible, attractive and lively.
  - These communities, like Oak Park, all have introduced national chains into their retail mix. In addition, some of these proven independent retailers may be interested in opening second locations or relocating to Oak Park if conditions were right.
  - It should be noted here that all of these Downtown districts have retail vacancies and turnover, for a variety of reasons, including escalating rents, outdated concepts, and management issues.
  - Forest Park’s revitalized Main Street strategy stands out as posing the most direct competition for Oak Park for a variety of reasons:
    - (1) Its close proximity along Madison St.
    - (2) Its inviting streetscape with free parallel and metered surface lot parking
    - (3) Its cohesive, contiguous line up of unique retail and dining, located in a well-defined, relatively contained environment that is easy to traverse and cross shop—all critical components to business district success



## 9.5 Retail Competition Overview – Downtown Chicago Retail

- ❑ **Chicago Neighborhoods have grown to offer both urban street retail, vertical mall-type shopping centers, and big box retail clusters** under high rise residential and/or office developments—or freestanding on corridors, such as on Clybourn. Older established neighborhood districts have developed lively center cores with retail and foodservice. The largest is Lincoln Park, which has extended into Bucktown and Wicker Park.
- ❑ Two factors account for the success of these boutique clusters:
  - (1) Enormous density of young, affluent, largely single professional households with high spending social, urban-oriented lifestyles, within a 5 or 10-minute drive. Most can even walk to shopping and dining from home.
    - For example: Within 10-minutes drive of the center of the Bucktown /Wicker Park retail cluster, (N. Damen at North Avenue) there are **355,900 households—almost 3 times the number of Oak Park. 83,000 of these households earn \$100k+ --more than 4 times that of Oak Park in the same 10-minute drive time.**
    - The Workplace Population is even stronger. Within 5 minutes, there are 102,592 workers. Within 10-minutes, there are an astounding **1 million workers—7 times more than Oak Park in the 10 minutes drive time.**
  - (2) The neighborhood retail is closer than suburban type mall options.
- ❑ **The newest Chicago neighborhood retail districts are the West Loop and the South Loop.** Both are eclectic mixes of national big boxes in vertical formats with structured parking—along with the hot new independent dining and boutiques that serve young professionals who work and/or live in these districts.
- ❑ **Downtown Chicago offers the most international, upscale retail offering on its Magnificent Mile and adjacent neighborhoods like Streeterville, Oak Street and the Gold Coast** (although vacancy rates are rising there as well). The mix excels in women’s and men’s apparel, shoes, gifts/jewelry at stores like Neiman Marcus, Tiffany’s, Saks Fifth Avenue, Gucci, Giorgio Armani, Max Mara, Chanel, and a host of others.
- ❑ **State Street in the Chicago Loop** is also in the midst of a major retail resurgence. Among the various projects in play to revitalize the area is Block 37 --- a high profile, transit-oriented, mixed use development that will feature 280,000 SF of retail, dining and entertainment venues on 4 levels by developer Joseph Freed & Associates. The project, which will face Macy’s Chicago flagship store, is scheduled to open next Spring, 2009. So far the project has leased 50% of the space. It has signed a 40,000 SF David Barton Gym and has attracted lots of interest from national retailers, among them --- Ben Sherman, Zara, Puma, Godiva, Club Monaco, Muvico, Steve Madden, Aveda and others.
  - State Street is actually more of a daily retail competitor to Oak Park, as Oak Park resident office workers in the Loop can do errands and apparel/home shopping from this extensive retail assortment on their lunch hour or on their way to/from The El, Metra, or parking structure.
- ❑ For **Dining**--Not surprisingly, Downtown Chicago ranked first in places for a sit-down dinner **OUTSIDE OF OAK PARK** with 1/3 of Consumer Survey respondents, followed by Forest Park. When having lunch or dinner was planned as part of a shopping trip, however, Upscale residents chose Oak Brook Mall first, followed closely by Downtown Oak Park. Midscale residents ranked Oak Park first, and Oak Brook came in second.



## 9.6 Retail Competition Overview – Convenience Retail

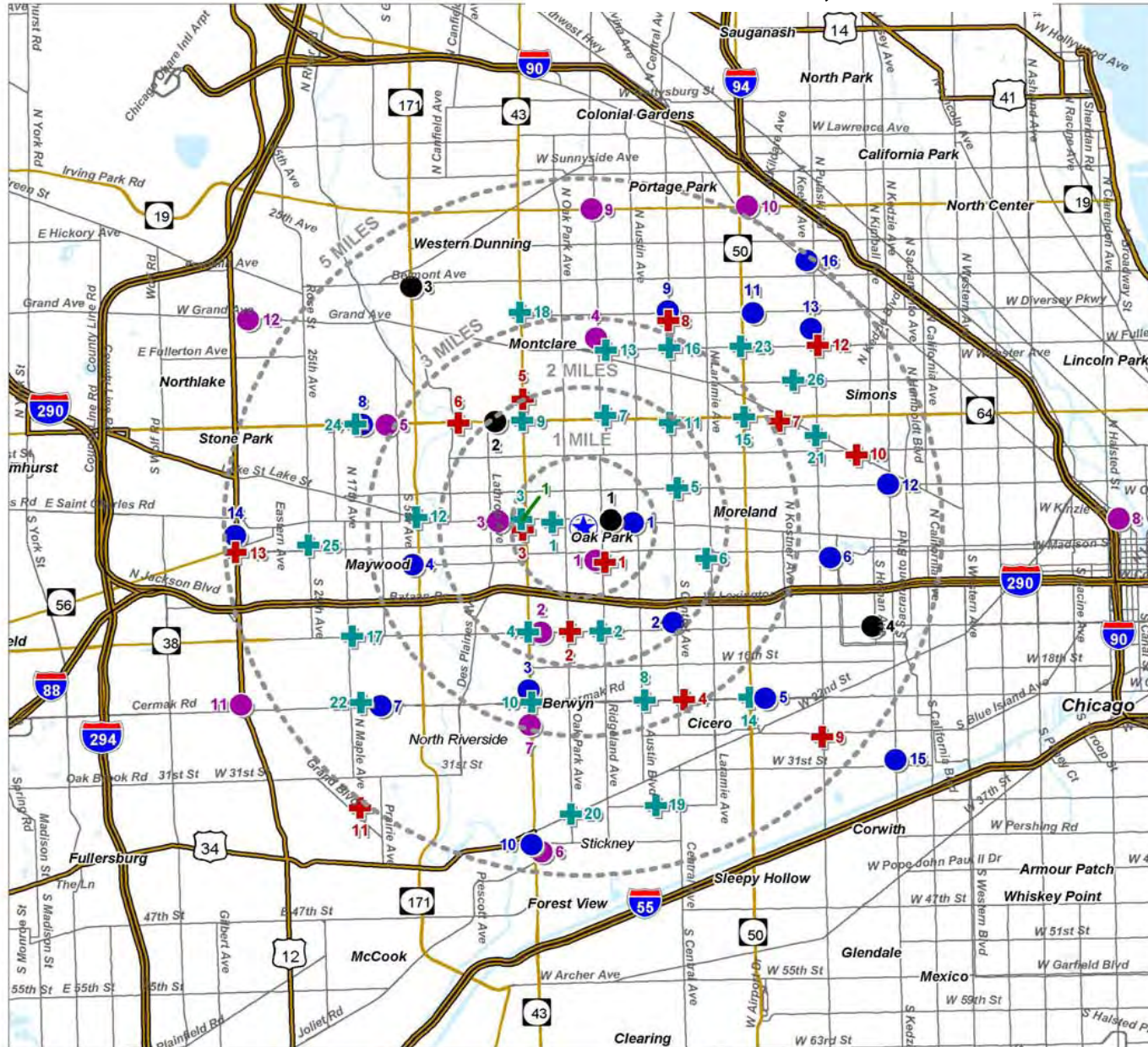
Convenience retail is the dominant retail category of Oak Park's neighborhood business districts

- ❑ **Convenience retail—primarily grocery stores, pharmacies, and personal service businesses**, is the backbone of most of Oak Park's business districts. 8 of the Village's 12 districts have at least one grocery store or convenience-type store selling food products. 4 districts feature at least one stand-alone pharmacy, but have multiple pharmacies if grocery store pharmacies are included.
- ❑ ***There is considerable overlap of competitors--approximately 18 CVS and Walgreens locations within a 3 mile area. If you add in the independent pharmacies, and those associated with the grocery store chains, the pool increases substantially to well over 40 pharmacy category retailers.***
- ❑ **Residents from every corner of the Village need not travel far to pick up daily necessities.** In addition to the grocery stores within Oak Park's boundaries ***there are over 60 grocery category stores ranging from small independents, ethnic food shops to supermarket chains, within a 2.5 mile distance of Oak Park and East Avenues***—plus the 7Elevens, Circle K or White Hen convenience chains that also dot the market. Chicago's leading grocery store chains—Aldi, Jewel-Osco, Dominick's, Whole Foods and Trader Joe's—have approximately 30 stores within a 5 mile area.
- ❑ **Consumers today are increasingly gravitating to more progressive grocery concepts:**
  - Major chains are enlarging and upgrading their stores and developing new higher quality concepts, e.g. WalMart, Target, updated Jewel-Osco's and Dominicks, etc.-- with extensive product lines designed to fit changing consumer lifestyles, e.g. on-site bakeries, take-away prepared foods, cafes and eating areas, and improved atmosphere.
  - Demand for cleaner, brighter, more updated stores has also grown with all the bells and whistles that modern retailers have introduced—Starbuck outposts, in-store banks, florist outposts, wine/gourmet shops, and seating areas.
  - The demand for more natural or "organic" products has also increased dramatically and more new concepts are expanding to satisfy consumer desire for a much wider array of fresher meats, seafood and produce— which Oak Park's older concepts do not provide.
- ❑ As more of these popular concepts, e.g. Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, continue to open within or closer to Oak Park's borders, and with the majority of Oak Park's Neighborhood districts unable to expand, these small independents in the convenience retail categories will find it increasingly challenging to keep up with consumer's increasing demands and the new concepts and services that are fulfilling them.

# Grocery and Drug Stores Oak Park, IL

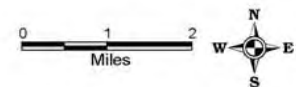
Prepared for 4Insights Inc

1, 2, 3 and 5 Mile Radii



## Legend

- Site Location
- Whole Foods
- Aldi
- Dominick's
- Jewel-Osco
- CVS
- Walgreens





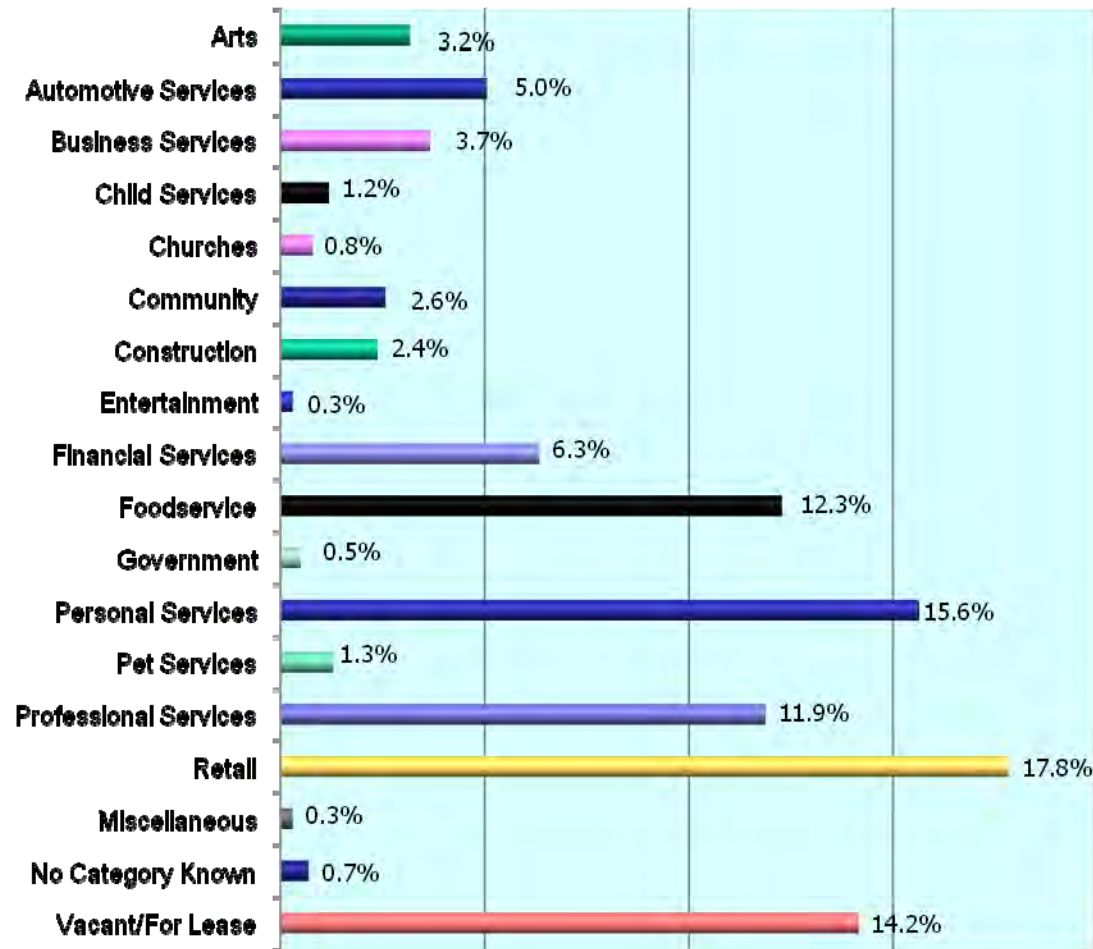
## 9.7 Retail Competition Overview—Village-Wide Business Inventory

4Insights inventoried and classified 1,010 street level businesses in Oak Park's 12 Business Districts to determine each one's retail strengths and opportunities.

- ❑ There are approximately 1,010 street level business locations in the combined districts: 867 currently in operation, 143 that appear to be vacant and for lease or sale.
- ❑ All of the businesses inventoried were categorized in two ways: (1) by major business categories; and (2) sub-categorized by their primary business/merchandise specialty. This allowed 4Insights to ascertain each district's distinct retail mix; and identify its advantages, challenges and resulting opportunities.
- ❑ For the business inventory, the term "Retail" is used to classify only establishments engaged in selling merchandise to consumers. The other categories are classified separately, e.g. food related businesses (full and limited service eateries, grocery and food specialty stores) and consumer service businesses (such as beauty salons, dry cleaners and fitness centers). In this way, the composition of businesses throughout the Village can be more specifically analyzed.
- ❑ Overall, Oak Park Districts' Retail represent a wide variety of business types that cater to both consumers basic living needs and discretionary spending. Non-retail businesses range from community-based services, professional and business-to-business services, and other street level offices. (Chart, next page).
- ❑ Businesses categorized as **true Retail throughout the Village account for 18%** (180 stores) of all street level businesses, the largest percentage of any business type. Foodservice, Personal Service, and Professional Service businesses follow -- in that order. **Combined, these four retail categories represent over 58% of all the businesses in the Village** with roughly 582 locations.
- ❑ Significantly, there are approximately 143 spaces that appear to be vacant and are either for lease or sale. These spaces represent 14% of all businesses in the Village. It is important to note, however, that this was based on visual observation only, and as such, may be underestimated, as vacant locations are often difficult to accurately identify.
  - **The largest number of vacancies tend to be in those districts where properties are being acquired to make way for anticipated redevelopment projects.** This is the case for Downtown, Madison St. and South-Marion where vacancies are running between 14%-17%.
  - Districts with the lowest vacancy rates (between 7%-11%) include Chicago @ Harlem Ave. and Garfield Rd. with only 3 vacancies each and South Town with 4 vacancies. However, these are also among the city's smallest businesses district.
  - Districts with notably high numbers of vacancies and no anticipated development activity include the Chicago @ Austin district with 10 vacancies, and North Ave with 20 vacancies .

## 9.7 Retail Competition Overview—Village-Wide Business Inventory

**Number of Businesses as % to total Village**



Number of Locations in Village

Arts	32
Automotive Services	51
Business Services	37
Child Services	12
Churches	8
Community	26
Construction	24
Entertainment	3
Financial Services	64
Foodservice	124
Government	5
Personal Services	158
Pet Services	13
Professional Services	120
Retail	180
Miscellaneous	3
No Category Known	7
<u>Vacant / For Lease</u>	<u>143</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1010</b>

## 9.7 Retail Competition Overview–Village-Wide Business Inventory

Retailers represent the largest number of business locations throughout the Village

- The 180 Retailer locations throughout Oak Park represent a wide variety of merchandise categories that are well dispersed among the Village's various Business Districts.

Store Categories	# of Locations	Store Categories	# of Locations	Store Categories	# of Locations
Apparel/Accessories	37	Gifts/Stationery	14	Pawn Shops	2
Beauty Products	5	Hardware/Nursery	3	Pet Supplies	2
Books/Comics	7	Home Furnishings	37	Pharmacies	8
Convenience/Variety	9	Jewelers	6	Shoes	6
Electronics	13	Music	10	Sporting Goods	5
Florist	5	Optical	3	Toys	1
Food Specialty	5	Office/School Supplies	2		

- Stores specializing in apparel and merchandise for the home represent the greatest portion of the businesses with each occupying an equal number of locations. Home furnishings concepts range from specialty boutiques to frame shops, many interior design studios, bedding stores, and antiques. The majority represent independent operations with only a few from national chains or name brands.
- *Apparel stores represent an equally large number of stores* within the group and are well dispersed among the 12 districts. Importantly, almost all are independent concepts which generally tend to draw from a more limited, localized customer base. The only national apparel retailers in the Village are Gap/Gap Kids, Lane Bryant, Old Navy and Benetton -- all located in Downtown.
  - *Consignment and resale shops have a large presence and represent the most dominant type of apparel stores throughout the Village.* Specialty concepts catering specifically to African Americans are also notable in the Village, and tend to be located at the eastern edge of the Village.
  - There are only a few children's and virtually no teen apparel stores which is an opportunity for growth, given the large number of schools within and near Oak Park, and the responses to the Stakeholder interviews.
  - In general, Oak Park's apparel stores cater to Moderate to Upper Moderate households with more conservative than trendy taste levels. The most upscale—but still under 'designer-priced' stores are in Downtown/South-Marion and The Avenue. Missing from the mix are stores that would appeal to "Gen X" customers and/or target the Village's most affluent consumers.
- Noticeably absent from all of the districts are national and regional brand chain retailers to 'anchor' the major shopping districts. **While independent concepts add a unique character to a market, carefully selected national chains would help attract shoppers from a larger trade area and would facilitate Oak Park's ability to bring in strong independent concepts.**



## 10.0 Market Positioning of the Village of Oak Park

The Central Business District will drive the image of Oak Park and the identity of its retail districts to consumers. Therefore, it is the first and most important target for the retail strategy.

□ Because of the magnitude of competitors within a 10-15 minute drive, **Oak Park must define a clear and unique identity for its *central retail core***, which 4Insights terms (for this Study only), as the *Combined Central Business District, (CCBD)*, which includes Downtown, South-Marion Street and The Avenue.

□ **Many of Oak Park's *points of difference* as a retail destination are already in place:** It is an "urban" suburb, at the transition where urban Chicago neighborhoods meet the first ring suburbs. As such, it has an urban street grid, with authentic city buildings; El /Metra stations; a real, working central business district, not a prefabricated main street or lifestyle center; a walkable, tree-lined CCBD; high pedestrian and vehicular activity on the street; and a diverse mix of eclectic residents--singles, families and couples--who are highly-educated and live in this blend of sophisticated urban and suburban lifestyles.

□ **Another *real point of difference* that sets a unique stage for retail is Oak Park's visible assets of art, architecture and history.** It is NOT the typical manufactured shopping center like those that surround it –North Riverside, Forest Park Plaza, and Oak Brook mall. *It is the only community among its suburban neighbors that can offer consumers this authentic, sophisticated "city" experience.*

□ ***This "eclectic, urban suburb" atmosphere is the key point of difference upon which to build the retail strategy.*** But it must start in the atmosphere--the look of the storefronts; visible areas of socializing; the "feel and pulse of the place." Additional retail development should be fully integrated into the street to integrate with the people and energy flow.

□ **The retail mix in the CCBD should follow with the same eclectic feel—a balance between the popular national brands that anchor the district—along with carefully selected independents who make it "real" and different from the standard mall mix.** The retail mix, of course, would be matched to the targeted customer bases identified in this Study.

□ **The CCBD, as a combination of retail and business destination, will be heavy on foodservice and socializing--a "great third place,"** with sit down casual and white tablecloth restaurants, quick-serve casual food for lunch, coffee shops and breakfast stops, wine bars, taverns, and music and the movies for after-hours life on the street. Its racial and ethnic diversity should be turned into a greater retail asset though an array of creative, entrepreneurial, ethnic foodservice as in the Chicago neighborhoods.

□ **This unique image of the "eclectic urban suburb" should unify the current three Districts of the CCBD:** Downtown District, South/Marion Street and The Avenue retail districts. While each can retain its name, a unified marketing campaign should, with consistent graphic images, drive marketing programs. The mix of retail should be balanced as one destination —not three overlapping sets of retailers. These districts should work together to create the largest, totally integrated, contiguous, walkable, and lively district in the area—one that no other community can easily duplicate.

## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

4Insights inventoried and conducted on-site assessments of each of Oak Park's 12 Business Districts. The districts vary significantly with one another in size, character, content and site characteristics--which fundamentally determine:

- Their competitive position in the marketplace
- The size and profile of their customer bases
- Their performance potential.

□To better understand their unique situations, and develop business strategies tailored to them, 4Insights categorized them into the following 4 district types.

- (1) **The Combined Central Business District**-- 4Insights defines the CCBD to include the 6 square block area that runs from Harlem to Forest--and Ontario to Lake--that Oak Park calls Downtown; and both the South/Marion and The Avenue districts. This *does not imply a change in name* for either Downtown, South/Marion or The Avenue.
- (2) **Corridors** --North Ave., Madison St. and Roosevelt Rd. Retail on these major east-west thoroughfares depends on auto-driven, single destination stops. Their retail mix, therefore, is mostly a series of stand-alone retail islands, with little possibility of any pedestrian cross shopping. *While they are visited by some neighborhood residents on foot, the majority of potential customers are motorists, either on destination trips to the retail islands--or as impulse stops en route to somewhere else.*
- (3) **Neighborhood Districts** – All of the remaining districts are classified as 'Neighborhood Districts', except the Harrison Street Arts District. They are: Chicago Ave. @ Harlem; Chicago Ave. @ Austin; Lake St. @ Austin; South Town; and Garfield @ Harlem Ave. *As such, they rely on a very small base of localized customers and their central purpose is to provide convenience (daily living) goods and services, which generate frequent visits with small expenditures per visit.*
- (4) **Specialty District**– the Harrison Street Arts District stands alone in this category. Currently, it is merchandised as a *hybrid of a Neighborhood and Specialty retail district*, with a unique focus on goods and services related to the Arts. Its low visibility location and configuration in a residential district, however, demand a destination trip of customers—the most difficult of customer bases to sustain without visibility .



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue—(CCBD)

### 1. District Description & Current Positioning

#### A. Location & Boundaries

- ❑ **4Insights views the Village’s core shopping area as a *Combined Central Business District (CCBD)* that encompasses three businesses districts--Downtown, the South Blvd./Marion St. and The Avenue.** Its boundaries are:
  - Lake Street from Harlem to Scoville Ave.; and Harlem Ave. from Ontario St. to South Blvd.
  - Marion Street from Ontario St. to Randolph St.
  - Oak Park Ave. from Lake St. to Pleasant St.

#### B. Composition, Major Drivers & Overall Image

- ❑ The 4Insights’ Consumer Survey clearly indicate that ***dining, shopping and entertainment (movies) are the main visit drivers to the CCBD.*** The Business Inventory indicates that these categories represent **nearly half (133)** of the street level businesses there. However, on a *Village-wide level, these categories are only 30%.*
- ❑ While dining and shopping establishments represent the majority of spaces in Downtown and The Avenue, in the South /Marion Street district, *personal service* type businesses dominate the mix, followed by retail and foodservice concepts—which confirms South/Marion’s more “neighborhood-serving” orientation.
- ❑ *Personal, financial and professional service businesses* make up another 26% of the CCBD with 71 locations. Because only street level storefronts were inventoried by 4Insights, these figures probably underestimate the true number and real importance of these businesses to the CCBD in attracting client and Workplace *Populations that support CCBD retail and restaurants.*

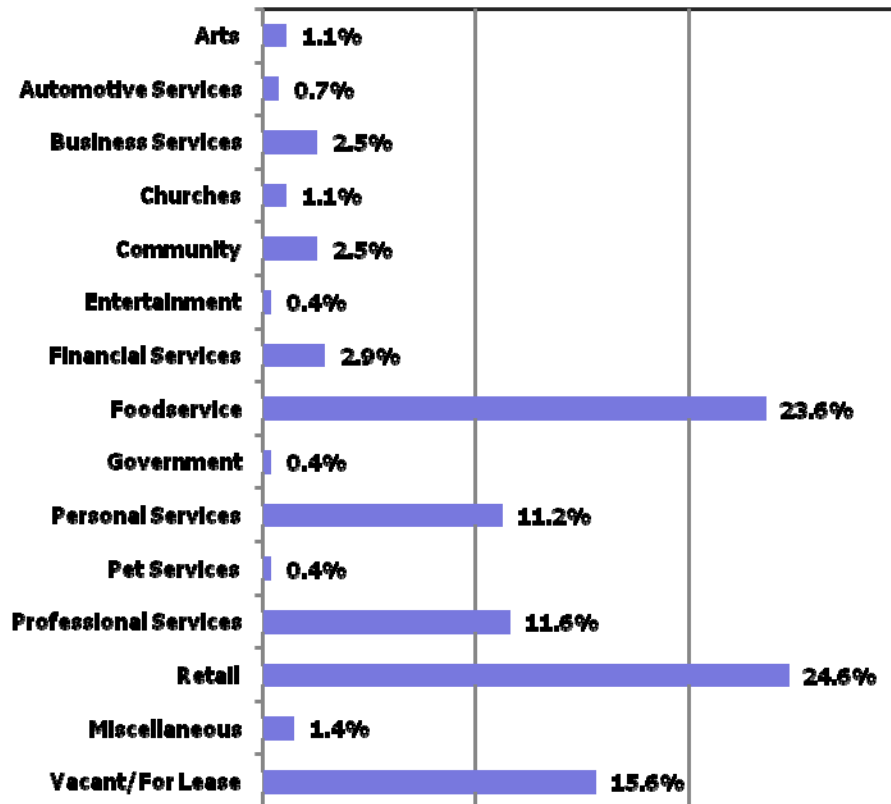
# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue—CCBD, cont'd

### B. Composition, Major Drivers & Overall Image, cont'd

- ❑ The chart below indicates the composition of the CCBD businesses—clearly dominated by Foodservice and Retail Stores and Services. Vacancies accounted for 16% of CCBD spaces.
- ❑ The Lake St. Theater, with less than 1% of spaces, was tied with shopping and dining “reason for visiting Downtown,” (4Insights Survey), suggesting that **socializing and entertainment are important drivers of CCBD visits.**

**CCBD - Combined Districts - Category Breakdown\***



Number of locations per Business Category				
Business Category	DWTN	THE AVE.	SOUTH/MARION	CBD TOTAL
Arts		3		3
Automotive Services		1	1	2
Business Services	5	2		7
Churches	3			3
Community		3	4	7
Entertainment	1			1
Financial Services	4	4		8
Foodservice	33	26	6	65
Government	1			1
Personal Services	13	11	7	31
Pet Services		1		1
Professional Services	16	12	4	32
Retail	39	25	4	68
Miscellaneous		1	3	4
Vacancies	24	14	5	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>276</b>

\* Based on the number of spaces per category

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue--CCBD, cont'd

### 1. District Description & Current Positioning, cont'd.

#### B. Composition, Major Drivers & Overall Image, cont'd.

- **There are 68 retail stores in the Combined Central Business District.**

Number of Retailers by Category in "CCBD" (Combined Central Business District of Downtown, South/Marion, The Avenue)					
MERCHANDISE CAT.	# of STORES	MERCHANDISE CAT.	# of STORES	MERCHANDISE CAT.	# of STORES
Apparel/Accessories	18	Florists	3	Toys	1
Books	4	Gifts/Stationery	10	Health/Beauty	1
Convenience/Pharmacy	2	Home Furnishings	15	<u>Jewelers</u>	<u>1</u>
Personal Technology	10	Shoes	3	TOTAL	68

- **Apparel category stores dominate retail stores, with 18 stores or 26% of the CCDB, with most located in the Downtown district (12 stores).** The only national brand stores in the Village are found there as well. Most are independents that target Baby Boomer adults at moderate to upper-moderate price points. From exterior observation, while quality varies, the majority are well merchandised, well-presented, priced appropriately for the market, and well-suited for a CCBD environment.
  - The offering consists of 6 women's apparel; 1 men's apparel; 4 men's & women's merchandise stores; 2 children's apparel; 1 women's accessories; and 4 consignment/thrifts shops.
  - *The major disadvantage of the current CCBD apparel mix is that there are too few concepts scattered throughout the large CCBD area, and clusters are broken up among Downtown and The Avenue.*
  - Second, these *customer segments are not covered adequately in the current CCBD store mix*: (1) Teens (other than the consignment/resale shops that tend to appeal to teens); (2) Quality children's apparel; (3) Men's apparel; (4) Unisex clothing; (5) Accessories; (6) Shoes; and (7) Women's apparel, especially targeting Gen X and the most affluent. A synergistic cluster of all of these categories would command a stronger shopping draw to the three districts of the CCBD.
  - Half of the stores in Downtown are located on Lake St. near the Harlem Ave. intersection (the nationals) with the remaining half located in the South-Marion St. district (independent boutiques) that somewhat overlap with the mix of independent boutiques located in The Avenue.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue—CCBD, cont'd

### 1. District Description & Current Positioning, cont'd.

#### B. Composition, Major Drivers & Overall Image, cont'd

- ❑ **Gifts and Home furnishings comprise an equally large number of stores in the CCBD (25).** All are independent 'boutiques' targeting both residents of Oak Park and River Forest, as well as out of town attraction visitors.
  - They offer a wide range of specialties that include: fine stationery; gifts/home accessories; interior design studios/stores; antiques; and fun, kitschy eclectic gift boutiques. Their quality is mixed.
  - Just like the Apparel stores, a larger, more contiguous cluster of these gift/home furnishings boutiques would draw more traffic and encourage cross-shopping.
- ❑ **Foodservice concepts occupy nearly as many spaces (65) throughout the CBD as retailers,** with again, most located in Downtown.
  - The CCBD has a great array of popular ethnic concepts and quick serve eateries that serve the Workplace Population. Foodservice, as stated previously, is a prime driver of CCBD trips—therefore, high quality, unique, and ethnic foodservice concepts are a crucial component of Oak Park retail strategy.
  - Downtown has the largest cluster of all foodservice units (grocery, restaurants, fast food and food specialty outlets)—typical of a Central Business District--but The Avenue leads in dinner-type restaurants, which is its major draw. (see chart below)
  - Almost all of the restaurants throughout the CCBD are from local or regional operators and range from small cafes, bistros, ethnic fare to mostly casual sit down concepts.

Foodservice Businesses by District				
	Downtown	The Avenue	S/Marion	TOTAL
Restaurants	12	18	3	33
Fast Food	8	1	2	11
Food Specialty	13	6	1	20
Grocery Stores	0	1	0	1

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue –CCBD, cont’d

### 2. Evaluation by Retail Criteria

#### A. Contiguous Retail Flow

- Retail stores flow well from the Harlem & Lake intersection to Forest Ave.; and from Lake to Marion St. north of North Blvd. They are also located within a comfortable pedestrian distance. The Avenue also permits cross shopping within its own district cross streets.
- However, to the consumer, The Avenue and Downtown appear too far removed to park just once (unless it's fine weather)—and the retail flow is broken by several large non-retail institutions, e.g. the post office, Unity Temple, the Library, churches, and Scoville Park. To the extent that these districts can be perceived to be more contiguous, the consumer will be encouraged to think of them as ONE destination shopping choice, not one of three exclusive choices.
- Between the Downtown District and South-Marion, and South Oak Park Avenue, the EL inserts a huge barrier to consumer pedestrian traffic heading south from Lake St. New stores, like the Marion St. Cheese Market will help mitigate these barriers. The Village can encourage this cross-district shopping/dining with: (1) way finding and promotional signage, (2) easily identified paths to parking, (3) clear parking limit signage, (4) warm, bright lighting under EI viaducts and around EI stops (5) Kiosk signage at both EL stations with maps showing routes between the districts, the location of parking, and the stores in each area, and (6) an avoidance of any additional non-retail uses that would further enlarge the retail void between the districts. Work should progress to remove those that are there, such as real estate offices. In addition, marketing each district as a separate entity encourages consumers to think of them as separate districts, farther apart and an 'either/or' decision for shopping or dining. They should be marketed in a unified theme and campaign.

#### B. Storefronts & Streetscape Appearance

- Streetscape and atmosphere, as stated previously, are crucial to differentiating the CCBD from other communities. Marion Street obviously serves as the standard for streetscape improvements. It is more important to have at least some initial streetscape improvements on Lake Street made sooner, than to wait until the entire CCBD can be brought to the caliber of Marion Street. The top priority for improvement is to install professionally designed, consistent window covers on vacant storefronts.

#### C. Motorist & Pedestrian Traffic Flow

- Motorist traffic can affect shopper attraction to the CCBD. The congestion that begins at Harlem/Lake and continues eastward on Lake St. especially at peak times, can discourage shoppers from turning right at Harlem onto Lake or making the decision to run into a store for a quick purchase. It will also be important to increase the driveway entrance size and signage visibility for any new retail development on Harlem south of the Lake St. intersection.
- Some of the congestion on Lake is caused by motorists looking for on-street parking spaces. Directional signage to garages, some of which is hard to read currently, can be improved to mitigate "circling."



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/Avenue –CCBD, cont'd

### 2. Evaluation by Retail Potential Criteria, cont'd.

#### D. Visibility of the Retail Cluster

- Visibility and access are not issues for the Lake Street portions of the CCBD. The Marion Street shopping area also has good visibility but accessibility is less evident from Lake St. The retail areas south of the EL are more problematic. They lack both visibility given the Station overpass, and their access is limited to Oak Park's interior streets. **The new Colt St. Development should be planned to provide maximum street visibility for its retail tenants, not only from Lake Street, but from Station Street, Westgate, North Ave. and the EL station.**

#### E. Parking Availability, Access, Signage, and Limitations

- Parking is one of the most critical issues facing the CCBD as demonstrated by the Consumer Survey and the Stakeholder Interviews. It is essential the Village provide the Consumer with the confidence that parking is adequate, easily accessible, reasonably priced, well signed in terms of directions and time limits, with long enough intervals to permit both shopping, dining, and/or appointments without having to return to the meter.

#### F. Competition

As the major retail hub in Oak Park, the CCBD competes with the other major shopping hubs and neighboring communities described in Section 9.0. The CCBD competes very little with some retailers in neighborhood districts throughout the Village for convenience oriented trips— because *consumers report avoiding Downtown for daily-living needs because of parking and congestion issues*. Most unfortunately, Downtown competes with The Avenue because there is substantial overlap in the mix of very similar stores and services. This situation could be mitigated with a retail strategy that attempts to lessen the duplication over time.

- Although River Forest Town Center is a major competitor, if the retail mix in the Colt site development is planned to be synergistic with it, a larger destination retail hub will be created that should attract more consumers and promote cross-shopping--if proper access can be provided across Harlem Ave.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/ Avenue –CCBD cont'd

### 2. Evaluation by Retail Criteria, cont'd

#### G. Expansion/Development or Redevelopment Opportunities

- *Expansion of the CCBD boundaries are limited.* Other than the Whiteco development on Ontario St., opportunities to expand either north/south and east/west are not anticipated within the next 2-3 years. Therefore, all anticipated development/redevelopment activity during that time is in existing districts. The retail strategy that follows is based on what development activity is currently anticipated in the CCBD.
- *Key pipeline developments* for new clusters of retail include: (1) the Colt Building development which will add up to 69,000 SF of retail to the CCBD; (2) the northeast corner of Lake St. and Forest Ave.; and (3) The Avenue Club at South Blvd. and S. Oak Park Avenue-- with 42 condominium units and 11,500 SF of retail.
- *There are 43 observed street level vacancies* throughout the CCBD area – 24 in Downtown, 14 in The Avenue and 5 in South-Marion. Half of the currently vacant spaces will be used for the developments detailed above. Four of these face the proposed Colt Building development, with the remaining vacancies scattered throughout the various CCBD areas.

### 3. Conclusions and Retail Strategy Recommendations

- A. Create a larger, unified CCBD district that is the greater sum of its distinct parts and that *complement* rather than *compete with one another*.** Unite consumers' perception of a contiguous shopping offering through unified streetscape design, central marketing efforts, consistent signage graphics, and a dedicated shuttle service for residents and visitors. Most important, planning the retail mix strategically, can build synergy and help draw consumers along for more cross shopping/dining.
- B. Oak Park's major gateway to Downtown—the Lake & Harlem intersection--should capture consumers by presenting the initial face of the new expanded CCBD retail offering.** The Colt Building development, because it is planned to attract national anchors, will be instrumental in setting this tone and should help future leasing efforts for the entire CCBD. The Colt development's retail mix should be carefully selected to complement, not compete with current viable CCBD businesses.
- C. Reduce the duplication of retail concepts where possible and redistribute concepts among the areas to help craft or solidify each districts unique identity.**
  - Because of the natural barriers like the EL; the distance between Downtown and The Avenue; and the nature of their current business mix and property ownership, these three districts have been functioning and marketing themselves independently. As a result, there is *duplication among some stores and business categories serving similar needs*. This further fractionalizes an already small consumer market, uses up limited spaces for the same retail offering; and therefore makes it more challenging for retailers.
  - Over time, the strategy should be to build a critical mass and establish each district's unique identity within the context of one 'super shopping destination'. Apparel retailers can anchor downtown. Home furnishings and décor, can become the hallmark of The Avenue, and Marion Street and the South Marion District can be the gathering spot for the latest dining and assorted shopping boutiques.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue—CCBD, cont'd

### 3. Conclusions & Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd

#### D. Take advantage of the traffic and drawing power that River Forest Town Center brings to the Harlem /Lake gateway.

- With limited opportunities for that center to expand, merchandise the Downtown portion of Oak Park as complementary to RFTC and a more compelling shopping hub, which effectively expands Downtown's key merchandise categories.

#### E. Fill in merchandise category gaps that the market assessment indicates are needed with those stores Consumer Survey respondents want--rounding out the mix in the CCBD:

- Key among them is *apparel*—especially concepts targeting Gen X and unisex, men's, teens and 18-24 young adults, children, and baby boomers. The *price points* should be along the lines of lifestyle or mall-type retailers and department stores—not designer top pricing. The national brand apparel retailers recommended for the Colt development are broad-appeal, upper-midscale to upscale price points—not exclusive designer stores.
  - *Designer apparel boutiques are usually highest risk tenants* because: (1) they divide the consumer base into very small niches, based on high income and differing fashion tastes, so they require high density markets; (2) only 17% of Upscale Consumer Survey respondents reported shopping at boutiques; (3) large enough clusters of boutiques will be necessary, like those already established in areas like Bucktown to be competitive—which will require many retail spaces in close proximity.
    - *A few apparel boutiques, however, are possible.* Those that are not in designer price points and have the proven ability to draw their own clientele and not depend on street traffic, can selectively be recruited as a second phase of Oak Park's retail strategy. (Concept ideas follow in Section 10.0)
    - *The least risky boutiques* are those that appeal to Oak Park's three other customer bases besides residents (Workplace and Daytime Populations and Visitors). These include: fashion accessories, home décor, housewares, gifts and crafts, personal technology, cosmetics and women's shoes, among others.
  - *Increase fast casual concepts* for the Downtown district lunchtime workers, and sit down restaurants that are not top price points, geared to socializing adults, with some family options. Consider concepts that offer both, like taverns, restaurants with live music on weekends, sports bars, "gastro-pubs" (micro breweries with full menu options). Some will require larger gross leasable areas.
  - *Entertainment concepts* such as a Children's Museum or Comedy Club in the upper floors of the Colt site, could be attractive as they offer additional reasons to visit, and are frequently combined with dining and browsing.
- #### F. Recruit a few, select national chain concepts to broaden the market draw and facilitate the recruitment of high-quality independents. A carefully selected set of national chain concepts can help set the proper tone or foundation for the intended retail strategy. They add credibility to an area, bring an expanded base of customers which in turn help entice a better quality pool of independents while enhancing their consumer traffic.

## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

### 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

#### 3. Conclusions & Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd.

**G. Establish a distinct retail identity for each of the three CCBD districts that are balanced as a whole shopping destination, while offering enough differences to encourage cross visitation.**

- Downtown including Marion St. to North Blvd. — As the Village's *primary commercial and Workplace Population center*, it should support the broadest assortment of business categories--retail, dining, personal, financial and professional services.
  - Because of the opportunity the Colt building presents for bringing national apparel concepts, the Downtown district can serve as the concentration of national brand apparel stores, augmented by the related merchandise categories of shoes, accessories, and cosmetics that attract the same customer bases.
  - Entertainment is also an important theme for the district with the Lake Theater and the possibility for an entertainment concept, such as the Wonder Works Children's Museum and a Comedy Club in the upper floor of the Colt project to draw daytime and evening bar/dining traffic.
- South Blvd. / South Marion St. – Further exploit the area's current identity as a *destination for unique restaurants*, targeting neighborhood residents, Downtown shoppers, and visitors staying at the Carlton hotel. As Downtown's Lake St. begins to strengthen and focuses on expanding its retail offerings, the opportunity for additional restaurants/taverns to spill over to South/Marion should increase.
- The Avenue/Oak Park Ave. to North Blvd. – Strengthen its current retail image as a destination for a wide variety of high *quality dining options* and unique and interesting *gift and specialty boutiques*. Over time, encourage property owners and developers to lease to tenants who reinforce this identity.
  - *Develop a retail cluster to appeal to teens in the Avenue, which is close to the high school.* This is a current void and among the most requested categories. Establish a collection of businesses that can begin with an apparel concept or two, such as American Apparel, or E Street Denim (jeans), and then build a meaningful assortment of retail that complements them. Target categories are quick serve food uses, personal technology, sports apparel and equipment, music, and teen fashion accessories.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South- Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 3. Conclusions & Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd

#### H. Better capture of spending by out-of-town visitors to Oak Park attractions in the entire CCBD:

- *Relocate the current Visitor Center* from its garage location on Forest Ave. to the new development on the corner of Forest and Lake. This will provide wider visibility for motorists turning off of Harlem onto Lake—and also for pedestrians from the El on Marion St., jogging over to Forest to head north to the F.L. Wright attractions. **The Visitor Center can also be a central place for *local residents* to get information on retailers and special events.**
- *Install* unmanned Kiosk signs at both the Harlem and Oak Park Avenue stops, that show clear alternate routes to all three CCBD districts and their retail offerings.
- *Change the traffic routing signs* to encourage motorists to turn onto Forest to visit the Visitor Center, not bypass downtown to proceed to Oak Park Ave, and then be routed west again back to Forest. Post clearly readable directional signs, with unified graphics, to parking options both at the Harlem end of Lake and The Avenue.
- *Unify Visitor marketing efforts by Oak Park's major attractions* both on their web sites and contact with tour groups and individuals to promote cross shopping and dining in the context of a large, unified and walkable district as part of the attraction visit—with *disembarking options at both Harlem and Oak Park Ave.*



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District

## 11.1 Downtown /South-Marion /The Avenue--CCBD

### 3. Conclusions and Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd—The Colt Site Development

#### I. The Colt Site Development –Tenant Mix Recommendations

- The Colt project will be integral to repositioning the CCBD retail. According to the Avalon Bay/Clark St. Development proposal revisions submitted to the Village in May, 2008, the project features upwards of 69,000 SF of retail space --- approximately 36,000 SF on the ground floor and another 33,000 SF of second floor retail.
- The chart that follows details the Tenant Mix Strategy for this project as it is currently configured in the Avalon Bay/Clark St. Development proposal. The plan details 4Insights' recommendations for the mix of retail that is matched to the customer bases and opportunities in the competitive market, as described in this Study.
  - The specific retailers listed are provided as examples of the type and caliber of tenants that should succeed in the Colt site Development--*provided that all other elements conducive to shopping, as described in this Study, are present*. The retailers listed represent viable and appropriate concepts in today's retail line-up—but because of the extreme volatility of the national retail sector, *a thorough update of each candidate's viability should be provided by the Developer before entering the leasing market*. New appropriate retail concepts may also emerge in the 2-3 year time period.

#### J. The Colt project, according to preliminary plans, presents a number of design issues that warrant discussion:

- The GLA facing Lake St. (13,000 SF) is limited, lessening the visual impact necessary at the CCBD's most important retail gateway corridor. The amount of first floor GLA (36,000 SF) is not enough space for a critical mass of retail to rival the competing shopping centers across Harlem and nearby.
- In the second floor space, recruiting a synergistic group of retailers will be difficult. There is also a limited pool of retailers that have adaptable 2-story concepts. Therefore, the space will most likely be leased to non-retail uses which reduces the size of the possible retail cluster—but might be able to drive Daytime traffic if the concepts were carefully selected.
- It appears from the preliminary design that retail on the new Station St. corridor will not have excellent visibility or access to the Downtown street grid. Currently, it has not been determined what the stores along Station St. will face. More retail storefronts would be ideal and would attract more shoppers to the street. These retailers should not face a blank, non-retail wall just south of Lake St. and a parking lot that adjoins the back of retail buildings.
- With access limited to one-way traffic at Marion St., the businesses located on Westgate will be more likely to succeed if the street were converted to a two-way street with access both ways on/off Marion.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 4. Colt Building – Retail Strategy & Tenant Mix Plan

Project Location	Key Categories/Primary Strategy Direction	Tenant Considerations	
<p>Lake St. Frontage 13,000 SF</p>	<p><u>Two national brand apparel</u> concepts plus <u>one signature restaurant</u> that suit the needs of the customer bases in a CBD environment – daytime workplace pop., visitors, spurs after work entertainment or dining, appeals to a Gen X to Boomer age profile</p> <p>Select strong national brand retailers that will anchor the project, set tone and identity for the rest of the leasing direction. Concepts need to be moderate to upper-moderate in price and address consumers more conservative to traditional/ updated traditional taste level. Concepts that best complement the target customer and tenant strategy at River Forest Town Center.</p>	<p><u>Apparel</u> AnnTaylor Banana Republic* Coldwater Creek* Eddie Bauer* H &amp; M* J. Crew* J. Jill Jos. A. Bank Clothiers* MARTIN + OSA White House/Black Market*</p>	<p><u>Restaurants</u> P.F. Chang's* Harry Caray's* California Pizza Kitchen* Tinfish Weber's Grill Restaurant Goose Island Brewing Inc.</p> <p><u>Home</u> Sur la Table West Elm CB2</p>
<p><u>North Building</u> Station St. &amp; Westgate St. 12,000 SF</p>	<p>Continue with series of smaller stores that complement apparel anchors positioned on Lake St. from mostly national chains. Key categories to consider include: shoes, accessories, fine jewelry, beauty/cosmetics, athletic apparel. Personal service type concepts, ie: a spa, massage, are recommended for Westgate St. where visibility and access is limited.</p>	<p>Aveda Bare Escentuals Biggby Coffee Francesca's Collection* Free People Justice Lori's Designer Shoes Lucy Lululemon Athlectia Massage Envy Peet's Coffee &amp; Tea Potbelly Sandwich Works*</p>	<p>Pumpkin Patch Red Mango Sephora* Skechers Sunglass Hut Swatch Ulta Vera Bradley Victoria's Secret Zazu Salon &amp; Spa Victoria's Secret</p>
<p><u>South Building</u> Station St. &amp; North Blvd. 11,000 SF</p>	<p>Continuation of Station St. North Building strategy but categories can expand to include gifts, specialty, home related, sports apparel and equipment, and small food concepts. A blend of national chains and best independents.</p>		
<p>Second Level 33,000 SF</p>	<p>Unless 2-level apparel or restaurant concepts can be recruited, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will be difficult to lease to any retail concept. Best use of the space is either an entertainment, educational or a professional type facility that will bring daytime and non-residents to the CBD.</p>	<p>Wonder Works Children's Museum Comedy Club/Jazz Club/Wine Bar with Music Health Spa</p>	
		<p>* Priority concepts based on Oak Park requests &amp; pivotal to achieving the proposed CCBD strategy</p>	

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue--CCBD

### 5. Combined Business District (CCBD) Beyond the Colt Project–Tenant Mix Strategy

- The table that follows provides a list of tenant recommendations for the remaining CCBD based on the following key considerations:
  - Tenant recommendations are an extension of and complement the direction set by the Colt building development.
  - Concepts address the needs of the customer bases targeted for the CCBD—workplace populations, tourists, visitors, residents.
  - Emphasis on goods and services that appeals to their needs—quick errand runs, lunchtime/dinnertime eateries, fast impulse purchases, stores/merchandise that are convenience oriented, critical mass of stores that encourages browsing, and after-hours hot spots to enjoy with friends or family.
  - Concepts that are appropriately priced—not too upscale or too mainstream, no luxury/designer.
  - Generation X to Baby Boomer segments are the primary target customers.
  - A mix of businesses that favor high quality, carefully selected independents that speak to the area’s diversity, urban sophistication and deep family orientation. The mix takes its cues from the Chicago neighborhood districts where Oak Park residents are likely to be from, as opposed to the suburban shopping centers and communities to the west.
- The list of tenant prospects addresses those merchandise categories that are best suited to creating a balanced and comprehensive assortment of businesses for the CCBD.
- The list includes a set of apparel businesses for the purpose of illustrating the caliber of stores that would fit the image and identity proposed for the CCBD, however, it is important to reiterate that independent apparel boutiques are a high risk strategy and the most vulnerable to economic downturns.
- Both independent operators from throughout the Chicago market place and some well selected national brand concerns are represented.
- The list is intended to serve primarily as examples of tenants that would be appropriate for the CCBD based on today’s standards. They are not intended to be all inclusive and retail brokers should be consulted to provide more information on their interest, expansion plans, and lease requirements after the market recovers.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue –CCBD

### 6. CCBD Tenant Recommendations by Key Merchandise Categories

- The primary purpose of the list below is to **illustrate the type and caliber of stores** that would be suitable for the CCBD in terms of pricing, styling and target customers— *these are not necessarily stores to be on a recruitment list for Oak Park*. The stores were selected to illustrate price strategies that range from moderate to upscale (Oak Brook mall-type stores), but not luxury designer; with styling that is sophisticated yet not too avant garde; and that would appeal to Gen X to Baby Boomer consumers for visits from home, the workplace--and non-residents outside of Oak Park’s trade area.
- Apparel boutiques, as previously mentioned, appeal to smaller niches of the customer base and are higher risk than stores with more broad appeal --therefore proven operators are recommended. **Only 1-2 concepts within each merchandise category from the list below are recommended for the CCBD.**

MERCHANDISE CATEGORY	STORE NAME	NOTES
Women’s Apparel	Girlfriend’s Closet	Frankfort, darling yet modern Gen X casual clothing & jeans
	Belly Couture	LaGrange & Yorktown Mall, maternity apparel concept
	Phoebe & Frances	Lake Forest, contemporary women’s clothing targeting Gen X
	Art Effect	Lincoln Park, fun, eclectic clothing, accessories, gifts, home general store
	Sara Jane	Old Town, modern Gen X casual clothing
	Utopia	LaGrange, Gen X modern, trendy attire
Children’s Apparel	Clothes Minded	Bucktown, everyday wear for the urban, Gen X girl
	Red Balloon	Lincoln Park, clothing, furniture, toys and books
	Grow	Bucktown, modern, organic clothing and furnishings for small children
	Stinky Pants	Lincoln Park, hip designer apparel for babies and small children
Men & Women	Psycho Baby	Bucktown, modern, eclectic clothing , gifts and toys for hip kids
	Robin Richman	Bucktown, trendy casual and dress clothing for Gen X
	E Street Denim	Highland Park, upscale jeans headquarters
	Untitled	Bucktown, latest styles, innovative designers, denim for everyone
Fashion Accessories & Shoes	The Blue Jean Bar	Lincoln Park, a “dazzling” selection of industry’s best brands for men and women
	Brooklyn Industries	Bucktown, urban clothing for young adults looking for modern silhouettes with an edge
	Gem A Jewelry Store	Wicker Park, creative jewelry
	Baubles by Maclyn	Naperville, fashion accessories
	Style Studio	Downer’s Grove, shoes, accessories & home décor
	Shooz on Madison	West Loop, women’s shoes
	1154 Lill Studio	Lincoln Park, upscale design your own handbag
	Spoil Me	Bucktown, fun, fanciful women’s accessories boutique

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 6. CCBD Tenant Recommendations by Key Merchandise Categories

MERCHANDISE CATEGORY	STORE NAME	NOTES
Beauty / Environment	Blue Mercury	Lincoln Park, apothecary spa chain
	Merz Apothecary	Lincoln Ave. modern day multi-brand, apothecary
	Method	Lincoln Park, environmentally conscience cleaning products
	Blueberry Moon	Lincoln Park, an Aveda lifestyle salon and spa
Gifts	Findables	Bucktown, eclectic gifts and home décor
	Stitch	Bucktown, personal leather goods and unusual gifts
	Virtu	Bucktown, eclectic mix of modern, artisan quality gifts/jewelry
	All She Wrote	Lincoln Park, hip gifts and stationery retailer
	Paper Doll	Bucktown, small but special vintage and modern stationery and gifts
	Elevenzees	Bucktown, a little bit of everything from home décor, gifts to clothing items
Home	SoTish	La Grange, modern elegant gifts & home furnishings
	Finishing Touches	Lake Forest, elegant home furnishings
	Design Within Reach	Bucktown, the best in modern furniture at every price point
	Lille	Bucktown, practical ware and eclectic home accessories from around world
	Art Affects	Lincoln Park, modern general store of assorted gifts, kitchen gadgets and home décor
	Zella Brown	Bucktown, eclectic mix of furniture, home décor, accessories and jewelry
Specialty	Symmetry	Bucktown, contemporary furniture and accessories with a global flair
	Knitche	Downers Grove, darling yarn, needlework store with classes
	The Quilt Basket	Downers Grove, quilting store with classes
	Nina	Wicker Park, fine yarn, knitting store



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 7. CCBD Tenant Recommendations–Teen-oriented Collection

- Businesses directed to teens is among the most requested categories and there are no noticeable areas within the various Oak Park districts that serves as a destination for this important consumer segment.
- The Avenue district ,given its proximity to the schools and neighborhood orientation, would be the most appropriate area in which to begin to accumulate space to build an area dedicated to this customer base.
- The following list illustrates examples of the caliber and type of stores that would accomplish this effort. It is not meant to be a definitive recruitment list for Oak Park.

MERCHANDISE CATEGORY	STORE NAME	NOTES
Teen-oriented Collection	American Apparel	National tenant, well priced basic clothing for both genders
	Lush	National, fresh handmade cosmetics and bath products
	BeneFit	National, cosmetics & body care set in a whimsical candy store atmosphere
	Uncle Dan's	Chicago local, family casual and active clothing/sports gear – a teen favorite
	Play It Again Sports	National, new & used sports /fitness clothing & equipment
	Boll Weevil	Downers Grove, jeans and casual clothing for both genders
	Paul Frank	Casual clothing known for its monkey face mascot
	Crossroads Trading Co.	Buy-sell trading outlet
	Resale concept	Strong local resale/consignment thrift shop that would address both genders

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue--CCBD

### 8. CCBD Tenant Recommendations--Foodservice Strategy

- Dining is among the top reason people visit Oak Park’s Downtown and The Avenue districts and will be integral to the overall CCBD strategy. The intent is to recruit concepts that will add energy, additional reasons to come to or stay in the area, and reflect the diversity of Oak Park’s customer bases and “*unique, authentic urban suburb*” Market Positioning.
- The selection of foodservice uses—fast food, food specialty, restaurants---is based on the criteria described previously.
- The restaurant examples below *represent the caliber and type of foodservice* that would work well in Oak Park. They are primarily Chicago-based businesses that are long time favorites and/or are new but have great critics reviews. Prices range from moderate to upper-moderate. They are great examples of the type of mix that would make Oak Park an eclectic and more lively 24/7 destination, with breakfast places, inexpensive but creative lunch venues, after work brew pubs, and destination dinners.
- In the case of the fast food and food specialty recommendations, national chains that are expanding or targeting the Chicago market are also included.

RESTAURANT CLASSIFICATIONS	STORE NAME	NOTES
Breakfast fare	Deleece	Long time favorite in Lakeview/Roscoe Village and Wrigleyville. Not too large, famous for brunch, now with expanded comfort food dinner menu, good for families. 4004 Southport Ave.
	Blueberry Hill Restaurant	LaGrange favorite breakfast café and pancake house with several Chicago locations
	Uncommon Ground	Helen & Michael Cameron, long time owners of this favorite spot in Lakeview for breakfast, lunch, dinner and evening entertainment. 3800 N. Clark
Pizzerias	Great Lake Pizza	Tiny storefront, very chic, only four items on the take out menu, gourmet pizzas. 1477 Balmoral Ave.
	Union Pizzeria	Technically a pizzeria, but its ‘small-plates’ are like Italian tapas, and their ‘big plates’ are nouveau Italian. 1245 Chicago Ave.
Latin	Cuatro	Nuevo Latino, compact, handsome South Loop dining room and lounge that attracts urbanites for its striking interpretations of Latin cuisine. 2030 S. Wabash

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 8. CCBD Tenant Recommendations--Foodservice Strategy, cont'd.

RESTAURANT CLASSIFICATIONS	STORE NAME	NOTES
"Gastropubs"	<u>New restaurant designation for brew pubs with much elevated menu beyond "bar food"</u>	
	The Bluebird	Great food like flatbreads, charcuterie, pastas with terrific beer selection and affordable. 1749 W. Devon Av.
	Paramount Room	New from John Young and Chef Stephen Dunne (Volo wine bar fame). Combines brew pub with kobe burgers, ale, fish and billard table. 415 N. Milwaukee Ave.
	Gage	Voted best new Gastropub by Time Out Magazine. A mix of haute cuisine and bar food by 2 nutty Irishmen. 24 S. Michigan Ave.
	Hopleaf	Draws from across city. 45 beers on draft and 13 pages of bottled beers. Eclectic, inspired menu of non-bar food.
Asian	Jin Jue	Korean restaurant with stand out menu and favorite in Andersonville, (hot new Gen X family community) with a loungy atmosphere and fruity cocktails. 5203 N. Clark
	Yoshi's Cafe	Long time favorite neighborhood spot with changing menu ranging from hibachi-style cooked at tableside to rack of lam and cassoulet. 3257 N. Halsted
	Moon Palace	A true Chinese standout for Szchwan & Mandarin. Very moderate prices and great martinis. 216 W. Cermak
Soul / BBQ	Wishbone	Great lively American Southern family place for breakfast, lunch or dinner. A Chicago favorite near Oprah's studios. 1001 W. Washington
	Amy & Lou's	Soul food restaurant and a 60-year neighborhood favorite. 422 E. 75 <sup>th</sup> Street.
	Honky Tonk BBQ	One of top 6 best new BBQ joints by Chicago Magazine. Championship BBQ, traditional, slow, wood-roasted barbeque. 1213 W. 18 <sup>th</sup> Street
Miscellaneous	Hot Chocolate	Featuring a wide range of desserts, as well as lunch and brunch in a modern café atmosphere. 1747 N. Damen
	Green Zebra	Contemporary vegetarian by Chef/partner Shawn McCain. Chicken and fish too. 1460 W. Chicago.
Bars/Wine bar	Lush	Famous for crowded bar with 2 locations in town and a prove success. 1306 S. Halsted
	Juicy Wine Co.	Owner Rodney Alex runs a Sunday brunch for which he imports favorite dishes from Chicago's popular restaurant s from Charlie Trotter to Harold's fried chicken—and everything's \$5.00, except the drinks.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 8. CCBD Tenant Recommendations—Fast Food and Food Specialty

MERCHANDISE CATEGORY	STORE NAME	NOTES
Fast Food/ Fast Casual	Spicy Pickle	National, sandwich quick serve
	The Upper Crust	Downers Grove, deli/café
	Noodles & Co.	National, fast casual concept specializing in all kinds of noodle based dishes
	5 Guys Burgers & Fries	National, Zagats “best burger” rating for number of major U.S. cities
	TOPZ	National, “healthier burger grill”, new concept franchising around country
	Freshii	National, healthy quick serve sandwich, salad , soup concept
	Roly Poly	National, wrap sandwiches
	Pei Wei Asian Diner	National, P.F.Chang’s fast casual concept featuring flavors of the Far East
	Moe’s Southwest Grill	National, quick serve Fresh-Mex
	Zoup!	Regional, a Michigan favorite serving a wide variety of hand-crafted soups
	Saladworks	National, healthy fast casual salad based concept with soups and sandwiches
	Qdoba	National, industry leader serving Fresh Mex
	McAlister’s Deli	National, top deli chain in U.S.
	Jason’s Deli	National, quintessential deli
The Counter	National, an Oprah favorite, best burgers, in Lincoln Park	
Cipollina	Wicker Park, Italian specialty foods & beverages take out fare	
Food Specialty Coffee/Juice Bar	iCream	Bucktown, clever, new ice cream shop in ultra modern design
	Jamba Juice	National, juice/smoothie bar for the health conscious consumer
	Caribou Coffee	National, coffeehouse
	Cuppy’s Coffee	National, new coffee and smoothie concept positioned for significant expansion
	Ethel’s Chocolate Lounge	Nevada-based purveyor of fine chocolates and chocolate lounge
	Moonstruck Chocolate Café	Chocolate “bistro” with chocolate drinks and original desserts
Doc’s Smoothies	Tiny take out spot, all organic smoothies, soups, Metropolis coffee	
Gourmet grocer	Goddess & Grocer	Bucktown, premier small gourmet grocer with take out fare and catering service
	Foodstuff	Gourmet foods and catering /market with locations in Glencoe & Evanston
Casual fare cafes	Crust –eat real	Lincoln Park, certified organic restaurant, mostly salads, sandwiches and drinks
	Sweet ‘n Savories	Lincoln Park, breakfast, brunch, light dinner fare , American & French cuisine
	Toast	Lincoln Park, breakfast and casual fare in small, simple setting

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Central Business District

## 11.1 Downtown/South-Marion/The Avenue --CCBD

### 8. CCBD Tenant Recommendations—Fast Food and Food Specialty

MERCHANDISE CATEGORY	STORE NAME	NOTES
Fine chocolates	Just Indulge Long Grove Confectionery	Bucktown, desserts, chocolate, custard, coffee and more Chicago based chocolatier
Specialty bakery	Swirlz Cupcakes Molly's Cupcakes Sweet Mandy B's Red Hen Bakery	Cupcake concept , 705 W. Belden, Lincoln Park New concept, baked fresh with fun designs, 2536 N. Clark St. Bucktown, darling sweets and dessert shop bakery Bucktown, artisanal bread bakery with 2 locations in the Neighborhoods
Frozen Yogurt	Freshberry Berry Chill	Frozen yogurt café Frozen yogurt cafe



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

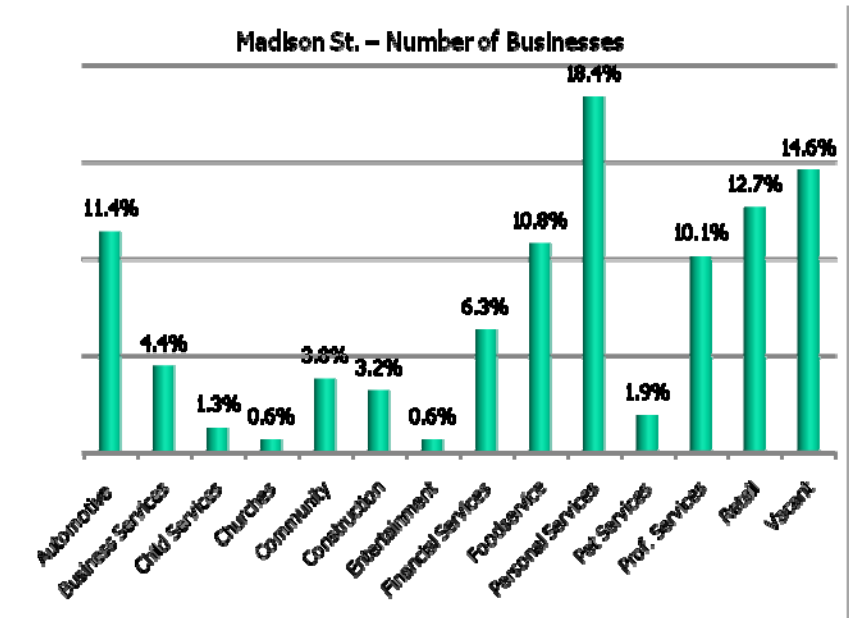
## 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

### 1. Corridor Location & General Description

- The high-traffic Madison St. corridor connects Oak Park to the City of Chicago border at Austin Avenue to the east and to the Village of Forest Park at Harlem Ave. to the west. Unlike the other corridors, North Ave. and Roosevelt Rd. both north and south sides of Madison are within the Village of Oak Park.
- This auto-driven business district is one of Oak Park’s largest--and within minutes from Interstate 290 and major bus routes.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- The Madison St. corridor has the largest number of businesses (158) of any district in Oak Park. The mix includes a wide range of categories dominated by service-based businesses. Business, financial, personal, professional and community type businesses, collectively represent 68 businesses or 43% of the mix, determining the Madison corridor’s primary identity. There are currently 23 vacancies—15% of the total.
- Personal service businesses dominate the mix (29 locations/18% of the mix)--almost all are hair salons and dry cleaners.
- Retail establishments occupy only 13% (20 spaces). The mix includes 5 apparel, 2 convenience, 2 personal technology, a florist, 2 home-related, 3 pharmacies, a shoe store, jeweler and cosmetic concept. Stores are of mixed quality.
- Most are not clustered together to encourage cross shopping, and therefore, function independently and are destination driven.
- Historically, the corridor was recognized for its high level of automobile dealerships. Today, while *the automotive services category commands a much greater share of the business mix than other Oak Park districts*, only 2 auto sales businesses remain. Other auto-related businesses include 3 car rentals, 7 auto repair shops (which do well), 4 gas stations and one driving school.



## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

### 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

#### 2. Business Mix Assessment, cont'd.

- The tenant mix includes a good assortment of convenience-based goods and services: 2 grocery stores, 7Eleven, 3 pharmacies, and 4 banks with hair salons and dry cleaners dominating the services category.
- Foodservice businesses do well along the corridor, though they are only (11%) of the mix with 17 concepts— *more than most Oak Park neighborhood districts*—but nearly half the numbers in either Downtown or The Avenue. The breakdown is: 2 grocery stores, 8 fast food, 5 restaurants, 1 bakery and 1 institutional foodservice concept, from both independent and chain operators.
- The number of vacant spaces is among the highest in the Village with roughly 23 locations representing 15% of the business mix, but, that is partially due to the pre-redevelopment activity that is in play in the corridor.

#### 3. Corridor Assets

- 21,500 average daily trips (ADTs) on Madison's 4 traffic lanes provide retailers with excellent exposure—and one of the easiest to access in Oak Park. The Chicago Transit Authority operates routes through the corridor, as does the Oak Park Shuttle Service. *CTA bus routes make it convenient for the middle to lower income residents of Oak Park and the more moderate communities that surround it, especially to the east and south, to reach retail that would be suited to their preferences, e.g. big box/discounters.* Madison also serves as an alternative route or bypass to I-290, providing added exposure to the businesses that line the corridor.
- Another asset to Madison retail expansion is significant Daytime Population attracted by its many institutional traffic magnets including: the Village Hall, Gymnastics Center, Elementary School Administration offices, Park District offices and Fenwick High School, as well as nearby Rush Oak Park Hospital.
- Potential sites for future development of key business nodes have been identified and the land assemblage process is progressing. In spite of many issues in the development process yet to be resolved, the sites are identified--and therefore, a *very preliminary* list of business prospects can be drafted. If large enough sites can be assembled to accommodate surface parking, the heavy cost burden of building parking structures can be avoided or minimized. In addition, more liberal height restrictions will enable mid and high rise mixed use development with more residential and/or office floors that make them more economically feasible for developers.
- Madison's current business mix offers a solid base from which to build on with new developments. As described above, the mix contains both convenience-based and destination-oriented businesses that can be further expanded.
- Oak Park receives sales and property taxes from both sides of Madison Street, as return on its investment in streetscape and road way improvements, unlike North Ave. and Roosevelt Rd.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

### 4. Issues & Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- There is no contiguous flow of retail throughout the corridor. Although there is a wide base of businesses, currently they are a random amalgam of uses not configured in a clustered pattern or consistent identity. Retailers, in particular, represent a very small percent of the mix (13%) and are dispersed throughout the 1.5 mile length, making them single destination, auto-driven stops, without no co-tenant synergy to draw shoppers. Foodservice, however, while only 11% of mix, is the most clustered and suited to auto-driven corridor retail.
- The tired condition of many buildings is a significant obstacle to quality tenant recruitment. The buildings and storefronts throughout the corridor are typically old and of varying size, design and character. Buildings and lot sizes do not meet current retail space configuration requirements required for high quality tenant recruitment.
- Parking is a serious issue for the corridor. The older buildings also do not have sufficient space for surface parking, both for pull-up parking in front, and too-shallow spaces in back. Lot depths are limited to 150 FT and back up to residential neighborhoods, limiting expansion both to the north or south of the roadway. As a result, new projects will have to be more vertical and provide either below grade or upper-level parking strategies--unless large enough sites can be assembled for surface parking.
- Historical buildings throughout the corridor challenge development efforts. There are several buildings with varying degrees of historical significance along Madison that will require special consideration, possibly complicating and delaying land assemblage and entitlements.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- Next to the CCBD, Madison St. is best positioned for significant redevelopment. It has the potential to include sizeable retail uses, especially the larger big box concepts that are tax generators. These big boxes can also address the needs and requests of Oak Park’s moderate residents and attract those of surrounding communities—a large potential customer base.
- The redevelopment projects and scenarios that are currently being studied are the catalysts needed to revitalizing the corridor. The plans being considered are in accordance with the Madison Street Corridor Plan study completed in 2006 that articulates specific vision theories for the major intersections, or “nodes” throughout the corridor. As these strategies are finalized, and development timing is defined, more concrete retail strategies can be recommended.
- For successful retail performance, 4Insights strongly recommends larger clusters of retail in larger overall developments. If several smaller, disconnected mixed-use developments are added to Madison, each with a few small retail stores under the residential tower, it will further scatter the retail offering. This discourages “park once—shop twice” shopping patterns and perpetuates single-stop destination trips—always more difficult to sustain retail. It will also eliminate any advantages of shared parking spaces that could lower development costs.
- The projects both under study and/or in progress are:
  - Madison at Highland: A 4-story commercial development with 17,000 SF of potential retail space and 39,000 SF of office space.
  - Madison at Oak Park Ave.: A 4-6 block area from Grove to Wesley Avenues with the potential to radically transform the character and significance of Madison St. One possible scenario for this site is for several multi-story, mixed-use developments that would be developed on both sides of Madison St. The buildings could be inter-connected with 2<sup>nd</sup> level walkways, and would include either below grade or upper level parking. New or existing medical and non-retail businesses in the corridor could occupy upper level space while preserving the ground floor space for significant retail developments in a pedestrian-friendly environment. A potential development of this size and caliber would be in concert with preceding 4Insights’ recommendations and inject a new retail anchor cluster to the corridor.
  - Potential relocations of Walgreens, Fresenius Medical Center, NANI Medical Center and Sears Pharmacy would free up spaces for replacement retail/food/service uses. Many of these, however, depend on the two developments detailed above.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd

- Madison St. retail should not compete with the smaller concepts and Lifestyle Center type apparel in the CCBD. If suitable sites can be assembled, there is a wide range of appropriate retail prospects. Their interest, of course, will depend on their corporate expansion plans, general market recovery, specific site requirements, co-tenant commitment and financial negotiations.
- Anchors and Junior Anchors for Future Developments:
  - General Merchandise Target\*\*, Wal-Mart, Meijer (may be combined with grocery in a superstore format)
  - Discount Big Lots, Dollar General, Dollar Tree
  - Office supplies Staples, Office Depot, OfficeMax
  - Personal Electronics Best Buy, Micro Center, Ultimate Electronics
  - Wholesale/Discount Grocery/  
Vegetable Markets Michael's Fresh Market, Caputo's, Garden Fresh Market\*
  - Apparel Marshalls, TJMaxx, Burlington Coat Factory, David's Bridal
  - Home goods HomeGoods, Bed Bath & Beyond, Anna's, Linens, True Value Hardware
  - Sporting Goods Dick's, R.E.I., SportMart, Footaction USA
  - Health & Beauty ULTA, BeautyFirst
  - Specialty PetSmart, Babies 'R Us, buybuyBABY
  - Footwear DSW Shoes
  - Crafts Michael's, JoAnn's Fabrics
- As new vertical developments take shape, redirect non-retail businesses to upper floors so that vacated spaces on street level can be re-merchandised with targeted tenants.

\*These new markets are intended to be replacements, not additions to the current supermarket mix in Oak Park, and would not be recommended if the General Merchandise stores were superstore formats that included grocery formats.

\*\*Target is the most requested retailer for Madison St. and has been approached by the Village. It is important to note that there are currently 5 Target stores within a 4 mile radius which may make it difficult to recruit Target when the market recovers.



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.2 Madison Street Corridor

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd.—Smaller Space Tenants

- Round out the proportional mix of businesses so that stronger, more impactful category statements can be developed. This builds critical mass and synergy between businesses that increase consumer draw to the area. Enhance the convenience offering with new retail, service, food/restaurant concepts that cater to time-pressed lifestyles--recalling that almost all of Oak Park's families with children under 18 have two working parents (per Consumer Survey).
- The recommended retail categories below are based on these criteria:
  - (1) They are complementary to the current retail mix
  - (2) They match the target customer base profile
  - (3) They factor in the competition and the opportunity gaps
  - (4) They assume that improvements to the district will move forward so that national concepts can be recruited
  - (5) They also include local operators for these uses as well
- Recommended Retail Categories—Current Spaces

• Mail/pack/copy centers	PostNet, Postal Annex
• Learning/tutoring centers	Kumon, Sylvan
• Computer/computer repair	TigerDirect.com, or best local operator
• Crafts, scrapbooking, collectibles	Archivers, Windy City Scrapbooking
• Coffee shops	Cuppy's Coffee & More, Biggby Coffee, or local concept
• Vitamin/ health	Better Health, Vitamin Shoppe
• Family entertainment	Monkey Joe's, Pump It Up
• Optical	Pearle Vision, Visionworks

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

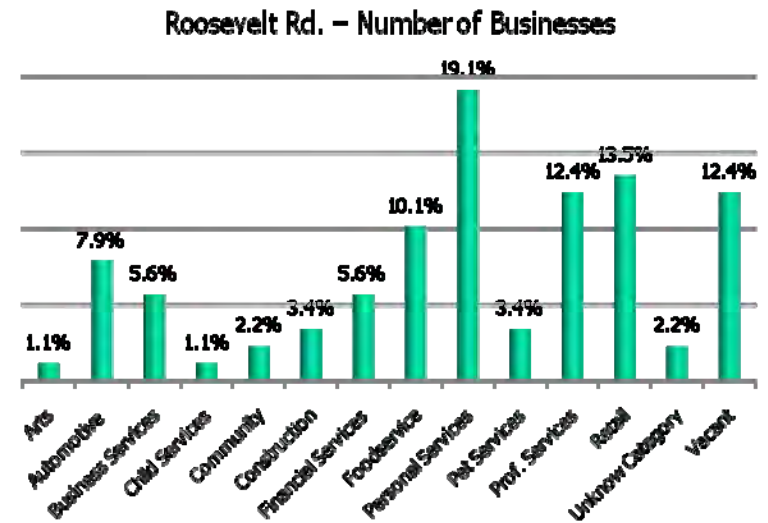
## 11.3 Roosevelt Road Corridor

### 1. Corridor Location and General Description

- Roosevelt Road is a major east-west arterial that extends from Harlem Ave. to Austin Ave. The corridor district is a state road controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Situated at the southern edge of the Village of Oak Park it is shared by the City of Berwyn on the south side from Harlem Ave. to Lombard St. and The Town of Cicero from Lombard St. to Austin Ave.
- The corridor is a mixed-use automotive intensive district with a broad range of mostly destination, single-stop businesses.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- Roosevelt Road is comprised of 89 businesses from a wide variety of business types. Personal and professional service type businesses dominate and there are a large number of automotive based concerns that serve as the main customer traffic drivers to the area which combined, equal 35 locations/39% of mix. 12% of the mix are vacancies.
- True consumer retail businesses represent 13.5% of the mix and are primarily destination-type businesses. The offering includes 3 resale outlets, a women's apparel boutique, 3 pharmacies, a fine jeweler, gift store, home interior business and a motorbike store. Overall quality is mixed. With the exception of CVS and Walgreens which serve as traffic magnets to the area, all of the retailers are independents.
- Foodservice represents only 9 businesses equaling just 10% of the mix – a small portion given the automotive intensive nature of the corridor. The offering includes, 2 grocery stores (primary draws for the corridor), 4 fast food eateries, 2 sit down restaurants and one wholesale bakery.
- Personal service businesses represent the largest number of businesses—17 locations, 19% of the mix. The bulk of the concepts are hair salons and dry cleaners, but also include single-stop businesses such as the exterminating and lawn care services which bring traffic to the corridor.
- Though fairly spread out, the corridor includes a good assortment of convenience oriented businesses—2 grocery stores, 3 pharmacies, 7 hair salons, 4 dry cleaners and 2 banks—strong attractors for the area.



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.3 Roosevelt Road Corridor

3.

### District Assets

- High traffic levels that attract large volumes of non-resident motorists and much needed added exposure for commercial businesses along the corridor. Average Daily Traffic volumes are good at 22,400 vehicles from Harlem to Oak Park Ave. However, according to the Roosevelt Rd. Plan for Redevelopment Study conducted in 2005, trip numbers are declining. As a result, the new streetscape plan just published (September, 2008) calls for narrowing the roadway to make way for sidewalks to be widened improving pedestrian flow throughout the corridor.
- Strong set of non-retail destination businesses throughout the corridor that attract traffic—banks, Fitzgerald's, MacNeal Healthcare.
- Good base of convenience-based businesses—2 grocery stores, 3 pharmacies, 2 banks—and new multi-unit residential developments in place from which a neighborhood mix of retail can be developed.
- A streetscape plan is now in place with pedestrian nodes identified (Home to Oak Park Ave. and Ridgeland to Lombard) that capitalizes on the corridor's existing business and physical attributes conducive to limited additional retail development.
- Parking appears to be adequate for current business levels, however parking strategies throughout the corridor are inconsistent. Both the 2005 redevelopment study and the recent 2008 streetscape plan describe the corrective action needed.

4.

### Issues and Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- The number of retailers throughout the Oak Park side of the corridor is minimal--12 retailers/10% of the mix, with equally limited number of retailers on the Berwyn/Cicero side of the road. All are scattered along the 1.5 mile corridor with no cohesive collection or critical mass of businesses to draw large numbers of potential customers to the corridor.
- As such, there is no contiguous flow of retail on either side of Roosevelt Rd, and no connectivity between the Oak Park and Berwyn/Cicero side retail clusters. Businesses function independently and are separated by an amalgam of unrelated businesses, vacant lots and windowless buildings—all major deterrents to fostering pedestrian-friendly atmosphere for retail development.
- The Roosevelt Road Plan for Redevelopment Study conducted in 2005 concluded that the corridor has "no demand for national-level retail tenants." Given the small number and mixed quality of the existing retailers, 4Insights agrees that any retail opportunity should be confined to independents or non-retail uses.
- Many storefronts are tired looking and do not project retail invitation to the consumer. In addition, because of the mixed business sectors in the district (light industrial, commercial, residential) many of the buildings are not conducive to retail and would require a complete renovation to make them suitable for today's quality retail criteria.
- Significant competition within 1-2 mile of corridor. There is considerable retail competition from Madison St., Cermak Rd. and nearby shopping centers Forest Park Plaza and North Riverside Mall.



## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

### 11.3 Roosevelt Road Corridor

#### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- There are no significant redevelopment plans anticipated for the Oak Park side of Roosevelt Rd within the next 2-3 years that would serve as a catalyst to bring new retail to the corridor. The only activity under consideration is the possibility of a new Community Bank with a drive thru at the northeast corner of Home and Roosevelt Rd. In addition, the Girl Scout facility at Clinton remains as a potential area of redevelopment, but no definite proposals are currently active.
- There are 11 vacancies within the district. Most, however, are not located within the two identified pedestrian nodes, but rather clustered between Humphrey and Taylor Avenues, designated as an “Automotive Oriented Subarea” designed to support destination businesses.
- The future direction for the corridor as supported by the Roosevelt Road Plan for Redevelopment Study is to transition *into more multi-unit residential or mixed-use developments and light industrial uses*. Both the mixed-use and residential developments could provide some limited opportunity for select retail to service new resident dwellers, however, small ‘islands’ of retail scattered among disjointed building demands a single-stop, auto-driven, destination trip, which is more difficult to sustain retail.
- No major retail strategy is recommended for Roosevelt Road, which complies with the conclusions of the Roosevelt Road Plan for Redevelopment Study. The new streetscape configurations, however, positions the corridor to capitalize on the grocery and pharmacy store locations creating pedestrian-friendly zones around them and neighborhood-oriented centers that would be conducive to some retail infill. Without any significant redevelopment, however, retail/service tenant opportunities would be very limited and confined to small independent businesses.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

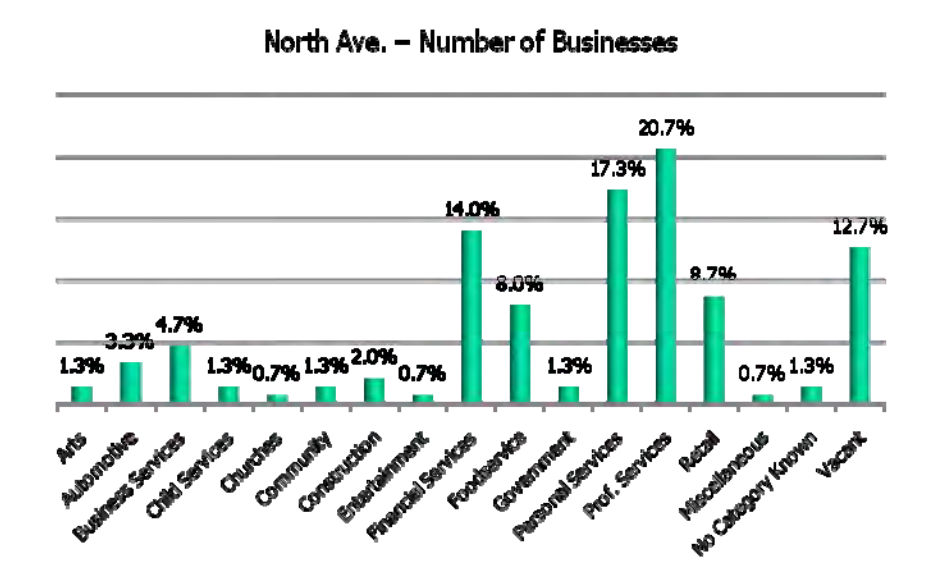
## 11.4 North Avenue Corridor

### 1. Corridor Location and General Description

- North Ave. is a major east-west arterial that extends from Harlem Ave. to Austin Ave. The corridor district is located at the northern boundary of Oak Park and is shared by the city of Chicago on the north side and Elmwood Park on the northwest section.
- The corridor’s retail district is driven by high volume pass-through auto traffic. It includes a broad range of destination, single-stop businesses.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- North Avenue is comprised of 150 mostly service based businesses, largest of any Oak Park district. Professional, personal and financial service type businesses dominate and are the main customer traffic drivers to the area (78 locations/52% of mix). Medical offices and healthcare facilities have an especially strong presence with 30+ locations. 13% of the mix are vacancies.
- Only 9% can be considered true consumer retail. The offering is limited to a few home-oriented concepts, a variety, cell phone, bicycle shop plus 2 pawn shops. Overall quality is mixed.
- Six businesses serve as important anchors: Schwinn Cycling & Fitness, Fresh Market, Park National Bank, Lyons Paint & Decorating, and two gas stations at Hayes Ave.
- Wonder Works Children’s Museum is well regarded and drives traffic to the corridor.
- Foodservice represents a small percentage of the mix- 8%. The offering includes, a grocer, bakery, 4 fast food, one donut shop and 5 restaurants dispersed throughout the corridor.





# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

## 11.4 North Avenue Corridor

3.

### Corridor Assets

- Highest traffic volumes in Oak Park, with 42,000 ADT's, twice those of Madison St. and Roosevelt Road. with good visibility and access. Long range plans—with no date or funding as yet-- include a possible road widening under study by I-DOT which would provide increased exposure for potential developments.

4.

### Issues and Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- Limited number of quality retailers dispersed throughout the corridor: The 13 retailers (9%) are scattered along the 1.5 mile corridor. As a result, there is no contiguous flow of retail on either side of North Ave, making shopping trips to retailers single-stop, destination driven.
- Overlapping business categories: Personal service businesses make up 17% of the corridor's business mix--but hair salons/barber shops and dry cleaners represent 65% of the personal service category--dividing up the customer base into challenging low customer bases.
- No connectivity between Oak Park and Chicago-side retail clusters: Each block of businesses functions as an independent island. Within each block, individual businesses do the same, because of their random and unfocused retail mix. As a result, there is little pedestrian oriented cross-shopping. In addition, the volume and speed of traffic, coupled with the width of North Ave, discourage pedestrian or vehicular connection between the retail clusters on the north and south side.
- Space Configuration: Lots are too small, store spaces too narrow and deep to meet basic requirements for national and most regional retail businesses, a consistent issue throughout all of Oak Park's business districts. The typical lot sizes of 25 FT wide and 150 FT depths do not meet today's retailers building requirements. Buildings are old, many are not in prime condition and would take expensive rehabbing to make them competitive with newer spaces.
- Property ownership too fragmented. Many property owners own small parcels requiring a long process of land assemblage to create adequate development sites.
- Parking: Most lots on North Ave. do not include enough front or rear space for current or future parking development. In addition, there are parking restrictions on neighborhood side streets. Further, Oak Park's cul de sacs and dead end streets in the neighborhoods make it confusing to get to North Avenue. There is only one street that is a "through" street leading to North. Parking fees prevail here as well and parking on neighborhood side streets is limited.
- Sizable competition at the Harlem/North intersection and beyond. Sears and Walgreens anchor the north corners with a variety of solid retailing both north and west of the intersection, that include Dominick's, Panera, Starbucks in shopping centers with convenient, free parking.

## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Corridors

### 11.4 North Avenue Corridor

#### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- Other than plans for an 18-unit residential development between East and Columbia Avenues, there are no significant redevelopment plans anticipated by Oak Park within the next 2-3 years.
- There are 19 vacancies within the district. Though a comparatively large number compared to other districts in Oak Park, they are dispersed throughout the corridor with most representing singular locations in difficult to lease building configurations.
- The three block area from Harlem Ave. to Forest Ave. has the greatest potential for redevelopment due to (1) existing vacancies and (2) some businesses that may leave, freeing up space for new opportunities. Wonder Works at Elmwood Ave. is considering a possible relocation to Downtown, and Midas at Harvey Ave. may close--but these are speculative only.
- No major retail strategy is recommended for North Ave at this time, for the reasons stated. In addition, because the Village owns only the south side of North Ave., any future streetscape and street improvements would have to be coordinated with the City of Chicago, with the Village eventually reaping only the sales tax from the south side of the street.
- The future direction for the corridor, as indicated by the Stakeholder Interviews is likely to transition into more multi-unit residential developments that will contain some limited retail opportunity. These would likely translate into convenience-oriented businesses, food uses and some personal service type businesses.
- This would enable North Avenue to capitalize on its current strengths in the service sector, primarily professional service-oriented businesses that are already clustered on both the Chicago and Oak Park sides of the roadway and address the auto-driven, single stop destination patterns of high-traffic corridors.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Specialty District

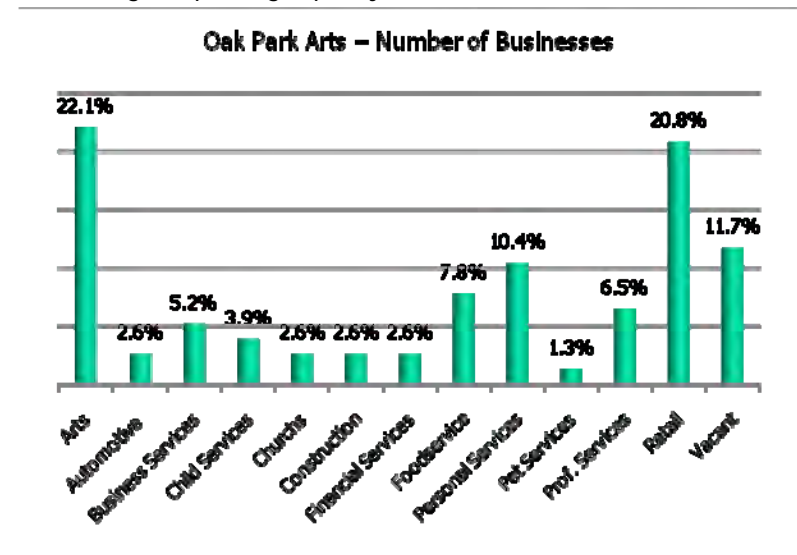
## 11.5 Oak Park Arts District

### 1. District Location & General Description

- The Oak Park Arts District is located in the southeastern edge of the Village along Harrison St. from Ridgeland to Austin Avenue, with the heart of the district concentrated between Taylor and Ridgeland Avenues.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- Its 77 businesses are dominated by art galleries, studios and retail shops. 12% of spaces in the district are currently vacant.
- Art-oriented businesses dominate the mix (17 units or 22%) and include galleries featuring art from a variety of mediums, plus working /learning studios from disciplines that include fine, graphic and the performing arts. These concepts, appropriately, define the district's image.
- Retailers occupy as many shops as the arts-related businesses—21%, with an interesting, varied mix of 3 apparel shops (women's, children's, and family apparel resale), 3 music stores, 2 health & fitness, 4 home furnishings, a jeweler, shoe store and bead store.
- All are independent shops, the majority with good interior atmosphere, offering unique, high quality merchandise.
- The district is also popular for its dining establishments, but the offering here is quite limited. The Foodservice category represents less than 8% of businesses, including a small grocer, coffee shop and 3 restaurants.
- Service based businesses, collectively, represent 26% and include several financial, personal, business and professional service type concepts.
- The overall business mix serves both convenience, service and discretionary needs. It's customer base is roughly 60% Oak Park, and 40% River Forest residents. Few tenants reported significant out of town visitor business.
- In spite of resident pride and its popularity, businesses here have a high failure rate. Many shop owners are artists with limited business skills who have other full or part-time jobs. As a result, operating hours throughout the district are inconsistent with many shops closed at midday. Coupled with the low levels of shoppers visiting the district, business turnover is high.



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Specialty District

## 11.5 Oak Park Arts District

### 3. District Assets

- Traffic volumes are not usually heavy (unless motorists are using it to bypass I-290 traffic conditions), making the district easy to traverse and cross shop. Harrison Street is also much narrower than other district roads adding to the cozy feel of the area.
- The focus on art and culture provides a solid foundation from which to build a future business strategy for the district. The potential to capitalize on the art and cultural aspects is strong and would create a truly unique destination, unlike anything else in the Village, drawing customers from beyond the normal trade areas—assuming sufficient marketing.

### 4. Issues & Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- High turnover among retailers. In spite of the fact that people love the district and its many interesting businesses, high turnover rates result in continuous vacancies.
- Very limited visibility and access are serious detriments. With its residential neighborhood setting, the Arts District does not appear as a retail destination. Motorists pass through on their way elsewhere, but do not stop for several reasons: the true retail cluster is small, and they are intermittent between galleries and other uses. Access is primarily via Austin, Harrison and Ridgeland Avenues. With the bulk of the retail centered around Ridgeland Ave., there is virtually no visibility from the major entrance points. The current monument entryway signage at Austin/Harrison is not visible enough and placed too close to the intersection, so that left-turning motorists are already past the sign before they can take their eyes off of oncoming traffic.
- Retail flow throughout the district is bifurcated. The business cluster between Austin and Lyman, which has a weaker mix of businesses, is separated from the main clusters near Ridgeland, making cross shopping less likely. Shoppers are not led by a continuous flow of businesses to cross from one cluster to the other.
- Parking is in very short supply with some business owners taking valuable front row spaces--and there is no place to expand it. Neighborhood residents are opposed to creating more parking that would encroach on their streets. Neighborhood induced parking time limits are also an issue for restaurant and other late night customers—in fact, some restaurateurs pay their customers' parking tickets after 10 p.m.
- Inconsistent business hours--or those that are not posted--confuse and frustrate shoppers. Inconsistent hours of operation among the retail shops, galleries and studios give the impression that the district is not serious, or a reliable place for shopping, as stated previously. Many owners also have limited business skills, being more artists than full-time merchants.
- No retail expansion area. The Arts District is bounded by residential areas, preventing it from any further expansion in every direction. The best opportunities is to expand within, requiring vertical developments in order to satisfy increased parking needs, which the neighborhood may not support.
- Storefronts and the streetscape should better reflect the district's progressive and sophisticated arts identity.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Specialty District

## 11.5 Oak Park Arts District

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- The Oak Park Arts District is an original neighborhood gem that is important to Oak Park’s unique identity in metropolitan Chicago and for out of town visitors as well. 4Insights recommends that its image should be preserved and strengthened—but it will be a continuous challenge for retail stores.
- Based on stakeholder interviews and recent turnover rates, many retailers here are underperforming. Without being able to change the fundamental situation in the Arts District, there is no magic tenant mix that will remediate retail challenges.

**Therefore, 4Insights recommends a six-part strategy for Art District retail:**

- (1) Preserve and strengthen the Arts component of the District—it is a singular asset to the Village of Oak Park and creates a point of difference above all other neighboring communities. A joint effort by the Village and the Arts Council could help create a larger cluster of artists workshops, studios and galleries *in a larger cooperative space (or spaces)* that would allow flexible hours and low rents, so that artists could be there for shorter hours, and still have a central display area for their creations that is staffed and open regular retail hours. It would create one visible anchor where artists could work, exhibit, sell, and/or perform. It would also save marketing costs for the co-op to be marketed as one destination. (Recently, the City of Elgin issued an invitation for artists with the ArtSpace organization for its Downtown Arts Showcase building--and 130 artists from Chicago and beyond responded.) A large showroom space would have to be assembled, which might be created by redeveloping adjacent vacant spaces from retail that has closed or been re-located. This Artists’ Showcase could also have classes in various art media and the performing arts, further increasing its visibility and traffic to the area, and asset to the Oak Park Community. (See item (4) below)
- (2) Strengthen the Arts District’s current reputation as a popular neighborhood place to dine and socialize. Capitalize on the solid performance of the district’s restaurants and recruit 2-3 innovative restaurant concepts to strengthen the current cluster. Convert smaller single retail spaces vacated by retailers into a café, tea room, wine bar, tavern, and/or lounge—e.g. places to socialize. The prospective tenants should be second locations of successful businesses from the Chicago neighborhoods that would appeal to the young professionals who have moved Oak Park from there, and miss their intimate, informal, eclectic eating and drinking places. (Parking time limits on neighborhood streets would have to be reconsidered for this to work.)
- (3) Fill other vacant single retail spaces with business-to-business or consumer services that do not require visibility —or as much parking—plus attract their own clientele to the area. The Arts District is already home to several of these professional services (architects, veterinarian, consultants). More of these businesses would increase customers for lunch and after work food/drink. Specialized schools are also a possibility here, such as children’s tutoring centers or language schools.
- (4) Rather than lose viable and interesting retailers, provide incentives for them to relocate their businesses to the combined Central Business District where there is strong pedestrian traffic and high visibility. This area already has a foundation cluster of such artsy, boutique retail, and benefits from high visibility on Lake Street, Marion, and Oak Park Ave. in the path of both El/Metra commuters, and from the high Daytime population of both residents and out of town visitors to the FL Wright and other attractions.



## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Specialty District

### 11.5 Oak Park Arts District

#### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations, cont'd

(5) Continue pursuing a small Art Theater/Performance Venue. The Lake Street theater is one of the top three draws to Downtown Oak Park . Currently, The Arts District Business Alliance is pursuing a 10,000 SF performance venue. The small capacity would not impose a high burden on available parking spaces, and it would add nighttime vitality and new dining patrons to the district. Parking restrictions would have to be addressed with the neighborhood.

(6) Better define the Arts District boundaries through improved signage and streetscape, including the gateway sign mentioned at the intersection of Austin/Harrison. The intimate, cozy and artistic feel of the district can greatly be defined and enhanced with relatively inexpensive, well designed programs.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.6 Chicago/Harlem Business District

### 1. Location & General Description

- This small, lovely and historically significant district is located on Chicago Avenue between Harlem and Belleforte Avenues, with businesses that extend along the east side of Harlem Ave. from Erie St. to Chicago Avenue.
- Its neighborhood mix of businesses addresses a very localized clientele and attracts pre-and post visits from Frank Lloyd Wright attraction visitors.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

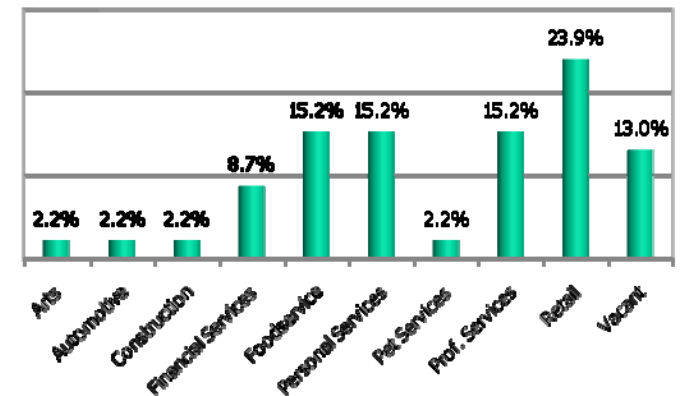
- Strong neighborhood assortment of businesses. The 46 businesses are dominated by 18 financial/personal/professional service businesses. 13 retail stores include a small, cohesive cluster of mostly gift, home furnishings and interior design concepts. There are 7 foodservice businesses. Anchoring the retail cluster are: Villager Foods, Dressel's Hardware and the Oak Park Cyclery.
- Food and beverage concepts are important assets for the cluster in part due to the Frank Lloyd Wright attractions nearby. They include 2 sit down restaurants, 2 fast food outlets, 1 ice cream and 1 wine shop, in addition to Village Foods grocery.

### 3.

#### istrict Assets

- Good visibility and access. The district benefits from its location at the intersection of heavily trafficked Harlem Ave. (35,500 ADT's). The signal light slows traffic at the intersection and promotes visibility at an important gateway to the district, (which is not particularly compelling, with a gas station on the corner). The area also benefits from public transportation stops at Harlem, and the Oak Park Shuttle service that brings riders to the southeast corner of Marion St. and Chicago Ave.
- Comfortable and attractive area to traverse with limited traffic and parking concerns. No recent streetscape improvements have been made to the area (though a plan has been proposed). However, the area remains attractive and appears safe. Businesses are well maintained. Parking, while sharing the same overall issues as other areas in Oak Park, appears adequate for locals and visitors.
- Retailers enjoy incremental customers from out of area visitor traffic -- and from proximity to River Forest. These are the local residents of the Polygon trade area, described previously in this Study, that contain affluent residents adjacent to Oak Park.

Chicago @ Harlem – Number of Businesses



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.6 Chicago/Harlem Business District

### 4. Issues and Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- One of the smallest districts in Oak Park serving a small trade area base. The Chicago Ave. cluster, which offers the most appealing assortment of businesses, has only 34 businesses, covering a brief two- block area. It serves a very localized clientele within a two-mile range.
- Too much competition within close proximity divides the customer base. While the district functions primarily as a neighborhood convenience-oriented destination for nearby residents, similar merchandise can be obtained in ½ mile, in larger and some newer assortments, such as Trader Joe's challenge to the dated Villager Foods.
- No expansion opportunity. The district is landlocked by residential east of Belleforte Ave., limiting any significant expansion or opportunity to alter the character and increase its drawing power. There are no new or redevelopment plans anticipated within the next 2-3 years and only 3 current vacancies.
- Low daytime traffic volumes on Chicago Ave. to sustain significant retail business. Though the district benefits from the high traffic volume on Harlem, Chicago Ave. which contains the most desirable food and retail, has much lower ADTs of 14,700, serving the most immediate residents.

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- With the inability to expand the retail cluster significantly--and with only 3 current vacancies in the district --4Insights does not recommend making retail stores the sole target for recruitment for these spaces.
- The recommended strategy is to provide additional foodservice options that can take advantage both of the neighborhood residents and the FLW visitors nearby. A café/bakery serving light fare (sandwiches, salads), to replace the void from Peterson's closing, would round out the current foodservice mix. While a national chain concept would add credibility to the district, it's procurement is unlikely, given the districts size, space and trade area limitations. Therefore, a strong, well-operated independent or regional operator could work well.
- Besides foodservice, professional service concepts (medical, dental, legal) or other business-to-business firms (architects, consultants) that attract more daytime population to the district are recommended.
- Buildings, in general, are old, with limited second floor opportunities, but with interesting historic architecture that should make them attractive for professional or other offices.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.7 Chicago/Austin Business District

### 1. Location & General Description

- This mid-sized business cluster is located along Chicago Ave. between Ridgeland and Austin Avenues, with the majority of businesses situated on the north side.
- A highly service-based, neighborhood-oriented district that serves mostly nearby Midscale Village residential areas.

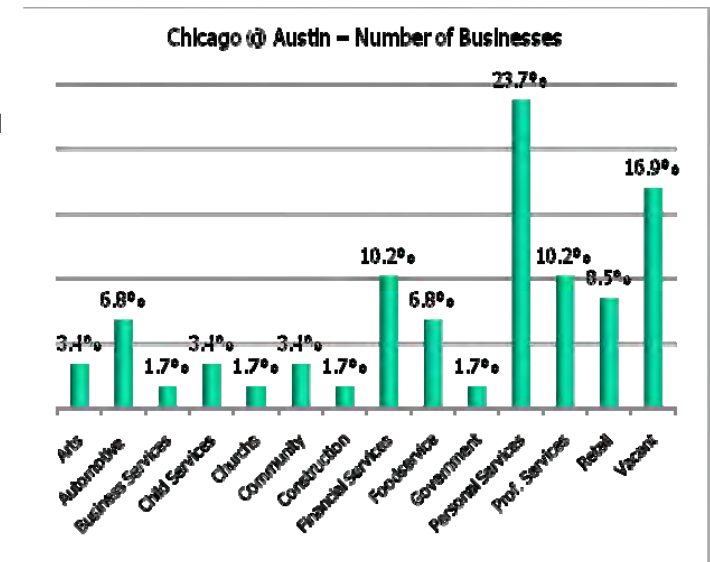
### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- Neighborhood oriented business mix dominated by personal service-based concepts. The district is comprised of 59 businesses from a very wide range of business categories that includes daily living needs: convenience store, fitness center, hardware store, assorted food and beverage outlets, and many community and professional services. It is most recognized, however, as a destination for personal services--mostly hair salons, barber shops, dry cleaners and Laundromats, which, as a category, represent almost 1/4 of the mix.
- There are only 5 retail businesses in the district. Ace Hardware stands out as an important anchor, but unfortunately, has no complementary co-tenants to provide shopping synergy. The district has one of the highest vacancy rates (17%) in the Village.

### 3.

#### istrict Assets

- Good visibility and access to the area. Though not a heavily trafficked area compared to other Village thoroughfares, (Chicago Ave., 10,500; Ridgeland Ave., 13,500) this district benefits from its location at the signalized Austin/Chicago Avenue intersection, giving it an important gateway entrance and clear visibility. Austin is also an exit from I-290 used by motorists to avoid the back up at the next exit, Harlem Ave.
- Recent streetscape improvements have created an attractive, comfortable shopping environment in the district. The lighting, parking, sidewalk, art and landscaping improvements have made the area a more visually appealing district, especially in the Humphrey/Austin block.
- These improvements have also helped to mitigate some of the safety concerns that were a serious issue in the past. However, the large number of vacancies and several poorly maintained buildings/storefronts still contribute to safety concerns. Furthermore, not all blocks have the same level of improvements.



- Parking appears to be adequate for business levels due to streetscape improvements that have expanded spaces.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.7 Chicago/Austin Business District

### 4. Issues & Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- Retail flow is not contiguous throughout the district. While individual businesses within each block are fairly cohesive on the north side of Chicago Ave, the blocks of retail are spread out along the corridor, separated by other uses. On the south side of Chicago Ave., residential areas separate the retail flow into two clusters—one situated at the district’s eastern edge between Taylor and Austin Avenues, while other is located at western edge near Ridgeland, making cross shopping unlikely.
- Several buildings and storefronts are poorly maintained and do not meet today’s criteria for retail uses. Aside from the strip just east of Humphrey Ave., most buildings are old with retail spaces that are too narrow and deep, making them non-competitive for leasing. Some storefronts do not appear to be actually open for business. There are a number of buildings with 2<sup>nd</sup> floor opportunities throughout the district which would greatly enhance its viability, but most appear from external observation to require significant renovation for leasing. The result is that the district must rely on local independent, and sometimes inexperienced independent operators.
- Pedestrian traffic is limited by the configuration of the district as described above, making shopping a single destination, and auto-driven effort. The dispersed nature of the businesses and limited number of retail and food businesses discourages shoppers from walking or cross shopping. As a result, businesses operate independently without the synergy of strong co-tenants to attract shoppers.
- No redevelopment plans are anticipated within the next 2-3 years that would provide the catalyst needed to inject renewed interest in the area. Buildings in the Taylor-Lombard Ave. block, where many vacancies exists, represent a potential area for redevelopment, but they would require significant improvements to make them attractive to strong tenants.
- Vacant spaces represent the most significant percentage of businesses in the district with 17%--10 locations. Most are located between Humphrey and Lombard Avenues--and most are in buildings requiring renovation.

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- The recommended strategy for the district is to continue leasing to the needs of the immediate neighborhood customer base-- local community businesses in the daily living, personal and professional service, and foodservice categories that are appropriately merchandised to meet the needs of the district’s customer base.
- The Chicago-Austin district is a busy gateway into Oak Park, and as such, vacant buildings or those in need of repair send the wrong message for prospective retail recruitment, and the Village itself. Vacant storefronts should be covered with professionally-designed full-window coverings. Lighting should be repaired or installed above these full window coverings in vacant storefronts.



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.8 Lake/Austin Business District

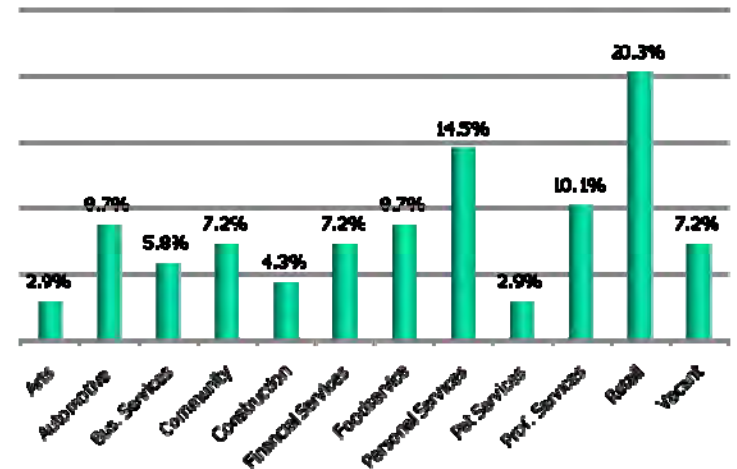
### 1. Location & General Description

- The Lake/Austin district is located just east of The Avenue Business District on Lake St. from Ridgeland to Austin Avenues and on South Boulevard, from Austin to Elmwood Ave.
- This district offers a wide range of businesses that include retail, food, service and community uses. It is within walking distance from several recreational facilities--Stevenson Park, Ridgeland Pool & Ice Area, and the Tennis & Fitness Center of Oak Park.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- There are 69 businesses representing a very broad assortment of business categories. Retail and personal services make up 1/3 of the total (14 and 10 units respectively). However, the mix is not at all focused. There is no critical mass of any one category that defines the district's retail identity from other competing districts. 7% of spaces are vacant.
- The retail mix includes: 2 apparel, 1 comics store, 1 video rental, 1 music, 1 gifts, 2 beauty, 1 interior design studio, 2 furniture stores. Based on visual assessment, most would not attract consumers beyond the immediate neighborhood.
- Personal service businesses are the next largest category (15%) with many duplicative services, dividing an already small geographic customer base. There are 6 hair salons, 5 dry cleaners and 1 laundromat, several of which are in buildings in need of maintenance or renovation.
- Professional service businesses represent 10%, include an attorney, a veterinarian, 4 medical facilities and 1 dental center.
- Foodservice is limited to 3 grocery stores (Dominick's is the most important), 2 fast food outlets, and a specialty food outlet--there is no critical mass to build upon.
- The district also contains 6 auto-related businesses--3 repair, 3 gas stations; 2 learning/daycare centers; and two community sports facilities.
- In summary, this district is an unfocused neighborhood-serving mix of many independent concepts competing for a very small customer base. Stores are spread out among many small buildings that as a result are unable to enjoy the synergy of strong co-tenancy to build a retail identity, and benefit from a larger trade area of customers and cross-shopping.

Lake @ Austin – Number of Businesses



## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

### 11.8 Lake/Austin Business District

3.

#### District Assets

- Good visibility and access to the district. Lake St. is a well traveled east-west arterial that ends at a signalized intersection at Austin Ave., also a higher volume roadway, and alternate exit to the congested Harlem Ave. off of I-290, which provides the district with good access and visibility.
- Proximity to many local institutions previously mentioned, that are 'people magnets' to the district.
- Parking: While the district shares many of the supply and location issues as previously mentioned, given the destination nature of the businesses and customer volume, parking does not appear to be a major concern for the district at the present time.

4.

#### Issues & Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- No contiguous flow of retail, impeding both cross shopping opportunities and a pedestrian-friendly experience. As previously mentioned, businesses including the retail shops, are dispersed among many small building configurations with no connections to encourage browsing, or multiple business patronage.
- No clear identity or focus to capitalize on. To reiterate, the area as a whole and the retail businesses in particular have no clear focus to further exploit to build a retail cluster identity.
- Storefronts do not meet today's standards. Several buildings throughout the district are old and need maintenance suggesting from visual observation that the tenant spaces do not meet today's retailing standards and would require extensive renovation to make them suitable for new quality tenants.
- Safety-issue perceptions for shoppers may result from these vacant or uninviting buildings or storefronts, and fragmented business mix.
- Heavy, good quality competition close by in Oak Park. The individual stores in this district compete for a very small customer base in a tight geographic area, because similar stores in larger clusters, are just a few blocks away in either The Avenue, or the Chicago/Austin district.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.8 Lake/Austin Business District

### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- There are 10 current vacancies in the district scattered throughout representing 10% of the mix, and no anticipated plans for redevelopment within the next 2-3 years to support additional retail.
- Given the issues and serious challenges facing this district, the opportunity for either more retail or strong retail to replace vacated tenants is limited.
- The least risk strategy would be to recruit non-retail (personal and professional services and business to business services) to fill current and future vacancies, thereby turning empty storefronts into occupied street level offices. Some examples include:
  - Pack and mail outpost: PostNet, or Postal Annex
  - Skills/training centers, computer training centers
  - Child learning/tutoring centers
  - Repair shops—computers, TV's, jewelry, shoes, alterations
  - Printings, signs
  - Tech support centers
  - Business cleaning services
  - Take-out food in the categories of pizza, chicken, barbeque, sandwiches and soup/salad
- Space criteria thresholds are unlikely to meet national tenant standards—unless they are chain, storefront fast food or service operations that require high auto traffic visibility and serve a mid-to-lower scale customer base. Therefore strong independent retail and service would be the likely candidates for the district's empty retail spaces.
- Improve the condition general shopping environment from both an attractiveness and perception of safety by facade improvements for unattractive or vacant buildings; covering empty storefronts with standardized, Village-designed window covers; and providing a continuous flow of warm, bright street lighting.

# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

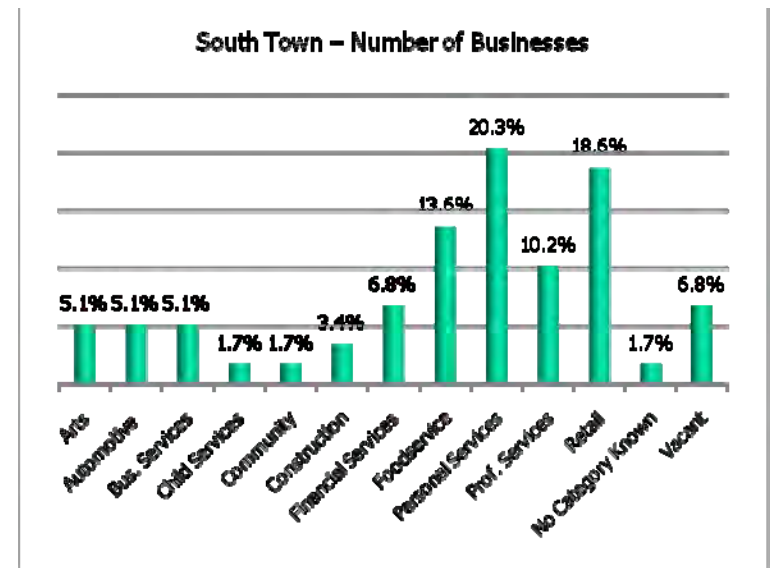
## 11.9 South Town/Oak Park @ Harrison Business District

### 1. Location & General Description

- South Town is centrally located in the southern portion of Oak Park, on Oak Park Ave. from Van Buren St. to the north and Lexington St. to the south.
- South Town which was once a large, singular neighborhood district is now divided by the I-290 Eisenhower Expressway into two small, separate business areas. Each section is comprised of a one block corridor of businesses that line both sides of Oak Park Ave. with some spill over onto Harrison Ave. in the northern section; and along Garfield Rd. in the southern portion.
- The combined district contains neighborhood businesses serving primarily local clientele: grocery store, banks, gas station, food and beverage outlets, retailers, and personal, financial and professional service businesses.

### 2. Business Mix Assessment

- Solid, though edited, convenience-based, neighborhood mix of businesses. The district contains 59 businesses from a wide variety of business categories which collectively contain convenience, basic living needs goods and services. 60% are located in the northern section, 40% in the south. The northern section offers the best mix overall—grocery store, banks, retail shops, restaurants, while the southern section is more destination-driven and is more service and foodservice-oriented. There are currently 6 vacancies.
- Personal service businesses represent the largest number of business types in the district with 12 storefronts (20%), mostly hair salons and dry cleaners that appear to be of good quality.
- Retail follows with 11 businesses (19%) that include 1 jewelry, 2 apparel stores (mostly consignment), a florist, gifts, crafts, a green products concept and an independent shoe store.
- Foodservice concepts consist of 9 (14%) concepts that include a grocery store, 3 restaurants, (two north/and one south of the freeway) and 5 food specialty shops --2 coffee (one north/one south), bakery, custard/yogurt, weight management.
- Pan’s Food Center serves as an important anchor and is central to the district’s neighborhood identity. Avenue Ale House and Nola’s Coffee stand out as area favorites.



# 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

## 11.9 South Town/Oak Park @ Harrison Business District

### 3. District Assets

- A small group of businesses with long standing reputations, such as Westgate Flowers, that have been in the area for many years and help draw customers from beyond the district.
- Contiguous flow of businesses within each of the two South Town areas (north and south of the freeway). Though the amount of retail businesses in each district is limited, all of the businesses within each section are relatively clustered, which promotes convenient cross shopping and a pedestrian-friendly experience within each sub-district.

### 4. Issues & Challenges Impacting the Retail Strategy

- I-290 is significant barrier for the district. The freeway breaks the contiguous flow of business areas and impedes pedestrian flow between the north and south sections making cross shopping cumbersome. The freeway has contributed greatly to the business erosion throughout the district--more evident in the southern section where fewer businesses are located and there is no clear marketable identity in which to build upon.
- Visibility and access is extremely limited. Its central, interior location with no clear gateways from any of the Village's major roadways, provides very limited visibility for the district and makes access difficult. Compounding the problem is the fact that there are no exits onto or off the freeway and insufficient signage to draw people to the district.
- Parking is a serious issue. Metered parallel parking lines the corridor and there are 2 small pocket lots (one north/one south) which can't handle the current level of business and poses a significant obstacle to future development.
- Stores, buildings and the area environment needs refreshing. There have been no streetscape improvements in the last ten years, and some residents feel that it is the "forgotten district of Oak Park." Although tired, it is reasonably well maintained and comfortable to traverse. Storefronts are standard fare--straightforward, awning covered, with traditional, but not fresh and exciting window presentations. Buildings are generally old to very old, with only a few second floor opportunities for non-retail office tenants that could attract daytime population visitors. The second floor of the Westgate Flowers building is one of few exceptions. There are few owner/operators in the district, resulting in buildings that are not up to today's tenant standards and would be difficult to lease to new retail tenants.
- Limited expansion potential. Like most districts in Oak Park, South Town is land locked between dense residential areas, which severely limits its ability to expand either north or south. While there appears to be land that would allow the district to expand east and west along either sides of the freeway, visibility there is even more limited, and traffic levels are lower.
- Small customer base. Given the district's limited visibility, its small size and contained nature not visible from Oak Park's major retail clusters, it draws from a very small geographic customer base. While the mix well serves convenience-based needs, the overall offering is very limited. There are a few businesses with long standing reputations that are able to draw beyond the surrounding neighborhoods, but those are more the exception than the rule, especially due to the barrier of I-290.



## 11.0 Retail Strategies by Business District – Neighborhood Districts

### 11.9 South Town/Oak Park @ Harrison Business District

#### 5. Retail Strategy Recommendations

- Filling current and future vacancies with non-retail businesses that can bring new traffic to the area such as professional, business or financial services are the least risky strategy for this limited and landlocked district.
- Minimum population criteria are not likely to be met for national or regional tenants. Therefore, should the district wish to pursue more local, independent retailers, we have listed complementary categories to the current convenience/services retail mix below.
  - Convenience store
  - Variety store (“Dollar-type” concept)
  - Small card/gift/wrap with books/magazines
  - Family-friendly, moderately-priced sit-down restaurant (local concept)
  - Fast food: Subway, Quizno’s, Jimmy John’s, Baja Fresh that require smaller storefront spaces
  - Pizza--either delivery/take out, bake-at-home; or dine in
  - Pack and mail outpost: PostNet, Postal Annex
  - Specialty crafts shop with classes like a yarn, needlework, bead, basket weaving

# ADDENDUM

## Contents

1. List of Stakeholders Interviewed by 4Insights for this Study.
2. Comparison of Oak Park household income levels by data source.
3. Business Inventory (submitted separately to Village Staff).

## Addendum to Section 5.0: Stakeholder Interviews List

In addition to being financially successful, the retail component of Oak Park should coincide with the vision of its residents, as closely as the retail market allows. 4Insights conducted 58 interviews averaging one-hour each, with 41 individual Stakeholders supplied by the Village staff (Section One) and 17 more suggested by 4Insights (Section Two).

### Interviewees Supplied by Oak Park:

1. Greg Marsey Village Trustee
2. Lori Summers Assistant Village Planner
3. Sandra Sokol Village Clerk
4. Robert Clements Village Redevelopment Manager
5. Tony Ambrose/Carl Leidy Village Police Department
6. Sunny Choi Village Licensing Officer
7. John Hale Village Trustee
8. John Eckenroad Oak Park Development Corporation (OPDC)
9. Sara Faust Oak Park Development Corporation
10. Lori Malinski Oak Park Development Corporation
11. Mary Jo Lopez Village Clerk's Office
12. Jim Budrick Village Engineer
13. Nick Gambino Restaurant Owner/ President of The Avenue Business District Association
14. John Scheiss Architect/Developer
15. David Pope Village President
16. Sandy Brisben Resident/Previous Focus Group Member
17. Michael Fox Property Owner/Developer/Downtown Oak Park Board (DTOP)
18. Karen Muriello Village Clerk's Office
19. Jason Smith Retailer/DTOP
20. Paul Zimmerman Property Owner/Roosevelt Road
21. Linda Bolte Chair, Plan Commission

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### Interviewees Supplied by Oak Park, cont'd

22.	Melinda Brisben	Resident/Previous Focus Group Member
23.	Dan Haley	The Avenue Business Association/Wednesday Journal
24.	Ray Johnson	Village Trustee
25.	David King	Broker/David King & Associates
26.	Pat Zubak	Executive Director, DTOP
27.	Tom Barwin	Village Manager
28.	Jonathan Shack	Developer in Oak Park
29.	Craig Failor	Village Planner
30.	Jim Doss	Oak Park/River Forest Chamber of Commerce (OPRF)
31.	Kris Gallagher	Resident/Previous Focus Group Member
32.	Karen Morava	Oak Park Retailer, Arts District
33.	Jan Pate	Village Trustee
34.	Jim Kelly	Resident, Roosevelt Road
35.	Cathy Yen	Oak Park Retailer, Great Harvest Bread
36.	Frank Pellegrini	Property Owner
37.	Kim Goldschmidt	Oak Park/River Forest Chamber of Commerce
38.	Dana Kozmos	Retailer, The Avenue
39.	Collete Lueck	Former Chair, Village Plan Commission
40.	Rich Carollo	Oak Park Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
41.	Willis Johnson	Lake Street Theater Owner

## 5.0 Stakeholder Interviews, cont'd

### Interviewees--Added by 4Insights:

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Richard Huff                   | Expression Graphics Owner; President, Harrison St. Business District               |
| 2. Gary Mancuso                   | President of the Oak Park Area Realtors Association                                |
| 3. Greg Melnyk                    | President of Business Assoc. Council/President of South/ Marion St. Business Assn. |
| 4. Dan Finnegan                   | President of the North Avenue Business Alliance                                    |
| 5. Chris Schumard                 | President of the Harrison St. Business Alliance                                    |
| 6. Joan Mecuri                    | Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust  |
| 7. Cecelia Hardarker & Tonya Hart | Former Oak Park Retailer now in River Forest: Two Fish, Forest Park                |
| 8. Lee Heininger                  | Oak Park Retailers, Owner of Fringe  |
| 9. Cathy Maloney                  | OPDC Retail Recruiter  |
| 10. Prime Realty                  | Brokerage with Lake Street vacant retail space                                     |
| 11. Stone Realty                  | Brokers with Lake Street vacant retail space                                       |
| 12. Adam Szetela                  | South Town Business District   |
| 13. Dennis Marani                 | Madison St. Business Assn.   |
| 14. Marge Erickson                | Oak Park Retailer, Owner of Mixed Company  |
| 15. Julia Nash                    | Oak Park Retailer, Owner of Flybird  |
| 16. Sondra Elder                  | Oak Park Retailer, Owner of Olive & Well   |
| 17. Jason Gustafvson              | Stone Realty   |

NOTE: No presidents are currently serving for three Business Districts: Lake/Austin; Chicago/Harlem/ and Chicago/Austin.

## ADDENDUM to Section 6.0: Comparison of Household Income Levels by Data Source

□ The estimates of Household Income within Oak Park boundaries varies by the source of the data. Three sources were used for the 4Insights Study: (1) Demographics; (2) Lifestyle Segmentation; (3) 4Insights Consumer Survey, mailed ONLY to the 5 highest density Lifestyle Segments on the chart to the right..

□ According to 2008 Demographic estimates by Claritas, Inc., Oak Park's median HH income is \$69.2. Average incomes are \$28,600 higher, (\$97,852) due to the very high incomes of a relatively small number of Oak Park households: 16% or 3,542 households earn over \$150,000 or more.

□ Family income levels are even higher—the average Family income is \$129,018. 56% of Oak Park households (12,400) are classified in the Census as Family, which means two or more relatives living together—not necessarily with children. (Only 31% of Oak Park households have children under 18 years living at home.)

□ Lifestyle Segmentation offers a different classification of Oak Park resident incomes. The 5 highest density, or “Target” Lifestyle Segments make up 89% of Village households. But within each of these Target Segments, there is a range of incomes, summarized in the chart to the right.

□ These incomes are modeled by Claritas, Inc. in its PrizmNE 2008 system on a national basis. 4Insights believes that 20% be added to these modeled income levels--first, due to the incomes reported in our Consumer Survey that was mailed only to these Target Segments; and second, because major metro markets such as Chicago have higher income levels than nationally modeled averages.

Five Highest Density Oak Park Lifestyle Segments—  
Prizm 2008 Median Household Incomes (without 20% increase)

Target Lifestyle Segment	Percent of OP HHs	Median HH Income	Income Ranges (in 000s)	
<b>Money &amp; Brains</b>	31% 6,864 HHs	<b>\$85,900</b>	\$75-99	33%
			<b>\$100-149</b>	<b>40%</b>
			\$150-199	14%
			\$200+	13%
<b>Young Digerati</b>	10% 2,214 HHs	<b>\$82,066</b>	\$75-99	35%
			<b>\$100-149</b>	<b>41%</b>
			\$150-199	09%
<b>American Dreams</b>	19% 4,206 HHs	<b>\$53,734</b>	\$40-49	22%
			<b>\$50-74</b>	<b>62%</b>
			\$75-99	15%
<b>Bohemian Mix</b>	20% 4,428 HHs	<b>\$52,483</b>	\$40-\$49	40%
			<b>\$50-74</b>	<b>50%</b>
			\$75-99	09%
<b>Cosmopolitans</b>	09% 1,992 HHs	<b>\$55,018</b>	\$40-49	37%
			<b>\$50-74</b>	<b>53%</b>
			\$75-99	09%

The Chart breaks down, according to Lifestyle Segmentation, the Median household incomes of the 5 highest-density Lifestyle Segments in Oak Park, which make up 89% of the total 22,142 Village Households.

In the two Upscale Segments (*Money and Brains & Young Digerati*), 2/3 of households earn \$100,000+. In the 3 Midscale Segments (*American Dreams, Bohemian Mix and the Cosmopolitans*), the largest percentage of households earn between \$50-74K.