

October 25, 2013

Developer Panel Summary Report

New Lenox, IL

Prepared by:



Introduction

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has invested over \$3 million of its own funds during the past 13 years to complete approximately 75 transit-oriented development (TOD) planning studies through the RTA's Community Planning funding program. This program funds TOD planning studies that promote walkable, mixed-income, mixed-use development co-located and/or well-connected to retail and business uses in transit station areas while also increasing overall access to transit.

While there are many success stories from communities that have implemented their plans, several communities have encountered obstacles and barriers to implementing recommendations found in their completed TOD planning studies. The RTA would like to further invest in the communities we have worked with previously by offering an opportunity to receive additional technical assistance and support towards implementing their plans. In 2011, the RTA launched a new program targeting those communities that have completed a TOD planning study through the RTA Community Planning Program and have illustrated a need for technical assistance and support with implementation. The projects eligible as part of the RTA's TOD implementation technical assistance efforts is now a part of the RTA's Community Planning Program. From the RTA's perspective, pursuing and achieving implementation of these plans can result in more efficient transit operations, improved access to transit services and a potential for increased ridership for all three of our Service Boards (Metra, Pace and CTA). Implementation efforts can also increase private investment in TOD areas while promoting the principles of sustainability and livability.

As part of these increased efforts, the RTA is working with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in Chicago to facilitate discussions between individual communities and development experts to shed light on the future of TODs and how this relates to the changing market and economy.

Developer Panel Participants

Anastacia Fratto, Crown Community Development

Tony Manno, RTA

Mary Ellen Martin, Morningside Equities Group, Inc.

Cindy McSherry, ULI Chicago

Sarah Wick, Related Midwest

Art Zwemke, Robert Arthur Land Company

New Lenox Participants

Kurt Carroll, Village Administrator
Robin Ellis, AICP, Community Development Director
Jeff Smith, Senior Planner

Background Information

The subject site is located at the key intersection of Laraway Road and Cedar Road in the Village of New Lenox. Key objectives of the Laraway Road "Transit Village" Plan, funded by the RTA and completed in 2005, include a vision that the property is developed with a variety of compatible land uses in a coordinated manner creating a "community within a community." Mixed-use development opportunities were to be explored, including a variety of housing types and densities, variety of scales and types of commercial activity, and recreation and open space opportunities. The Plan recognizes that collaborative efforts between the Village, partner agencies and developers will be needed to ensure a successful development process.



The majority of the 236-acre site is currently zoned R-1 Single Family Residence. The Metra station and future Metra parking area is zoned C-3 General Business District. Sanitary Sewer service available for southern portion of property via the Laraway Road Trunk Sewer and the northern portion of the property requires extension of the Jackson Branch Trunk Sewer. Water service is available along Laraway Road and Cedar Road and an SSA in place for recapture. The existing Metra station has approximately 200 parking spaces. Metra service is currently limited to 6 weekday trains and 3 Saturday trains.

Study Area

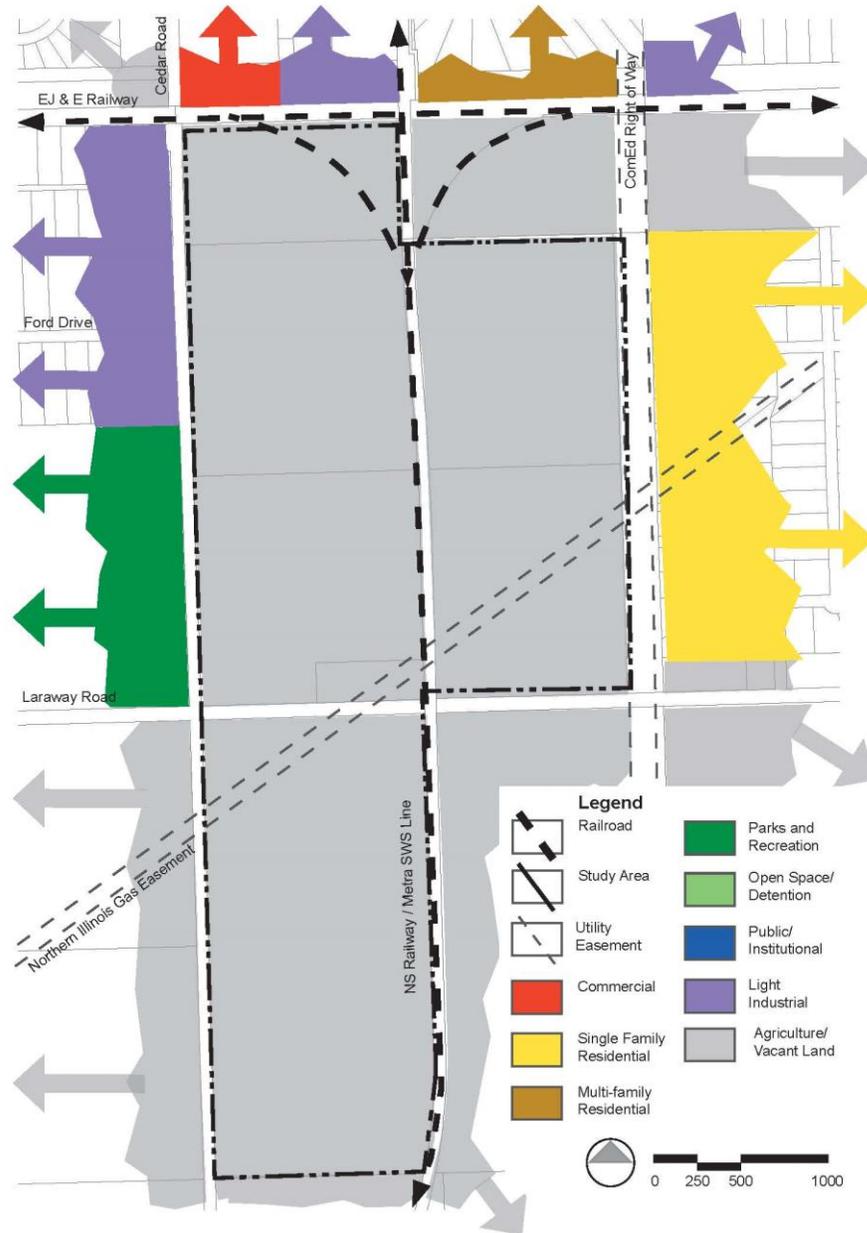


Figure 3 - Existing Land Use

Laraway Road 'Transit Village'
Village of New Lenox, Illinois

the Village of New Lenox
"Home of Proud Americans"

Metra
Regional Transportation Authority

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Summary of Key Recommendations from Discussion

Short-Term

- Reconcile the Annexation Agreement and the Laraway Road “Transit Village” Plan to current market trends and conditions;
- Consider flexible zoning for the northeast and southeast corners of Laraway Road and Cedar Road to include a mix of commercial and multi-family uses;
- Promote the Village’s economic development incentives and tools to attract commercial development at Laraway Road and Cedar Road to complement the existing commercial uses;
- Exclude the south parcel from future Transit Oriented planning efforts.

Long-Term

- Pursue funding for a pedestrian underpass under the Metra tracks to connect the east and west parcels;
- Consider funding the Jackson Branch Trunk Sewer extension to enhance the marketability of the north parcels;
- Consider a land plan that balances multiple Public Squares facing small single family lots to create a unique, walkable community that can readily help support the Metra Station.