



Acknowledgments

This plan was developed by and for the La Grange community, resulting from an extensive outreach process that engaged hundreds of residents, businesses, organizations, staff, and elected and appointed officials. We extend our gratitude to all who participated; this document embodies your vision, ideas, and dedication to La Grange's future. We look forward to working together to implement this plan and continue building a vibrant, thriving La Grange for generations to come.

Village Board

Mark Kuchler (President)
Paul Saladino (Clerk)
Beth Augustine
Louis J. Gale
Shawana McGee
Tim O'Brien
Peggy Peterson
Glenn Thompson

Plan Commission

Greg Paice (Chair)
Julie Egan
Jeff Hoffenberg
Suzanne Mosher
Peter O'Connor
Dave Schwartz
Glenn Wentink

Village Staff

Charity Jones, Deputy Village Manager/Community Development Director
Jack Knight, Village Manager
Heather Valone, Village Planner
Kelsey Fawell, Village Planner
Roya Nassirpour, Village Planner

Board of Fire & Police Commissioners

Community & Economic Development Commission

Design Review Commission

Environmental Quality Commission

Zoning Board of Appeals

Consultant Team

Teska Associates, Inc.
Sam Schwartz

Partners

We also thank the RTA for project funding through the Community Planning program and for their involvement throughout the process. We also appreciate the valuable input from Metra and Pace during the development of this plan.



LA GRANGE

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1		CHAPTER 4		CHAPTER 7	
ABOUT THE PLAN	4	FUTURE LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	46	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	119
What Is a Comprehensive Plan?	5	Vision for Land Use	48	Vision for Environmental Sustainability	121
How To Use This Plan	6	Goals for Land Use	48	Goals for Environmental Sustainability	121
Planning Process	7	Planning Considerations	49	Community Input	122
A Vision for La Grange's Future	9	Future Land Use Map (FLUM)	53	Planning Considerations	122
		Strategies	56	Strategies	124
CHAPTER 2		CHAPTER 5		CHAPTER 8	
FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING	10	SUBAREAS	58	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	128
La Grange At-A-Glance	11	Downtown Subarea	60	Vision for Economic Development	130
A Brief History of La Grange	12	<i>Central Business District</i>	62	Goals for Economic Development	130
Past Village Planning Efforts	14	<i>West End</i>	72	Community Input	131
Existing Land Use	16	<i>North End</i>	81	Planning Considerations	131
Demographic / Market Overview	19	South La Grange Road Subarea	87	Strategies	134
Public Engagement Summary	22	Industrial Subarea	96		
CHAPTER 3		CHAPTER 6		CHAPTER 9	
COMMUNITY CHARACTER	24	TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS	102	IMPLEMENTATION	139
Vision for Community Character	26	Vision for Transportation & Access	104	Implementing The Plan	141
Goals for Community Character	26	Goals for Transportation & Access	104	Priority Strategies	142
Community Input	27	Community Input	105	Strategies Matrix	143
Planning Considerations	27	Planning Considerations	105		
Strategies	29	Strategies	107	<i>Glossary</i>	154
				<i>Endnotes</i>	156
				APPENDIX	
				Zoning Map	



La Grange Village Hall



CHAPTER 1

ABOUT THE PLAN

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Great communities do not happen by chance. They are the result of years, decades, and even generations of leadership and an involved network of community members that have nurtured assets and tackled challenges together. A comprehensive plan is one important tool that communities use to create their desired future and plan for growth and development.

The heart of a comprehensive plan is the community's goals, which provide the focus for future decision-making. Together, these goals define a desired vision for the community and answer that question of "what will our community be in ten or fifteen years?" At the foundation of a plan is an understanding of a community's current conditions, including community demographics, land uses, economy, community character, housing, infrastructure, transportation, environmental conditions, and more. This analysis creates a baseline for the plan by identifying the community's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges and a framework through which goals can be evaluated and refined.

While a comprehensive plan is a technical study, it is also largely informed by community input from residents, business and property owners, elected and appointed officials, and various other stakeholders.

A comprehensive plan culminates into a set of strategies that define achievable, measurable steps for the community to implement in order to achieve its goals. Informed by community input, current conditions, and planning best practices, a comprehensive plan articulates how the community will proactively work toward a vision for the future.



Wayfinding in Downtown La Grange

How To Use This Plan

This plan will help guide the Village Board in future decision-making, such as adopting ordinances and policies, initiating or continuing programs, and allocating resources to achieve La Grange's vision for the future. Community partners in the Village also play an ongoing role in implementing the plan. Various taxing bodies, community groups, local businesses, and property owners were instrumental in the creation of the plan. Village officials and staff, alongside partner agencies, will ensure the plan remains relevant by acting on and refining plan priorities as opportunities arise.

Plan Structure

The plan is organized into a series of chapters that address relevant planning topics specific to this plan, including: Community Character, Future Land Use & Development, Subareas, Transportation & Access, Environmental Sustainability, and Economic Development.

The plan chapters follow a consistent format, as detailed below:

Vision Statement

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Community Input

Each section includes a summary of community input received from residents, business owners, elected and appointed officials, and other community members throughout the plan development process. Insights from community engagement

describe the aspects of life in La Grange that people find desirable, want to expand, or feel are very much part of the Village character.

Planning Considerations

Planning considerations include a summary of existing conditions and other relevant considerations that informed the planning process. Existing conditions describe current assets and challenges at the time this plan was developed; these baseline conditions set context for future-oriented planning. External factors and trends help develop plan goals and subsequent recommended strategies.

Strategies

Strategies describe the actions the Village will aim to take to achieve the goals and vision outlined in the plan. These actions are described in each chapter, with additional structure for their application (stakeholders, timelines, and costs associated with each action) described in the Implementation Chapter.

Plan Implementation

The plan can be implemented through a variety of methods by Village staff and officials, often in the following ways:

Conveying the Village's goals and expectations to share La Grange's needs, expectations, and planned actions to partner organizations, other government agencies, developers, and the community. In this way, common goals, funding opportunities, and the needs of shared constituencies can most effectively be met.

The projects, programs, and policies outlined in this document cannot be done all at once, so they are assigned priorities based on community need, funding availability, and time sensitivity.

Considering development proposals based on the extent to which the proposals advance the plan. When developers and property owners propose developments that require Village approval, there is an opportunity to incorporate policy goals of the plan, such as those related to sustainability or housing, as part of those deliberations for approval.

Continuing to assess and amend the plan to support implementation over time. Communities may meet periodically to review the plan, its priorities, and progress made. This can be done as part of a dedicated workshop or in conjunction with strategic planning, usually done every two to three years, to review the continued relevance and timeliness of goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. It is important to note that this document is adopted at a specific moment in time. Markets, technologies, external influences, and community priorities evolve over time, and may warrant changes to the plan. The plan should be a living document that can change, but any substantive changes should be reviewed by the Plan Commission and adopted by the Village Board.



Downtown La Grange shops and storefronts

Planning Process

The “La Grange Forward” comprehensive planning process spanned a total of eighteen months, beginning in May of 2023 with plan adoption by the Village Board in November of 2024. The process consisted of five distinct stages, which helped define the vision and refine recommended strategies.

Stage 1 – Existing Conditions: The initial phase of the planning process consisted of data gathering and analysis, and review of other recent planning efforts. Key aspects of the existing conditions analysis are incorporated throughout this plan. A complete summary of existing conditions is provided in the *Existing Conditions Analysis Appendix*.

Stage 2 – Public Engagement: Wide reaching and extensive public engagement occurred throughout the entire planning process. Engagement efforts included a project website with an interactive comment wall and map, stakeholder interviews, several community event pop-ups, two community workshops, two workshops for Village elected and appointed officials, and several workshop meetings of the Plan Commission. An overview of the engagement strategies is summarized in the next chapter.

Stage 3 – Community Visioning: The existing conditions analysis and early public engagement provided a foundation to draft vision statements for plan themes and related goals. These aspirational statements are meant to inform the development of detailed strategies to help achieve the community vision.

Stage 4 – Preliminary Plan Recommendations: Preliminary strategy recommendations were drafted, and further public engagement was conducted on the potential strategies. The community engagement provided valuable input to further refine potential strategies and to help identify priority action items ahead of plan drafting.

Stage 5 – Plan Drafting and Community Review: This stage included drafting the Comprehensive Plan, considering and incorporating community feedback, community and market assessments, and relevant data collected throughout the process. The final Comprehensive Plan was then prepared for Plan Commission review consideration, and adoption by the Village Board.

The **Village Plan Commission** had an active advisory role in the planning process. Throughout each stage of the process, the Plan Commission provided insightful feedback and direction, ensuring the applicability and appropriateness of the plan. The Plan Commission met five times throughout the planning process:

- May 1, 2023**
Kick-off meeting
- June 27, 2023**
Reviewing and refining the community conditions
- January 16, 2024**
Reviewing and refining vision statements and goals
- June 3, 2024**
Reviewing and refining preliminary plan recommendations
- August 13, 2024**
Reviewing and refining the Draft Comprehensive Plan



A Vision for La Grange's Future

La Grange's strengths are well-established and effectively managed by the Village. This comprehensive plan acknowledges these strengths and aims to build upon them, taking into account community values and current conditions. The goals and strategies outlined in this plan are intended to collectively support the following vision for La Grange's future:

La Grange is a thriving, established community whose character transcends its numerous assets, including inviting and interconnected neighborhoods, distinctive architecture, historic charm, and a strategic location within the near western suburbs. Attractive residential neighborhoods are the foundation of the Village, providing diverse housing options that accommodate various needs. La Grange continues to be a "front porch" community, where residents know and support one another, both on their blocks and throughout their community. While honoring traditions, the community embraces ongoing change, consistently leaning into the future.

Beyond its residential neighborhoods, La Grange boasts established business centers, anchored by a thriving downtown that attracts families from across the western suburbs. The Village's commercial landscape thrives, supported by its dynamic downtown, commercial districts, and industrial zones, which together offer a wide range of dining, retail, service, and employment opportunities.

The Village maintains high-quality public infrastructure, facilities, and services in a financially responsible manner, enhancing residents' quality-of-life and fostering a supportive business environment. Strong partnerships among neighbors, governmental bodies, civic institutions, and businesses contribute to the community's enduring success.

La Grange Fountain



Stone Avenue Metra Station



CHAPTER 2

FOUNDATIONS FOR PLANNING

La Grange At-A-Glance

La Grange is home to over 16,000 residents and over 450 businesses. La Grange's residents and businesses have access to a variety of shopping and dining destinations, as well as nationally recognized public schools, exceptional community services, high-quality housing options, and a variety of community events.

Just fourteen miles west of Lake Michigan, La Grange is well positioned within the Chicago region. Two major roadways, US 45 (La Grange Road) and US 34 (Ogden Avenue), and two major railroad lines, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), and the CSX/Indiana Harbor Belt, run through the Village, providing local and regional access. Additional connections to major transportation and economic hubs is provided via nearby interstates, including I-290, I-55, and I-294, and transit services, including Metra Commuter Rail and Pace Bus Service. Centrally located between both Midway Airport and O'Hare International Airport, La Grange is within a 30-minute drive from each.

La Grange's position within the context of the region is outlined in *Figure 1: Regional Access Map*.

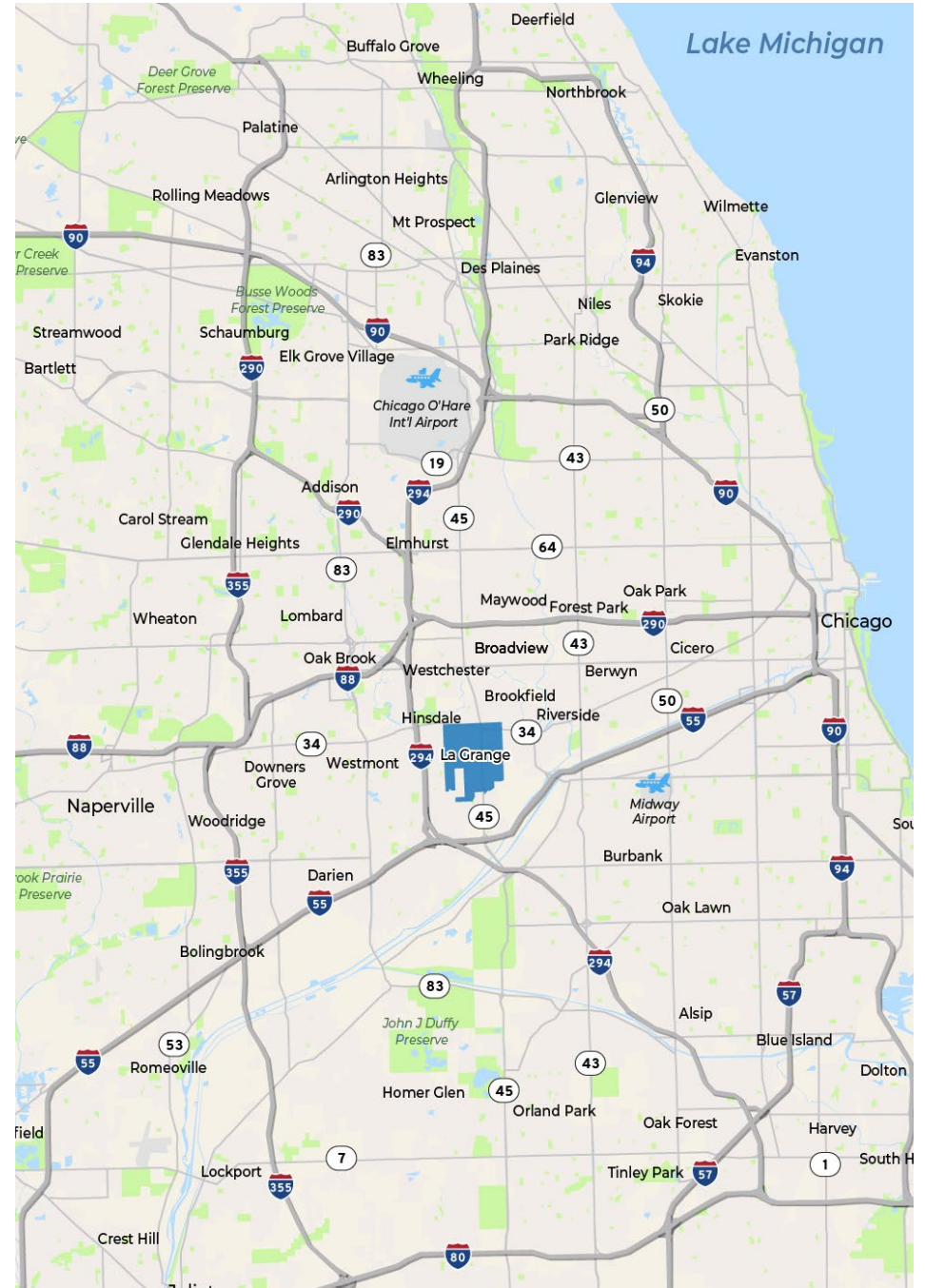


Figure 1: Regional Access Map

A Brief History of La Grange



Image Source: La Grange Historical Society

1837: Robert Leitch purchased 440 acres of land from the U.S. government in what is now La Grange.

1864: Railroad service to the area began with the opening of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad (now Burlington Northern Santa Fe).

1869: Commuter rail service was added to the rail line, connecting the La Grange area to Chicago.

1870s: Franklin D. Cossitt, a Chicago grocery merchant, purchased 600 acres adjacent to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, including part of Leitch's property, roughly encompassing the area now bounded by Ogden Avenue, 47th Street, Bluff Avenue and Waiola Avenue. Cossitt's wholesale grocery business in Chicago was destroyed in the Chicago Fire of 1871, which spurred his work of rebuilding the business and developing his 600 acres. The Chicago Fire resulted in many city residents relocating to nearby, young suburbs, including La Grange.

1879: The Village of La Grange was incorporated.

1880-90s: Development of La Grange and increasing population growth spurred commercial activity, especially around the rail depots at Fifth Avenue (now La Grange Road) and Stone Avenue, contributing to the development of what is now referred to as Downtown La Grange. By 1890, the La Grange business district consisted of nearly thirty stores. The community's location within the greater Chicago area, and location along the railroad, would continue to provide La Grange with opportunity for prosperity.

1900-10s: By the turn of the century the Village's population quadrupled from 1,000 to 4,000. The automobile was common by 1910, and its introduction continued to enhance access to the Village and its downtown.

1920-40s: Through the late 1920s, the Village expanded east of Bluff Avenue to East Avenue, and south of 47th Street to 51st Street. By 1930, the Village of La Grange grew from 6,525 to 10,103 residents, an increase of approximately 55%. From this period through the 1950's, La Grange had successfully positioned its downtown as a regional shopping center.

1950-70s: Beginning in the late 1950's through the early 1970's the Village faced financial challenges. By this time, La Grange was fully developed. Nationally, the introduction of the shopping mall introduced a business prototype in nearby competitive locations which significantly impacted the strength of La Grange as a retailing center. In the face of this challenge, La Grange did

Who was Franklin D. Cossitt?

Franklin D Cossitt relocated to Chicago from La Grange, Tennessee, after his cotton farm was devastated by the Civil War. In 1862, he established a wholesale grocery business that eventually grew to become the largest in Chicago. Following the 1871 Chicago Fire, Cossitt, like many other Chicagoans, relocated westward to the suburbs. There, he acquired and began developing 600 acres of land next to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

Cossitt's impact on La Grange was extensive and lasting. He played a key role in planning and developing much of what would become the Village of La Grange. His contributions included laying out streets, planting trees, donating land for churches and schools, constructing residential homes, and building a new railroad depot at the Fifth Avenue (La Grange Road) station. His son-in-law supported his vision by funding the construction of the Stone Avenue railroad depot. In 1879, the Village of La Grange, named after Cossitt's hometown in Tennessee, was incorporated. In addition to being recognized as the founder, Cossitt served as the village's first president.

Much of Cossitt's plan and vision for La Grange was realized early on and continues to influence the character of the Village over a hundred years later. Today, many of the buildings and landmarks that Cossitt built or influenced still remain and his name lives on in various forms throughout La Grange.

A Brief History of La Grange (Cont.)

not succumb to the inclusion of large-scale shopping centers in the downtown, as many other communities did.

1970: The Village engaged in its first community-wide comprehensive plan. The Village was hoping to again redefine and shape its role as both a strong and desirable residential and business community. A comprehensive plan was a way to focus community ideas and resources on reversing and stabilizing local business and retailing. The plan supported the notion that the Village maintain the basic orientation of the downtown as a pedestrian environment, and work with businesses on property and marketing improvements.

1976: La Grange's early history included its designation as a "dry" town. This meant a complete ban on alcohol sales within the Village. Following Prohibition, La Grange relaxed its stance, permitting the retail sale of beer for both on-premises and off-premises consumption. Following an advisory referendum in 1976, the Village Board voted to adopt Ordinance O-76-37, which expanded alcohol sales to include all alcoholic liquor. This significant change opened the door for expanded offerings at restaurants in La Grange.

1979: The Village of La Grange Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1986: With foresight of the need to continue reinvestment in the downtown and sustain a unique role in the marketplace, the Village

adopted a more detailed plan, A Plan for Northeast La Grange, that addressed the downtown and surrounding areas and served, in part, as the basis for a very successful tax increment finance (TIF) project enacted in the same year. The finance tool made possible many changes including street repairs, business incentives, and facade renovation loans for refurbishing storefronts.

2000-10s: After several years of successful planning efforts and Village intervention, major reinvestment and redevelopment occurred in the early 2000s. Among the most visible and successful projects induced by TIF financing was the Triangle Redevelopment Project (La Grange Crossing) at La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue in the early 2000s. Shortly thereafter, TIF funds were used to construct a parking structure near Village Hall. These investments were followed by privately funded redevelopments, such as La Grange Pointe on the south end of Downtown. During this time, Downtown La Grange flourished and became a prominent regional destination for dining and entertainment. Alongside commercial reinvestment, substantial reinvestment occurred in the Village's housing stock community-wide.

2005: The community again called upon itself to evaluate the state of the Downtown, West End Business District, and the community as a whole, and to refine its course for the future. The Village engaged in its first comprehensive plan update, resulting in the adoption of the La Grange Comprehensive Plan and BNSF Corridor Subarea Plan.

2010-20s: Significant investment and development have marked the last decade, with notable projects reshaping the Village's landscape. The Uptown La Grange project in 2015 introduced a 254-unit luxury apartment complex on the former YMCA property, upholding the high standard for new residential development in the Village. This was followed by Aspired Living in 2016, which added 84 assisted living units and 32 memory care units just north of Uptown La Grange, catering to the needs of seniors and those requiring specialized care. The 2017 establishment of BEDS Plus Ogden Avenue Supportive Housing introduced a 20-unit permanent supportive housing facility, offering crucial support for individuals at risk of homelessness. In 2019, the redevelopment of the former Masonic Children's Home site into Mason Pointe brought 12 single-family homes and 58 townhome units, further enhancing the Village's diversity in housing options.

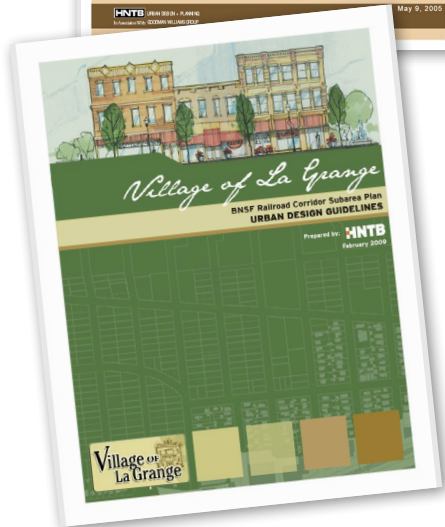
Well established as a family-centered community and subregional hub for dining and commerce, the Village's governance continues to focus on providing quality services and addressing local needs, ranging from community events to stormwater management. This plan aims to consolidate and advance efforts related to government services and previous initiatives.

Past Village Planning Efforts

This Comprehensive Plan does not start from scratch. It builds on previous and ongoing Village planning efforts. Recent La Grange plans considered as part of this plan update are summarized below.

2005 Comprehensive Plan & BNSF Railroad Corridor Subarea

La Grange adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1970, which was last updated in 2005. A major focus of the 2005 update was sustaining the economic success of the community while retaining its small-town charm and character. Issues included: the growth of the Downtown and the need for investment in the West End Business District; allowing new and desirable residential development while ensuring a range of housing types for all in the community; identifying ways to sustain and improve conditions within the Village's smaller commercial areas; and the need to continue to provide high quality community services and facilities.



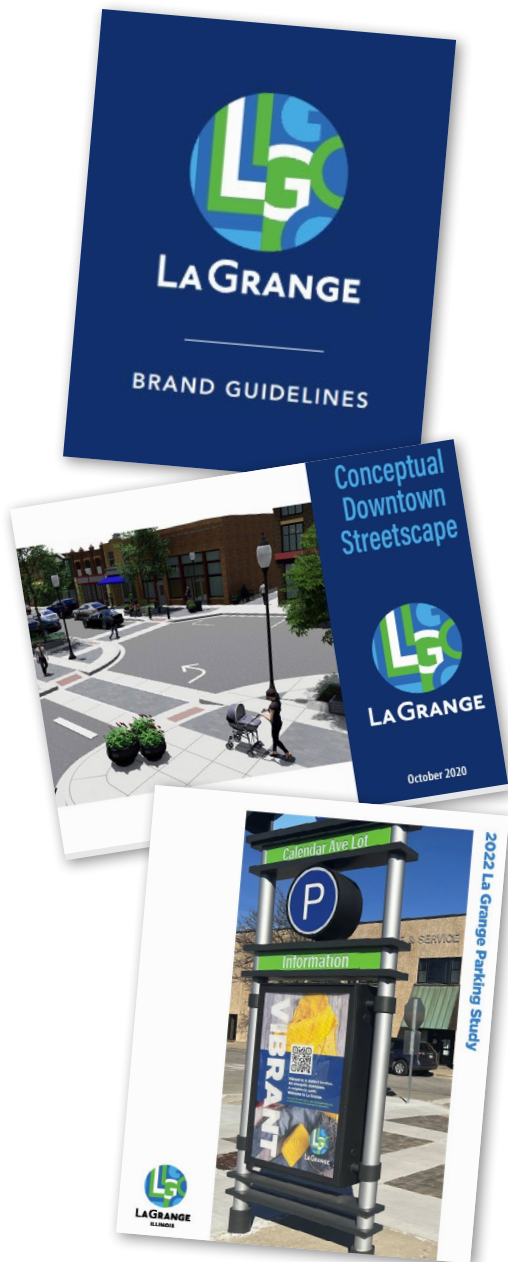
Urban Design Guidelines (2009)

During the 2005 comprehensive planning process, the Village collected input regarding key issues and opportunities in the BNSF Railroad Corridor environs. Several challenges relating to urban design were identified, which led to the creation of the 2009 Urban Design Guidelines. This document includes urban design principles meant to guide design decisions for both public and private improvements within the BNSF Railroad Corridor to facilitate a consistent and pedestrian-friendly character.

La Grange 2020 Task Force & Strategic Plan (2014)

In 2014, the Village of La Grange celebrated its 135th anniversary of incorporation. To mark this milestone, the Village Board created a fixed-term advisory panel of residents (the Task Force) to advise the Village on delivery of core services to maintain and enhance quality of life. The product was a Strategic Plan that identified key focus areas with priorities to help guide the Village over the following several years.

Past Village Planning Efforts



La Grange Branding Study (2019)

The purpose of this study was to identify the Village's brand positioning and points of differentiation. This involved extensive community outreach efforts and analysis to understand current market perceptions and identify target audiences. The result of the Branding Study was a comprehensive brand strategy and identity for La Grange.

Downtown Streetscape Plan (2020)

The Village recognized the importance of downtown La Grange within the community and the need to keep the streetscape well maintained and current. The purpose of this plan was to develop a master plan for streetscape upgrades to improve appearance, address ongoing maintenance concerns, and identify location-specific issues. Additional goals included: incorporate the new Village brand and identify improvements to reinforce the community image; determine best practices for materials and design applications; develop a flexible approach that allows for phasing in new streetscape elements and modifying elements as adjacent property uses change; and review and update the Village policy for sidewalk cafes and use of the public right-of-way.

Parking Study (2022)

The Parking Study evaluated Village-owned or Village-controlled on- and off-street parking throughout the Central Business District and West End. It summarized the Village's existing characteristics, available parking inventory, alternative transportation options, existing and future demand patterns, and recommendations to improve the system. Broad public engagement was included in the planning process to determine parking behavior patterns within the Central Business District and West End business districts and to identify major concerns raised by visitors, residents, and business owners, culminating in the study's various recommendations for optimizing parking.



Downtown La Grange is characterized by its mix of commercial and residential uses

Existing Land Use

Land use contributes to a community's character through the placement of building types, development density, and open space. Insight into a community's economy is also conveyed through its land use in the proportions of commercial, residential, and industrial areas. Land use is also intertwined with the natural environment and community sustainability efforts through preserved open spaces, walking and biking facilities, and improvements to mitigate or manage storm water and other potential natural hazards.

La Grange's land use composition is primarily single-family residential, with dispersed business districts/commercial corridors, scattered institutional uses (schools, places of worship, civic buildings, etc.), various parks and open spaces, and limited pockets of light industrial uses.

Existing land uses for La Grange are categorized as follows:

Single-Family Detached Residential is the primary land use in the Village. Much of La Grange outside of the Downtown Subarea is characterized by single-family detached residential neighborhoods.

Single-Family Attached Residential in La Grange includes side by side duplexes or two-flats and townhomes or rowhomes. Duplexes and two-flats can generally be found in the single-family neighborhoods in and around the downtown subarea, along La Grange Road south of 47th, along the BNSF rail line west of Brainard Avenue, and mixed into the neighborhood east of the IHB rail line north of Cossitt Avenue. Townhome developments in La Grange are limited and are oftentimes newer than single-family neighborhoods, such as the Mason Pointe subdivision or the those located along Hillgrove Avenue between Spring Avenue and Kensington Avenue.

Multi-family Residential are the apartments and condominiums in the Village. Modest density multi-family residential can be found in the residential neighborhoods within the downtown subarea, along La Grange Road south of 47th, and along the BNSF rail line west of Brainard Avenue. Multi-family residential is concentrated mostly within the Downtown Subarea, with the exception of a few pockets of older multi-family buildings, such as Villa Venice Condominiums on Plainfield Road, some older apartment buildings on the east side of Bluff Avenue south of Maple Avenue, and along Cossitt Avenue east of Brainard Avenue.



Multi-family residential along Kensington Avenue

Existing Land Use

Public/Institutional uses are public, religious, or medical, buildings. Local examples of institutional uses include UChicago Medicine AdventHealth La Grange, schools, Village Hall, the police and fire station, churches, assisted living facilities, and the local post office. Many of the institutional uses in La Grange can be found in the downtown or in residential neighborhoods. Many of these uses are located in historic buildings.

Commercial land uses include retailers, restaurants, and other consumer-oriented services. Commercial uses are concentrated within the Downtown Subarea, along the South La Grange Road Corridor south of 47th Street, and at the Village's western boundary along Willow Springs Road. Offices and service commercial uses are prominent in La Grange and generally mixed into the commercial districts. In the Central Business District, office uses mostly occupy above-ground-floor units. In the West End, North End, and in the South La Grange Road corridor, office uses can be found in first floor and above-ground-floor units. Another concentration of office uses is found around the intersection of Willow Springs Road and 47th Street; this district is considered La Grange's medical office district.

Mixed-Use land uses generally include buildings with a combination of commercial uses, which may include a mix of retailers, restaurants, and other consumer-oriented services on the first floors, and residential uses in the form of above-ground-floor dwellings. These uses are concentrated in the downtown subarea and are supported by their proximity to transit options.

Industrial uses are concentrated within two areas located in the eastern portion of the Village; the Shawmut Industrial Area located north of the BNSF rail line and east of the IHB rail line and the IHB Railroad Industrial Area which is concentrated along the IHB rail line south of Ogden Avenue and north of 47th Street. La Grange's industrial uses include mostly warehousing, distribution, flex space, and light manufacturing.

Parks & Open Space refers to mostly public-owned open space, such as properties owned by the park district and school districts. Other open space directly adjacent to the Village includes the La Grange Country Club, an unincorporated property near the Village's southwestern corner. Conservation areas are public and natural open spaces. There are no conservation areas within Village boundaries, however the 245-acre Salt Creek Woods Nature Preserve is located just northwest of the Village.

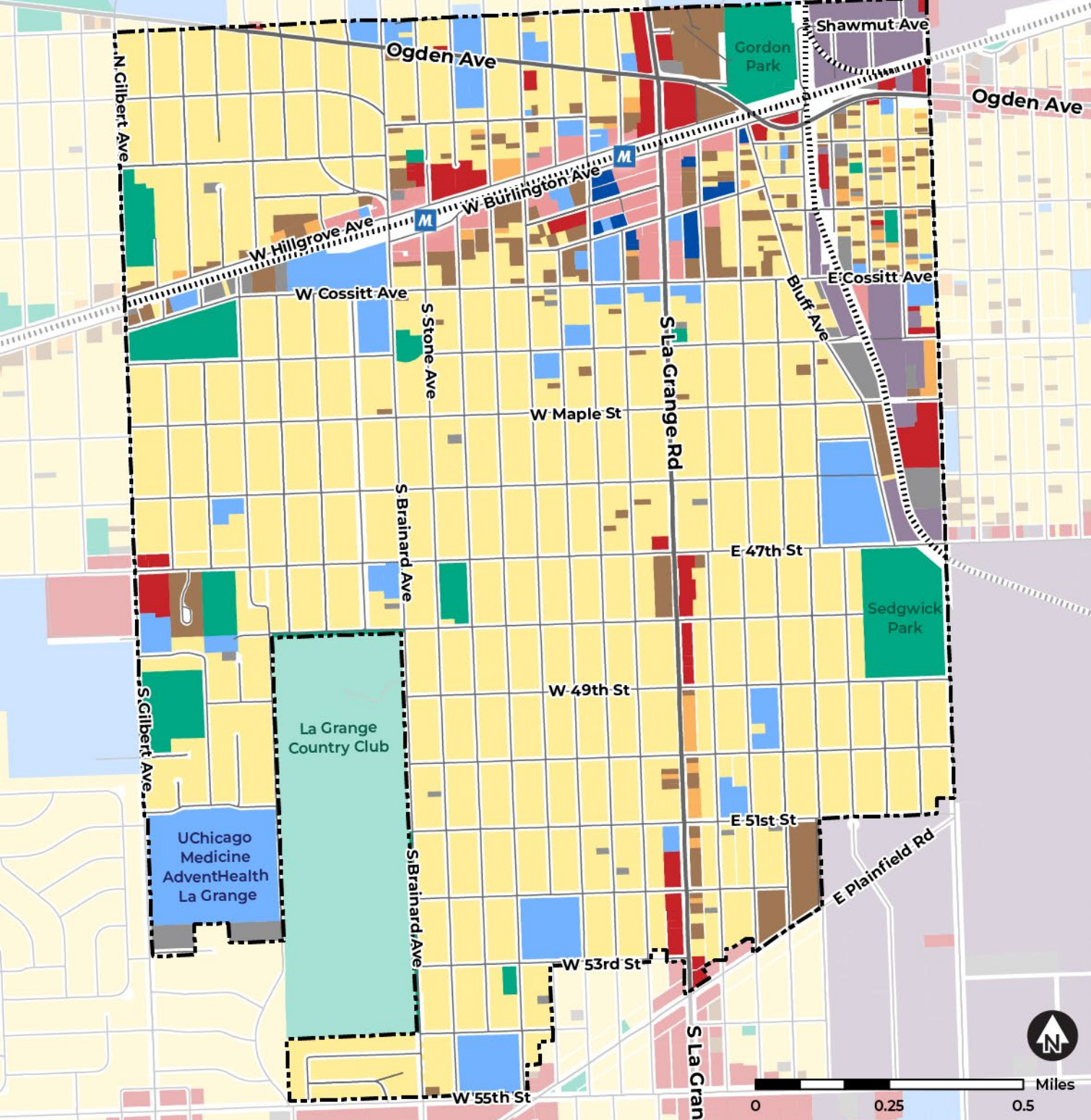





Figure. 2
 Village of La Grange, IL
Existing Land Use Map

-  Village Boundary
 -  Roads
 -  Rails
 -  Downtown Subarea
 -  Metra Station
- Existing Land Use**
-  Single-Family Detached Residential
 -  Single-Family Attached Residential
 -  Multi-Family Residential
 -  Commercial
 -  Downtown Mixed-Use
 -  Industrial
 -  Vacant
 -  Parks & Open Space
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Village Owned Parking Lots

Source Data: CMAP 2018 | Map Created By: Teska

La Grange Demographic & Market Overview

This section presents an overview of current Village demographic and market conditions. These factors and other existing conditions helped inform the Village's vision and goals for the future. A complete summary of existing conditions is provided in the *Community Conditions Report*.

Demographics Summary

La Grange and Surrounding Communities

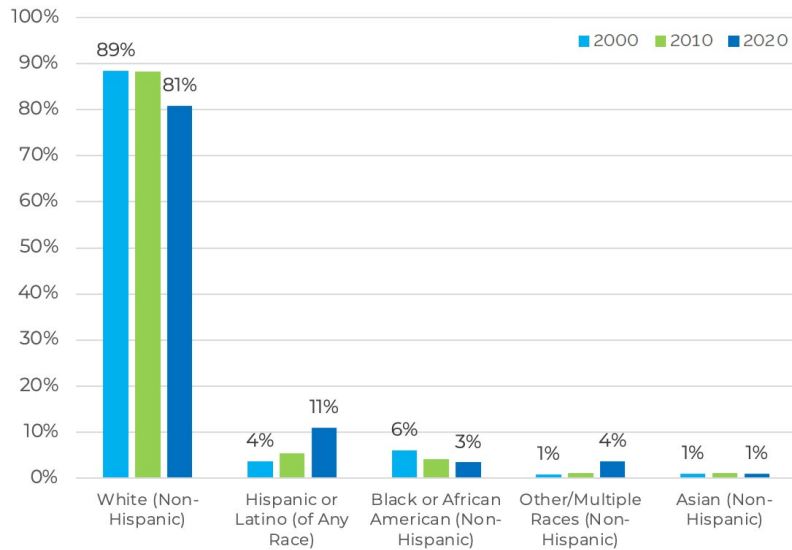
	La Grange	Brookfield	Countryside	La Grange Park	Western Springs
Population	16,128	19,349	6,322	13,332	13,557
Daytime Population*	17,656	13,707	9,300	10,830	11,259
Households	5,791	7,733	2,803	5,159	4,521
Median Age	42.4	40.9	47.9	41.6	42.0
Average Household Size	2.7	2.5	2.2	2.5	3.0
Median Household Income	\$141,235	\$98,867	\$78,603	\$113,419	\$198,836
Per Capita Income	\$71,259	\$46,739	\$51,722	\$55,080	\$93,413
Total Housing Units	6,061	8,135	3,004	5,597	4,643

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey five-year estimates

- Median income in La Grange is nearly double that of Cook County and the State – and it has increased since 2000.
- The majority (58%) of La Grange households earn \$100k+ annually.
- Household income is highest in the neighborhoods south of downtown and in the western portion of the Village.

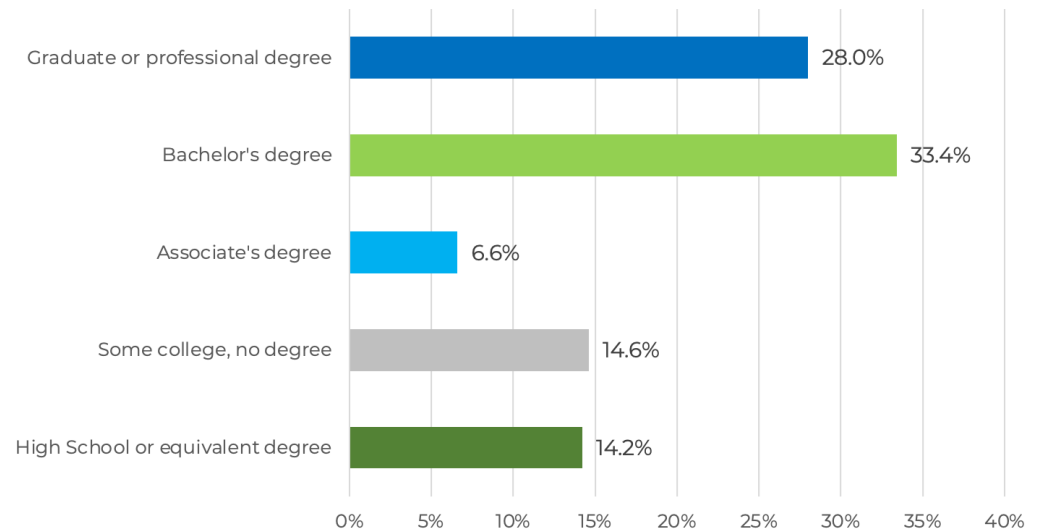
La Grange Demographic & Market Overview (Cont.)

Race & Ethnicity | 2000-2022



Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, Source: 2018-2022 ACS five-year estimates

Educational Attainment | 2022



Source: 2018-2022 ACS five-year estimates

- While the majority of La Grange residents identify as White non-Hispanic, shifts in race and ethnicity occurred between 2000 and 2022, with a decrease in the White non-Hispanic population, and an increase in the Hispanic population and other/multiple races non-Hispanic population.
- The percentage of Hispanic or Latino population has increased slightly between 2000 and 2020, while the Black non-Hispanic population has decreased slightly.
- 11% of La Grange residents speak a language other than English at home, with the largest percentage speaking Spanish, followed by Indo-European languages.

- 61% of La Grange residents have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher, with 28% obtaining a Graduate or Professional degree.

La Grange Demographic & Market Overview (Cont.)

Market Analysis Findings

- Retail vibrancy in downtown continues to be strong and emphasizes restaurants.
- Downtown La Grange is strengthened by drawing visitors from surrounding communities with smaller downtowns.
- Net retail rents are comparable to Elmhurst and Downers Grove.
- Taxes are lower in those DuPage County towns, which creates a competitive disadvantage to renting space in La Grange and Cook County generally.
- Retail rent levels can be a burden for smaller, independently owned retail businesses.
- Residential market is strong, as indicated by low vacancy rates and relatively higher sale prices.
- Office and industrial spaces are a relatively small part of La Grange's local market, and are supported by unique elements such as proximity to major state roads and interstates, rail lines, and Advent Hospital's location in the Village.



Vibrant downtown with emphasis on dining



Attractive to visitors from surrounding communities



Strong residential market with low vacancy

Public Engagement Summary

Insight from the community is a critical element of every comprehensive plan. La Grange’s plan was introduced to the community under the “La Grange Forward Comprehensive Plan” brand.

Community input occurred through individual in-person interviews, focus groups, and meetings, as well as virtually through the project website and other means over the course of the entire planning process. It included:

Focus Groups & Stakeholder Interviews [June 1st & 5th, 2023]:

Stakeholders were invited to participate via small group interviews and provided input on challenges and opportunities for La Grange.

Pop-Up at the La Grange Farmers Market [June 1st, 2023]:

Kicked-off the planning process by spreading the word about the plan and collecting initial input from the public about what people love about La Grange and what they would like to see for La Grange’s future.

Community Workshop Open House #1 [July 31st, 2023]:

Gathered public input on issues and opportunities related to current conditions and planning subareas.

Pop-Ups at the La Grange Community Center Mosaic Project by the COMMUNITY Diversity Group [August 20th & 25th, 2023]:

Continued efforts to spread the word about the planning process. Invited the public to provide input on current conditions and planning subareas.

Boards & Commissions Workshop #1 [August 8th, 2023]:

The Village’s elected and appointed officials came together to discuss initial plan findings and provide their input to help advance the community visioning phase.

Boards & Commissions Workshop #2 [April 24th, 2024]:

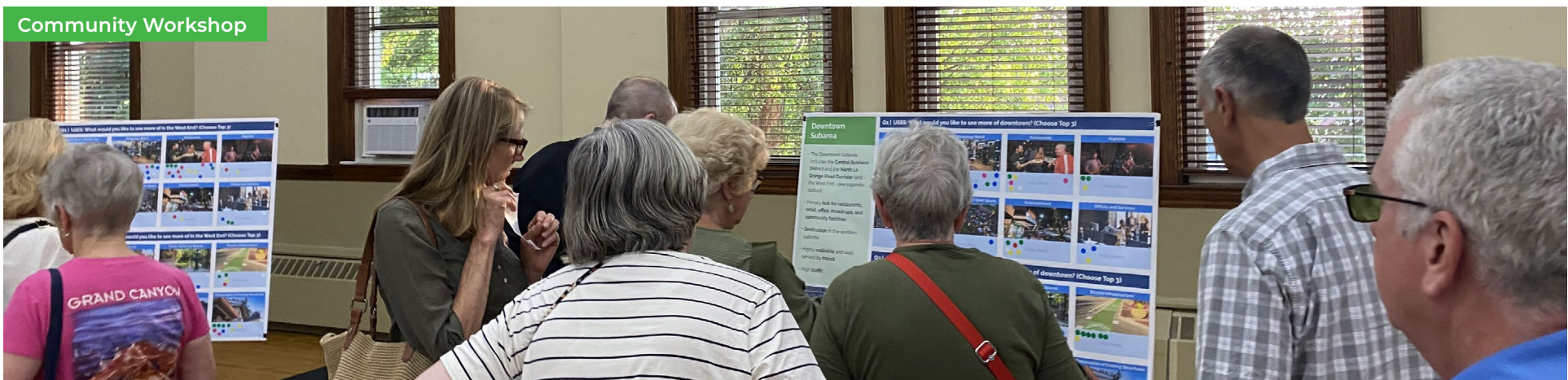
The Village’s elected and appointed officials came together for a second workshop to refine preliminary plan recommendations and to help identify priority action items ahead of plan drafting.

Community Workshop Open House #2 [May 6th, 2024]:

Solicited community input to further refine preliminary plan recommendations and to help identify priority action items ahead of plan drafting.

Virtual Engagement [2023-2024]:

Accomplished through the LaGrangeForward.org website, virtual input resulted in 5,000+ page views, 2,700+ unique visitors, and nearly 300 subscribers. Two online input tools, the comment map and ideas wall, collected over 500 comments throughout the course of the planning process and over 5,000 total visits. Over 2,000 unique visitors explored the input tools to comment their own or read others’ ideas.





La Grange Farmers' Market



CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

What is Community Character?

Community character is not one thing, it is a collection of things that create the “look and feel” of a community. The design and form of public and private buildings, open spaces, design of private properties, and even public streets and rights of way all make up community character.

Communities regulate to protect or enhance character through zoning codes, design guidelines, and processes by which developments are approved. These tools must be sound to support success. The Comprehensive Plan offers an opportunity to review and identify refinements to regulatory tools so they provide a foundation to:

- Provide clarity for the development community and residents on the desired vision for future development;
- Respect the varied character of the Village’s different commercial areas; and
- Protect the special attributes of La Grange to preserve in the future.

Over the years, La Grange has successfully nurtured its community character through community involvement and the good work of its commissions and staff. La Grange’s community character is also supported by the Village’s locational strengths and strong position in the commercial marketplace.



Storefronts in Downtown La Grange



Vision & Goals

A **vision statement** summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for Community Character

La Grange is a thriving community whose character is more than the sum of its many assets, displayed in the design of private properties and the public realm. It is supported by the Village's overall land use form, a vibrant downtown, established residential neighborhoods, distinctive architecture, and historic charm. La Grange is a "front porch" community where residents know and look out for one another and are active in their community. Established residential neighborhoods retain their charm, while opening their arms to new housing types that dovetail with their surroundings.

The Village's established business centers also contribute to the character of the community. Anchored by the dynamic downtown with an eminently welcoming pedestrian scale, each commercial or industrial area reflects its own distinct identity, while maintaining the Village's high standards for design and pedestrian access.

Through strategically located and sensitively designed redevelopment, La Grange continues to build a broader base of residents, adding customers to support local businesses and bolstering property values while facilitating development practices that prioritize people over cars.

Goals for Community Character

- Thoughtfully designed public spaces promote community engagement and contribute to an enduring "sense of place."
- Village standards facilitate new development that respects and complements its surroundings.
- The community includes a broader range of housing options at varied price points.
- New development adds to the rich architectural heritage of the community.
- Historic buildings are well-maintained and preserved.
- High-quality infrastructure serves the needs of residents and businesses.

Community Input

- *La Grange is home to many community organizations and events.*
- *Residents are service-oriented and have a strong connection to their community.*
- *La Grange is a family-friendly community and a good place to raise children.*
- *Some areas of the Village feel disconnected, specifically the south La Grange Road area and neighborhood east of the IHB rail line.*
- *The downtown is an integral part of the character and identity of La Grange.*
- *There is a limited diversity of housing options and a high cost of housing.*
- *Many of La Grange's historic buildings are important assets and should be preserved.*
- *The high quality of design, architectural character, scale, and historic feel of the CBD and West End are appreciated by the community.*
- *La Grange is mostly built-out and landlocked – there is little opportunity for growth.*
- *Preserving and enhancing green spaces is important.*

Planning Considerations for Community Character

The aspects of La Grange that define its community character are noted below. They are important to define in order to preserve and build on what residents and visitors to La Grange find special about the community.

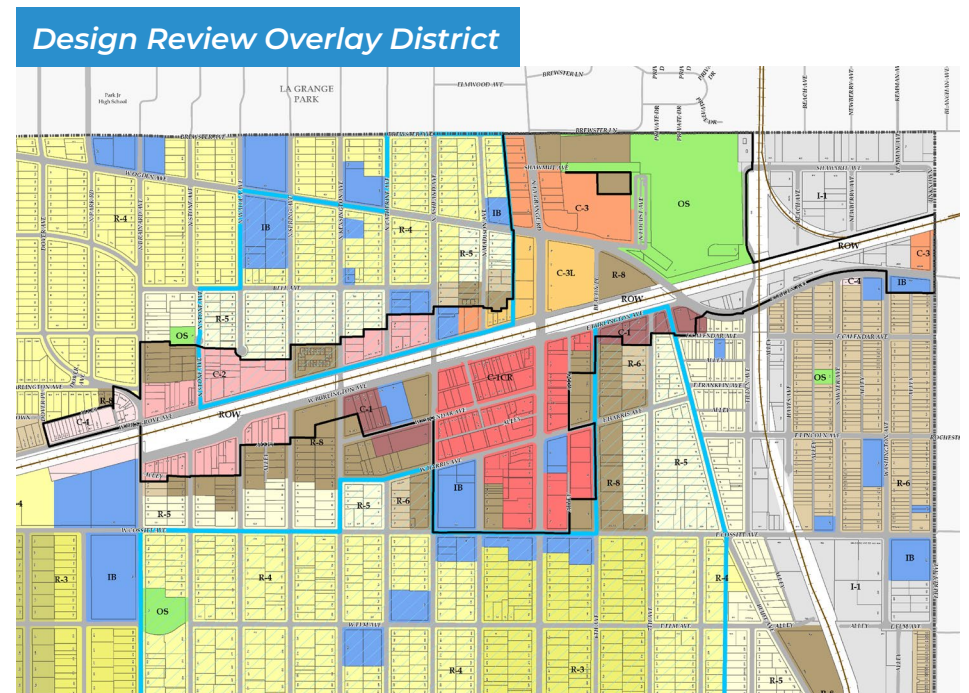
- To many, **La Grange's character** is exemplified by attractive single-family homes, tree-lined streets, a vibrant downtown, and its position within the western suburbs of Chicago. It is a traditional railroad community, making its position within the regional transit system, and transportation system at large, a key part of its character.
- La Grange's mature **tree canopy** is an important element of the community's character, offering environmental benefits like better air quality and climate control, while also creating an inviting feeling in La Grange's neighborhoods.
- Much of this character is rooted in **La Grange's rich history** and dates to the early days of the Village, nearly 150 years ago. Not all areas of La Grange share the same history or form. After World War II, the housing boom of the 1950s transformed the area south of 47th Street, now characterized by ranch-style and bi-level homes and mid-century commercial architecture. The residential neighborhood east of the IHB rail line has an eclectic mix of residential architecture built over several decades. While not all of La Grange maintains a common aesthetic, every neighborhood and area of La Grange informs the look and feel of the whole Village—each can have distinct characteristics, but they all contribute to the Village-wide community character.
- **Resident involvement** in the Village and community-based organizations is a long-standing tradition and characteristic of La Grange. The Village's physical design, including grid streets, extensive sidewalks, homes with porches, detached garages, smaller-sized lots, and tree-lined streets, create a setting that invites residents to know their neighbors and contribute to the community.

Planning Considerations for Community Character

- The entire Village benefits from **engaged community members and institutions** that create a strong sense of community. Institutions, facilities, and organizations (schools, libraries, parks, nonprofits, places of worship, day cares) further enhance community identity, and create opportunities for residents to connect, socialize, and learn.
- **La Grange's land use composition** is primarily single-family residential, with dispersed activity areas/business districts/commercial corridors, scattered institutional uses (schools, places of worship, civic buildings, etc.), various parks and open spaces, and limited pockets of light industrial uses.
- **Land uses in the Village are separated into distinct residential, commercial, office, and industrial districts, which are largely reflected in the underlying zoning.** The built form of La Grange is generally low-density, consisting of single-family residential neighborhoods, commercial centers on major corridors, low-impact industrial, and open space.
- As a **built-out community** with very limited vacant land, La Grange's land use composition is not likely to experience significant changes. Incremental changes will occur through redevelopment of underutilized or outdated properties. Future land uses in La Grange can be expected to largely reflect what exists today—shops, restaurants, services, dwellings—though in some cases these uses may take new shape in the form of mixed-use or multi-family residential development.
- The Village currently requires a **design review process for commercial and multi-family properties within the BNSF Railroad Corridor area**, congruous with the Design Review Overlay District (DRO) outlined in black in the image to the right. The process is spearheaded by the Design Review Commission (DRC), Plan Commission, and Village staff. The

intent of the process, as noted in the Village Zoning Code, is to preserve the character of established areas and set a design standard for any areas that newly develop. Commissions and staff are predominantly guided by the 2009 Urban Design Guidelines for the BNSF Corridor, as well as minor standards within the zoning code.

- **Application of the Urban Design Guidelines by commissions and staff has facilitated attractive development** that contributes to the character throughout the Overlay District. Current design guidelines recommend a general set of standards that is a good basis for review criteria but are broad and exclude important aspects that contribute to building and site designs.



Strategies

Design Standards

Design guidelines are tools used by communities to influence the quality and character of their built environments. Design guidelines do not specify the land use of new developments (as zoning does), they communicate desirable characteristics of buildings and site design. Design guidelines establish a lens through which design decisions should be made; they are a tool that should be referenced by:

The Public: Members of the community can have confidence in seeing La Grange's community character maintained.

Elected and Appointed Officials and Village Staff: Officials whose decisions influence community character can review development proposals in light of consistent, community-based and supported standards.

Business and Property Owners: Owners benefit from a standard being set for character of nearby sites and predictability of how they may invest in their properties.

Design + Development Professionals: Those preparing designs for development projects will have a clear understanding of Village goals for community character and development design.

The existing character in La Grange's Design Review Overlay District is maintained by the Village's application of the established Urban Design Guidelines and the work of the DRC and staff. These efforts have created an attractive district with designs appropriate for La Grange. The current Urban Design Guidelines provide the groundwork to update and more formally adopt clear design standards for the benefit of property owners, designers, and reviewers. More specifically, updated standards will help put protections in place against outlier design proposals. A revised design review process and guidelines are outlined below, to be further developed in the context of an anticipated zoning code update by the Village.



A multi-family residential building at Ashland Ave & Harris Ave

Strategies | Design Standards

1. Refine and detail design guidelines for the current Overlay area:

Current design guidelines provide a general set of standards and a good basis for review criteria in the downtown. The guidelines can be further refined to facilitate more consistent application of standards while maintaining the eclectic character of the downtown, and providing more nuanced guidance specifically tailored for mixed use, commercial, and residential building types. This is most effectively done through a process led by the DRC during a zoning code update, and would include elements such as:

- Preserving existing architectural elements when renovating
- Windows fitting into the architectural style
- Preserving historic character
- Practicality of maintenance
- Design on sides/rears of structures
- Compatibility with adjacent, nearby buildings
- Compatibility of materials on the building
- Compatibility of architectural elements on the building (railings, awnings, parapets, lighting and light fixtures, canopies, gutters, etc)
- Compatibility of new building elements with existing building elements when renovating
- Using natural and durable materials
- Views and vistas of and from the building
- Easy to identify building entrances
- Incorporation of environmentally sensitive materials or design

In updating the design guidelines and elements for consideration, differing standards should be developed for different areas: CBD, West End, North La Grange, and multi-family development. Considerations that may vary for these areas include, but are not limited to:

- Vertical/horizontal expression and relief
- Clearly defined top/middle/bottom of building
- Use of perimeter, interior, and foundation landscaping
- Lighting fixtures and glare reduction
- Pedestrian pathways and connections

Strategies | Design Standards

2. Establish a Design Overlay District for South La Grange Road:

The South La Grange Road subarea is not mapped with an Overlay and not subject to design guidelines. This is pertinent to the plan, given that community feedback indicated this area “did not feel like the rest of La Grange” from a design and character standpoint.

Design standards for new or renovated commercial, mixed-use, and multiple-unit structures fronting La Grange Road south of 47th Street can, over time, establish a standard for quality of design in the area. The more auto-oriented nature of the corridor will not change, and the area cannot replicate downtown La Grange. However, design guidelines can provide enhanced aesthetics and consistent character in the Village.

Design guidelines for the South La Grange Road corridor should address two types of development/redevelopment. The first is auto-oriented development sites, with single users or smaller multi-user commercial structures; generally, these sites are located south of 51st Street. Standards for these sites should focus on building design and site design, including landscaping.

The second type of development to be addressed would be larger redevelopments – likely of multiple lots, half blocks, or even a full block. Guidelines for these sites should be tailored to larger scale residential or mixed-use development, while also addressing transitions to adjacent residential uses.

3. Establish design guidelines for new multi-unit and single-family attached residential development throughout the Village:

Multi-unit (apartment and condominium) and single-family attached (townhome) developments add to the variety of housing types available in La Grange. However, it is important to establish a standard for the character and quality of these developments.

Guidelines should address the many types of multi-unit and single-family attached residential development allowed in the Village. Additionally, standards should be distinct to the type of development; for example, a townhome development differs from a condominium development in terms of architecture and site design.

Further, the Housing Options section of this chapter outlines opportunities for “soft density” in some residential areas and neighborhoods. Soft Density includes small-scale increases in density to allow more variety of housing types, such as accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, while maintaining a single-family character. Unlike large, mixed-use and multi-unit buildings, like those along the BNSF line, these small-scale projects fit on one or two existing lots. With established design standards, projects like these can look and feel like they fit in with single-family residential neighborhoods. Guidelines should establish design standards that are sensitive to the types of neighborhoods in which this type of development would be permitted (e.g. neighborhoods with older homes, smaller lots, etc.).

Strategies | Design Standards

4. Establish a tiered design review process to ensure community design objectives are met in an efficient and effective manner:

Administrative Review by Village Staff:

Modifications to existing multi-family and single-family attached residential buildings and buildings within an Overlay District should be governed by design requirements to be included in the forthcoming Zoning Code update. Clear, codified requirements will enable staff to administratively review and approve changes to existing buildings. Not only does this process improve the efficiency of services to residents and business owners, it also reduces the burden and expense of the formal design review process that might discourage investment and impact the Village's economic development or housing diversity objectives.

Review by Design Review Commission:

The Design Review Commission should continue to review proposals for new by-right development (development not requiring zoning approval through a public hearing process) including all new buildings in the current design review overlay district and South La Grange Road corridor, and duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and multi-family residential throughout the community (see Housing Options section of this chapter). Design Review Commission review should be based on specific design guidelines that advance quality design and context sensitivity within established neighborhoods. This approach allows for zoning to be granted by right, but also allows for public input through the design review process.

The Design Review Commission should review proposals for new construction of commercial or mixed-use development requiring zoning entitlement through the Planned Development process. Currently the zoning code defers this review to the Plan Commission when a proposed building is the subject of a planned development application. This review would apply to areas in the current Design Overlay (CBD, West End, North La Grange Road) and the South La Grange Road subarea.

Strategies | Design Standards

5. Consider revising height standards to allow four stories by right in the R-8, C-1, and C-2 Zoning Districts, where appropriate:

The R-8, C-1, and C-2 zoning districts allow three stories by right with up to five stories through approval of a Planned Development. Within the downtown subarea, the majority of new buildings built since the adoption of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan have been four or five stories and located near transit. The new developments fit well into the character and scale of the area.

Amending the code to allow four-story buildings by right for some R-8, C-1, and C-2 zoned properties can facilitate developments that advance other plan goals such as increasing the number and type of housing units in the Village, improving sustainability through transit-oriented development and supporting economic development by adding customers within walking distance of downtown restaurants and businesses.

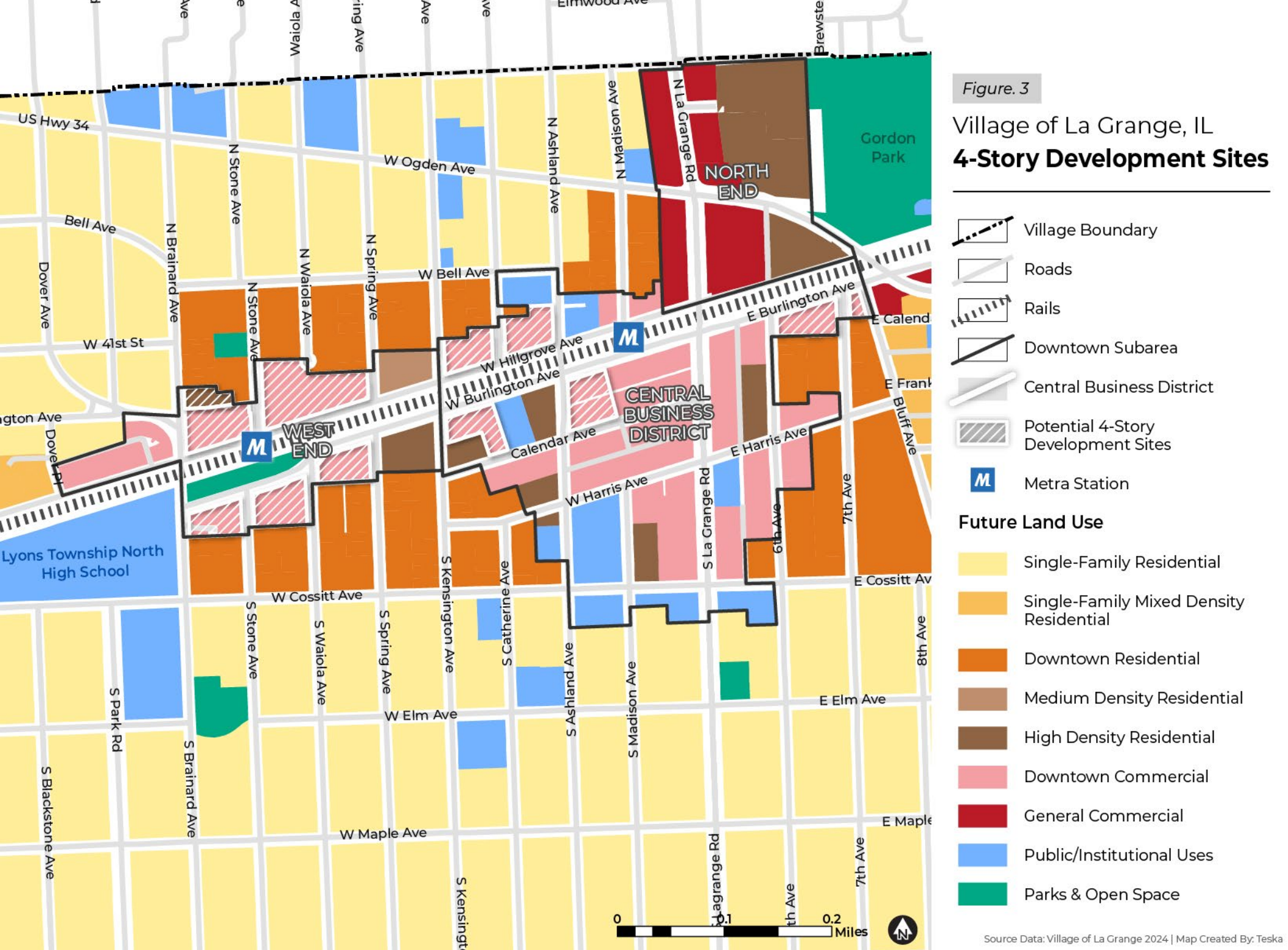
The sites that are candidates for the taller by-right development (shown in *Figure 3. Four-Story Development Sites*) should meet land use and transit-oriented development principles, such as:

- Proximity to public transit;
- Proximity to open areas (such as that just south of the Stone Avenue Metra Station);
- Distance from smaller residential dwellings (generally R-5 zoned areas);
- Applying design and architectural elements (such as stepping back upper building floors) to mitigate possible impacts on smaller residential buildings; and
- Ability to apply a buffer or screening from existing single-family residences.



Image One: 40 S Ashland, Image Two: 14 S Ashland, Image Three: 410 and 420 W Burlington Ave (Source: Google Streetview)

Figure 3
 Village of La Grange, IL
4-Story Development Sites



- Future Land Use**
- Single-Family Residential
 - Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 - Downtown Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Downtown Commercial
 - General Commercial
 - Public/Institutional Uses
 - Parks & Open Space

- Village Boundary
- Roads
- Rails
- Downtown Subarea
- Central Business District
- Potential 4-Story Development Sites
- M Metra Station

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska

Strategies

Housing Options

Community input indicated the need for more diverse housing in La Grange to meet the needs of current Village residents and prospective future residents. In particular, community input noted a need for housing options to accommodate households in various life stages, including senior citizens/empty nesters, young families, and the young workforce, who have limited housing choices and specific needs.

Currently, the housing stock in La Grange consists mostly of single-family residences, which account for seventy-seven percent (77%) of total housing units. Large, multi-family structures (10+ units) make up the second largest category, comprising fourteen percent (14%) of total housing stock. While this make-up contributes to the overall character of La Grange, opportunities exist to adapt and expand La Grange's housing stock to meet the needs of current and prospective residents. Challenges to housing diversification include limited land availability, because La Grange is largely built-out, and high land costs.

While the Village has taken steps to preserve and increase housing diversity, affordability, and attainability, it remains committed to expanding housing options for current and potential new residents, recognizing that a range of housing is foundational in cultivating a welcoming and diverse community. Many of the strategies included in this plan support that commitment by creating opportunities to cultivate a more diversified housing stock that is generally more attainable for a larger variety of residents while also preserving the character that many love about La Grange.



The housing stock in La Grange consists mostly of single-family residences

Strategies | Housing Options

1. Increase allowable density in areas currently zoned R-5 and preserve existing higher density in areas currently zoned R-6, applying concepts of “soft density”.

Incremental increases in density through a change to underlying zoning can advance multiple goals of this plan. Allowing more dwellings per acre creates a variety of housing types, some of which may be smaller and less costly, and supports a more sustainable land use pattern. The development types described below are not anticipated, or encouraged, to be employed through large-scale redevelopment. Rather, these formats are expected as preservation of existing conditions and limited infill opportunities on existing lots.

Allow two dwellings per lot in the R-5 zoning district.

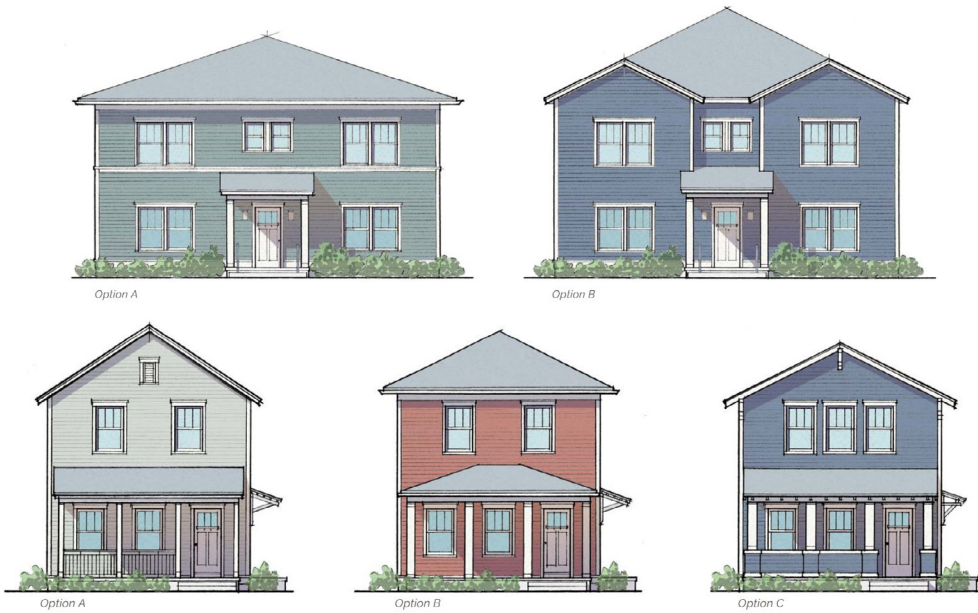
The R-5 zoning district is an opportunity for the Village to modestly increase zoning density by allowing two units per lot in the R-5 zoning district. This change is not anticipated to broadly alter the area’s character, but an opportunity to add a different type of dwelling to the Village on infill or redeveloped lots. The R-5 district already includes several existing two-unit buildings, which do not comply with current zoning requirements. In addition to this fact, the visual impact of mixing residential densities can be mitigated with creative soft density design, where two-unit structures are designed to reflect the character of single-family homes. Two-unit dwellings should be held to design standards established through the upcoming zoning update.

Preserve already existing triplexes and fourplexes in the R-6 zoning district.

Currently the R-6 district allows single family homes and duplexes. Understanding that R-6 areas have a set character and identity, it is recommended that this existing residential character be maintained. That existing character includes several structures that have been converted into 3-unit or 4-unit dwellings. While these buildings are not in keeping with current zoning, they are considered part of the area’s character and are recommended to be allowed to remain through provisions that can be considered as part of the upcoming zoning update.

The R-6 Zoning District contains standards for developing or renovating a two-unit dwelling by specifying design of the primary access, ground-floor entrances, vehicular access, architectural features, and landscaping. These standards help preserve the district’s character and, like other current design guidelines, should be further refined and enhanced through the upcoming zoning code update.

Strategies | Housing Options



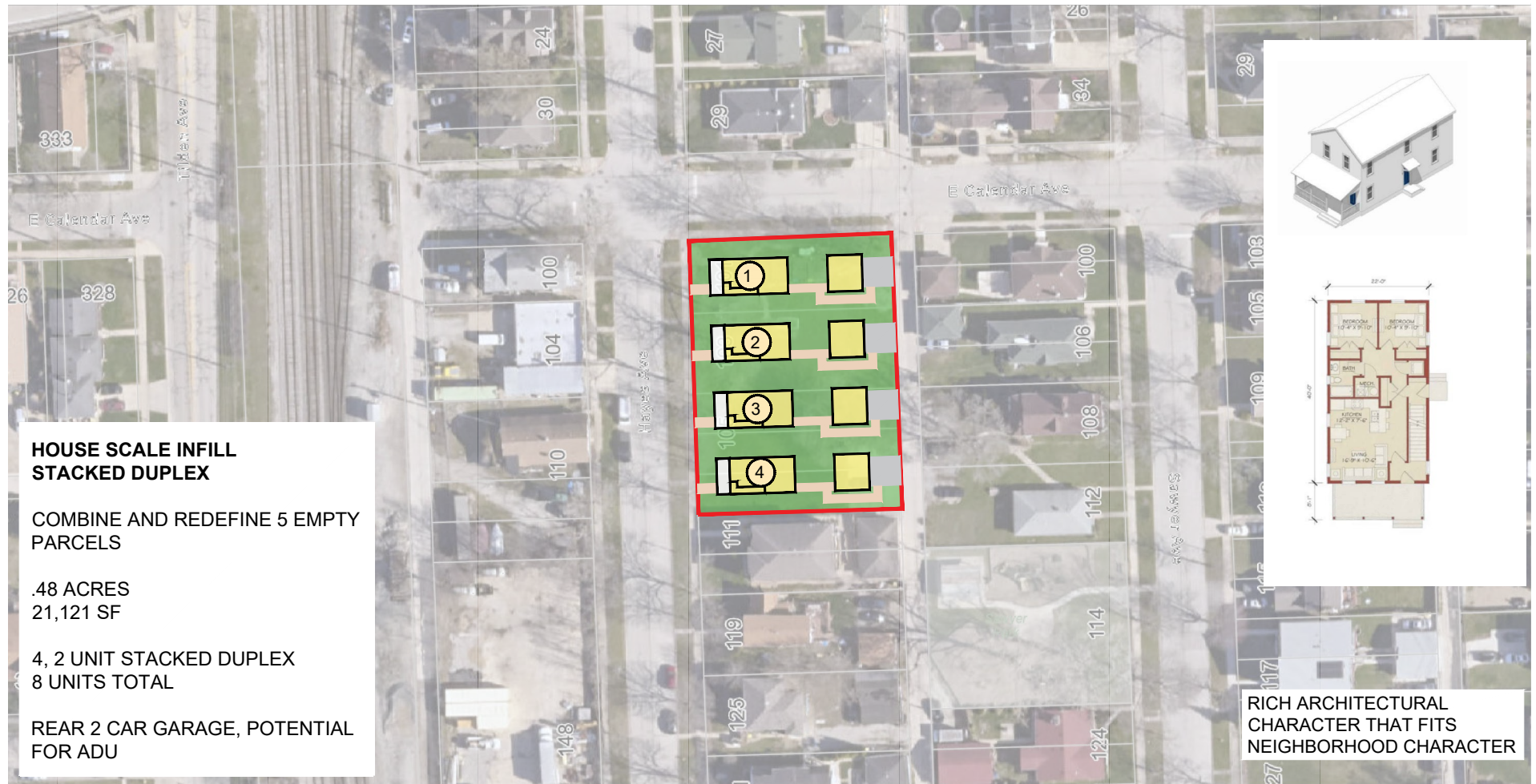
The images above show how these design concepts have been incorporated into development regulations in South Bend, IN, and in developments in La Grange. Top: Side-by side duplex designs; Bottom: Stacked duplex designs (Source: City of South Bend)

Soft Density housing examples – Left to Right: Side-by-side Duplex, Stacked Duplex (Source: Opticos for Lake Bluff Missing Middle Housing Study)

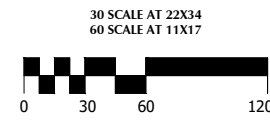
Strategies | Housing Options

Concept A indicates how such designs could be incorporated as infill sites in one of the Village's R-6 areas.

Development Concept A: Stacked Duplex



RESIDENTIAL INFILL



Strategies | Housing Options

3. Revise zoning to allow owners to enhance, expand, and modernize their homes:

The realization of this plan's vision will not be met through new development alone. Existing homes also play a role in supporting the achievement of community goals. Village codes that enable homeowners to modernize their properties can support the retention of existing, affordable housing stock, and allow families to age in place. Enabling modifications to existing homes can also contribute to the established character of a residential neighborhood, help a neighborhood develop a more cohesive look, or support the preservation of historic structures. However, zoning regulations can sometimes limit these improvements, particularly in neighborhoods with small or narrow lots. For example, the front yard setback might prohibit the addition of a front porch—a popular feature in La Grange—or building or lot coverage standards might limit the size of a home addition, which could accommodate a first-floor accessible bathroom.

To address these challenges, a future update to the Zoning Code should review and refine standards to determine appropriate scales and review processes for such enhancements. It is recommended that zoning changes focus on the Single-Family Mixed Density Residential land use category, primarily zoned R-6. These neighborhoods, developed over several decades, feature a mix of home sizes and architectural styles, with lots of varying sizes—including some small, narrow lots that may be constrained by current zoning regulations.

4. Evaluate the local housing environment to identify opportunities to improve housing affordability.

The strategies of this plan support the development of new housing types and scales, which will improve the variety of housing available to current and potential residents and work towards making housing in the Village more affordable.

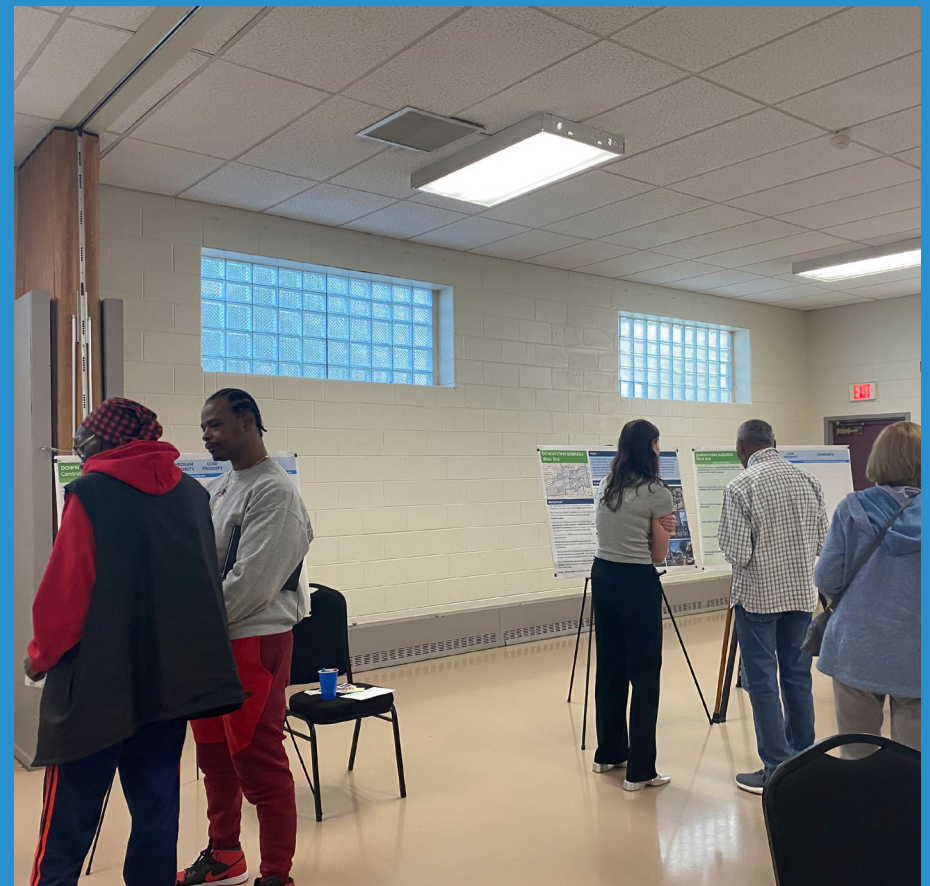
To further support housing affordability, the Village should consider formulating a task force and/or conducting a housing needs assessment. This study would consider the needs of various populations such as empty nesters, young professionals, new families, and those who work in the Village in light of available housing stock and market conditions. The assessment would identify further actions the Village can take to support the housing needs of key populations.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: Historic East Side Residential Neighborhood

Character: La Grange's historic East Side neighborhood is distinctive due to its gradual development, diverse housing stock, and eclectic architectural styles. Unlike other areas that expanded rapidly during housing booms, this neighborhood evolved over several decades, resulting in varied home sizes and designs. Its unique character is marked by a network of alleyways influencing both the design and management of properties. Historically zoned R-6, the neighborhood supports a mix of single-family detached homes and two-family residences, enhancing its residential feel and offering diverse housing options. The neighborhood is also home to several institutional uses, including parks and places of worship.

Location: Another key characteristic of the East Side neighborhood—and the source of its colloquial name—is its location within the village. More so than any other residential neighborhood in La Grange, this area is noticeably influenced by its location and the physical barriers that surround it. The presence of the IHB Railroad, major roadways including Ogden Avenue to the north and East Avenue to the east, and the industrial area south of Cossitt contribute to the area's pocket-neighborhood feel. While these barriers have a confining nature, they have also contributed to a strong sense of community fostered by the residents within the neighborhood.



Community Workshop in East Side neighborhood

Source: CommUNITY Diversity Group



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: Historic East Side Residential Neighborhood

History & Community: The East Side neighborhood has a culturally rich heritage, deeply intertwined with its diverse population, multi-generational families, historically significant sites, and longstanding institutions. Among its notable landmarks and community hubs, the La Grange Community Center at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Washington Avenue has long served as an important gathering place for local residents. Recently, a collection of commemorative mosaic murals was installed at the Community Center, thanks to an initiative led by the CommUNITY Diversity Group of La Grange. This local organization, which is deeply connected to the East Side community, is known for organizing and supporting events and initiatives focused on diversity. The CommUNITY Mosaic Project engaged a diverse group of community members and engaged generations of families from the area to create a series of eight murals that encapsulates the neighborhood’s past, present and future as a unified community.

Looking To the Future: This plan aims to build on the neighborhood’s rich history of varied housing options by promoting soft density and fostering the preservation and improvement of older homes and buildings. It also supports creating and improving connections between neighborhoods by enhancing biking and walking infrastructure to support a connected, unified La Grange.

Source: CommUNITY Diversity Group

The CommUNITY Mosaic Mural: PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE
THE COMMUNITY CENTER HAS HELD THE HEART OF THIS CULTURALLY RICH AND HISTORIC EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SINCE 1939

PANEL STORIES AS TOLD BY LOCAL RESIDENTS

THE PAST
TREE WITH ROOTS: Generations of African American families had roots in La Grange starting in the 1920s
PLANTING SEEDS: Elderly homes represent the stories, connections, nurturing, and love planted by the people who came before us
TRAIN: During the Great Migration, people came to the area from the South to work in local industries such as Reynolds and GM Electro-Motive
Southern Hospitality was sharing what you had - living accommodations and food. If you had a piece of ground, you shared it. Love the neighbor like one of thy neighbor. Mr. Ken Kananani, former East Side resident and Mosaic Project participant

THE PRESENT
FAMILY HEARTBEAT: The thread that binds this community throughout the story
FAITH: The essence that lifts the spirit of and grounds many in the community
CONNECTION & CELEBRATION: With fond memories of softball, basketball and other activities, the Center continues to be a gathering place for special celebrations and remembrances as well as Park District programs
GENERATIONS: Elderly hands assisting young hands to go and continue the story

THE FUTURE
DIVERSITY FRUIT TREE: Many east side homes had fruit trees in their yards - The community is growing and changing... May it continue to be a diverse and welcoming place where its essence remains focused on sharing, connection, celebration, family, faith and love

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!
WARRIOR: Coddis Family - Rotary Club of La Grange
CHAMPION: First United Methodist Church of La Grange - Gemini Gymnastics Academy
ADVOCATE: Township of Lyons - Emmanuel Episcopal Church of La Grange (David Weaver Grant) Horton Home Lighting & Ace Hardware - Prairie Path Group - First Congregational Church of Western Springs The Grimm Bauw Family - Claire & Peter Ewing - Susan Bramson Brooks
ALLY: Bahá'ís of La Grange - Davis Memorial AME Church - Second Baptist Church of La Grange - First Congregational Church of La Grange - St. Francis Xavier La Grange Ministerium - In Memory of Harold Caffey Sr. - Becky Lorenzen & Harold Gibson - The Bramson & Dieter Family - Rev. Corne & Dr. Mark Rand - Dixon & Cirina Family - Elizabeth Wallace & Ken Gustaf - Owen Ispredini - Kowalczyk Family - Jacqueline & Cameron Walker Gale Family - Mizi Lorenzen & George Muller - Ann & Paul Saladino - Susan Schuerger - Gianroffi Frye Family
CDG ARTS COMMITTEE: Nancy Bramson, Chair - Becky Lorenzen - Harold Gibson - Bernadine Sims - Regina McClinton - Russell Davenport - Jennifer Rubison - Nancy LaBreacht - Peggy Ellis
Advisors: Reverend Shawana McGee & Minister Lynn Lacey

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
 25+ Friend Level Donors - 30+ Design Workshop Participants
 400+ Tile-Laying Workshop Participants

Community Designed ~ Created ~ Connected: A Colorful Reminder of What We Can Do Together

Presented by: a non-profit and advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion in government, civic and cultural life so that everyone is represented and heard.

Dedicated as a Gift From CommUNITY Diversity Group of La Grange Area to the Park District of La Grange
October 15, 2023

Created by: a non-profit that works with communities to design and realize public art.

Scan here for an educational, self-guided walking tour about the rich history of La Grange’s Historic East Side Neighborhood:



Strategies

Historic Preservation

To many, La Grange's community form and character is intertwined with its rich history and defined by the historic elements of its built environment. Ensuring that those elements continue to be well-maintained and preserved over time is key. This plan identifies opportunities to identify historic and architecturally significant structures and sites and strategies for ensuring these assets continue to be maintained over time.

1. Update the Village's historic structures inventory.

The Village conducted a historic structures inventory in the 1970s, which identified many of the historic structures present in the Village. However, that inventory was conducted over 50 years ago and the list of potential historic structures has since grown, with many mid-century era structures now being recognized as 'historic.'

2. Develop and adopt a historic preservation plan.

This plan should identify the historic and architecturally significant structures and neighborhoods as candidates and priorities for preservation, as well as determine the Village's preservation priorities. The Village's current historic district largely excludes the downtown, where many historic and architecturally significant buildings are located. The proposed historic preservation plan should give attention to this area, as its character is integral to the economic vitality of the community.

3. Develop a historic rehabilitation program.

This program should focus on educational materials, technical assistance, and incentives to encourage the rehabilitation of privately owned historic structures.



La Grange Historic District

The La Grange Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This district, which was added to the National Register in 1979, exemplifies a residential area that has preserved its architectural integrity, featuring notable examples of Victorian, Queen Anne, Prairie Style and American Four-Square homes.

There is one individual landmark within La Grange on the National Register: La Grange Village Hall, at 53 South La Grange Road. Constructed around 1899, it served as Lyons Township Hall for many years and was listed on the Register in 1978. La Grange is also home to over thirty other historic sites and buildings listed in the Illinois Inventory of Historic Landmarks or Structures, including: the Stone Avenue Station; portions of the Lyons Township High School North Campus; Seventh Avenue School at the southeast corner of 49th Street and Seventh Avenue; the Kensington School building at 125 North Kensington Avenue; the church at the southeast corner of Ogden and Kensington Avenues; a utility building at 530 East Cossitt Avenue; the Jackson Storage Warehouse at 108 East Burlington Avenue; and, over twenty homes, many of which are within the Historic District.

Strategies

Gateways & Wayfinding

La Grange is home to many unique assets and destinations. Making sure that residents and visitors can easily identify and access those places is important to maintaining a vibrant community and supporting economic development.

Gateways and wayfinding signage are placemaking elements that help increase awareness of the Village's unique amenities by highlighting the location of community assets, such as parks, commercial districts, and community facilities. La Grange already uses these tools, however there are opportunities to expand on this program to continue to increase awareness.

1. Expand the wayfinding and gateway signage program:

This includes adding additional vehicle-oriented wayfinding signage that identifies community destinations like Downtown and the Metra stations, particularly in areas of La Grange that feel isolated from Downtown, and introducing new pedestrian-scale signage that includes estimated walking/biking times to those destinations.

Locations for expanded signage include:

Lincoln Avenue and Cossitt Avenue - These are the connecting routes with at-grade railroad crossings for the residential neighborhood east of the IHB rail line. These roadways both connect residents in this neighborhood to Village amenities on the east side of the railroad and connect residents from other neighborhoods in the La Grange community to amenities in and around this area, such as the Community Center on Lincoln Avenue and the Park District Recreation Center on East Avenue.

The West End – This area is home to several community destinations, such as LTHS and the Stone Avenue Metra station. It is also home to many of La Grange's local retailers and dining establishments. Signage should be used to direct people to the West End district from other points in the Village, such as the intersection of Ogden Avenue and Brainard Avenue.

South La Grange Road - The Village's most traveled north-south corridor and the primary route for residents and visitors traversing the village. For visitors entering the Village from the south, this is the roadway that will lead them into downtown and to various La Grange destinations.

Shawmut Avenue - A northern access point into the Village from neighboring communities like La Grange Park and Brookfield. While not a traditional gateway, this area can be a first impression for visitors entering La Grange. Wayfinding can be used to direct visitors traversing the Shawmut Industrial Area to Gordon Park, Downtown, Train Stations and other local destinations.



Example of directional wayfinding with walking times in Clayton, Missouri (Source: Kiku Obata & Company)

Strategies

Placemaking & Streetscape

Enhancing the built environment with placemaking elements is not a new concept in La Grange. These ideas date back to Cossitt's tree-planting initiative in La Grange's early years and were later emphasized in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. More recently, placemaking concepts were implemented as part of the Village's 2021 Streetscape Conceptual Plan, bringing a fresh look and enhancing the downtown's people-friendly environment.

Placemaking is a central theme in La Grange's planning history and is a driving force in maintaining the welcoming environment and character of the Village. However, this work is ongoing. Opportunities to continue this type of improvement exist in areas around the Village and can be leveraged to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment, a strong sense of place, and provide interesting and attractive places.

Below is an overview of strategies related to placemaking, an essential part of community character. However, many of these strategies relate to specific geographies in the Village, and are therefore provided in greater detail in the Subareas chapter of this plan:



Wide sidewalks and bump outs provide opportunities for additional street furnishings and landscaping (Winnetka, IL)

- 1. Uphold residential area streetscape standards** (parkways, sidewalks, etc.) to create a comfortable pedestrian network.
- 2. Complete gaps in the established Downtown streetscape palette** in the West End and North End.
- 3. Create additional space for streetscape and larger sidewalks** in the South La Grange Corridor, where feasible, when considering redevelopment proposals.
- 4. Create intentional and well-designed 'people spaces'** in the CBD and West End.
- 5. Employ placemaking treatments** (light pole banners, public art installations, decorative bike parking, planters, etc.) throughout the West End and South La Grange Road Corridor.





Pace service in La Grange



CHAPTER 4

FUTURE LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

Supporting Future Land Use & Development

Land use categorizes and describes the way properties are used throughout a place, and the relationship of those properties to one another. A cohesive land use strategy provides structure for a community's growth and development, offering predictability for residents, property owners, officials, and developers.

Future land use planning establishes a framework to support the community's vision for the future. In a developed community like La Grange, future land use planning focuses on preserving current uses while identifying strategic opportunities for desired changes.



La Grange water tower



Vision for Future Land Use & Development

The Village is built on its appealing and high-quality residential neighborhoods, which offer a range of housing options to meet different needs. In addition to these neighborhoods, the Village features well-established business centers. Its strong commercial base is supported by a lively mixed-use downtown, diverse commercial districts, and industrial areas, providing numerous dining, retail, service, and job opportunities.

Goals for Future Land Use & Development

- The Village's land use mix provides sufficient area for a variety of activities, businesses, and places to live.
- The Village's land use mix supports a stable and balanced tax base.
- Land use regulations are current and support the vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vision & Goals

A **vision statement** summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Planning Considerations for Future Land Use & Development

La Grange’s existing land use is essential to understand in order to recommend future land use changes and development guidelines.

Existing Land Use

La Grange’s land use pattern is influenced by when neighborhoods and business areas were developed, location of the railroads, how local streets were laid out, and the major roadways and railroad corridors running through the community. Land uses in the Village are generally separated into distinct residential, commercial, office, and industrial districts; current zoning is largely reflective of the existing land uses. The built form of La Grange consists of single-family residential neighborhoods, a mixed-use downtown, commercial centers on major corridors, pockets of light industrial (such as warehouses and low-intensity manufacturing), and community parks throughout. Institutional and community-oriented uses (schools, churches, public buildings, and a hospital) are located throughout the Village.

This arrangement of land uses are the basic building blocks of communities, and this concept informs many elements of this Plan. Significant to La Grange’s land use pattern is that the Village is mainly built-out and essentially landlocked (abutting other communities on all sides leaving little potential for annexation). This means that development most often comes from reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings on properties having other uses nearby. In these cases, changes in land use can be slower and more impactful than those of “greenfield” development. This is a fundamental element of development in La Grange – particularly the Subareas chapter of this Plan. The current land use pattern is shown in *Figure 4: Existing Land Use*.



Gordon Park is a major community recreational asset

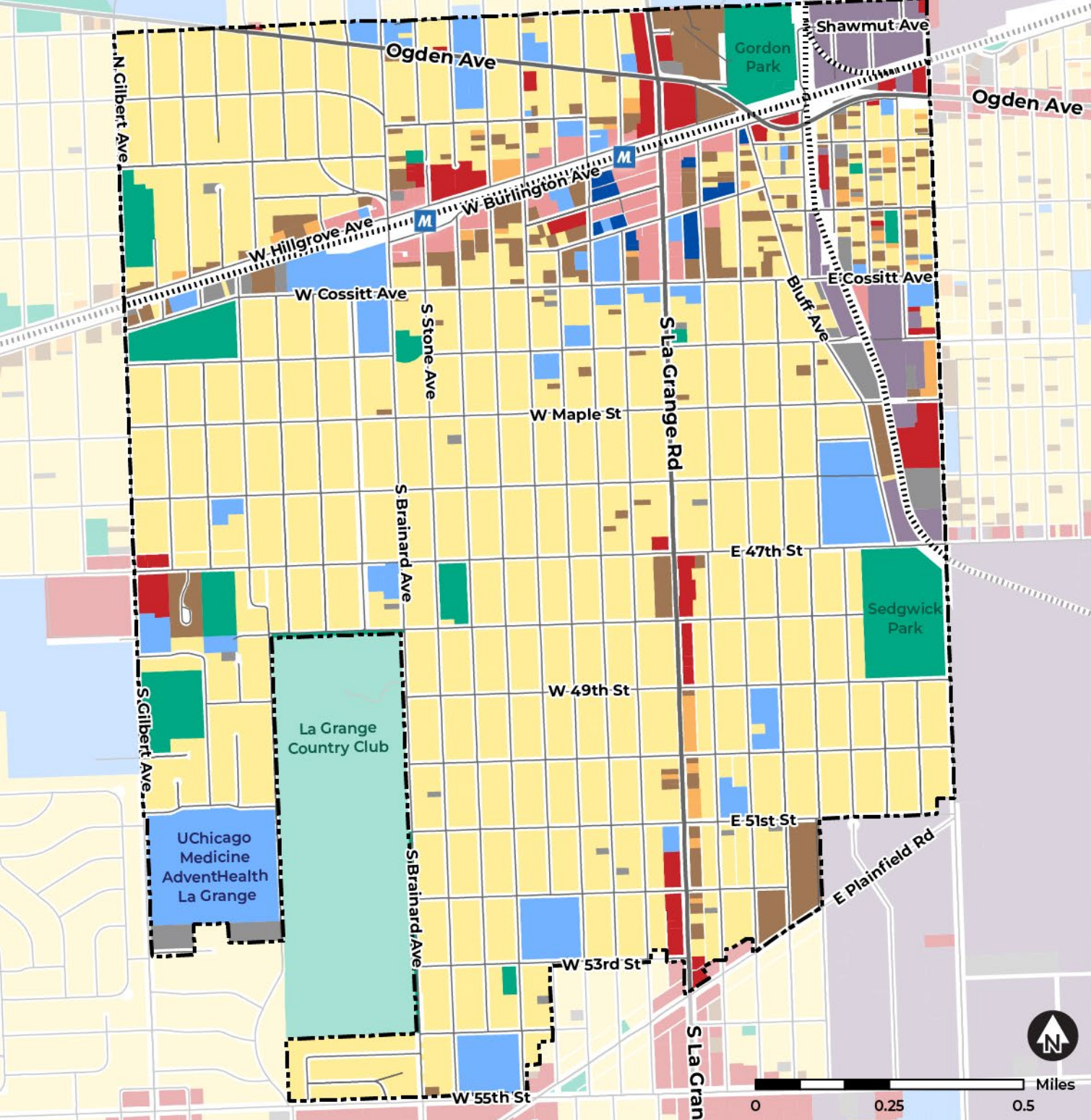

















Figure. 4
 Village of La Grange, IL
Existing Land Use Map

-  Village Boundary
 -  Roads
 -  Rails
 -  Downtown Subarea
 -  Metra Station
- Existing Land Use**
-  Single-Family Detached Residential
 -  Single-Family Attached Residential
 -  Multi-Family Residential
 -  Commercial
 -  Downtown Mixed-Use
 -  Industrial
 -  Vacant
 -  Parks & Open Space
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Village Owned Parking Lots

Source Data: CMAP 2018 | Map Created By: Teska

Planning Considerations for Future Land Use & Development

Current Application of Zoning Standards:

The La Grange Zoning Code, as with all zoning codes, focuses on 1) permitted uses of land, 2) bulk of allowed structures (essentially height and setback of buildings) 3) procedures for case-by-case consideration of certain applications, and 4) dividing the Village into zones that cluster complementary uses.

- There are five residential zoning districts that focus on single-family residential uses, with lot sizes ranging from a minimum of 5,000 to 12,000 square feet – consistent with a community built at the time La Grange was developed. R-4 (with a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet) is the most common residential district. There are several well-defined R-2 and R-3 areas in the Village. R-5 zoning, mainly found at the periphery of the downtown, allows the highest single-family density (with 5,000 square foot lot minimums.). The R-6 District allows single unit homes and duplex units and is located primarily to the east of Tilden Avenue.
- Multi-family development is regulated by the R-7 and R-8 districts. The primary distinction between these districts (as with most zoning codes) is the number of dwellings allowed per lot or acre (density), and the type of housing permitted (e.g. townhomes, multi-family). R-7 is applied in limited areas and allows densities of about 21 dwellings per acre.
- R-8 is the primary multiple-family zoning district in the Village (apartments / condos). It is concentrated in and around downtown, and very much part of that area's activity level and overall appearance. Height standards for R-8 are modest for transit-oriented downtowns, at 3 stories. However, taller structures with more units are found throughout the downtown area. Current zoning allows a maximum height of five stories or 70 feet (whichever is greater) through a planned development approval. Also, it allows the maximum height to be the greater of seven stories (or 90 feet) in R-8 Districts north of Hillgrove Avenue and east of La Grange Road.
- Commercial zoning districts set use and bulk regulations for the Village. The CBD is zoned C-1CR, the West End is largely zoned C-2, North and South La Grange Road are zoned C-3. The districts designate land use types in part by applying the established NAICS (North American Industry Classification System), which is a somewhat outdated approach. All commercial districts allow for mixed-use buildings, where commercial uses occupy the ground level of a building and multi-family residential uses occupy upper floors.
- The Zoning Code permits some non-retail uses on the first floor in the C-1, C-2, and C-3. In portions of the C-1 and C3 (outside the C-1CR and C-3L), office uses are allowed as of right. C-2 broadly allows office use as of right. Limiting first floor use is a common zoning approach to maintain commercial and retail character of districts, especially downtown areas. This approach has been effective in La Grange in helping to curate the allowed uses and activity types in the downtown.
- Other zoning districts in the Village provide regulations related to industrial districts, office areas, institutional uses, and open spaces.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) serves to consolidate land use policies from the Comprehensive Plan, illustrating the community's vision for future land use. While the FLUM communicates the Comprehensive Plan's vision, it may be updated independently in some cases.

The Village uses the FLUM to assess redevelopment proposals and inform updates to the village Zoning Code. In a developed community like La Grange, future land use planning focuses on preserving current uses while identifying desired changes that may be realized when development opportunities arise.

Figure 5. Future Land Use Map

Residential Land Use Terms

Below is a list of definitions for terms used throughout this chapter:

Dwelling Unit: A building or part of a building, containing living, sleeping, housekeeping accommodations, and sanitary facilities for occupancy.

Townhouse: A dwelling unit, with a private entrance, which is part of a structure containing three or more dwelling units attached horizontally in a row.

Duplex: One building containing two dwelling units, situated side-by-side or one above the other.

Triplex: One building containing three dwelling units.

Quadplex: One building containing four dwelling units.

Low-rise Residential: A multi-story, building containing five or more dwelling units, typically 2-3 stories in height.

Mid-rise Residential: A multi-story, building containing five or more dwelling units, typically 3-5 stories in height.

Single-family Detached: One building containing a single dwelling unit.

Single-family Attached: One building containing attached dwelling units with private entrances (e.g. Side-by-side Duplexes and Townhouses).

Multi-Unit Building: One building containing multiple dwelling units. Units share a common building entrance, interior hallways, and other common areas.

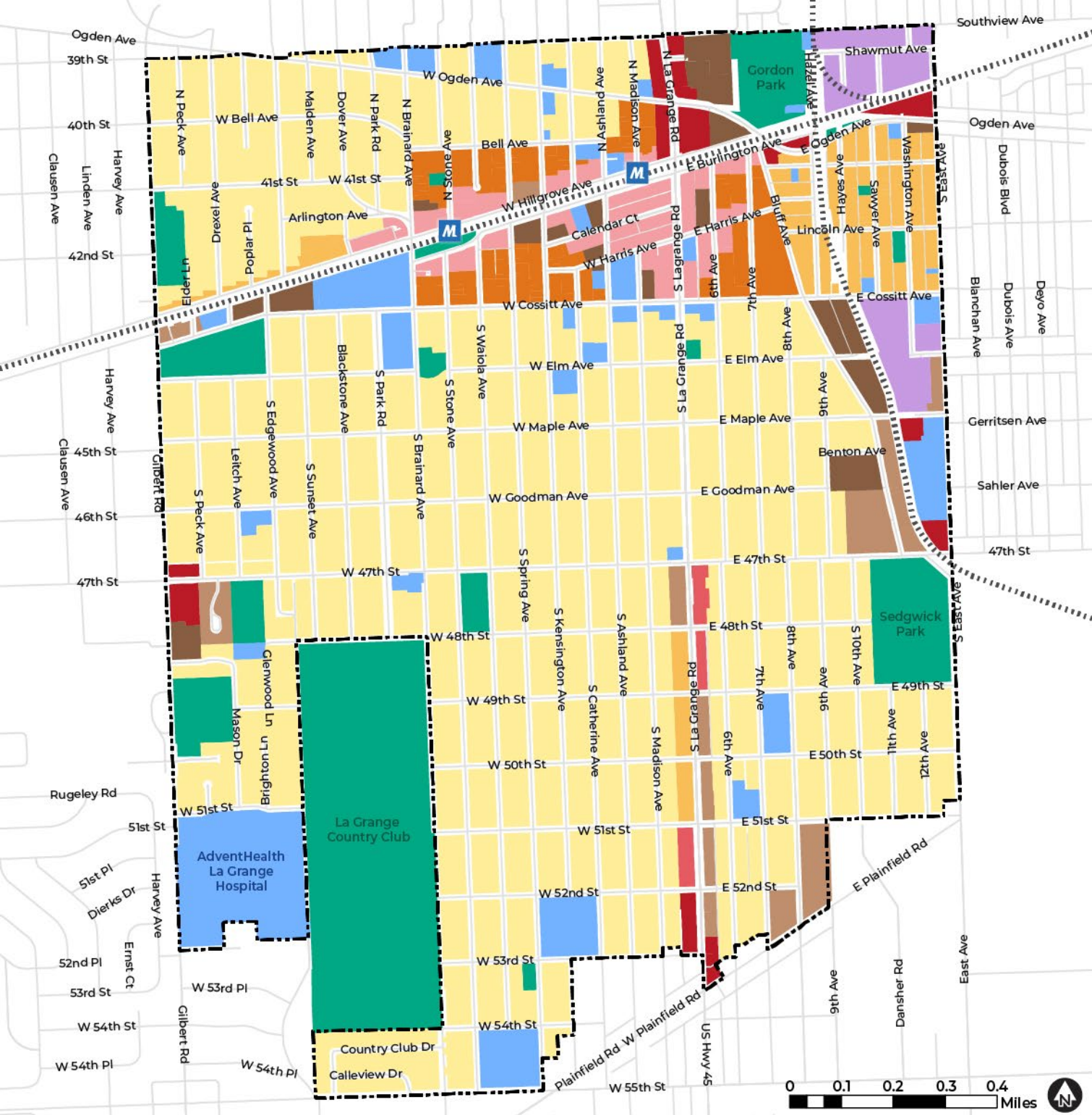



Figure 5
Village of La Grange, IL
Future Land Use Map

-  Village Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rails
-  Metra Station

- Future Land Use**
-  Single-Family Residential
 -  Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 -  Downtown Residential
 -  Medium Density Residential
 -  High Density Residential
 -  Downtown Commercial
 -  Corridor Mixed-Use
 -  General Commercial
 -  Light Industrial
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Parks & Open Space

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska

Future Land Use Categories

Single-Family Residential

This residential category includes single-family detached residences on various lot sizes and related accessory uses and structures.

Single-Family Mixed Density Residential

This residential category is comprised primarily of single-family detached residences and a mix of duplex, triplex, and quadplex buildings that are designed to resemble single-family detached residences. This category creates opportunities to provide infill development with “soft density” design elements that preserve a primarily single-family character for the area while promoting a range of housing choices.

Downtown Residential

This Downtown category consists of a mix of single-family residential, including detached residences and attached residences in the form of duplexes, and medium-density residential in the form of multi-unit dwellings in low-rise buildings. The variety in densities and dwelling types reflects their proximity to downtown’s transportation and business hubs. This category offers opportunities to preserve existing homes while accommodating new residential development to support downtown densification. It also permits the conversion of residential properties to commercial uses, facilitating the organic expansion of downtown while preserving historic buildings.

Medium-Density Residential

This residential category consists of multi-unit residential dwellings buildings and attached single-family townhomes. Structures in this district are typically two to three stories in height. This category provides a mix of medium density residential uses in close proximity to major corridors.

High-Density Residential

This residential category consists of multi-unit, mid-rise residential buildings. Residential buildings in this category are typically three to five stories in height and might include features such as shared lobbies, common resident amenities, and centralized parking facilities.



Housing in La Grange

Future Land Use Categories (cont.)

Downtown Commercial

This category includes the commercial hub and civic core of the Village and functions as a focal point of the community. It is characterized by commercial and mixed-use buildings that house a variety of retail, entertainment, commercial service, professional office, and residential uses. Allowable uses and building scale within the district are thoughtfully curated to achieve the goals of this plan. The area is characterized by a pedestrian-focused, transit-oriented development (TOD) pattern – different from other commercial areas of the Village that include more accommodations for automobiles.

Corridor Mixed-Use

This category includes a mix of commercial and residential uses. Like the Village's other commercial categories, commercial uses may be housed in sole purpose structures or in mixed-use buildings with residential units above ground-floor commercial uses. Distinct from the other commercial categories, this area also accommodates entirely residential development, in the form of single-family attached dwellings, or low- and mid-rise multi-family dwellings. This category reflects flexibility in uses to present an improved opportunity for unique future development.

General Commercial

This category provides a mix of goods and services that meet the daily living needs of nearby residents as well as a range of other shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities. These areas are typically located along major streets and cater to local residents, as well as customers from outside the Village. These areas are more auto oriented than mixed-use districts and require dedicated off-street parking.

Light Industrial

This category provides for a mix of light industrial uses including office, warehousing and distribution, and the light assembly and light manufacturing of products.

Public and Institutional

This category contains community facilities or public buildings such as schools, hospitals, churches, municipal buildings, and cultural facilities. This category reflects existing institutions. Should reuse or redevelopment of structures or sites in this category occur, new development should be reflective of the scale and density of surrounding uses.

Open Space and Recreation

Areas intended to be maintained as a park, recreation site, or open space. This category includes the La Grange Country Club, which is currently an unincorporated property within the Village's future planning area.



La Grange Village Hall is a key institutional use

Strategies

Redevelopment

Some new development opportunities in La Grange involve vacant land that is waiting for the right owner or development proposal. In most cases, redevelopment opportunities involve properties that are currently put to productive use, but where redevelopment would be welcomed under the appropriate circumstances, such as changes in ownership or users. Should the owners of these sites seek change, the Village's intent is that new development should align with the vision, goals, and strategies established in this plan and the land uses identified in the Future Land Use Map.

Below is a list of select redevelopment opportunities, as shown on the Future Land Use Map:

- Public/Institutional Uses:** Should reuse or redevelopment of structures or sites in this category occur, new development should be reflective of the scale and density of surrounding uses.
- Village-Owned Parking Lots:** Should reuse or redevelopment of Village-owned parking lots occur, these sites present opportunities for mixed-use development that is complementary to surrounding uses and supports the vision for the downtown.
- West End Industrial Campus:** The industrial campus is a potential redevelopment site. While the user is a significant employer that contributes to the vitality of the local economy, the use of the property is largely a nonconforming industrial manufacturing facility in a mixed-use downtown. Should the company that owns this property move on to another location, this site presents an opportunity for a significant mixed-use redevelopment.
- La Grange Country Club:** This Plan recognizes the La Grange Country Club as a regional recreational and open space facility that is expected to continue during the planning horizon. However, should it be subject to change in the future, the community's land use preference for the area would be institutional or residential that is compatible with neighboring areas. Any future redevelopment should be done in a way that preserves and maximizes open space and makes it accessible to the community. Future redevelopment of this property should happen through an annexation agreement that can be used to incorporate these goals as well as other objectives of this plan.
- Vacant parcels along the IHB Railroad:** There are several vacant or underutilized parcels along the IHB Railroad that present opportunities for redevelopment. These sites have unique characteristics or qualities, such as the location abutting the railroad, large or differently shaped lots, and, in some cases, environmental challenges associated with past uses, that present certain challenges with redevelopment. Should redevelopment of these properties occur, the community's land use preference would be high-density residential.

Strategies

Zoning

Zoning is the regulatory framework used by local governments to manage the development and use of property. The purpose of zoning is to promote community welfare and to protect the health and safety of residents.

The La Grange Zoning Code divides the Village into various zoning districts that permit specific uses of land and set standards for character of the built environment. Each zoning district contains regulations for development such as use, setbacks, building heights, lot coverage, minimum lot size, permitted encroachments, and floor area ratios. These requirements protect open space and ensure that development is orderly and consistent with surrounding uses and structures.

The Zoning Code provides the Village a tool to sustain the unique character of La Grange. It is also one of the tools used to implement the comprehensive plan, and therefore requires on-going review to ensure that zoning standards align with the Village's vision for the future. Desired outcomes of future zoning amendments include:

- **Community wide zoning code standards** that reflect Village development objectives, apply modern zoning best practices, and advance other plan goals (see *Economic Development* and *Environmental Sustainability* chapters).
- **Downtown zoning standards** that continue to curate the existing character and use mix yet are flexible in supporting local businesses (see *Economic Development* chapter).
- **Appropriate housing types** that may reflect increased residential densities and heights while respecting established land use patterns (see *Community Character* chapter).
- **Commercial, office, and industrial zoning standards** that support the continued vitality of these districts. (see *Economic Development* chapter).



Multi-family residential building in the CBD



Sidewalk dining in Downtown La Grange



CHAPTER 5

SUBAREAS

Subarea Planning

The goals and strategies of the comprehensive plan overlap chapters, themes, and geographies. This chapter presents design and development recommendations for specific areas within the Village.

The recommendations within this chapter operate in concert with recommendations from chapters on community character, transportation, sustainability, and economic development. The following sections should be considered in the context of the recommendations in those other parts of this plan.



La Grange Road Metra Station



Sidewalk dining in Downtown La Grange

Downtown Subarea

Downtown La Grange is the beating heart of the Village and an activity and transportation hub for the area. With its focal point at the intersection of La Grange Road and the Metra BNSF Commuter rail line, the Downtown Subarea is anchored by two Metra rail train stations, serviced by multiple Pace Bus routes, supported by various community facilities, and contains a mix of consumer-oriented businesses and higher density housing. These factors support active foot traffic and a vibrant downtown.

The subarea is made up of three districts, each of which is distinctive and present different challenges and opportunities for placemaking and commerce. These districts are: the Central Business District (CBD), the West End, and the North End.







Figure 6. Downtown Subarea Map

Over the last two decades, the Village has diligently guided the renaissance of Downtown La Grange. Much of that emphasis has been placed on the CBD and the North End, and the community has realized substantial success in these districts. However, work remains to define the future role and character of the West End.

The opportunities and strategies highlighted in this section of the Plan are intended to help sustain the area's success and leverage the strengths of the subarea.



Figure. 6
 Village of La Grange, IL
Downtown Subarea Map

-  Parks & Open Space
-  Village Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rails
-  Downtown Subarea
-  Metra Station

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska

The Central Business District

The Central Business District comprises the central, mixed-use area of the Downtown surrounding the La Grange Road Metra station. This district is generally bounded by Kensington Avenue to the west, 7th Avenue to the east, Cossitt Avenue on the south and Hillgrove Avenue on the north (including properties just north of Hillgrove Avenue that directly relate to the CBD). Likewise, community institutions south of Cossitt Avenue are included.

Figure 7. Central Business District Map

This district is the vibrant core of the downtown and provides multiple shopping and service experiences, a diverse selection of dining options, and a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere with outdoor dining and heavy foot traffic. All elements of the Village's transportation infrastructure meet in the CBD and contribute to its vibrancy. The CBD is also home to a mix of residential uses, including multi-family apartment buildings and condominiums, and several institutional uses, such as Village Hall, the police and fire department facility, the Post Office, the public library, and Cossitt Elementary School.



The CBD is characterized by wide, comfortable sidewalks

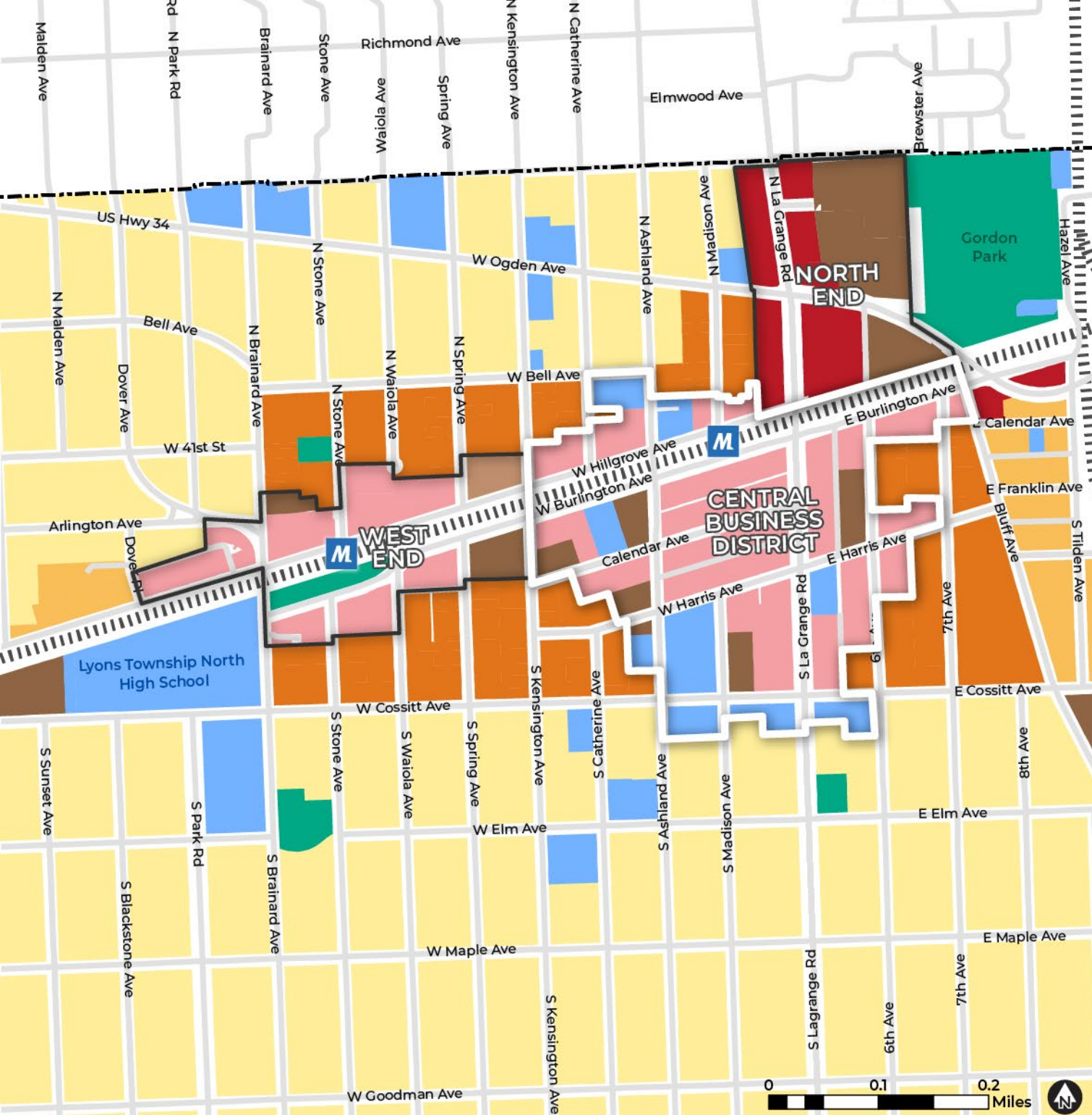
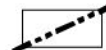







Figure. 7
 Village of La Grange, IL
Central Business District

-  Village Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rails
-  Downtown Subarea
-  Central Business District
-  Metra Station

- Future Land Use**
-  Single-Family Residential
 -  Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 -  Downtown Residential
 -  Medium Density Residential
 -  High Density Residential
 -  Downtown Commercial
 -  General Commercial
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Parks & Open Space

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska



Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for the Central Business District

A Central Business District that is equal parts charming and humming with energy, attracting visitors, residents, and businesses from the greater Chicago region. The CBD includes a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, a vibrant social culture, and eclectic mix of architecture that balances modern function and historic character. The district is home to a variety of uses and developments that, together with the district's varied transportation options and superior pedestrian accommodations, support the CBD's vitality. The area is more than a commercial district, it directly serves and is supported by the moderate and higher density residential developments that contribute to its mixed-use nature and vibrancy of the CBD.

Goals for the Central Business District

- The business district is a regional destination, drawing visitors from the western suburbs and beyond.
- Within the CBD core, comfortable and well-designed public ways and storefronts invite visitors to stop at multiple destinations.
- Within the CBD core, the business mix provides attractive options for shopping, dining and entertainment that make the Village a destination from morning to night.
- Mixed-use development improves the diversity of housing options, includes commercial uses to support the vitality of the business district, incorporates environmentally sustainable practices, and complements the surrounding established character of the area.
- Historic architecture is well-maintained and preserved.
- High-quality public spaces and infrastructure serve the needs of the district and contribute to an enduring "sense of place."
- The CBD is a walkable and accessible transit-oriented environment centered around public transit hubs and easily accessible by bike or walking from surrounding residential areas.
- The Village, local business community, and other partners work collaboratively to attract visitors to the district.

Community Input

- *Desired Elements: Shopping/Retail, Entertainment, Pedestrian Safety and Preservation of Existing Structures.*
- *Safer, more comfortable pedestrian crossing points of La Grange Road are desired throughout the CBD.*
- *More comfortable pedestrian crossings of BNSF railroad tracks at La Grange Road and Ashland Avenue and at intersections on the north and south side of the tracks are desired.*
- *Additional community gathering spaces and 'people places' throughout the CBD.*
- *The variety of dining spaces, retailers, and entertainment uses are valued: maintaining a variety of businesses is important.*
- *The people and pedestrian friendly nature of downtown (such as al fresco dining) was praised, and interest expressed in having more of the same (such as public art or an activated alleyway for gathering spaces).*
- *More consistency with design standards in the CBD, as well as improved facades for existing buildings, are desired.*

Planning Considerations for the Central Business District

- **Public transportation** is a large part of the CBD's success, giving it a transit-oriented character and access to and from the region. The CBD is serviced by Metra and Amtrak, via the La Grange Road station, and Pace bus. These sustainable forms of travel mean fewer cars, leading to decreased traffic congestion and emissions.
- The district includes a **generous mix of entertainment, retail, and dining uses** presenting an opportunity to harness the synergy of multiple experiential offerings and a highly walkable design to facilitate a pedestrian friendly environment.
- The district is also regarded as a **subregional hub for dining**, with a diverse variety of high-quality restaurant businesses, which attracts visitors from around the region. Restaurants remain an important element of La Grange's entertainment offerings and contribute greatly to the Village's sale tax revenue. However, maintaining a healthy balance with restaurants, retail, and other uses is important and will help reinforce the dining and entertainment market in the village.
- The CBD is **almost entirely built out with limited available land**. Redevelopment will be limited to infill and repurposing of existing buildings and spaces and, potentially, Village-owned parking lots.
- **High traffic volume** on La Grange Road (20,400 vehicles/day) creates high visibility for the district and lends itself to a major regional destination. The CBD also benefits from on-street parking along La Grange Road and several signalized intersections, including Cossitt Ave, Harris Ave, Burlington Ave, Hillgrove Ave, and Ogden Ave. However, a highly trafficked roadway like La Grange Road can result in increased noise and congestion, contributing to perceived and real pedestrian safety concerns.

Planning Considerations for the Central Business District

- The CBD is home to **several community events throughout the year**, including the Farmers Market which runs from May to October and annual events such as the Pet Parade, Craft Show, and Holiday Walk.
- The Village and its partners have successfully sustained an attractive CBD and Downtown with a **balance of older structures and newer styles of development** that are complimentary to the existing character. The Village has also successfully maintained a streetscape program which reinforces the charm and ambiance of the Downtown. Aesthetic improvements, combined with the bulk regulations of the zoning code, have created a central business district that is **highly pedestrian-oriented**. Buildings in the CBD are generally 1-3 stories in height and built to the property lines. Streetscape includes wide sidewalks, enhanced pavement, street trees and annual plantings, and attractive and functional street furniture that is homogeneous throughout the district.
- The Village developed the **Conceptual Downtown Streetscape** plan in October 2020, which addresses proposed streetscape improvements in the CBD, including accessibility compliance, paving and crosswalks, lighting, street furniture, trees and plantings, and signage.
- In addition to the on-street **parking** available throughout CBD and downtown and even along La Grange Road, the Village also owns several parking lots and a three-story parking garage in the downtown subarea that supports downtown patronage.
- The Village **does not require individual businesses to provide parking**; this has been essential to preserving La Grange's walkable CDB and making it a destination within the Western Suburbs.
- **La Grange Theater is an entertainment anchor** in CBD and greater Downtown area. Through public-private partnership, the theater has remained viable despite changes in operators and pandemic related closures. Recently acquired by Classic Cinemas, the theater has been fully renovated and is now actively preparing for expansion.



The La Grange Theater, an entertainment anchor in the CBD

Strategies for the Central Business District

Community Character

1. Create intentional and well-designed ‘people spaces’. These spaces, such as plazas, green spaces, outdoor dining areas, informal seating areas, etc., facilitate community interaction and vibrancy, visually enhance underutilized spaces, and support local businesses and economic development. ‘People spaces’ can be permanent or temporary installations of pedestrian amenities, furnishings, and other placemaking treatments, such as al fresco dining, outdoor seating, landscaping, lighting, activities, etc. Opportunities for these types of installations include:

a) Sidewalks & parking bumpouts. Several streets within the CBD, including La Grange Road, Burlington Avenue, Calendar Avenue, and Harris Avenue, have been designed with wide sidewalks and bumpouts to create a pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment. These spaces often have street furnishings, such as benches, bollards, and planters, and some locations are used for outdoor dining for downtown restaurants. Street furnishings should be updated to provide inviting and comfortable seating options. Additional street furnishings can be introduced in the amenity zones (the portion of the public sidewalk near the curb) to create pocket people spaces throughout the CBD. These additions should be done selectively, balancing with safety concerns and existing furnishing and sidewalk café locations. Special consideration should be given to intersections near railroad crossings, to shorten the crossing distance and improve pedestrian comfort.

b) Village-Owned Parking Lots. Continue to use Village-owned and other public parking lots within the CBD for special event ‘pop-ups’ (aka temporary activation for events and community gatherings).

c) Pedestrian Alleys. Pedestrian alleys are unique and important amenities that provide safe and efficient connections between destinations. La Grange has two alleys that function as pedestrian-only walkthroughs in the CBD, including the alley between 23 and 25 S La Grange Road and Arcade Place, which provides a mid-block connection between Calendar Avenue and Harris Avenue. Creative placemaking elements, such as art installations, festive lighting, wayfinding signage, and/or outdoor seating options, can be installed to provide a unique pedestrian experience in the CBD and increase the use of those amenities.

- 2. Refine and detail design standards tailored to the CBD area** (see *Community Character* chapter).
- 3. Allow taller buildings by right in select locations near transit and business districts** (see *Community Character* chapter).
- 4. Implement the recommendations of a historic preservation plan as they relate to the CBD** (see *Community Character* chapter).

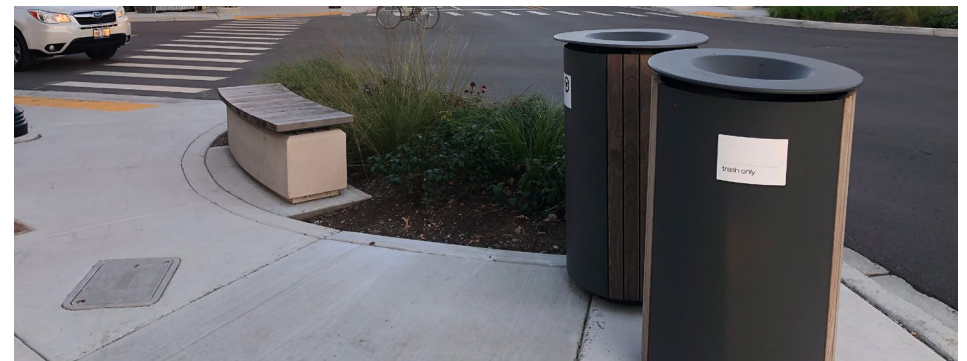
Strategies for the Central Business District

Sidewalks & Parking Bumpouts | Opportunity Locations



Opportunity locations within the CBD for pedestrian furnishings (Image One: sidewalk bump out at Calendar Avenue and Arcade Place, Image Two: sidewalk bumpout at Hillgrove Avenue and Ashland Avenue) Image Sources: Google Streetview, 2021

Sidewalks & Parking Bumpouts | Character Images



Wide sidewalks and bump outs provide opportunities for additional street furnishings and landscaping (Top two images: Winnetka, IL, Bottom image: Wilmette, IL)

Strategies for the Central Business District

Pedestrian Alley | Opportunity Locations

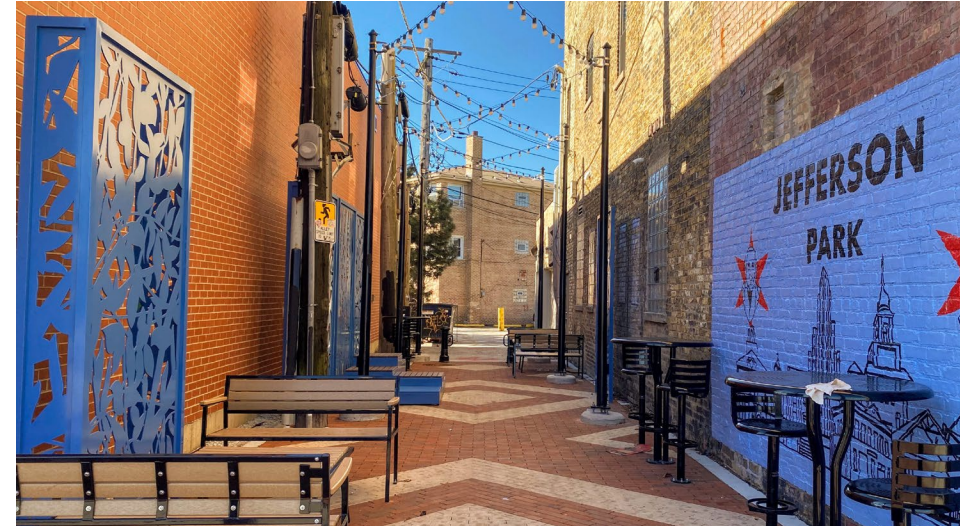


Opportunity location for pedestrian alley activation (Arcade Place) Image Source: Google Streetview, 2019



Opportunity location for pedestrian alley activation (alley between 23 and 25 S La Grange Road) Image Source: Google Streetview, 2019

Pedestrian Alley | Character Images



Alleyway activation includes festive lighting, outdoor seating options, murals, and decorative art installations. (Jefferson Park, Chicago, IL)



Alleyway activation includes festive lighting, outdoor seating options, games, and season-sensitive treatments such as outdoor heaters. (Milk Market, Denver, CO)

Strategies for the Central Business District

Economic Development

1. **Continue to prohibit first floor office uses in the core of the CBD (generally the C1-CR zoning district) to emphasize retail uses** (see *Economic Development* chapter).
2. **Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown** (see *Economic Development* chapter).
3. **Organize transit station activation projects** (see *Economic Development* chapter).
4. **Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district** (see *Economic Development* chapter).

Transportation & Access

1. **Strengthen the visibility of the crosswalks across the CBD** to match the high-visibility crosswalks around Cossitt School and generally present to the west of La Grange Road by adding additional high-visibility crosswalks at locations such as Harris and 6th Avenues or along Burlington Avenue on the south side of the street.
2. **Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks** (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
3. **Continue implementing community-branded ‘signature’ bike racks** that reflect the identity and spirit of La Grange at key destinations across the CBD (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).

4. **Continue to implement recommendations from the 2022 Parking Study.**
5. **Encourage transit-oriented development**, as has been discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the plan, which allows residents to access local businesses without a car and to reach further-flung destinations via Metra and Pace bus.

Environmental Sustainability

1. **Continue to preserve the walkable environment and move parking to the periphery of the downtown**, creating a ‘walking first’ and ‘park once’ community (see *Environmental Sustainability* chapter).
2. **Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations**, including opportunities for rebates from state and federal agencies (see *Environmental Sustainability* chapter).



Uptown La Grange multi-family apartment building in Downtown La Grange

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is defined by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) as “moderate to high-density, mixed-use communities generally located within a half-mile radius (ten-minute walk) of a rail or bus station designed to maximize walkability and transit access.”

TOD is an easy way for communities like La Grange to leverage areas around transit that already allow residents to meet many of their daily needs. Someone living in downtown La Grange can access a grocery store, restaurants, regional rail and bus service, and other daily needs (doctors’ offices, hair salons, etc.) without the need for a personal vehicle. Adding more housing in areas of La Grange that are already suited for car-free or car-light living allows residents to live more affordably and more healthfully (since they walk or bicycle more than car commuters and can therefore have less cars per household). It also allows the Village to offer a wide variety of housing options that suit retirees, people returning to raise their own families, and single-parent households (particularly in cases of divorce, where parents must find housing in proximity to each other). Facilitating a greater inventory of TOD housing options will make living in La Grange more affordable across a wider range of incomes.

The West End

The West End District of the Downtown is a neighborhood commercial and residential area surrounding the Stone Avenue Metra station. South of the rail line the western boundary includes LTHS North and Kensington Avenue on the eastern edge. On the north side of the rail line, the boundary includes uses along Hillgrove Avenue between Kensington Avenue and Dover Place. The southern boundary includes multi-unit residential uses and commercial uses along Burlington Avenue, as well as nearby multi-unit residential uses along Brainard Avenue, Stone Avenue, Waiola Avenue, and Spring Avenue.

Figure 8. West End District Map

The West End District is part of La Grange's downtown, though it has a more relaxed atmosphere than the CBD. It is home to established businesses of various sizes. The area has a historic character but can feel disjointed due to the lack of consistency in land uses and building types along Burlington Avenue and Hillgrove Avenue. Like the Central Business District, the West End is anchored by a Metra Station and institutional uses (Lyons Township High School North Campus), which generate consistent foot traffic. Unique to the district is the broad green space surrounding the Stone Avenue Station.



The Stone Avenue Metra Station is a key transportation hub in the West End

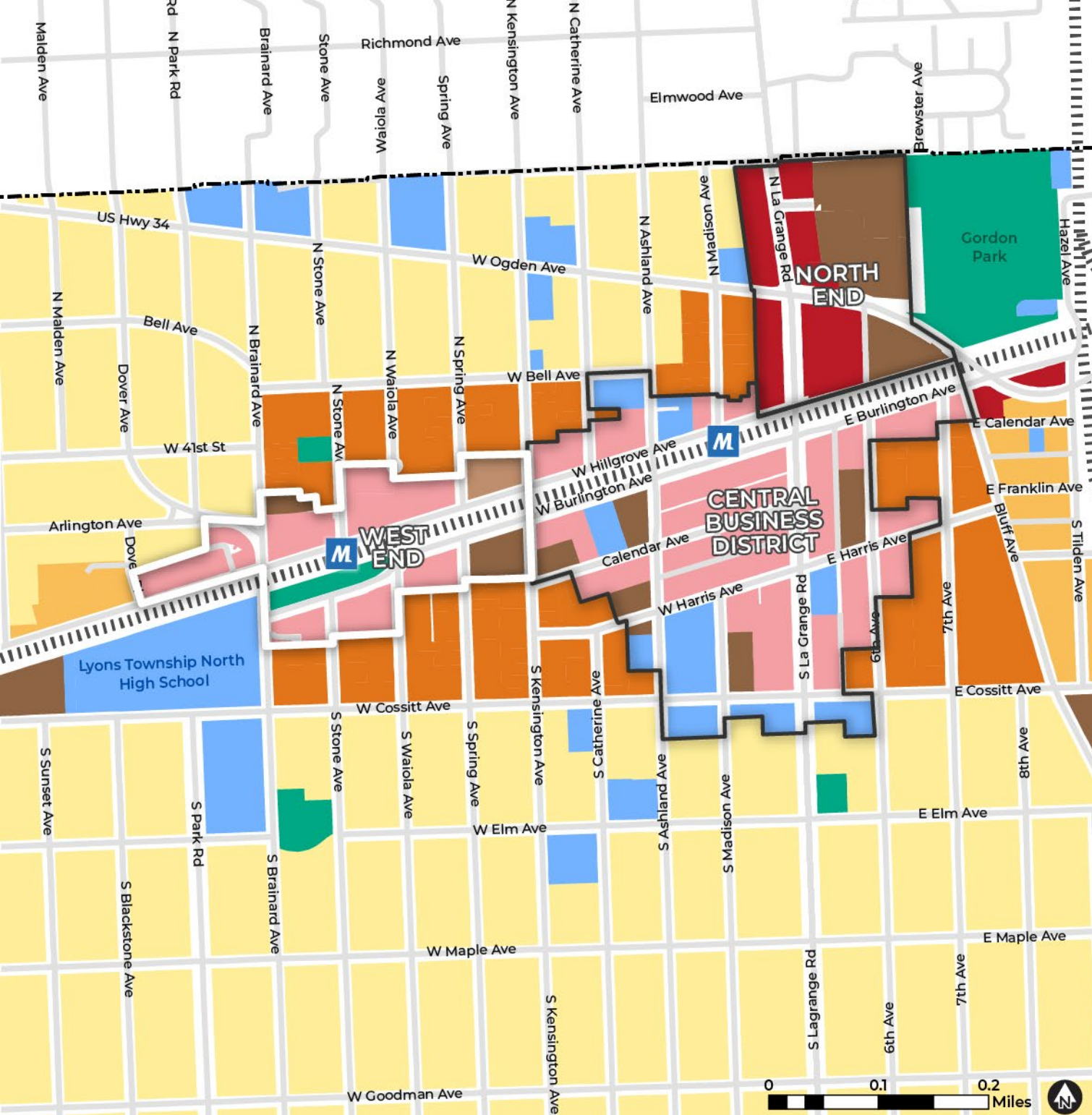


Figure. 8
 Village of La Grange, IL
West End District

- Village Boundary
- Roads
- Rails
- Downtown Subarea
- West End District
- Metra Station

- Future Land Use**
- Single-Family Residential
 - Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 - Downtown Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Downtown Commercial
 - General Commercial
 - Public/Institutional Uses
 - Parks & Open Space

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska



Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for the West End

The West End has a “neighborhood” charm, supported and reinforced by its pedestrian-oriented streetscape, wide public rights-of-way, mature tree canopy, gently curved streets, and a central green space at the Stone Avenue train station. The district is home to a mix of service and local retail businesses for shopping and service needs, benefiting residential neighbors in the West End, from around La Grange, and beyond. New developments in the West End offer opportunities for modern commercial uses and expanded housing options near transit, further supporting a walkable community. The historic character synonymous with the district has been maintained through targeted preservation and thoughtful design of new development.

Goals for the West End

- New multi-family residential and mixed-use development improves the diversity of housing options and complements the surrounding established character of the area.
- Historic architecture is well-maintained and preserved.
- Public spaces are thoughtfully designed, contribute to an enduring “sense of place”, and support economic activity.
- The West End is more seamlessly connected to the central business district; visitors walk between the two areas.
- The Village, local business community, and other partners work collaboratively to attract visitors to the district.
- Infrastructure supports increased pedestrian and bicycle use for commuters, residents and LTHS.
- Preserve and expand Metra service at the Stone Avenue Station.

Community Input

- *The West End has a charming “small town” feel with “neighborhood commercial” uses.*
- *Consider ways to unify the West End and the Central Business District so that downtown feels more cohesive.*
- *Enhance vibrancy through public art, placemaking, al fresco dining, landscaping, etc.*
- *Consider new mixed-use, multi-family developments that would benefit from proximity to the train station.*
- *Incentivize new businesses to open..*
- *Capitalize on the proximity to the high school. Attract uses and businesses that cater to students and teachers (i.e. bookstore, coffee shop).*
- *Invest in improving and maintaining existing buildings/structures.*
- *Convert vacant and underutilized lots into active uses.*
- *Host more events to attract people to the West End (i.e. car show).*
- *The green space around the Stone Avenue station is very popular.*
- *Consider redevelopment of the commercial strip on Hillgrove Avenue west of Brainard Avenue and the industrial campus.*
- *Enhance the pedestrian railroad crossing on Brainard Avenue.*

Planning Considerations for the West End District

- **Public transportation, specifically the Metra Stone Avenue Station, is an important amenity for the district**, attracting commuters to live in and visit the West End. However, commuter service at the Stone Avenue station continues to be reduced and soon will be limited to weekday peak only.
- **Daytime population in the district is supported by nearby institutions and prominent businesses**, including Lyons Township North High School (enrolled: 4,000 students, employed: 255), Grayhill electronics manufacturer (employed: 250), and First National Bank.
- **The West End business mix has traditionally embraced more service businesses** than the CBD. This is due to several factors, including zoning, building and site characteristics, and lower commercial rents. These types of businesses are generally stable and fundamental to the Village tax base. However, they are often single stop destinations to fulfill a specific need for a specific customer. Diversifying the business mix in the West End could support increased pedestrian activity in the district.
- **Rising rents may occur with redevelopment, threatening the long-term viability of smaller local businesses.** If significant redevelopment of this district occurs, the existing retail uses, which are generally small and local businesses, may be priced out. However, redevelopment may create opportunities for other types of retail that would benefit from more modern facilities.
- **Space for parking and stormwater management is limited**, which will require creative on-site solutions for redevelopment.
- **Green space** within and around the district includes an informal open space surrounding the Stone Ave train station, Stone Park on N Stone Avenue, and Elm Park at S Brainard Ave and W Elm Ave.

Planning Considerations for the West End District

- **The presence of LTHS presents both issues and opportunities.** Daytime student population, as well as parent pick-up/drop off peaks, contribute to local traffic and parking issues. However, LTHS generates potential customer traffic that can be captured by businesses in the district.
- **Existing land use patterns in the Downtown Subarea indicate a natural break in commercial activity between the CBD and the West End.** This is in part due to the residential developments on both Hillgrove Avenue and Burlington Avenue between Kensington Avenue and Spring Avenue, and the two-block manufacturing campus along Hillgrove Avenue between Spring Avenue and Stone Avenue. These significant breaks

in commercial activity contribute to the real and perceived separation of the West End. The residential developments are unlikely to redevelop over the course of this planning horizon given their age and continued viability. The manufacturing campus is a significant employment center and likewise has been the subject of recent investment. However, the use of the property is largely a nonconforming industrial manufacturing facility in the middle of the mixed-use downtown. When it is time for this user to move on to another location, this site presents an opportunity for a significant mixed-use redevelopment in the West End. This opportunity is reflected on the Future Land Use Map.



Milkstop in the West End District employs sidewalk dining to activate the area

Strategies for the West End District

Community Character

1. Cultivate a cohesive pedestrian experience between the Central Business District and the West End.

Community input expressed a desire to unify the subarea so that it feels and functions as a cohesive Downtown La Grange. While the real and perceived disconnect between the two districts is in part due to established land use patterns, it can also be attributed to the differences in the pedestrian experience. The Village has established an enjoyable pedestrian environment in the CBD through effective urban design that is recognized as a major contributing factor in the vibrancy of the district. The West End shares many of the same urban design elements as the CBD, which establishes them as parts of the greater downtown La Grange. However, there are additional opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment in the West End in a way that looks and feels consistent with the CBD.

a) Complete gaps in the established Downtown streetscape palette in the West End, specifically the south side of Burlington Avenue between Brainard Avenue and Waiola Avenue. Streetscape elements include accessibility compliance, paving and crosswalks, and lighting. Matching street furniture, trees and plantings, and signage should also be continued in this district as part of the established streetscape palette.

b) Employ placemaking treatments throughout the district that are cohesive with the rest of the downtown subarea to encourage exploration of the district and provide continuity throughout downtown. These treatments may include light pole banners, decorative bike parking, and wayfinding signage.



Established placemaking treatments in Downtown La Grange include branded light pole banners, kiosks, and signage.

Strategies for the West End District

2. Create intentional and well-designed ‘people spaces’.

These spaces, such as plazas, green spaces, outdoor dining areas, informal seating areas, etc., facilitate community interaction and vibrancy, visually enhance underutilized spaces, and support local businesses and economic development. ‘People spaces’ can be permanent or temporary installations of pedestrian amenities, furnishings, and other placemaking treatments, such as al fresco dining, outdoor seating, landscaping, lighting, activities, etc. Opportunities for these types of installations include:

a) Sidewalks & parking bumpouts. Like the CBD, several streets within the West End, including Burlington Avenue and Hillgrove Avenue, have been designed with wide sidewalks and bumpouts to create a pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment. Unlike the CBD, the West End has few street furnishings, such as benches, bollards, and planters. New street furnishings should be introduced to provide inviting and comfortable seating options to contribute to an enjoyable pedestrian experience. Additional street furnishings can be introduced in the amenity zones (the portion of the public sidewalk near the curb) to create pocket people spaces throughout the West End. These additions should be done selectively, balancing with safety concerns and existing furnishing and sidewalk café locations.

Sidewalks & Parking Bumpouts | Opportunity Locations



Opportunity locations within the West End for pedestrian furnishings (Image One: sidewalk bump out at Burlington Avenue and Stone Avenue and Image Two: sidewalk at Burlington Avenue and Waiola Avenue) Image Sources: Google Streetview, 2021

Strategies for the West End District

b) Parklets. Identify opportunities in the West End where parking can be replaced with improved and expanded pedestrian areas, such as permanent 'parklets', that can be used for street furnishings and/or outdoor dining. Spaces typically used for temporary outdoor dining are good candidates for this.

- 3. Refine and detail design standards tailored to the West End** (see *Community Character* chapter).
- 4. Allow taller buildings by right in select locations near transit and business districts** (see *Community Character* chapter).
- 4. Implement the recommendations of a historic preservation plan as they relate to the West End** (see *Community Character* chapter).

Economic Development

- 1. Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown** (see *Economic Development* Chapter).
- 2. Organize transit station activation projects** (see *Economic Development* chapter).
- 3. Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district** (see *Economic Development* chapter).

Parklets | Opportunity Locations



Opportunity location within the West End for a parklet (Burlington Avenue and Stone Avenue) Image Sources: Google Streetview, 2022

Parklets | Character Images



Permanent 'parklet' offers space for street furnishings and outdoor dining, as well as pedestrian scale streetscape elements, such as cafe lighting, pavers, outdoor heaters, and landscaping (Wheaton, IL)

Strategies for the West End District

Transportation & Access

1. **Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks** (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
2. **Continue implementing community-branded ‘signature’ bike racks** that reflect the identity and spirit of La Grange (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
3. **Eliminate parking minimums for occupancy of existing commercial buildings in the West End** (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
4. **Work with Lyons Township High School (LTHS) to provide more bicycle racks across school property, and enhance pedestrian pathways and walkability along major routes to school.** This particularly includes traffic calming on Brainard Avenue.
5. **Encourage transit-oriented development**, as has been discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the plan, which allows residents to access local businesses without a car and to reach further-flung destinations via Metra and Pace bus.
6. **Coordinate with RTA to advocate for increased Metra service.**

Environmental Sustainability

1. **Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations**, including opportunities for rebates from state and federal agencies (see *Environmental Sustainability* chapter).



Stone Avenue Metra Station

The North End

The North End District of the Downtown comprises the mixed-use area surrounding La Grange Road north of the BNSF Rail Line. It is generally bounded by Hillgrove Avenue to the south, Brewster Avenue to the North where the Village boundary ends, Gordon Park to the east, and includes the commercial developments on the west side of La Grange Road.

Figure 9. North End District Map

The North End is defined by its more auto-oriented site design and newer developments. This is the smallest of the districts within the Downtown Subarea, but perhaps the most visible given its location along La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue, a highly trafficked intersection. While an extension of La Grange's downtown, the North End district feels much more auto oriented than the rest of the downtown, due in part to its focal point at the intersection of two major arterial roadways, the types of commercial uses, parking requirements and parking areas, and the overall design of the district. While the character of the North End differs from that of the CBD and West End, it also varies within the district, specifically north and south of Ogden Avenue. The area south of Ogden was all developed as one cohesive shopping center which provides consistency in architecture and design, whereas the area north of Ogden Avenue has a more eclectic character, developed over a longer range of time. This district also includes several high-density residential developments (5+ stories).



Pace Bus service in La Grange

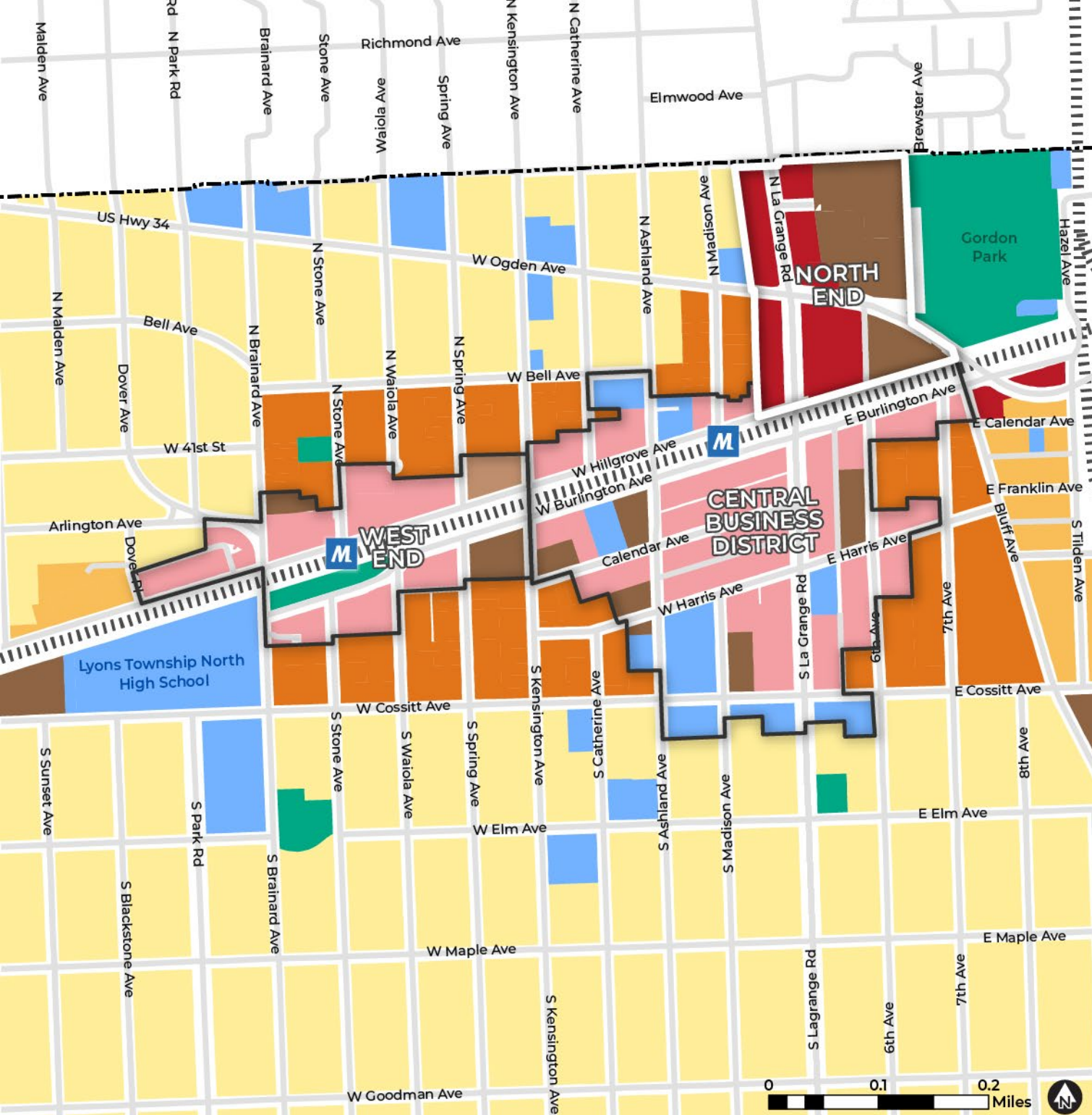








Figure. 9
 Village of La Grange, IL
North End District

-  Village Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rails
-  Downtown Subarea
-  North End District
-  Metra Station

- Future Land Use**
-  Single-Family Residential
 -  Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 -  Downtown Residential
 -  Medium Density Residential
 -  High Density Residential
 -  Downtown Commercial
 -  General Commercial
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Parks & Open Space



Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska



Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for the North End

The North End is a highly productive commercial center with high density residential development at the convergence of two major regional roadways, La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue. The district connects area residents, employees, and visitors with major community destinations like Gordon Park and Downtown La Grange and it serves as an attractive northern entrance to the Village from neighboring communities. Significant automobile traffic travels through the area, supporting the businesses in the district as well as the Village's visibility and connectivity within the region, but auto traffic does not overshadow the North End's pedestrian environment and easy access to nearby transit options.

Goals for the North End

- New development is designed to Village standards and complements the surrounding environment.
- The district is a key driver for the local tax base.
- The district is an attractive entrance/gateway to the community.
- Visitors feel comfortable walking and biking to destinations.

Community Input

- *Most people drive to the businesses in this district.*
- *The character of this district feels different than the rest of Downtown La Grange.*
- *The La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue intersection can be difficult to cross because of high traffic volumes.*
- *Truck traffic on Ogden Avenue and La Grange Road can be dangerous.*
- *The Uptown La Grange apartment building was a nice addition to this district.*

Planning Considerations for the North End District

- This district has seen **a significant transformation over the last few decades** with the redevelopment of the strip of La Grange Road between Hillgrove Avenue and Ogden Avenue, now home to national retailers like Corner Bakery, Trader Joe's, Chipotle, Walgreens, Pet Supplies Plus, and AT&T. Most recently, the old YMCA site north of Ogden Avenue was redeveloped into a five-story, 254-unit luxury apartment building. This new addition has made this district feel more like an extension of the CBD, adding a large residential base to the north end, and has opened the door for redevelopment in this district. Other recent developments include a new Chase bank facility at the northeast corner of Ogden Avenue and La Grange Road and a remodel of the McDonald's on the northwest corner of the same intersection. Other existing commercial lots in this area are generally well-maintained and could be potential candidates for redevelopment in the future given the proximity to transit, residential, and other amenities of the downtown.
- **High traffic volume** on La Grange Road (19,300 vehicles/day) and Ogden Avenue (21,500-28,200 vehicles/day) **creates high visibility** for the district and greater concentration of national brands than in other commercial districts. (Data Source: IDOT, 2023)
- This district also experiences **high truck traffic volume** on La Grange Road (905-1,125 trucks/day) and Ogden Avenue (1,150-2,125 trucks/day) which contributes to both real and perceived pedestrian safety concerns. (Data Source: IDOT, 2023)
- This district is a **northern entrance for the Village**, with high visibility at the intersection of La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue and is often a first impression for visitors entering downtown.

Planning Considerations for the North End District

- While within short walking distance to the CBD and the La Grange Road Metra Station, this district (particularly the portion north of Ogden Avenue) **feels isolated from the rest of the Downtown Subarea** given the major roadways and railroad tracks that separate it.
- Community feedback suggested that people are not walking to this area for several reasons, including: **amenities are incongruous with pedestrian trips** (e.g. carrying heavy grocery bags or a 50lb bag of dog food), **sites are designed to be more auto-accommodating** (e.g. designated parking lots, building entrances oriented to the parking lot instead of the street/sidewalk, drive-thru uses, etc.), and **it does not feel safe/comfortable to walk** in this area due to crossing the BNSF rail line and major roadways, and the traffic along those roadways.
- Much of the North End has been **recently redeveloped and limited enhancement opportunities exist** in this district.

Image Source: Uptown La Grange Apartments



Strategies for the North End District

Community Character

- 1. Complete gaps in the established Downtown streetscape palette in the North End**, between Ogden Avenue and Brewster Avenue. Streetscape elements include accessibility compliance, paving and crosswalks, lighting, street furniture, trees and plantings, and signage.
- 2. Refine and detail design standards tailored to the North End** (see *Community Character* chapter).



Businesses at La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue are anchors of this subarea

Economic Development

- 1. Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district** (see *Economic Development* chapter).

Transportation & Access

- 1. Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks** (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
- 2. Continue implementing community-branded 'signature' bike racks** that reflect the identity and spirit of La Grange (see *Transportation & Access* chapter).
- 3. Encourage transit-oriented development**, as has been discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the plan, which allows residents to access local businesses without a car and to reach further-flung destinations via Metra and Pace bus.

Environmental Sustainability

- 1. Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations**, including opportunities for rebates from state and federal agencies (see *Environmental Sustainability* chapter).
- 2. Consider opportunities for enhanced landscaping**, especially at the corner of Ogden Avenue and La Grange Road, including the introduction of native plants to reduce stormwater runoff and increase biodiversity.

South La Grange Road Subarea

The South La Grange Road subarea is a six-block stretch of properties fronting La Grange Road between 47th Street and Plainfield Road. The corridor is a mixed-use transitional district. It includes a mix of residential housing types, ranging from single-family to lower- and mid-density multi-family (many of the multi-family buildings are two floors plus a garden level) in the core of the corridor. There is also a mix of commercial uses, focused on the north end, east side of La Grange Road between 47th Street and 49th Street, and on the south end, west side of La Grange Road between 51st Street and Plainfield Road. Buildings and properties have varied design; some function as more auto-oriented, with buildings set back on the lot and parking areas in front of buildings, whereas others are more pedestrian-oriented, with buildings built to the front property line and parking areas.

Figure 10. South La Grange Road Subarea Map



The South La Grange Road subarea is a six-block stretch of properties fronting La Grange Road between 47th Street and Plainfield Road

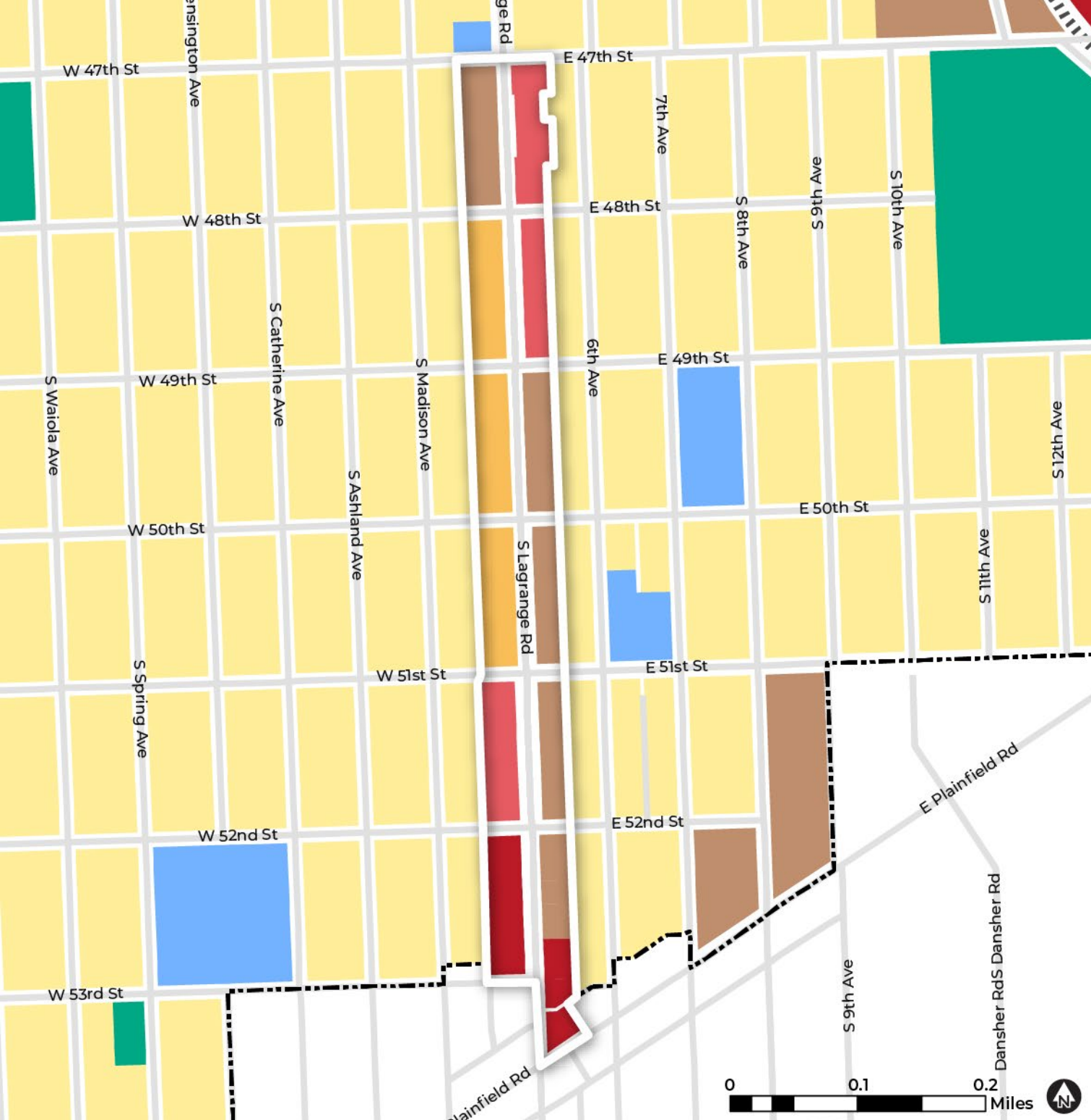


Figure. 10
 Village of La Grange, IL
South La Grange Road Subarea

- Village Boundary
- Roads
- Rails
- South La Grange Road Subarea Boundary

- Future Land Use**
- Single-Family Residential
 - Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - Corridor Mixed Use
 - General Commercial
 - Public/Institutional Uses
 - Parks & Open Space



Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska



Vision for the South La Grange Road Subarea

Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

South La Grange Road is a highly visible corridor for those traveling through the community and an inviting southern gateway to La Grange. The corridor is an integral and safe connection between Downtown La Grange and commercial areas to the south of the Village, as well as between neighborhoods. The area includes a mix of commercial uses and housing of varied designs and densities that reflect the character of La Grange. Underutilized properties fronting La Grange Road have been redeveloped to commercial, multi-family residential, or mixed-use. Standards for new or renovated buildings have supported renovation and redevelopment that enhances the area's aesthetic appeal and reflects the overall character of La Grange.

Goals for the South La Grange Road Subarea

- New development occurs and incrementally a unique design standard is established for the area.
- Whether residential, commercial, or mixed-use - new development complements surroundings and improves pedestrian access.
- Residents safely access destinations within and across the La Grange Road corridor by bike or walking.
- The district contributes to the tax base.
- New residential development contributes to a diverse housing stock.

Community Input

- *Does not have the same La Grange character as downtown – lacks identity and character.*
- *Connectivity is a challenge – residents who do not live in this area are unlikely to walk or bike to this corridor because it feels disconnected and there are few active uses.*
- *Higher vacancy than other commercial areas in La Grange.*
- *Some sites reflect a lack of building and site maintenance.*
- *Opportunity for new mixed-use development or new multi-family residential.*

Planning Considerations for the South La Grange Road Subarea

- **High traffic volume** on La Grange Road (23,600 vehicles/day on the north end and 24,100 vehicles/day on the south end) creates high visibility.
- This corridor of La Grange Road is **distinct from the downtown and the blocks of residential north of 47th Street**, as it was developed later. It has a mixed character which is due to the variety of uses, including single-family homes, moderate density multi-family buildings and commercial, all with varying setbacks, site designs, and architectural styles.
- There is a **varied mix of multi-family residential uses** that include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, multiplexes, and townhomes. These buildings were mostly built across the 1960s, -70s, and -80s and have generally been well-maintained. These uses provide an important housing type for the village.
- This corridor is a **less comfortable area for walking** given an inconsistency in sidewalk widths, parkways, building setbacks, architectural character, and streetscape treatments.
- The commercial nodes in this corridor act as **secondary commercial districts** within the village given their locations and business mixes. There are few retail uses and some long-established restaurant uses, but most uses in these commercial districts include office and service-based businesses.
- **Vacancy rates** and durations for commercial uses here are longer than in the Downtown Subarea.
- **Flexibility and patience are essential to the future of this subarea.** Accomplishing the opportunities (and addressing the challenges) for the area requires working with many moving parts. The commercial districts within the corridor are not currently seeing pressure for redevelopment, most likely due to factors like location, multiple property owners, small lot sizes, and market factors. The Village is supportive of private sector development within the South La Grange Road subarea. Over time, the right opportunities may arise to further the goals for this corridor.

Strategies for the South La Grange Road Subarea

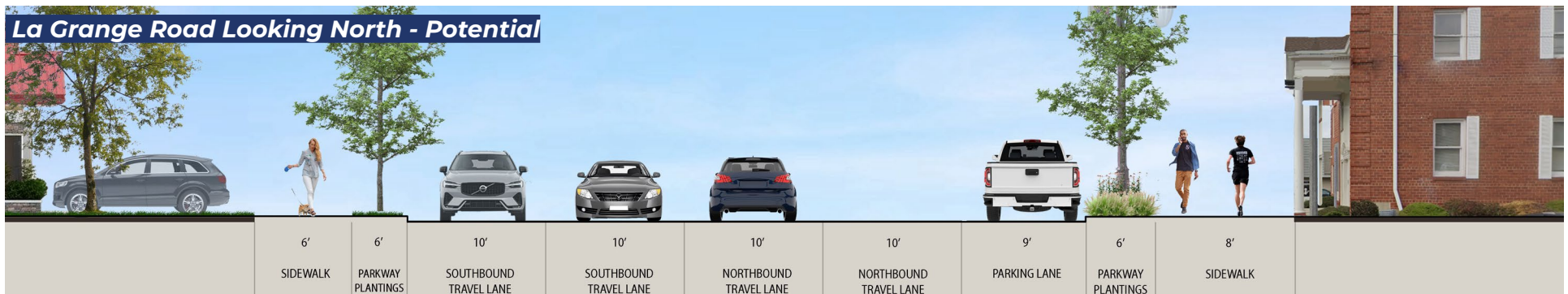
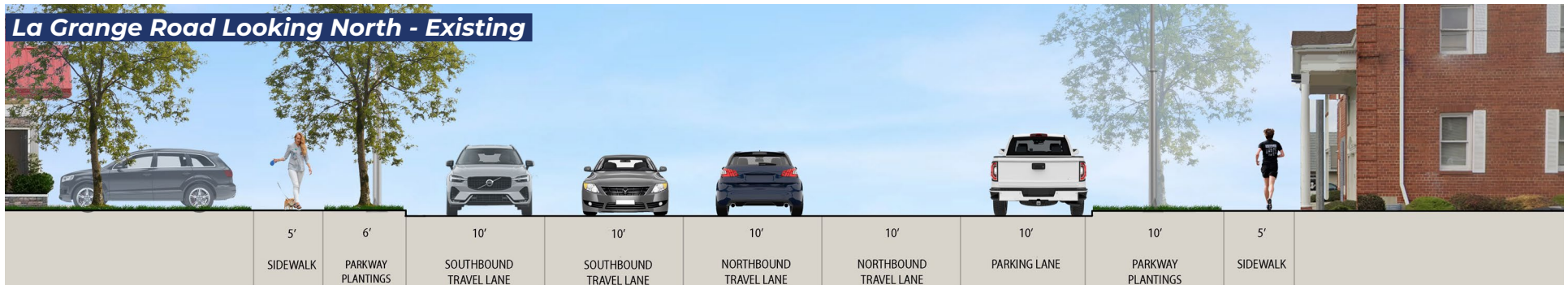
Community Character

- 1. Employ streetscape treatments throughout the South La Grange Road Subarea** that are cohesive and reinforce the corridor’s identity as part of La Grange. Focus should be given to the commercial nodes on the northern and southern ends of the district. New village signage has already been installed on the south end of the corridor. Other treatments could include improved sidewalks, light pole banners, parkway trees and plantings, and other wayfinding or identity signage. Coordination with IDOT will be necessary.
- 2. Provide additional space for streetscape and larger sidewalks where feasible**, when considering redevelopment proposals within the South La Grange Road Subarea, working with property owners to incorporate these pedestrian elements

on their private properties.

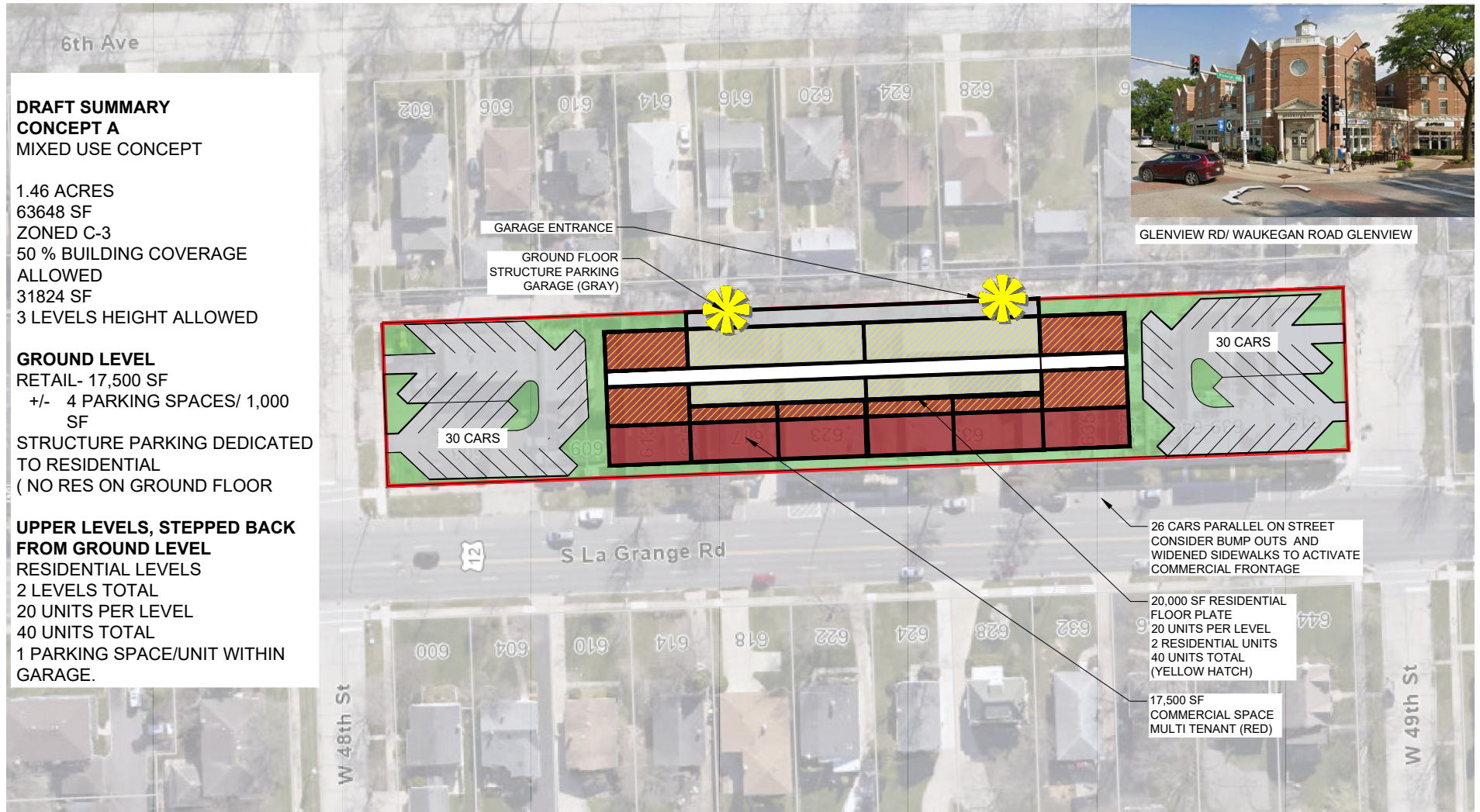
See figures below for examples of how to maximize pedestrian space with existing ROW.

- 3. Establish Design Standards for the South La Grange Road subarea** (see *Community Character* chapter).
- 4. Revise zoning in the South La Grange Road subarea to accommodate denser residential and/or commercial development**, where feasible. Redevelopment of some blocks within this corridor is feasible but requires property acquisition by a developer and design attentive to adjacent residential uses. Zoning bulk, setback, and density standards should be revised to reflect those development opportunities as spelled out in the South La Grange Road subarea.



Strategies for the South La Grange Road Subarea

Concept A: Mixed-Use



**DRAFT SUMMARY
CONCEPT A
MIXED USE CONCEPT**

1.46 ACRES
63648 SF
ZONED C-3
50 % BUILDING COVERAGE ALLOWED
31824 SF
3 LEVELS HEIGHT ALLOWED

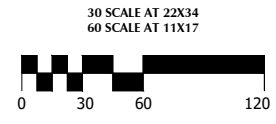
GROUND LEVEL
RETAIL- 17,500 SF
+/- 4 PARKING SPACES/ 1,000 SF
STRUCTURE PARKING DEDICATED TO RESIDENTIAL (NO RES ON GROUND FLOOR)

UPPER LEVELS, STEPPED BACK FROM GROUND LEVEL
RESIDENTIAL LEVELS
2 LEVELS TOTAL
20 UNITS PER LEVEL
40 UNITS TOTAL
1 PARKING SPACE/UNIT WITHIN GARAGE.



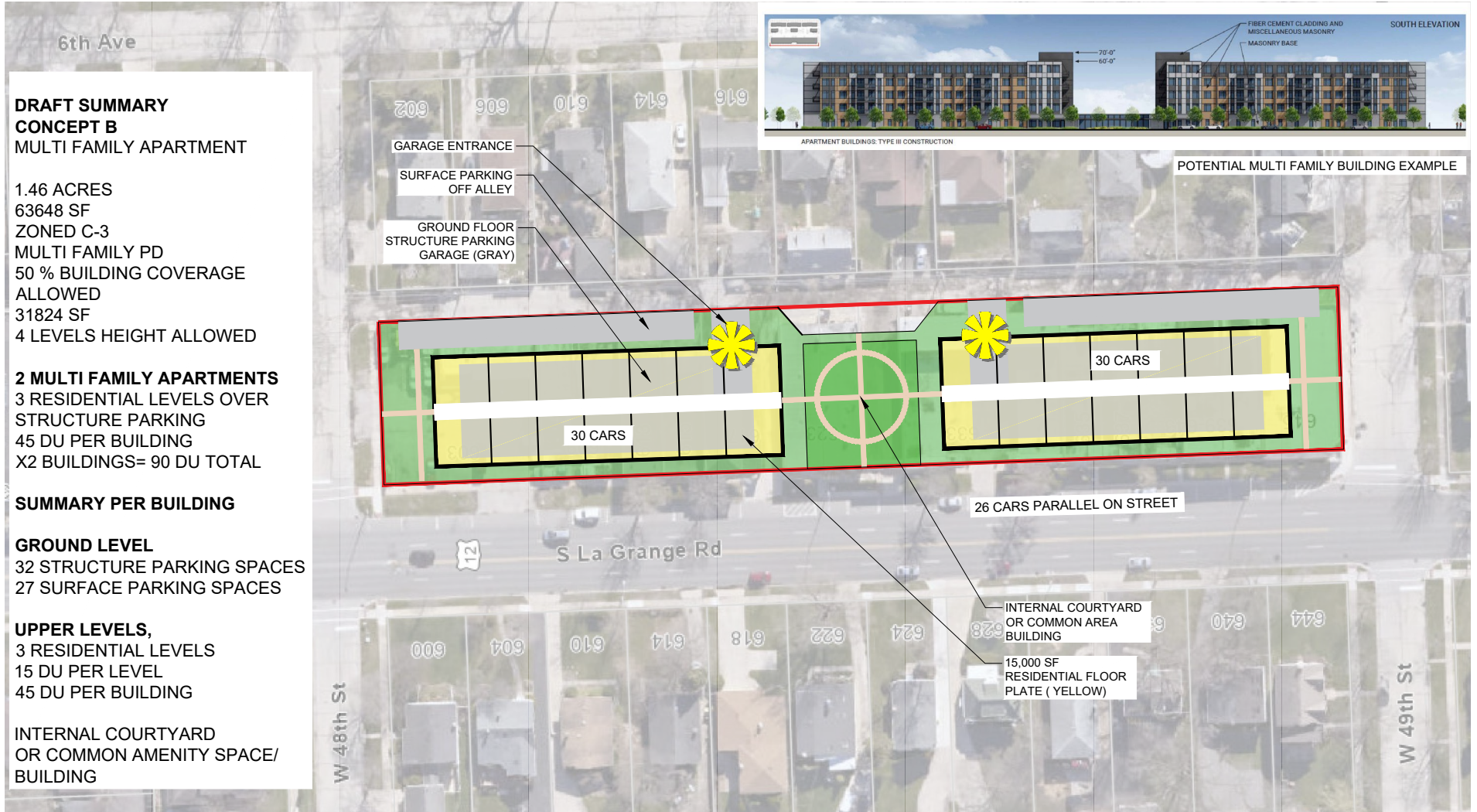
GLENVIEW RD/ WAUKEGAN ROAD GLENVIEW

CONCEPT A 48th- 49th AND LA GRANGE ROAD

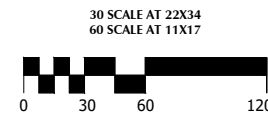


Strategies for the South La Grange Road Subarea

Concept B: Multi-Family Apartment

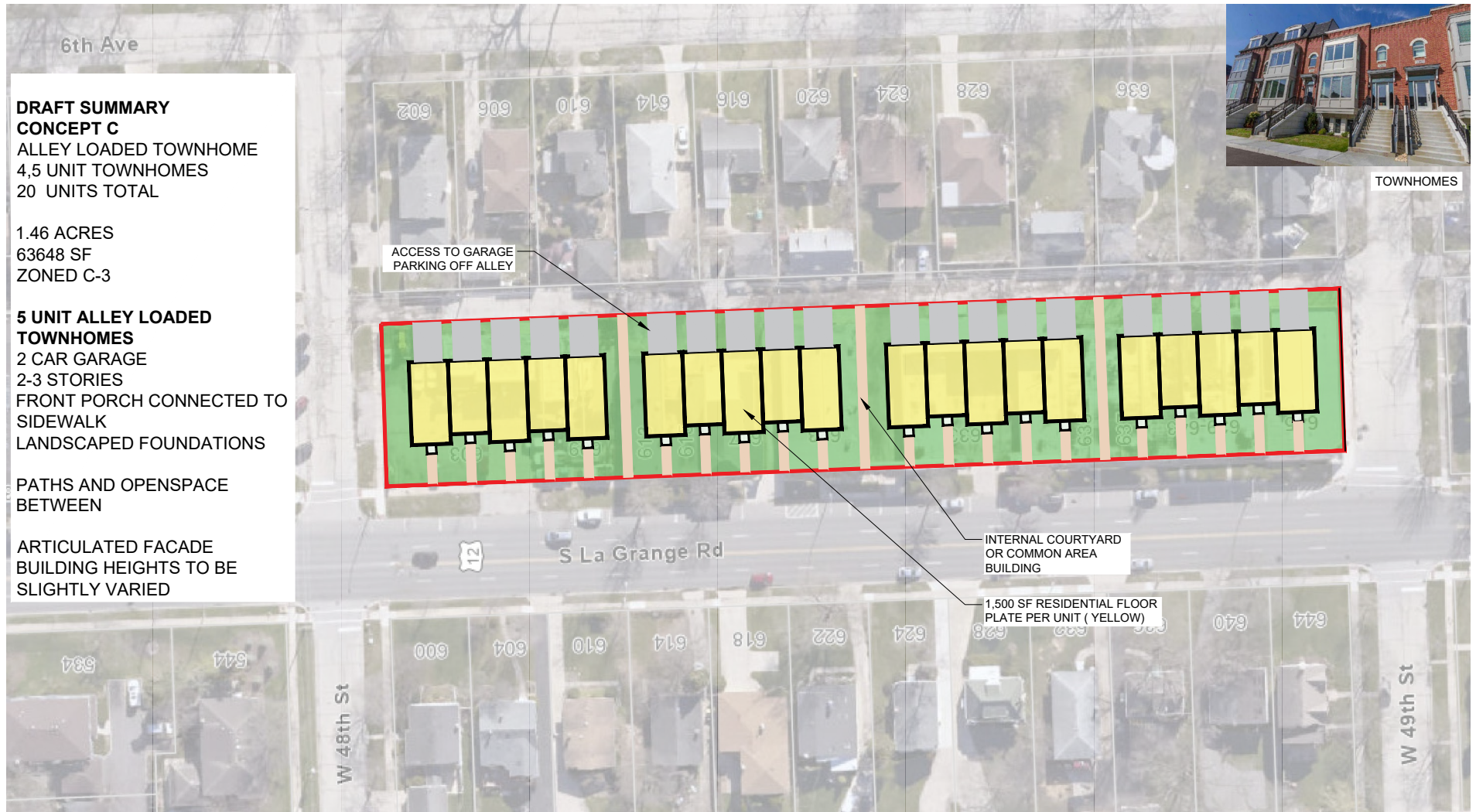


CONCEPT B 48th- 49th AND LA GRANGE ROAD



Strategies for the South La Grange Road Subarea

Concept C: Townhomes



**DRAFT SUMMARY
CONCEPT C**
ALLEY LOADED TOWNHOME
4,5 UNIT TOWNHOMES
20 UNITS TOTAL

1.46 ACRES
63648 SF
ZONED C-3

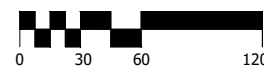
**5 UNIT ALLEY LOADED
TOWNHOMES**
2 CAR GARAGE
2-3 STORIES
FRONT PORCH CONNECTED TO
SIDEWALK
LANDSCAPED FOUNDATIONS

PATHS AND OPENSOURCE
BETWEEN

ARTICULATED FACADE
BUILDING HEIGHTS TO BE
SLIGHTLY VARIED

CONCEPT C 48th- 49th AND LA GRANGE ROAD

30 SCALE AT 22X34
60 SCALE AT 11X17



Strategies for the South La Grange Road Subarea

Economic Development

- 1. Explore opportunities for public-private partnerships that incentivize development in the South La Grange Road Subarea.** Encouraging development in this area is valuable, but staying focused on targeted activities is important. For instance, the Village can use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for a particular development project that aligns with its goals. Speculative action is not recommended. Instead, the Village should pursue public-private partnerships for specific projects that deliver clear, mutually beneficial results.
- 2. Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district** (see [Economic Development](#) chapter).

Transportation & Access

- 1. Provide dedicated crossing points and complete sidewalk gaps on La Grange Road between 47th and Plainfield Road to improve bike and pedestrian connectivity within the South La Grange Road subarea.** Despite there being nine Pace bus stops on La Grange Road between 42nd Street and Plainfield Road, there is only one crosswalk in this stretch (at 52nd Street). Because La Grange Road is an IDOT road, installing high-visibility crossing infrastructure, such as a traffic signal or signalized crosswalk, must be done in partnership with IDOT. Improved bike and pedestrian facilities within the South La Grange Road Subarea, such as completing the sidewalk gap on the east side of La Grange Road between 52nd and Plainfield Road, will significantly enhance the overall active transportation connectivity across the Village.

Environmental Sustainability

- 1. Work with Metra and Pace to enhance jobs and housing connectivity and allow residents to live car-free or car-light.** For example, the Village can encourage: transit schedules be tailored to incentivize taking transit over driving; bus stops be shifted to serve new housing developments; and routes that more directly connect residential areas with major employment hubs.
- 2. Assess additional opportunities for tree canopy enhancements** to improve air quality, slow traffic, and reduce stormwater runoff (see [Environmental Sustainability](#) chapter).
- 1. Pursue additional stormwater retention opportunities** in the form of additional landscaping on the IDOT parkway (see [Environmental Sustainability](#) chapter).
- 2. Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations,** including opportunities for rebates from state and federal agencies (see [Environmental Sustainability](#) chapter).

Industrial Subareas

The Village has two contiguous industrial areas: the Shawmut Industrial District, located north of the BNSF Railroad and east of the IHB Railroad; and the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Railroad Industrial District, bounded by the IHB Railroad, East Avenue, and Cossitt Avenue.

These districts have historically been comprised of smaller, light industrial uses, including manufacturing, warehousing, contracting, etc. The IHB Railroad industrial district is home to the Village's Public Works department facility and the Park District of La Grange Recreation Center, both on East Avenue.

Figure 11. Industrial Subareas



The Industrial Subareas have historically been comprised of smaller, light industrial uses

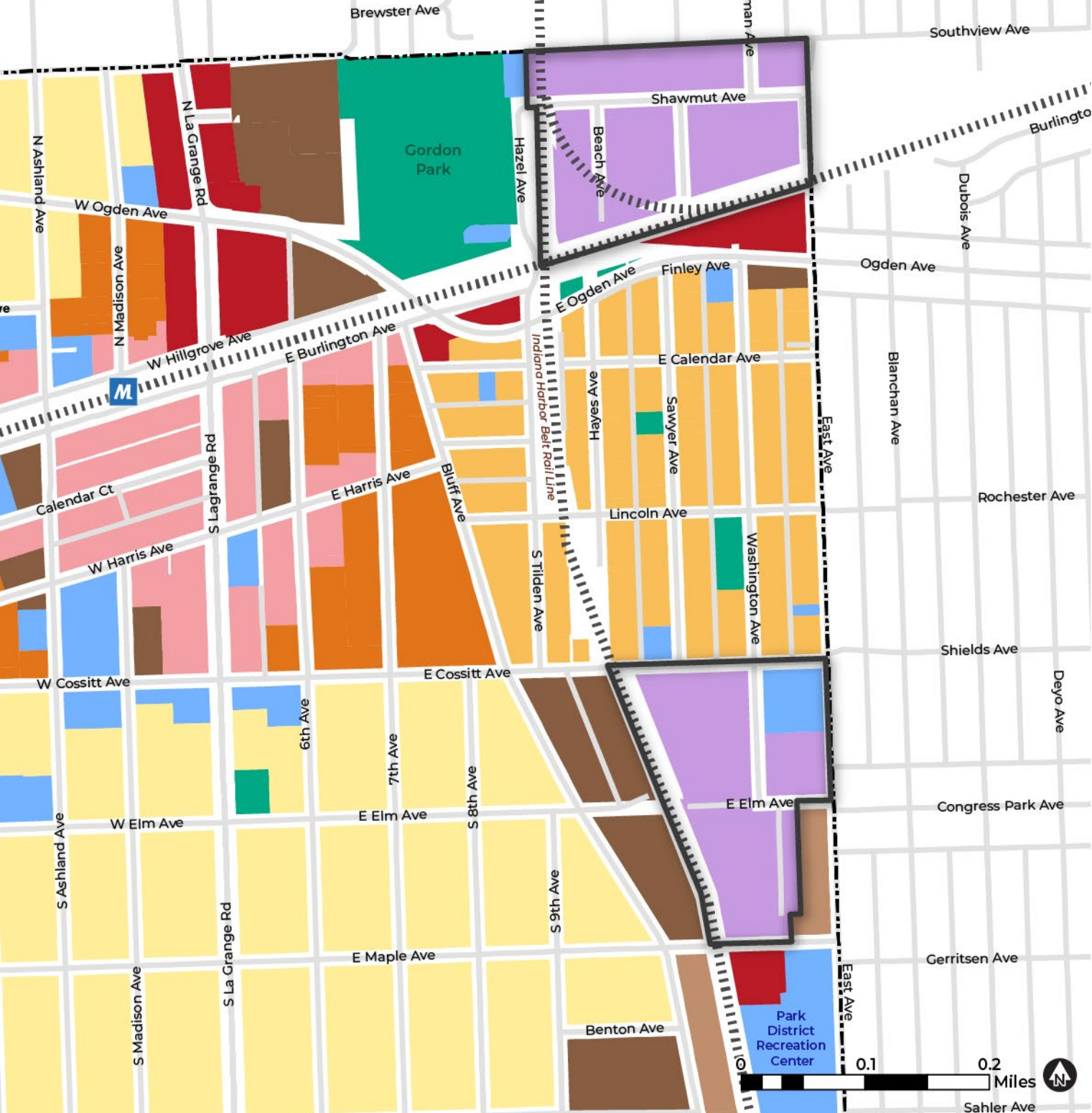







Figure. 11
 Village of La Grange, IL
Industrial Subareas

-  Village Boundary
-  Roads
-  Rails
-  Industrial Subareas
-  Metra Station

- Future Land Use**
-  Single-Family Residential
 -  Single-Family Mixed Density Residential
 -  Downtown Residential
 -  Medium Density Residential
 -  High Density Residential
 -  Downtown Commercial
 -  General Commercial
 -  Public/Institutional Uses
 -  Parks & Open Space

Source Data: Village of La Grange 2024 | Map Created By: Teska



Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for the Industrial Subareas

La Grange's industrial areas have a stable, balanced mix of light industrial uses that contribute to the Village's employment and tax base. Private properties and public infrastructure are well-maintained and aesthetically synonymous with village standards. The industrial areas have minimal impact on neighboring residential neighborhoods.

Goals for the Industrial Subareas

- Industrial properties are well maintained and attractive.
- Residents can safely walk or bike through industrial districts.
- Local regulations and public infrastructure support the continued vitality of businesses in the area.
- As modifications are made to buildings and sites, sustainable practices are incorporated.

Community Input

- *Improve IHB railroad vehicular and pedestrian crossings on Shawmut Avenue and Cossitt Avenue.*
- *Add IHB railroad vehicular and pedestrian crossings at Elm Avenue and Maple Avenue to improve accessibility to the La Grange Park District Recreation Center.*
- *Maintain the industrial areas for economic reasons.*
- *Consider how to expand activities for residents in these areas, specifically in the IHB Railroad Industrial Area where residents frequent the La Grange Park District Recreation Center.*
- *Truck traffic along East Avenue is a concern.*

Planning Considerations for the Industrial Subareas

- Both industrial areas are **established employment areas** that contribute to the Village's tax base and, therefore, are important areas for the Village to maintain and ensure continued viability.
- While **vacancies are generally low** in both districts, there are concerns of **aging infrastructure and aging industrial properties** that do not always meet modern needs for industrial uses.
- **Proximity to neighboring residential** is also a challenge for these areas, especially the IHB Railroad Industrial district. While considered light industrial, many of these uses have elements, such as truck traffic, noise pollution, parking, and storage, that may have an impact on nearby homes and properties.
- The industrial areas serve as **one of the Village's economic engines**, generating tax revenue for all jurisdictions and employment opportunities. Uses in the area can have greater impact on infrastructure (primarily roads) and can show more need for Village capital improvements to maintain their functionality.

Strategies for the Industrial Subareas

Community Character

- 1. Develop and maintain consistent streetscape standards for industrial areas.** Streetscape treatments in industrial areas do not require the same level of amenities as retail districts like the CBD, but common standards for the look of Village right of ways will facilitate attractive industrial corridors.

Economic Development

1. Maintain and refine zoning standards in the I-1 zoning district:

a) Review permitted uses in the I-1 zoning district to ensure they are consistent with the primarily small to mid-size buildings in the area and appropriate for industrial areas close to residential uses. The market assessment for this plan confirms low vacancies and steady rents in the area, consistent with regionally seen demand for 5,000 to 50,000 square foot flexible industrial spaces.

b) Use lists should be reviewed and revised to not use the overly restrictive SIC / NAICS approach. In addition, as part of that review, industrial uses that present potential for adverse impacts (such as heavy truck uses) should be considered for removal in a zoning update. Permitted uses in the I-1 included a range of uses industrial uses, some of which can be considered intensive for a small industrial area close to residential uses. The intent is not to create non-conforming uses, but to eliminate special uses that may not be appropriate under any circumstance – fuel dealers, scrap and waste materials, heavy construction equipment rental, etc.

c) Maintain the current use types allowed (as permitted or special uses) in the Industrial district that are recreation, athletic, service, or nontraditional industrial oriented, which allow a broader base of potential occupants for existing buildings while providing services the community desires (i.e. indoor recreation, amusement facilities, micro-manufacturing, professional offices and uses, etc.). Other low impact uses, such as direct to consumer warehousing or storage, might also be added to the use list.

2. Maintain public infrastructure to support access to and from the area.

3. Encourage interior and exterior building renovation to maintain the viability of this business area (see *Economic Development* chapter).

4. Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district (see *Economic Development* chapter).

Transportation & Access

1. Improve pedestrian railroad crossings, with priority given to IHB crossings at Lincoln and Cossitt.

2. Work with CSX and the Indiana Harbor Belt rail lines to improve pedestrian connectivity across the rail lines, particularly at Maple and Elm Streets.

Strategies for the Industrial Subareas

Environmental Sustainability

1. **Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations**, including opportunities for rebates from state and federal agencies (see Environmental Sustainability chapter).
2. **Identify opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces in the industrial areas.** Over time, as buildings are sold, or site improvements are maintained/constructed the Village should seek to reduce impervious surfaces in coordination with property owners. For example, if a new building owner no longer requires use of existing loading docks; the surplus pavement could be converted to green space, bioswales, or used for other permeable surfaces. If an existing parking lot is scheduled for reconstruction, it could be converted into permeable parking solutions or the total area could be reduced to eliminate surplus, unneeded parking).
3. **Identify opportunities for enhanced landscaping and biodiversity** in partnership with landowners and the Village arborist.



Surplus pavement could be converted to green space, bioswales, or used for other permeable surfaces



La Grange Metra Station



CHAPTER 6

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS

Transportation & Access in La Grange

The way people travel through their communities is a critical part of their daily experience, and the method by which they travel has huge implications for economic development, land development, and community allegiance. Research shows that people who walk to local businesses spend more over time than people who drive – they spend fewer dollars per trip but make many more trips. Likewise, there is value in public transportation access: homes near transit have higher value than those further away. In a community like La Grange, which seeks to welcome residents of all ages and across the income spectrum, supporting systems that allow residents to live car-free simultaneously allows for life in the Village to be more affordable: the cost of car ownership in the United States averages over \$1,000 per month.¹

This chapter seeks to contextualize the role that transportation plays in the larger vision and goals that the Village has for itself over the course of this Comprehensive Plan. The chapter outlines the steps that La Grange can take for enhanced safety, ease of transportation, and affordability. By removing barriers and strengthening access to active transportation, La Grange communities can continue promoting social inclusion, reduce economic disparities, and empower individuals to fully engage in economic, educational, and social opportunities.



Pace Bus service in La Grange



Vision & Goals

A vision statement summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for Transportation & Access

A La Grange where all members of the community can move around the Village safely, meet most of their daily needs on foot or by bicycle if they choose, and where children and elderly gain or maintain independence without concern about traffic safety.

Goals for Transportation & Access

- A seamless, efficient transportation network supports various integrated modes of transportation (e.g., biking, walking, public transit).
- Neighborhoods and community destinations are well-connected to one another via a multi-modal transportation network.
- Transportation systems and infrastructure are accessible and safe for all individuals.
- Transportation systems and infrastructure support the community's character, economic vitality, and environmental resources.

Community Input

- *Ease of access to downtown La Grange, by all methods (car, bicycle, foot) is important to residents and to the economic health of the community.*
- *Pedestrian safety, especially downtown and around schools and bus stops, is a paramount concern for residents.*
- *Traffic associated with Lyons Township High School is a source of frustration for many residents. West End business owners have also noted that LTHS students park in private spaces and that there is a period of parking disruption every autumn when school starts.*
- *High vehicle speeds are a concern throughout the Village and were noted across the Village.*
- *The railroad tracks throughout the community are a known constraint, but the IHB tracks on the east side of town are considered more difficult to navigate than others.*
- *Metra is vital to the community, and train access is a reason people choose La Grange over neighboring Villages.*
- *There are opportunities for enhanced traffic safety throughout the Village – improving sightlines, enhancing pedestrian crossings, and slowing vehicle speeds are all priorities for residents.*
- *Most householders in the Village have at least one car, and most people need a vehicle for at least some of their regular travel.*

Planning Considerations for Transportation & Access

Key considerations about La Grange’s transportation environment are noted below. They are important to define in order to ascertain how residents and visitors traverse the Village, and how they may best be served by future improvements.

- The Village of **La Grange is a mature, largely built-out community, and so its transportation network is established:** the Village has two Metra stations (both on the BNSF line); three Pace routes; and several major IDOT roads. There is a mature and robust transportation system serving the Village.
- **La Grange has two Metra stations and three Pace routes** that run through the Village, making it particularly well-connected relative to its peer communities in the western suburbs. Residents cite the transit access as a key reason in their decision to move to the community, and that is reflected in high Metra ridership. Transit use floundered during the pandemic but appears to be rebounding in 2024; on the other hand, Pace ridership is relatively low on the three routes that operate in the Village.
- **La Grange is known across the western suburbs for its Metra accessibility, ease of access to downtown Chicago, and walkable, attractive downtown** – which has been achieved because the Village has not required individual businesses to provide parking in the downtown area. The Village can implement further parking requirement changes to continue to support its development, sustainability, and affordability goals.
- In addition to the BNSF line, which runs roughly east-west through the Village, the Indiana Harbor Belt line runs north-south. While there are connections across the Indiana Harbor Belt freight line, **the crossings at Maple, Elm and Goodman Streets were removed many years ago, creating a large section of the Village where it is difficult to traverse** across the tracks, and creating a feeling of physical separation for residents on either side of the tracks. Because of Railroad concerns about safety, any new crossings

Planning Considerations for Transportation & Access

would most likely need to be grade-separated. The underpass in Western Springs is frequently cited as a model for what a grade-separated crossing could look like in La Grange, though it is not an apples-to-apples comparison because there is already an elevated railway track – the underpass is the same grade as the surrounding streets. In La Grange, an underpass would have to be subterranean, which is harder to light, requires more space and more complicated stormwater management, and can be difficult to maintain.

- There is **an excellent sidewalk network throughout the Village, with the exception of one residential neighborhood built in the sixties and subsequently annexed into the Village.** On La Grange Road in the CBD and Burlington Road in the West End, sidewalks are generally around 18 feet wide. In residential areas, sidewalks range between 4.5 and 6 feet. The Federal Highway Administration states that 5-foot sidewalks are the minimum for two people walking side-by-side, with 6 feet as the federal minimum where there is no grass parkway.
- **Walking in residential communities is generally pleasant and low stress, with the notable exception of major arterial roads** that cut through the Village. Ogden Avenue, La Grange Road, and 47th Street are all difficult to cross, creating pockets of walkability that are not connected to each other. The effect is that, while individual neighborhoods have high internal connectivity, it is difficult to fulfill daily needs without encountering a road that serves as a barrier to walking and bicycling. It also makes it difficult for children and other vulnerable road users to navigate the Village independently.
- Likewise, **the experience of riding a bicycle in the Village is generally safe and pleasant in neighborhood areas**, but major arterial roads are difficult to cross and are a barrier to cycling as a method of transportation vs. leisure. Within neighborhoods, most roads are low-stress, so cyclists can ride in mixed traffic. There are few dedicated bicycle facilities on roads with higher average daily traffic.
- This document strives to **highlight items that the Village can undertake of its own volition, without dependency on outside parties.** The plan acknowledges that there are places where the Village faces constraints relative to outside agencies. For example, additional Metra service would be an asset to the community, but is ultimately at Metra’s discretion. Likewise, the Village must work with Pace, Cook County, the Illinois Department of Transportation; and the railroads to achieve changes to bus service; to roads outside Village jurisdiction; and to infrastructure pertaining to the railroad tracks. This document highlights opportunities for partnership and advocacy.

Strategies

Pedestrian Network

The Village of La Grange has robust sidewalk provision. Curb ramps in the downtown area have detectable warning tiles for people with low or no vision, and despite some exceptions, sidewalks are generally provided on both sides of the street and are easily traversable by people of all mobility levels throughout the Village.

La Grange's walkability is frequently cited by residents as one of the things that drew them to the community, along with easy transit access to downtown Chicago. Walking culture is a fundamental part of La Grange's identity, and the Village can continue to cultivate a place where people can choose to do much of their travel on foot.



Curb bumpouts shorten crossing distances (Glencoe, IL)

1. Continue to apply a Village-managed sidewalk replacement strategy.

La Grange has an extensive network of sidewalks, most of which are in sound condition. The current program for sidewalk replacement in residential areas is a 50/50% cost split between property owners and the Village. This program has proved effective and should be maintained. It would be conducted in concert with the Village's ongoing efforts to repair damaged sidewalks (where feasible) and close gaps where sidewalks or other public way connections are missing. As part of the program, the Village could consider expanding its regularly scheduled street condition survey to include sidewalk condition (prioritizing improvements in the areas of greatest need) and assuring broad awareness of the 50/50% program for residents.

Priority for pedestrian enhancements given to the types of heavily trafficked areas noted below will help to advance comprehensive plan goals related to connectivity and walkability:

- Both Metra stations and all 35 existing Pace bus stops;
- The La Grange Road, Burlington Avenue, and Hillgrove Avenue commercial corridors;
- Large employers;
- Parks, schools, and civic institutions; and
- Residential areas that are closest to the CBD, near La Grange Road, or surrounding LTHS and the Stone Avenue Metra Station.

Plan goals also are supported by anticipated improvements to the intersection of East Avenue and 47th Street, which is slated to receive traffic safety and pedestrian enhancements by IDOT (47th is an IDOT road).

Strategies | Pedestrian Network

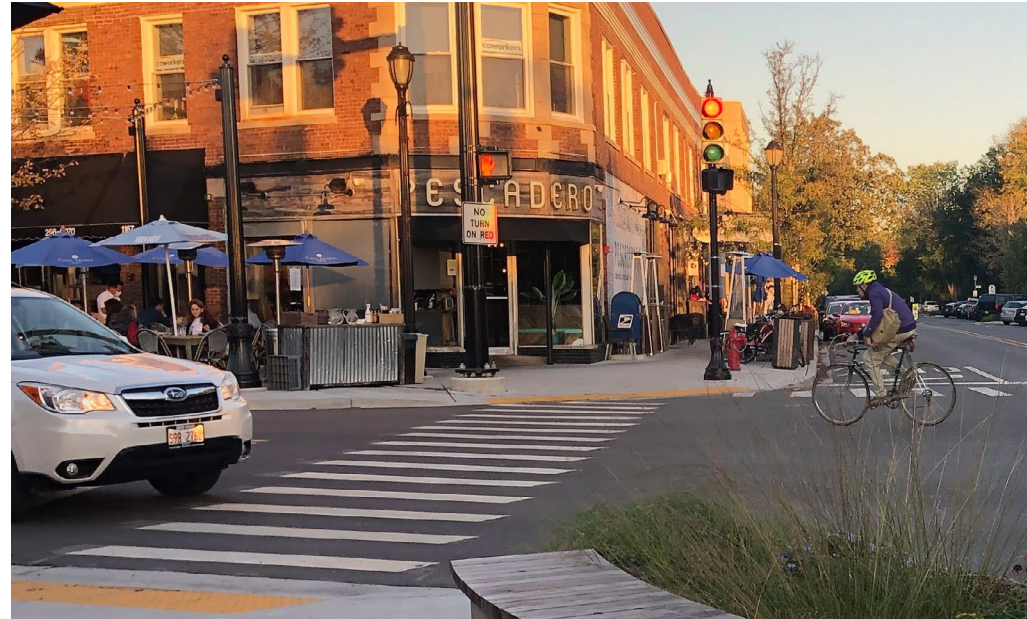
2. Work with IDOT to implement safe crossing infrastructure at 47th Street, Ogden, and La Grange Roads.

Very few people walk or bicycle on these roads – other Village roads are less stressful and almost as direct – but very few people can reach major destinations in the Village without crossing at least one of them in the course of a journey. Focusing on intersection treatments that facilitate safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings at IDOT roads would significantly enhance pedestrians’ and cyclists’ ability to traverse the Village. Intersection treatments can include curb bump-outs to shorten pedestrian crossing distance (these already exist on La Grange Road); changes to the actual signal boxes themselves to incorporate leading pedestrian or bicycle intervals (a few seconds of dedicated time that allows people to move into the intersection and enhance their visibility to drivers); and comprehensive continental crosswalk installation across the CBD and near schools. The Village already has many continental crosswalks, so this reflects an extension of a program that is already underway.

3. Adopt an ADA Transition Plan.

While La Grange is generally accessible, the Village does not have an ADA Transition Plan. Such a plan would:

- Catalog physical barriers that limit accessibility (i.e., sidewalks less than five feet wide, utility infrastructure blocking right-of-way access, insufficient crosswalks, and pedestrian signalization)
- Outline methods to be used to remove these barriers and make facilities accessible
- Provide a schedule for making the access modifications
- Identify the public officials responsible for implementation of the Transition Plan



Continental crosswalks are best-practice crosswalk design, and are easier to see than traditional parallel lines across a street (Winnetka, IL)

Strategies

Bicycle Planning

As with walking, La Grange is already a pleasant place to bicycle: it has a mostly-gridded network of low-stress streets that support bicycling, and a downtown that provides for many of the needs of day-to-day life, along with schools organized by community catchment areas that allow children to walk and bike to and from school.

However, there are also high-traffic regional arterials that are challenging to cross, and places where infrastructure is not supportive for bicycles. There are two strategies for creating a more bicycle-friendly La Grange: the first focuses on **on-street enhancements to make bicycling safer** for all age groups and communities, and the second focuses on **ensuring that there is ancillary infrastructure** – bicycle racks and signage – situated appropriately around the community.



Bicycle parking near Stone Avenue Metra Station

Strategies | Bicycle Planning

1. Develop a network containing primarily neighborhood greenways that connect the Village to important destinations.

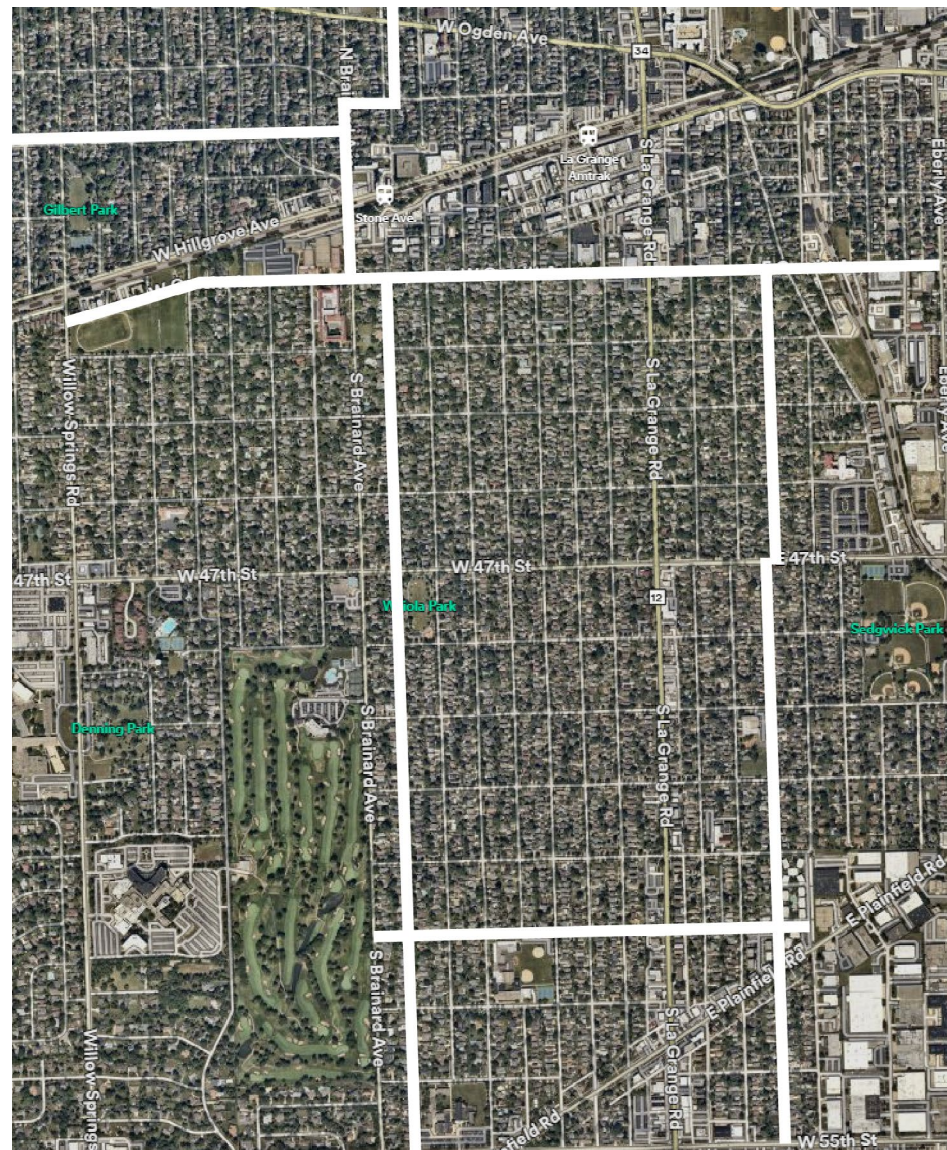
Destinations include Downtown, both Metra stations and Pace bus stops, schools, parks, and the hospital, and present the best opportunity to connect to existing bicycle networks in neighboring communities like Brookfield and Western Springs. Neighborhood greenways are one of the low-stress bikeway options because they prioritize bicycles on low-volume, low-speed side streets. Neighborhood greenways use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through-trips by motor vehicles and create safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets. Locations suggested for such improvements are:

a) Implement a neighborhood greenway facility on key north-south and east-west routes

(see Figure 12. Potential Neighborhood Greenways Map).

These low-stress, local corridors connect residents to La Grange schools, several parks, the Stone Avenue Metra station and downtown. Stone Avenue is a low-traffic road (per Replica, about 200 car journeys per day) but runs north-south for most of the length of the Village. Stone Avenue and Cossitt Avenue can serve as the superstructure of a greenways plan: if there is a low-stress bicycle path on those streets, nearly every resident in La Grange can access major employment sites, schools, public transit and the downtown area while remaining on low-stress bicycle lanes. Once this exoskeleton is in place, the community can develop secondary bicycle streets that connect to this superstructure. Given that most streets are low traffic, this high-level grid will be broadly accessible by almost all residents, and will provide a path to schools, community destinations, and the CBD.

Figure 12: Potential Neighborhood Greenways Map



Strategies | Bicycle Planning

b) Extend on-street bicycle infrastructure to connect to major work sites and other community destinations.

Once the backbone of the greenways are established as bicycle routes, the Village can develop spurs; for example, to AdventHealth. Extending on-street bicycle infrastructure a few blocks to connect to major work sites and other community destinations will complete the network and will, for example, make it easier for middle school students to travel to and from school by themselves.

2. Develop a school-specific bicycle accessibility plan that focuses on safe facilities to and from La Grange schools.

The objective of such a plan would be to enhance the safety and accessibility of bicycle routes to and from La Grange schools, promoting a culture of walking and biking among students and their families. Students and their families in La Grange are a consistent and reliable group of walkers and bicyclists, regularly using established routes. Prioritizing safe passage around schools is crucial for fostering long-term health benefits and improving spatial awareness among students. Many La Grange students already walk or bike to school, and numerous others live within a short distance, making it feasible for them to do so. Focusing on improving school safety is a practical approach to encourage and increase walking and biking in the community.



On-street bicycle facilities enhance the safety and ease of traveling by bike (Kankakee, IL)

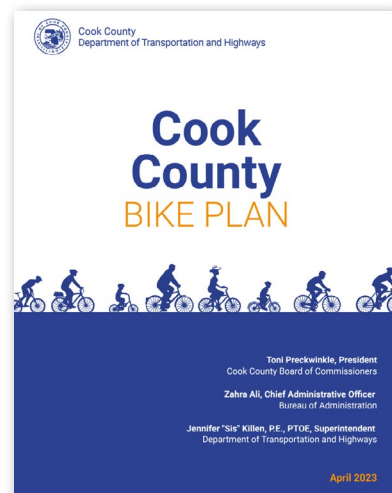
Strategies | Bicycle Planning

3. Coordinate with neighboring communities to ensure existing and future bicycle networks connect residents to jobs and destinations throughout the region.

Brookfield and La Grange Park have both worked to enhance their bicycle network and to build on the work that their next-door communities are doing. La Grange already partners with surrounding communities on other issues; partnerships regarding bicycle infrastructure would follow established precedent. For example, La Grange could work on north/south connections with La Grange Park. If La Grange Park is planning to develop a bicycle lane on Waiola Avenue versus Stone Avenue, the two Villages could coordinate about a transition point or each re-evaluate their plan, so that they are building complementary infrastructure.

4. Develop a web page on the Village website that shows where the greenways and surrounding bicycle infrastructure are located.

To develop the content, the Village could start with the Cook County Bike Plan.



At right: The Cook County Bike Plan (2023) details opportunities for enhancing the conditions for bicycling across the county

5. Expand the wayfinding program to install clear and visible bicycle wayfinding signage directing users to facilities and from facilities to community destinations.

If the Village pursues a 'neighborhood greenways' system, as recommended above, it would be accompanied by signage indicating what streets are included and could also include branded signs indicating nearby destinations such as parks, schools and transit. The role of these signs would be to demarcate preferred, traffic-calmed routes, but could also be branded to match the larger signage profile of La Grange.

6. Establish a bicycle parking ordinance so that bicycle parking is provided by new and updated developments, and at priority locations including at Pace bus stops, parks and schools.

- a) Amend zoning to require short- and long-term bicycle parking at all public buildings.
- b) Amend zoning to require short- and long-term bicycle parking at places of employment and multi-unit residential buildings.
- c) Outline design standards for safe, secure, easy-to-use bicycle parking, including specific bicycle rack styles and placement guidelines.

Strategies | Bicycle Planning



Adding new 'signature' bike racks can reinforce the Village's identity

7. Add community-branded 'signature' bike racks that reflect the identity and spirit of La Grange.

The Village should continue to expand its inventory of bicycle racks in the Central Business District and the West End. The Village can consider a signature, La Grange-branded design or use a style already found in the downtown (such as the U-racks located on Cossitt Avenue next to the library). The Village should also continue to maintain and, where warranted, expand secure and covered bicycle parking, especially at transit stops, schools, and all-day destinations.

8. Ensure that all new and existing bicycle facilities are equipped with the appropriate safety and traffic calming measures.

Strategies

Transit

Transit provision in the Village, particularly Metra, is one of the things that residents frequently cite as their reason for choosing La Grange as a place to live. The Village can focus on transit-supportive development and design to support ridership and eliminate or reduce barriers to access for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those without personal vehicles. Many of the specific actions to support transit are incorporated elsewhere in this document. In particular, allowing development around transit stations will allow for greater access to Metra and Pace routes, an idea that is developed more fully in the parking section below.

The recommendations for expanding the robust transit access in La Grange include:

1. Improve sidewalks to meet ADA standards and that adhere to PROWAG guidelines at all Pace bus stops.

In some places, easements or property acquisition are necessary to add sidewalks, because individual property owners' property lines go all the way to the curb.

2. Install curb ramps where they do not currently exist.

3. Provide more amenities like bicycle parking, pedestrian pathways, and safe access where necessary.

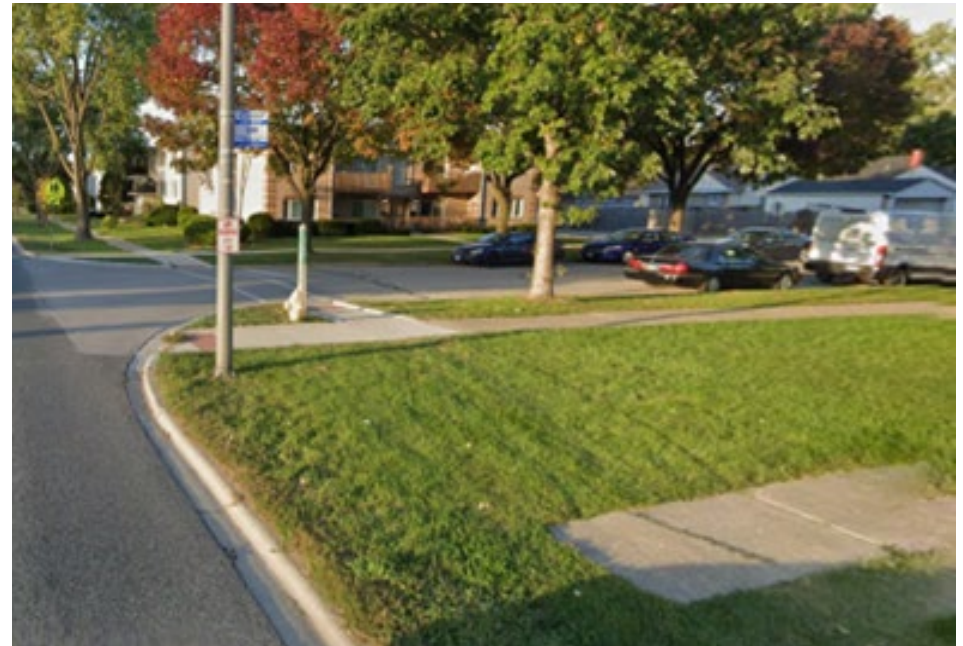
For example, while there are nine Pace bus stops on La Grange Road between 47th Street and Plainfield Road, there is only one crosswalk across La Grange Road (at 52nd Street). Likewise, the at stop La Grange Road and 52nd Street is missing a section of sidewalk, making it difficult to access for anyone coming from the south. As with this location

and others, the availability of right-of-way can be a limiting factor in the Village's ability to implement new pedestrian infrastructure.

4. Work with Pace to make sure all stops are appropriately located, spaced, and signed.

Stops should be spaced out to increase speed and to allow Pace to consolidate high-quality infrastructure in easily accessible locations.

5. Encourage TOD practices by permitting higher density residential buildings near transit stops to ensure access to transit.



Pace bus stop at La Grange Road and 52nd Street with missing sidewalk. (Image source: Google Streetview)

Strategies

Roadway Network & Safety

La Grange's roadway network is largely characterized by well-developed, low-stress local streets that intersect larger arterials and commercial areas. The network is designed to balance traffic flow and residential tranquility, promoting easy navigation and giving Village streets a suburban feel. Outside of residential areas, however, high-traffic regional arterials present safety challenges for all roadway users. To reduce dangerous driving, the Village can focus on implementing traffic calming and other safety measures throughout the network, but particularly at these complex intersections where several land uses, travel modes, and infrastructure typologies come together. Safe streets infrastructure such as curb extensions, landscaping, raised crosswalks and intersections, and speed feedback signals, among others, will enhance safe mobility and expand access to everyone in La Grange. When implemented together, the following strategies maximize the Village's potential to improve roadway safety.

1. Develop 'quick-build' strategies to address safety concerns at high-crash areas.

Quick-build strategies can serve as pilots or as lower-cost strategies for addressing road safety. The Village has not historically used quick-build strategies, but they can be effective an implementation strategy for intersection improvements and could be treated as a prelude or pilot in advance of more permanent infrastructure.



Examples of quick-build strategies include painted bumpouts and curb extensions and temporary bollards

Strategies | Roadway Network & Safety

2. Commit to a Vision Zero policy, wherein the Village will focus on high-crash areas and undertake infrastructure solutions to reduce crashes and severe injuries.

A Vision Zero pledge can be supported with roadway infrastructure that reduces dangerous driving behaviors: curb bump-outs; left-turn traffic calming; and intersection tools like leading pedestrian intervals. A Vision Zero policy should aim for zero roadway serious-injury and fatal crashes.

La Grange can focus on intersections that have a high incidence of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. A list of specific intersections is listed below, based on the crash incidence in the last five years (per IDOT data).

- Brainard Avenue and Burlington Avenue
- Cossitt Avenue and Kensington Avenue
- Cossitt Avenue and Bluff Avenue

This list of intersections was chosen specifically because all the roads are under La Grange jurisdiction and improvements can be made to them without involving other partners. Cossitt Avenue is a significant east-west route through the Village, providing the easiest pathway to connect the downtown to the residential neighborhood east of the IHB tracks, and serving the south side of Downtown La Grange and Cossitt School, a k-6 school with 500 students. Brainard Avenue is a major north-south road that runs the entire length of the Village, where many other roads dead-end at the BNSF Railroad.

The preponderance of crashes happen along IDOT roads. The Village can partner with IDOT to address other high-crash intersections across La Grange, including:

- La Grange Road and Ogden Avenue
- La Grange Road and Burlington Avenue/Hillgrove Avenue

Coordination with nearby Villages can also support safety between communities whose residents use common IDOT corridors.

Each intersection will need to be specifically designed but can be improved by taking a safe systems approach: in addition to the specific improvements listed above, each intersection should be considered in its entirety to assess how it can be made safer for vulnerable road users. In the case of Brainard and Burlington, for example, it may be appropriate to consider a raised crosswalk or raised intersection; to re-stripe the crosswalks for greater visibility; or to incorporate left-turn traffic calming.

3. Coordinate with IDOT to upgrade pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Coordination with IDOT is critical for the Village to implement safety improvements on local roads that intersect IDOT roads: along La Grange Road, 47th Street, East Avenue, and on Ogden Avenue. Developing a system for coordinating between the Village and IDOT will promote ongoing collaboration on funding efforts.

Strategies

Parking

In most of the Village, parking is not a major concern: residents have garages, driveways, or parking pads, and overnight vehicle storage is not allowed on the street. In some apartment and condo buildings in the downtown, residents do not have parking and instead rent space from the Village and park in surface or garage spots. This plan acknowledges the importance of accommodating personal vehicles; providing parking; and thinking through the parking implications of new development, especially proximate to the downtown and West End.

The Village is in the process of implementing a 2022 Parking Plan that focuses on parking availability and legibility in the downtown and West End. The plan found that, while there are certain areas of downtown that are in high demand, the area as a whole was only about 50% occupied at peak times (51% in the downtown; 54% at peak occupancy in West End).

Parking and parking requirements in developed communities like La Grange are part of a delicate ecosystem that balances a range of goals including sustainability, economic development, and providing housing opportunities. The recommendations here are presented with that understanding in mind.

1. Adopt Parking Changes When Revising the Zoning Code.

a) Eliminate parking minimums for occupancy of existing commercial buildings in the West End.

The CBD (more specifically the C-1CR zoning district) does not have parking minimums for most businesses; instead, visitors access downtown businesses using Village-owned garages and surface lots, as well as ample on-street parking. In the West End, however, businesses are often required to provide on-site parking and it is understood that these requirements have limited potential changes in use within existing buildings because the proposed business cannot provide the additional parking required. For example, when a hair salon closes, that vacant property cannot open as a restaurant, because the restaurants require more parking requirements and there is no place to locate additional parking. As such, current zoning requirements hamstrings development in the West End by requiring like-for-like business replacement.

In updating the Zoning Code, the Village may consider allowing dissimilar and more intensive uses to reoccupy commercial spaces. While greater parking demand will result, this change can help to maintain the economic vitality of the business district. Furthermore, there are spaces available in and around the West End that have historically been occupied by Metra commuters. While demand for Metra parking may eventually rebound on some days and at some times, it is likely to remain depressed for the foreseeable future and will also be available on nights and weekends in perpetuity.

Strategies | Parking

b) Reduce parking minimums in the R-5, R-6, R-7, and R-8 zoning districts.

The current zoning map of the Village shows a doughnut of higher-density residential development around the downtown area. Reducing parking minimums in the R-5, R-6, R-7, and R-8 zoning districts would allow those areas closest to the Village center to be developed with fewer parking spaces.

It is important to note that the plan does not recommend creation of parking maximums, which would impose a cap on the number of parking spaces that a developer could build to accompany a residential development. New housing units will almost certainly be built with some amount of parking given market demand. However, reducing parking minimums – which currently sit at 1.5 parking spaces per unit in multifamily properties – would allow individual developers to make decisions about what their potential customers and future residents want in terms of parking provision.

For example, the Village parking lot at Ashland, Burlington, and Calendar Avenues is a potential redevelopment site. Most inquiries regarding redevelopment of this site have not contemplated a sufficient number of parking spaces given the current zoning requirements, since the Village policy is that any new development should provide a like-for-like replacement of the existing lot while also meeting zoning requirements for additional units on site. Reducing minimum parking requirements could unlock that site for greater use and could also allow for redevelopment of other sites in the periphery of the downtown. The specific number will ultimately be codified in the zoning code, but it can be changed in several ways.

i. Within the downtown, the number can be reduced for multifamily units, from 1.5 to, for example, 1.0.

ii. In the rest of the Village, parking requirements for multifamily units can reflect the number of bedrooms versus a single number per dwelling unit. It may be appropriate to require .5 per bedroom, for example.

iii. For single-family homes within the R-5, R-6, R-7, and R-8 districts, it may be appropriate to reduce parking requirements. It is extremely unlikely that homes will be built without any parking, but taking a hands-off approach might result in less lot area devoted to parking.

Community members often noted throughout the planning process that housing diversity and affordability are important considerations for the Village. Reducing parking requirements will reduce the cost of development, so is an important provision in support of affordability that will not compromise the architectural quality of individual buildings, or the look and feel of La Grange.



Parking Lot With Permeable Pavers



CHAPTER 7

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Working Toward Environmental Sustainability

La Grange has, in recent years, undertaken steps toward applying sustainability policies and programs. The Village has enacted policies around impervious surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff; has ensured that residents and businesses may install solar panels (and has provided clear guidance on their lawful installation); has facilitated installation of home EV charging systems; has provided Village-wide composting opportunities; and has taken steps to give La Grange residents easy access to sustainable choices, for example by staffing informational tables at La Grange farmers markets and hosting native plant bicycle tours.

As noted elsewhere in this plan, there are broadly good walking, cycling, and transit throughout the Village, allowing residents to forego vehicle trips. In June 2024, car ownership was 1.6 vehicles per household and residents drove 14.5 miles per capita, less than half the American average of 30.1 per day.^{3,4} While as a built-out community, La Grange may have limited opportunity for large-scale changes to the Village's sustainability profile in the short term, smaller scaled actions also can be impactful.



La Grange Farmers' Market



Vision & Goals

A **vision statement** summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for Environmental Sustainability

The Village of La Grange is an active partner in regional efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions and build resiliency through local leadership and action. The Village leads efforts to marshal federal, state, and regional resources to provide solutions for regional flooding. La Grange residents are well informed and active participants in supporting a healthy environment for all residents.

Goals for Environmental Sustainability

- Efforts by the Village and residents result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- The built environment integrates sustainable design principles to enhance environmental performance and resilience related to stormwater management.
- An informed community is aware of environmental issues and sustainable practices and is prepared for climate change impacts.

Community Input

- *Climate change mitigation and stormwater management are the two paramount concerns of Village residents.*
- *Preservation of green space for infiltration and stormwater management is a priority for many residents, as is incorporation of green infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens.*
- *Surface parking lots at community facilities and institutions (schools, recreational, etc.) should be made permeable.*
- *Maintaining and expanding parkway tree cover is a desire for some residents.*
- *The Environmental Quality Commission has a broad remit and has pursued a broad range of sustainability initiatives, such as efforts to reduce use of coal-tar sealants in the Village, reduce vehicle idling, and increase recycling at community events.*
- *Residents also cited the need to pursue revisions to zoning and building standards to support and, in some cases, mandate more sustainable building practices.*

Planning Considerations for Environmental Sustainability

Key considerations about La Grange's existing efforts toward environmental sustainability are noted below. They are important to define in order to plan for future undertakings.

- The Village is actively engaged in sustainability efforts around the region, and it has an **engaged citizenry that have taken a leading role in the Village's sustainability commitments.**
- As of the drafting of this plan, **the Village has committed to regional and national frameworks used to measure and direct sustainability efforts:** Metropolitan Mayors' Council (MMC) Greenest Region Compact, MMC/ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region, Department of Energy SolSmart, Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA, National Wildlife Federation Mayors' Monarch Pledge. In addition to those commitments, the Village's current sustainability efforts are summarized below.
 - The Village provides information about sustainability on its Green Initiatives webpage.
 - Stormwater and runoff are being addressed by major infrastructure investments.
 - The Village attained SolSmart Silver status in 2023.
 - There are existing guidelines and regulations about solar installation and home electric vehicle charging available within the zoning code and on the Village website, such that residents can make personal sustainability investments with ease. The Village offers municipal composting and waste diversion through a partnership with Flood Brothers.
 - The Village has undertaken sustainable infrastructure investments such as the permeable paving area outside the 6th Street Parking Garage.

Planning Considerations for Environmental Sustainability

- **To achieve the climate commitments it has made, the Village may have to take on areas where there is more resistance.** In some cases, this may disrupt resident expectations but will maintain the high quality of life in La Grange.
- The Village currently undertakes **significant efforts to manage its stormwater, support appropriate plantings, and advance electrification.** In addition, La Grange has the opportunity to have a greater impact on its environment and be an active partner in enhancing sustainability in the Western Suburbs. Steps toward this goal include actions commonly considered environmental actions, such as providing a framework for native plantings and modifying streetlights to protect bird migration patterns, and more. They also include actions found in other plan themes, such as enacting policies that allow for upzoning and soft density.
- The Village has already addressed many topics in sustainability via **education, programmatic offerings, or facilities improvements.** Broader actions require significant staff commitment, budget, multijurisdictional cooperation, and/or are outside Village purview. This plan aims to focus on things that are within Village control, and builds on existing frameworks (e.g. the Greenest Region Compact and similar) to which the Village has already committed.



Residents walking in Downtown La Grange

Strategies

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)

In accordance with the 2021 Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region, La Grange is targeting a 50% reduction in GHG Emissions by 2030; 65% reduction by 2040; and 80% reduction by 2050 (from 2015 levels, per a 2019 report). GHG Emissions are calculated by Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Greenhouse Gas Inventories for La Grange.⁵ The Village can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by focusing on the following strategies.

1. Increase renewable energy supply and storage capacity across the Village.

The Village has Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) power procurement in place to offer decarbonized power options to residents and businesses; however, they must do so on a recurring basis, since CCAs typically last one to two years before they must be renegotiated. The Village should continue promoting CCA power and seek to continually increase its share of renewable energy as part of its power supply.

2. Connect homeowners, business owners, and property owners to resources for building efficiency improvements.

Such resources may include the Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs (PACE) for businesses or Residential PACE (R-PACE) for homes. The program allows property owners to finance eligible improvements and repay costs over time via voluntary assessment. The program is administered through the United States Department of Energy.⁶ The Village can publicize information like the PACE program and act as a clearinghouse for similar programs that would allow business owners access grants, funding, or other support to undertake operational sustainability improvements.

3. Connect downtown businesses and offices to solar resources offered via the Illinois Power Agency, such as solar incentives for businesses with larger rooftop capacity (e.g. the movie theater or Aging Care Connections). It can also work with businesses to publicize federal tax credits available to businesses to purchase solar energy systems, including the investment tax credit and production tax credit.⁷

4. Continue efforts to decarbonize transportation, and maintain existing ordinances related to electric vehicle charging at private residences. The Village has developed and implemented a plan for residents who live in multi-family buildings who wish to purchase electric vehicles via the 2022 Parking Plan. Continuing this effort, as well as maintaining existing ordinances related to electric vehicle charging at private residences can advance sustainability goals.

5. Commit to electrifying the Village fleet in situations where comparable electric vehicles are available, specifically for vehicles like sedans and pickup trucks, as existing procurement timelines allow.

In some cases, there are electric vehicles that are cost-comparable to gas vehicles, especially accounting for lower maintenance and running costs. In the case of larger vehicles (for example, garbage trucks or fire engines), the Village must weigh the additional cost with the longer lifetime of the vehicles. The Village has already begun to assess its fleet, incorporating EV review into its 2023 purchasing decisions, so the Village can build on this existing protocol, acknowledging that at the time of writing, there are some types of vehicles that do not have comparable electric vehicles (e.g. fire engines, tractors, etc.). The Village can also continue to offer anti-idling staff awareness programs.

Strategies

Climate Change Resilience

The Village can use the Greenest Region Compact Framework as an outline or menu to implement climate change resilience strategies.

1. Continue to diversify the Village tree canopy.

La Grange's extensive tree canopy on both private and public land is an asset of the community and the public canopy is actively managed by the Village. The Village has a commitment to removing and replacing damaged or diseased trees, and also takes requests from residents for additional tree planting. The Village can continue to diversify its canopy as part of its ongoing management strategy, by working with its arborist to prioritize the planting of native trees on parkways and other Village property, with a particular focus on diversity in the wake of the loss of ash trees to the Emerald Ash Borer.

2. Adopt composting and recycling programs at Village buildings and at Village events.

Adopting this and related programs can also provide waste management education (e.g. providing education and management regarding waste, recycling and compost, as well as reduce items entering the waste stream). The Village should also continue to work with neighboring communities and other area partners to facilitate events such as repair cafes; pumpkin smashes; Christmas tree composting and other waste-diversion events.



Kiwanis Park

Strategies

Stormwater Management

Stormwater management is a known challenge in La Grange, and there are several large-scale infrastructure projects in various stages of development that pre-date the comprehensive plan, the execution of which was ongoing as of the time of writing. These projects, when complete, will make a significant difference in Village stormwater issues. Small-scale and green infrastructure improvements can supplement these large-scale projects and address many of the problems caused by smaller rainwater events. The Village has been proactive in requiring small-scale stormwater management on private properties and installing green infrastructure on Village property such as permeable pavers and porous parking areas (for example, in the small surface lot outside the 6th Avenue Garage).



Educational signage about permeable pavers

1. Pursue stormwater management projects to mitigate flooding and water pollution, including those recommended by the North and South Basin modeling studies and upcoming long range capital plan, as well as small-scale and opportunistic improvements.

Stormwater management includes both gray (traditional, cement/pipe) and green (landscaped) infrastructure. As the Village continues to pursue its infrastructure planning and improvements, it can work with the Park District, School District, and other institutional and large landowners within the Village to install infrastructure, including green infrastructure (bioswales, rain gardens, permeable pavers), as opportunities arise.

2. Create zoning guidance for residential water and waste systems.

Similar to the approach it has taken for EV charging and solar panels, the Village can create zoning guidance for residential systems like grey water reuse and stormwater management systems.

3. Educate residents about home systems for stormwater management.

The Village already offers a robust portfolio of educational materials that it can continue to use to educate residents about stormwater management in residential settings, and it can use third-party resources such as Three Rivers Wet Weather and RainReady to supplement as is useful.

Strategies

Education & Outreach

Education and outreach will empower La Grange residents with the knowledge and motivation needed to create a more sustainable and resilient community. The Village's sustainability initiatives will be more impactful and reach more residents if key messages and resources are communicated strategically.

1. Expand on the Village's educational resources and outreach initiatives related to sustainability topics and opportunities.

The Village currently communicates with La Grange residents via the Green Initiatives portion of its website about sustainability topics and opportunities, and should continue to develop this resource to incorporate information on the topics above, as well as associated opportunities (some of which have been addressed in the Transportation & Access chapter) to reduce car ownership, reduce vehicle miles traveled, enhance biodiversity, reduce light pollution, support pollinators, and create habitat for native species. The Village can engage residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations through a variety of activities and partnerships.

Multijurisdictional Partnerships

By collaborating with neighboring communities and regional agencies, La Grange can leverage collective strengths, share resources, and address sustainability challenges more effectively, leading to a more sustainable and resilient region.

1. Pursue multijurisdictional partnerships that advance the Village's sustainability goals.

The Village already has strong partnerships with surrounding communities, and could seek to share the potential financial burden of some investments via collective purchasing or shared-use agreements (e.g. for Village fleet management; tree purchasing; etc.). The Village can also maintain its ongoing dialogue with other communities about best practices for mitigating climate change and pursuing greater resilience for individuals and the community.



La Grange Summerfest



CHAPTER 8

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Fostering Robust Economic Development

Economic development is a governmental function focused on preserving and enhancing the community's quality of life. Broadly considered, that idea applies to much that a municipality does (and, in the case of La Grange, is a touchpoint highlighted in its recent strategic planning work). More specifically, the role of economic development in supporting quality of life is establishing and maintaining a sustainable tax base that provides a municipality with the resources to fund community services. As a primarily built out community, economic development functions in La Grange include maintaining a vibrant downtown business district, supporting uses in the Village's two industrial areas, and facilitating development and redevelopment that generates tax revenues. Beyond that, and from the perspective of this comprehensive plan, economic development can be considered in concert with other tax base related plan elements, such as land use patterns, redevelopment, and zoning.

A fundamental question of economic development for all communities is how involved to be in the business and real estate environments in support of local economic development goals. In some cases, the discussion is practical (local financial capacity will inform the decision). In some cases, it is a philosophical consideration (should governmental be involved at all in supporting individual properties or businesses?). Ultimately, the approach of communities varies widely and reflects local conditions and needs.

Over the course of preparing this comprehensive plan, a clear message for approaching economic development rose to the top: **Be intentional, be thoughtful, act with a purpose.** This thinking can be applied to evaluating development proposals, funding local programs, providing grants or incentives, and considering changes to development regulations. The economic development strategies recommended in this chapter are brought forward with this perspective in mind.



La Grange Theater in Downtown La Grange



Vision & Goals

A **vision statement** summarizes aspirations for the planning topic area and describes the Village's ambitions for the future. The vision statement serves as a guide for decision-making and strategy development.

Goals support the vision and provide direction for the planning strategies. Many of the goals detail the ways in which the Village will change in pursuit of the plan vision statements. However, sometimes keeping things how they are also requires active management; therefore, some goals are about preserving desired existing conditions.

Vision for Economic Development

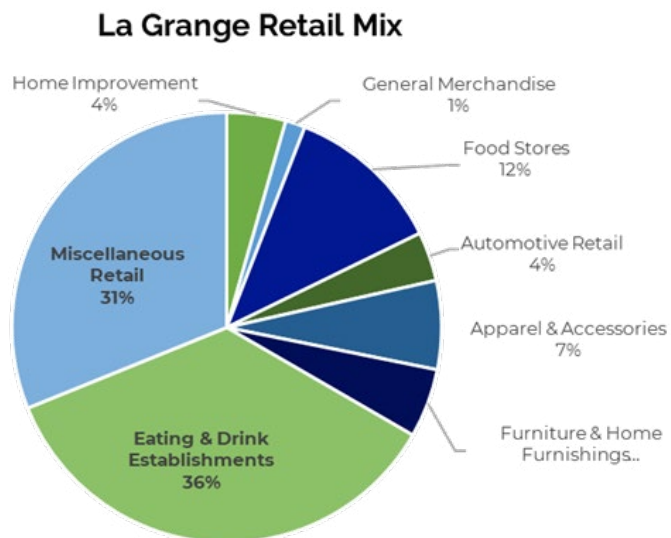
La Grange continues to build on its assets and opportunities, furthering its strong local business climate. The Village reinforces the downtown's vibrancy and notoriety as a regional destination, maintains the community's ready access within the region, and supports the continued success of established industrial and medical centers. Together with partners and local businesses, La Grange offers visitors surprising and memorable experiences through strategically designed events and promotions. La Grange is a welcoming destination in the western suburbs for families to spend an evening or a whole day enjoying dining and shopping, enjoying entertainment, and community events.

Goals for Economic Development

- The Village maintains a stable and balanced tax base.
- The Village maintains a strong relationship with the business community.
- Local regulations foster the vitality of the local economy and support the character of the community.
- Local experiences engage residents' wide range of interests, cultures, and values, and attract visitors to the community.

Community Input

- *The West End has a lot of potential; it would be nice to have more going on there.*
- *Industrial and commercial areas, outside of the downtown subarea, feel separate from the rest of the village, mostly in the way they look.*
- *Commercial areas outside of the downtown are visited less frequently and are usually visited for specific reason (e.g. doctor's appointment, automotive work, etc.)*
- *Regional accessibility, proximity to transit, and access to jobs are all major reasons why people choose to live in La Grange.*
- *Restaurants are the main businesses downtown and they are a big reason why people go to the downtown.*



Planning Considerations for Economic Development

A sound and stable business environment benefits the Village by supporting the tax base and providing for residents' needs. Having limited area for new development, this goal in La Grange involves maintaining a strong downtown and identifying ways to enhance other business and industrial districts.

The challenge in economic development is that multiple conditions must align for improvements to effectively take place. For example: the overall economy must be positive, real estate demand for a given use or location must be healthy, property owners must be looking to act, and local plans and zoning must align with those opportunities. Ultimately, local communities cannot control all these factors. However, effective community planning spells out goals and expectations for new activity and development so that when enough factors align, there is opportunity to advance economic development.

- **Downtown La Grange is the Village's focal point for business and commerce**, offering a mix of dining establishments, locally known retail stores, and a variety of services that contribute to the vibrancy of downtown.
- **Locally owned businesses** are a key element in the success of La Grange's business climate. These provide unique offerings to visitors and help distinguish the Village (particularly the downtown) from other business areas.
- **La Grange is a dining destination.** Restaurants are an important aspect of La Grange's entertainment offerings. Restaurants (eating & drink establishments) are the most common business in La Grange's retail mix. The next largest category is miscellaneous retail, which includes stores with unique characteristics like florists, used merchandise stores, and pet/pet supply stores as well as other store retailers (source: ESRI & US Census 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates).

Planning Considerations for Economic Development

- **The Community and Economic Development Commission (CEDC)** is an appointed body of the Village. It meets four times a year to review economic conditions in the Village, consider the needs of local businesses, and make recommendations to the Village Board on economic development matters.
- **Village revenues generally accrued from development related sources** (property and sales taxes) are strong contributors to the Village’s general fund operating budget. The table below from the Village’s 2024/2025 annual budget highlights the significance of these revenues, which account for approximately 70% of all General Fund Tax revenues, and the value of Village economic development efforts to maintain them. Licensing and permitted fees from development also contribute to Village revenues.
- **A market study** conducted as part of this comprehensive plan gave insight to key elements of the business environment. The findings of that analysis included:
 - Retail vibrancy downtown continues to be strong and emphasizes dining uses.
 - Downtown La Grange is strengthened by drawing visitors from surrounding communities with smaller downtowns.
 - Downtown net retail rents are comparable to Elmhurst and Downers Grove. Taxes are lower in those DuPage County towns, which creates a competitive disadvantage to renting space in La Grange and Cook County generally.
 - Retail rent levels can be a burden for smaller, independently owned retail businesses.
 - The residential market is strong, as indicated by low vacancy rates and relatively high sale prices.
 - Office and industrial spaces are a relatively small part of La Grange’s local market. The relative strength of those markets are supported by unique elements such as proximity to major state roads and interstates, rail lines, and UChicago Medicine AdventHealth La Grange Hospital’s location in the Village.

**General Fund
Budget Summary
Revenues**

	2021-22 ACTUAL	2022-23 ACTUAL	2023-24 BUDGET	2023-24 EST. ACT	2024-25 BUDGET	2025-26 BUDGET	2026-27 BUDGET	2027-28 BUDGET	2028-29 BUDGET
Taxes									
5000 Property Taxes	4,361,540	4,514,100	5,062,289	5,046,157	5,273,234	5,457,798	5,594,243	5,734,099	5,877,451
5002 Road & Bridge Taxes	143,668	143,071	146,955	139,890	141,289	142,701	144,128	145,570	147,025
5004 Replacement Taxes	688,685	902,764	645,840	667,874	686,000	699,720	713,714	727,989	742,548
5009 SSA - CBD Maintenance	92,265	91,763	103,980	98,708	111,985	114,225	116,509	118,839	121,216
5030 Income Tax	2,285,647	2,637,120	2,529,755	2,543,764	2,594,639	2,646,532	2,699,462	2,753,451	2,808,520
5040 Sales Tax	2,111,325	2,239,629	2,100,000	2,114,643	2,156,936	2,200,075	2,244,076	2,288,958	2,334,737
5041 Local Use Tax	620,121	669,253	669,161	686,523	600,000	600,000	612,000	624,240	636,725
5042 Non-Home Rule Sales Tax	1,674,948	1,778,740	1,700,000	1,735,568	1,770,279	1,805,685	1,841,799	1,878,635	1,916,207
5045 Cannabis Excise Tax	25,650	25,148	29,215	24,381	24,625	24,871	25,120	25,371	25,625
5048 Theater Amusement Tax	-	30,178	25,000	57,757	58,000	58,580	59,166	59,757	60,355
5050 Utility Tax Comed / Nicor @5%	994,422	1,030,713	850,000	727,986	850,000	858,500	867,085	875,756	884,513
5055 Simplified Telecom Tax (6%)	316,195	328,847	300,000	298,628	276,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
5070 Property Tax - Police Pension	1,782,347	1,848,793	1,826,660	1,826,660	1,942,946	2,030,379	2,121,746	2,217,224	2,316,999
5075 Property Tax - Fire Pension	1,424,268	1,462,513	1,400,883	1,400,883	1,544,949	1,614,472	1,687,123	1,763,043	1,842,380
Total Taxes	16,521,081	17,702,632	17,389,738	17,369,422	18,030,882	18,553,537	19,026,171	19,512,933	20,014,304

Planning Considerations for Economic Development

- There is an active **Special Service Area downtown** that expires in 2024. The Downtown SSA funds services, such as annual plantings and snow removal, to businesses in the area. However, the funds levied through the current SSA only cover a portion of the cost of Village services within the SSA boundary and the Village provides similar services outside of the SSA at no additional cost.
- **The Village does not have any active Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.** The Downtown TIF District that helped revitalize the downtown expired in 2009 and there has not been a need, or an interest expressed in creating a new TIF district.
- **Community rail and bus service** are important economic factors for the Village in that they provide opportunity for residents to get around the region, for visitors and customers to come to La Grange, and allow for varying densities of housing to appropriately fit into transit oriented areas of the Village.
- **The La Grange Business Association (LGBA)** is an economic development partner to the Village. The LGBA is a member-based organization seeking to enhance the local business climate and promote businesses growth in La Grange. Other economic development partners include the West Suburban Chamber of Commerce and Visit Oak Park, the state-certified convention and visitors bureau for Western Cook County.
- **Community events** are an element of economic development in that they bring visitors to the community, particularly the downtown area. While those visits may not directly correspond to a shopping or dining visit, they do raise awareness of the Village's business areas generally and provides opportunities for visitors to see stores to be patronized on a return visit. The Village supports these events, which are hosted by or in partnership with other organizations. La Grange events include:
 - **The Farmer's Market** is held downtown on Thursdays from May to October and is sponsored by the LGBA.
 - **The Pet Parade** has been a significant early summer event in La Grange for over 75 years. It involves and attracts large numbers of residents, businesses and visitors; the parade is sponsored by La Grange Pet Parade Charities. The La Grange Carnival is held the same weekend, sponsored by the LGBA.
 - **The La Grange Craft Fair** is held downtown in July, making craft goods from around the region available for sale. This event is sponsored by the LGBA.
 - **The West End Arts Festival** is a juried fine arts festival that attracts a wide range of artists. It is held near the Stone Avenue Metra Station.
 - **The La Grange Holiday Walk**, held the first Saturday of December, is the centerpiece of holiday promotions in La Grange, bringing visitors to downtown for events and shopping during the winter holiday season.

Strategies

Tax Base

As described here, a stable and balanced tax base is certainly a key object of the Village's local economic development efforts. Beyond supporting ongoing operations, it mitigates the tax burden on residential property owners.

1. Adopt an Economic Development Strategic Plan, that identifies specific actions, priorities, and programs to enable the Village of La Grange to maintain its tax base and level of business activity. The Village's Community and Economic Development Commission (CEDC) can serve as focal point for developing the plan. While the Village currently has an informal policy about developing Village properties through public private partnerships, it has not yet resulted in development. The purpose of an Economic Development Strategic Plan is to identify specific actions related to public private partnerships, local businesses to retain, new industries to attract, and sites to be redeveloped – including those noted in the Subareas chapter of this plan.



Outdoor dining in Downtown La Grange

Strategies

Business Climate

Through its ongoing programs with partners like the La Grange Business Association and serving as a resource to local businesses, the Village maintains a strong relationship with the business community. This helps Village officials understand the current and anticipated business climate and needs of local merchants and property owners, and coordinate its activities to advance common objectives. The strategies below support that effort.

1. Develop an Economic Incentives Policy/Program as part of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, tailored to retain, expand, and attract targeted commercial and industrial businesses. Incentive types may include and be aimed at:

a) Facade enhancement of commercial and business properties. Currently, the Village offers a village-wide facade loan program that provides below market interest rates for eligible improvements. As part of the development of the Economic Strategic Plan, the Village should evaluate the success of this program to determine if the program should continue as-is or if modifications are needed. Additionally, the Village should evaluate if additional marketing of this program is needed or if additional educational resources should be developed.

b) Interior enhancement support can be further evaluated as part of developing an economic development plan. Such improvement programs are not as common as facade programs because they are not readily visible from the outside and may benefit only the current user of a space. However, this option may have value to the Village as it could assist in attracting new businesses, such as retail and entertainment uses, that are highly desired but face challenges for success. Interior improvement support may be targeted to such businesses, as these tend to be the uses most burdened by high rent costs. Interior improvement support could also facilitate better

ADA accessibility (e.g. elevators, accessible bathrooms, etc.) and fire suppression technology and resources to modernize and protect historic buildings. This could be available for all businesses given the high cost for these improvements and the benefits that they provide.

c) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or a Special Service Area (SSA) are potential funding sources for building enhancement programs, financing infrastructure improvements, facilitating development, and providing marketing support. The feasibility of these programs can be evaluated as part of the economic development plan, with a focus on maintaining and enhancing the West End and industrial areas.

2. Implement a Vacant Storefront Program in the Downtown Subarea to encourage empty commercial spaces and buildings to maintain interesting window displays.

The program can be applied on a volunteer basis or required through local codes. Displays may include community programming information, downtown marketing initiatives, or art displays. Communities that apply this type of program also use it to advertise local businesses, highlight the businesses districts generally, share art or other displays, all of which add interest to the pedestrian environment.

Many of the Village's commercial districts, especially the CBD and West End, maintain below market vacancy rates, so this program is not targeted to address a vacancy problem in the Village. Rather, this type of program should be considered from a marketing and placemaking perspective. Empty storefronts can have a heavy visual impact on a commercial area, even if they are just empty during a transition phase between users. Activation of empty storefronts can provide a visually appealing and engaging experience for pedestrians.

Strategies

Zoning

An update to the Village's Zoning Code has been contemplated throughout the plan making process, and specific recommendations to be considered are found in various sections of this document. Revising the zoning code to meet best planning practices and make regulations easier to understand for all parties will support the vitality of the Village's business districts.

1. Revise zoning use lists.

The highly detailed SIC and NAICS classification systems in the zoning code are overly complicated and apply broad national definitions to La Grange. They should be replaced with lists of specific permitted land uses for commercial, office and industrial businesses. Each of these uses should be defined in the Zoning Code, with definitions specific to La Grange. Although the Village should broaden use categories within the zoning code to make the code easier to understand and apply, the Village should continue its practice of using the Code to carefully curate the uses within the downtown to reinforce its character and the distinctive characteristics of its districts (CBD, West End, and North End).

2. Consolidate commercial and office zoning districts.

Currently, the Village has four commercial zoning districts (C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4), with two distinct subdistricts (C-1CR and C-3L); the largest of the districts, C-3, encompasses 26 acres, plus an additional 7 acres of C-3L subdistrict, and the smallest, C-4, includes only 4 acres. Additionally, the O-1 office district is just 5 acres in size. While first floor uses are closely regulated in the C-1CR and C-3L subdistricts, allowable uses in the remaining commercial and office uses are largely the same. As use lists are consolidated, the Village should consider opportunities to consolidate districts where no or few functional distinctions exist between current zoning classifications.



Central Business District in Downtown La Grange

Strategies | Zoning

3. Revise accessory use standards for select commercial zoning districts.

Accessory use standards for the C-1 and C-2 should be updated to allow ancillary uses related to the main business, such as hosting events, producing items to be sold on site, or selling related types of goods. It is not unusual, especially for small local businesses, to remain viable through creative extensions of their operations. This updated approach to zoning not only supports small businesses but adds to downtown vibrancy.

4. Maintain prohibition on first floor office uses in the core of the CBD.

The current code does not allow office uses on the first floor in the downtown core (C-1CR), in order to emphasize retail uses. In the heart of the downtown, this approach is recommended to remain. However, areas at the fringe of the C-1CR, such as 6th Avenue or the western C-1CR edge of Calendar Avenue can include offices without impacting a highly active pedestrian area.

5. Revise zoning to support conversion of single-family residential structures to commercial uses in appropriate locations within the Downtown Residential category designated on the Future Land Use Map. Appropriate locations include areas on the periphery of the C-1CR district, such as 6th Avenue or the western edge of Calendar Avenue. In these locations, conversions from residential to commercial uses—likely offices or service-oriented commercial activities—can support potential growing demand for those services and represent opportunities for adaptive reuse of historic structures. (see [Future Land Use Chapter](#)).

6. Evaluate development review processes.

Development review processes are essential to community evaluation of proposed uses and structures. However, the approach through which these requests are evaluated should be considered in the zoning update. In general, the amount of process should match the level of evaluation needed. More specifically, the zoning update process should be used to consider what approvals can be effectively conducted administratively (by staff) rather than a commission or Village Board. For example, recommendations in the Community Character chapter suggest that design guidelines for new buildings be applied by a commission and Village Board, but that building elements be approved administratively. Similarly, defining minor variations and technical considerations like use interpretations can follow established guidelines and be approved by staff.

Strategies

Entertainment & Events

Local entertainment and events engage and expand residents' wide range of interests, cultures and values, and attract visitors to the community. They also support vibrancy of the community and encourage additional spending at La Grange businesses. The history of events in downtown La Grange has enhanced its position as gathering space for the community and hub for the region. It is certainly a recommendation of this plan that the Village continue to facilitate and support community events.

1. Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown.

Continue to work with partner organizations, such as the La Grange Business Association and local businesses, to conduct event/pop-up/activation offerings to generate and maintain both local and regional interest in patronizing the downtown. In addition, a process can be developed by which local businesses are allowed and encouraged to host their own special events and add to Village and LGBA programming.

2. Organize transit station activation projects at the La Grange Road and Stone Avenue Metra stations and/or Metra owned-parking lots. Project activations may include:

- **Performers** - Events where a local musician(s) or school choir performs near the transit station.
- **Vendors** - A pop-up event where local vendors set up an area to offer their food, drinks, crafts, or other goods.
- **Artistic exhibition** - Local artists are invited to showcase their work and perhaps offer art for sale.



Image Source: La Grange Pet Parade

La Grange Pet Parade

The annual Pet Parade has been the unofficial start to summer in La Grange for decades. It attracts thousands of people from the Village and beyond. It is a unique and fun event that highlights the Village's family friendly character, vibrant downtown, and spirit of community. The Pet Parade weekend is paired with the La Grange Carnival, adding to the festive atmosphere. The 2024 Pet Parade was described in the Chicago Tribune:

"The La Grange Pet Parade, one of several in the Chicagoland, and thought by many to be the oldest, began as a project of the La Grange Chamber of Commerce, whose president, Ed Breen, owner of Breen's cleaners, had the idea to create an event that would feature the Village's children and family pets. The parade grew over the years to include entrees from local businesses, schools, and nonprofits. It was televised by WGN-TV throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Since the 1990s, the parade has been telecast over local access cable TV by LTTV, the station operated by students at Lyons Township High School. Over the years, many local celebrities have served as Grand Marshalls of the parade, including media figures John Coleman and Lester Holt, legendary coaches Ray Meyer and Gene Pingatore, and athletic icons Bobby Hull, Stan Mikita, and Gary Fencik. ... A nonprofit Board of Directors was created in 1999 to organize and fund the Pet Parade, known since 2016 as Pet Parade Charities. The organization exists both to fund yearly parade expenses, and to contribute to local pet-based charities."



Vibrant Downtown La Grange



CHAPTER 9

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Plan

The work of a comprehensive plan doesn't end with its adoption by the Village Board; that step begins a new purpose for the document. Plan implementation is the work of turning months of technical analysis, deliberations by Village officials, and community discussions that created the plan into the tasks through which the Village strives to reach its vision for the future. That next phase of work is outlined in the chapter as a path for implementing the La Grange Comprehensive Plan

While the plan is much more than the Village's "to-do" list for the coming years, it does contain recommended strategic actions to undertake. There are many recommendations in this plan, and they cannot all be accomplished at one time, or in one year, or even in five years. Plans are implemented over a 10 plus year period, through the Village deciding the time is right to conduct one of the recommended measures, or when an opportunity arises where Village action can advance a plan goal.



La Grange Village Hall



La Grange Metra Station

Implementing the Plan

Plan implementation primarily happens in three ways:

Regular Review

This comprehensive plan is a resource for the Village to regularly check in on how plan goals are being advanced. This can be done periodically as part of developing the Village's budget or work plans for staff or Village commissions. In La Grange, there currently are Village commissions related to planning, sustainability, community design and economic development that can all look to this plan to understand community consensus and community-wide policies as they consider how best to fulfill their charge.

Development Proposals

Development proposals that come before the Village are an opportunity to implement the comprehensive plan. Plan implementation requires partnerships, which includes property

owners and developers, business owners, or others investing in the Village. When a proposal comes to the Village for a new development, business or major activity, the appropriateness of that action for La Grange can be measured, in part, against this comprehensive plan. In this way, evaluating development proposals through zoning and other development processes is plan implementation.

External Funding Opportunities

Grants or other funding opportunities will arise for the Village, and some will relate to the plan, its strategies, or its overall vision for La Grange. In those cases, the plan becomes documentation of the community's vision and evidence that outside funding will be applied in a thoughtful manner.

Priority Strategies

As noted on the previous page, implementing plan strategies will occur over multiple years and when factors related to each strategy align to make it the right time. However, there are three strategies (or collection of strategies) in this plan that are considered highest priority and are best taken in the short term. These are strategies that either advance multiple plan goals, set the stage for implementation of other strategies, or are of significance in advancing the vision of La Grange conveyed in this plan.

Update the Village Zoning Code and Design Guidelines

Changes to these regulations are noted throughout the plan and would be implemented as part of a full zoning code update, already contemplated by the Village before preparing this plan. This step will refine, formalize, and codify several recommendations related to community character, economic development, subarea redevelopment, and sustainability.

Develop an Economic Incentives Policy/Program

The Village already engages in many economic development activities. In addition, this plan's Economic Development chapter describes an overall approach to economic development, a vision for how it can be considered effective, and economic development program options to be evaluated. However, there is no single compilation of these efforts or a formal framework for applying them in a coordinated manner. Such a framework is important to be positioned against actions beyond the Village's control (such as store closings or economic shifts) or to take advantage of opportunities that arise with little or no warning (such a request from a prospective new business or possible private public partnership). An economic development program helps a community act quickly based on a pre-established consensus of possible actions.

Provide Connections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists on Safe and Comfortable Routes.

Focused mainly in the Transportation Chapter, recommendations to add or complete sidewalks and bike connections are noted throughout the plan. These help create safe travel opportunities and advance the plan's sustainability goals. The significance of these connections was raised often during the planning process and are considered an important element of the Village's community character. The connections will help more residents reach shopping, recreation, education, and transit destinations safely without the need for a car, and will strengthen the connection between business and residential areas. Key efforts around this theme include: working with IDOT to create safe crossings of La Grange and Ogden Roads, safe crossing or railroad lines, completing connections between residential areas and La Grange schools, installing traffic calming elements where appropriate, and better connecting residents and visitors to transit services and business districts.

Strategies Matrix

The matrix on the pages that follow summarize the various strategies recommended in the plan (the page where information about each strategy can be found in this document is indicated). For each strategy, the lead group, supporting group(s), relative cost of the strategy and its priority for implementation are indicated.

- The **lead groups and partners** are as described in this plan, but certainly lend themselves to be revised and expanded as implementation is contemplated.
- **Strategy priority is a relative consideration.** All of the strategies have merit, but as noted above cannot all be done at once. Those strategies associated with the Priority Strategies noted above are generally considered a high priority in the matrix. Medium level strategies typically are those that support high priority strategies. Other medium level strategies are not specifically actionable, but reflect ongoing efforts or possible opportunities to be monitored. Low priority items are not unimportant, but as a matter of overall Village workload and limited impact to support other strategies, these items can occur over a longer timeline.
- **Exact costs related to implementation of strategies are not provided,** as each requires more definition before action is taken and most will not occur for a number of years, making costing impractical. Therefore, relative cost of implementation tasks are indicated symbolically as:
 - \$** - Actions that may be completed in a given budget cycle with existing allocated funds.
 - \$\$** - Actions that require future funding allocations by inclusion in upcoming budget cycles and/or multi-year capital plans.
 - \$\$\$** - Complex and costly actions that likely require outside funding sources, such as grants and partnerships with private entities and/or government agencies.



La Grange water tower

VILLAGE-WIDE COMMUNITY CHARACTER / LAND USE / ZONING

<i>Task</i>	<i>Lead Group</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Zoning & Design Guidelines				
Update Village Design Guidelines	Village	Consultant	\$\$	High
Refine and detail design guidelines for the current Overlay area.				
Establish a Design Overlay District for South La Grange Road.				
Establish design guidelines for new multi-unit and single-family attached residential development throughout the Village.				
Establish a tiered design review process to ensure community design objectives are met in an efficient and effective manner.				
Update Village Zoning Ordinance	Village	Consultant	\$\$	High
Consider revising height standards to allow four stories by right in the R-8, C-1, and C-2 Zoning Districts, where appropriate.				
Increase allowable density in areas currently zoned R-5 and preserve existing higher density in areas currently zoned R-6, applying concepts of “soft density”.				
Revise zoning to allow owners to enhance, expand, and modernize their homes.				
Revise zoning code commercial, office, and industrial use lists.				
Revise zoning in the South La Grange Road Focus Area to accommodate denser residential and/or commercial development, where feasible.				
Modernize zoning standards in the I-1, while maintaining the zoning district's intent.				
Adopt parking changes in concert with height and density changes.				
Historic Preservation				
Update the Village's historic structures inventory.	Village	Consultant	\$	Low
Develop and adopt a historic preservation plan	Village	Consultant	\$	Medium
Develop a historic rehabilitation program	Village	Consultant	\$	Low
Wayfinding & Gateway				
Expand the wayfinding and gateway signage program.	Village	Consultant	\$\$	Medium
Placemaking & Streetscape				
Continue to uphold residential area streetscape standards (parkways, sidewalks, etc.) to create a comfortable pedestrian network.	Village		\$	High

DOWNTOWN SUBAREA: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

<i>Task</i>	<i>Lead Group</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Community Character				
Refine and detail design standards tailored to the CBD area.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Allow taller buildings by right in select locations near transit and business districts.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Revise zoning to support conversion of single-family residential structures to commercial uses.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Create intentional and well-designed 'people spaces'.	Village	Property Owners	\$\$	Medium
Economic Development				
Continue to prohibit first floor office uses in the core of the CBD.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown.	LGBA	LGBA	\$	High
Organize transit station activation projects.	Village	RTA, LGBA	\$\$	Medium
Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Transportation & Access				
Strengthen the visibility of the crosswalks across the CBD.	Village		\$	High
Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks.	Village	IDOT, Other Villages	\$\$	High
Continue implementing community-branded 'signature' bike racks.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Medium
Continue to implement recommendations from the 2022 Parking Study.	Village	Property Owners, Developers	\$	High
Encourage transit-oriented development.	Village	Part of on going development review	\$	High
Environmental Sustainability				
Continue to preserve the walkable environment and move parking to the periphery of the downtown.	Village		\$\$	Medium
Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low

DOWNTOWN SUBAREA: WEST END

<i>Task</i>	<i>Lead Group</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Community Character				
Cultivate a cohesive pedestrian experience between the Central Business District and the West End.	Village	Property Owners	\$	High
Create intentional and well-designed 'people spaces'.	Village	Property Owners	\$\$	Medium
Refine and detail design standards tailored to the West End.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Allow taller buildings by right in select locations near transit and business districts.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Economic Development				
Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown.	LGBA	LGBA	\$	High
Organize transit station activation projects.	Village	RTA, LGBA	\$\$	Medium
Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Transportation & Access				
Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks.	Village	IDOT, Other Villages	\$\$\$	High
Continue implementing community-branded 'signature' bike racks.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Medium
Eliminate parking minimums for occupancy of existing commercial buildings in the West End.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Work with Lyons Township High School (LTHS) to provide more bicycle racks across school property, and enhance pedestrian pathways and walkability along major routes to school.	Village	LTHS	\$	Medium
Encourage transit-oriented development.	Village	Part of on going development review	\$	High
Coordinate with RTA to advocate for increased Metra service.	Village	RTA	\$	High
Environmental Sustainability				
Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low

DOWNTOWN SUBAREA: NORTH END				
Task	Lead Group	Partners	Cost	Priority
Community Character				
Complete gaps in the established Downtown streetscape palette in the North End.	Village		\$\$	Medium
Refine and detail design standards tailored to the North End.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Economic Development				
Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Transportation & Access				
Coordinate with IDOT and neighboring communities to improve existing and future pedestrian networks.	Village	IDOT, Other Villages	\$	High
Continue implementing community-branded 'signature' bike racks.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Medium
Encourage transit-oriented development.	Village	Part of on going development review	\$	High
Environmental Sustainability				
Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low
Consider opportunities for enhanced landscaping.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$\$	Medium

SOUTH LA GRANGE ROAD SUBAREA				
Task	Lead Group	Partners	Cost	Priority
Community Character				
Employ streetscape treatments throughout the South La Grange Road Subarea that are cohesive and reinforce the corridor's identity as part of La Grange.	Village	IDOT, Property Owners, Developers	\$\$	Medium
Provide additional space for streetscape and larger sidewalks where feasible, when considering redevelopment proposals within the South La Grange Road Subarea.	Village	IDOT, Property Owners, Developers	\$\$	Medium
Economic Development				
Explore opportunities for public-private partnerships that incentivize development in the South La Grange Road Subarea.	Village	Property Owners, Developers	\$\$	Medium
Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Transportation & Access				
Improve bike and pedestrian connectivity within the South La Grange Road Subarea.	Village	IDOT	\$\$	High
Environmental Sustainability				
Work with Metra and Pace to enhance jobs and housing connectivity.	Village	Metra & Pace	\$	Medium
Assess additional opportunities for tree canopy enhancements.	Village	Property Owners	\$	Medium
Pursue additional stormwater retention opportunities.	Village	IDNR, Property Owners, Developers	\$\$\$	High
Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low

INDUSTRIAL SUBAREAS				
Task	Lead Group	Partners	Cost	Priority
Community Character				
Develop and maintain consistent streetscape.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$\$	Medium
Maintain and refine zoning standards in the I-1 zoning district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Economic Development				
Maintain public infrastructure.	Village		\$\$\$	Medium
Encourage interior and exterior building renovation.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$\$	Medium
Implement Village initiatives and Code amendments to support the vitality of the district.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Transportation & Access				
Improve pedestrian railroad crossings.	Village	IHB/CSX	\$\$\$	High
Work with CSX and the Indiana Harbor Belt rail lines to improve pedestrian connectivity across the rail lines.	Village	IHB/CSX	\$\$\$	High
Environmental Sustainability				
Work with landowners to explore large-scale solar installations.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low
Identify opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Medium
Identify opportunities for enhanced landscaping and biodiversity.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Low

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS

<i>Task</i>	<i>Lead Group</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Pedestrian Network				
Continue to apply a Village-managed sidewalk replacement strategy.	Village	La Grange Park District	\$\$	High
Work with IDOT to implement safe crossing infrastructure at 47th Street, Ogden, and La Grange Roads.	Village	IDOT	\$\$	High
Adopt an ADA Transition Plan.	Village	CMAP; Other Villages	\$	Medium
Revise the zoning code to include provisions related to pedestrian-accessible design.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Implement pedestrian safety improvements at school perimeters.	Village	School Districts	\$\$	Medium
Bicycle Planning				
Develop a network containing primarily neighborhood greenways.	Village	IDOT, Cook County DOTH	\$\$	Medium
Develop a school-specific bicycle accessibility plan.	Schools	Village; La Grange School District 102	\$	High
Coordinate with neighboring communities to ensure existing and future bicycle networks connect residents to jobs and destinations throughout the region.	Village	IDOT, Other Villages	\$\$	Medium
Develop a web page on the Village website that shows where the greenways and surrounding bicycle infrastructure are located.	Village		\$	Low
Expand the wayfinding program to install clear and visible bicycle wayfinding signage.	Village Staff / Village Board	Plan Commission	\$	Medium
Establish a bicycle parking ordinance so that bicycle parking is provided by new and updated developments, and at priority locations including at Pace bus stops, parks and schools.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update		\$	Low
Add community-branded 'signature' bike racks.	Village	Property & Business Owners	\$	Medium
Ensure that all new and existing bicycle facilities are equipped with the appropriate safety and traffic calming measures.	Village	IDOT	\$	High

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS				
Task	Lead Group	Partners	Cost	Priority
Transit				
Improve sidewalks to meet ADA standards and that adhere to PROWAG guidelines at all Pace bus stops.	Village	Metra, Pace, IDOT, Cook County DOT, Park District, Other Villages, BNSF, Indiana Harbor Belt	\$\$	High
Install curb ramps where they do not currently exist.	Village	IDOT	\$\$	Medium
Provide more amenities like bicycle parking, pedestrian pathways, and safe access where necessary.	Village	Metra, Pace, IDOT, Park District, La Grange School District 102	\$	High
Work with Pace to make sure all stops are appropriately located, spaced, and signed.	Village	Pace	\$	High
Encourage TOD practices.	Village	Village; La Grange School District 102	\$	High
Roadway Network & Safety				
Develop 'quick-build' strategies to address safety concerns at high-crash areas.	Village	Other Villages	\$	High
Commit to a Vision Zero policy, wherein the Village will focus on high-crash areas and undertake infrastructure solutions to reduce crashes and severe injuries.	Village	Village	\$	Low
Coordinate with IDOT to upgrade pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	Village	IDOT	\$\$	High
Parking				
Adopt parking changes when revising the zoning code.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY				
Task	Lead Group	Partners	Cost	Priority
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)				
Increase renewable energy supply and storage capacity across the Village.	Village	Illinois Solar Energy for All; Illinois Solar Education Association	\$	Medium
Connect homeowners, business owners, and property owners to resources for building efficiency improvements.	Village	Illinois Solar Energy for All; Illinois Solar Education Association; Environment Illinois	\$	Low
Connect downtown businesses and offices to solar resources offered via the Illinois Power Agency.	Village	Illinois Power Agency	\$	Low
Continue efforts to decarbonize transportation.	Village	La Grange School District 102	\$	Low
Commit to electrifying the Village fleet in situations where there are comparable electric vehicles are available.	Village	La Grange School District 102	\$	Low
Create zoning guidance for residential water and waste systems.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update		\$	High
Educate residents about home systems for stormwater management.	Village	Property Owners	\$	Low
Climate Change Resilience				
Continue to diversify the Village tree canopy.	Village	Property Owners; School District; IDOT; Cook County DOTD	\$	Medium
Adopt composting and recycling programs at Village buildings and events.	Village		\$	Low
Stormwater Management				
Pursue stormwater management projects to mitigate flooding and water pollution.	Village	Metropolitan Water Reclamation District	\$\$\$	High
Education & Outreach				
Expand on the Village's educational resources and outreach initiatives related to sustainability topics and opportunities.	Village	Env. Quality Comm.	\$	Medium
Multijurisdictional Partnerships				
Pursue multijurisdictional partnerships that advance the Village's sustainability goals.	Village	Env. Quality Comm. / Other Villages	\$	Medium

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
<i>Task</i>	<i>Lead Group</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Tax Base				
Adopt an Economic Development Strategic Plan.	Village	Consultant	\$	High
Business Climate				
Develop an Economic Incentives Policy/Program.	Part of Economic Development Strategic		\$	Medium
Implement a Vacant Storefront Program.	Village		\$	Low
Zoning				
Revise zoning use lists.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Consolidate commercial and office zoning districts.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Revise accessory use standards for select commercial zoning districts.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Maintain prohibition on first floor office uses in the core of the CBD.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Revise zoning to support conversion of single-family residential structures to commercial uses in appropriate locations.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Evaluate development review processes.	Part of Zoning / Design Guidelines Update			
Entertainment & Events				
Continually refine event/pop-up/activation offerings downtown.	LGBA	LGBA	\$	High
Organize transit station activation projects.	Village	RTA, LGBA	\$	Medium

Glossary



Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): An independent dwelling located on the same lot as a single-family detached home: colloquially referred to as granny flats, accessory apartments, or coach houses.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to state and local government programs and services.⁸

By right: Also called “as of right,” a permitted use by a zoning code that does not require additional special review or approval by the local government and may be approved administratively through a building permit.

Comprehensive Plan: A tool used to guide the future development and growth of a community.

Design Guidelines: Architecture, site planning, landscape and related standards established by a community and applied to new developments or renovations. The standards help to ensure such construction fits into the context of the area and advances local development objectives. The standards are not highly prescriptive or intended to limit creative expressions of design.

Greenway: Low-stress, low-speed streets that are suitable for bicyclists; characterized by low-speed limits and traffic calming measures that make the streets more attractive to bicyclists.

Infill Development: Development of vacant or underutilized parcels within already developed areas.

Missing Middle Housing: Middle housing encompasses various types of multi-unit buildings that are similar in scale and appearance to single-family homes. These structures are designed to fit seamlessly into walkable neighborhoods. Middle housing has often been called “missing” due to restrictive single-family zoning laws and building codes that have favored larger apartment buildings, making it challenging to construct these kinds of homes.⁹



Glossary

Placemaking: A process of promoting the unique identity of a place—socially, aesthetically, and culturally—to enhance opportunities for social connection, belonging, and higher quality of life. Some elements of placemaking include temporary or permanent activations, public art, and pedestrian-focused street furniture.

Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG): Guidelines and technical requirements (published by the United States Access Board, a federal agency) to ensure that public rights of way, including sidewalks and shared use paths, are accessible for individuals with disabilities under regulations put forth by the ADA.¹⁰

Right-of-way: An area of land dedicated to public use for pedestrian and vehicular movement (e.g. parkways, sidewalks, alleys, roads, etc.), which may also accommodate public utilities.

Soft Density: A method of slowly increasing dense development without sacrificing the existing character in low- or middle-density areas; includes small-scale increases in density to allow more variety of housing types, such as accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, while maintaining a single-family character; sometimes called “gentle density”.¹¹ See also: *Missing Middle Housing*.

Streetscape: The collective appearance of a street, including vehicle travel lanes, bike facilities, sidewalks, street furniture, and landscaping.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): A strategy pattern of developing mixed-use and higher density uses around transit hubs as a means of promoting public transportation use and economic development; often includes improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.¹²

Vision Zero: A multinational road safety effort that aims to reduce traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries to zero.¹³

Village Zoning Districts:

Single Family Residential Districts

- R-1 - Single Family Residential District
- R-2 - Single Family Residential District
- R-3 - Single Family Residential District
- R-4 - Single Family Residential District
- R-5 - Single Family Residential District

Multiple Family Residential Districts

- R-6 - Two Family Residential District
- R-7 - Multiple Family Residential District
- R-8 - Multiple Family Residential District

Commercial Districts

- C-1 - Central Commercial District
- C-2 - Limited Service Commercial District
- C-3 - General Service Commercial District
- C-4 - Convenience Commercial District

Office District

- O-1 - General Office District

Industrial District

- I-1 - Light Industrial District

Special Districts

- OS - Open Space District
- IB - Institutional Buildings District
- DR - Design Review Overlay District

Endnotes

- 1 Bureau of Transportation Statistics: Average Cost of Owning and Operating an Automobile. <https://www.bts.gov/content/average-cost-owning-and-operating-automobilea-assuming-15000-vehicle-miles-year>. Accessed 7.17.24.
- 2 Per Replica, accessed 7.17.24
- 3 Replica Data Service Dashboard, accessed 6.25.24. Replica is a data service that aggregates mobile phone data to provide information about mobility patterns.
- 4 American Driving Survey: 2022 Research Brief. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, https://aaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/202309_2022-AAFTS-American-Driving-Survey-Brief_v3.pdf. Accessed 6.25.24.
- 5 La Grange 2019 Municipal Emissions Summary. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/1483671/La+Grange+GHG+Emissions+Summary.pdf/021acb7d-9223-ad1c-cfe2-189e55976dfd?t=1664310727389> Accessed 6.25.24.
- 6 Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs. State and Local Solutions Center. <https://www.energy.gov/scep/slsc/property-assessed-clean-energy-programs> Accessed 6.25.24.
- 7 Federal Solar Tax Credits for Businesses. Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/federal-solar-tax-credits-businesses> Accessed 6.27.24.
- 8 Introduction to the Americans with Disabilities Act. ADA.Gov. <https://www.ada.gov/topics/intro-to-ada/>
- 9 What is Missing Middle Housing? National League of Cities. <https://www.nlc.org/article/2024/01/23/what-is-missing-middle-housing/>. Accessed 8.19.24.
- 10 U.S. Access Board - About PROWAG. <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>. Accessed 8.19.24
- 11 Baca, A., Schuetz, J., & McAnaney, P. (2019, December 4). "Gentle" density can save our neighborhoods. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/gentle-density-can-save-our-neighborhoods/>
- 12 Transit oriented development. <http://www.tod.org/>. Accessed 8.19.24
- 13 Vision Zero Network. (2021, December 7). Vision Zero Network. <https://visionzeronetwork.org/>. Accessed 8.19.24



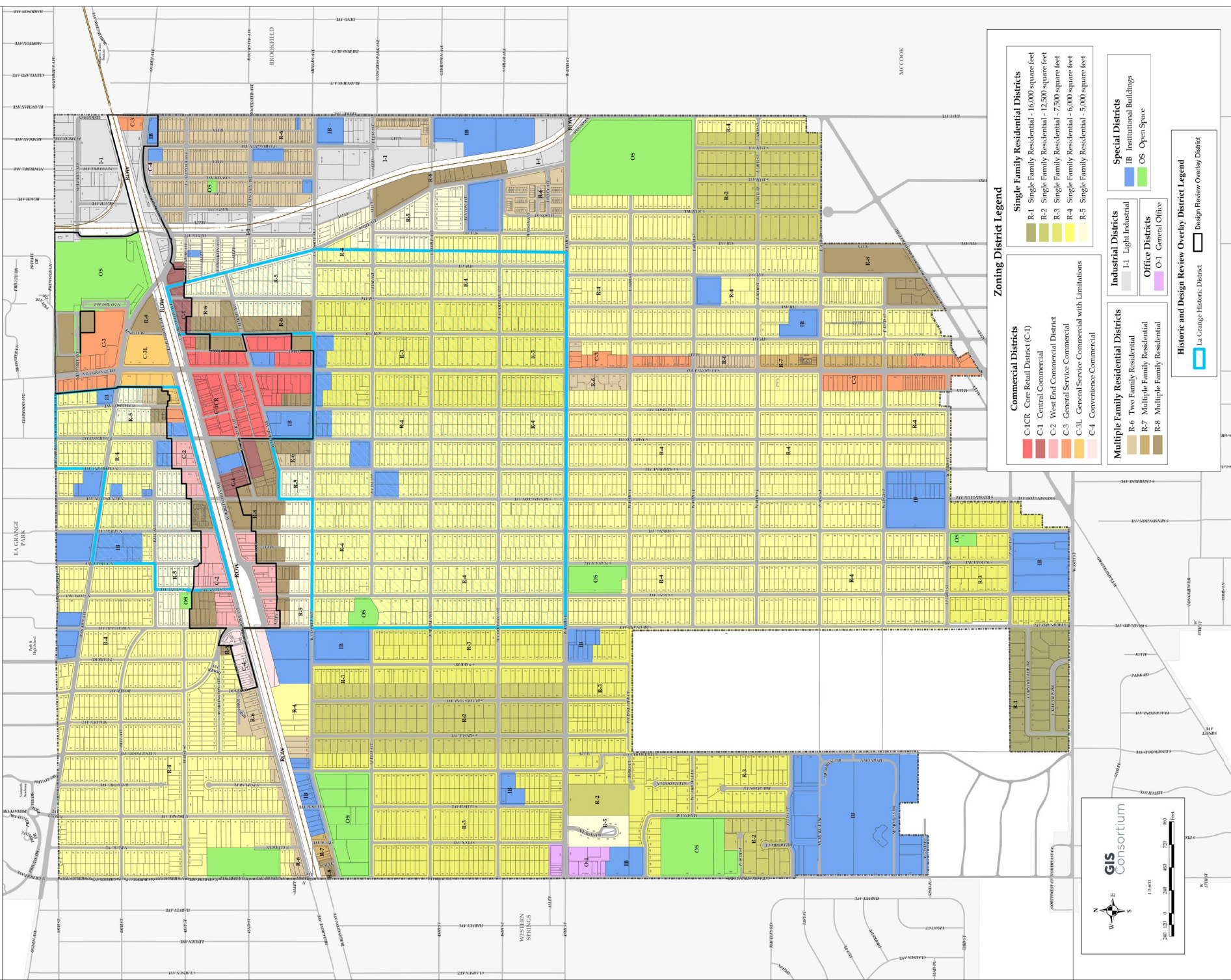
La Grange Village Hall

APPENDIX



Village of La Grange Official Zoning Map

Last Updated: 4/11/2024



Zoning District Legend

Commercial Districts	Multiple Family Residential Districts	Industrial Districts	Office Districts	Special Districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-1CR Core Retail District (C-1) C-1 Central Commercial C-2 West End Commercial C-3 General Service Commercial C-3L General Service Commercial with Limitations C-4 Convenience Commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R-6 Two Family Residential R-7 Multiple Family Residential R-8 Multiple Family Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I-1 Light Industrial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O-1 General Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IB Institutional Buildings OS Open Space

Single Family Residential Districts	Historic and Design Review Overlay District Legend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R-1 Single Family Residential - 16,000 square feet R-2 Single Family Residential - 12,500 square feet R-3 Single Family Residential - 7,500 square feet R-4 Single Family Residential - 6,000 square feet R-5 Single Family Residential - 5,000 square feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> La Grange Historic District Design Review Overlay District

GIS Consortium

Scale: 0 to 900 feet