

DEMPSTER CORRIDOR PLAN

WHERE COMMUNITY MEETS COMMERCE

Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting
June 18, 2025



Agenda

Introductions

Project Overview

Walking Tour Impressions & Visioning Exercise

Community Engagement

Current Conditions & Discussion

Next Steps

Introductions

Please introduce yourself and share one sentence about what you would like to see for the future of Dempster

Planning Team

This project is a partnership between the **Village of Morton Grove** and the **Regional Transportation Authority** (RTA).

The RTA Community Planning program provides funding and technical assistance to local governments to help foster the growth of sustainable, equitable, walkable, and transit-friendly communities.



RTA

Alex Waltz, Principal Planner

Village of Morton Grove

Brandon Nolin, Community Development Administrator

Anne Ryder Kirchner, Planner/Zoning Administrator



Planning Team

Consultant Team:

Teska Associates: Project Management, Engagement, Planning, & Urban Design

- Scott Goldstein
- Francie Lawrence
- Yuchen Ding

TYLin: Transportation Planning & Analysis

- Alex Hanson
- Mark Bennett
- Mary Buchanan

Egret & Ox: Engagement, Land Use & Zoning

- Todd Vanadilok

Project Overview

Why Develop a Plan for Dempster?

Dempster Street spans nearly three miles east-west across the Village

Provides connections to housing, shops and restaurants, doctors' offices and dentists, schools, and destinations like Harrer Park and the Legion

With the new Pace Pulse line, three local Pace routes, and Metra nearby, the corridor is transit-rich and ripe with opportunity



Project Goals

Provide **land use and economic development** recommendations to sustain existing businesses while also attracting new development;

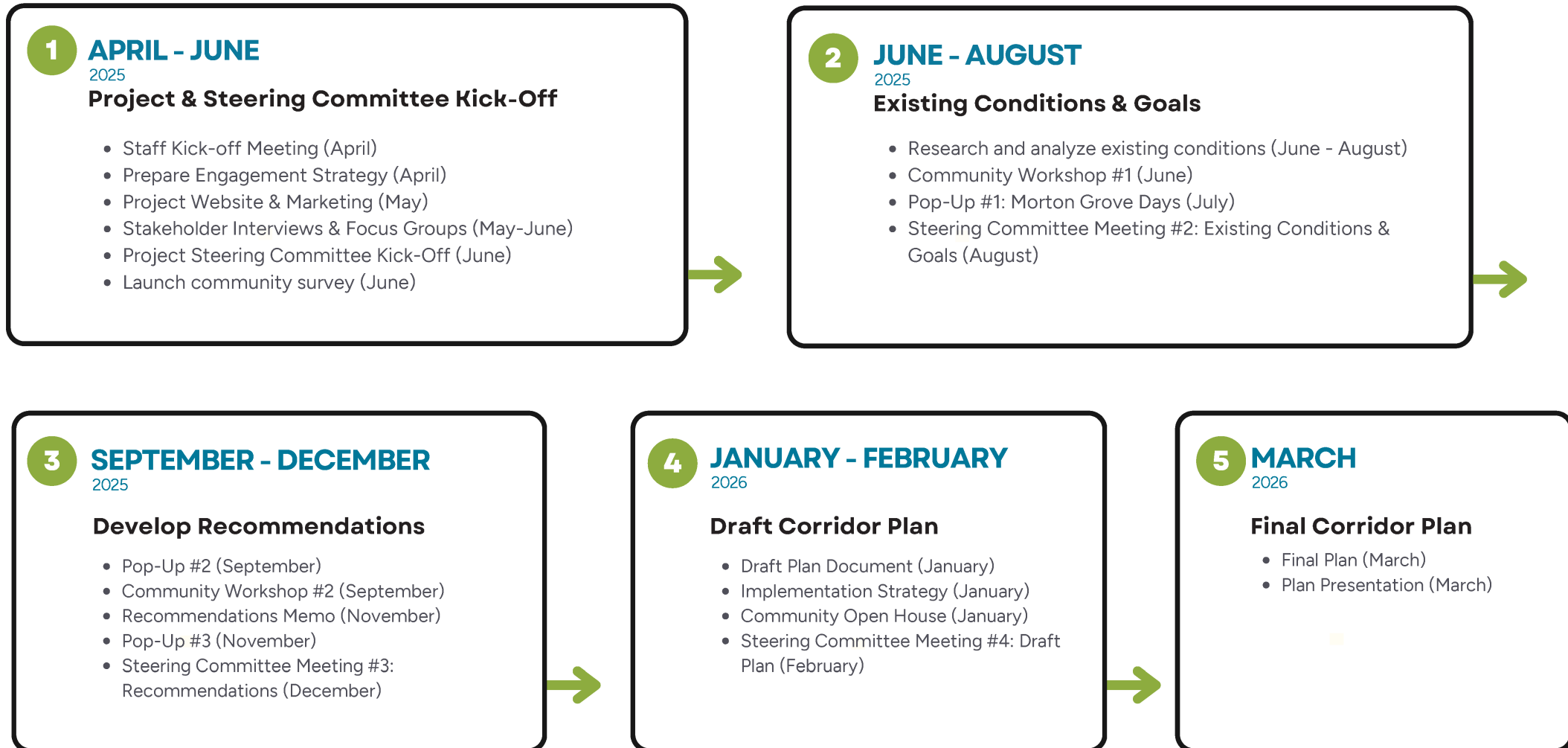
Identify **infrastructure improvements** to improve safety for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders);

Propose improvements to decrease Pace bus travel times and **increase service reliability** and on-time performance; and

Outline implementation strategies for the Village that **improve transportation infrastructure, support transit-oriented development (TOD), manage parking, and enhance connectivity** between Pace and Metra.



Planning Process





Steering Committee Role

Advisory group overseeing the planning process

Assist with community engagement and outreach (spread the word and participate in events)

Serve as a liaison between this planning process and your Board/Commission/organization

Review draft deliverables and provide feedback on plan recommendations

Walking Tour Impressions / Visioning Exercise

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe the experience of being on / traveling through Dempster Street today (or in the past)? How is that experience different as a driver vs. pedestrian or bicyclist?
2. Imagine yourself on Dempster in the future. Describe that experience: how does it feel or look different from today?
3. Think about other corridors you've visited/traveled through that have similar characteristics as Dempster. What stands out to you about those places (positively or negatively)?
4. What are the most important elements to address in the plan (e.g. safety, walkability, attracting businesses to vacant buildings, transit access, etc.)?

Engagement & Outreach

Community Engagement

Online Engagement:

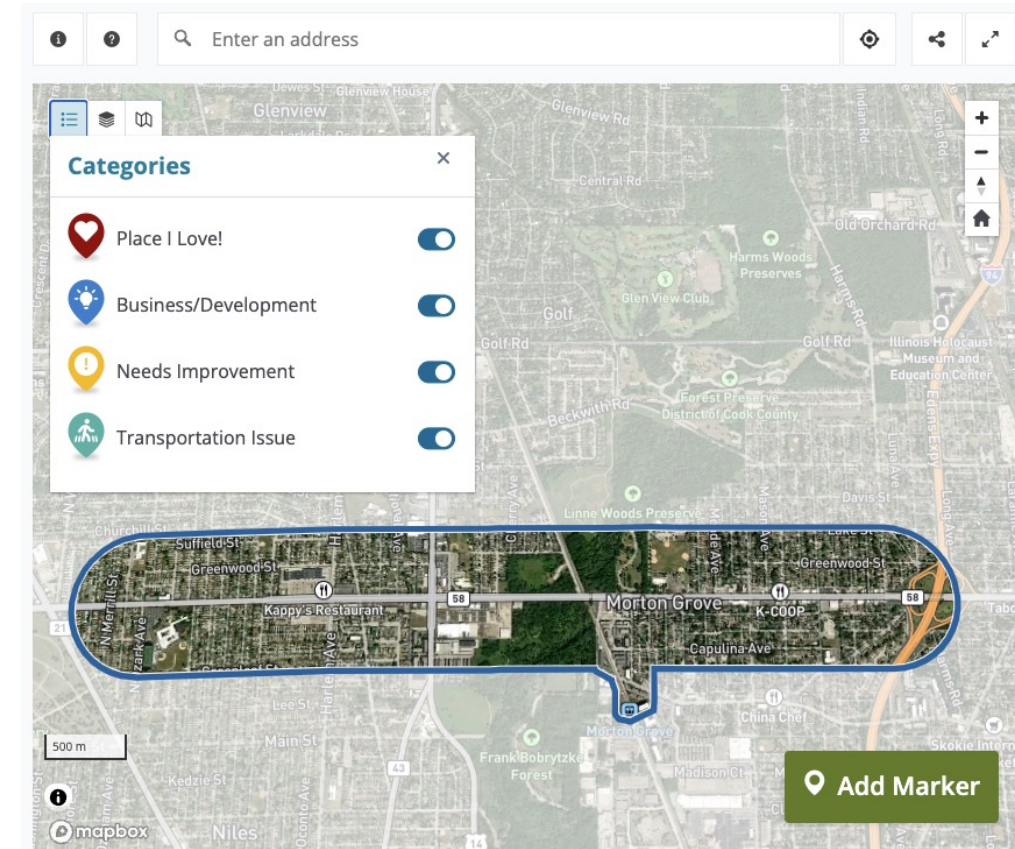
- Website: PlanDempster.org (May)
- [Online Interactive Comment Map](#) (May)
- Community Survey (June)

In-Person Engagement:

- Steering Committee (June/Aug/Dec/Feb 2026)
- Stakeholder Focus Groups (May)
- Community Workshops (Jun/Sept/Jan 2026)
- Pop-up events (Jul/Sept/Nov)

Marketing:

- Printed project cards (June)
- Printed posters/flyers (ongoing)
- Social media graphics and community news updates (ongoing)



Stakeholder Interviews Summary

23 stakeholders interviewed across five focus groups and one-on-one conversations

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong sense of community pride• Appreciation for Dempster streetscape efforts• Pace Pulse (shelters especially) & Pace Local• Proximity to Metra• North Branch Trail• Variety of businesses, some that cater to local customers and some draw from larger market area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dempster feels unsafe to cross, especially for students and families• Ongoing concerns with traffic congestion• Long light cycles and turning difficulties• Perception that parking is limited• Lack of visibility for businesses (cars speed by)• Limited places for teens/students• Underutilized/vacant properties hold potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a Main Street atmosphere with walkable destinations• Desire for more restaurants, grocery store, banquet hall/event venue• Encourage awareness/participation in façade improvement program• Create destinations/amenities for trail users

Help Shape What's Next!

DEMPSTER CORRIDOR PLAN

WHERE COMMUNITY MEETS COMMERCE

my
wishlist for
Dempster

Add Ideas Here



VILLAGE OF MORTON GROVE
PLANDEMPSTER.ORG

Your Voice · Your Vision · Your Dempster

**Dempster Street isn't just a road...
it's where Morton Grove shops,
rides, and connects.**

Dempster Street (between I-94 on the east and Notre Dame College Prep on the west) is at the heart of everyday life - linking neighborhoods, local businesses and restaurants, parks, and transit connections. The **Village of Morton Grove** has launched a planning initiative to enhance the corridor as a vibrant and safe place to live, work, shop, and play - and wants your input!

-  **Tell us what matters**
-  **Help shape what's next**
-  **Be part of a corridor that truly connects us**

Share your thoughts, imaginative ideas, and stay informed at: **PlanDempster.org**.



DEMPSTER CORRIDOR PLAN

WHERE COMMUNITY MEETS COMMERCE

Help Shape the Future of Dempster

JOIN US FOR THE 1ST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP!

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Morton Grove Civic Center

6140 Dempster Street, Morton Grove, IL

Free
Snacks
& Prize
Drawings

Learn More



PLANDEMPSTER.ORG



Community Pop-Ups

July 3rd – Morton Grove Days

August 5th – National Night Out



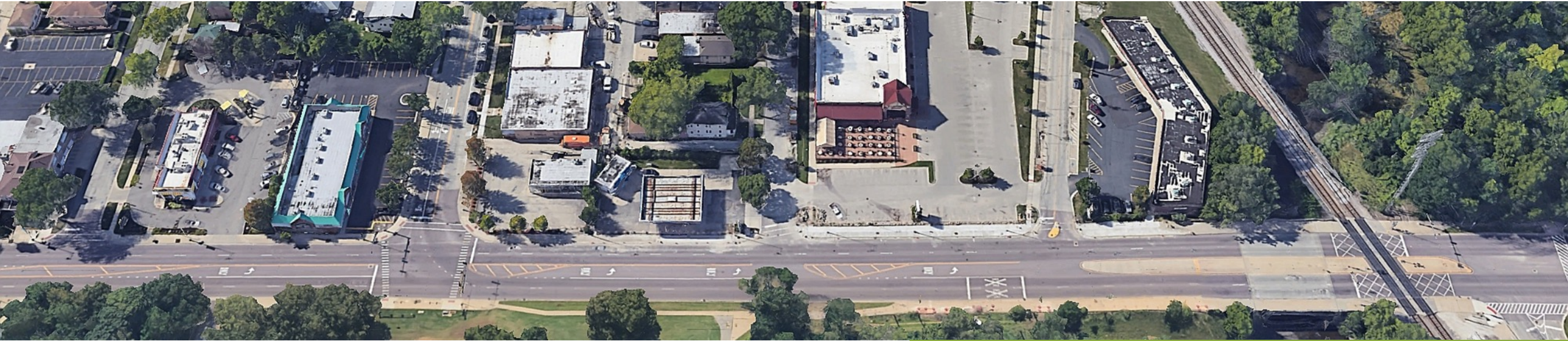
Current Conditions & Discussion

Land Use

Transportation

Economic Development

Land Use Typologies



Commercial

Commercial is the predominant use along the corridor, including a range of retail businesses, services, restaurants, and offices. Most commercial uses are located on single blocks fronting Dempster as either standalone buildings or within multi-tenant buildings. Larger sites include Village Plaza, Sawmill Station, Moretti's, and the former Ascension Health site.

What are the commercial opportunities?

Overall, the Village has a low vacancy rate (less than 6% per CoStar). Like many similar corridors, Dempster has a handful of prominent vacant commercial spaces. Part of this planning process will focus on identifying market demand, strategies for attracting desired development, and recommending public improvements that can help attract new and desired uses.

Land Use Typologies



Residential

The Dempster corridor is surrounded by primarily single-family residential neighborhoods. There are some residential uses that directly front Dempster: apartments (Sawmill Residences), condos (across from Notre Dame College Prep), and mixed-use (two buildings on the eastern segment of Dempster).

Why does housing along/near Dempster matter?

- Nearby customer base for businesses
- Nearby ridership base for Pace and Metra
- Nearby household base for schools, houses of worship, and other civic services
- Safe walkability is key

Land Use Typologies



Mixed-Use Development

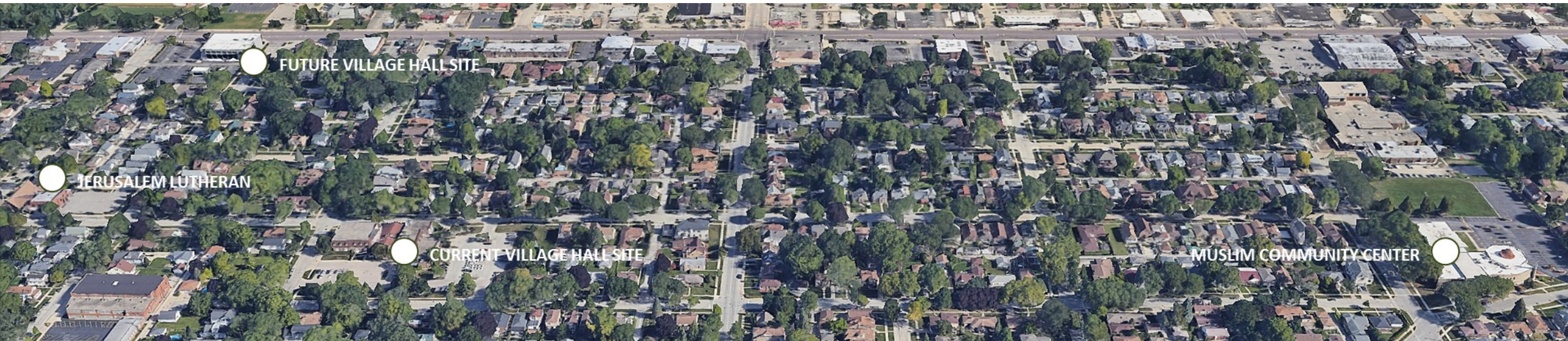
Traditional mixed-use buildings with commercial on the ground floor and residential units above are interspersed along the corridor. However, most are in aging structures from previous eras of development. Sawmill Station is the preeminent mixed-use development along the corridor, breaking ground in 2022 and is mostly built out with one outlot available.

What makes Sawmill Station unique?

- Horizontal mixed use format
- 250 rental units near popular restaurants and retail
- Transit accessible to both Pace and Metra*
- Adjacent to forest preserve and trails

**There are physical barriers to conveniently access Metra, but this corridor study will evaluate ways to improve access to transit*

Land Use Typologies



Schools

The corridor is home to multiple schools, including a few elementary schools, Jerusalem Lutheran, the Muslim Community Center Academy, and Notre Dame College Prep. Safe corridor access for students and families is critical, particularly at peak times.

Houses of Worship

Safe corridor access is important to members of nearby houses of worship. In particular, about 25% of the Muslim Community Center membership walks to the site. Neighborhood traffic and parking during peak periods are also issues for houses of worship.

Civic Uses

Since Morton Grove does not have a traditional downtown, Dempster serves as this central hub of activity that often includes civic uses. The Morton Grove Civic Center, Village Hall, and Park District are some of the civic uses that bring people to the corridor.

Land Use Typologies



Parks and Open Space

This stretch of Dempster is unique in that it is bisected by Cook County Forest Preserve, including one of the most used trails in the preserve's network. Harrer Park and Prairie View Park, which each offer a variety of recreational opportunities, sit right on the corridor. These major parks and open spaces accentuate Dempster's close proximity to recreational opportunities, with safe access being a major obstacle for even greater usage.

Why does open space matter along Dempster?

- Parks, trails, and open spaces are destinations
- People walk, bike, and take transit to these places
- Green space and parks help beautify the corridor and create gathering places

Land Use Takeaways

- Safe road crossings are key to make the mix of uses more accessible.
- A pedestrian-friendly environment will make the corridor more inviting and encourage people to multiple destinations all in one visit, rather than driving to one specific place and leaving.
- While there are multiple schools nearby, there are limited youth-focused spaces along Dempster (other than the park facilities).
- Reuse of vacant sites and future developments like the new Village Hall site can serve as catalysts to spur greater activity along the corridor.

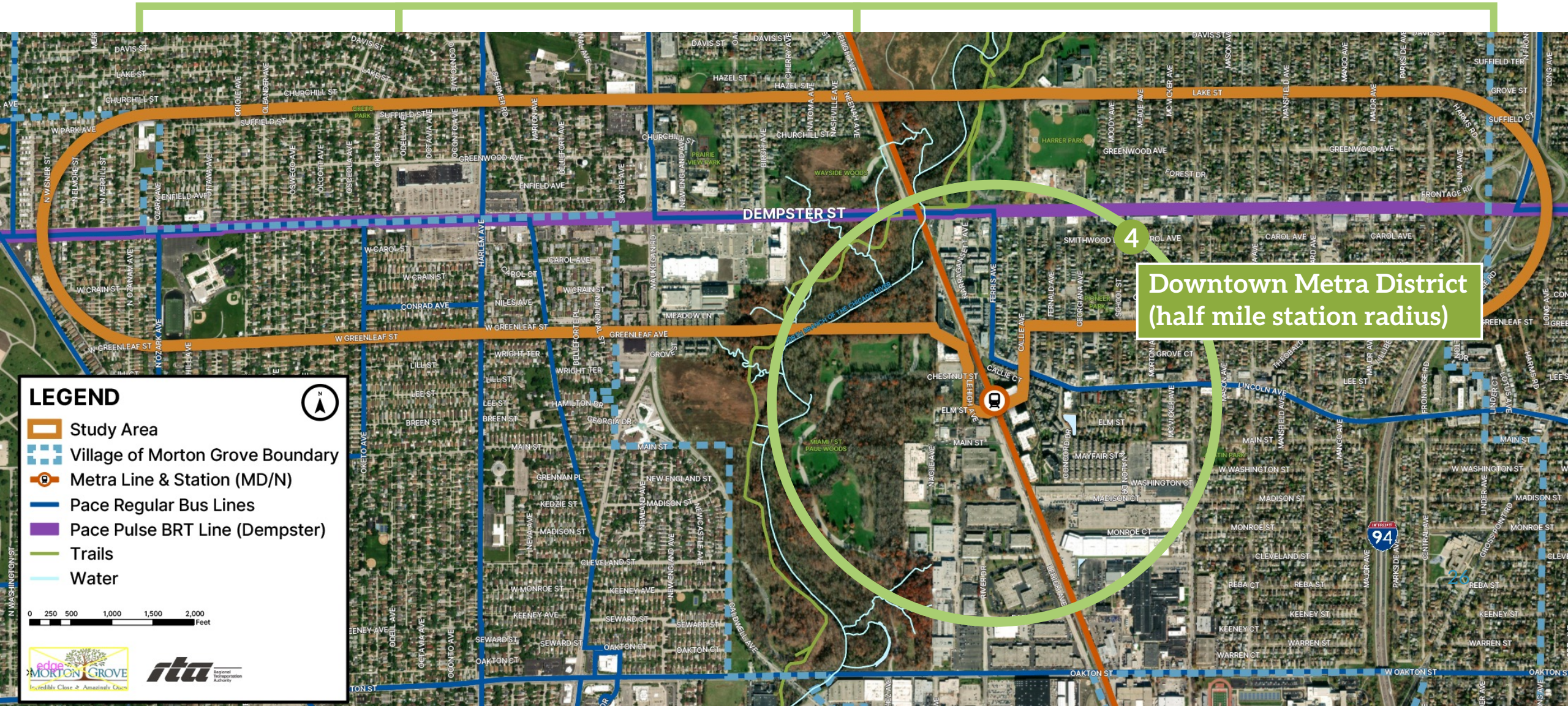


Corridor Sub-Districts

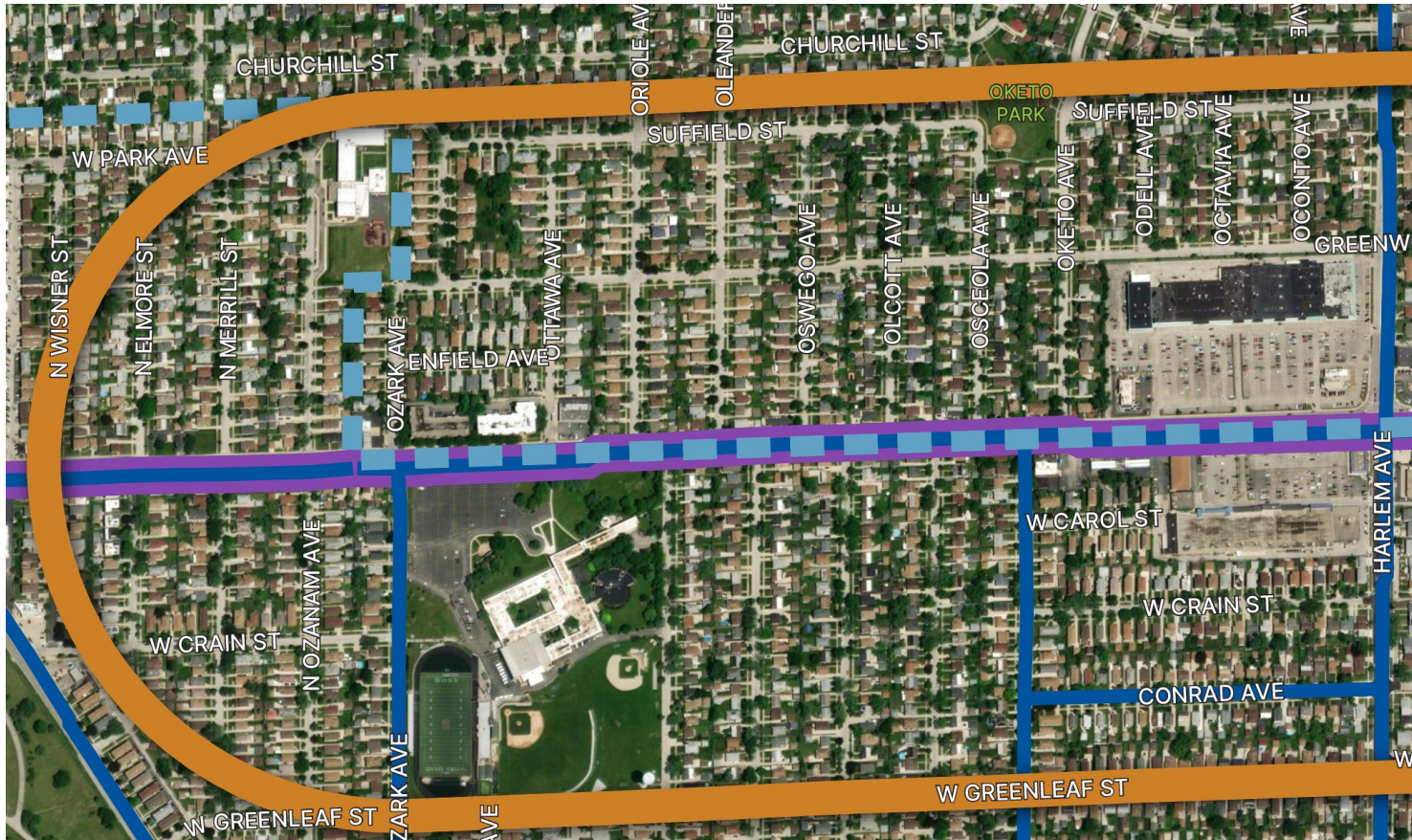
1 Residential Corridor

2 Commercial Corridor District

3 "Main Street" District



Corridor Sub-Districts

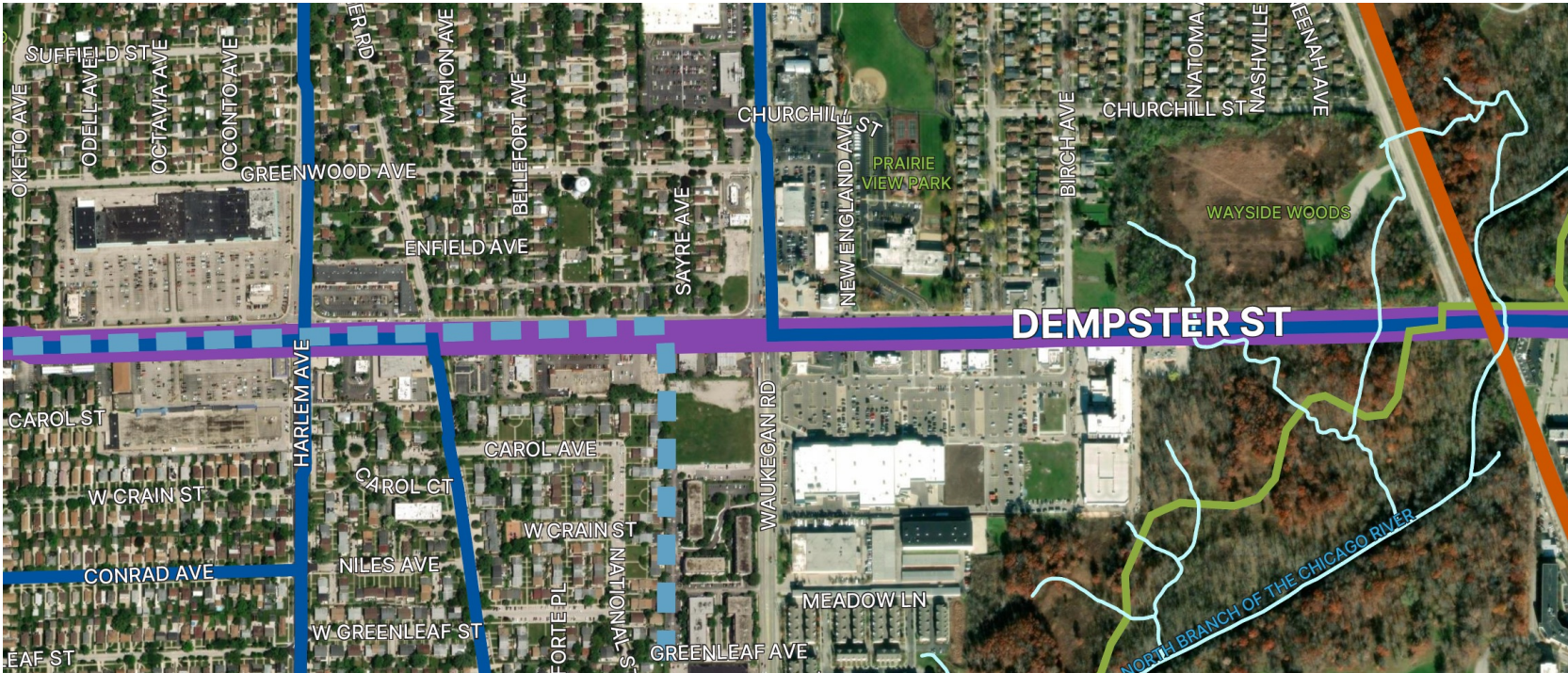


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Residential Corridor

Ozark Ave to Oketo Ave

- Six lane road profile
- Western-most segment of the study area
- Mostly single-family residential

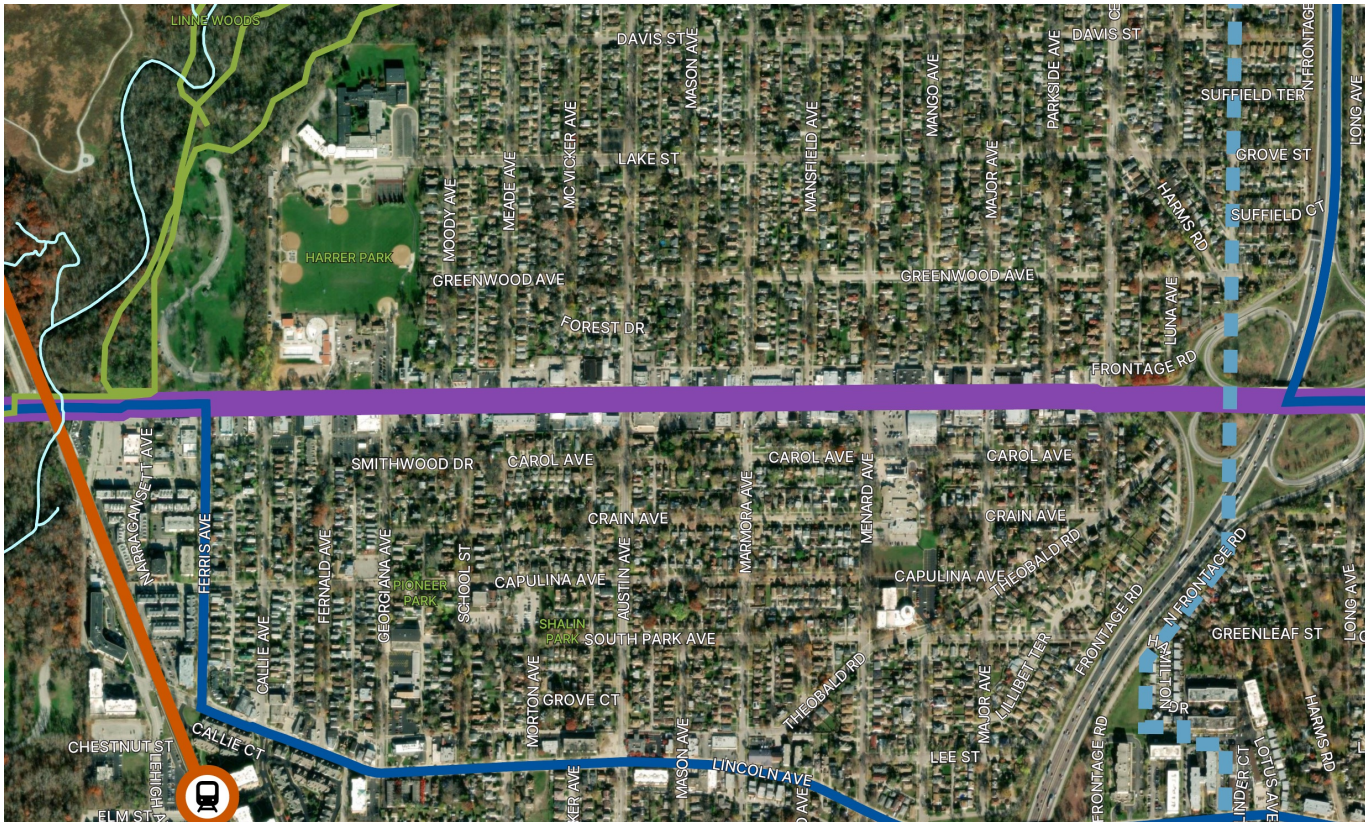


2 Commercial Corridor District

Oketo Ave to Railroad

- Six lane road profile
- Multiple national chains and major draws, including newly expanded Honda dealership
- Sawmill Station is corridor's most prominent mixed use development, with luxury apartments, Amazon Fresh, Raising Cane's, and other popular stores and restaurants

Corridor Sub-Districts



3

"Main Street" District

Railroad to I-94

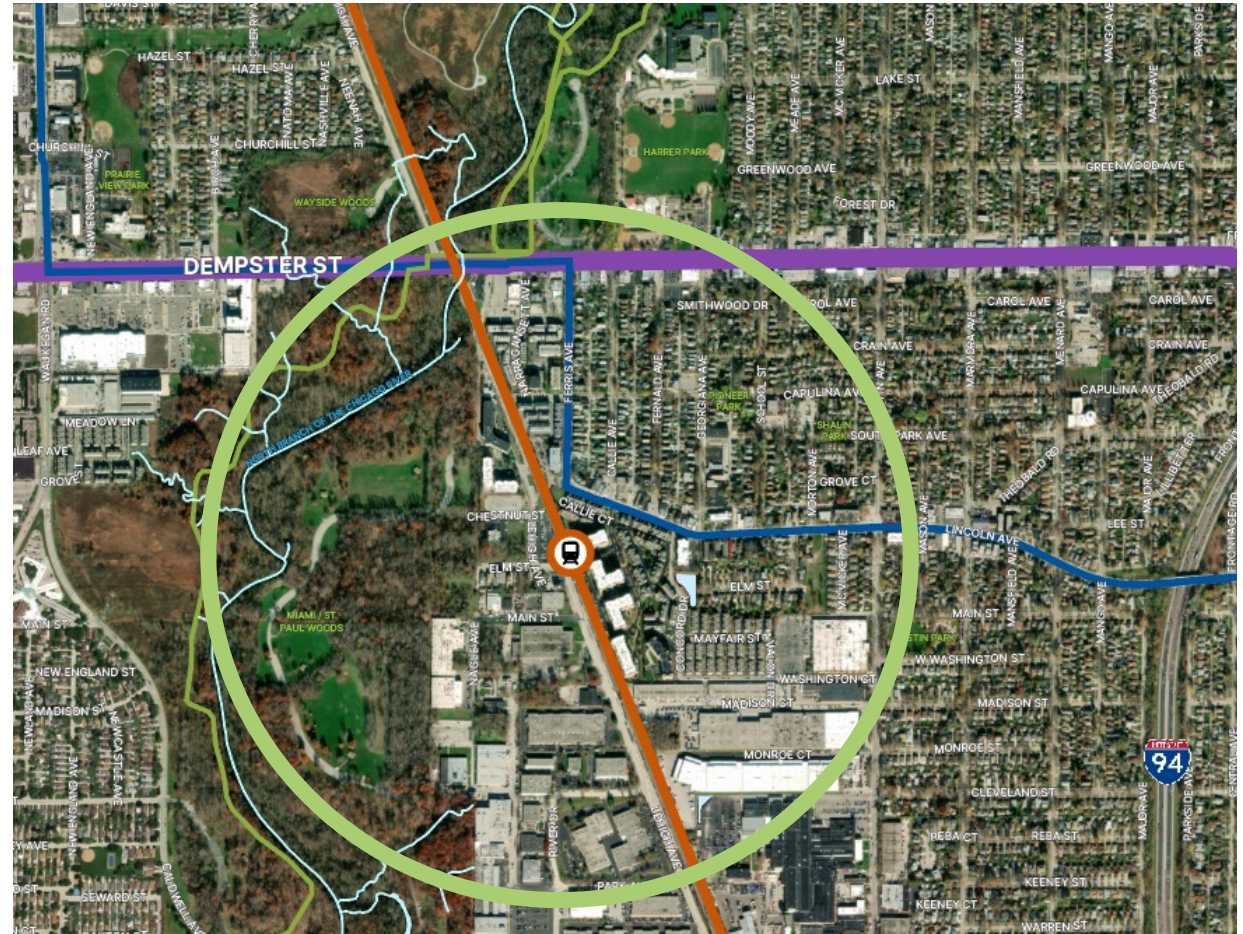
- Four lane road profile
- Mostly single-story commercial
- Primarily local businesses and a few franchises
- Strong international variety of businesses
- Parking generally on side or rear
- Greater potential for walkability
- Right of way not very wide
- Difficult to cross, even at crosswalks and signaled intersections

Corridor Sub-Districts

4 Downtown Metra District

½ Mile Station Radius

- New Metra station
- Includes two Pace bus routes
- Informal civic area, including Village Hall (current and future sites), library, and multiple schools and houses of worship
- Mix of housing types, including new townhomes, "missing middle" housing (under construction), senior housing, and traditional single family homes
- Low traffic counts
- Home of Pequod's and Burt's Place
- Encompasses forest preserve
- Small town feel

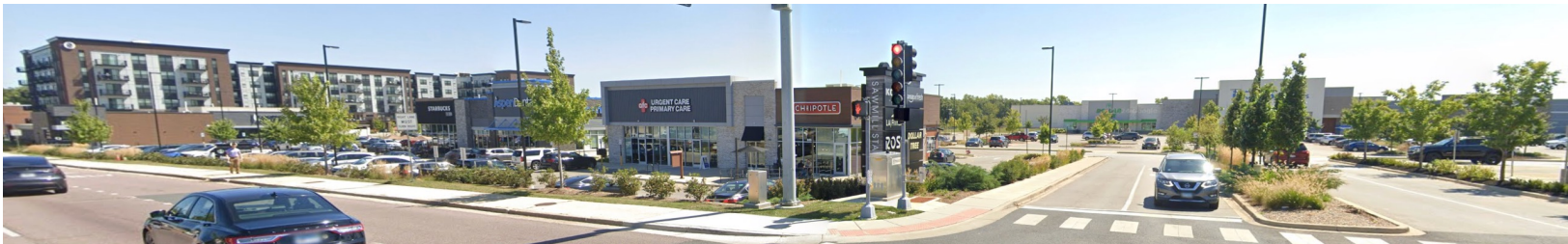


Discussion: Land Use

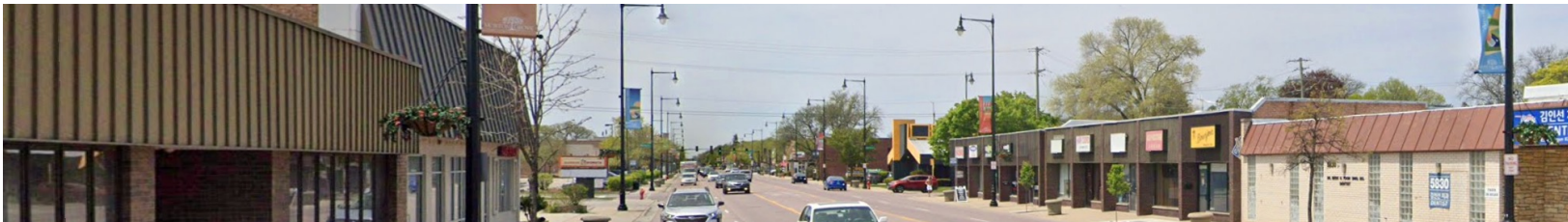
What should be the future vision for each sub-district?



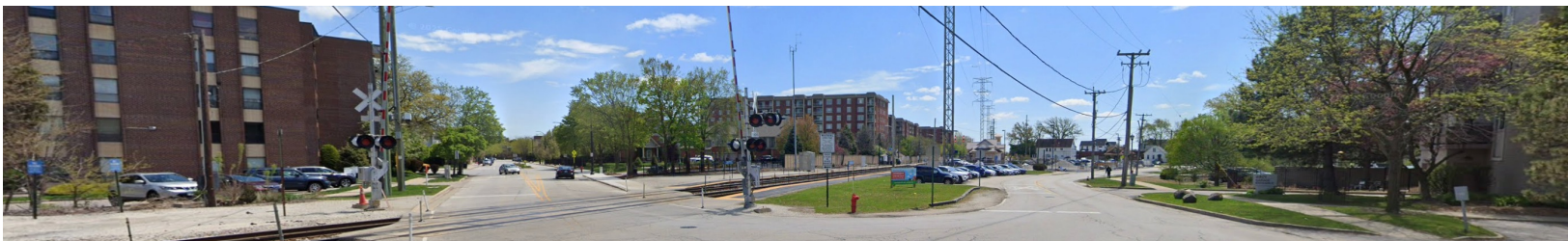
Residential Corridor



Commercial Corridor



Main Street District



Downtown Metra District

Current Conditions & Discussion

Land Use

Transportation

Economic Development

© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 105–112

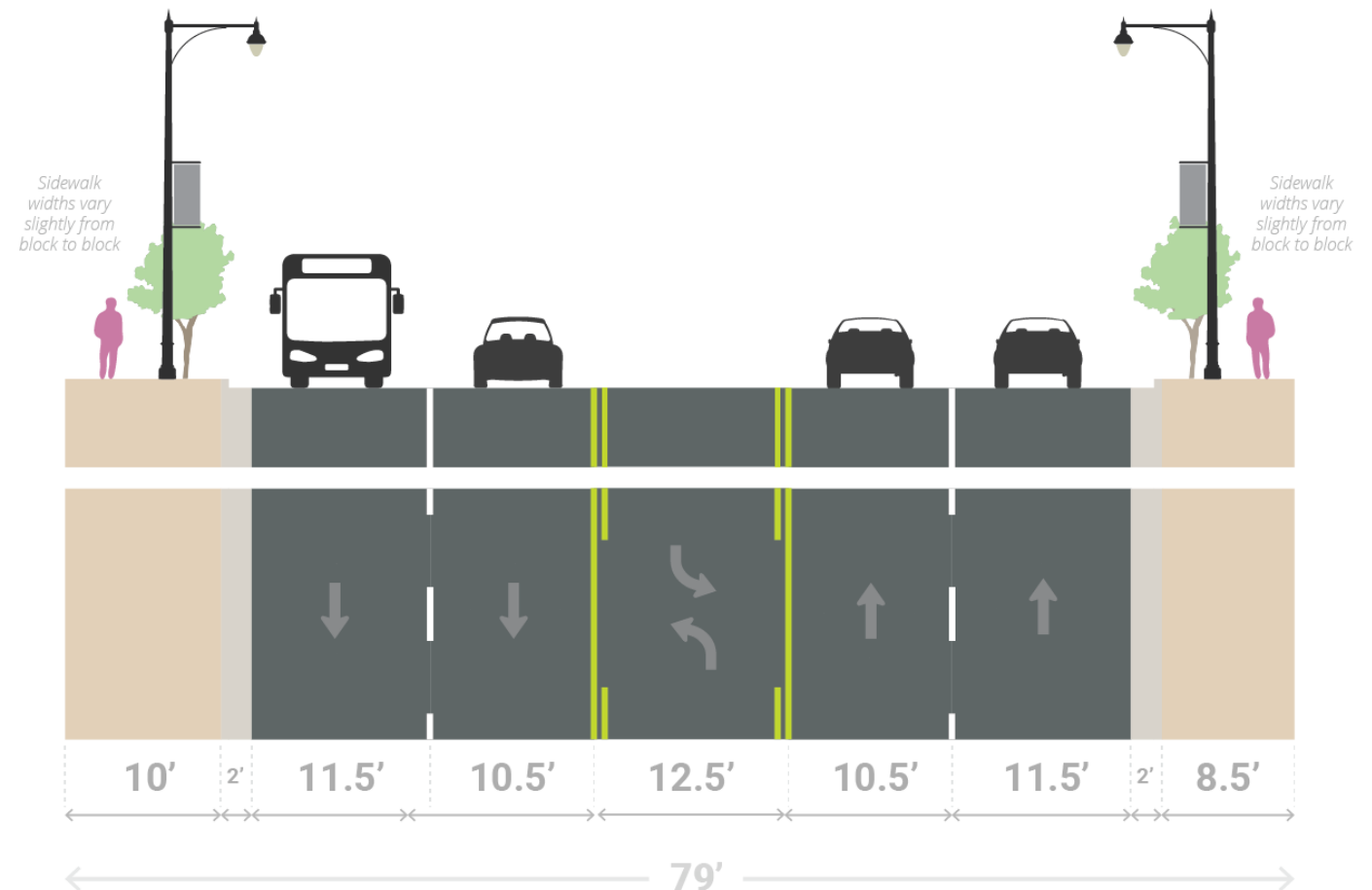
- ## ■ Major



Transportation Conditions: Cross-Section

- Existing sidewalks and landscaping are fairly constrained
- Pedestrians feel very close to traffic when walking down sidewalks
- Some existing lane widths are potentially slightly wider than absolute minimums

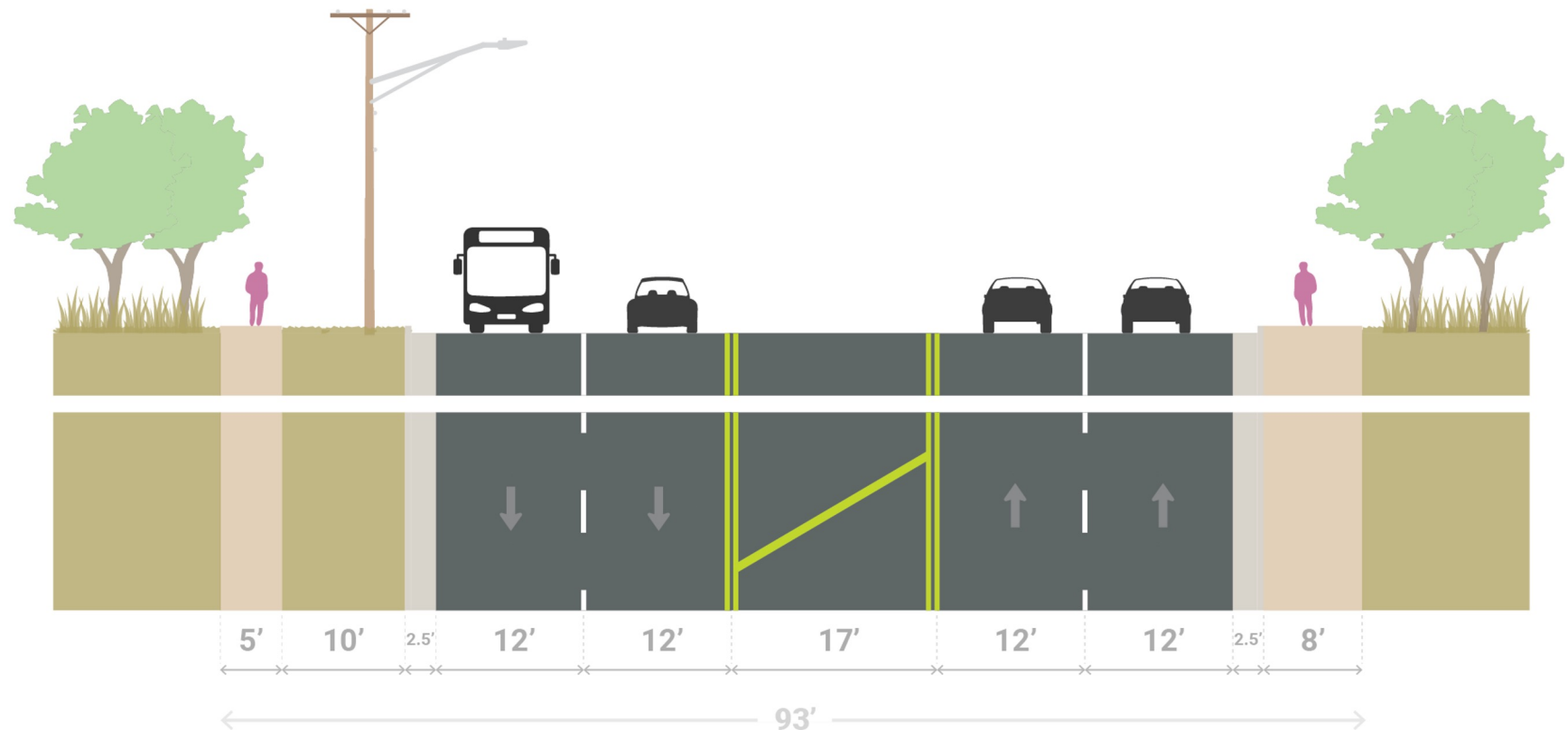
"Main Street District" (Central Ave to Ferris Ave)



Transportation Conditions: Cross-Section

- Wide lanes with wide striped median
- No driveways or intersections = elevated potential for high speeds
- Railroad crossing (MD-N) and North Branch Trail present challenges for crossings and safety

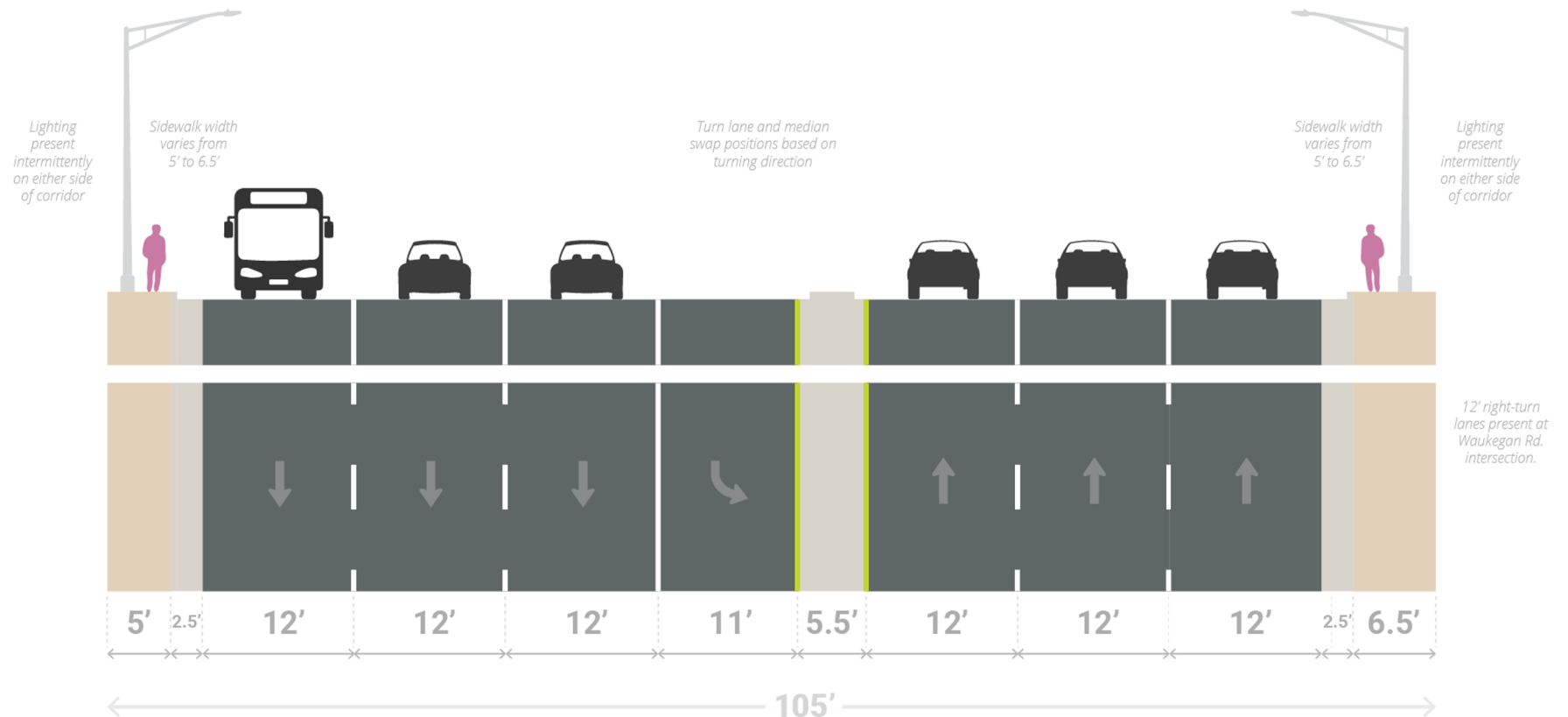
Forest Preserve Section (Lehigh Ave to Birch Ave)



Transportation Conditions: Cross-Section

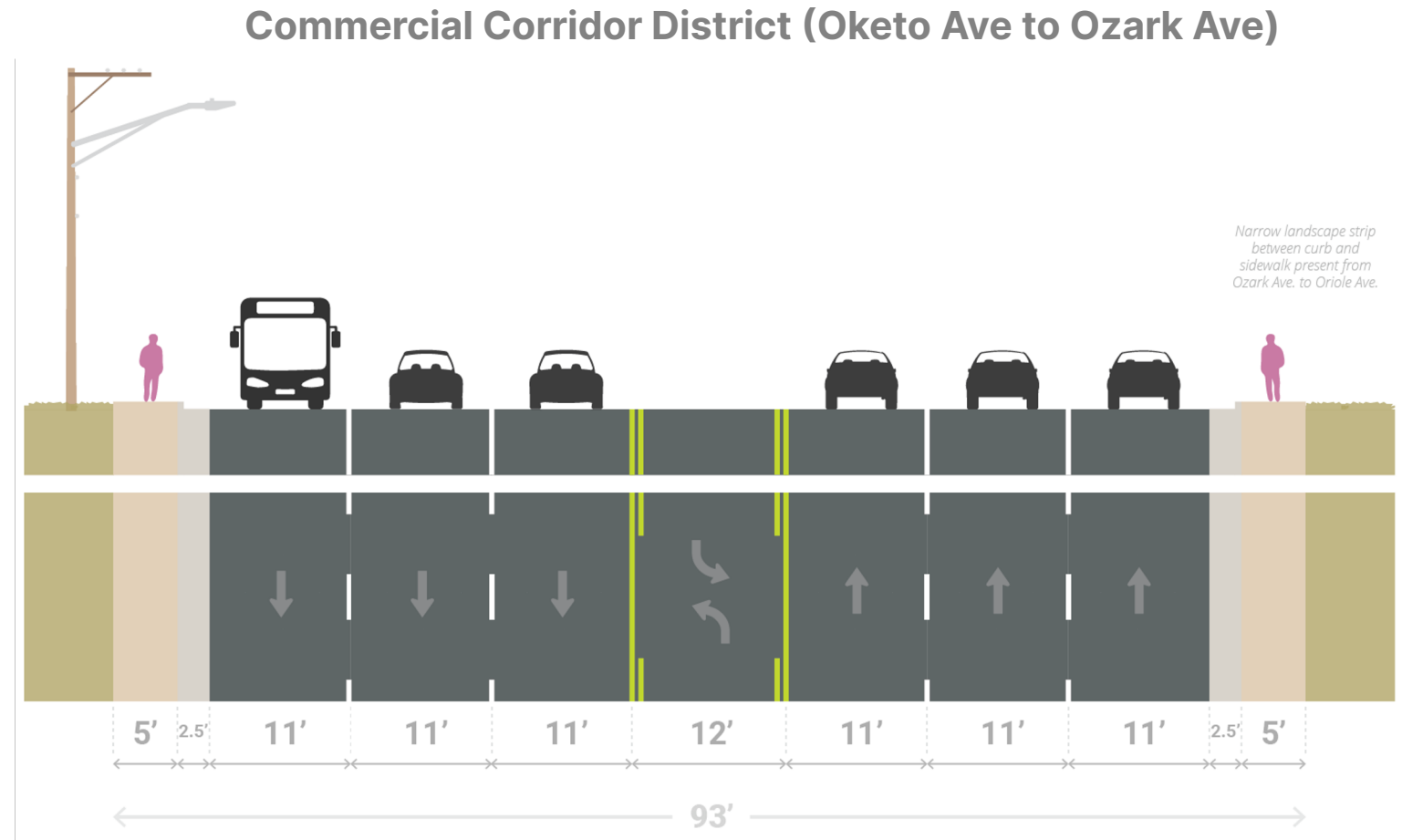
- Very narrow and uncomfortable sidewalks right up against travel lanes
- Vehicle lanes are slightly wider than required
- Street lights are intermittent on this stretch and frequently block pedestrian path

Commercial Corridor District (New England Ave to Oketo Ave)



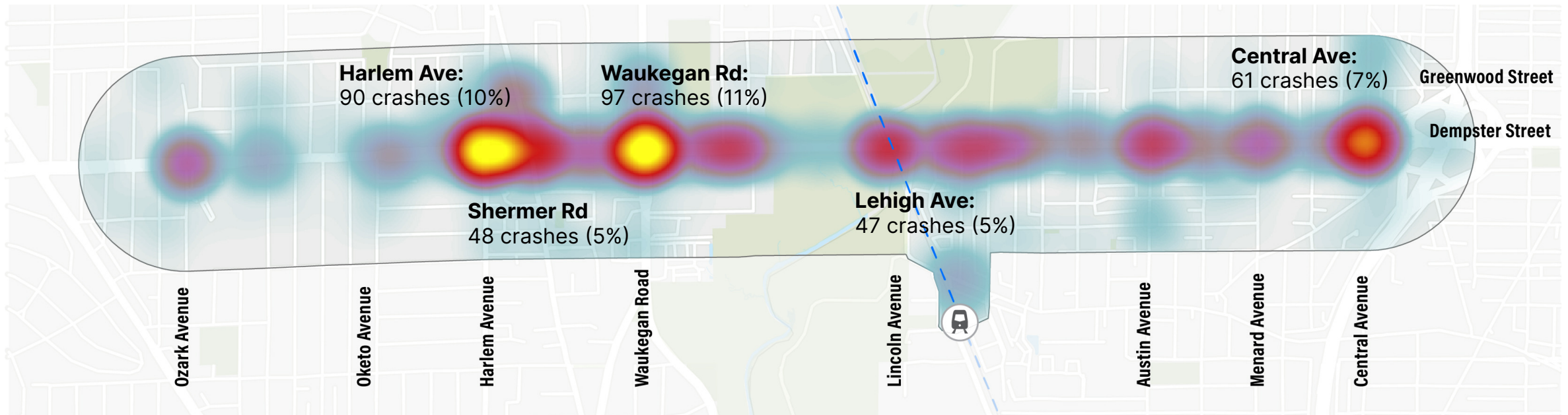
Transportation Conditions: Cross-Section

- Narrow sidewalks mostly right up against travel lanes = uncomfortable pedestrian experience
- Opportunity for center medians where turn lanes not needed
- Very infrequent pedestrian crossings



Transportation Conditions: Crashes

Total Vehicle Crashes (2019-2023)

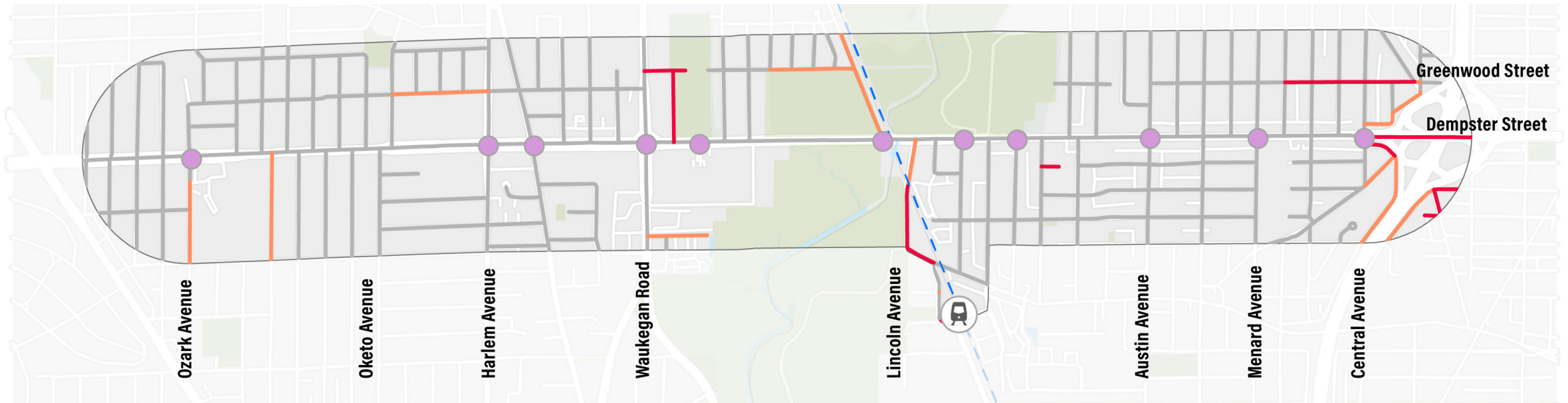


- 16 serious injury and 2 fatal crashes within analysis period
- Failure to Reduce Speed is top crash cause (37%)
- 41% of cyclist crashes occurred between Lehigh Ave and Ferris Ave



Transportation Conditions: Sidewalks

Sidewalk Network and Crossings

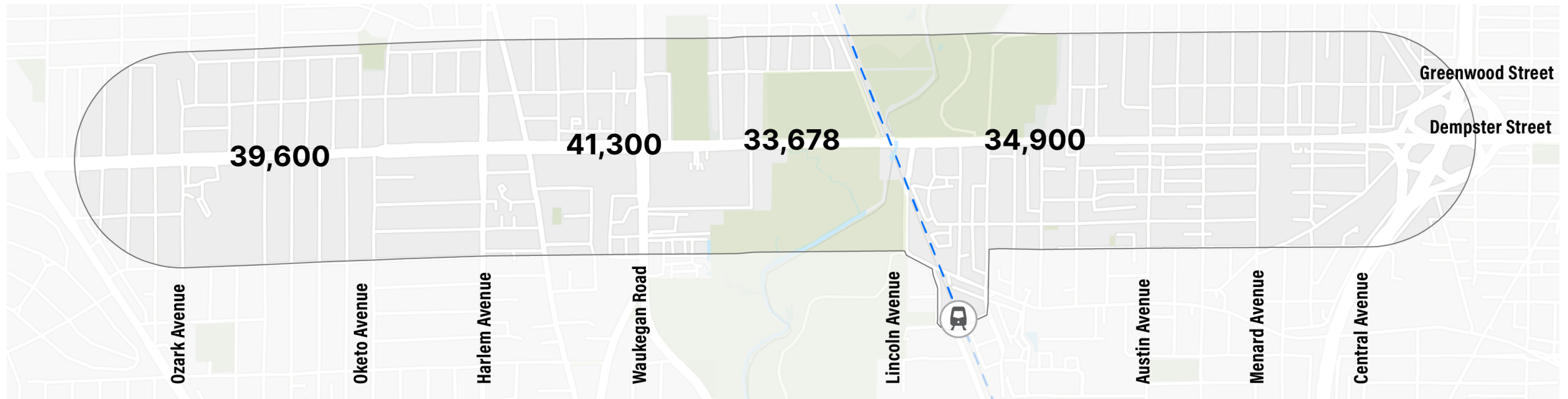


- Nearly complete sidewalk network
- 3,570' between Ozark Ave and Harlem Ave pedestrian crossings
- At School St, Marmora Ave, Major Ave: 4-6 minute time penalty to cross on foot

- Sidewalks on both sides of the street
- Sidewalk on one side of the street
- No sidewalks
- Traffic Signal/Pedestrian Crossing

Transportation Conditions: Traffic

Traffic Volumes (Average Annual Daily Vehicles)



- 5-lane section east of Waukegan Road well over typical bounds for lane reduction
- 7-lane section west of Waukegan Road may be able to accommodate a lane reduction, although AM and PM peaks could pose a challenge

Transportation Discussion

- What do you currently like about traveling on or across Dempster?
- What's most frustrating about traveling on or across Dempster?
- How easy or difficult is it to find parking along Dempster?

Current Conditions & Discussion

Land Use

Transportation

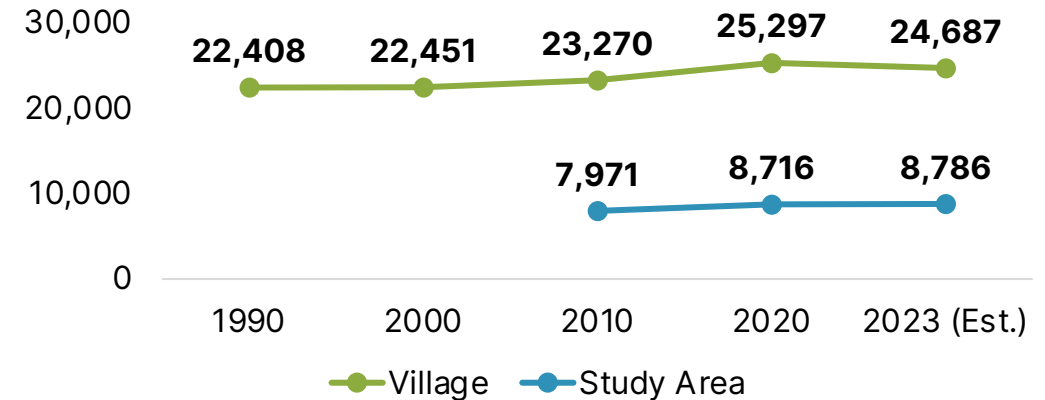
Economic Development

Market Conditions

- As a largely built-out suburb in older Chicagoland, Morton Grove has seen steady population growth, rising 10% since 1990. Despite being the smallest of the three communities, it has outpaced its neighbors.
- Growth picked up during the 2010s but has slowed since 2020.
- The population change in the study area matches the pattern of the Village.

**The 2023 estimates may not include the Residences at Sawmill Station.*

Village of Morton Grove Population (1990-2023)



Population Growth Comparison (1990-2023)

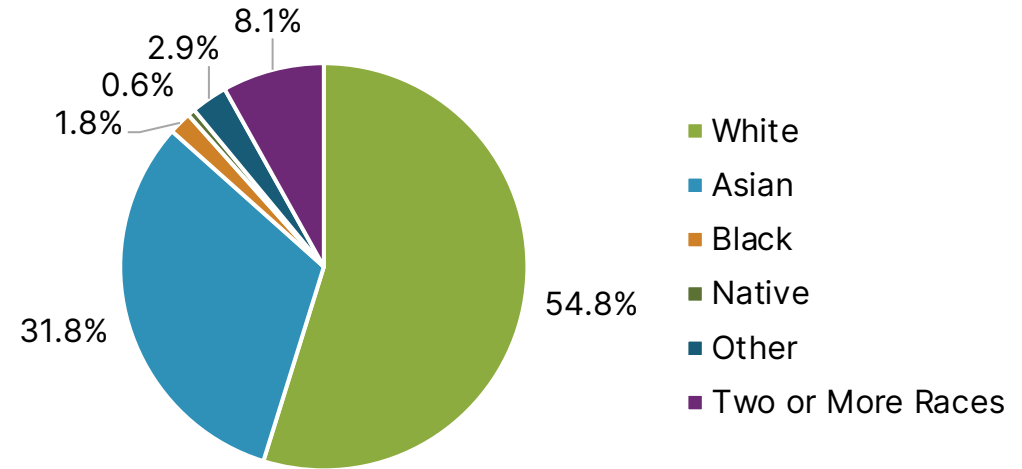
	Morton Grove	Niles	Skokie
Population (2023 est.)	24,687	30,262	64,939
Growth (%)	10.2	7.0	9.3

Source: 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020 US Census, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Esri

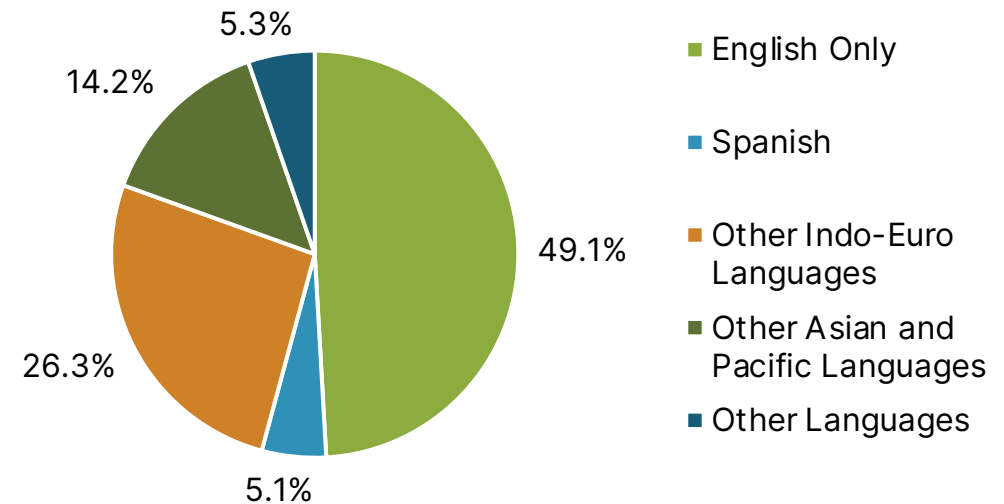
Race & Ethnicity

- Morton Grove thrives on its cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Asian residents are the second-largest racial group after White.
- Over half of households speak a language other than English at home.
- The retail environment in the Corridor reflects the international flavor of the area both in terms of offerings and consumer base, drawing in visitors from surrounding communities

Race (2023)



Language Spoken at Home (2023)



Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

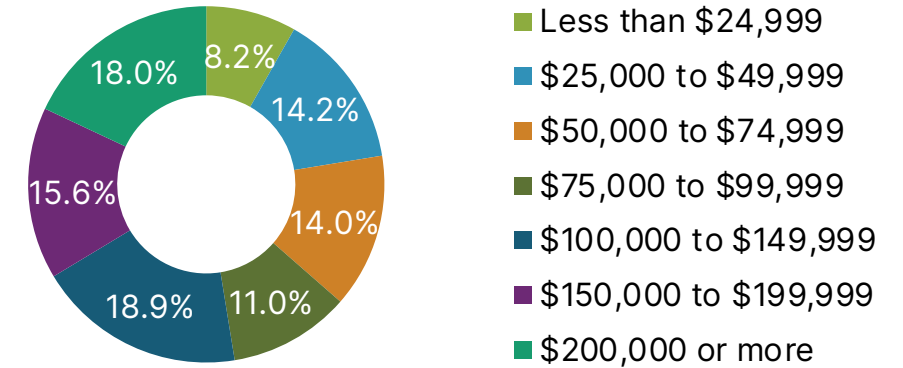
Income

Median Household Income (2023)



Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Esri

Village of Morton Grove Household Income Distribution (2023)

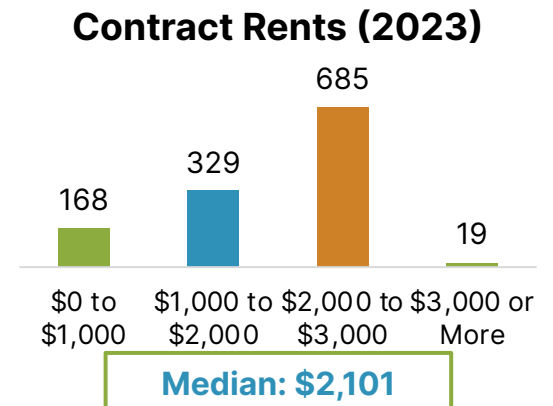
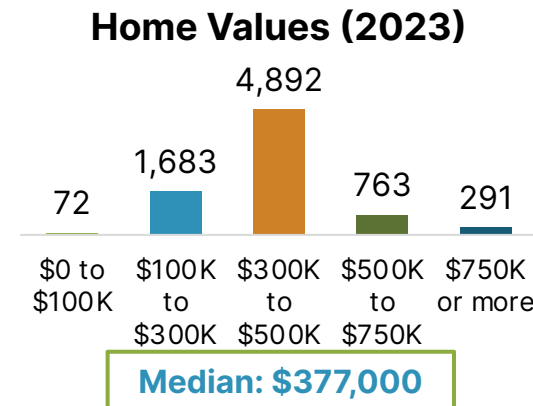
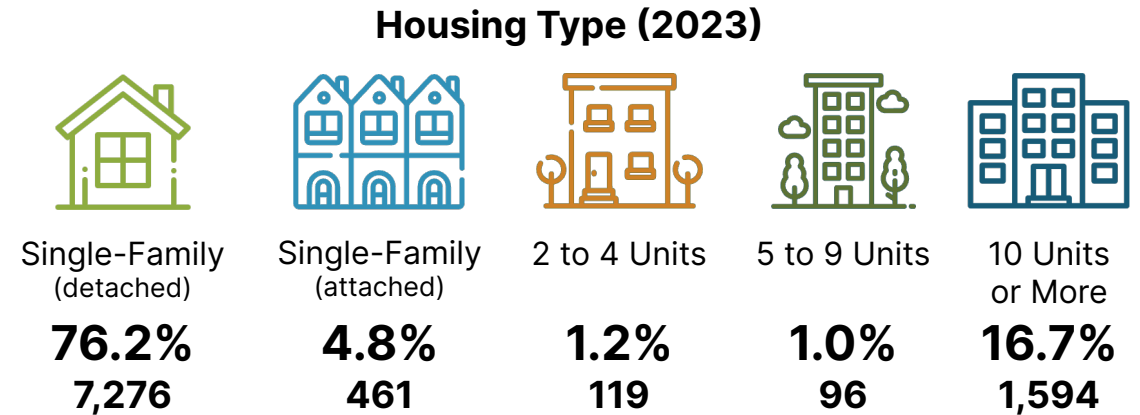
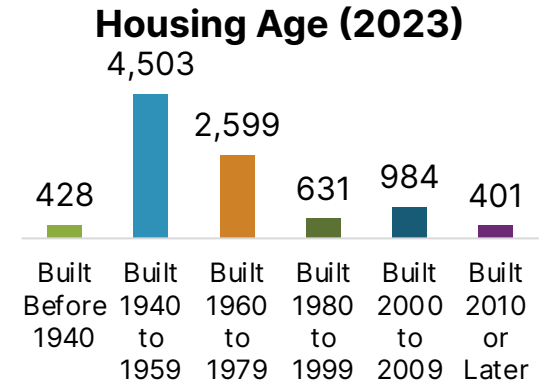
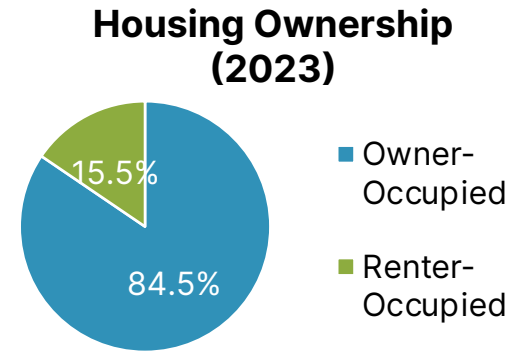


Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

- Morton Grove has the highest median household income compared to neighboring communities.
- Its median income significantly exceeds County and State levels.

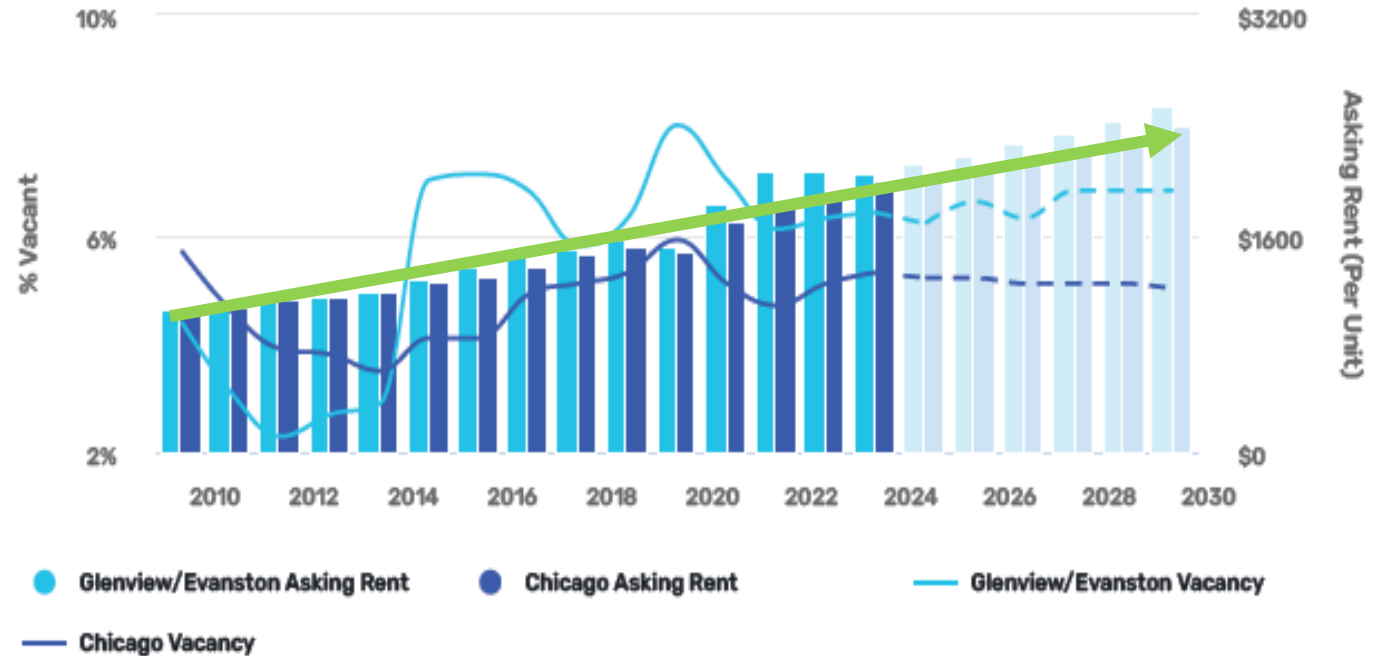
Housing (Village)

- Morton Grove experienced a boom during the Baby Boom era, with most homes built between 1940 and 1959.
- About 75% of housing consists of single-family detached homes, alongside roughly 1,500 multi-family residences.
- Home values and contract rents align closely with regional averages.



Multi-family Performance: Morton Grove/Glenview/Evanston

- **Strong and steady rent growth.** Asking rents in the submarket have nearly doubled since 2010 (up 92%), averaging 4.6% annual growth.
- **Competitive outlook with stable fundamentals.** The submarket remains strong and competitive, with continued inventory growth and rent increases projected at 3.7% annually over the next five years. Vacancy is expected to remain stable around 6%.



Source: Moody's Commercial Real Estate, 2025

Employment

Top Residence Locations

Chicago	27.1%
Morton Grove	6.8%
Skokie	4.4%
Niles	2.8%
Des Plaines	2.4%

10,537

Live Elsewhere,
Work in Morton Grove

764

Live & Work in
Morton Grove

Top Employment Locations

Chicago	32.3%
Morton Grove	5.7%
Skokie	5.3%
Evanston	4.6%
Glenview	3.6%

12,642

Live in Morton Grove,
Work Elsewhere

Top Industry Sectors in Morton Grove



Health Care

22.4%



Manufacturing

19.6%



Admin. & Support,
Waste Services

12.5%



Retail Trade

11.1%



Accommodation &
Food Services

6.3%

Top Industry Sectors for Morton Grove Residents



Health Care

20.3%



Retail
Trade

10.4%



Education

9.4%



Prof., Sci., &
Tech. Services

9.4%



Manufacturing

7.5%

Source: OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2022).

Trade Area Highlights

10-Minute Drive Time Market Profile

159,896

Total Residents (2024)

44.5

Median Age (2024)

59,515

Households (2024)

\$104,465

Median Household Income (2024)

62,919

Housing Units (2024)

\$2.1B

Forecasted Retail Sales (2028)

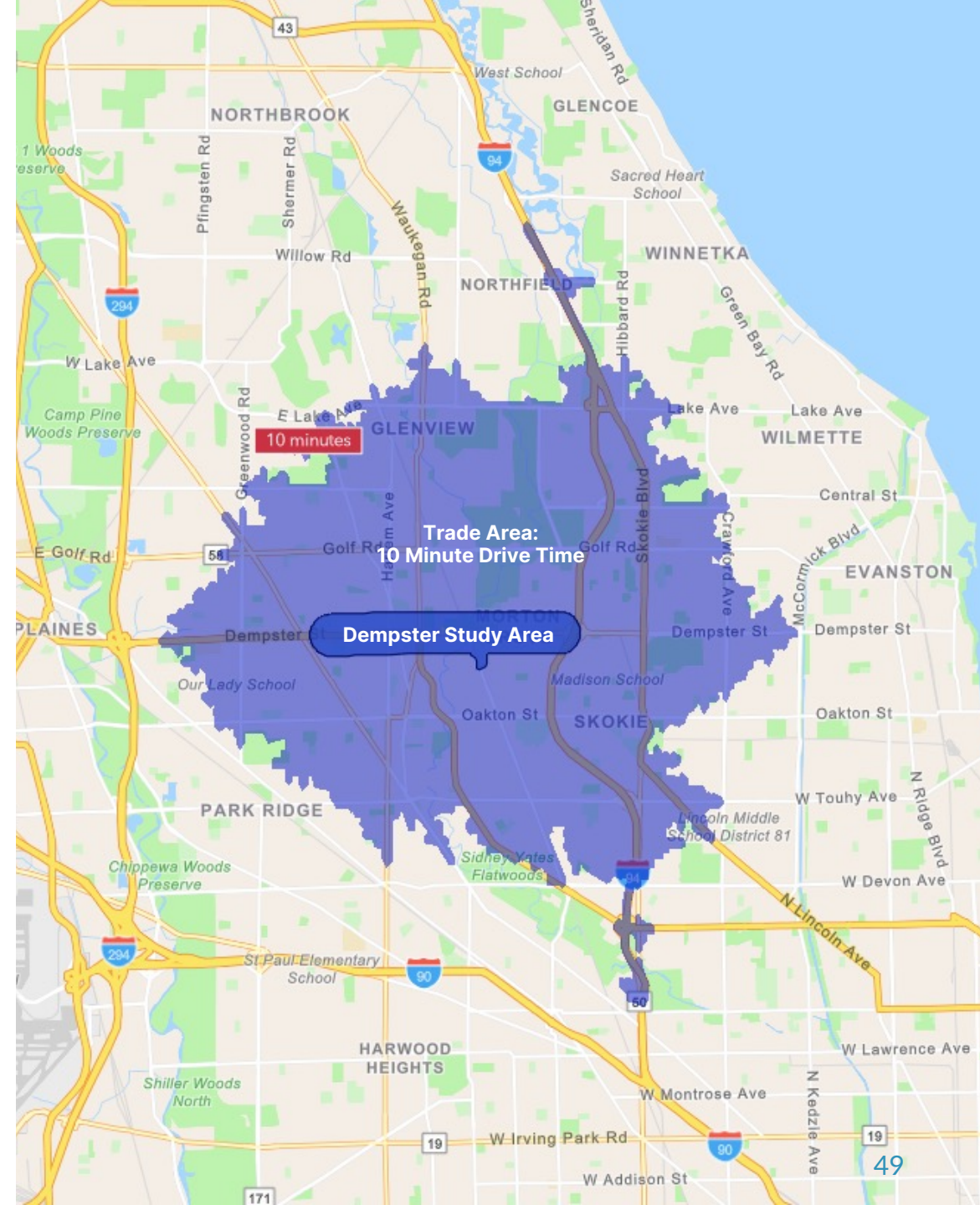
\$1.8B

Current Retail Demand (2023)

\$278M






Projected Retail Growth

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2025



10-Minute Trade Area Retail Spending Growth (2024 - 2029)

- Retail spending growth forecast compares the total spent on retail goods and services in a period to the forecasted total demand for a future period

					
	Groceries	Dining Out	Entertainment & Recreation	Apparel	Household Furnishings
2024	\$547M	\$298M	\$314M	\$178M	\$154M
2029	\$629M	\$344M	\$362M	\$204M	\$178M
Growth	\$82M	\$45M	\$48M	\$26M	\$23M

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2025

Sales Tax

- **Sales tax revenues trending upward.** In 2024, retail sales in Morton Grove generated over \$53 million in sales tax across all taxing bodies — a steady increase over the past five years.
- **Still trails neighboring communities.** Despite growth, total sales tax revenue remains lower than in nearby Niles and Skokie.
- **Competitive tax rates:**
 - General merchandise: 10.25% (same as Niles and Skokie)
 - Food service: 12.25%
 - Qualifying food & drug: 2.25%
- **Dempster / Waukegan Business District**
 - Additional 0.25% sales tax on general merchandise and food service provides funding for improvement projects within the Dempster/Waukegan Business District



Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

Discussion: Economic Development

TOD can come in a variety of uses and scales:

Neighborhood commercial



Small-scale multi-family



Mixed-use



Discussion: Economic Development

- Which types of retail would best fit the three commercial sub-districts?
 - Commercial Corridor District
 - Main Street District
 - Downtown Metra District
- While Morton Grove is mostly comprised of owner-occupied housing, there is growing demand for multi-family for younger households and empty-nesters. These units would also support retail development. What types of multi-family housing would best fit the Study Area / different sub-districts? (e.g. townhomes, small-scale multi-family buildings, mixed-use developments)

Next Steps

Next Steps

- June 25, 6-7:30pm - Community Workshop
- August 28, 7pm - Steering Committee Meeting #2

A flyer for a community workshop. The top section has a dark blue background with the text "Help Shape the Future of Dempster" in white, followed by "JOIN US FOR THE 1ST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP!" in green. Below this is a map of the project study area with Dempster Street highlighted. The event details are listed: "Wednesday, June 25, 2025", "6:00 PM to 7:30 PM", and "Morton Grove Civic Center, 6140 Dempster Street, Morton Grove, IL". An orange starburst graphic on the left says "Free Snacks & Prize Drawings". A QR code on the right is labeled "Learn More". At the bottom, the Morton Grove logo and the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority) logo are displayed, along with the website "PLANDEMPSTER.ORG".

Help Shape the Future of Dempster
JOIN US FOR THE 1ST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP!

Wednesday, June 25, 2025
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Morton Grove Civic Center
6140 Dempster Street, Morton Grove, IL

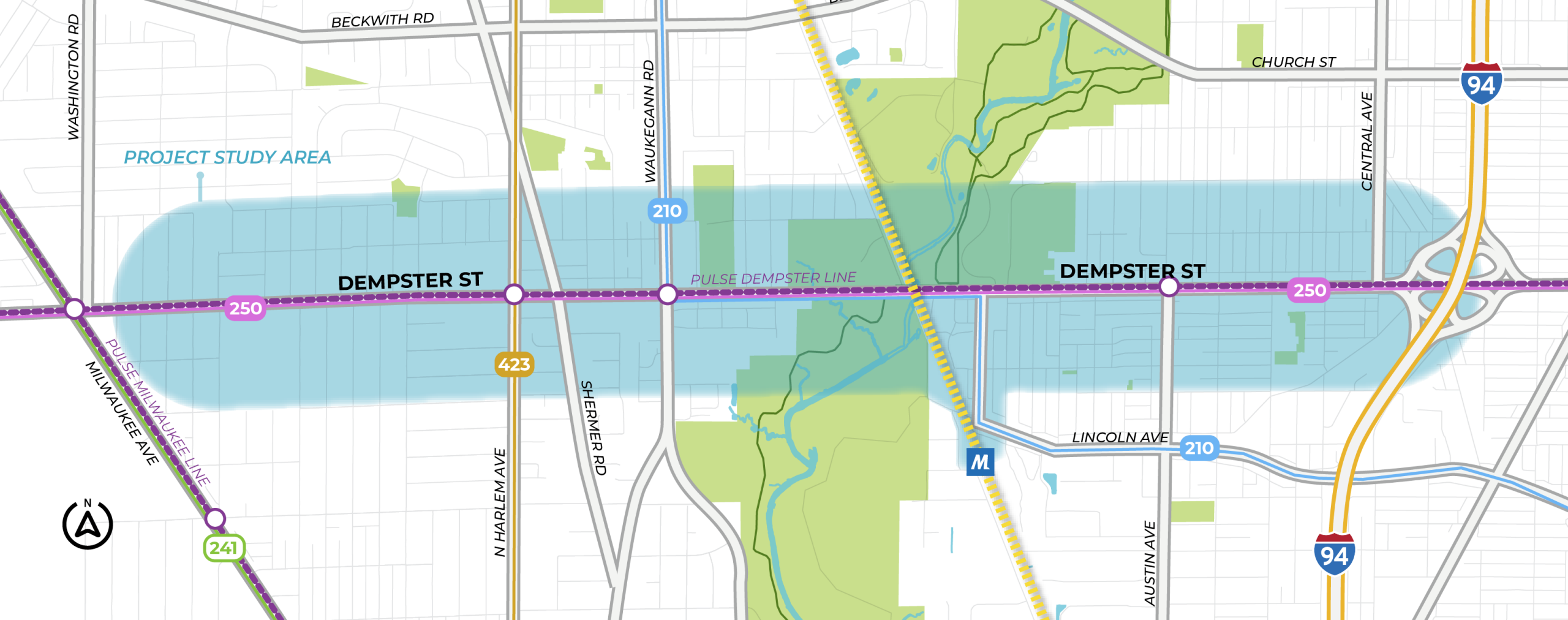
Free Snacks & Prize Drawings

Learn More

PLANDEMPSTER.ORG

MORTON GROVE
Invisible Close & Amazingly Open

rtat
Regional Transportation Authority



DEMPSTER CORRIDOR PLAN

WHERE COMMUNITY MEETS COMMERCE

Thank you!