

DEMPSTER CORRIDOR PLAN

WHERE COMMUNITY MEETS COMMERCE

Community Workshop #2

March 19, 2026 | 6-7:30pm

Morton Grove Civic Center



Agenda

- Welcome!
- Project Timeline
- Draft Goals & Objectives
- Workshop Stations Overview
 - Corridor Recommendations
 - Opportunity Site Concept Plans
 - Transportation Recommendations
- Next Steps

Project Timeline



Goals & Objectives

Vision for the Dempster Corridor

The Dempster Corridor is a **safe, walkable, and inviting destination** with **attractive streetscapes, vibrant local businesses, and welcoming public spaces.**

Modernized buildings, **new residential and commercial development**, and dedicated **people places** create a lively and comfortable environment that **encourages visitors to linger.**

Convenient **Pace** bus service, a new **Metra** station, **safe pedestrian crossings, and streamlined trail crossings** make the corridor **easy to navigate for all.** Dempster Street serves as both a community hub and a **regional gateway** for residents, visitors, and trail users.

LAND USE GOAL 1: New commercial, residential, and mixed-use developments along Dempster and near Metra will contribute to an active and vibrant corridor with residents who can walk, bike, or take transit.

- Pursue well-designed **redevelopment** that provides **tax-generating** uses
- Foster development designs that **address site constraints** such as shallow lot size, limited curb cuts
- Pursue **rezoning and planned developments** that advance plan goals and provide public benefits
- Support new development that provides **modern spaces** for businesses
- Develop policies for **public incentives** that meet the Village's objectives



Example of shallow-lot development that includes public space and wall mural

LAND USE GOAL 2: Existing retail spaces will be modernized and filled with attractive businesses and restaurants that draw residents and visitors to Dempster.

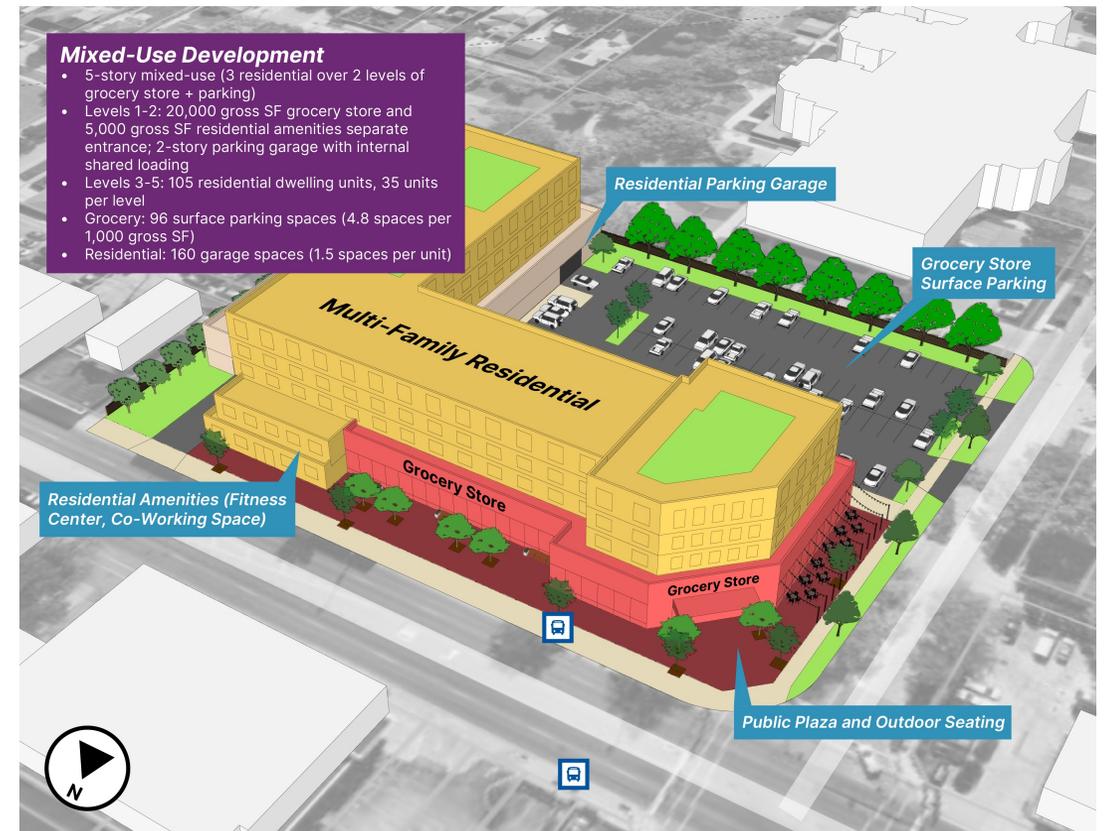
- **Lease vacant spaces** with new or expanding businesses
- Expand existing **façade improvement program**
- Evaluate new grants or incentives for **modernizing spaces**
- Encourage **adaptive reuse** for underutilized spaces
- Identify space for **food truck events and pop-ups**



*Example of façade enhancements
(Credit: Vancouver Downtown Association)*

LAND USE GOAL 3: Promote excellence in design for new development and redevelopment that is transit-supportive and enables easy use of transit to access shops, services, and other amenities.

- Encourage **active ground-floor uses** with residential above, human-scale density, **taller stories stepped back**, entry and public spaces **connect to sidewalk** and bus stops/stations
- Encourage entrances oriented toward sidewalks, **parking to the rear or side**, **pedestrian-scaled** signage and lighting, integrated **streetscape and public space amenities**
- Concentrate higher-density housing near Pace Pulse and Metra with less parking, integrated **open space**, and **transit-friendly amenities**



LAND USE GOAL 4: Dempster will provide a range of spaces for entrepreneurs and small businesses to get established and branch out as they grow.

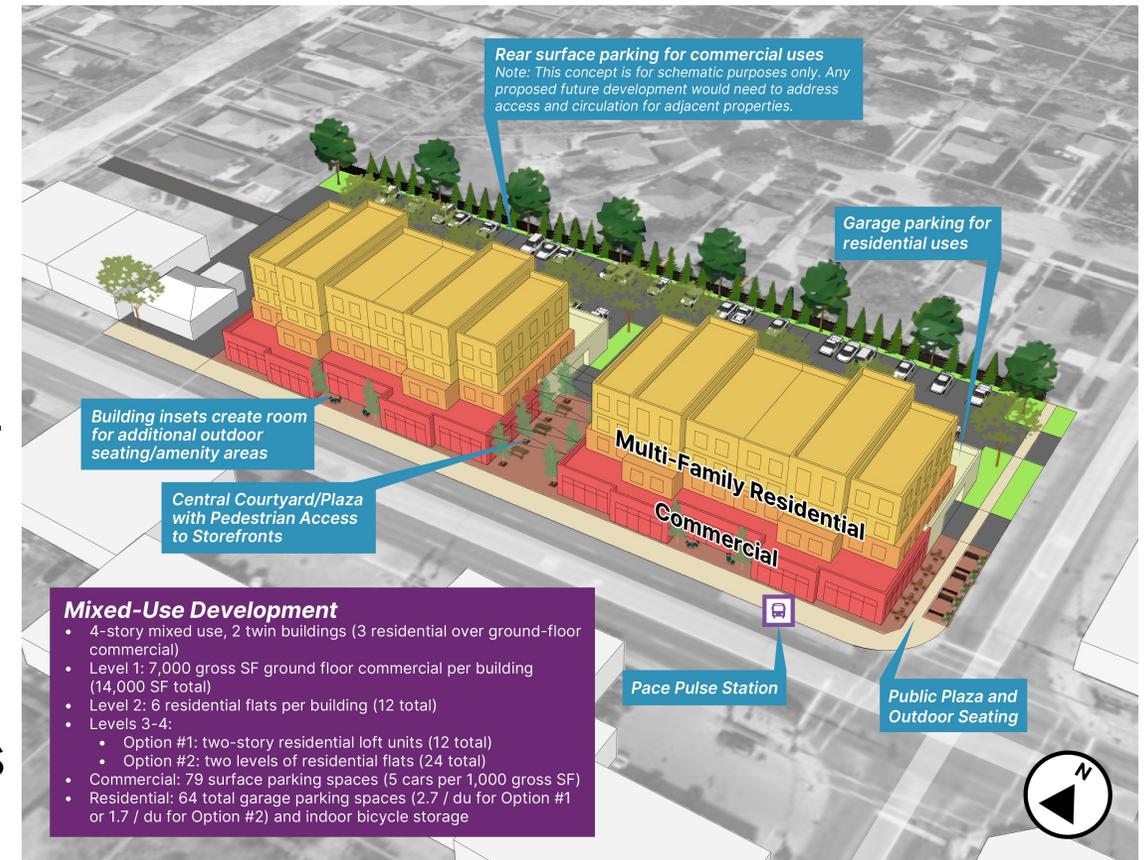
- Develop short-term solutions for smaller vacant spaces, such as **pop-up businesses** and restaurants and art installations
- Match businesses to **affordable retail** rental spaces
- Encourage **co-working** and shared office spaces on second stories or renovated properties
- Establish **business incubator** with small shop spaces for rent for entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses



Example of an adaptive-reuse of a former retail site turned into a business incubator supporting small business vendors

LAND USE GOAL 5: Residential options along the corridor will contribute to Morton Grove's overall housing stock to meet different needs, incomes, and life stages and support Dempster businesses.

- Add new **multi-family and mixed-use** projects with high quality housing and commercial space
- Consider needs of **older adults** as part of new housing development
- Attract **missing middle housing** types—townhomes and small scale multi-family—to areas near Metra
- Establish some maintenance and housing rehabilitation **support for seniors**
- Consider allowing **accessory dwelling units (ADUs)** in residential neighborhoods near the corridor and Metra



LAND USE GOAL 6: Dempster Street will be the heart of Morton Grove as a central hub for community and civic uses, public spaces, and activity.

- Create a **unified civic campus** around new Village Hall and Police Department
- Dedicate space for **plazas, patios, and green spaces**, including potential side-street closures
- Add **outdoor seating** and pedestrian walk-up windows
- Install **public art** (murals, sculptures, bus stop activations, light pole decorations, etc.)



Café walk-up window in a pedestrian alley in downtown Wheaton

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 1: People of all ages will feel safe and comfortable crossing Dempster Street on foot.

- Improve **safe access** to, from, and across Dempster near **schools** and **parks**
- Construct **new crossing** locations, pedestrian refuge islands, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs)
- Evaluate install **traffic calming** options
- Address **conflicts between pedestrians** and left turning vehicles



Example of a pedestrian crosswalk with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs)



TRANSPORTATION GOAL 2: Dempster Street will be a pleasant place to stroll and linger, and people will regularly walk to/between businesses.

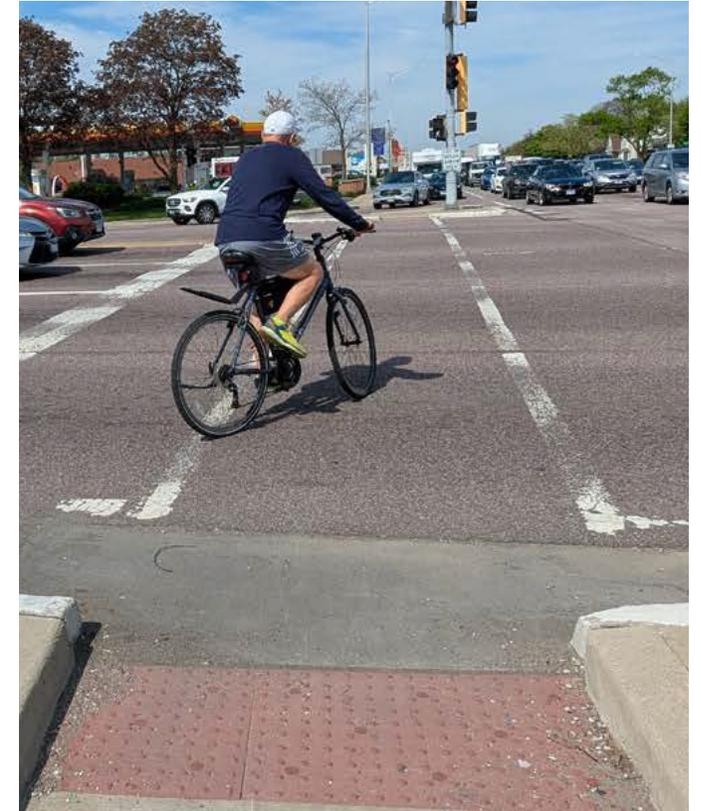
- Construct **streetscape** upgrades
- Install **planted medians** in the Main Street District
- Create **wayfinding** system with distance markers to key destinations
- Resolve **sidewalk accessibility** deficiencies
- Utilize parking lot space to **improve streetscaping behind sidewalks**
- Study potential for **closing select side streets** that connect with Dempster to improve safety and create more public space

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 3: Residents and visitors alike will find it easy to understand where they can park near Dempster Street.

- Install **striping at on-street parking** areas
- Upgrade parking **signage**

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 4: People of all ages and abilities will feel safe and comfortable cycling to the Dempster Street corridor and crossing Dempster Street on bicycle.

- Create **parallel street bike routes** and associated crossing improvements
- Construct **shared-use path** adjacent to Metra tracks, north of Lincoln Ave
- Construct trail **crossing improvements at Dempster & Lehigh Avenue**
- Create **new bikeway on Lehigh Avenue**, south of Lincoln Avenue
- Establish **bike parking** equipment standards
- Review **secure bike parking** options



*Bicyclist crossing
Waukegan at Dempster*

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 5: Using transit to get to and along the Dempster Street corridor will be fast, safe, and comfortable.

- Install **Pace bus queue-jump** near Sawmill Station
- Pursue other **transit operational improvements**
- Install bus stop location and **amenity** improvements
- Improve **pedestrian connection between Metra** and Dempster
- **Evaluate closing Lincoln Avenue** at railroad tracks to improve safety by limiting vehicle and train conflict points



Pace Pulse station on Dempster

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 6: Driving on Dempster Street will be a safe and efficient way to travel across the village.

- **Restrict left turns** in the Main Street District
- Improve safety at **Lehigh & Dempster**
- Install **lighting improvements**
- Reduce vehicular **speeds**



Example of a restricted left turn lane on Skokie Blvd near Dempster

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1: A vibrant mix of businesses will populate the Dempster Corridor.

- **Support small businesses** through marketing, technical assistance, and networking
- Create **incentive program** for small business expansion and attraction
- **Market the international flavor** of the Dempster Corridor
- **Attract cafes, restaurants, full-service grocery** and other food-related stores
- Encourage **creative industries**—such as art galleries, bookstores, theaters—and entertainment/recreational uses

DINE ON DEMPSTER IN MORTON GROVE!

Morton Grove's Dempster Street is home to an eclectic mix of dozens of restaurants. Hop on Route 250 or the Pulse Dempster Line to enjoy falafel and sushi, steaks and gyros, Korean BBQ and fine Italian, and much more!



Signage placed on Pace buses to market Morton Grove's restaurants on Dempster



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2: New commercial and mixed-use development will attract investment and new tenants in the study area.

- Create guidelines for providing **financial incentives**
- Provide a **predictable zoning** and approval process
- **Streamline new business approvals**
- Enhance **design standards**
- Encourage **new residential** uses to support a mix of restaurants and retailers

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3: The Corridor's assets—including open space, recreation, transportation options and cultural diversity—will attract visitors and economic investment.

- **Identify businesses** that can complement the Forest Preserve, North Shore Trail, and park facilities
- **Attract entertainment** related uses that become destinations



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: Events and marketing efforts will attract visitors and customers to the Corridor.

- Establish schedule of **events that celebrate local businesses** and recreation and cultural opportunities unique to Dempster
- Evaluate creation on a **Special Service Area or business district** to provide targeted programming and improvements
- Conduct social media and **marketing campaigns**



How do I share input?

- Fill out a comment card
- Visit **PlanDempster.org** to submit feedback online

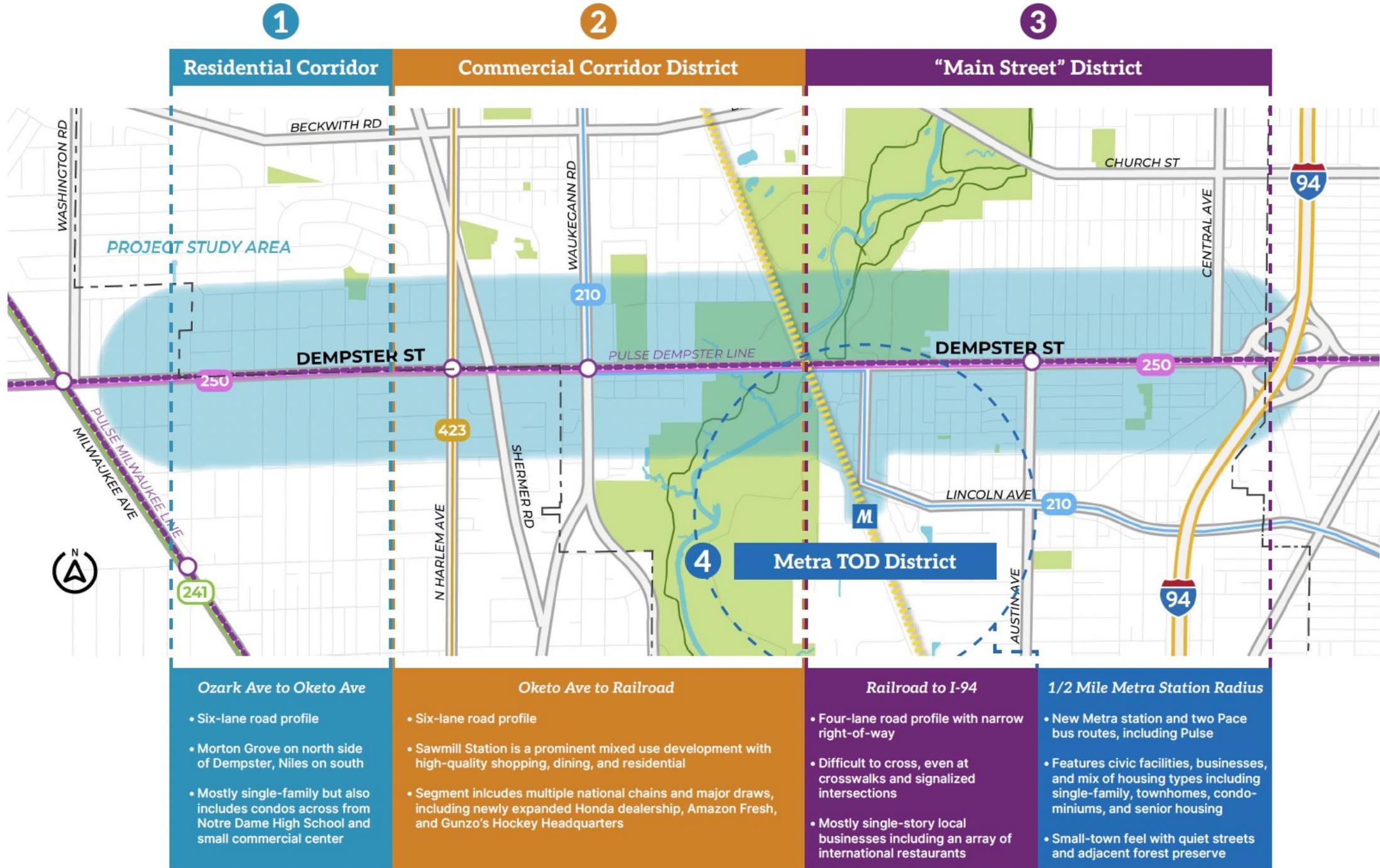
Corridor Recommendations



Key Community Input

Collected from: online comments, community survey, community workshop #1, three pop-up events

- Safe, walkable, inviting, and aesthetically pleasing streets
- Increased curb appeal; improve and modernize deteriorated or vacant properties
- More points of interest that invite people to stop and stay on Dempster
- More local and unique businesses and destinations, such as grocery stores, restaurants, bars, cafes, shops, and events
- New mixed-use or retail development
- More trees for noise reduction, shade, and visual appeal
- Outdoor seating/public gathering/green space
- Better connections for all modes and less traffic congestion
- Reduced vehicle speeding and neighborhood cut through traffic
- Improved Metra and trail crossings near Lehigh
- Destinations for North Branch Trail users, building on that asset



Vision for the Residential Corridor District

As the **western gateway** to Morton Grove, this corridor will welcome visitors and residents to the community while providing **safe travel for all modes** and a **pleasant environment for the residential neighborhoods** that flank Dempster Street.



Vision for the Commercial Corridor District

This **economic center of the Dempster corridor** will build on recent success by attracting additional **high-quality** commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family housing development. Residents, shoppers, diners, and trail users will be welcomed to the area through **improved pedestrian crossings, landscaping, and gathering spaces**, creating a vibrant center for everyone.



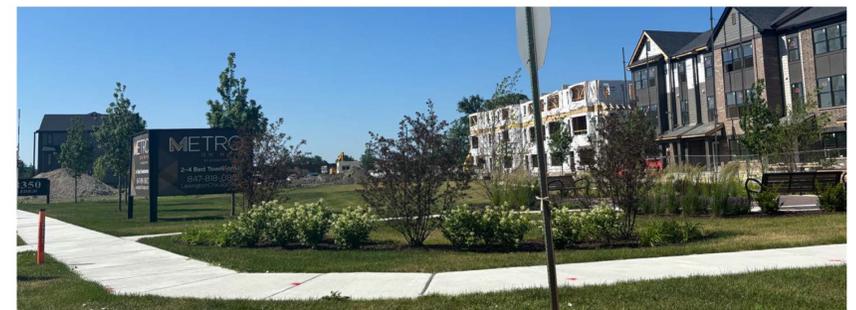
Vision for the Main Street District

The **eastern entry into Morton Grove** has a charming and vibrant main street feel, with an inviting and **attractive streetscape** that encourages pedestrians to walk and spend time at a variety of shops, restaurants, civic uses, and **places for public gathering**. **Crossing Dempster Street is safe** and accessible, with defined spaces for pedestrians, vehicles, and bikes on parallel roadways. **Transit users** hop on and off Pace Pulse and local buses to visit Morton Grove's many destinations.



Vision for the Metra TOD District

With a brand-new train station, the area surrounding the Morton Grove Metra feels like a **walkable small-town** with a **mix of housing**, local businesses, schools, and institutions. The **Forest Preserve and North Branch Trail are regional assets** in this neighborhood's backyard. **Improved pedestrian and bike connections** between the trail, Metra, and Pace Pulse paired with new development bring a healthy dose of **foot traffic** and customers to Lincoln Avenue and Dempster Street businesses



How do I share input?

- Visit the Corridor Recommendations Station and add comments directly on any/all of the six maps

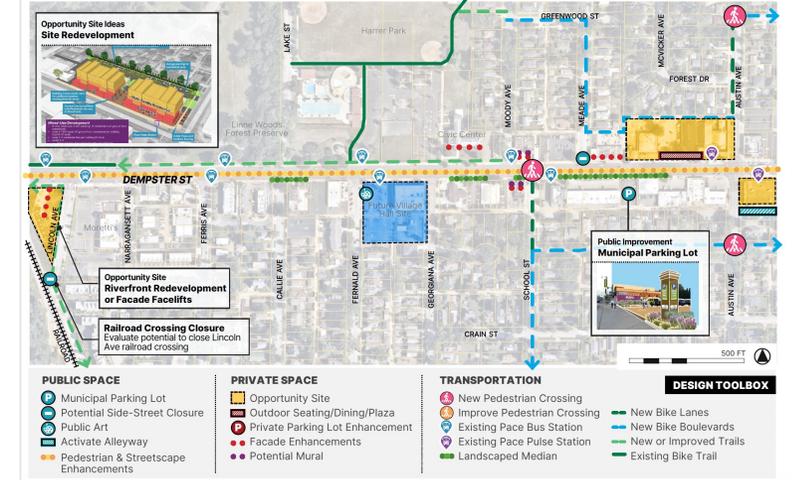
- Visit **PlanDempster.org** to submit feedback online

Draft Corridor Recommendations

Corridor Activity Hub "Main Street" District · Railroad → Austin Avenue

This segment serves as a key activity hub for the corridor, with the future Village Hall, Harrer Park, Linne Woods, and Metra station just south of Dempster. Recommendations focus on improving walkability with pedestrian and bike connections and transforming the corner at Austin with two new developments, outdoor spaces, public art, and an activated alleyway.

Grab a sticky note and add your comments on the map!

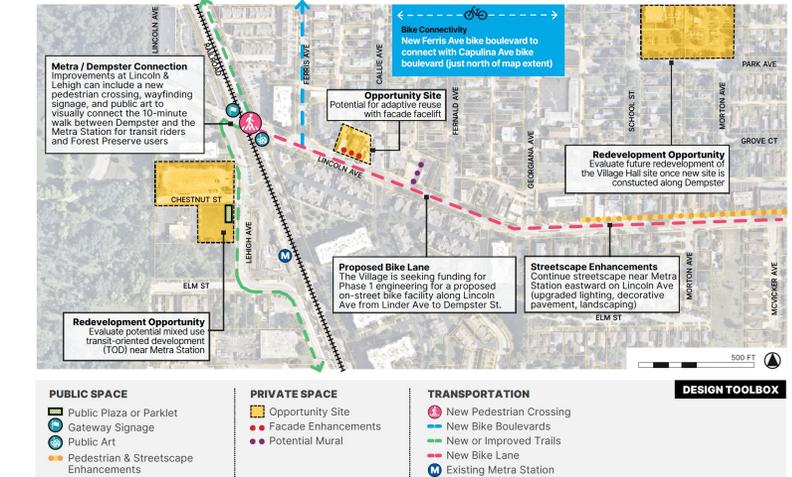


Draft Corridor Recommendations

Metra TOD District · Capulina Avenue → Main Street

As the historic core of Morton Grove, this area is ripe for improved pedestrian and bike connections for easier access between Metra and Dempster's Pace bus routes. Development opportunities near Metra and at the former Village Hall site will bring new foot traffic and customers for businesses on Lincoln Ave and Dempster.

Grab a sticky note and add your comments on the map!

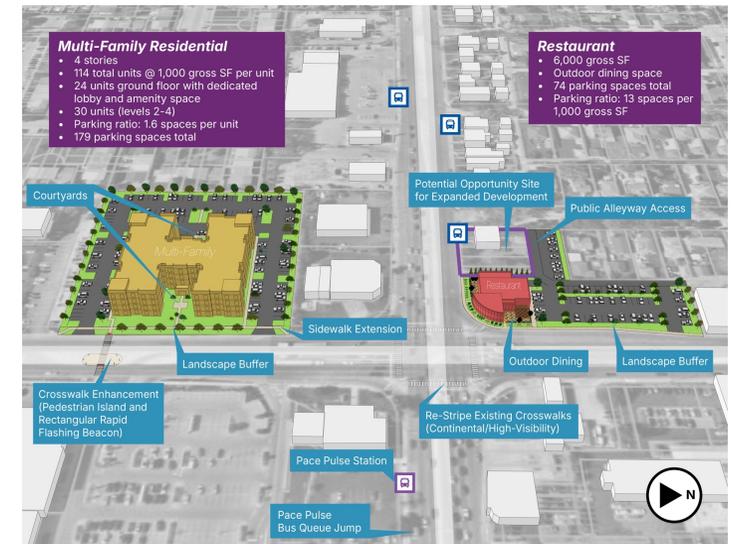
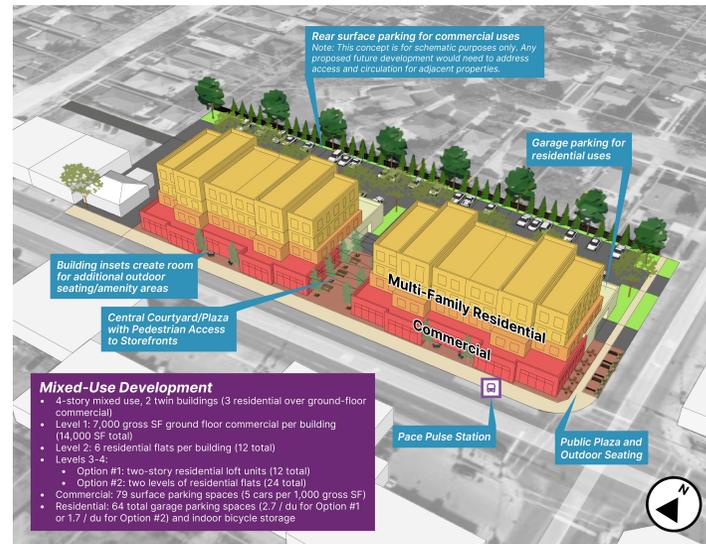


Opportunity Site Concept Plans

**ILLUSTRATIVE DRAFTS FOR
PLANNING LEVEL DISCUSSION**

How do I share input?

- Visit the Opportunity Site Concepts Station and add comments directly on any/all of the three drawings
- Visit **PlanDempster.org** to submit feedback online



Next Steps

Next Steps

- Collect, analyze, and incorporate community input
- Draft Dempster Corridor Plan document
- Present completed draft plan at final Community Open House #3 in June (date TBD)
- Summer 2026: plan implementation!

