VILLAGE OF WHEELING, ILLINOIS
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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WHEELING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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1. INTRODUCTION

Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the elected and appointed officials of the Village of Wheeling as they initiate new development activities or review proposals before them. In Illinois, comprehensive plans may consider the municipality and unincorporated areas within one and one-half miles of the municipality's corporate limits. The Comprehensive Plan is Wheeling's road map for the future.

A comprehensive plan can serve a variety of functions. It is often a guide for community improvement and the provision of public infrastructure and facilities. Through the future land use plan, it sets forth the policy for private development and forms the basis for the municipality's zoning map and ordinance. However, particularly in the case of a mostly developed community like Wheeling, it also allows residents and local decisionmakers to identify and respond to changing community needs and desires in a proactive, rather than reactive way.

Comprehensive plans are often organized to answer three basic questions about a community:

1) Who are we?
2) What do we want to be?
3) How will we get there?

Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan builds upon a community planning process known as ***Wheeling 2000 and Beyond***, which was completed in November, 1996. This year long project, which began in Fall 1995, was initiated by the Village President and Board of Trustees and was designed to engage residents and the business community in planning for the Village's future. Two community-wide meetings were held in October and December of 1995 to ensure that all residents and the business community had the opportunity to participate in the process. Following the first meeting, an Executive Committee was selected, consisting of representatives of all the Village's governmental units, churches and business community. The Executive Committee then elected eight committee chairs and assigned residents and members of the business community to committees based on their interest preference. The eight committees were organized by topic, which included image, education, infrastructure, government, community diversity, community services, economic development – large corporations, and economic development – commercial/retail. Each committee adopted a vision statement and during the ensuing months held meetings, conducted research, met with Village officials, and interviewed government and business leaders from other communities. The work culminated with preparation of a series of reports that included an assessment of current conditions, identification of future trends, a future vision and recommended actions.

The ***Wheeling 2000 and Beyond*** project primarily focused on economic development and community service issues. However, many of the recommendations had implications for land use policy and infrastructure improvements. Consequently, the Village began to discuss the need to update Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In November 2001, the Wheeling Plan Commission began the process of updating its 1987 Comprehensive Plan to reflect changed community conditions and an emerging vision of the community's future. The work program for this planning effort was designed to engage residents, Village boards and commissions, and other local taxing districts at various points in the planning process. In addition to the typical focus on existing and future land use, Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan considers floodplain and floodway hazards, which are inherent in a community laced with rivers, streams and wetland areas, and opportunities to develop a bicycle and pedestrian pathway system that is not unnecessarily interrupted by the high-volume regional arterial streets that traverse Wheeling. However, probably the most important consideration during development of the Comprehensive Plan has been improving the Village's image and identity by upgrading the physical appearance and condition of the building stock, and developing streetscape and other infrastructure improvement recommendations along Wheeling's commercial corridors that can be implemented over the life of this Comprehensive Plan.

In August 2002, the State of Illinois enacted the Local Planning Technical Assistance Act, which has among its purposes, encouraging local governments to engage in planning, regulatory and development approaches that promote and encourage comprehensive planning, and supporting planning efforts that include one or more units of local government working together. Municipalities that have adopted plans may be eligible for additional preferences in State economic development programs, State transportation programs, State planning programs, State natural resource programs, and State agricultural programs. This document has been organized around the format described in the Local Planning Technical Assistance Act.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is the key to any successful comprehensive planning process and Wheeling has endeavored to involve residents and representatives of other taxing districts and its own boards and commissions all along the way. The public was most involved in identifying the major issues that the plan needed to address at the beginning of the planning process. As specific plan recommendations began to emerge, the Economic Development Commission, Wheeling Park District, School District 21 and the Village Board were invited to work with the Plan Commission to refine subarea recommendations and related objectives and policies. These groups are critical to successful plan implementation, since these entities will have to spend the money and undertake the work needed to implement the Plan's recommendations.

Community Outreach and Consensus Building

Following a kick-off meeting designed to solicit input from members of the Wheeling Plan Commission and Village Board, nine focus group sessions were held to solicit input from representatives of a variety of community groups. Invited to participate in this process were representatives of the Economic Development Commission, the Human Relations Commission, the Wheeling Park District, Wheeling High School, Parent Teacher Organization presidents from School District 21, the Indian Trails Library District, and new and long-time residents of the community. Initially, a tenth focus group was planned to gain the perspective of teenagers with a focus group of Wheeling High School students. Unfortunately, it was not possible to schedule such a session. However, through coordination with a community planning assignment being undertaken by students at the Jack London Middle School, more than 100 students were engaged in the planning process. The students provided useful insights as to mobility, the types of facilities missing from the community, and the function, location and design of a town center.

The focus group sessions with residents, and workshops with the Plan Commission and Village Board resulted in the following insights concerning the issues and opportunities that face the community. This material summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that both guide and inform the planning process.

Community Identity

Ethnic and economic diversity sets Wheeling apart from its neighbors. This diversity is a source of pride for Wheeling residents, but is not always viewed positively by outsiders. It is a family-oriented village. Its regional identity is established by its place as an industrial center and Milwaukee Avenue's Restaurant Row. Because Wheeling has evolved over many decades, there are some areas of the Village, especially along major streets, where the mix of uses lacks continuity and does not relate to the pattern of newer development that has occurred along these growth corridors. Ill-defined Village boundaries on the south and west, and overlapping tax district boundaries have served to confuse the sense of community among residents in these areas, especially where residents find themselves in a different library or park district from other Wheeling residents.

Community Image

Creating a strong community image is one of the challenges facing the Village. Wheeling is known for its excellent public facilities and services. However, it is also known for unattractive and dated commercial corridors and has a history of flooding. On the plus side, there are few land use conflicts between residential and non-residential areas commonly found in other communities. The lack of a town center that could help to establish a strong community identity was also identified as a major planning consideration.

Community Direction

Achieving Wheeling's vision for the future will require the initiation and implementation of a wide range of public improvement projects. In an era of budgetary constraints and dwindling resources, not everything can be done at once. The ability to be proactive, rather than reactive, is one of the benefits of planning for the future. Another benefit is the ability to prioritize key projects that can be implemented to lead to a higher quality of development and a consistency of direction.

Community Assets

Wheeling's community assets include its location and transportation amenities, its schools, parks and library, the range of housing types and prices, and environmental resources, including the Des Plaines River and Forest Preserve. Restaurant Row along Milwaukee Avenue is a source of local pride and attracts people from throughout the region.

Community Challenges

Among the challenges facing Wheeling are traffic congestion, the age and size of Wheeling's older housing stock, property maintenance and the lack of a retail identity along the Dundee Road commercial corridor, which serves as the Village's major shopping street.

All Wheeling residents were invited to a community forum held in June 2002, which was used to explain the comprehensive planning process to the public, test the draft community vision and solicit additional recommendations for input that needed to be included in the Comprehensive Plan as it evolved.

Public Education Strategy

Keeping Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan current and ensuring that it has a central place in the community's public decisionmaking process is an ongoing education process. Involving residents in the development of the Comprehensive Plan was the first step in the public education strategy. Making the plan available to residents is the second step. However, the most important strategy will be for elected and appointed officials to refer to the plan and make a conscious effort to use its policies and recommendations in their decisionmaking.

One of the best ways to keep the Comprehensive Plan before the community is to undertake an annual review of the actions taken by the Plan Commission, Village Board and others to implement the Plan's goals, objectives and policies. A summary of this report could be included in the Village's newsletter to residents. In this way, Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan can become an ongoing action agenda and discussion vehicle for a wide range of community concerns.

It is further recommended that the Plan Commission undertake a review of the Comprehensive Plan every five years. The intent of this review is to make sure that the Comprehensive Plan addresses changed conditions and that the objectives, policies and official future land use plan map remain an effective community planning tool, both mechanically and legally. Wheeling is not a static community. Similarly, Wheeling's plan for its future must provide opportunities for periodic adjustment as new trends and opportunities emerge, and be able to address new challenges as they arise. Continuing to be proactive in planning for the future will help improve the chances for success in achieving Wheeling's community objectives.

2. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan is designed to articulate the community's vision for its future, in light of the major trends and development forces that establish Wheeling's place in the Chicago metropolitan region. The goals, objectives and policies that conclude this section of the plan establish the guiding principles and priorities that will allow current and future community decisionmakers and stakeholders to achieve Wheeling's community vision.

COMMUNITY VISION

Wheeling's vision for its future was carefully crafted, following several months of public meetings and focus groups that addressed the issues facing Wheeling, and community strengths, weaknesses, assets and challenges. The community vision, the goals, objectives, and policies to achieve the vision, and the future land use plan form the critical elements of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan.

> *Wheeling is a community of choice that is enriched by the cultural diversity of its residents. The Village's "can do" philosophy makes Wheeling a community where people want to live and businesses want to locate. Local governments take the lead in providing high quality public services and facilities that stimulate private investment. The appearance of the community gets better each year as new landscaping and streetscape improvements are added and businesses renovate or replace older commercial facilities. More and more residents of means choose to make Wheeling home. Visitors attracted to Wheeling's many fine restaurants discover the Village's other amenities and choose Wheeling as a leisure destination. Wheeling's quality of life is something that other communities try to match.*

TRENDS ANALYSIS

Wheeling is centrally located within the Chicago metropolitan region. Its eastern edge is well defined by the Des Plaines River and Cook County Forest Preserve. Its northern boundary is equally well defined for most of its length by Lake Cook Road, which forms the boundary between Cook and Lake Counties. The western and southern Village boundaries are less obvious because school, library and park district boundaries are not coterminous with the Village's corporate limits.

A strong tax base is needed to pay for the kind of governmental services that residents expect and demand. These community amenities include good schools, parks, libraries, and police and fire protection. Not all are provided by the Village of Wheeling. In fact, most are provided by other governmental entities. Yet the Village sets the tone and is the basis for community identity and, as a result, it is in the Village's interest to consider all community facilities and services in the comprehensive planning process.

An understanding of the local real estate market and the demographic trends is important in helping to craft local land use and planning decisions. It does no good to plan for an increased population if there is no market for new housing within the community or if little residential land is available for development. Similarly, setting aside land for major commercial development may be ill-advised if there is no consumer demand for such facilities. Land may lie fallow for many years, waiting for a user that may never come. In order to allow a community to grow and develop, land set aside for future development needs to be in balance with anticipated market demand and community development needs.

Regional and Local Commercial Trends

The strength of commercial markets is a function of the number of households, household income, competitive alignment and available sites. Wheeling's commercial market is relatively strong, but has significant competition from adjacent communities. The market for specific types of uses is dependent on the interplay of the factors listed above. The Wheeling trade area has solid demographics. While there are some high-density areas, overall population density is reduced because of the amount of land devoted to industrial uses. Another factor that affects Wheeling's trade area is the large swath of Cook County Forest Preserve land along its eastern edge and Palwaukee Municipal Airport. Whereas most trade circles have households throughout the ring, much of Wheeling's trade area has no people, making Wheeling less desirable as a retail location than neighboring communities.

With little vacant commercial property, most of the new commercial development occurring in Wheeling and the surrounding communities involves redevelopment of older commercial properties. Use of tax increment financing and other economic development incentives are among the tools being used to stimulate new commercial development, especially in Cook County where commercial property tax assessment levels are significantly higher than in neighboring Lake County.

Wheeling's industrial market remains strong and stable. The liberal use of Cook County's Class 6B tax incentive program has helped to offset the property tax differential with the Lake County industrial market. However, future challenges in maintaining the strength of the industrial real estate market can be expected due to shifting industrial use patterns, as well as aging industrial properties, the relatively small size of industrial parcels and the property tax burden.

Despite its industrial base and Palwaukee Municipal Airport, Wheeling is not generally considered to be a prime retail or office location. There is a strong market for Class B space for small office tenants, but Wheeling is not considered a major office location. There are only a few potential sites with sufficient visibility for Class A/A- office use. These are found along Milwaukee Avenue and Lake Cook Road.

Vacancy problems in the larger retail centers are largely due to competition from stronger retail nodes at the Randhurst Mall in Mount Prospect and the Rand/Arlington Heights Road area in Arlington Heights. Current shopping center owners are attracting low quality tenants because of the condition of the centers. Wheeling is recognized for its "Restaurant Row" along Milwaukee Avenue. The increasing number and diversity of these restaurants provides diners with many choices when they come to Wheeling.

Housing Market Assessment

Wheeling's residential development has occurred in response to the housing market. Wheeling initially developed as a community of detached single-family starter homes. When townhouse developments became popular, major townhouse developments were built in Wheeling. As demand for mid-rise condominium buildings grew in the northwest suburbs, developers turned to Wheeling as a location for this housing product.

Wheeling's housing represents a good value. The residential market, both in Wheeling and the surrounding communities, is stable. This is partially due to the lack of vacant land on which to build. In Wheeling, townhouse and condominium prices are roughly equal to single-family prices. Among adjacent communities, Wheeling's townhouse and condominium prices are second only to Northbrook's.

Lack of sites constrains residential development in Wheeling rather than a lack of demand. There are strong markets for single-family attached, detached and condominium development, and strong market acceptance for recent projects. What has been missing from Wheeling's housing mix is a significant number of high-end, detached single-family houses.

Transportation

Wheeling is centrally located in the northwestern suburbs, which are growing along with the rest of the northeastern Illinois region. It is part of a complex, mature and extensive transportation system. Wheeling is in close proximity to the Illinois Tollway and interstate highway system. Because not all subregional long distance automobile and commercial traffic can be accommodated on the freeway and tollway system, a Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) system has been developed to address these needs. Lake Cook Road, Milwaukee Avenue and Palatine Road have been designated as Strategic Regional Arterials and carry significant traffic through the Village of Wheeling. Other major arterials that form the basic structure of Wheeling's street system include Dundee Road, Elmhurst Road, Wolf Road, Wheeling Road and McHenry Road.

The community is also blessed with Metra commuter rail service. Ridership on Metra's North Central line is expected to increase when double tracking of this recent addition to the regional commuter rail system is completed in 2005. The presence of Palwaukee Municipal Airport, which is a general aviation airport jointly owned by the Village of Wheeling and the City of Prospect Heights, is another unique and important transportation asset.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following goals, objectives and policies are designed to help Wheeling achieve its vision for its future over the life of the Comprehensive Plan. They are organized around the following categories: 1) community image, 2) growth and development, 3) environmental stewardship, 4) residential areas, 5) business and commercial areas, 6) industrial areas, 7) community facilities and infrastructure, 8) parks and open space, 9) transportation, and 10) intergovernmental cooperation.

The Village of Wheeling can work to implement most, but not all, of the objectives and policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan. Some are best implemented by other governmental bodies, community organizations or the private sector. Implementation of others will require the development of new programs or regulatory tools. However, it is important to be inclusive in the identification of community goals, objectives and policies. In this way the Comprehensive Plan becomes a strategic tool that can be used by the entire community to upgrade Wheeling's status in the region. In effect, it allows everyone to be on the same page with respect to Wheeling's future.

Definitions:

- *Goals* describe, in general terms, broad aims, desired end situations or ideals for achievement. A goal is typically broad and long-range.
- *Objectives* are more specific than goals and generally represent an expanded description of a particular aspect of a goal or a more precise desired end situation.
- *Policies* are specific strategies intended to achieve the Plan's goals and objectives, and ultimately the community vision, over the Comprehensive Plan's planning horizon.

Community Image

People who live inside and outside of Wheeling recognize Wheeling as a first-class community, appreciate the outstanding reputation of its public services and institutions, value the warm, spirited and culturally diverse populace, and are impressed with the strength and depth of Wheeling's industrial and commercial districts. Enhancing Wheeling's image and identity within the region involves a variety of actions, including public relations, community events and physical improvements, designed to put Wheeling's best face forward and extol its community strengths.

Wheeling's identity within the region is largely established by the visual character as viewed from the major arterial streets that traverse the community. The Village has benefited from new development and streetscape improvements along Milwaukee Avenue and other highly visible locations. However, not all of the areas along the major streets within the Village are attractive ones. Above ground utility lines obscure otherwise attractive features and lack of landscaping often results in harsh views along major streets. Streetscape and other appearance improvements are important aesthetic enhancements. In the past, those outside the community have sometimes viewed Wheeling's rich ethnic and social diversity as a problem, whereas residents see the same diversity as one of Wheeling's greatest strengths.

GOAL: **A COMMUNITY WITH A STRONG AND POSITIVE COMMUNITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Make Wheeling a "community of choice" for future residents.	• Promote Wheeling's identity as a family-friendly community. • Promote Wheeling's positive demographic characteristics and community facilities. • Celebrate the ethnic diversity within the community. • Continue to promote successful special events and identify new events to be organized by the Village and other organizations. • Actively collaborate with local realty firms and others in marketing Wheeling as a desirable place to live. • Preserve land values and other desirable characteristics to assure that Wheeling's quality of life is maintained.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Establish and maintain a positive community identity along arterial streets.	• Upgrade public street infrastructure through coordinated streetscape improvement programs. • Develop a gateway identity program. • Redevelop obsolete commercial uses. • Encourage effective signage that is appropriately designed and scaled to minimize adverse impacts. • Explore opportunities to establish parkways along State roads and other arterial corridors. • Work with appropriate agencies to replace the deteriorated pedestrian bridge on Dundee Road, adjacent to Jack London School, with a safe pedestrian crossing. • Work with IDOT to identify appropriate locations and construct landscaped islands to facilitate pedestrian crossings. • Explore opportunities to develop marked bike lanes or designated bike routes along arterial streets with IDOT. • Investigate opportunities to have utility lines buried along arterial streets.
Enhance the Milwaukee Avenue corridor as a community focal point and regional destination.	• Promote Milwaukee Avenue as "Restaurant Row." • Encourage pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development along Milwaukee Avenue that establishes a sense of place. • Work with the Cook Forest Preserve District and Wheeling Park District to establish a riverwalk system that connects restaurants, retail uses, parks and other community amenities. • Maintain and enhance the existing pedestrian/equestrian bridge across the Des Plaines River near Lake Cook Road as a connection between the regional and local trail system. • Encourage hotel, entertainment and other uses with regional draw to locate along Milwaukee Avenue. • Acquire parcels too small for effective commercial development, or that are subject to chronic flooding, to be used as landscaped open space or natural areas to enhance the visual image of the corridor.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Enhance the Dundee Road corridor as Wheeling's "Main Street."	• Encourage community-oriented retail and commercial uses to locate along Dundee Road. • Maintain the location of municipal facilities, the post office and other community uses along Dundee Road. • Develop a public use campus that integrates public facilities, open space and stormwater detention into a strong community amenity. • Undertake improvements designed to make the Dundee Road corridor more inviting for pedestrians.
Identify an appropriate location for development of a town center and pursue its implementation.	• Plan for an appropriately scaled mixed-use environment that meets the desires of Wheeling residents for a community center environment.

Growth and Development

There are only a few parcels of undeveloped land in Wheeling. Most of the remaining vacant parcels are environmentally challenged areas that are either located in floodplains, floodways, wetland areas, have poor soils or are otherwise environmentally problematic sites. Consequently, most new development in Wheeling will occur as redevelopment. Proposals for the development of the remaining development parcels should be carefully evaluated to ensure that Wheeling's identified land use needs are met. Proposals for the redevelopment of areas of the Village that have reached the end of their economic lives should also be carefully considered so as not to adversely impact the surrounding areas and the Village as a whole.

In making land use decisions, it is important to anticipate the future needs of the Village and its residents. Long range projections and current trends should be periodically reviewed. Such reviews should be used as the basis for formulating plans to meet anticipated needs and review development and redevelopment proposals. The Village should continually seek to maintain a safe, livable and attractive environment. As development and redevelopment proposals are presented to the Village, great care should be taken in their evaluation.

There are some areas that are outside the Village of Wheeling's corporate boundaries, but are located within Wheeling's Planning Jurisdiction, which is defined as areas that are unincorporated and within one and one-half miles of the Village limits. Some of these are wholly contained within Wheeling and could be forcibly annexed into Wheeling. Other areas can be annexed at the request of affected property owners. The annexation of land can be viewed as a means to augment the tax base and control the development and use of the land. Selected annexation is also a way to help establish more regular corporate boundaries.

GOAL: **A VILLAGE WITH RECOGNIZABLE BOUNDARIES WHEREIN NEW DEVELOPMENT OCCURS WITH RESPECT FOR THAT WHICH ALREADY EXISTS.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Maintain definable edges to the community.	• Promote a more cohesive land use pattern through the redevelopment of obsolete uses. • Adjust the zoning map, where necessary, to ensure that new development creates a congruous land use pattern and minimizes land use conflicts.
Encourage new development that is compatible with the community vision.	• Encourage single-family residential development in order to establish a better balance between single-family and multi-family uses. • Work to increase the supply of single-family housing in appropriate locations through zoning map designations. • Maintain Wheeling's industrial base, but consider new uses for obsolete facilities. • Identify alternative locations for desirable uses that are poorly located in their present sites and assist with relocation when in the best interest of the community. • Promote development or redevelopment that is compatible with the existing or planned capacity of the transportation system. • Closely review development proposals to ensure that new development provides adequate open space and preserves natural features.
Increase the Village's influence or control over development within adjacent, unincorporated areas.	• Pursue annexation of the Jackson Drive, Vera Lane and Hintz Road unincorporated areas, which are completely contained within Wheeling's boundaries, to encourage upgrade of existing residential properties and centralize the provision of services to their residents. • Consider annexation of the Wolf Ridge subdivision in order to facilitate its transition to airport-related industrial uses. • Pursue annexation of unincorporated areas along Milwaukee Avenue adjacent to Palwaukee Municipal Airport to control their redevelopment and impact on the image of the Village.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Make the best use of remaining vacant land and redevelopment parcels in order to provide for future needs.	• Identify key redevelopment parcels and consider the use of economic incentives, infrastructure improvements and/or assistance with land assembly to encourage their redevelopment in a manner that benefits and best serves the entire Village. • Encourage uses that provide a positive fiscal benefit to the community and its local tax districts. • Evaluate the fiscal impact of development proposals on local tax districts before approving land use changes. • Reserve land suitable for single-family housing for that purpose. • Identify vacant land that should be retained as public open space.
Promote high quality development.	• Adopt and maintain development controls that accommodate future growth in accordance with desired type, intensity and design quality of land uses. • Constantly assess the effectiveness of existing development controls and modify as needed to address new land use issues or problems that are identified within the community. • Continue to require binding appearance review for all commercial and industrial projects and any multi-family residential developments that require special zoning approvals. • Develop a strong landscape ordinance.

Environmental Stewardship

Wheeling's identity is partially shaped by the Des Plaines River and the Cook County Forest Preserve property that forms its eastern edge. There is a limit to the supply of natural resources available within the region, and every effort should be made to avoid waste of these valuable and necessary resources. The quality of life is greatly improved by open spaces, greenery, clean air and water, and the absence of litter, excessive noise and uncontrolled signage. However, significant portions of Wheeling are located in designated floodplain and floodway areas, which limits the development and redevelopment potential of these properties. The challenge is to identify ways to enhance the Village's tax base in an environmentally responsible manner.

GOAL: A LAND USE PATTERN THAT CONSERVES NATURAL AREAS AS PART OF WHEELING'S ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT AND MINIMIZES DAMAGE FROM FLOODING.	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Preserve existing natural features, including rivers, lakes, wetlands and major tree stands within the community.	• Recognize Wheeling's environmentally challenged areas as community assets. • Promote Cook County Forest Preserve resources along the Des Plaines River as part of Wheeling's community identity. • Work with private property owners and public entities to establish an accessible greenway corridor along Buffalo Creek and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch through easement agreements or public acquisition.
Reduce the damage to private property caused by flooding.	• Encourage the use of flood prone land for public open space, recreation, wildlife habitat and pedestrian trails. • Explore the use of floodways and floodplains along Buffalo Creek and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch for storm water detention facilities.
Assure that new development will minimize adverse impacts on the natural features of the site.	• Support new development that enhances Wheeling's environmental assets. • Require new development to preserve natural features on their sites. • Consider stormwater improvements to alter the floodplain only in support of strategically important new development.

Residential Neighborhoods

Wheeling began its growth as a community of single-family homes, but has since attracted a significant number of condominium and townhouse developments. Most housing in Wheeling is owner-occupied and very few housing units are vacant. While most of the housing units built before 1970 were single-family houses, since then most new housing has been in the form of condominiums and townhouse developments. Because there are few opportunities for new residential development, residential land use policies focus as much on maintaining the existing housing stock and encouraging reinvestment in existing neighborhoods as on encouraging development of new housing. Since Wheeling has relatively little single-family housing for upper income buyers, what land is available for new housing should be reserved for this market.

GOAL: **WELL-MAINTAINED RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES AND PRICE RANGES.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Encourage housing that promotes positive perceptions of Wheeling.	• Encourage new housing, especially single-family, that provides opportunities for the move-up market. • Reserve land for new, high-quality single-family residential development. • Encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock to keep pace with market trends and enhance housing values in existing residential neighborhoods. • Support teardowns that result in the construction of new up-scale housing. • Work to increase the supply of owner-occupied single-family housing in appropriate locations. • Encourage condominium associations to limit the number of rental units allowed in order to preserve property values and increase the percentage of owner-occupied dwellings. • Require new residential development to make appropriate provisions for public open space and connections to the public pathway system.
Insure that residential property is safe and well maintained.	• Develop and/or participate in programs designed to maintain and rehabilitate residential properties. • Implement a regular code enforcement program for all residential property. • Work with neighborhood groups, as needed, to increase the likelihood that enforcement efforts will be successful. • Encourage property owners to install sprinkler systems or otherwise provide an appropriate water source for the maintenance of landscaping.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Promote reinvestment in existing housing to improve compatibility with modern lifestyles and improve market appeal.	• Encourage additions and improvements to existing homes. • Develop zoning regulations that simplify improvements to existing residential property. • Prepare design studies to illustrate potential renovation options for existing single-family and multi-family buildings. • Provide design guidelines and/or consulting to improve the quality of additions and other improvements to existing housing.

Business and Commercial Areas

Wheeling's business and commercial areas are integral parts of the community's physical structure and make a substantial contribution to the property and sales tax base. They serve both residents and customers attracted from the surrounding region. The community's three largest retail and commercial concentrations are located along Dundee Road, Milwaukee Avenue and Lake Cook Road. In order to remain competitive with surrounding communities, Wheeling must continue to work provide the type of commercial environment that will attract new businesses to the Village and allow existing businesses to thrive.

GOAL: BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS THAT ARE DESIRABLE LOCATIONS FOR RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICE ACTIVITY.	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Promote the growth and redevelopment of business and commercial areas.	• Encourage private owners to redevelop deteriorated or obsolete uses. • Encourage assembly of parcels to create larger redevelopment sites. • Consider the use of tax increment financing and other economic development tools to spur redevelopment along commercial corridors.
Improve the appearance of existing business strips.	• Encourage façade improvements by private property owners. • Encourage landscaping of existing parking lots. • Actively pursue enforcement of existing building and property maintenance codes. • Consider assistance programs for business owners to help them upgrade their properties and/or expand businesses.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Attract new businesses that fill identified market niches and retain existing businesses that serve Wheeling residents.	• Create a physical and regulatory environment that will attract quality businesses to Wheeling. • Actively market available properties to prospective businesses, especially those that are likely to enhance Wheeling's image as a retail destination. • Use economic incentives, infrastructure improvements and/or assistance with land assembly to attract retail and other commercial uses to serve Wheeling residents and the surrounding region.
Establish a town center that can serve as a focal point for community activity.	• Focus community facilities and services within an identifiable "public use" campus. • Encourage development of compatible private uses to strengthen the town center as a destination for community residents.

Industrial Areas

Wheeling has long been known as an industrial center. Access to rail freight lines, Palwaukee Municipal Airport and the Illinois Tollway are among the reasons for this success. Another important factor has been the Village's willingness to use available tax incentive programs to ensure that Wheeling's geographical advantages within the region are not diminished by the competitive disadvantage of Cook County's property tax structure versus that of Lake County. Wheeling is a pro-business community that understands and promotes the corporate environment that is home to many diverse industrial businesses. The industrial districts have a positive and attractive image that contributes to Wheeling's identity as a community.

GOAL: **STRONG INDUSTRIAL CONCENTRATIONS THAT PROVIDE JOBS AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL TAX BASE.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Maintain the role of Wheeling's industrial areas as regional employment centers.	• Promote Wheeling's identity as an industrial center. • Encourage the continual improvement of existing industrial facilities. • Encourage industrial redevelopment within established industrial districts, including the replacement of obsolete facilities with new industrial buildings. • Work with transit providers to improve transportation options for industrial employees.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Recruit and retain industrial uses that contribute to the economic strength of the community.	• Assist in marketing available industrial properties. • Promote use of Cook County's Class 6B incentive program to attract new industrial investment.
Maintain attractive industrial areas.	• Require new industrial developments to undergo binding appearance review and provide an attractive landscaped setting for industrial buildings and facilities.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

One of the primary functions of municipal government is to provide those services that can be managed best and most economically on a Village-wide basis. Wheeling's Village facilities and services include water distribution, storm and sanitary sewer systems, police and fire protection, emergency services and street maintenance. The Village has also participated in regional efforts to provide for the efficient and environmentally sound collection and reuse of solid waste.

Public properties and facilities in the community include not only those of the Village, but also those of the Wheeling Park District, School District 21, School district 214, and the Indian Trails Public Library District. Intergovernmental communication and cooperation is the key to ensuring that Wheeling residents enjoy the highest quality public services and facilities at a reasonable cost.

Advances in technology have made communications an issue that is important to any long-range planning process. Ensuring that easements for telecommunications lines are included within public rights-of-way and provisions are made for cell towers in appropriate locations are among the linkages between the Village and utility providers that must be considered as portions of the Village are developed or redeveloped.

GOAL: **A COOPERATIVE SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SERVE THE NEEDS OF WHEELING RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Establish a cooperative system of community facilities and public infrastructure that serve the needs of Wheeling residents and businesses.	• Provide and maintain a high level of municipal services. • Upgrade public safety equipment and vehicles when necessary. • Regularly communicate with other local governmental units to identify facility needs. • Consider the impacts of development on all units of local government when making development decisions. • Encourage School District 21 to use a longer timeframe when making enrollment projections.
Accommodate public buildings and community-oriented institutional uses that provide a full range of community services.	• Regularly meet with local taxing districts to identify improvement needs before investment decisions are made. • Encourage the design of high quality community facilities. • Create a more identifiable public use campus for the main concentration of public facilities located along Dundee Road.
Assure efficient provision and maintenance of utilities in public ways.	• Budget priority projects and develop a project revenue policy for proposed improvements. • Work to ensure that above grade utilities including electric and telephone lines are buried wherever possible, particularly along arterial streets. • Ensure that easements are provided for telecommunications infrastructure as needed to ensure proper access to new technologies. • Maintain the water utility system from the receiving points of supply from the Northwest Water Commission through the distribution process. • Maintain and improve storm and wastewater collection, conveyance and systems management through construction and timely repair of sanitary and storm sewer systems.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
	• Coordinate utility improvements with planned street improvement projects as part of Wheeling's capital improvement program. • Continue to upgrade infrastructure in residential neighborhoods. • Extend utilities to unincorporated islands within the Village to centralize service provision

Parks and Open Space

Parks, woods and other open spaces not only provide a way to satisfy the recreational needs of community residents, they also help to beautify the Village and maintain its appearance of spaciousness. The primary responsibility of satisfying the recreational needs and desires of Wheeling residents lies with the Wheeling Park District. The Cook County Forest Preserve District also owns and manages substantial holdings within and along Wheeling's eastern boundary. The role of the Village government is primarily one of support, cooperation and assistance in those situations in which the public interest is best served by the joint work of all governmental units.

GOAL: **A SYSTEM OF HIGH-QUALITY PARK AND OPEN SPACE AREAS THAT MEET THE VARYING RECREATION AND LEISURE INTERESTS OF WHEELING RESIDENTS.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Increase visual and physical access to the Village's significant natural features, including waterways, wetlands and surrounding natural areas.	• Protect and preserve existing natural resources and plan for future open space needs. • Selectively acquire new public open space within floodway and floodplain areas in order to make productive use of flood-prone land. • Consider development of a scenic resources plan that identifies potential for enhancing views of significant natural features and establishes a program of scenic improvements.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Develop a pathway system that connects destinations within the Village and improves links with the regional trail system.	• Work with the Park District and others to create a "greenway" system that combines existing pathways, parks and floodplain areas into a broader, integrated open space system. • Provide open space along waterways to allow for public access and enjoyment. • Explore opportunities to develop bike paths that connect with existing or future bike paths in neighboring communities. • Require new residential developments to connect to the Village's bike path system. • Work with appropriate public and private entities to establish public easements within Commonwealth Edison's right-of-way for open space and recreational purposes.
Ensure that superior park and recreation facilities are available to Wheeling residents.	• Support Park District efforts to ensure that residential neighborhoods are adequately served by neighborhood park facilities. • Work to ensure that lands annexed to the Village are simultaneously annexed to the Park District, whenever possible.

Transportation

Wheeling is located just to the west of the Illinois Tollway and is served by several major arterial streets, including Lake Cook Road, Milwaukee Avenue, Dundee Road and Palatine Road. These heavily traveled roadways serve to provide easy access to regional destinations, but also serve to divide Wheeling as a community. As growth continues in this part of the Chicago metropolitan region, traffic along these roads will inevitably increase. It is important for those traveling within, or through, Wheeling that traffic along major thoroughfares moves smoothly and efficiently with a minimum of back up and congestion. It is equally important, however, to develop local collector routes that provide access to these roads, but also provide alternative routes that allow for easy access trips that begin and end in the Village.

Wheeling is also served by Metra, which provides important alternative to the automobile. The presence of Palwaukee Municipal Airport, which is jointly owned by the Village of Wheeling and the City of Prospect Heights is also an important component of Wheeling's transportation system. Finally, the continued presence of freight rail service has helped to keep Wheeling's status as an industrial center strong.

GOAL: **AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT REINFORCES THE COMMUNITY'S CHARACTER AND PROMOTES ACCESS TO AND FROM THE METROPOLITAN AREA.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Provide safe and efficient circulation within Wheeling.	• Explore opportunities to establish new street connections to facilitate the movement of local traffic within Wheeling. • Enhance circulation in areas where a street grid system is already in place. • Ensure safe crossings across major roads for bikers and pedestrians.
Maintain the safety and efficiency of the Village's street network.	• Promote traffic safety and comfort through improvement, repair and reconstruction of deficient roads including, street lighting and appropriate traffic controls. • Work with IDOT and other funding agencies to undertake road improvement projects to reduce accidents.
Provide an arterial system that facilitates through and cross-town movement while serving all parts of the community.	• Pursue funding for projects that reduce congestion along the regional arterials that traverse the Village. • Be proactive in dealing with the IDOT and other agencies to achieve Wheeling's transportation objectives.
Expand Wheeling's status as a commuter rail center.	• Continue to work with Metra to bring full service to the North Central line. • Promote transit-oriented development around the Metra station.
Encourage a variety of public transit options for Wheeling residents and workers.	• Encourage Pace to establish enhanced connections between Metra and area employers.
Develop and maintain a bikeway system that links Wheeling's community facilities and shopping areas with residential neighborhoods and provides easy access to the regional trail system.	• Explore opportunities to link Wheeling bike paths with the regional trail system by creating new recreational bridges across the Des Plaines River or widening sidewalks along the Dundee Road bridge over the Des Plaines River. • Require provision of public bicycle and pedestrian pathway links to the existing recreational bridge across the Des Plaines River when the stable property along Milwaukee Avenue is redeveloped. • Establish a bike path within the diversion channel right-of-way.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
	• Work with appropriate entities to establish bike paths within Commonwealth Edison right-of-way easements. • Work to establish bicycle and pedestrian path links along Buffalo Creek and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch as private development occurs or easement agreements are reached with property owners. • Investigate grants and other funding sources for bike path construction.
Enhance pedestrian access and safety through infrastructure improvements and modifications.	• Include sidewalk improvements in the Village's capital improvement program. • Acquire land to accommodate the installation of new sidewalks in locations where substandard right-of-way widths currently exist as part of the Village's capital improvement program. • Include pedestrian and bicycle amenities in road improvement projects.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

There are many advantages to smaller units of government, such as those serving Wheeling, not the least of which are increased local control and the greater accessibility to public officials. However, the greater the number of separate governments serving an area, the greater the chance of the duplication of services, uncertain or overlapping areas of responsibility, and the potential waste of tax dollars. By cooperating with the other governmental units serving Wheeling residents, the Village can help to reduce or eliminate these problems.

GOAL: **A COMMUNITY WHERE LOCAL TAX DISTRICTS WORK TOGETHER TO ENHANCE WHEELING'S IMAGE.**	
OBJECTIVES	**POLICIES**
Increase the level of cooperation and communications between all local governments having jurisdiction in Wheeling.	• Support an outstanding educational system that provides a wide range of opportunities. • Support the Wheeling Park District's efforts to enhance park and recreation programs and facilities. • Work with the Indian Trails Library and other service providers to ensure that information services needs are met.

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Establish new ways for local tax districts to work together to enhance the quality of life for Wheeling residents.	• Actively work with other governmental bodies and civic organizations to plan, organize, support and assist with the identification of funding sources for projects that promote and attract quality new development to Wheeling.

3. LAND USE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The purpose of this element of the Comprehensive Plan is to translate the vision statement, and the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and policies into physical terms. It provides a context for the community in terms of existing land use, population, natural resources and the local economy, and provides a general pattern for the location, distribution and characteristics of future land uses over a 20-year planning horizon. Development of the Future Land Use Plan began with consideration of five planning subareas, which included most of the potential redevelopment sites identified during the issues and opportunities analysis. The land use recommendations for these subareas have been incorporated into the Future Land Use Plan presented at the end of this chapter. More detailed image enhancement and streetscape improvement recommendations related to these planning subareas are discussed in Chapter 4. Community Image and Design.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Wheeling's community context is established through the interplay of existing conditions within the Village. This includes the existing land use pattern and development character, natural resources and environmental constraints, the demographic profile of residents, and Wheeling's economic base. These existing conditions establish the framework within which future land use decisions will be made.

Wheeling began its existence as an overnight stop for travelers from Chicago who were headed to the Wisconsin Territory via the overland trail, now known as Milwaukee Avenue (Illinois Route 21). The string of inns, taverns and eateries established in the 1830's was the start of what is now Wheeling's renowned "Restaurant Row."

Farmers took advantage of the area's fertile soil and the expanding overland transportation network. Soon the stage stop community began to export its crops. Later, Wheeling became known for its landscaping nurseries. In step with the growth of Metro Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s, Wheeling emerged as a center for industry and commerce with manufacturing plants that located in industrial districts along the railroad line that bisects the Village. These manufacturers were joined by the large residential subdivisions that form many of Wheeling's residential neighborhoods. Commercial development followed the population growth, locating along Dundee Road and Milwaukee Avenue.

Today, the nurseries and truck farms are nearly gone, and little vacant land remains for development. Industrial uses are still strong, but face increasing regional and global competition. The residential population continues to evolve, and community facilities and services have emerged to meet rising community expectations and technological challenges.

Wheeling residents are a diverse group of people, with ancestries from all over the world, who share a high standard of living. The variety of age and styles of housing stock in the community allows for many choices - from affordable single-family homes in one of Wheeling's older tree-lined neighborhoods to many well-maintained condominium developments to numerous rental apartment complexes that accommodate families of all sizes.

Existing Land Use

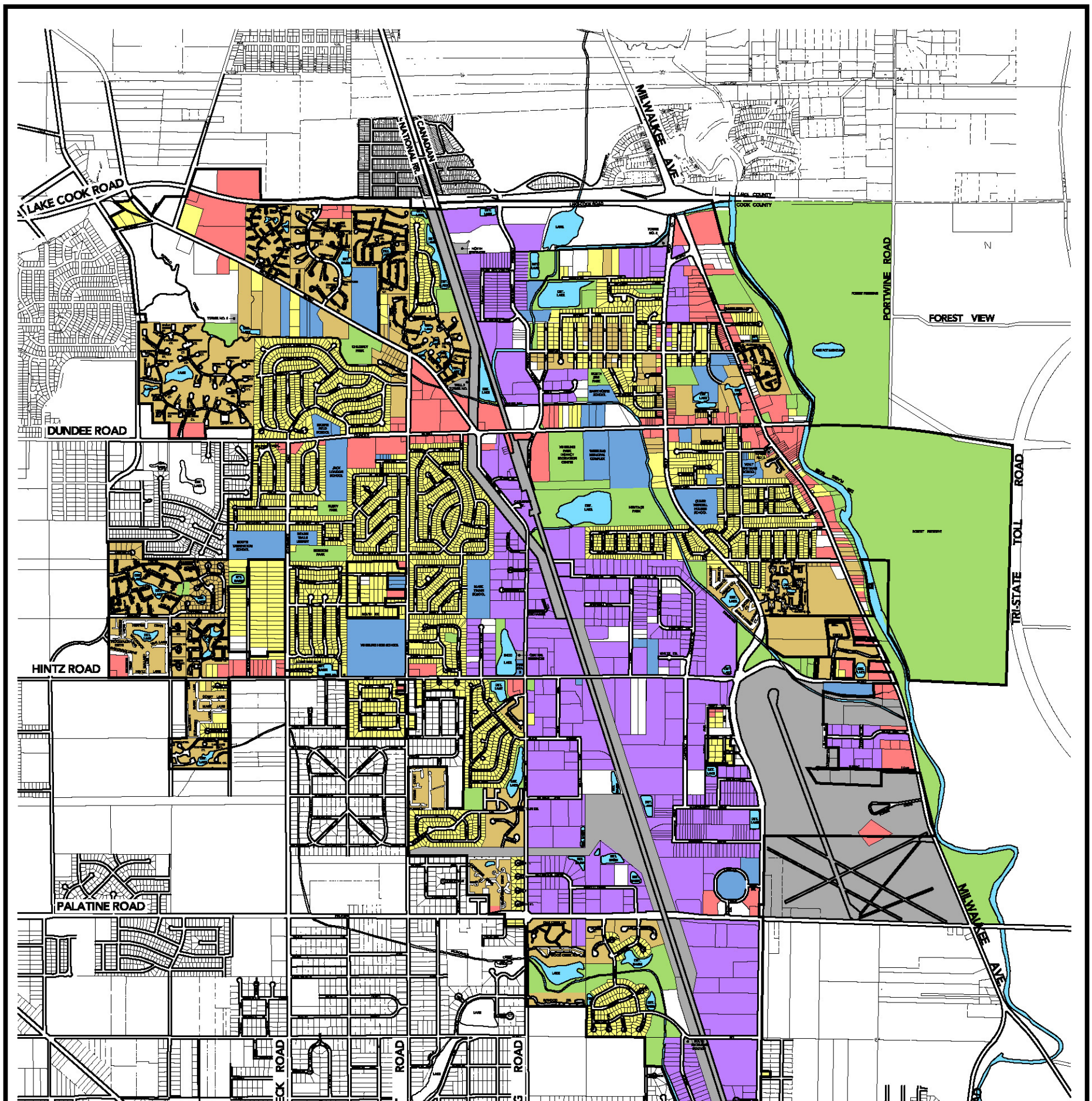
Wheeling features diversity in its land uses as well as in its population. Single-family residential, multi-family residential, industrial, open space and public rights-of-way each account for more than 10% of Wheeling's land area in 2002, as shown in *Table 1: Existing Land Use*. In several cases, land uses differ significantly from the percentages foreseen by Wheeling's 1987 Future Land Use Plan. Commercial uses, for example, account for only 5% of the village's land are in 2002, less than half of the 11% predicted in 1987. Single-family residential and industrial uses also fall short of the 1987 expectations, while multi-family residential and open space exceed the percentages projected in 1987.

Table 1: Existing Land Use

Land Use Category	2002 Existing Land Use Distribution		1987 Future Land Use Plan Projected Land Use
	Acres	% of Total	
Single Family Residential	847	16%	22%
Multi-family Residential	725	13%	9%
Commercial	294	5%	11%
Industrial	992	18%	24%
Transportation & Utilities	428	8%	N/A
Open Space, Rivers & Ponds	839	15%	13%
Public/Institutional	263	5%	5%
Vacant	299	5%	0%
Total Land Use	**4,686**	**86%**	**82%**
Public Right-of-Way	753	14%	18%
Total Incorporated Area	**5,439**	**100%**	**100%**

Wheeling's existing land use pattern is shown in *Figure 1: Existing Land Use Map*. Industrial uses occupy the largest percentage of land in Wheeling, with 18% of the Village's total land area. The Village's residential areas are bisected by this large industrial center. The railroad tracks and Commonwealth Edison utilities lines, which run through the center of the industrial corridor, reinforce this division.

Residential development patterns reflect the types of development products being promoted in the decades since World War II. The large single-family subdivisions were mostly platted in the 1950s and 1960s. Townhouse developments began to be approved in the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1990, there has been a mix of single-family, townhouse and mid-rise condominium developments on a variety of infill development sites scattered throughout the Village.



LEGEND

- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES
- OPEN SPACE
- RIVERS & PONDS
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL
- VACANT

DATE: JULY 2003
SCALE: 1"=2500'

0' 1250' 2500' 5000'

NORTH

Figure 1:
EXISTING LAND USE MAP

Village of Wheeling — Wheeling, Illinois

CAMIROS
Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Landscape Architecture
411 South Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607 Phone: (312) 922-9211

Wheeling's commercial corridors are primarily located along Dundee Road and Milwaukee Avenue, with commercial nodes also located along Hintz Road, Wolf Road, and Lake Cook Road. The intersection of Lake Cook and Weiland Roads has emerged as a "big box" center with Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and Target all represented. Among the commercial land use issues that are likely to come before the Village in the near term is the future of the Kmart site located at the Corner of Dundee and Elmhurst Road; this store closed in 2002 in response to Kmart's bankruptcy filing.

About 14% of Wheeling's land area consists of streets and other public rights-of-way. Not included in this total are an additional 428 acres of land devoted to railroad lines and Commonwealth Edison utility lines, and the portion of Palwaukee Municipal Airport that lies within Wheeling's corporate limits.

The 15% of Wheeling's land area containing open space, rivers and ponds includes both formal and informal open space that is publicly and privately owned. The Wheeling Park District, Cook County Forest Preserve District and Village of Wheeling are the principal owners of publicly held open space. The balance of the community's open space includes stormwater detention facilities and other open space areas associated with large-scale private developments. The Public/Institutional land use category includes Village facilities, public and private schools, the Indian Trails Public Library, the National-Louis University campus, churches, nursing homes and retirement centers.

Limited amounts of vacant land are scattered throughout the Village. The three largest pockets include: 1) the Schwind and Horcher properties along Buffalo Grove Road and McHenry Road in the northwest corner of the Village, 2) land south of Lake Cook Road between Wolf Road and Northgate Parkway, and 3) property on the north side of Dundee Road between the railroad tracks and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch.

Natural Resources

The Des Plaines River, and the other tributaries that lace Wheeling, form the framework for Wheeling's natural areas. While most of Wheeling's land area has been developed for many years, there are a few natural areas located along the Des Plaines River and protected by virtue of being part of the Cook County Forest Preserve system. There are also several large parcels that are still agricultural in use. However, these parcels of land are expected to eventually be developed.

The Village of Wheeling has several floodways and floodplains within its corporate limits. The majority of flood problems are associated with the Wheeling Drainage Ditch, although there is also periodic flooding of the Des Plaines River. The floodplains and floodways throughout the Village have a number of structures located in them.

Buildings located in the floodplain include the Village Hall and Public Works Buildings, as well as a number of businesses and schools. The Village has recognized the flooding problems and has implemented a number of measures to alleviate the financial losses associated with flooding, which include:

- Joining the National Flood Insurance Program so that property owners could purchase flood insurance to protect their properties from losses due to flooding.
- Adopting floodplain development regulations.
- Preparing an abbreviated flood hazard mitigation plan and flood response plan as part of this Comprehensive Plan.

Wheeling's mapped floodways and floodplains, based on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (revised in 2000), are shown in *Figure 2: Floodplain Map*. Some areas of ongoing flooding and persistent ponding have also been included on the map. Village Public Works staff identified these areas. A series of maps for Wheeling were digitized into the Village's base map so they could be overlaid for planning purposes.

Although these are the most recent maps available, subsequent work has already altered the location of the floodplain at the Wheeling Drainage Ditch near the airport. Also, the floodplain south of Lake-Cook Road has been connected to the Des Plaines River. The extent of these changes and their impact on Wheeling Drainage Ditch's floodplain through the Village has not yet been established. One result of these improvements is the potential reduction in flood heights through the Village, which may be formally realized by obtaining a Letter of Map Revision for the improved areas.

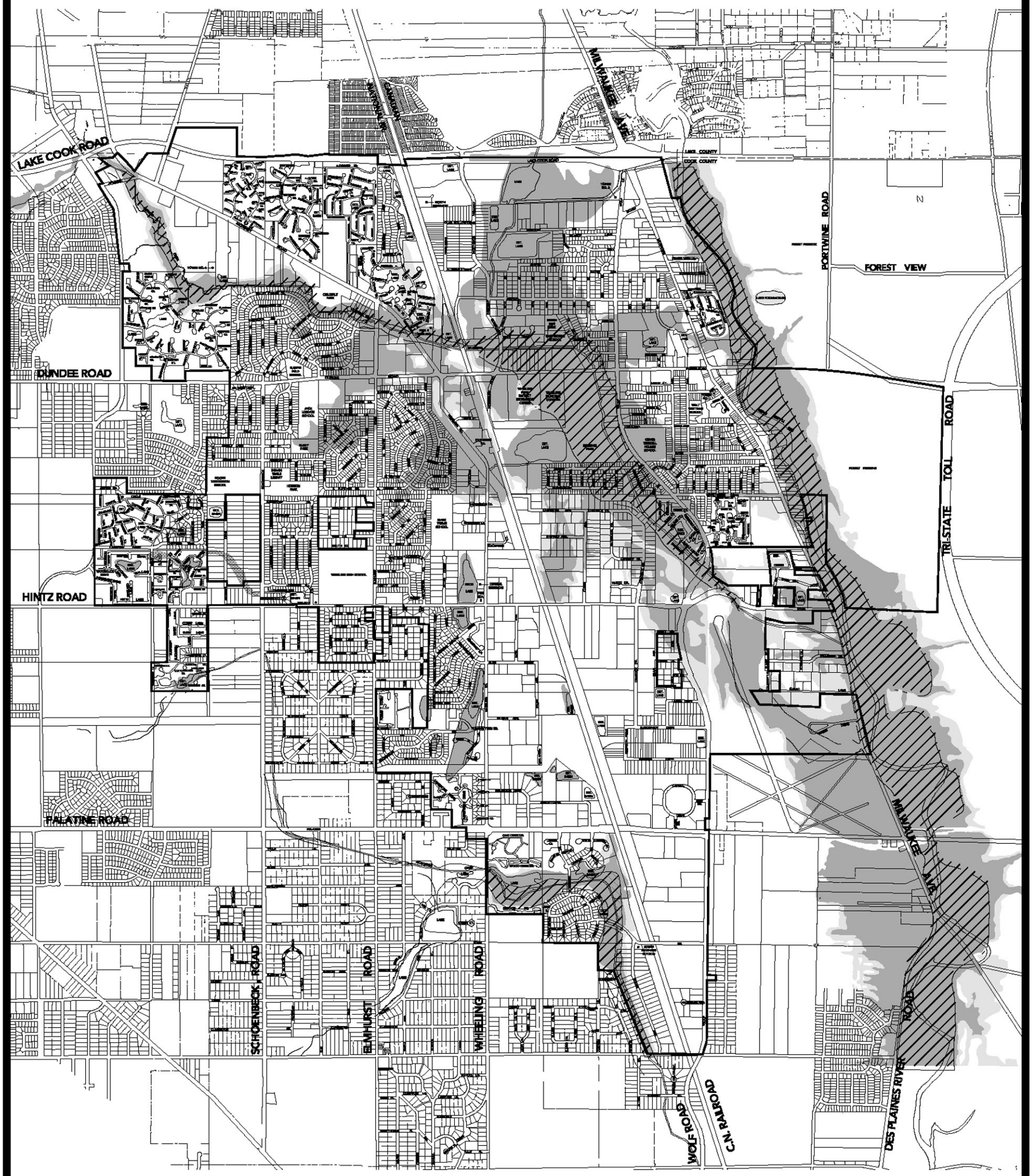
Population

As *Figure 3: Wheeling Population Growth* shows, the Village of Wheeling's population has experienced significant yet steady growth. New residential development is expected to continue to occur over the next two decades. However, the trend toward smaller household size may offset an increased number of housing units. As a result, Wheeling's future population growth is expected to occur at a much slower pace than in the past.

Figure 4: Age Profile of Residents shows how Wheeling's population has changed between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, the largest age group was 25 to 34 years old, with a higher percentage of preschool age children than reported in the 2000 U.S. Census. This composition reflects young families, most likely choosing Wheeling as a place to start their families because of its affordable housing stock. The population profile in 2000 is much more evenly distributed across all age groups, with the largest percentage growth occurring in the 45 to 54 year old category.

Over the ten-year period from 1990 to 2000, racial diversity within the Village of Wheeling increased. The Black/African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latino populations have experienced significant growth over the past decade. When compared with the neighboring municipalities of Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Mount Prospect, Northbrook and Prospect Heights, both the Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino populations have grown more than in any of the other communities, at a rate of 57.8% and 64.8%, respectively. The Black/African-American population has also grown significantly, with an increase of 40.6% that places Wheeling behind only Northbrook. In general, all the comparison communities have shown a greater diversity from 1990 to 2000; Wheeling is no exception.

In addition to racial diversity, Wheeling features a high degree of ethnic diversity. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, almost one-third of Wheeling residents (31.4%) are foreign-born, and a majority of these foreign-born residents are recent immigrants, having entered the United States during the 1990s. The origin of these residents is diverse as well: 31.6% came from Europe, 24.0% from Asia, and 42.9% from Latin America. Nearly 40% of Wheeling residents speak a language other than English at home, as might be expected from such a cosmopolitan population.



LEGEND

- FLOODWAY
- 100 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
- 500 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
- PROBLEM AREAS

DATE: JULY 2003

SCALE: 1"=2500'

0' 1250' 2500' 5000'

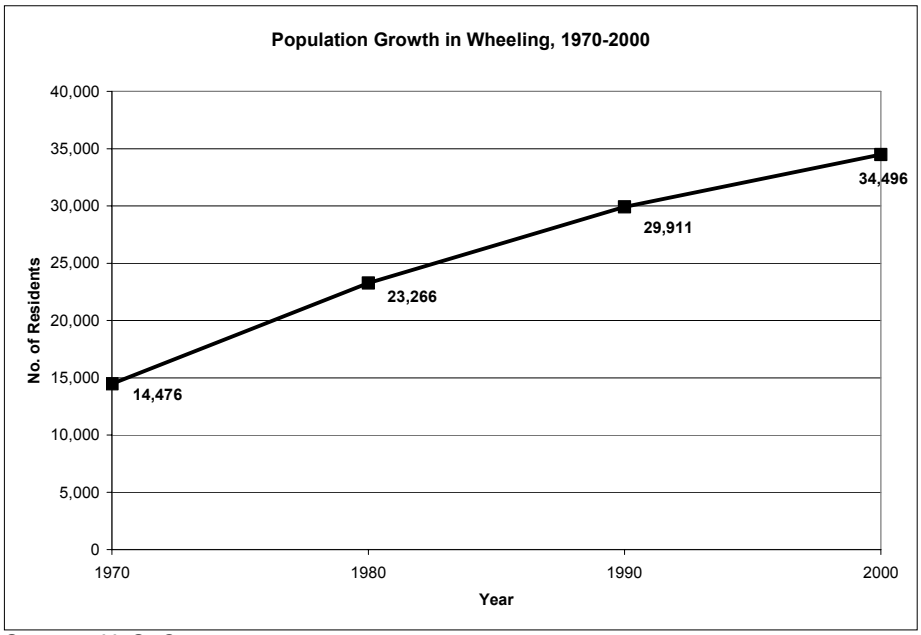
NORTH

Figure 2:
FLOOD PLAIN MAP

Wheeling Comprehensive Plan **Wheeling, Illinois**

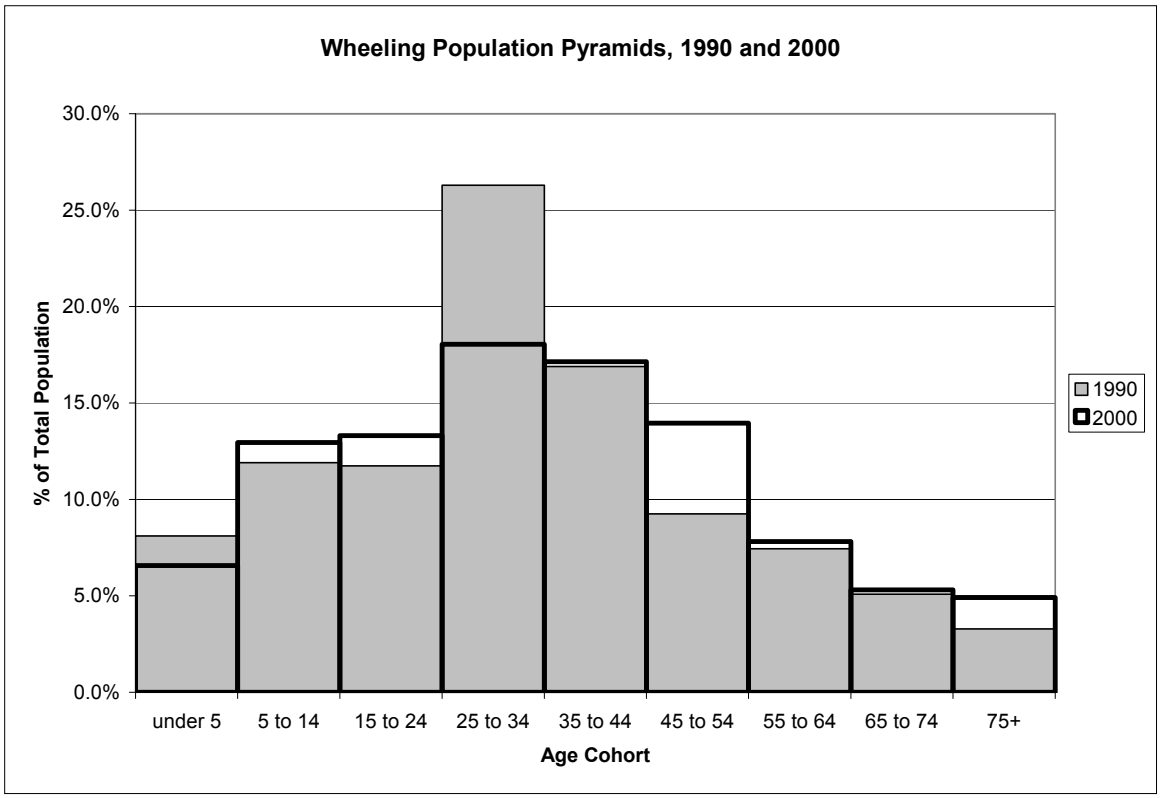
CAMIROS
Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Landscape Architecture
411 South Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607 Phone: (312) 922-9211

Figure 3: Wheeling Population Growth



Source: U. S. Census

Figure 4: Age Profile of Residents



Source: U.S. Census

Table 2: Racial Characteristics

Race	Wheeling		Arlington Heights		Buffalo Grove		Mount Prospect		Northbrook		Prospect Heights	
	Total (%)		Total (%)		Total (%)		Total (%)		Total (%)		Total (%)	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
White	25,512 (85.2%)	22,892 (66.4%)	70,124 (92.9%)	66,612 (87.6%)	33,756 (92.6%)	37,121 (86.5%)	45,722 (86.0%)	41,548 (73.8%)	29,654 (91.8%)	29,346 (87.8%)	12,178 (79.8%)	11,139 (65.2%)
1990-2000 % Change	*-11.4%*		*-5.3%*		*+9.1%*		*-9.1%*		*-1.0%*		*-9.3%*	
Black or African-American	475 (1.6%)	799 (2.3%)	467 (0.6%)	706 (0.9%)	366 (1.0%)	317 (0.7%)	559 (1.1%)	979 (1.7%)	65 (0.2%)	190 (0.6%)	232 (1.5%)	272 (1.6%)
1990-2000 % Change	*+40.6%*		*+33.9%*		*-15.5%*		*+42.9%*		*+65.8%*		*+14.7%*	
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut or Alaska Native	48 (0.2%)	35 (0.1%)	49 (0.1%)	35 (0%)	24 (0.1%)	16 (0%)	62 (0.1%)	41 (0.1%)	11 (0%)	8 (0%)	10 (0.1%)	18 (0.1%)
1990-2000 % Change	*-37.1%*		*-40.0%*		*-50.0%*		*-51.2%*		*-37.5%*		*-80.0%*	
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,351 (4.5%)	3,201 (9.3%)	2,755 (3.7%)	4,556 (6.0%)	1,566 (4.3%)	3,618 (8.4%)	3,376 (6.3%)	6,300 (11.2%)	2,059 (6.4%)	2,955 (8.8%)	618 (4.1%)	752 (4.4%)
1990-2000 % Change	*+57.8%*		*+39.5%*		*+56.7%*		*+46.4%*		*+30.3%*		*+17.8%*	
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	2,508 (8.4%)	7,135 (20.7%)	2,046 (2.7%)	3,393 (4.5%)	711 (2.0%)	1,425 (3.4%)	3,411 (6.4%)	6,620 (11.8%)	510 (1.6%)	616 (1.8%)	2,190 (14.4%)	4,711 (27.6%)
1990-2000 % Change	*+64.8%*		*+39.7%*		*+50.1%*		*+48.5%*		*+17.2%*		*+53.5%*	
Other Race	17 (0.1%)	43 (0.1%)	19 (0%)	68 (0.1%)	4 (0%)	44 (0.1%)	40 (0.1%)	43 (0.1%)	9 (0%)	30 (0.1%)	11 (0.1%)	6 (0%)
1990-2000 % Change	*+60.5%*		*+72.1%*		*+90.9%*		*+7.0%*		*+70.0%*		*-83.3%*	
Two or More Races[1]	n/a	391 (1.1%)	n/a	661 (0.9%)	n/a	368 (0.9%)	n/a	734 (1.3%)	n/a	290 (0.9%)	n/a	183 (1.1%)
1990-2000 % Change	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a	
Total Population	**29,911 (100%)**	**34,496 (100%)**	**75,460 (100%)**	**76,031 (100%)**	**36,427 (100%)**	**42,909 (100%)**	**53,170 (100%)**	**56,265 (100%)**	**32,308 (100%)**	**33,435 (100%)**	**15,239 (100%)**	**17,081 (100%)**
1990-2000 % Change	***+13.3%***		***+0.8%***		***+15.1%***		***+5.5%***		***+30.4%***		***+10.8%***	

Source: U.S. Census

[1] 1990 U.S. Census does not have a racial category that allows those persons of more than one race to identify themselves as such.

The Census classifies households as either "family" or "non-family." Family households are comprised of two or more related people. Non-family households include single individuals or two or more unrelated people who share a housing unit. Wheeling experienced a slight increase in the total number of households between 1990 and 2000 (see *Table 3: Household Types*). In 1990, 63.2% of Wheeling's households were "family" compared with 63.7% in 2000. Prospect Heights experienced a similar increase (from 66.8% to 69.5%). The neighboring communities of Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Mount Prospect, and Northbrook all saw a drop in the percentage of "family" households in their communities. Non-family households in Wheeling decreased slightly – from 36.8% of households to 36.3%. Again, Prospect Heights experienced a drop in the percentage of "non-family" households, while percentages for the other communities increased. In general, the Village of Wheeling's household composition has remained consistent, even with increases in total population and number of households.

Table 3: Household Types

Household Types	Wheeling Total (%)		Arlington Heights Total (%)		Buffalo Grove Total (%)	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Family Households	7,880 (63.2%)	8,454 (63.7%)	20,644 (71.7%)	20,531 (66.7%)	10,018 (75.1%)	11,663 (74.2%)
Non-Family Households	4,588 (36.8%)	4,826 (36.3%)	8,166 (28.3%)	10,232 (33.3%)	3,317 (24.9%)	4,045 (25.8%)
Total Households	**12,468 (100%)**	**13,280 (100%)**	**28,810 (100%)**	**30,763 (100%)**	**13,335 (100%)**	**15,708 (100%)**

Household Types	Mount Prospect Total (%)		Northbrook Total (%)		Prospect Heights Total (%)	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Family Households	14,570 (71.8%)	15,163 (70.2%)	9,391 (82.4%)	9,682 (79.3%)	4,033 (66.8%)	4,432 (69.5%)
Non-Family Households	5,711 (28.2%)	6,422 (29.8%)	2,000 (17.6%)	2,521 (20.7%)	2,005 (33.2%)	1,947 (30.5%)
Total Households	**20,281 (100%)**	**21,585 (100%)**	**11,391 (100%)**	**12,203 (100%)**	**6,038 (100%)**	**6,379 (100%)**

Source: U.S. Census

Census figures also reveal that Wheeling is a stable community. More than half (51.4%) of residents reported living in the same house in 2000 as they did in 1995. 30% of Wheeling residents moved to their house from another place within Wheeling or Cook County between 1995 and 2000, while 10.3% moved from another county in the state, or another state. The remaining residents, 8.3%, lived elsewhere in 1995.

A similar statistic confirms Wheeling's residential stability. 12.3% of Wheeling residents moved into their housing unit in 1979 or earlier, 16.4% moved in between 1980 and 1989, and 18.8% between 1990 and 1994.

Table 4: Household Income compares the distribution of household incomes in 1990 and 2000. Median household income rose from $39,848 in 1990 to $55,491 in 2000. While the percentage of households with incomes below $10,000 annually remained steady at about 5% of all households, there was a steady shift to the higher income brackets among the remaining households.

Table 4: Household Income

	1990 Total (%)			2000 Total (%)		
	Total Households	**Family Households**	**Non-Family Households**	**Households**	**Family Households**	**Non-Family Households**
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	**12,495 (100.0%)**	**7,992 (100.0%)**	**4,503 (100.0%)**	**13,237 (100.0%)**	**8,456**	**n/a**
Less than $5,000	213 (1.7%)	79 (1.0%)	144 (3.2%)	662 (5.0%)	137 (1.6%)	n/a
$5,000 - $9,999	399 (3.2%)	77 (1.0%)	312 (6.9%)			
$10,000 - $14,999	508 (4.1%)	208 (2.6%)	300 (6.7%)	350 (2.6%)	99 (1.2%)	n/a
$15,000 - $24,999	1,432 (11.5%)	613 (7.7%)	886 (19.7%)	988 (7.5%)	513 (6.1%)	n/a
$25,000 - $34,999	2,475 (19.8%)	1,488 (18.6%)	979 (21.7%)	1,278 (9.7%)	696 (8.2%)	n/a
$35,000 - $49,999	3,503 (28.0%)	2,359 (29.5%)	1,148 (25.5%)	2,452 (18.5%)	1,383 (16.4%)	n/a
$50,000 - $74,999	2,700 (21.6%)	2,142 (26.7%)	543 (12.1%)	3,476 (26.3%)	2,463 (29.1%)	n/a
$75,000 - $99,999	836 (6.7%)	709 (8.8%)	85 (1.9%)	2,105 (15.9%)	1,657 (19.6%)	n/a
$100,000 - $149,999	335 (2.6%)	247 (3.1%)	82 (1.8%)	1,333 (10.1%)	1,058 (12.5%)	n/a
Above $150,000	94 (0.8%)	70 (1.0%)	24 (0.5%)	593 (4.5%)	450 (5.4%)	n/a
Median Income	**$39,848**	**$44,966**	**$31,181**	**$55,491**	**$63,088**	n/a

Source: US Census

Local Economy

Wheeling's economy is split almost evenly between the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors, with approximately 48% of employees working within manufacturing and 52% working within non-manufacturing. *Table 5: Employment* shows the distribution of Wheeling's industries, as well as those of the neighboring communities. Among the comparison communities (Prospect Heights was excluded because no data was available), Wheeling is the only community to display this balance.

The majority of employees within the manufacturing sector in Wheeling work in the industry categories of industrial machinery and equipment (2,296 employees), fabricated metals (1,546 employees), printing and publishing (1,473 employees), and rubber and plastics (963 employees). In the category of industrial machinery and equipment, Wheeling dominates with the largest number of persons employed in that line of work compared to the other communities.

The majority of employees within the non-manufacturing sector work in the categories of wholesale trade (3,166 employees), retail trade (2,332 employees) and contract construction (2,159 employees). In Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove and Mount Prospect, retail trade is the dominant non-manufacturing industry, followed by the prominence of the finance/insurance/real estate and business services industries. Again, Wheeling's primary non-manufacturing industry (wholesale trade) assumes the greatest percentage of non-manufacturing employees (27%), more so than the other communities.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Wheeling's resident workforce totals 19,329, slightly lower than the number of jobs found in Wheeling. Of this total, 3,974 worked in manufacturing, 873 worked in wholesale trade, and 2,604 worked in retail trade. The balance of Wheeling residents worked in construction, transportation, communications and a variety of service sectors.

In theory, every employed Wheeling resident could find a job within the Village. However, in reality, the jobs available within a community and the skill set of residents seldom match. *Table 6: Jobs to Household Ratio* contains a ratio of the number of jobs within a municipality divided by the total number of households within that municipality. What this ratio measures is the job-housing balance in the community. Communities with a ratio of less than one are net exporters of workers, while those with a ratio over two are net importers. Wheeling, with a jobs-per-household ratio of 1.7, is similar to Arlington Heights. While this ratio does not determine whether people who live in a community work within that same community, it is a good indicator that Wheeling's economy has a good balance between employment and housing.

Table 5: Employment

INDUSTRY	Wheeling	Arlington Heights	Buffalo Grove	Mount Prospect	Northbrook
ALL INDUSTRIES	**22,678**	**53,982**	**17,679**	**16,783**	**46,777**
Manufacturing Total	**10,800**	**15,672**	**4,793**	**2,188**	**6,609**
Durable Goods	***6,541***	***12,967***	***3,311***	***1,488***	***4,257***
Lumber & Wood (24)	*	*	*	*	7
Furniture & Fixtures (25)	48	96	0	0	*
Stone, Clay, Glass (32)	209	16	0	*	69
Primary Metals (33)	750	56	*	*	*
Fabricated Metals (34)	1,546	367	*	311	341
Industrial Machinery & Equipment (35)	2,296	963	646	670	1,168
Electronic Machinery (36)	728	*	167	271	2,041
Transportation Equipment (37)	275	*	*	0	0
Instruments & Related Products (38)	443	301	*	81	242
Misc. Manufacturing (39)	77	*	*	*	310
Nondurable Goods	***4,259***	***2,705***	***1,482***	***700***	***2,352***
Food & Kindred Products (20)	729	*	*	*	483
Apparel Products (23)	*	*	0	*	62
Paper & Allied Products (26)	647	*	0	0	72
Printing & Publishing (27)	1,473	1,382	465	144	1,224
Chemical & Allied Products (28)	422	409	*	281	204
Petroleum & Coal Products (29)	0	*	0	0	0
Rubber & Plastics (30)	963	493	*	*	296
Other Nondurables (21, 22, 31)	*	18	*	*	*

Table 5: Employment (cont'd)

INDUSTRY	Wheeling	Arlington Heights	Buffalo Grove	Mount Prospect	Northbrook
Non-Manufacturing	**11,876**	**38,278**	**12,845**	**14,567**	**40,086**
Mining & Quarrying (10-14)	0	0	0	0	0
Contract Construction (15-17)	2,159	2,844	681	1,106	2,409
Transportation (40-47)	1,170	707	551	374	2,003
Communications & Utilities (48, 49)	185	527	96	518	290
Wholesale Trade (50, 51)	3,166	4,093	1,670	2,042	3,713
Retail Trade (52-59)	2,332	7,173	4,201	5,422	6,397
Finance – Insurance – Real Estate (60-67)	295	2,839	662	914	9,927
Business Services (73)	780	4,787	1,148	1,764	2,573
Health Services (80)	450	6,321	814	431	1,953
Engineering, Management & Related Services (87)	244	4,413	1,073	378	5,021
Misc. & All Other Services (01-09, 70-72, 74-79, 81-86, 88, 89)	1,095	4,574	1,860	1,618	5,800
Nonclassified Establishments	*	**32**	**37**	**28**	**82**

* Figures omitted to avoid disclosure of individual firm data by the Illinois Department of Employment Security.
Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security (March 2000)
Note: The March 2000 report was chosen to allow comparison with the data provided by the 2000 U.S. Census.

Table 6: Jobs to Household Ratio

Municipality	Household Size (2000)	Employment (March 2000)	Households (2000)	Jobs Per Household
Wheeling	**2.57**	**22,678**	13,280	**1.7**
Arlington Heights	2.44	53,982	30,763	1.8
Buffalo Grove	2.72	17,679	15,708	1.1
Mount Prospect	2.60	16,783	21,585	0.8
Northbrook	2.68	46,777	12,203	3.8

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security & US Census

PLANNING SUBAREAS

The development of future land use recommendations for potential redevelopment sites within the Village was structured through an evaluation of five planning subareas identified by the Plan Commission. These five sites included most of the identified redevelopment sites and those portions of Dundee Road and Milwaukee Avenue identified as the focus of corridor improvement recommendations. These subareas are identified in *Figure 5: Planning Subarea Map*. Because development decisions that are made for one site within the subarea may affect the development potential of other nearby sites, it is important to consider the overall development objectives for each subarea within the context of the community as a whole. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to each of the five subareas were summarized as a series of development issues. Subarea plans were presented to the Plan Commission in a series of workshop sessions. In some instances, the initial land use and improvement recommendations were modified and the resulting land use decisions are reflected in the Future Land Use Plan presented in the next section of this chapter. More detailed concept plans for particular redevelopment sites within the subareas are also included, in some cases, in order to present ideas for redevelopment that address site design and land use issues. These notions offer valuable insights into redevelopment and can be useful in considering actual redevelopment proposals. However, these detailed plans do not represent firm plans or policy for development, and are illustrative only.

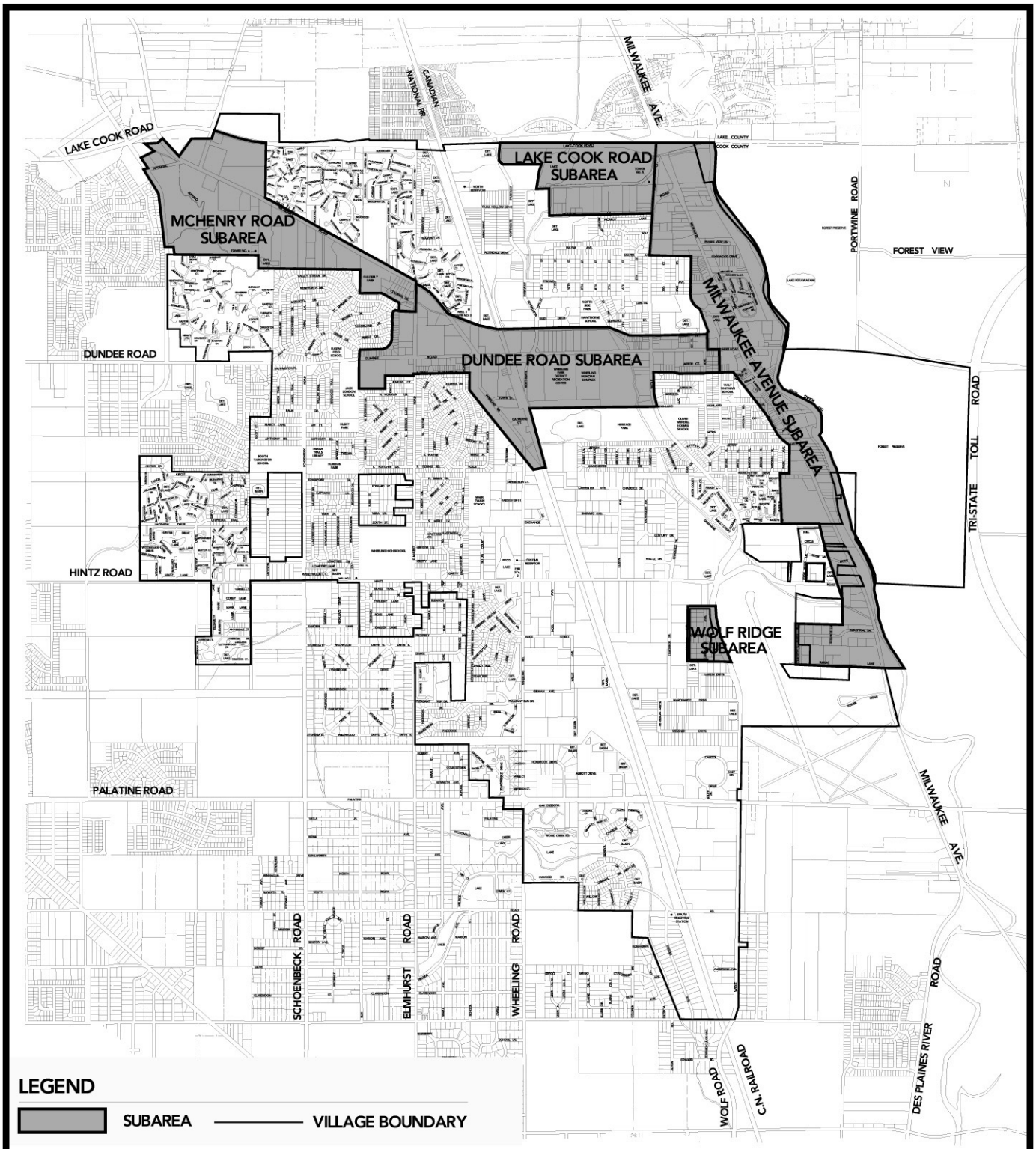


Figure 5:

PLANNING SUBAREA MAP

Village of Wheeling

Wheeling, Illinois

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Milwaukee Avenue Subarea

Boundaries: The Milwaukee Avenue planning subarea is generally bounded by Lake Cook Road on the north, the Des Plaines River on the east, Palwaukee Airport on the south, and the Wolf Road/Milwaukee Avenue frontage on the west. It is adjacent to Lake Cook Road Subarea and Dundee Road Subarea. It includes portions of the proposed North Milwaukee Avenue/Lake Cook Road TIF district as well as most of the Crossroads TIF district. All of the South Milwaukee Avenue/Manchester Drive Area TIF district is contained within the Milwaukee Avenue Subarea boundaries.

Existing Land Use Mix: The current land use pattern includes a mix of commercial, industrial, residential and open space uses that vary both in terms of age and condition of structures. While significant new development has occurred or is underway, including the 1 Milwaukee Place development and the new Kimball-Hill residential development, there are many other potential redevelopment sites within the subarea.

Land Use and Development Issues:

- One of the key development issues for the Milwaukee Avenue corridor is how to project a stronger and more cohesive image as the "Restaurant Row" entertainment area.
- The industrial uses along Wolf Road where it intersects with Milwaukee Avenue are not generally consistent with the emerging development pattern that emphasizes restaurants and high-end residential development.
- How can the proximity to and recreational potential of the Des Plaines River and Forest Preserve be maximized?
- In certain areas, shallow lot depths limit the commercial development potential along Milwaukee Avenue.
- The land use plans contained within the established TIF districts establish the range of uses that can be supported with TIF funds. Typically, various types of mixed-use designations are used to preserve development flexibility over the life of the TIF. Where a specific land use is established, TIF funds cannot be used to assist other types of development. For example, the Crossroads TIF District designates the Arbor Court area for multi-family residential and the Cole Taylor Bank property for commercial use, which precludes their redevelopment for other types of development using TIF funds. (Redevelopment that does not involve TIF funds, however, is not precluded.) While in theory, TIF land use plans can be amended, in practice, given current notice requirements for all property owners within the district as well as adjacent residents, it is probably cost prohibitive to amend the Crossroads TIF. Any changes to the South Milwaukee Avenue/Manchester Drive TIF would need to be made before units in the Kimball-Hill development are sold and there are substantial numbers of new property owners.
- South of the Kimball-Hill development, the Village boundaries are irregular with much of the Milwaukee Avenue frontage remaining unincorporated and outside of the Village's jurisdiction and control. The current mix of unattractive and generally obsolete uses creates a negative image as travelers enter the Village from the south.

Figure 6: Milwaukee Avenue Land Use Policy Plan describes the land use and planning recommendations proposed for this corridor. Key recommendations include:

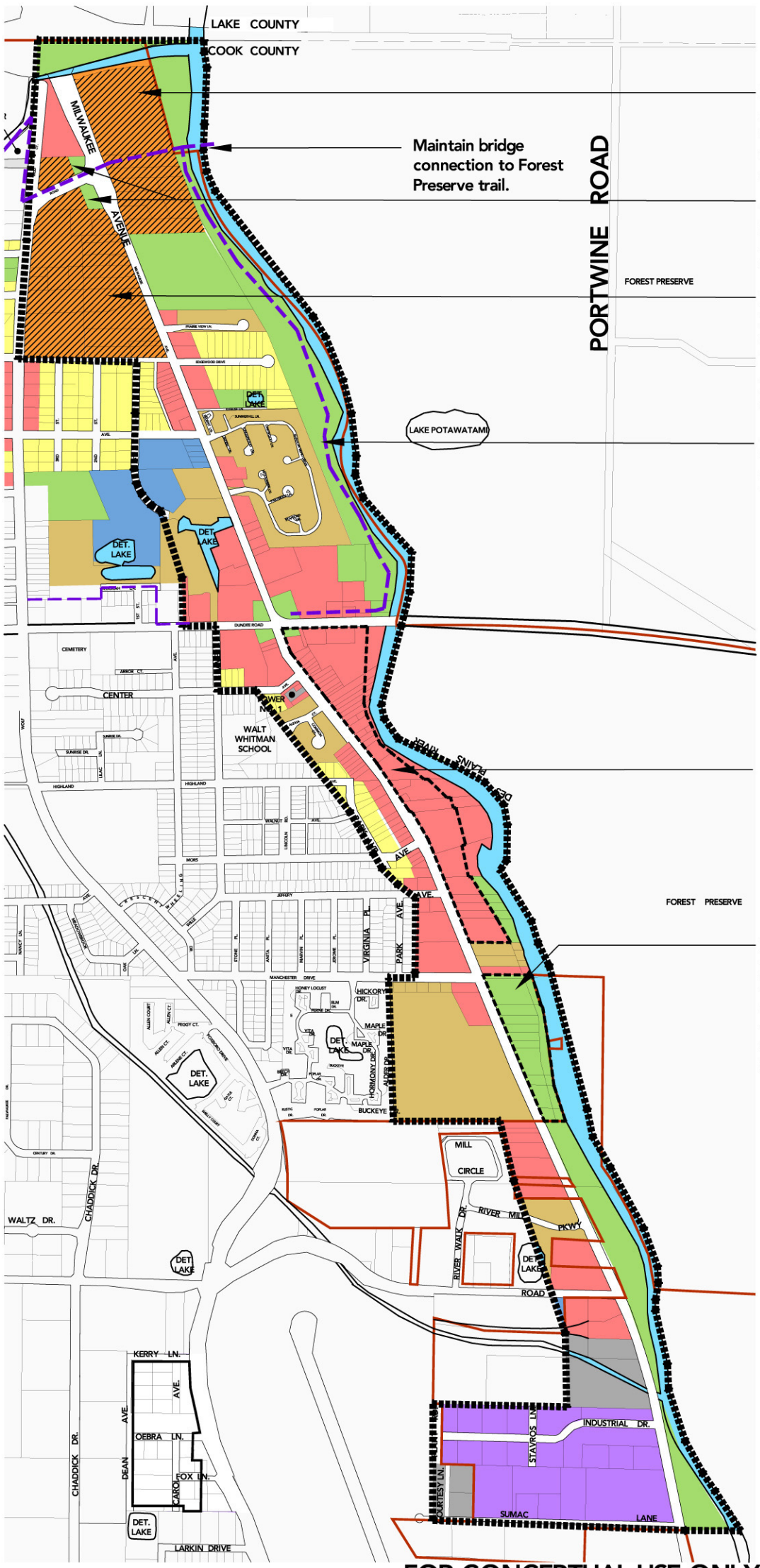

Figure 6:

MILWAUKEE AVENUE - LAND USE POLICY PLAN

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1. The proximity to, and recreational potential of, the Des Plaines River and Forest Preserve can be maximized through the development of a riverwalk or recreational trail along the west side of the Des Plaines River, north of Dundee Road. While the Village has previously explored development of a riverwalk south of Dundee Road, there is little land available along the river with which to work. Accordingly, it is recommended that south of Dundee Road a pedestrian path be established along the east side of Milwaukee Avenue. This path and associated landscaping would help enhance and unify the Restaurant Row area south of Dundee Road. Recommendations for streetscape design are address below.

2. One of the key redevelopment sites is located on the northern edge of the subarea between Milwaukee Avenue and the Des Plaines River. This site is comprised a riding stable and several underutilized commercial properties. This site is designated for Commercial/Residential Mixed Use. The access and visibility provided by Milwaukee Avenue make the site suitable for commercial use while its proximity to the river and forest preserve make it suitable for residential use (multi-family). One possible development alternative is illustrated in *Figure 7: Milwaukee Avenue/Wolf Road Redevelopment Concept Plan*. This plan illustrates a combination of hotel and commercial recreation use. The site might be suitable for a hotel given its location at a major intersection and its proximity to the river and forest preserve. The commercial recreation use would be a complement to the hotel use and would benefit from the adjacent forest preserve. It should be stressed that this concept plan is but one of several development concepts that would be appropriate for the site. The development of this concept, as with any development plan, would need to be market-tested to determine its financial feasibility and the degree to which public subsidies could be required to attract such a development.

3. Just to the south on the west side of Milwaukee Avenue is another potential redevelopment area, which also has frontage on Wolf Road. This area currently contains a mix of industrial, restaurant and office uses. While some of the current uses remain economically viable, this area does not represent the highest and best use of the land and could be redeveloped as a commercial/residential mixed use area with specialty retail shops and residential units on the upper levels. Such redevelopment would also provide an opportunity to establish a new street linking Milwaukee Avenue and Wolf Road. *Figure 7: Milwaukee Avenue/Wolf Road Redevelopment Concept Plan* also illustrates this proposal and delineates existing viable uses to remain as well as moderately obsolete uses that would be suited for redevelopment.

4. The portion of the Milwaukee Avenue corridor between Manchester Avenue and Palwaukee Municipal Airport at the south end of the Village is one of Wheeling's biggest challenges in terms of future land use. The current land use mix includes single-family houses, a mobile home park, old and new multi-family developments, and a variety of commercial, industrial and airport uses. The Village's corporate boundaries are irregular along this portion of the corridor, which limits Wheeling's ability to control the future development and ensure that the existing developments are properly maintained. The Future Land Use Plan calls for a more consistent land use pattern with commercial uses along the west side of Milwaukee Avenue, except for property along Industrial Drive, where industrial and airport-related uses are recommended.

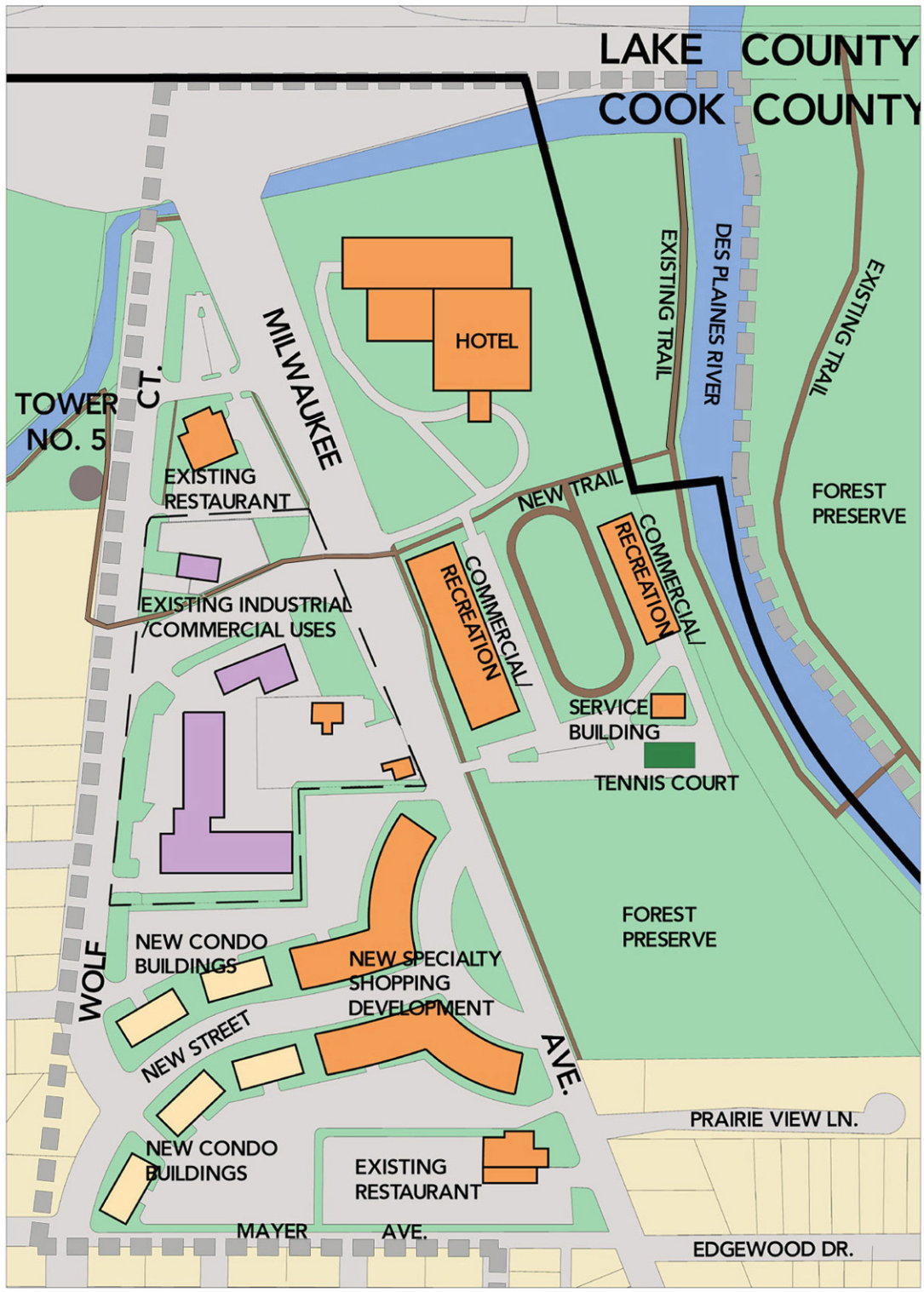

Figure 7:

MILWAUKEE AVENUE/WOLF ROAD REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

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Lake Cook Road Subarea

Boundaries: The Lake Cook Road Subarea includes the Lake Cook Road frontage between Wolf Road and Northgate Parkway, generally extending south to Meadow Lane. It abuts the Milwaukee Avenue Subarea along Wolf Road and includes the balance of the proposed North Milwaukee Avenue/Lake Cook Road TIF district. This subarea is located immediately north of the Picardy Lane single-family residential subdivision.

Existing Land Use Mix: This subarea contains a mix of vacant land, obsolete industrial property and older single and multi-family residential uses. The new diversion channel, property acquired by the Village for flood control management and the Village's water tower number 5 are also included in the land use mix. There is a vacant industrial site located at the southeast corner of Lake Cook Road and Northgate Parkway. A luxury multi-family development is currently under consideration for the Semmerling Fence industrial property. The largest potential development parcel is known as the Johnson Property. It is approximately 60 acres in size and includes an existing pond that is approximately 13 acres in size as well as significant wetland and floodplain areas. Wolf Court and Northgate Parkway located at either end of the subarea provide the only public access. Wolf Count dead ends at the diversion channel, while Northgate Parkway links Lake Cook and Dundee Road with signalized intersections. Meadow Lane is an unimproved single lane private access drive that provides access to the existing residential properties located in the southern portion of the subarea.

Land Use and Development Issues:

- Existing soil conditions, floodplain and wetland areas may significantly limit development potential within the subarea. (The full extent of such limitations cannot be fully assessed without specific site analyses.)
- Existing public right-of-way does not provide access to all properties within the subarea.
- The current configuration of the Wolf Road/Wolf Court intersection should be considered when making land use decisions with respect to this area. Given the awkward circulation pattern that presently exists uses that are likely to generate high volumes of traffic should be avoided.
- The grade-separated crossing at Milwaukee Avenue adversely impacts the development potential of the Johnson Property despite its location along Lake Cook Road.
- While the property along Lake Cook Road has a high degree of visibility, the land south of the diversion channel is much more isolated.

Figure 8: Lake Cook Road Subarea Plan provides detailed land use analysis and recommendations for specific sites within subarea. The recommendations reflect broad land use policies emphasized in workshop meetings during the planning process. Chief among these policies is to encourage new single-family residential development, especially development suitable for the "move-up" market. Accordingly, the plan calls for significant areas of single-family residential use, as shown in the subarea plan. The concept plan also calls for the redevelopment of obsolete industrial uses along Wolf Road for multi-family residential use. It must be stressed that the land use policy plan does not identify environmentally sensitive land within the subarea. It is recognized that significant areas of environmentally sensitive land exist in the subarea. However, the delineation of such lands would require detailed analysis that is beyond the scope of the Comprehensive Plan. For this reason, development policies for this subarea should be interpreted such that land suitable for development would be developed in conformance with the land use policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Open space needed for environmentally sensitive land would be accommodated, as needed, within the land use designations. Future development of this area will also require improving accessibility through the extension of the street grid and recognizing the environmental constraints that are present. However, because of its visibility from Lake Cook Road, future development also provides opportunities to enhance Wheeling's image as a community.

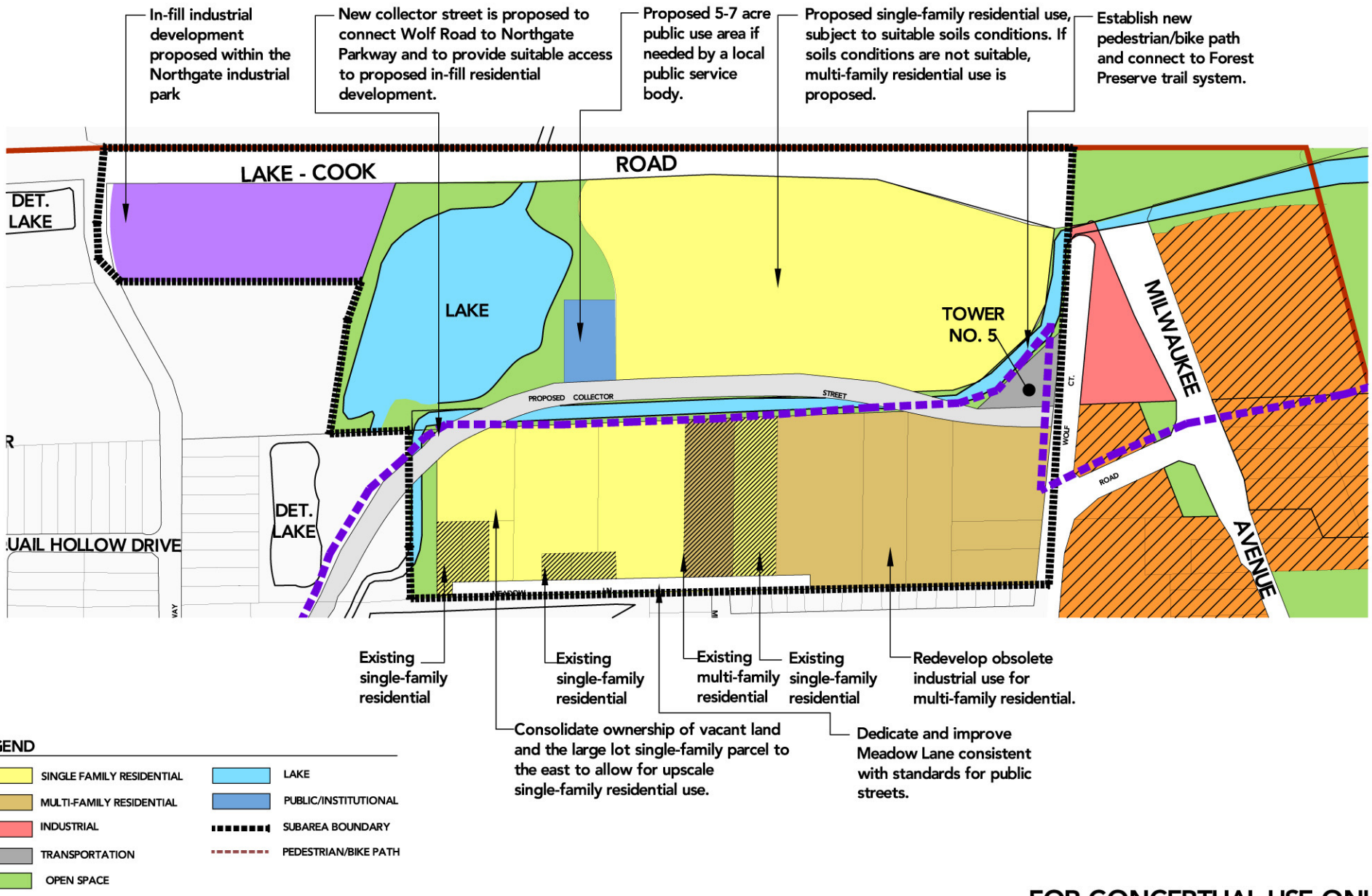

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Figure 8:

LAKE COOK ROAD SUBAREA PLAN

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Dundee Road Subarea

Boundaries: The Dundee Road Subarea is generally bounded by Milwaukee Avenue on the east and Jack London School on the west. It includes the Dundee Road frontage as well as a portion of the Wolf Road frontage located north of Dundee Road, residential and commercial uses along Elmhurst Road between Dundee Road and Wheeling Road, and the Metra station area along Wheeling Road south of Dundee Road to the intersection of the Commonwealth Edison power lines and the train tracks.

Existing Land Use Mix: This subarea consists of three segments, each with its own land use mix and development character. Between Milwaukee Avenue and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch there is a mix of strip commercial, single and multifamily development. The cemetery provides an interesting focal point along this portion of Dundee Road. The middle segment of the Dundee Road subarea located between the Wheeling Drainage Ditch and Wheeling Road contains a number of community facilities including the post office, recreation center and parkland, Village Hall, a Catholic Church and school, and the Metra station. Because much of the area lies within designated floodplain areas, there has been limited interest in the remaining development sites located on the north side of Dundee Road. The triangle formed by Dundee Road, Wheeling Road and the Metra tracks contains the Meyer Materials facility and other industrial and commercial uses. The western portion of the Dundee Road subarea contains retail frontage that contains a mix of older strip centers and larger shopping center sites, including the recently closed Kmart store and an auto dealership.

Land Use and Development Issues:

- The presence of floodplain and floodway areas that roughly parallel the Wheeling Drainage Ditch significantly restricts development potential.
- Many of the existing commercial centers consist of unattractive, older buildings that are uninviting and contain marginal uses.
- The vacant K-Mart store at the corner of Dundee Road and Elmhurst Road is one of the major redevelopment opportunities within the corridor and merits careful consideration.
- The public rights-of-way, especially sidewalks and parkway areas are unattractive and could benefit from a publicly financed streetscape improvement program.
- The industrial uses located along Wheeling Road south of Dundee Road do little to complement the Metra station or establish the area's transit-oriented development potential.
- Some of the older multi-family residential developments along Dundee Road and Elmhurst Road create a negative visual image that detracts from the image of Dundee Road as a commercial corridor.
- Traffic congestion at peak periods, especially near the Metra tracks, makes it difficult to access businesses along Dundee Road.

The Dundee Road corridor contains the main concentration of public service uses within the community, as well as the main shopping street for Wheeling residents. However, the public service role of the area does not project well and is not readily apparent to the casual observer. There is significant potential to develop a campus-like appearance in the central portion of the subarea through the acquisition of property with limited development potential for public use. *Figure 9: Dundee Road Subarea Concept Plan* describes the improvement recommendations for the Dundee Road subarea and illustrates how the central portion of the Dundee Road corridor could be developed as a public use campus. The proposed public use campus is described in greater detail in Chapter 4. Community Image and Design.

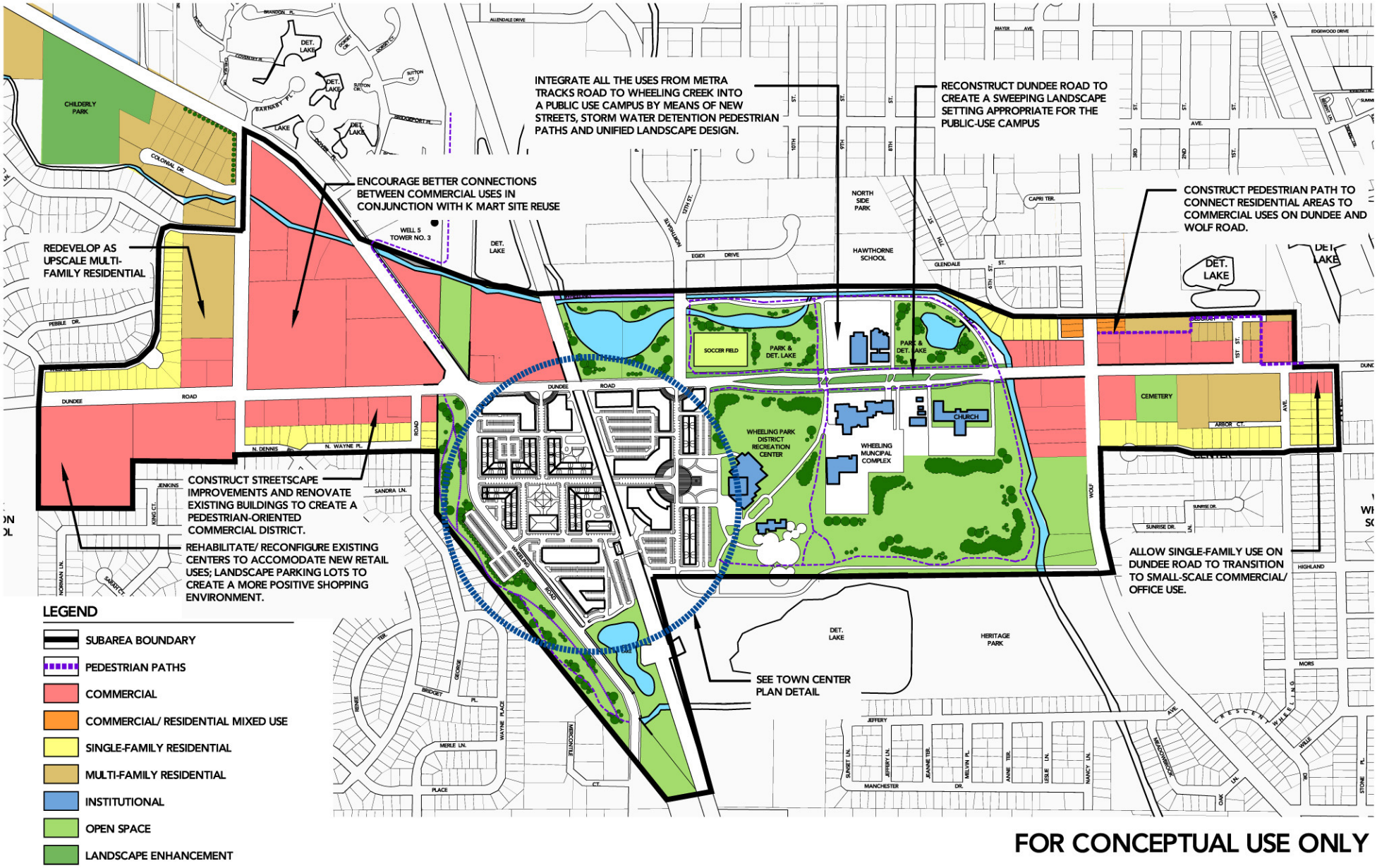

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Figure 9:

DUNDEE ROAD SUBAREA CONCEPT PLAN

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One of the key policy recommendations shown on the Dundee Road Subarea Concept Plan is the proposal to replace areas of conventional commercial development with transit-oriented development. This recommendation occurs on the site on the north side of Dundee Road between Wheeling Road and Old McHenry Road. This site is currently occupied by the vacant K-Mart site and a car dealership. It is widely known that the car dealership is seeking a new location. The plan recommends to redevelopment these two sites for transit-oriented, mixed use development. This site is located in close proximity to the commuter station and the proposed town-center development. Given its size and location, the site is capable of supporting a mix of retail and residential uses designed to promote pedestrian activity and transit use. Explicit in this recommendation is the understanding that conventional "big box" or strip commercial development should not replace the existing uses on this site.

McHenry Road Subarea

Boundaries: The McHenry Road subarea generally extends from Buffalo Grove Road to Elmhurst Road. It includes the Walmart and Sam's Club commercial centers and the entire McHenry Road frontage on the south side of the street.

Existing Land Use Mix: The McHenry Road Subarea is significant in that it contains the largest remaining parcels of vacant land within the Village. The two largest parcels located on either side of Buffalo Creek between Buffalo Grove Road and McHenry Road remain in agricultural use. There are several existing single-family properties on the north side of Aptakisic Road as well as a remaining single-family property at the northeast corner of McHenry Road and Weiland Road. The Horcher garden center is the only commercial use that is currently located on the south side of McHenry Road. There are two rental multi-family developments and a new condominium development located to the northwest of Childerly Park. There is also an older multi-family development located along Colonial drive at the intersection of McHenry Road and Elmhurst Road. The balance of the subarea includes several older single-family properties, a long-term care facility and the AmVets lodge.

Land Use and Development Issues:

- The Horcher and Schwind properties represent the only significant pieces of vacant land within Wheeling that could be used to develop to develop new single-family housing for the "move-up" market. Given the size of the parcels, there is also likely to be interest within the development community to use these properties as sites for big-box retail centers. While retail development can certainly improve Wheeling's sales tax base, it will do little to elevate Wheeling's status as an upscale residential community.
- The Colonial Drive multi-family development is densely populated and lacks any sort of landscape screening particularly along McHenry Road, which contributed to a poor visual image given its proximity to Childerly Park.
- There are several older single-family uses that are no longer consistent with the development character along this portion of McHenry Road.

The land use concept plan for the McHenry Road subarea are presented in *Figure 10: McHenry Road Subarea*. The concept plan illustrates the general organization of uses within the Horcher and Scwind properties, but does not illustrate a specific development concept.

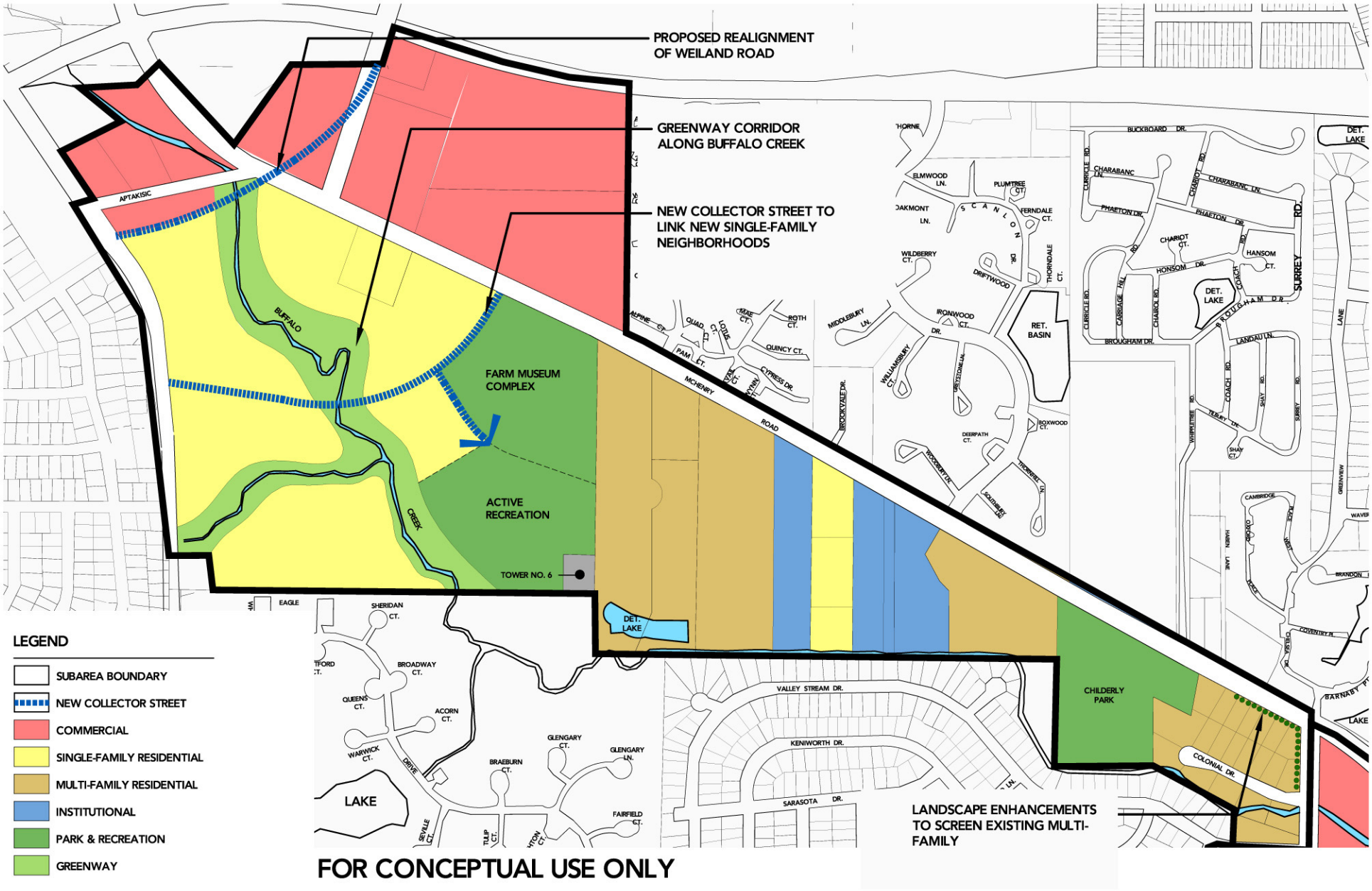

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Figure 10:

MCHENRY ROAD SUBAREA

Village of Wheeling

Wheeling, Illinois

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Wolf Ridge Subarea

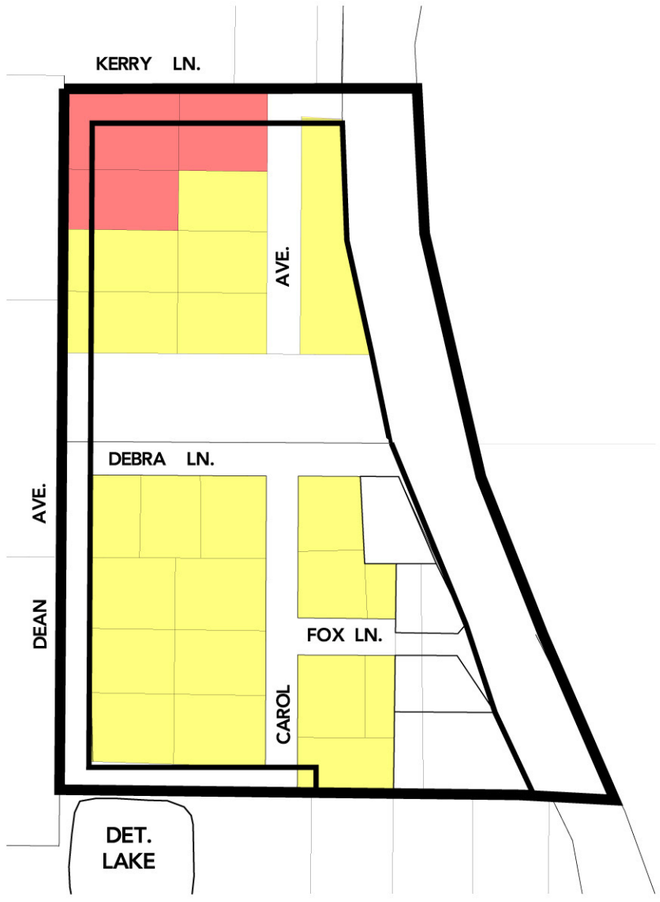
Boundaries: The Wolf Ridge Subarea consists of a 1957 residential subdivision that is still unincorporated and is located on the west side of Wolf Road adjacent to Palwaukee Airport. It is completely surrounded by airport and industrial uses.

Existing Land Use Mix: The current land use mix is primarily single-family residential but also includes two areas that appear to be used as contractors yards. A strip of vacant land that is owned by Palwaukee Airport divides the subarea into two residential enclaves. The northern section is accessed by Kerry Lane and Carol Avenue and includes three single-family houses and a landscape contractor's yard. While four additional lots were platted behind the four parcels that front on Carol Avenue, the streets to serve these parcels were never built. The southern portion of the subarea is a more cohesive residential neighborhood with approximately 17 single-family houses. Circulation and access is also more complete with Debra Lane and Cindy Lane both intersecting with Wolf Road.

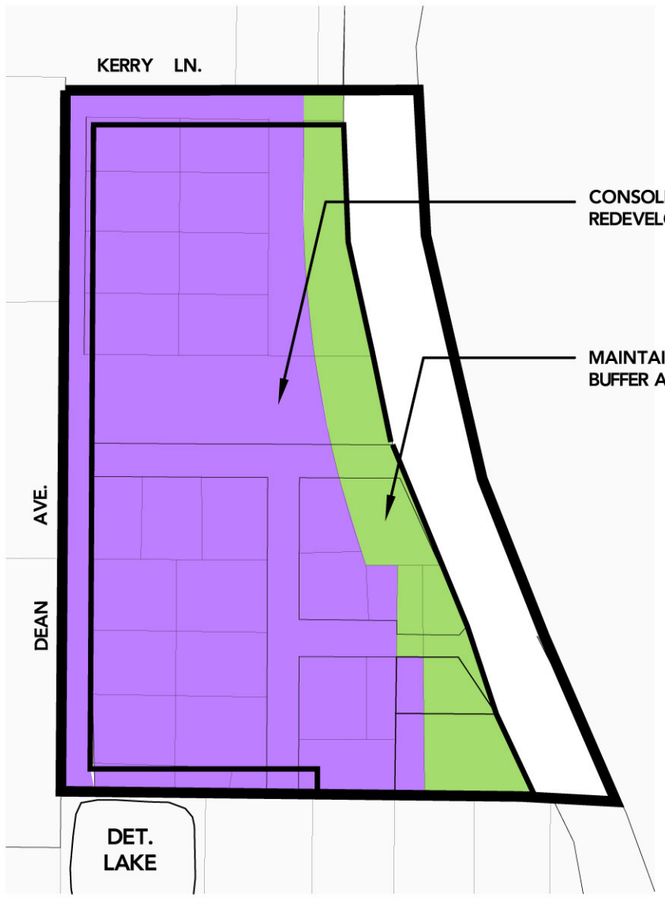
Land Use and Development Issues:

- This residential subdivision is completely surrounded by industrial and airport uses.
- Because it is in unincorporated Cook County, the Village has no control over the maintenance of property within the area. The homes along the northern portion of Carol Avenue are in poor condition and negatively reflect on Wheeling, since the casual observer is likely to assume that these properties are part of the Village.
- The houses in this subarea are all more than 40 years old; many show signs of deterioration and appear to be nearing the end of their useful lives.

This residential enclave is a disruption in the otherwise orderly development pattern of industrial and airport uses. Because of the age and condition of the houses closest to Wolf Road, this subarea has a negative impact on the otherwise positive visual character of this portion of Wolf Road. Eventually the current single-family uses should be replaced with uses that are more compatible with the surrounding industrial development pattern. However, it is probably unlikely that the private market will be able to drive such a land use transition, especially in the southern part of the subarea where there are a greater number of single-family homes that would have to be acquired. In any event, the Village is not in a position to facilitate land use change in this area unless it chooses to annex this unincorporated area. At that point it may be possible to establish a tax increment financing district to facilitate redevelopment of at least the northern portion of the subdivision. However, annexation and redevelopment of this area should be pursued with caution in that the potential marketability of the land for industrial or airport-related commercial uses may be not be sufficient to support the cost of acquiring the existing residential uses. The existing land uses and future land use recommendations for this subarea are shown in *Figure 11: Wolf Ridge Subarea*.



EXISTING LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE

LEGEND

- SUBAREA BOUNDARY
- COMMERCIAL
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- OPEN SPACE

Figure 11:

WOLF RIDGE SUBAREA

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FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Figure 12: Future Land Use Plan addresses future land use for areas within the Village boundaries, as well as unincorporated areas that are within Wheeling's planning jurisdiction (unincorporated land within one and one-half miles of the Village limits). In most respects, Wheeling's future land use plan mirrors the existing land use pattern. The remaining vacant parcels are expected to eventually develop consistent with zoning and the adjacent land use pattern. However, there are also a number of areas where land use change is desirable and should be encouraged. In these areas, several alternative uses may be appropriate depending on market conditions and the timing of such development. Consequently three mixed use land use categories have been established to provide future flexibility in site planning and development approvals.

The Residential/Open Space Mixed Use designation has been applied to areas that have been reserved primarily for future single-family residential development. Because these sites tend to be relatively large, it is likely that development proposals will need to include provision for parks, schools and other public facilities. However, until development proposals are advanced, specific sites cannot be established for these facilities. Similarly, the Commercial/Residential Mixed Use category is used to identify areas along Milwaukee Avenue, Dundee Road, Northgate Parkway, Wolf Road and other commercial corridors where redevelopment is expected. This development may also include parks and community facilities. However, the primary land use emphasis will be on mixed use development that includes commercial development such as retail, office, hotel, restaurant and entertainment along with residential development. The typical commercial/residential mixed use development would be ground floor retail with residential above.

The third mixed use designation is Transit-Oriented Mixed Use. This designation has been applied to land around the Metra station, where a pedestrian-oriented development pattern is desired as part of the eventual development of an identifiable town center.

Opportunities to construct new collector streets to serve potential new development areas or to improve secondary access within the Village are also identified on the Future Land Use Plan. Neighborhoods that the Wheeling Park District has identified as being underserved with respect to neighborhood parks have been generally indicated, although no specific park locations have been identified. Any new park facilities will be the focus of a future park master plan to be prepared by the Park District.

Finally, greenway corridors have been indicated along both sides of Buffalo Creek, the Wheeling Drainage Ditch and the diversion channel. A small portion of the proposed greenway corridor includes Wheeling Park District, School District 21 or Village land, but most of the land is privately owned. Inclusion of the proposed greenways on the Future Land Use Plan is designed to support long-term efforts to establish an accessible trail system over time through acquisition or easements.

One of the major land use priorities for the Village is the development of new, high quality residential development. New single-family development is most likely to result from teardown activity and the development of the few remaining parcels of residentially zoned property. Upscale multi-family development is most likely to occur along major streets as existing multi-family residential developments reach the end of their useful lives and are replaced by new, and probably, more intensive development. Multi-family development is also expected to be a component of mixed use projects and transit-oriented development around the Metra station and the future town center development.

Future Land Use Plan Definitions

Land Use Category	Description
Single-Family Residential	This land use category identifies current single-family developments as well as vacant land proposed for single-family residential development.
Multi-Family Residential	This land use category includes attached single-family dwellings or townhouses, as well as larger multi-family buildings.
Residential/Open Space Mixed Use	This land use category identifies existing vacant land or underutilized land that should be considered for redevelopment. Single-family residential, community facilities and open space are the preferred uses. Multi-family development proposals may be considered if the preferred land uses are not economically viable due to environmental considerations, such as flooding, soils and wetland conditions.
Public/Institutional	This category identifies the major public and institutional uses including schools, Village facilities, library, post office and churches. Should any of these uses cease to operate in their present locations, the property should be reclassified to a land use category consistent with the surrounding land use pattern and existing environmental conditions.
Commercial	This land use category includes retail, restaurant, office and auto-related commercial uses.
Commercial/Residential Mixed Use	This land use category identifies transitional areas along arterial streets where the existing land use pattern is expected to change over time as obsolete uses are replaced and the remaining vacant land is developed. In these areas, a variety of commercial uses, including restaurants, hotels, offices and retail services, could contribute to the vitality of the area. Residential planned developments should include a retail component and may also include recreational or other community-oriented uses as part of the land use mix.
Transit-Oriented Mixed Use	This land use category identifies areas proximate to the Metra station and other public transit facilities, where compact, pedestrian-oriented mixed uses are desirable. The development pattern is expected to include commercial development on the ground floor with office or residential uses above.
Industrial	A wide variety of employment-oriented land uses and warehousing operations are included under this land use category. Included are all types of manufacturing uses, warehousing, distribution, service and related office uses.
Transportation & Utilities	This land use category includes rail and utility lines, Palwaukee Municipal Airport, and the Village's water distribution facilities.
Open Space	Both public and private open space is included in this land use category. Major land owners include the Wheeling Park District and the Cook County Forest Preserve District. Privately held land located in floodway and floodplain areas, and property being acquired for open space purposes or designated for flood hazard mitigation improvements, are also identified. Also included are a few open space areas associated with detention facilities for private developments. Finally, this land use category is intended to accommodate facilities, such as an environmental learning center, heritage farm or other types of cultural, environmental or historical resources.
Rivers & Ponds	The future land use map identifies the Des Plaines River, creeks, diversion channel, drainage ditch and various ponds and natural lakes as a separate land use category to highlight their contribution to the community's open space amenities.

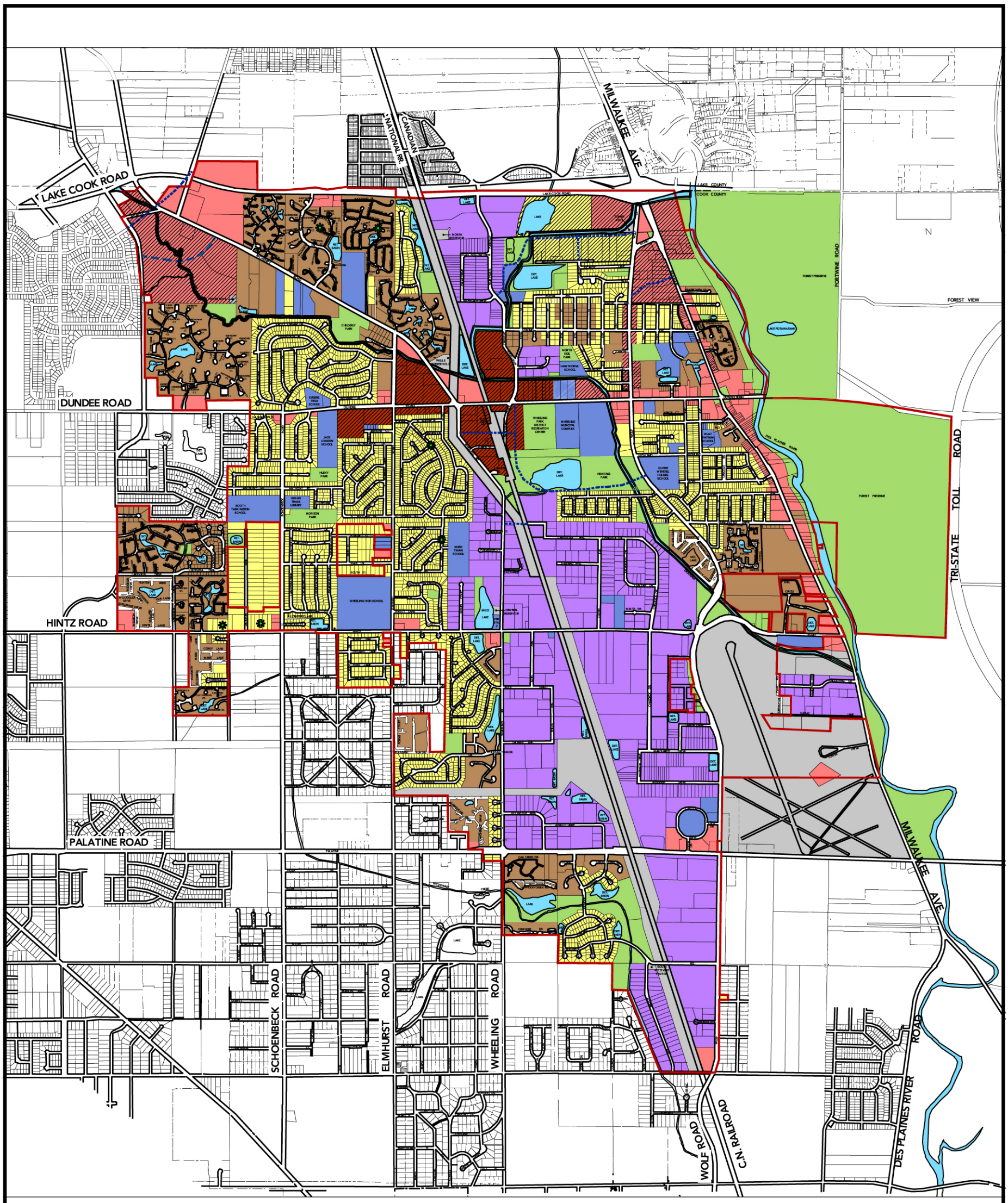

Figure 12:

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Wheeling Comprehensive Plan

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The Horcher and Schwind properties in the northwest corner of the Village represent the only significant pieces of vacant land within Wheeling that could be used to develop new single-family housing for the "move-up" market. There is also interest in use of a portion of this property for development of a heritage farm complex and active park and recreation space. The Comprehensive Plan must establish a clear vision as to how this land should be allowed to develop to best achieve the Village's long-term development objectives. Because the precise nature of the use mix will depend on future development proposals and the needs of other governmental units, the land use designation for this area is Commercial/Residential Mixed Use.

Two other concentrations of vacant and underutilized property represent opportunities for the expansion of open space and community facilities, and may also help with flood hazard mitigation. The first of these is located south of Lake Cook Road, between Wolf Road and Northgate Parkway on either side of the recently constructed diversion channel. Soil conditions and wetland areas present in this area have hindered development, as developers gravitated to sites where development was easier and less expensive. However, this area is highly visible given its Lake Cook Road frontage and could substantially improve Wheeling's image with the development of a high profile community use, such as a school, recreation complex or environmental learning center. The second such area includes land on the north side of Dundee Road between the Wheeling Drainage Ditch and the railroad tracks. Most of this land is designated as floodway, and as a result is not readily developable. This area is highly visible and could be developed as part of a public use campus that includes stormwater detention facilities and park land, resulting in both flood hazard mitigation and a significant improvement of the Village's community identity and appearance.

Dundee Road functions as the major commercial corridor for Wheeling residents. The area between the Des Plaines River and Wolf Road has largely redeveloped as a result of the construction of One Milwaukee Place. The central portion of the Dundee Road corridor contains most of Wheeling's community facilities, including Village Hall, the Park District's Recreation Center and the U.S. Post Office. There is also a significant retail concentration between Wheeling Road and Jack London School. There are several older, neighborhood-scale shopping centers as well as strip commercial uses located on the south side of Dundee Road. While commercial use is an obvious land use choice for this area, there may also be a market for a mixed commercial and residential environment, given the areas proximity to Wheeling's Metra station. Consequently, significant portions of the Dundee Road corridor have been designated as Transit-Oriented Mixed Use.

Over time, it is expected that smaller parcels of land will be assembled as part of larger redevelopment sites, especially along Wheeling's commercial corridors. Such consolidation may be needed to create sites large enough to accommodate contemporary development and meet parking and landscape requirements.

Perhaps the most significant potential land use change involves the development of a town center mixed use development around the community's Metra commuter rail station. The land identified as the potential town center site is generally bounded by Wheeling Road and the Wheeling Park District's recreation center on the south side of Dundee Road. This area could accommodate a substantial amount of new commercial and residential development, creating a pedestrian-oriented environment that takes advantage of its proximity to the commuter rail station and nearby commercial centers. While most of the properties are currently in some form of industrial use, Transit-Oriented Mixed Use is the recommended future land use designation for this area, with land immediately north of the culvert at Wheeling Road and the Commonwealth Edison right-of-way designated as additional stormwater detention.

The industrial districts that extend through the center of the Village continue to be designated as industrial on the Future Land Use Plan. Industrial uses are expected to remain viable throughout the 10 to 20 year life of this Comprehensive Plan. However, over the long term, there may less demand for industrial space

and market interest in recycling industrial land for other uses. Redevelopment development proposals involving industrial land on the edge of the existing industrial concentrations should be considered. Such proposals may represent opportunities to expand the supply of upscale housing, but should not be actively pursued by the Village while industrial uses remain viable. Proposals to recycle industrial land located in the center of industrial districts with housing is not appropriate. However, office, certain institutional uses or active recreation uses may be appropriate transitional, or replacement, uses for obsolete industrial areas.

4. COMMUNITY IMAGE AND DESIGN

Improving the appearance of Wheeling's commercial areas and arterial corridors is a major element of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan. The Village has been actively involved in this effort for many years. Examples include working to ensure that utility lines are buried as part of major road reconstruction projects, such as the recently completed improvement of Milwaukee Avenue. In addition, appearance review regulations have resulted in the attractive industrial areas found throughout the Village. Also, the construction of Friendship Park at the northeast corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road and additional gateway improvements on the other three corners of this intersection are designed to establish Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road as Wheeling's "gateway intersection." This chapter of the plan focuses on advancing the agenda of improving community appearance.

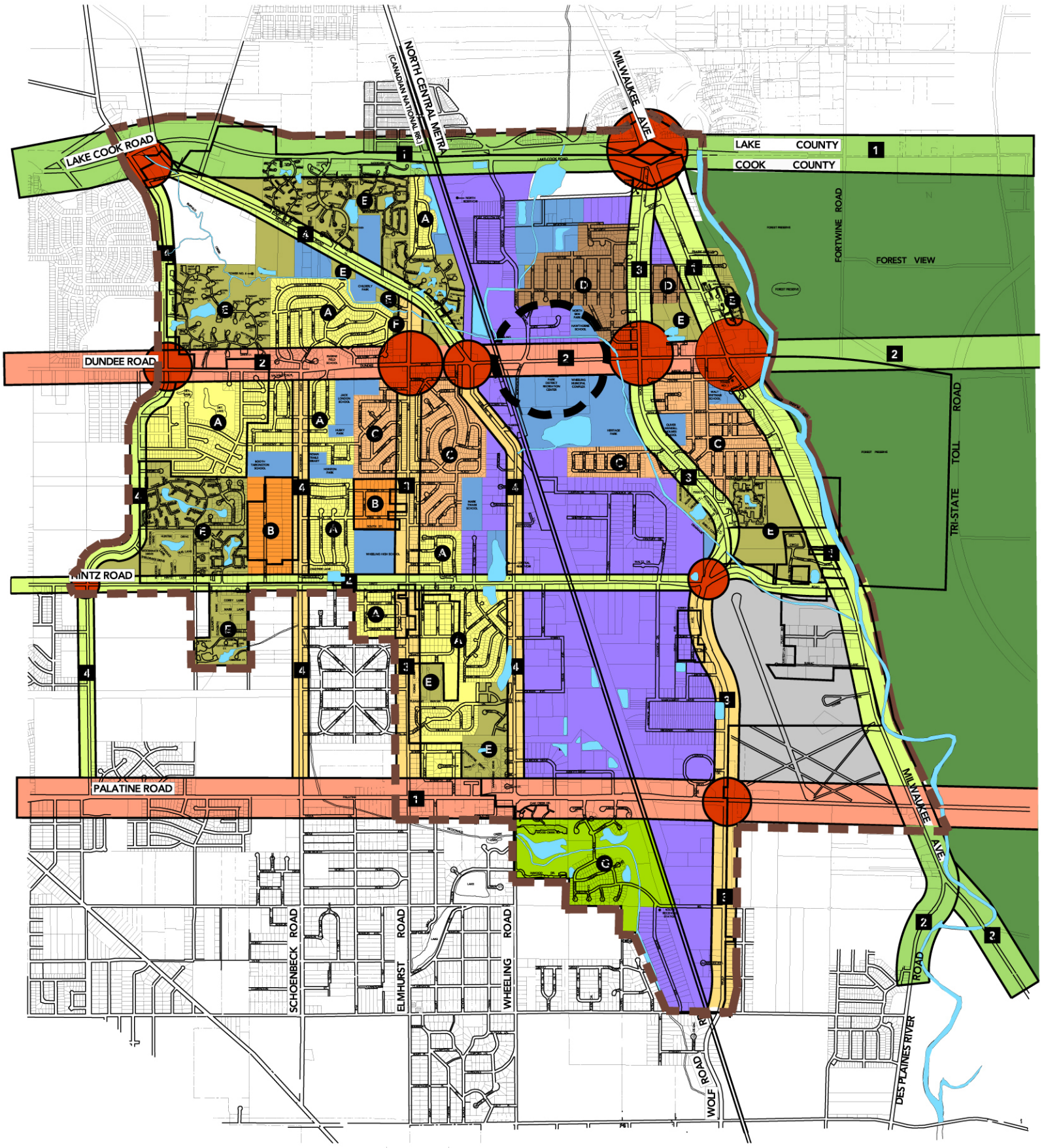
COMMUNITY CHARACTER ANALYSIS

As part of the existing conditions analysis a community character assessment was undertaken. The findings of this effort are summarized in *Figure 13: Community Character Assessment*. Of particular importance is the assessment of the visual character along the major streets that serve the Village. While many street segments provide positive community images, others do not and consequently suggest areas where streetscape enhancements and other improvements are needed to enhance Wheeling's community identity. The two corridors with the most negative image are Dundee Road and Palatine Road. Other street segments with relatively poor visual character include Schoenbeck Road, Elmhurst Road, Wheeling Road (south of Dundee) and Wolf Road (south of Hintz).

As discussed in the Future Land Use section of the preceding chapter of this Comprehensive Plan, there is significant redevelopment potential along Dundee Road, Milwaukee Avenue and Wolf Road. The following sections of the plan describe ways in which some of these sites could be organized and redeveloped. The illustrative concept plans that follow are intended to stimulate discussion. Their importance lies in visually describing what is possible to achieve.

DUNDEE ROAD CORRIDOR

Many of the existing commercial centers consist of unattractive, older buildings that are uninviting and contain marginal uses. The public rights-of-way, especially sidewalks and parkway areas are unattractive and could benefit from a publicly financed streetscape improvement program. Traffic congestion at peak periods, especially near the Metra tracks, makes it difficult to access businesses along Dundee Road. However, even without substantial new development, it is possible to enhance the existing uses and upgrade the appearance of the corridor.



LEGEND

ROADWAY CORRIDOR CHARACTER

- NEGATIVE
- POSITIVE
- 1 LARGE STRATEGIC REGIONAL ARTERIAL
- 2 ARTERIAL
- 3 MAJOR COLLECTOR
- 4 LOCAL COLLECTOR
- KEY INTERSECTIONS
- POTENTIAL PUBLIC USE CAMPUS

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

- A CONVENTIONAL SUBURBAN SINGLE FAMILY
- B LARGE LOT / SMALL HOUSE
- C SMALL, OLDER SINGLE FAMILY RANCHES
- D TRADITIONAL OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS
- E MODERN / UPSCALE MULTI-FAMILY
- F OLDER / UNATTRACTIVE MULTI-FAMILY
- G NEW "OPEN SPACE" NEIGHBORHOOD

OTHER CHARACTER DISTRICTS

- PUBLIC LANDS / PARKS / INSTITUTIONAL
- FOREST PRESERVES
- INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS
- AIRPORT AND RELATED LAND
- VACANT LAND
- SURFACE WATER BODIES
- RAILROAD TRACKS
- COMMUNITY CHARACTER BOUNDARIES

Figure 13:
COMMUNITY CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

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The recommendations contained in *Figure 9: Dundee Road Subarea Concept Plan*, presented in the previous chapter, represent a pivotal proposal for upgrading both the image and quality of life in Wheeling. The proposed public use campus is a highly visible "green campus" that would contrast with the strip commercial character of Dundee Road and set Wheeling apart from other communities. The campus would extend the development pattern already in place that includes Village Hall and the Park District's recreation complex. The proposed landscape amenities within a new Dundee Road median and along expanded parkways would also help to build upon the Friendship Park gateway that has been established at the Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road intersection. Because of its proximity to the Wheeling Drainage Ditch, the north side of Dundee Road has significant potential for flood mitigation that could help to remove areas closer to the Metra station from the floodplain where a new Town Center development is proposed. The campus would be improved with both pedestrian trails and upgraded vehicular drives to make the area truly accessible.

Development of a town center that can serve as a focus for community activities is a major objective of this Comprehensive Plan. The town center recommendation represents the second pivotal proposal that would dramatically upgrade Wheeling's image and quality of life. One of the initial considerations was where such a center should be located. While the Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road intersection historically functioned as the community center, the introduction of Metra commuter rail service provides a new opportunity to establish a signature town center development. *Figure 14: Town Center Concept Plan* illustrates how the area around the Metra station could be redeveloped and connected to the proposed public use campus immediately to the east.

The Town Center Concept Plan illustrates the proposed framework for such a development in this location. The plan calls for a mix of commercial, multi-family residential and public use. The mix of these uses would depend on market and other conditions. It is expected that Wheeling's strong condominium market would help drive the development in its initial stages and establish the context for future commercial development. The entire area is intended to be pedestrian-friendly, with attractive streetscapes and architecture. A grade separated crossing beneath the railroad tracks is proposed and would be important to link areas east and west of the tracks together. Public uses could include a new Village Hall, senior center, library or performing arts center.

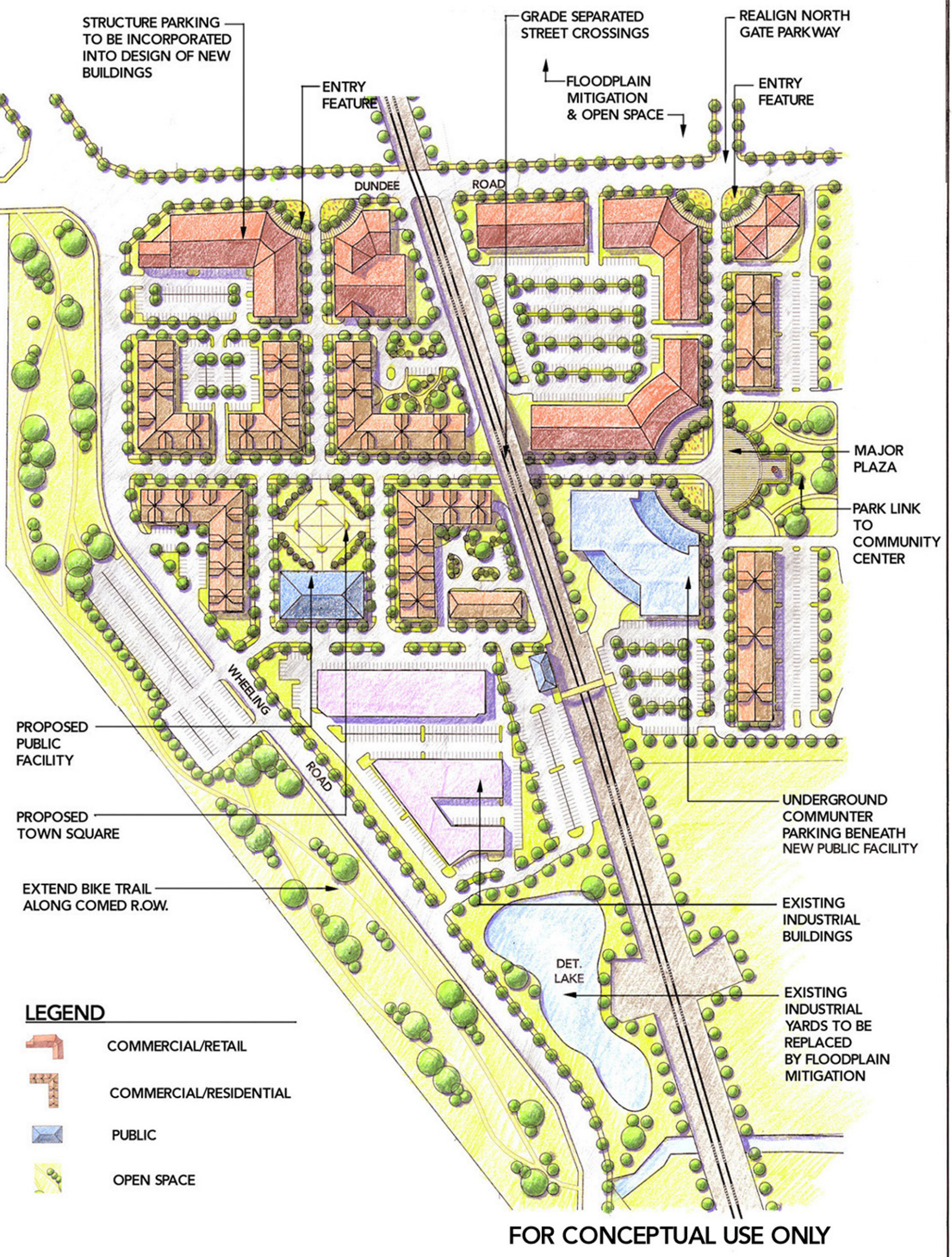

Figure 14:

TOWN CENTER CONCEPT PLAN

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Commercial Area Improvement

Aside from the public use campus and town center, there is a need to improve the appearance of the commercial development along the Dundee Road corridor. Many of the existing commercial developments are characterized by undersized sites, difficult access, poorly organized parking and drab buildings. As a means of addressing these common problems, a case study was performed on one of these typical commercial developments. The site of this case study is located on the south side of Dundee Road between Wheeling Road and George Road.

Figure 15: Strip Commercial Enhancement Plan illustrates how this area could be reconfigured so that it functions better with landscape enhancements designed to improve its visual appearance. This concept can also be applied to other commercial centers within the Village. Key recommendations for the renewal of strip commercial shopping centers include:

- Comprehensive façade renovations on all buildings.
- In-fill commercial buildings to replace buildings that are sited in a way that prevents integration of the commercial development.
- A frontage drive providing cross access to all properties.
- The reorganization of parking in coordination with the frontage drive.
- An internal streetscape improvement between the frontage drive and the buildings to create an attractive and continuous pedestrian zone.
- Move the public sidewalk onto an easement over private property to create a landscaped buffer area adjacent to Dundee Road.
- Reorganization of access points to reduce turning movements and simplify circulation.

Dundee Road Streetscape Improvement

The enhancement of the Dundee Road corridor through streetscape improvements can be accomplished in two ways. First, the creation of the public use campus, especially the broad landscaped medians and parkways, will create a dramatic "green" relief from strip commercial development. The second form of streetscape improvement will take the form of enhancements that are part of the renewal of conventional strip commercial development. To illustrate these recommendations, illustrative streetscape drawings were prepared based on the typical commercial development case study shown in Figure 15. *Figure 16: Typical Dundee Road Streetscape Enhancement* illustrates how streetscape improvements can be incorporated into the renewal of conventional strip commercial development. Key streetscape recommendations include:

- Creating a dense landscape buffer between the public sidewalk and the road.
- Creating the space for such a landscape buffer by moving the public sidewalk away from the road and onto an easement located on private property or additional right-of-way area.
- Adding decorative lighting to both the roadway and the pedestrian sidewalk.
- Upgrading the design of the frontage access drive to include special paving and curbs.
- Creating an expanded streetscape zone in front of the buildings, which would include brick paving, pedestrian scaled-lighting, ornamental trees, and streetscape treatments in front of the buildings.
- Applying more limited streetscape improvements to portions of Dundee Road where easements cannot be obtained, as shown on the opposite side of the street. These improvements will include street trees, decorative lighting, and landscape screening of commercial parking lots.

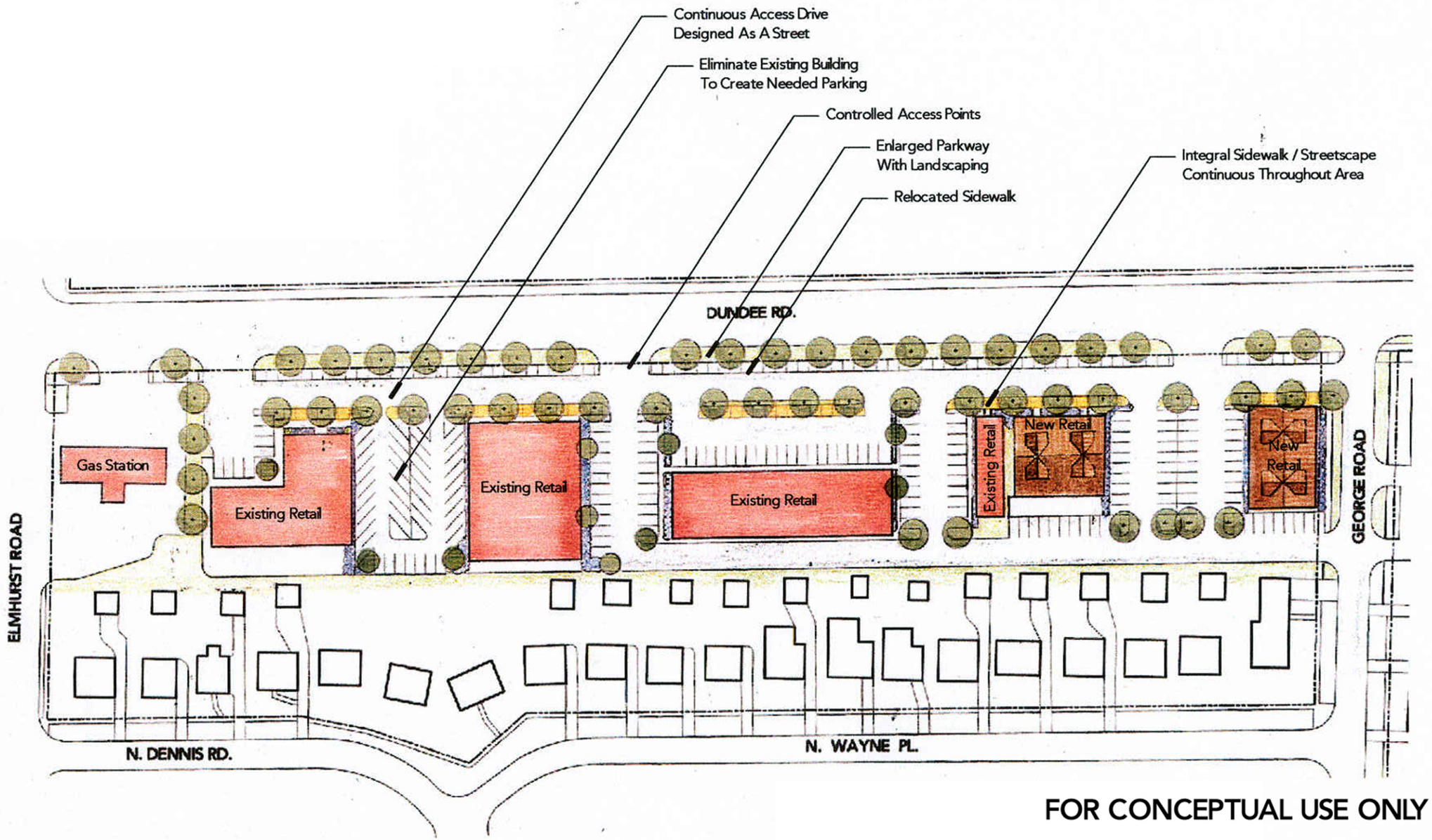

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Figure 15:

STRIP COMMERCIAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

WHEELING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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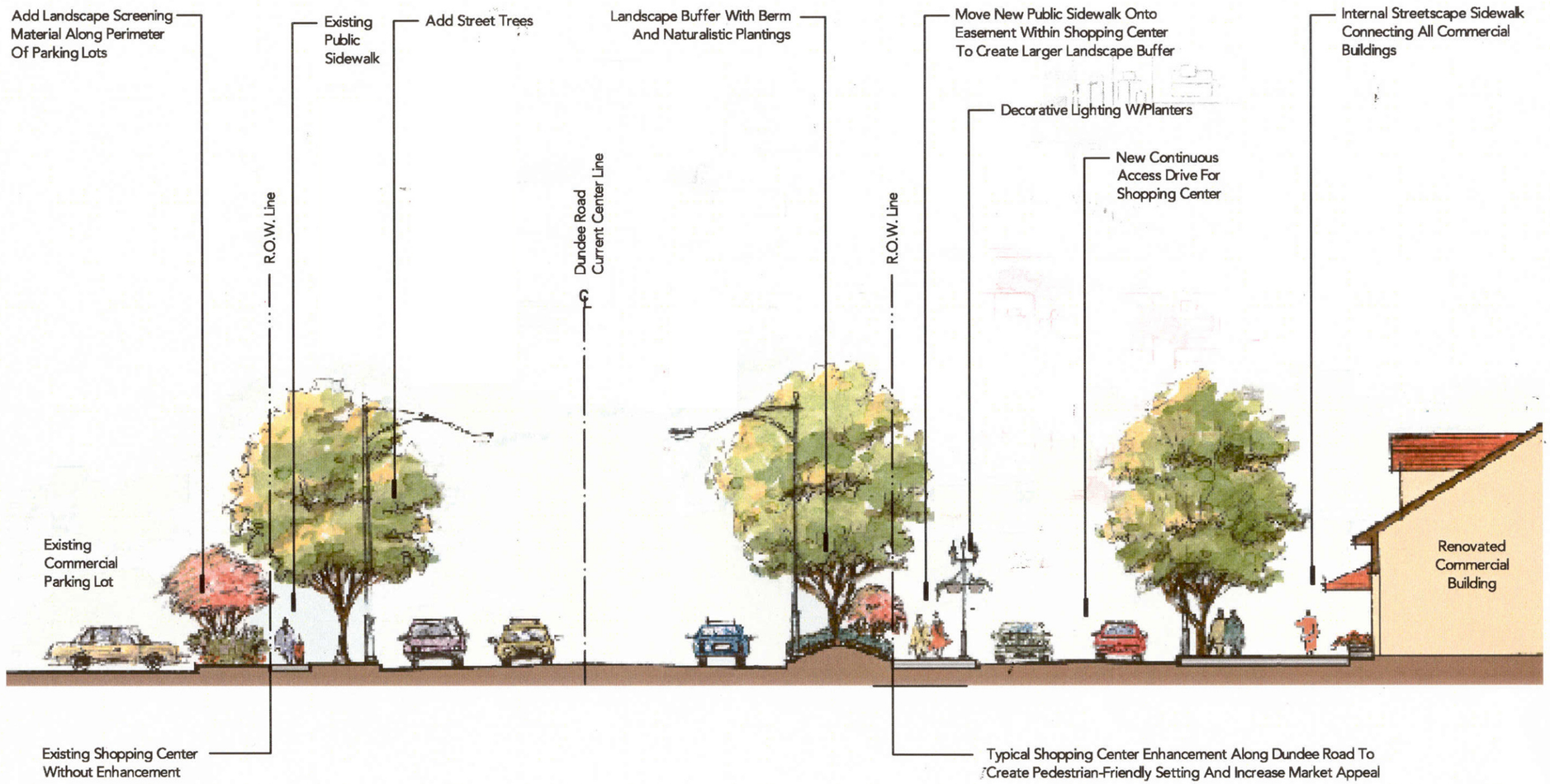

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Figure 16:

TYPICAL DUNDEE ROAD STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT

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MILWAUKEE AVENUE CORRIDOR

Milwaukee Avenue is widely known as "Restaurant Row" and contains more than a dozen restaurants that attract patrons from throughout the region. Because of Milwaukee Avenue's role as a high volume regional arterial there is the potential to create three strong community gateways and focal points at Palwaukee Municipal Airport, at the Dundee Road intersection, and at the Lake Cook/Wolf Road intersection. With the completion of Friendship Park, the Village has already established a strong Village gateway at the Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road intersection. The presence of the Des Plaines River and the Forest Preserve property that links the river to Milwaukee Avenue also provides the potential to highlight the environmental amenities that are a strong part of Wheeling's identity. One of the key development issues for the Milwaukee Avenue corridor is how to project a stronger and more cohesive image as the "Restaurant Row" entertainment area.

With the exception of land immediately adjacent to Palwaukee Municipal Airport south of Hintz Road at the southern end of the subarea, the long-term viability of the current industrial uses appears to be limited. The industrial uses along Wolf Road, where it intersects Milwaukee Avenue, are not generally consistent with the emerging development pattern that emphasizes restaurants and high-end residential development. Over time, as the current industrial/office facilities become obsolete, redevelopment with more appropriate uses should be encouraged. Similarly used car dealers and other auto-related uses are not recommended since they do not contribute to the "Restaurant Row" theme or the recreational potential contained within the Milwaukee Avenue Subarea. Land uses that are compatible with the current/potential role of the subarea as a regional destination and mixed-use environment include restaurants, hotels, multi-family residential, retail-oriented commercial development, offices, entertainment venues, open space and recreational uses.

Streetscape Recommendations

Enhancing the appearance and pedestrian appeal of the Milwaukee Avenue is an important element of overall community development. Milwaukee Avenue is one of the important corridors within Wheeling and its appearance has significant influence on the image of the community. One of the challenges in enhancing the Milwaukee Avenue streetscape is creating a pedestrian-friendly environment along a busy arterial street. The recommended approach for streetscape enhancement is illustrated on *Figure 17: Streetscape Enhancement – Milwaukee Avenue Subarea*. The essential concept is to create a continuous pedestrian promenade along the street. This promenade would be wider than a typical sidewalk and would be improved with benches, lighting and landscaping. While landscaping would be added to soften the environment, it is important to maintain sight lines to existing businesses. In order to create this kind of improvement, more space is needed. The proposed improvement calls for locating the promenade further away from the street, which would necessitate the acquisition of easements or right-of-way from existing property owners. This condition is illustrated on *Figure 18: Sidewalk Alignment Diagram*. This major level of streetscape improvement will be difficult to accomplish due to the need for easement acquisition. Consequently, this recommendation is intended for one side of the street only, with a more modest improvement on the other side.

Streetscape Design Objective:
To Create An Attractive Pedestrian Promenade That Visually Connects The Restaurant Row Area While Maintains Sight Lines To Businesses

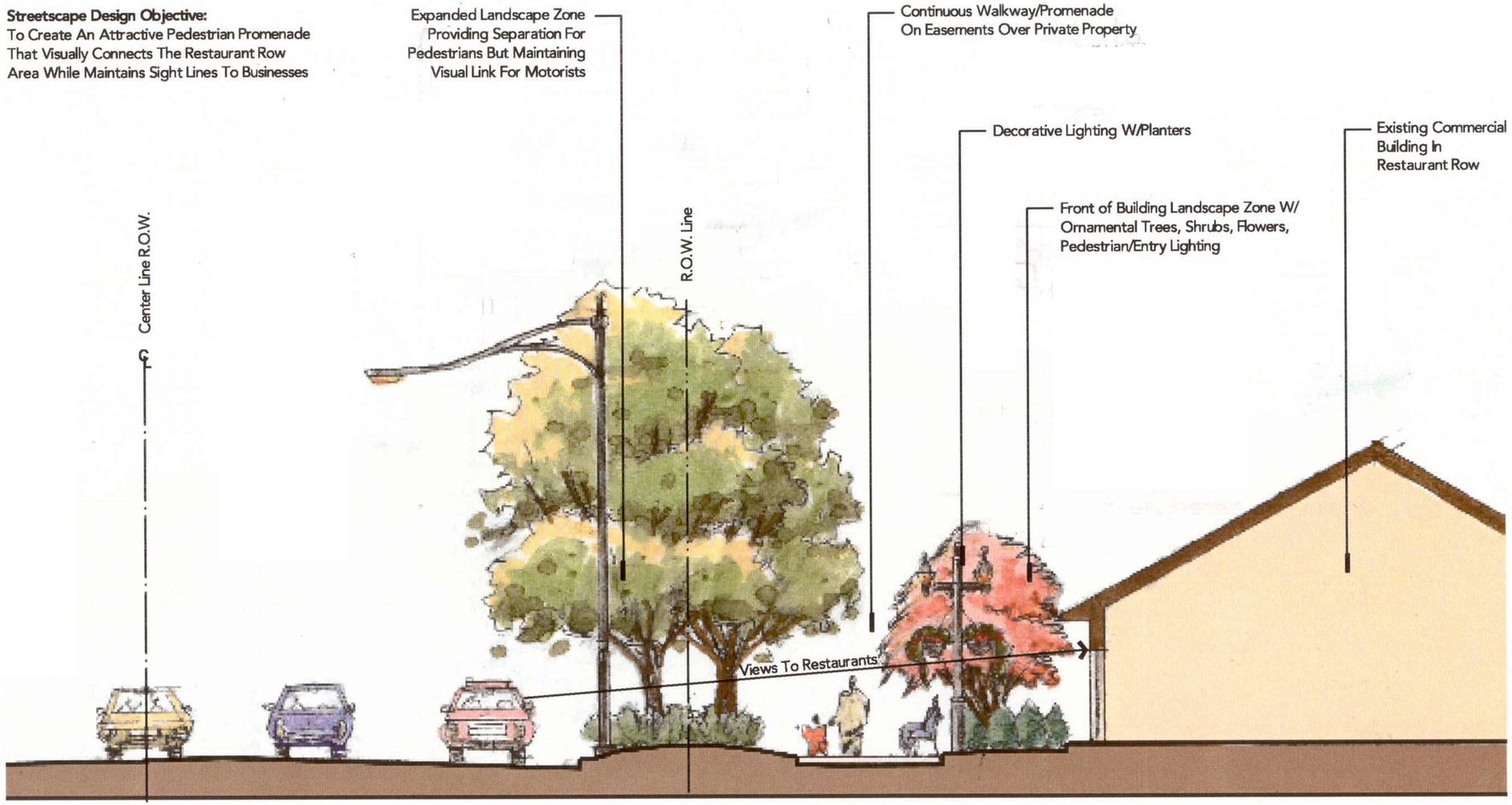

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Figure 17:

STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT - MILWAUKEE AVENUE SUBAREA

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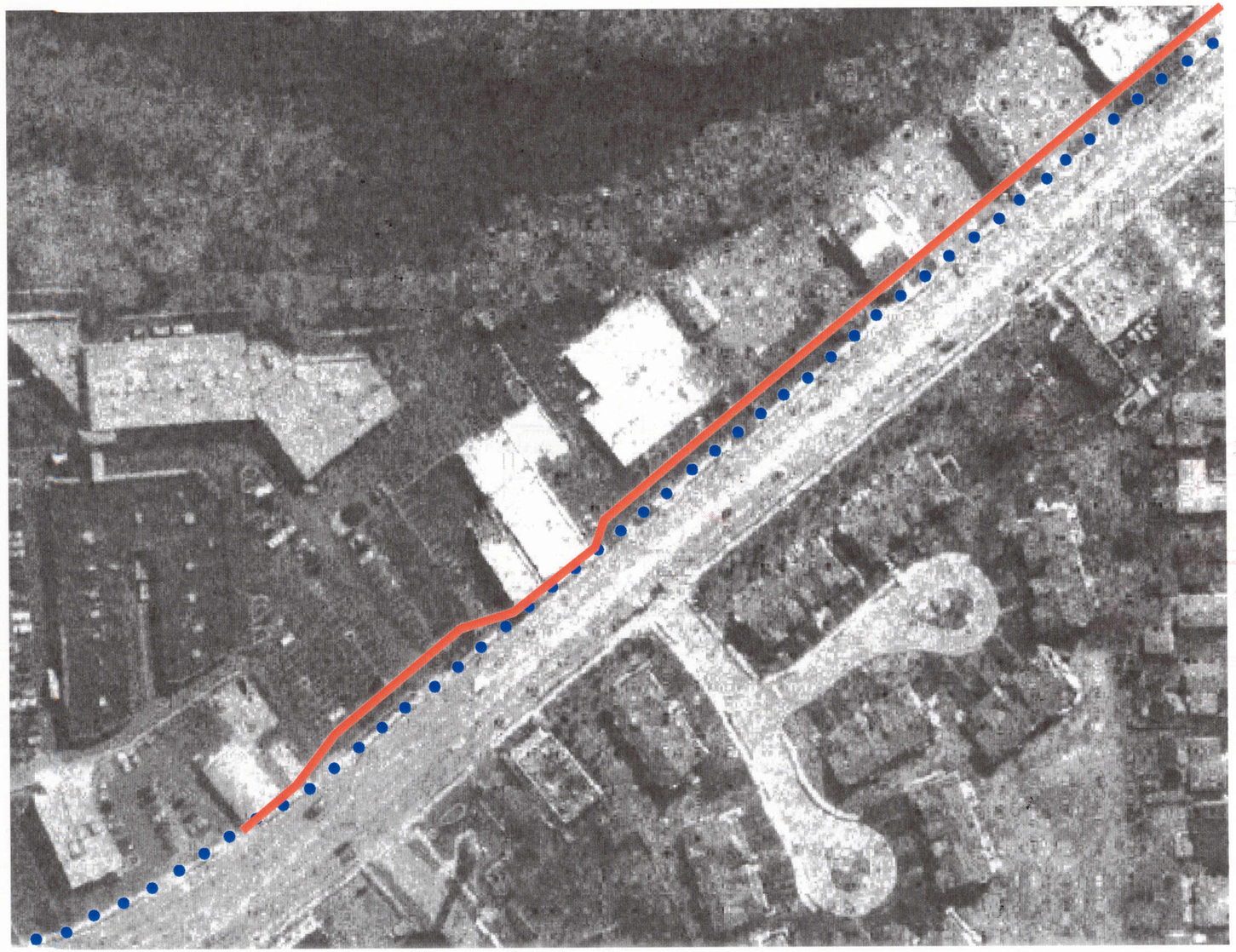

LEGEND

- EXISTING SIDEWALK LOCATIONS
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK LOCATIONS

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Figure 18:

SIDEWALK ALIGNMENT DIAGRAM: MILWAUKEE AVENUE SUB AREA PLAN

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WOLF ROAD SUBAREA

The Wolf Road corridor north of Dundee Road was also identified as an area where visual improvements are needed. Land use policy recommendations are presented in *Figure 19: Wolf Road Subarea Plan*. *Figure 20: Wolf Road Mixed Use Area Improvement Plan* illustrates how the mixed-use area near Dundee Road could be enhanced with landscape and parking improvements. The proposed enhancements are similar to the commercial improvement recommendations for the Dundee Road corridor. However, because Wolf Road carries less traffic, the result is more pedestrian-oriented than Dundee Road. *Figure 21: Sketch of Façade/Streetscape Enhancements* illustrates how the area could look after improvements.

Another alternative for development of the Wolf Road Corridor is illustrated in *Figure 22: Alternative Wolf Road Subarea Plan*. The plan incorporates some of the properties on Dundee Road to show alternate access points to existing businesses. The plan requires a greater amount of reinvestment in the area because most of the existing structures will be replaced with newer townhomes for a more cohesive land use along the corridor. There is also more open space with the pocket park on the northeast corner of Dundee Road and Wolf Road and with the removal of some of the existing commercial structures to allow for more parking.

MULTI-FAMILY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The redevelopment of existing single-family, office, commercial and industrial uses in favor of multi-family residential use in the northern portion of the subarea. The type of develop-ment proposed is attractive, high-quality condominium development in buildings not taller than four stories. This area is seen as particularly suitable for this type of develop-ment, given other nearby multi-family use and convenient access to local goods and services. The introduction of new development may spur the upgrading of existing multi-family residential properties within the subarea.

MULTI-FAMILY CONSERVATION/REHABILITATION

Existing multi-family residential use within the southern portion of the subarea is a suitable use and is reflected on the land use plan. While the use is suitable, the current condition of many of these properties needs improvement. The addition of front yard landscaping and parkway trees would do much to enhance these properties. Building façade improvements are needed to make these buildings more appealing. Some properties need additional parking, which in some cases could be provided on adjacent property to proposed for redevelopment. Where no other option is available, an existing building should be demolished to provide needed parking.

COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE

The existing mixed use area on the east side of Wolf Road north of Dundee Road is a vestige of past development patterns. This kind of mix of commercial and residential use along a collector street (Wolf Road) would not occur in today's market. However, this kind of mixed-use pattern can be an amenity for the local area if the property is suitably enhanced. Major façade enhancement of buildings is needed to make the area more appealing to shoppers. Significant site improvements are also needed. Specifically, the front parking lot should be reconfigured into an intimate shopping street with streetscape promenade created in front of the shops. Land use flexibility should allow for the expansion or contraction of either use as part of a high quality redevelopment project.

LEGEND

- Commercial
- Commercial/Residential Mixed-Use
- Multi-Family Conservation/ Rehabilitation
- Multi-Family Residential Redevelopment
- Park

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Figure 19: WOLF ROAD SUBAREA PLAN

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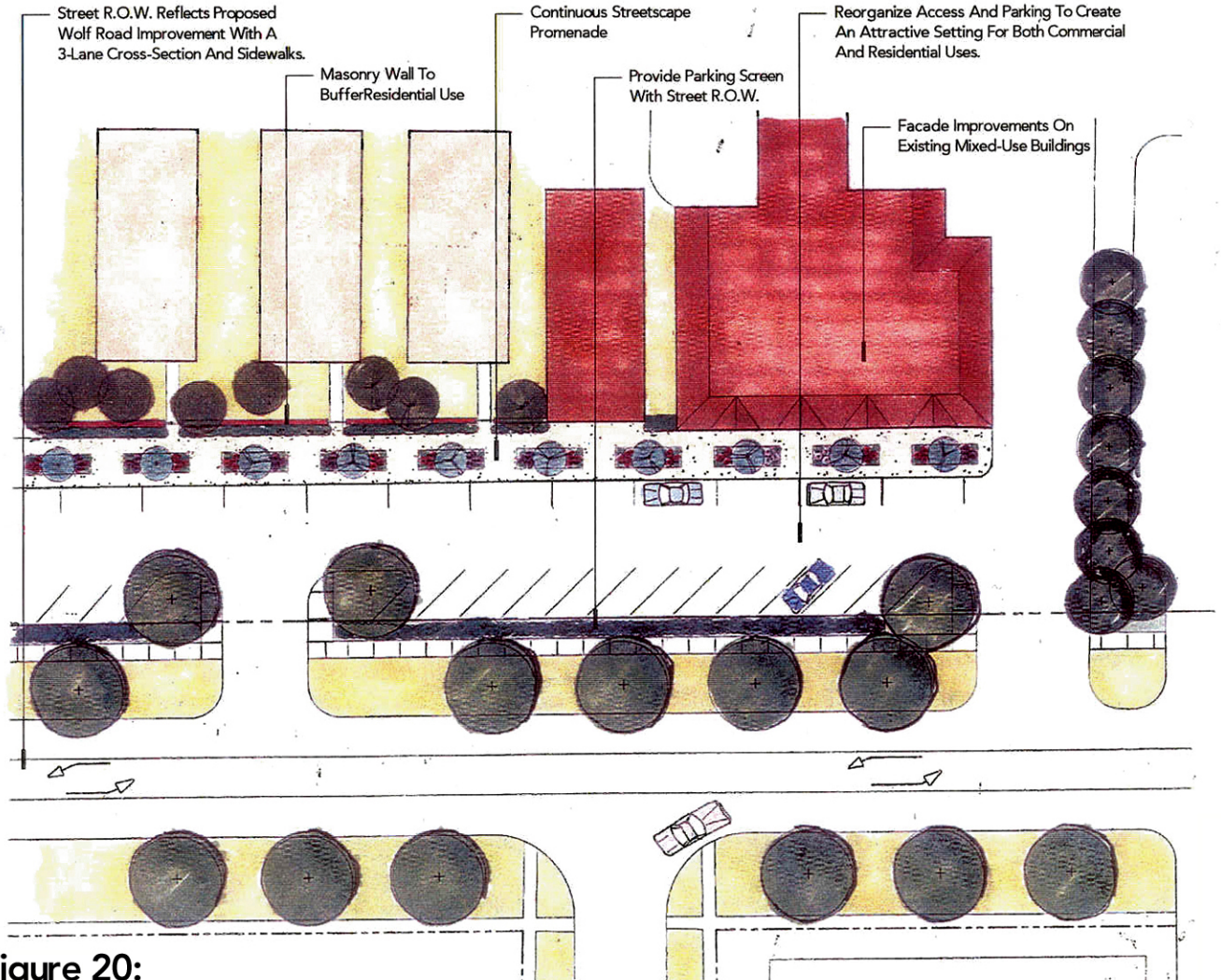

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Figure 20:
WOLF ROAD MIXED USE AREA IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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Figure 21:

SKETCH OF FACADE / STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS; WOLF ROAD SUBAREA PLAN

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Figure 22:

ALTERNATIVE WOLF ROAD SUBAREA PLAN

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5. NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan element is to identify and define the natural resources in the community with respect to water, land, flora and fauna, and their relationship to the developed portions of the Village. In many communities, natural resources are important components of the land use mix for a variety of reasons. They can provide recreational amenities, habitat for wildlife and often serve as critical aquifer recharge areas. Even though Wheeling is almost completely developed, consideration of the Village's natural resources is no less important.

NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Wheeling's inventory of natural resources is limited to the portions of Cook County Forest Preserve property that lies within the municipal boundaries, the Des Plaines River and associated tributaries. There are also numerous wetland areas and a small amount of agricultural lands that function as the major natural areas in the Village. Because Wheeling is part of a highly urbanized region, there are few, if any, sites that are still in their natural state.

More than 800 acres of land within Wheeling's boundaries contain rivers, ponds and open space. While much of this land is formalized as park and recreation facilities and stormwater detention facilities serving a variety of private developments, many acres are in a natural state. Because Wheeling draws its drinking water from Lake Michigan, the role of these natural areas as aquifer recharge areas is less important than in many other municipalities. A more important function of Wheeling's remaining natural areas lies with their ability to handle the water associated with the periodic flooding common along Wheeling's waterways. These natural areas represent a significant resource in allowing appropriate parts of the Village to grow and develop,

RESOURCE PROTECTION STRATEGIES

The Des Plaines River and the Cook County Forest Preserve, which form much of Wheeling's eastern boundary, help to shape the community's identity. There is a limit to the supply of natural resources within the region and all communities have a responsibility to help to preserve them. Perhaps the most important resource protection strategy is to begin to recognize Wheeling's remaining natural areas, most of which remain undeveloped by virtue of their location within designated floodways and floodplains, as community assets rather than development impediments to overcome.

Parks, woods and other open spaces not only provide a way to satisfy the recreational choices of residents, they also help to beautify the Village and maintain its sense of spaciousness. Increasing the visual and physical access to the Village's significant natural features, including waterways, wetlands and surrounding natural areas, is an important means of developing the conservation ethic needed to ensure continued environmental stewardship of these resources.

FLOODPLAIN/FLOODWAY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The reduction of flooding within the Village of Wheeling can help to relieve practical and financial hardships and improve the quality of life. Local geography and development patterns have created a situation in which a significant portion of the Village is prone to flooding and/or located in the floodplain. The degree to which flooding can be mitigated will need to be studied using hydraulic and hydrologic modeling. It is possible through compensatory storage, channel reconfiguration and flood-proofing to protect selected areas from flooding and increase developable area. However, it is unlikely that all, or even most, of the areas currently prone to flooding can be protected from flooding. Determining the extent of floodplain mitigation required, and the completion of the needed models to determine floodplain impacts, is beyond the scope of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Village of Wheeling has several floodways and floodplains within its corporate limits. The majority of flood problems are associated with the Wheeling Drainage Ditch, although there is also some overbank flooding of the Des Plaines River. The floodplains and floodways throughout the Village have a number of structures located in them.

Buildings located in the floodplain include the Village Hall and Public Works Buildings, as well as a number of businesses and schools. The Village recognized the flooding problems and has implemented a number of measures to alleviate the financial losses associated with flooding, which include:

- Joining the National Flood Insurance Program so that property owners could purchase flood insurance to protect their properties from losses due to flooding.
- Adopting floodplain development regulations.
- Preparing an abbreviated flood hazard mitigation plan and flood response plan as part of this Comprehensive Plan.

Floodplains and Floodways

The central part of the floodplain is called the "floodway." There are floodways associated with both the Wheeling Drainage Ditch and the Des Plaines River. The floodway is the channel and the portion of the adjacent floodplain that must remain open to permit passage of the base flood (flood with a 1% chance of occurrence during any given year). Floodwaters generally are deepest and have the greatest velocity in the floodway, and anything in this area is in the most danger during a flood. The remainder of the floodplain is called the "fringe," where water may be shallower and slower.

A floodway analysis determines the boundaries of the floodway based on the following floodplain management beliefs:

- Development in the floodplain will obstruct flood flows and may divert flows onto other properties.
- Properties on both banks of the river or stream should be treated fairly (i.e., they are each allowed equal encroachment into the floodplain).
- Development can occur if it will not obstruct flood flows or increase water surface elevations by more than 0.1 foot at the upstream property line.
- Compensatory storage may be required to ensure flood storage volume within the floodplain is not decreased due to development.

Economic Impacts of Flooding

Floods also result in problems that are not as easy to quantify as damage to commercial and residential buildings. Business disruption due to flooding can have an adverse impact in tax revenue, property values and customer service. Depending on the length of closure and the type of business, inventories may be affected by the flooding and/or the closure, resulting in less convenience for consumers and increased costs for the business owner.

Road and bridge closures are also an impact of flooding that is difficult to quantify. Depending the severity of the closure, many residents and businesses in Wheeling, as well as other communities, may be affected by the loss of major routes vital to traffic flow and sales taxes. In addition to lost tax revenue and lost income, there are costs for fighting the floods (public works time, lane closures, sandbags, 911 calls, clean up and repair of any damaged public property, etc.). Due to the cost of improving properties in the floodplain and floodplains that have a history of flooding being high, owners may tend to let these properties deteriorate, resulting in a reduction in property values.

Flood Prevention

There are a variety of strategies that can be used to reduce the impact of flooding on property owners and local governments.

Property Protection

There are a number of ways to provide protection from flooding. Properties that suffer from reoccurring flood damage can be purchased and the buildings relocated or demolished. Clearing the property of buildings in the floodway and floodplain will improve the hydraulics of the channel. The property can be returned to its native condition and restored to improve water quality.

If there is an expansive floodway/floodplain, or the properties are too valuable to relocate, commercial buildings can be flood-proofed and protected from flooding. Flood-proofing is expensive, although the owner will see a reduction in repetitive losses associated with frequent flooding of the property.

Stormwater Management

Through the adoption of various ordinances to regulate development in the floodplain and control the stormwater runoff from new developments, water quality can be improved and the likelihood of recurring flooding can be reduced. Providing detention on newly developed properties reduces the immediate impact of stormwater runoff by altering the duration of the storm that may be causing the flooding. Releasing water slowly from a detention basin places water in a downstream channel at a time after the storm has passed, making it more likely that the channel will have sufficient capacity to convey the runoff to the outlet.

Controlling erosion and sediment on a construction site also helps to reduce siltation in the channel. Keeping the channel free of silt enables it to maintain its hydraulic capacity for a longer period of time, thereby reducing the possibility of flooding due to conveyance ability. Floodplain regulations requiring homes to be built to a certain height above the floodplain elevation reduce repetitive losses. Residents of communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program also benefit by being able to purchase flood insurance at discounted rates.

Planning

In an effort to reduce flooding within the Village, a number of initiatives have been undertaken. The north drainage ditch allows water to be diverted from the Wheeling Drainage Ditch north through Wheeling and into the Des Plaines River. The project was completed based on diverting a 100-year discharge of 800 cfs to the north. The channel was designed to accept water during the 5-year storm. This diversion should help to alleviate flooding downstream, although definitive modeling of the new configuration still needs to be completed.

The relocation of the channel at the airport resulted in a shorter channel length that should be more hydraulically effective. The relocation also resulted in a reduction in the floodplain area at the outlet of the drainage ditch. A portion of the area that was previously in the floodplain may now be removed via a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Obtaining a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) based on the modeling will be the first step in obtaining a LOMR. Upon final completion of the project, record drawings of the project will be completed and the models revised to reflect what is in the field. These models and the record drawings will then be submitted to FEMA for the LOMR.

The Village is currently working on additional studies that may affect the location of the floodway. The Village hopes to incorporate the past improvements into the new studies to obtain a more realistic picture of the flood prone areas within the Village. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Water Resources (IDNR-OWR) in Springfield is also currently working on a study that they expect will be done in about three years. The study of the Buffalo Creek (upstream) and Wheeling Drainage Ditch (downstream) will be comprehensive and should result in new flood profiles, as well as revised floodplain and floodway locations.

Open Space Preservation

As floodplains become developed, the natural beneficial functions that are being eliminated become more visible. Keeping floodplains in their natural state or allowing less intensive use of the floodplain is beneficial for the community. New subdivision proposals typically allocate the floodplain and wetland area within the property as open space, in addition to the requirements for parks within new subdivisions.

If open space and regional detention/compensatory storage are provided within the existing floodplain, some reclamation of the floodplain may be realized in addition to maintaining the natural benefits of the floodplain. Since the area north of Dundee Road is a floodway, it is also a good location for a preservation area. Allowing this area to revert to open space will improve water quality and may improve the hydraulics of the stream to help alleviate downstream flooding impacts. Improving this area may also allow a portion of the floodplain to be reclaimed for the proposed town center. The completion of the comprehensive modeling mentioned above will provide a more accurate picture of the improvements that can be realized.

Floodplain Regulations and Critical Facilities

Prior to initiating any work in the floodplain or floodway, Title 22, Floodplain Regulations, of the Wheeling Municipal Ordinance and the permitting requirements, through the Village Engineer, should be consulted to determine the feasibility of the proposed work.

New development is allowed within the flood fringe area if appropriate compensatory storage is provided and ordinance requirements are met. Residential buildings placed on fill must be elevated to, or above, the Flood Protection Elevation (FPE), which is one foot above the 100-year base flood elevation. Elevated residential buildings within the floodplain must have all areas below the FPE constructed of flood-proof material, and no items or materials may be stored below the FPE. Commercial buildings can either be placed at, or above, the FPE or structurally dry flood proofed.

Only appropriate uses, as defined in the floodplain protection ordinance, are allowed in the floodway. Construction or placement of new structures in the floodway is prohibited. If property in the floodway is to be developed with new buildings, the property will must be removed from the floodway. Appropriate uses in the floodway include, but are not limited to, the following: bridges, culverts, storage sheds and detached garages that will not block flood flows, and public open space, trails and open air pavilions. Therefore, existing open space that is currently in the floodway can typically be developed as parks even if the property is not removed from the floodway.

A critical facility should not be located in the floodplain. If a facility is already in the floodplain, or must be located there, then it should meet a higher protection standard. The building should be protected to at least the 500-year flood elevation and have elevated access ramps.

Critical facilities are defined as:

- Structures or facilities that produce, use or store highly volatile, flammable, explosive, toxic and/or water-reactive materials.
- Hospitals, nursing homes and housing likely to have occupants who may not be sufficiently mobile to avoid injury or death during a flood.
- Police stations, fire stations, vehicle and equipment storage facilities, and emergency operations centers that are needed for flood response activities before, during, and after a flood.
- Public and private utility facilities that are vital to maintaining or restoring normal services to flooded areas before, during, and after a flood.

Zoning

Zoning can be used to help regulate land use and development within the floodplain. Zoning regulations should be consistent with other regulations governing land use within the floodplain, namely the Village's floodplain protection ordinance. Such zoning regulations can be done by establishing a new zoning district and amending the zoning map to place this new district over floodplain areas. A "floodplain" or "conservation" zoning district can be used to identify areas of the Village that have significant development limitations due to floodplain, stormwater detention facilities or other environmental restrictions. In addition, a "public lands" zoning district can be used to identify properties dedicated to public uses such as schools, parks, municipal facilities and other similar uses. In Wheeling, a significant amount of public land is also within the floodplain, so if the two districts were used together, they would need to be carefully coordinated. Depending on how the

Village wants to structure its zoning regulations, the "floodplain" or "conservation zoning" district could be an overlay district while the "public lands" district could be a standard mapped district. By incorporating such districts into the Village's zoning ordinance, Wheeling's zoning regulations would provide a clearer indication of the land use restrictions in place on these types of properties and can avoid confusion regarding their use and development.

Emergency Response

Emergency services protect people during and after a disaster. A good emergency services program addresses all hazards, not just flooding. At the state level, emergency response is coordinated through the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. Lake County, as well as the other collar counties, has its own Emergency Management Agency (EMA) that is staffed by the Lake County Sheriff's Department in Libertyville. Wheeling's EMA is coordinated through the fire department.

Threat Recognition

To ensure an effective emergency response can be implemented, the threat of a disaster must be recognized. Without a proper and timely threat recognition system, adequate warnings cannot be disseminated. A system that recognizes imminent flooding will be able to predict the time and height of the flood crest and still provide time for proper emergency response action to be taken.

The National Weather Service coordinated the flood threat recognition work on large rivers, such as the Des Plaines, Fox, Kankakee and Little Calumet Rivers. Flood threat predictions are provided on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, which broadcasts National Weather Service (NWS) warnings, watches, forecasts, and other information 24 hours a day. During an emergency, NWS forecasters interrupt routine weather programming and send out a special tone that activates weather radios in the listening area. Communities on smaller rivers must develop their own flood threat recognition system to provide early warning to emergency managers, such as installing, in key locations, rain and river gauges that gather data electronically or manually. Once a flood threat is recognized, the first priority is to alert others through a flood warning system.

In lieu of installing a stream gaging system on local streams and rivers, the best threat recognition system is to have local personnel monitor rainfall and stream conditions. The threat of various water surface elevations should be documented. The observer can match field observations with modeled data and known topography to determine the threat of flooding. This approach may provide advance notice of potential local or flash flooding.

Warning

After the threat recognition system tells the emergency management agency that a flood or other hazard is coming, the next step is to notify the public and staff of other agencies and critical facilities. The earlier and the more specific the warning, the more likely people can be effectively evacuated from affected areas, as well as allowing greater coordination among the people that are implementing protection measures.

The National Weather Service issues notices to the public using two levels of notification:

- Watch: Conditions are right for flooding, thunderstorm, etc.
- Warning: A flood, tornado, etc. has started or has been observed.

Wheeling has an advanced emergency telephone system. The high-speed notification system allows emergency personnel to communicate directly with residents of areas in danger of fire or other natural

disaster threats. This system ensures that those affected by the disaster will be targeted with specific information, making it more effective than a radio broadcast that targets the whole community. Unfortunately, if the telephones are not in service, other means will be necessary to notify the community of potential threats.

Multiple or redundant systems are most effective. If people do not hear one warning, they may still get the message from another part of the system. Each method of warning the public has advantages and disadvantages. Outdoor warning sirens can reach the most people quickly (except those around loud noise, such as at a factory or during a thunderstorm), but they do not explain what hazard is coming and cannot be sounded unless a timely means of threat recognition exists. Radio and TV provide a lot of information, but people have to know to turn them on and electric lines must be in service. Telephone systems are also fast and can target a specific area, but do not work when phones lines are down.

The systems being used within the community must also convey to residents what is expected of them. Some of the systems mentioned above will allow communication directly with the affected residents. Systems that do not allow direct communication should have a public information aspect associated with them to ensure citizens are aware of what action they need to take. People need to be able to differentiate the difference between a tornado warning (when they should seek shelter in a basement) and a flood warning (when they should stay out of basements).

Response

Warnings will only be effective if people understand what to do when a warning is received. Considerable effort has been made by the National Weather Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the American Red Cross, the media, and many other groups to provide disaster response information. In many areas, the front pages of the telephone book explain how to respond to severe weather, medical emergencies and tornadoes, as well as other potential emergency situations for a particular region. Efforts to improve warning delivery systems at any level (national, state, local) also should be accompanied by public education programs, contingency planning and a review or update of the emergency management plan.

The emergency action plan should be used as a guide to determine the response to the disaster and to ensure that the response activities are appropriate for the expected threat. The plan should be developed by knowledgeable local staff in conjunction with the county, state or national agencies that have jurisdiction over disasters. The protection of life and property is the most important task of emergency responders. The emergency response plan should be developed based on actions being undertaken that will minimize or prevent damage to property and injuries to citizens. This may include persuading people to evacuate in a timely fashion so as not to put themselves or potential rescuers in danger. These actions might include sandbagging and closing streets/bridges in areas that tend to flood, removing objects of importance from basements prone to flooding, and moving cars from low-lying areas.

To determine those affected by flooding, contour mapping can be utilized to determine areas that are inundated at varying flood levels (a flood stage forecast map). Prior to a flood occurring, public works staff working with emergency management staff should identify the properties most likely to be impacted by a flood, streets that will likely be impassable and any critical facilities that may have access problems. Based on this information, the emergency response plan can be tailored to ensure the properties and people most likely to be affected by an emergency will still have access to emergency services and critical facilities will still be able to function as required.

An emergency response plan should be flexible, in that it should be reviewed and revised as conditions change. Also, the items (sandbags, etc.) necessary to respond to a disaster need to be checked to ensure that they are available and any equipment required for a response will be operable. The plan should be checked each year to ensure contact names and telephone numbers are current. If streets that are necessary to emergency response are slated for repair during the year, an alternate route will need to be incorporated into the plan. Learning experiences that occur during disasters or are identified in response rehearsals should be incorporated into the document. The end result should be a document that is adapted to changing conditions and the result of a coordinated effort by people with experience responding to disasters so that available resources will be used in the most efficient manner.

Critical Facilities Protection

Ensuring that critical facilities are protected from the impacts of disasters prior to and during the disaster is the responsibility of the facility owner and/or operator. However, because of the impact that non-functioning critical facilities can have on a community during a disaster, the community should also ensure that these critical facilities will function as expected during a disaster. Critical facilities need to meet a higher standard than normal buildings as far as location and flood-proofing are concerned since damage to a critical facility will have a tendency to divert significant resources from other disaster mitigation efforts.

Many critical facilities have a full-time staff that is responsible for the facility during a disaster. Illinois state law requires hospitals, nursing homes and other public health facilities to develop emergency response plans; other facilities also have their own plans. These plans should be coordinated with the local emergency response plan to ensure there is continuity in the emergency responders efforts. The coordination of efforts will also help guarantee that services are not duplicated during the disaster and that the emergency response is efficient and coordinated. Obviously critical facilities, as well as others potentially affected by flooding, will benefit from early flood warning, flood response planning and coordination with community flood response efforts.

Post-Disaster Recovery and Mitigation

After a disaster, communities need to continue their emergency response efforts by protecting public health and safety. This can be accomplished by providing safe drinking water, clearing streets, cleaning up debris, and monitoring for disease. The community should advise residents about mitigation measures to reduce future damage that can be incorporated into their reconstruction efforts. The various emergency management agencies responding to the disaster will need to inform the public of long-term mitigation activities that will prepare people and property for the next disaster.

During the recovery phase, residents and those affected by the disaster want their property and their life to revert to the way it was prior to the disaster. Unfortunately, returning properties to their pre-disaster condition means people and property may be affected adversely by future disasters, especially flooding. Since tornadoes are relatively random occurrences, the likelihood of properties being exposed more than once in this area is nil. However, permitting reconstruction projects after a flood should be strictly enforced to minimize the possibility of repetitive flood losses being incurred by structures located in areas of historic flooding. Proper permitting and inspections of properties based on the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) requirements will also ensure the community meets its obligations to the NFIP. As discussed earlier, flood losses provide an opportunity for less intensive uses of the floodplain or letting the floodplain revert to open space that will improve water quality.

Flood mitigation may be defined as "everything that can be implemented to reduce property damage, and the threat to life and public health from flooding." Communities have typically relied on two broad kinds of measures to address flooding in northeastern Illinois:

1. Remedial structural measures, such as reservoirs and channel improvements, which keep floodwaters away from damage-prone development.
2. Nonstructural measures, such as regulating development to keep it away from the floodplain detaining stormwater on the sites of new developments, removing flood prone structures from the floodplain, and acquiring flood prone lands for open space.

Each mitigation measure is appropriate in different situations. Structural flood control projects can be the most efficient way to protect an existing critical facility or a concentration of damage-prone buildings. However, structural approaches may give residents a false sense of security leading them to stop purchasing flood insurance because they believe that a flood will never occur if the project is in place. Nationally, these projects are expanding their focus beyond flood damage reduction benefits to other community benefits, such as increased recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat or water quality enhancement.

The use of cost-effective non-structural solutions for individual homeowners, such as flood-proofing or buy-outs, often costs less in the end, but they are often not as readily acceptable to homeowners. Due to the inability to adequately account for open space and ecological benefits in benefit-cost calculations, some federal agencies are still reluctant to spend significant sums of money on non-structural solutions to flooding. It is essential that the community champion the need for enhancement of water quality, habitat and open space, if it is to be in a position to take advantage of available state and federal funding for such programs.

Mitigation Strategies and Recommendations

The primary recommendations with respect to floodplain mitigation within Wheeling involve establishing policies and objectives to guide more detailed studies. These recommendations are outlined below.

1. Proposed floodplain mitigation areas should be focused primarily on vacant/undeveloped land adjacent to the existing stream. For example, portions of the Wheeling Drainage Ditch are adjacent to undeveloped property that would be viable for floodplain mitigation. The use of developed property for floodplain mitigation is not typically financially feasible.

2. Proposed floodplain mitigation areas should be strategically located to help relieve flooding in areas of highest priority. Areas of highest priority for flooding relief are:

    a) Areas critical to enhancing Wheeling's image, such as the town center area.
    b) Areas of public use whose usefulness is compromised by flooding, such as Heritage Park, Hawthorn School, the municipal complex and the recreation center.
    c) Important areas of commercial redevelopment, such as the Kmart site.

3. A definitive projection of the benefits to be gained by proposed floodplain mitigation can only be determined by in-depth floodplain modeling, which is beyond the scope of the Comprehensive Plan. The following policies and objectives for floodplain management and mitigation are based on accepted practices in the field of water resources:

    a) Areas closest to the source of the flooding will be the most difficult to improve while areas on the fringe of the floodplain will be easiest to improve.

b) Development within the floodway is not practical and should be discouraged.
c) Floodplain mitigation plans can be designed to improve water quality.
d) The degree to which downstream flooding is alleviated can be affected by the extent of upstream floodplain improvements.
e) Vacant land and redevelopment sites can be more easily removed from the floodplain by the elevating surface topography and incorporating compensatory storage for the fill volume. Removing existing development is typically more difficult due to the required changes in floodplain hydraulics/hydrology.

The recommendations discussed above are policies intended to outline the approach to actual floodplain mitigation. Specific plans for mitigation can be formulated only after a detailed engineering study has been performed to identify the specific characteristics of flooding in Wheeling. This study is currently underway. Once that study is completed, specific plans for floodplain mitigation can be prepared. However, it should be understood that the floodplain mitigation plan could be designed in several ways to achieve varying effects. Choices will need to be made on which areas to mitigate. The Village's engineering reviews currently address development controls in the floodplain.

6. TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The purpose of this element is to consider all relevant modes of transportation, including mass transit, air, water, rail, automobile, bicycle, pedestrian and transportation designed to accommodate special needs, as they affect Wheeling's land use pattern and community mobility. The implementation section of this chapter of the plan provides an overview of the framework for acquisition, preservation and protection of existing and future rights-of-way, and sets forth transportation performance measures designed to provide guidance to decisionmakers.

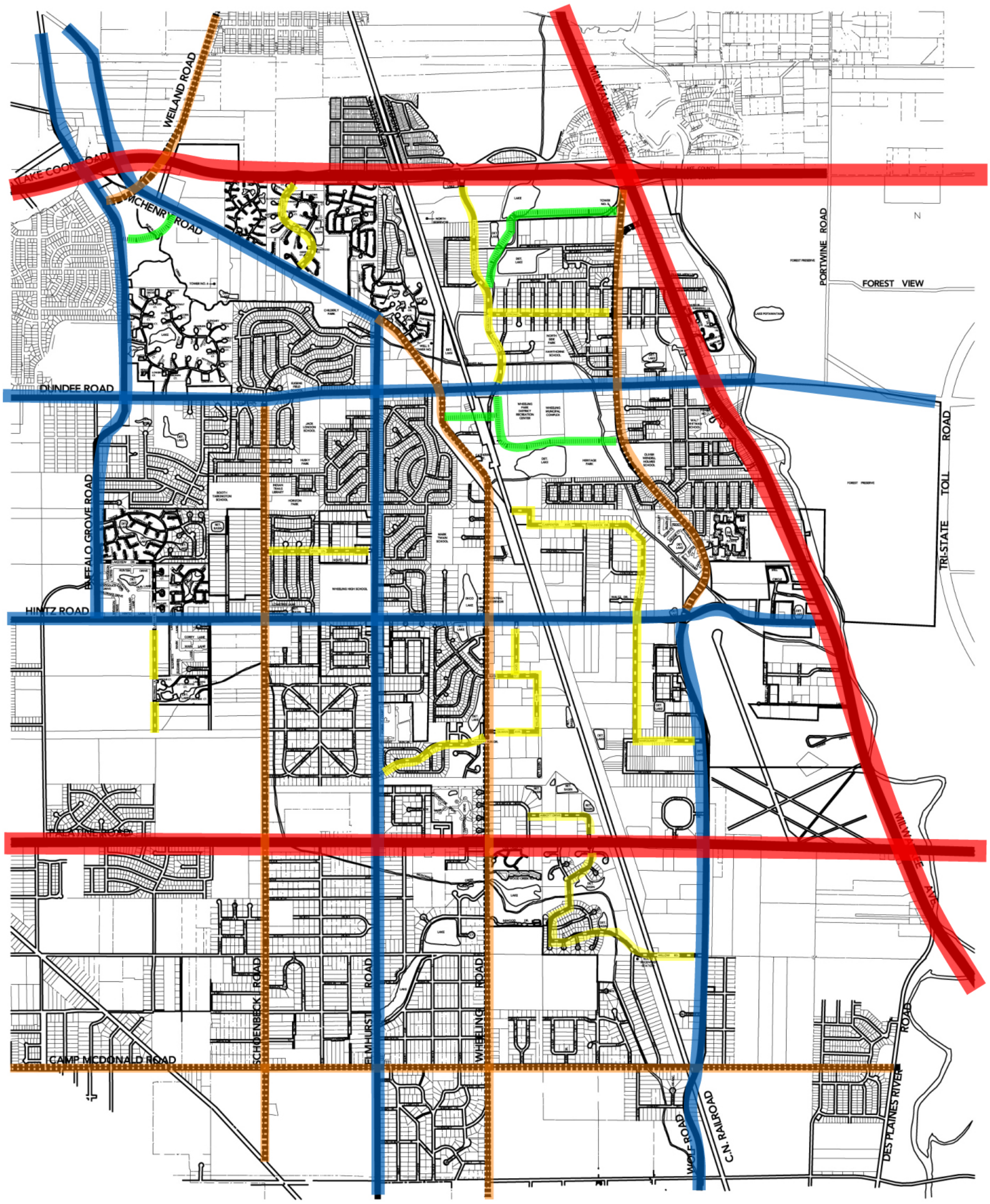
STREET SYSTEM

Streets are typically classified by their function within the community and regional transportation network. Wheeling's street system hierarchy is shown in *Figure 23: Street System Plan*. Lake Cook Road, Milwaukee Avenue and Palatine Road have been designated as Strategic Regional Arterials in the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) ***2020 Regional Transportation Plan***. Wheeling's designated major streets also include Dundee Road, Hintz Road, Wolf Road (south of Hintz Road), Elmhurst Road, McHenry Road and Buffalo Grove Road. Major streets are designed with 100-foot rights-of-way and typically carry the highest traffic volumes. Secondary streets include Camp McDonald Road, Wolf Road (north of Hintz Road), Wheeling Road, Schoenbeck Road, and Weiland Road and are typically built within 80 foot rights-of-way. Collector streets provide circulation between local streets and the major and secondary streets that connect Wheeling with adjacent communities and the region. Local streets provide direct access to private property and constitute the remainder of Wheeling's circulation system.

One of Wheeling's primary transportation objectives is enhancing transportation movement within Wheeling. There are only four east west streets that cross the railroad tracks that bisect the community. While there are grade separated crossings at Lake Cook Road and Palatine Road, these arterials are located at the north and south edges of the Village and are not particularly useful in the east-west movement of local traffic. Two new railroad crossings have been identified. The first is a below grade crossing south of Dundee Road that would link the east and west sections of the proposed town center development. A second at grade crossing is shown at Carpenter Avenue that would connect the industrial uses east of the railroad tracks with Wheeling Road.

Expanding the community's street grid system will provide local residents with alternatives to often congested arterial streets. A more consistent street grid can also help to reinforce a sense of community by linking Wheeling's residential neighborhoods.

A number of heavily traveled arterial roads pass through Wheeling. Overall, average daily traffic counts on most roads increased from 1994 to 1998/2000. *Table 7: Traffic Volumes* lists the 1994 and 1998/2000 traffic counts for all major arterials and collectors in Wheeling.



LEGEND

- STRATEGIC REGIONAL ARTERIAL
- MAJOR ARTERIAL
- SECONDARY ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR STREET
- LOCAL STREET
- FUTURE COLLECTOR STREET

Figure 23:

STREET SYSTEM PLAN

Village of Wheeling — Wheeling, Illinois

DATE: JULY 2003

0' 1250' 2500' 5000'

NORTH

CAMIROS
Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Landscape Architecture
411 South Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607 Phone: (312) 922-9211

Table 7: Traffic Volumes

Street	Average Daily Traffic	
	1994	1998 & 2000*
Lake Cook Road • Buffalo Grove-Milwaukee Avenue	28,600	44,700
Dundee Road • Milwaukee Avenue-Elmhurst Road • Elmhurst Road-Buffalo Grove Road	26,700 31,100	31,300 37,400
Hintz Road • Milwaukee Avenue-Wolf Road • Wolf Road-Wheeling Road • Wheeling Road-Elmhurst Road • Elmhurst Road-Schoenbeck Road • Schoenbeck Road-Buffalo Grove Road	8,900 18,100 19,400 20,800 15,500	11,500 20,000 22,000 19,800 24,000
Palatine Road • Milwaukee Avenue-Wolf Road • Wolf Road-Elmhurst Road	39,800 40,400	49,800 38,200
Milwaukee Avenue • Lake Cook Road-Dundee Road • Dundee Road-Palatine Road	30,100 33,800	28,600 31,400
Wolf Road • Milwaukee Avenue-Dundee Road • Dundee Road-Hintz Road • Hintz Road-Palatine Road	14,500 15,900 15,900	10,100 17,300 17,000
Wheeling Road • Old McHenry Road-Dundee Road • Dundee Road-Palatine Road	N/A N/A	13,700 7,500
Elmhurst Road • Dundee Road-Palatine Road • Dundee Road-Hintz Road • Hintz Road-Palatine Road	N/A 18,800 19,700	16,000 N/A N/A
Schoenbeck Road • Dundee Road-Hintz Road • Hintz Road-Palatine Road	8,500 8,700	8,100 9,100
Buffalo Grove Road • Lake Cook Road-Dundee Road • Dundee Road-Hintz Road	20,100 12,800	17,500 12,200

* - Local roads = 1998 traffic counts; State routes = 2000 traffic counts.
Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS

The main goal of Wheeling's pathway plan is to establish a bicycle and pedestrian system within the Village, which connects the neighborhoods to each other and to community facilities, such as parks, schools, shopping and community centers. The recommendations propose several ways to safely separate bicyclists and pedestrians from vehicular traffic. The plan also recommends possible future connectors to pathway systems in the neighboring municipalities and to the regional trail system. The plan has been structured to allow the Village to develop the path system incrementally over the years as development opportunities and funding become available. Potential funding sources for implementation of the pathway system are also listed in the final section of this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

The primary goal of the bicycle and pedestrian pathway system is to connect neighborhoods with destinations within Wheeling and the regional bike path along the Des Plaines River. Schools, the library, parks and the swimming pool are popular destinations for school-aged children. The Metra station and Village Hall are more likely to appeal to adults. Shopping destinations include shopping centers, grocery stores and restaurants.

Besides identifying appropriate routes within the Village, Wheeling's pathway system should also identify links that provide easy access to the regional trail system and the bikeway systems of surrounding communities as they develop. The regional bike trail along the Des Plaines River in the Cook County Forest Preserve and extending into Lake County is a popular destination for recreational bicyclists. Consequently, emphasis should be placed on providing safe access to this important regional amenity from all parts of the Village.

Wheeling's major arterial streets, including Dundee Road, Milwaukee Avenue, Lake Cook Road, Hintz Road, Wheeling Road, Wolf Road and Elmhurst Road, significantly influence the design of the pathway system. These arterials, given their high traffic volumes and wide roadways, represent major constraints to establishing safe and continuous east-west and north-south pathways. The Metra tracks that bisect the Village further disrupt continuous circulation. These constraints and the existing land use patterns have a significant influence on the structure of the pathway system.

Planning Considerations

While Wheeling's pathway plan is intended to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists, the primary focus is on bike riders. Bicyclists typically take longer trips and are more sensitive to the impact of vehicular traffic. While it is desirable to separate bicyclists and pedestrians, both user groups are often attracted to the same pathways, particularly if they are well maintained and lead to popular community destinations. Sidewalks are already generally in place along the busiest streets and can safely accommodate pedestrians, but may be too narrow to also safely accommodate bikes.

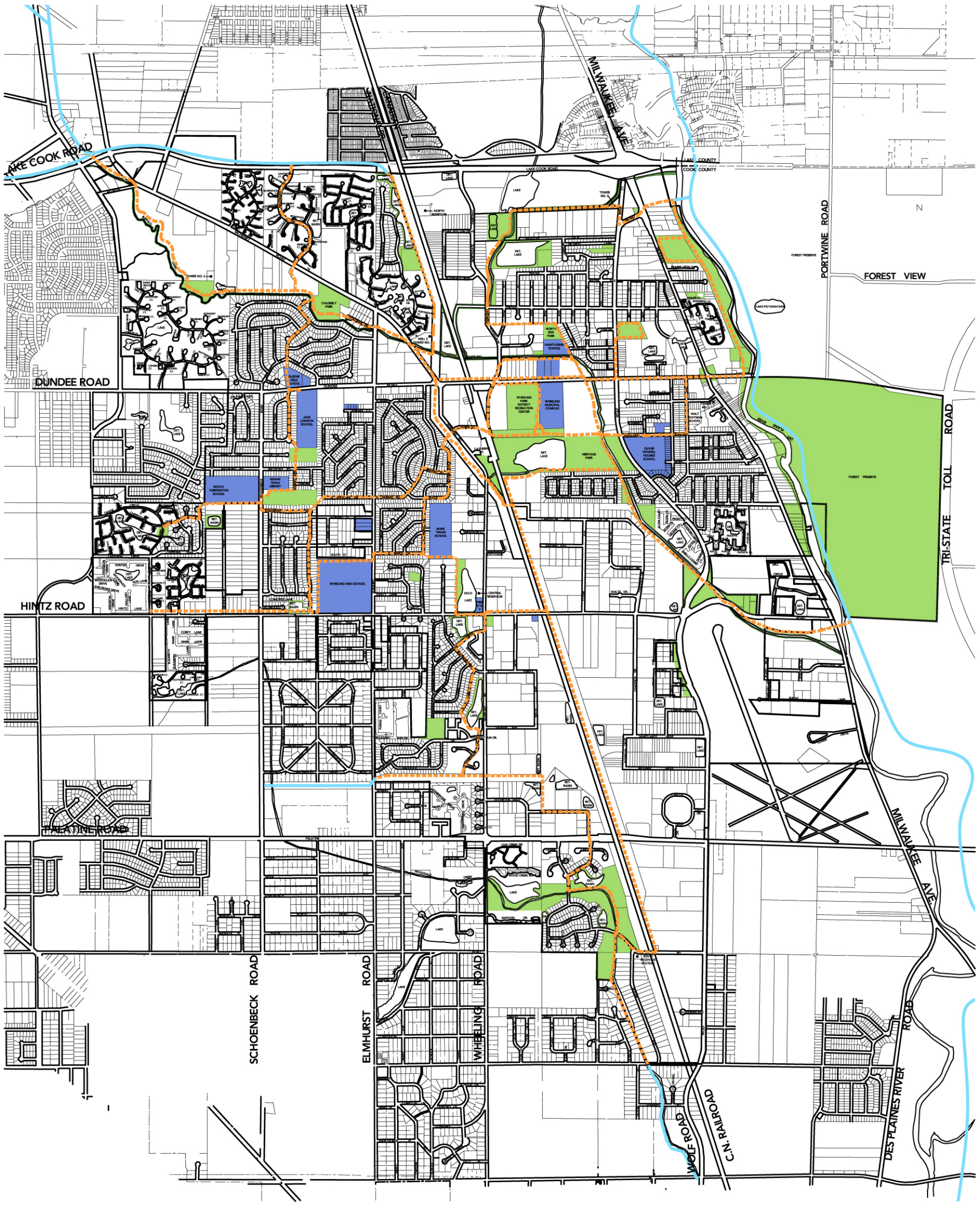
Pedestrian Pathways

Sidewalks are already found along Wheeling's major arterials and many of its neighborhood streets. Streetscape improvements can significantly improve the overall pedestrian experience. Generally, it is best to separate pedestrians and bicyclists. However, given the current traffic patterns and physical barriers there may be instances when both pedestrians and bicyclists will need to be accommodated. This is especially true of the area around the Metra station and along Dundee Road.

Bicycle Pathways

The proposed bicycle system is shown in *Figure 24: Bikeway System Plan*. The primary pathway system uses existing streets, sidewalks, bike paths and signalized intersections to link neighborhoods and community destinations. Where possible, routes are designated on streets that parallel busier streets and rely on signalized intersections to cross arterial streets in order to minimize conflicts between motor vehicles and pedestrians and bicycles.

Among the impediments to building a Village-wide bikeway system are the lack of connections between subdivisions and ways to cross the railroad tracks and major streets safely. These are the same factors that hinder vehicular movement within the community. However, since bikes and pedestrian movement is typically less disruptive to quality of life, it may be more politically acceptable to selectively acquire private property that would allow new linkages to be established.



LEGEND

- REGIONAL TRAIL LINKS
- PROPOSED PATH
- OPEN SPACE/RECREATIONAL
- GREENWAY CORRIDOR
- SCHOOLS/LIBRARY/VILLAGE HALL

FOR CONCEPTUAL USE ONLY

Figure 24:

BIKEWAY SYSTEM PLAN

DATE: JULY 2003

0' 1250' 2500' 5000'

NORTH

Wheeling Comprehensive Plan

Wheeling, Illinois

CAMIROS
Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Landscape Architecture
411 South Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607 Phone: (312) 922-9211

In addition to the streets and sidewalks that can be immediately designated to establish a functioning bikeway system, a number of future routes are identified that will require installation of new traffic signals or other improvements for them to become a part of the bikeway system. The Commonwealth Edison right-of-way is a natural location for a bike path, as are the banks of the diversion channel, the Wheeling Drainage Ditch, Buffalo Creek and land located along the Des Plaines River owned by the Cook County Forest Preserve.

Bicycle Parking

The regular presence of bicycle parking at destinations can help to deliver the message that the Village is bicycle-friendly and may actually encourage more people to use their bicycle for shopping, trips to the library and other utilitarian purposes. Provision of secured parking, especially at the Metra station and other locations where bicycles are typically parked for long periods of time, may encourage greater bicycle use.

Bicycle parking facilities can vary in design depending on intended duration of use. Several factors common to all acceptable bicycle parking installations are:

- Good support of the bicycle
- Security (capacity to lock the frame and both wheels)
- Ease of use
- Durability
- Visibility of the parking area
- Convenience to the destination
- Compatibility with site conditions
- Attractiveness

Bicycle parking should be provided for all public buildings including Village Hall, schools, recreational facilities, the library and, of course, the Metra station. Private property owners should be encouraged to provide bicycle parking at shopping centers and other destinations.

Bike Route Signing

Signage is one of the least important elements of a community-oriented pathway system. It is more important to establish attractive and user-friendly routes that link popular community destinations. As residents learn that it is more convenient to walk or bicycle along safe and attractive routes than it is to drive, the pathway system will become an integral part of the local transportation network – with or without directional signage.

Bike route signing is not needed along most streets. This supports a key bicycle planning principle that every street is a bicycling street, and cyclists will use a variety of streets in selecting convenient routes to various destinations. A signed bike route should indicate a direct route to a useful destination, utilize low traffic streets or designated bicycle facilities and be adequately signed to show destinations and, where appropriate, distances. For liability and safety reasons, all hazards to bicycle travel should be removed or improved before signing a route. These include items such as unsafe drainage grates, rough railroad crossings, unresponsive traffic signals, potholes, gravel and debris.

As a general guide, streets that provide direct routes of travel and have traffic volumes of less than 2,000 ADT (average daily traffic) and speeds of less than 30 mph are the most suitable for shared-use bicycle route designation. Widened curb lanes, paved shoulders and designated bike lanes are

recommended design treatments for streets and roadways with higher traffic volumes and speeds. Bike route signs should not be used to designate sidewalks and other substandard routes as bikeways.

Bicycle Pathway Classification

According to the 1991 *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, the national planning and design standards published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO),

> "Bicycle Facility Planning is commonly thought of as the effort undertaken to develop a separated bikeway system composed completely of bicycle paths and lanes all interconnected and spaced closely enough to satisfy all the travel needs of bicyclists. In fact, such systems can be unnecessarily expensive and do not provide for the vast majority of bicycle travel. Existing roadways, often with relatively inexpensive improvements, must serve as the base system to provide for the travel needs of bicyclists. Bicycle paths and lanes can augment this existing system in scenic corridors or in places where access is limited. Thus, bicycle transportation planning is more than planning for bikeways and is an effort that should consider many alternatives to provide for safe and efficient bicycle travel."

The recommended strategies contained within this section of the plan discuss the applicability of various alternatives for accommodating bicycle and pedestrian travel within Wheeling. These include designated multi-use trails, as well as general roadway improvements that benefit motorized and non-motorized users alike, and supplemental programs to promote increased use and safety for bicycling and walking activities. Such a balanced approach is necessary to ensure that the needs of all users are being met in a resource efficient and cost effective manner.

Shared-Use Streets

AASHTO states that "to varying extents, bicycles will be ridden on all highways (roadways) where they are permitted. All new highways, except those where bicyclists will be legally prohibited, should be designed and constructed under the assumption that they will be used by bicyclists." It is usually not good public policy to prohibit bicycles on public streets. Bike riders will typically gravitate to the safest routes, either on the street or on adjacent sidewalks.

Designing, constructing and retrofitting roadways to better accommodate bicycle use means eliminating basic hazards to bicycle travel. These include wheel damaging drainage grates, rough at-grade railroad crossings, unresponsive traffic signals, rumble strips, potholes, longitudinal seams in pavement, and a lack of maintenance attention focused on the right-hand edge of roadways. For the most part, the removal of hazards is inexpensive and can be accomplished within routine maintenance schedules and minor roadway improvement budgets.

Shared-use streets typically have 12 foot lane widths, and provide access to many origins and destinations dispersed throughout the community. Bicyclists typically find that sharing roadways with vehicles is most pleasant on local streets in residential areas with low motor vehicle traffic volumes and speeds. Shared roadways do not usually require or warrant any special signing for bicyclists, unless they are preferred alternate routes or critical links in an overall bicycle system.

As a result of a recent court decision, in Illinois there are no liability issues for communities that do not undertake street improvements to accommodate bicyclists, but liability exposure for those communities that do. Various groups are pursuing legislative remedies to this situation, which rewards communities that do not encourage bicycle use, while raising liability concerns for

communities working to become more bicycle-friendly. However, those communities that have continued to develop shared-use street facilities have experienced few liability claims.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks in Wheeling are commonly used for bicycle travel, especially by young children. Sidewalks provide a separation from traffic and hence greater bicyclist safety. However, according to state and national standards, sidewalks are not and should not be designated as bicycle facilities. This is primarily due to conflicts arising out of the shared use of the narrow sidewalk by both pedestrians and bicyclists. However, a separate bike path or shared use of existing roadways is often not feasible because of insufficient right-of-way widths or heavy traffic volumes. Consideration should be given to widening sidewalks along major streets to better accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Bike Trails

Bicycle facilities separated from the street and road system are commonly referred to as bike paths or multi-use trails. These facilities are typically paved a minimum of 10 feet wide and designed for the exclusive use of bicycles and other non-motorized users (pedestrians, joggers, in-line skaters, etc.) There are several opportunities to establish new bike trail segments that would form the spine of Wheeling's bikeway system. These include extension of the recently approved bike path along the Commonwealth Edison right-of-way north of Dundee Road that will connect with Buffalo Grove's bike path system, to the southern end of Wheeling, where it can be connected to the bike path in Prospect Heights.

Design Standards

Off-road facilities should be built to appropriate design standards. If a route is a designated bike path, it should be built to bikeway standards; if pedestrians and bikes will share an existing sidewalk, the sidewalk can be built to typical sidewalk standards. In general, the same maintenance and liability responsibilities apply to bike paths and Village sidewalks.

Bike paths and multi-use trails attract a variety of user types and, therefore, need to be designed to accommodate multiple users. Trails provided primarily for a recreational purpose do not need to be paved. However, they do need to be compacted, level, smooth surfaces in keeping with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements. Paved paths are preferred if they are also to be used by commuters. Most often bike paths within communities are paved to widths of at least 10 feet. According to AASHTO standards, an 8-foot width is adequate where the following conditions prevail:

1. Bicycle traffic is expected to be low, even on peak days or during peak hours.
2. Pedestrian use of the facility is not expected to be more than occasional.
3. There will be good horizontal and vertical path alignment providing safe and frequent passing opportunities.
4. The path will not be subject to maintenance vehicle traffic that would cause pavement edge damage.

Bike path projects should provide adequate access points and appropriate transition areas to the on-street bikeways that form the remainder of Wheeling's pathway system.

Trail development along Buffalo Creek, the diversion channel and the Wheeling Drainage Ditch will involve a number of considerations. Easements will have to be acquired that are of sufficient width to accommodate bike trails and meet other recreational needs. There may be points at which one or more bridges will be needed to establish a continuous trail along these waterways. Both the trail and any bridge crossings will have to be designed and constructed to withstand potential flooding and minimize trail maintenance requirements.

Pedestrian travel needs differ from those of bike riders, and may best be served through a network of sidewalks along public rights-of-way. Pedestrians are slower than cyclists, prefer greater separation from traffic, are the least tolerant of out-of-the-way travel paths and, since motorists often are not looking for pedestrians, they are the most vulnerable of roadway users. Curb ramps should be installed perpendicular to the street and should lead into safe crosswalk areas, and not direct users into the flow of vehicular traffic.

Whenever adequate right-of-way exists, a planted parkway or median is recommended to provide a buffer area between motor vehicle traffic and pedestrian movement. To further improve the quality of the pedestrian environment, trees should be planted within the buffer areas to provide a visual and physical separation from vehicular traffic.

A well designed cohesive landscape adds to the visual experience of the pathways, improves the streetscape and attracts a greater number of users to the path system. Functionally, it serves as a buffer between the vehicular and bicycle traffic. However, landscape material should not create visual hazards for motorists or path users. Hence, plants over three feet tall should be avoided within 50 feet of intersections and driveways. Landscape improvements for the paths along Wheeling's waterways should take a natural approach and be designed to enhance existing natural features, especially the wooded areas along the creek. Improvements should also be coordinated with future streetscape recommendations for specific streets and intersections.

Roadway intersections, where the path users must cross streets carrying vehicular traffic, should be identified to the path user in advance. This can be accomplished by posting appropriate traffic control signs, such as warning and stop signs, along the pathway. Pavement markings identifying the crossing should be provided at major intersection crossings, particularly where bike routes cross Dundee Road, Milwaukee Avenue and other busy streets.

Implementation Strategies

A combination of proactive and incremental approaches can be used to implement the proposed pathway plan. A proactive approach would involve utilizing general funds from normal Village revenue or applying for outside government grants. A more incremental approach would include implementation through the development approval process as opportunities arise. Since Wheeling is almost fully developed, the proactive approach will yield the most positive results.

Building Wheeling's pathway system will require undertaking a number of projects over a period of years. Once priorities have been confirmed by the Village, a more detailed review of potential funding sources is appropriate. Projects that will be locally funded can be included in the Village's capital improvement program and grant applications can be prepared for appropriate projects. Finally, the Village should work with local school and park districts, Metra, and neighboring communities to enhance the regional trail system. Providing realistic alternatives to the automobile is an important long-range transportation objective.

Potential Funding Sources

While the Village's annual operating budget may be the most obvious source of funding for pathway system improvements, there are a number of options for stretching scarce local resources. State and local funding will most likely be the most efficient method of improvement financing. The application and reporting requirements associated with federal funding programs generally means that such funding should be reserved for projects costing $250,000 or more. The major non-local funding sources for bikeway facilities are briefly described below.

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

All state transportation departments are required to set aside 10% of their Surface Transportation Program Funds under TEA-21 for transportation improvements. ITEP is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Based on Illinois's anticipated apportionment, approximately $21 million in federal funds will be available annually through 2003.

ITEP offers funding for projects than enhance the country's transportation system with a variety of improvements. One of the primary elements of the program is funding for trails and pathway systems that offer economic, social and environmental benefits. In order to be eligible for enhancement funding, a project must be directly related to, and enhance, the community's transportation system. For example, loop trails within a park are not eligible under this program because they serve recreational needs and are not related to the overall transportation system.

ITEP is a reimbursement program in which project sponsors pay 100% of project costs and are then reimbursed for eligible project costs following implementation. All TEA-21 projects must have a state or local sponsor. Examples of local sponsors include municipalities, forest preserve districts, townships and park districts. Acquisition of right-of-way and easements are reimbursed on a 50/50 matching basis. Right-of-way donations from a third party can be credited towards the sponsor's share of the project construction costs.

Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD)

The Illinois OSLAD program is a state-financed grant program that is administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. It provides up to 50% funding assistance to eligible local government units for the purpose of acquiring and/or developing lands for public outdoor recreation purposes. Maximum grant awards to any one project in a given year is currently limited to $400,000 for approved land acquisition projects and $200,000 for approved development projects. It should be noted that acquisition of land from another public agency, with the exception of school districts, is not eligible for OSLAD assistance.

Illinois Trails Grant Programs

Illinois Bicycle Path Program
The Illinois Bicycle Path Program is a state grant program administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The program provides financial assistance to eligible local government units to assist them in the acquisition, construction and rehabilitation of public, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly related support facilities. Bicycle routes sharing existing roadway surfaces are not eligible for funding.

Currently, the Bicycle Path grant program provides up to a maximum of 50% funding assistance on approved local project cots. Maximum grants for development projects is limited to $200,000

per annual request. No maximum grant amount limit exists for acquisition projects, other than the established annual state appropriation level for the program.

Recreational Trails Program
The federal "Recreational Trails Program" (RTP) was created through the National Recreational Trail Fund Act (NRTFA) and enacted as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and re-authorized by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21). In Illinois, RTP funds are administered by DNR in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

The RTP provides funding assistance for acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized recreation trails. The RTP program can provide up to 80% federal funding for approved projects and requires a minimum 20% non-federal funding match.

US Department of Interior, Rails to Trails Program

This program enables communities to transform abandoned railway corridors into public hike and bike paths.

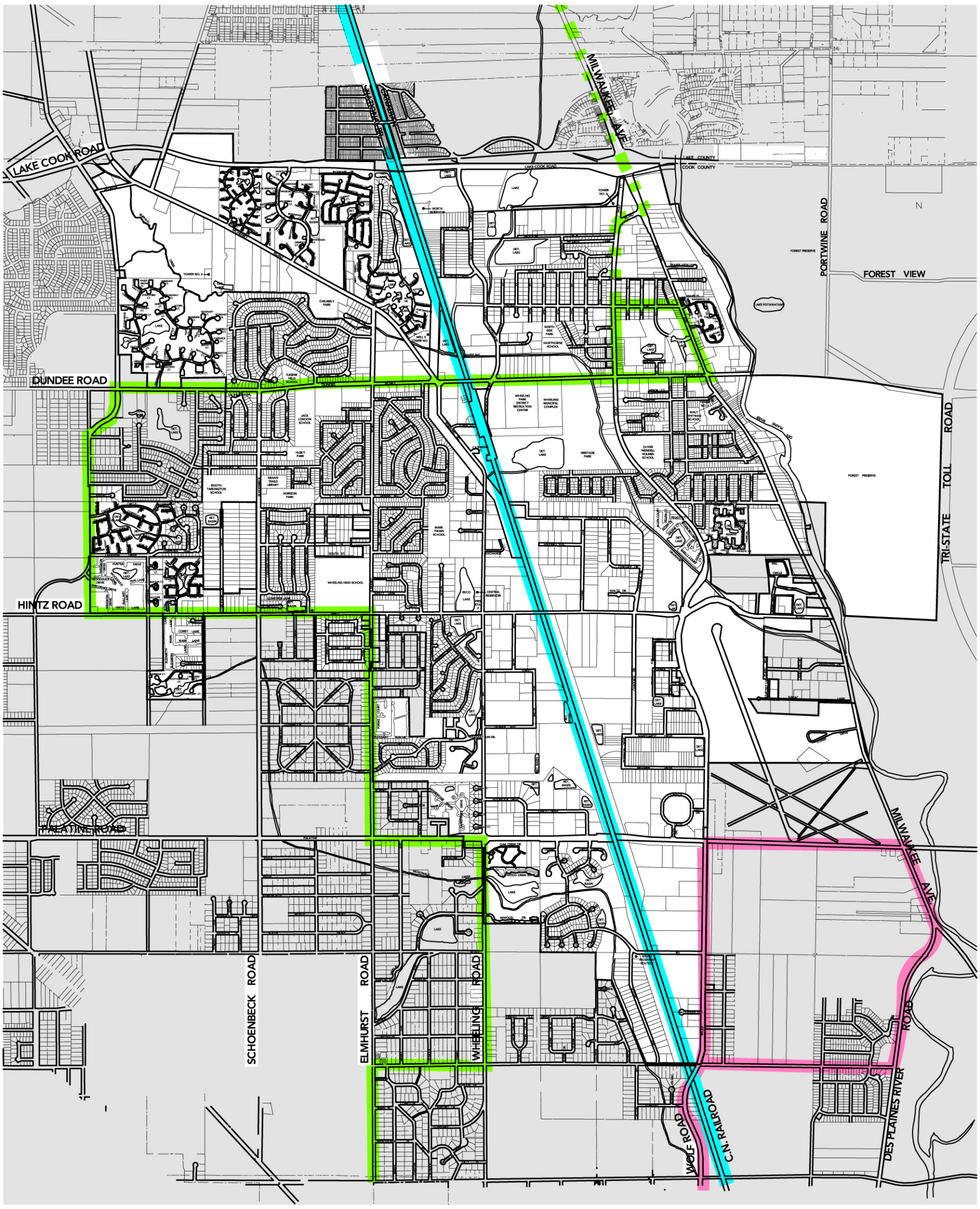
PUBLIC TRANSIT

Wheeling is served by Metra commuter rail service and two Pace bus routes as shown in *Figure 25: Public Transportation Map*. Since 1999, ridership on both Pace bus routes has declined. Route 221 serves only the far south portion of Wheeling (Wolf Road south of Palatine Road). While the entire length of Dundee Road within Wheeling is served by Route 234, most of the route runs along the periphery of the Village.

Metra service began in 1996 and currently operates with 10 trains each weekday. No weekend service is available. A partial upgrade of Metra's North Central line, now under construction, will allow expanded service with 22 trains per weekday beginning in 2005. Although no financial commitments are in place, the CATS ***2020 Regional Transportation Plan*** includes a full upgrade of this Metra line that would a schedule with 52 trains per weekday as well as the possibility of weekend service.

With the expansion of service, boardings are projected to more than double by 2008 over 1998 boarding counts. Metra periodically conducts ridership surveys to identify ridership patterns. The most recent survey was a 1999 On-Board Passenger Survey that showed that the vast majority of commuters (74%) drove alone to access Metra trains. Another 16% of riders were dropped off at the station, while only 4% of riders walked. With development of a town center that includes residential development in the land use mix, the percentage of commuters who walk to the station can be expected to increase.

The current bus routes and location of the Metra station are not conducive to use by individuals who are employed in Wheeling's industrial areas. This means that most Wheeling workers must drive to work. In order to identify opportunities to improve transit access for Wheeling workers, Pace and Wheeling's Economic Development Department initiated a transportation analysis study for local employers. The intent of this effort was to determine the need for connecting service from Wheeling's Metra station as well as providing rush hour service to the industrial area north of Hintz Road and east of Wheeling Road.



LEGEND

- METRA COMMUTER RAIL (SERVICE BETWEEN CHICAGO AND ANTIOCH)
- PACE ROUTE #221 ROSEMONT CTA STATION TO PROSPECT HEIGHTS
- PACE ROUTE #234 DOWNTOWN DES PLAINES, HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL, MOUNT PROSPECT METRA STATION, RANDHURST, WOODLAND CREEK APARTMENTS, WHEELING H.S., WHEELING MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
- PACE ROUTE #234 BUFFALO GROVE TERMINAL (RUSH HOURS)

Figure 25:

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MAP

DATE: JULY 2003

NORTH

Wheeling Comprehensive Plan

Wheeling, Illinois

CAMIROS
Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, Landscape Architecture
411 South Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607 Phone: (312) 922-9211

OTHER TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

There are two other major components of Wheeling's transportation system. These are Palwaukee Municipal Airport and the rail freight line that traverses the Village.

Palwaukee Municipal Airport

Palwaukee Municipal Airport is one of the few general aviation airports that remain in Cook County. The airport, which can accommodate corporate jets, is jointly owned and operated by the Village of Wheeling and the City of Prospect Heights.

Founded in 1925 as Gauthier's Flying Field, Palwaukee Municipal Airport has grown from a 40-acre grassy open area with dirt runways to a general aviation airport serving the metropolitan Chicago area. It is also one of the nation's busiest reliever airports. Gauthier's Flying Field expanded in the 1930s to 91 acres, including the addition of a blimp hanger in 1933. The field also experienced significant growth in the 1940s when it expanded to 109 acres and improved with a gravel runway and 70 individual T-hangars. In 1953, Priester Aviation Service acquired the airport. Priester owned and continued to develop the airport until 1986, when it was acquired by the Village of Wheeling and the City of Prospect Heights. During Priester ownership, the runways were added and paved, lighting installed and a DC-3 hangar built. A VOR approach was established in 1961, new corporate hangars and a 5,000 foot runway were constructed in 1965. In 1967 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) commissioned an air traffic control tower at the airport. In 1974, a 1,600 foot partial taxiway parallel to Runway 16/34 was completed and the FAA began an ILS installation.

During the last decade, Palwaukee Municipal Airport has undergone significant construction, upgrading and development projects. In 1992, the first airport emergency drill was conducted, which realistically simulated an airport disaster. As a result, the intersection of two major arterial roadways and a drainage ditch have been relocated beyond the runway safety area. A new air traffic control tower was commissioned in 1997.

Today, Palwaukee Municipal Airport is home to 360 aircraft, including 54 corporate jet aircraft. More than 18,000 takeoffs and landings have been logged annually in recent years. It is in operation 24 hours a day year round. Palwaukee Municipal Airport consists of three active runways and covers more than 412 acres. It is the third business airport in Illinois and plays a crucial role as a reliever for the region, which includes O'Hare International Airport. Currently, a modernization project is underway that will bring Palwaukee Municipal Airport up to federal standards. This work includes improving runways and building taxiways and aprons.

Rail Freight Services

One of the transportation amenities for industrial users is the freight line that runs diagonally through the Village. Now owned by the Canadian National Railway – Wisconsin Central Division, this rail corridor also carries Metra commuter trains. Although access to rail freight lines is less important for many industries than in the past, rail spurs still serve many Wheeling industrial users.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's transportation recommendations will involve a variety of Village actions. A number of new roadway connections are shown on the plan which are designed to establish new local collector streets that will allow local traffic to avoid busy regional arterials and make it easier for Wheeling residents to get around town, particularly at rush hour. While the general locations of future rights-of-way have been identified in the Future Land Use Plan, the exact locations of these new street connections will depend on a variety of factors. The most effective way for the Village to ensure that the community's transportation objectives are met is to become actively involved in planning for regional transportation improvements and to lobby for projects that will benefit Wheeling. Developing strong working relationships with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Cook County, Metra, Pace and other agencies will help to ensure that the community's transportation, streetscape improvement and development objectives are considered as funding and improvement decisions are made.

Right-of Way Acquisition, Preservation and Protection

In some cases, development of these new streets can be made a part of the development process. In other situations, the Village will need to take the lead in acquiring new right-of-way. New community collector streets are proposed to connect McHenry Road and Buffalo Grove Road when the Schwind and Horcher properties are developed in northwest Wheeling. Another community collector is proposed between Wolf Court and Northgate Parkway, to provide a secondary alternative to Lake Cook Road. Two additional community collector streets are shown south of Dundee Road that would be needed to facilitate traffic movement within the proposed town center development and that would provide additional connections to Wolf Road, Northgate Parkway and Wheeling Road. A new street connecting Wolf Road and Milwaukee Avenue is anticipated as part of a potential redevelopment of the industrial and commercial property between Wolf Road and Milwaukee Avenue, just north of Mayer Avenue. Finally, a short street segment is shown that would connect the industrial district east of the railroad tracks with Wheeling Road at Carpenter Avenue.

Developing a local bike and pedestrian pathway system is in many respects a more challenging undertaking. While most Village streets have sidewalks along at least one side of the street, not all do. Where sidewalks do exist, they are generally not wide enough to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians.

Because few connections between subdivisions were required as Wheeling developed, pedestrians and bicyclists must use busy streets to get from place to place within the Village. It may be possible to accommodate bicycle lanes along some major streets where there is sufficient pavement width or as part of major roadway improvement projects. However, certain streets, particularly Dundee Road, Milwaukee Avenue, Lake Cook Road and Palatine Road, may always be too busy to safely accommodate bicycles. In these areas, the bicycle system will need to rely on sidewalks or the creation of separate pathways.

The proposed trail system relies on the use of easements along Commonwealth Edison right-of-way, local streets and pathway links through schools and parks, and public and private easements along local creeks and the diversion channel. However, making the proposed trail system accessible to the adjacent residential neighborhoods will also require the selective acquisition of strategically located private property.

Evaluation and Performance Measures

The basic test of how well Wheeling's transportation system functions is how easily Wheeling residents and workers can get from place to place within the Village. There is currently considerable frustration in this regard. Given the range of transportation system recommendations contained in this Comprehensive Plan, it is clearly not possible to do everything at once. Priorities will need to be established that are geared to improving Wheeling's quality of life and mobility of residents and the local work force. Among the factors that should be used to evaluate transportation improvement proposals are the following:

- Does the improvement allow traffic to move smoothly, with few delays?
- Does the improvement improve safety?
- Does the improvement help to establish viable alternatives to the automobile for getting around town?

7. HOUSING PLAN

The purpose of this component of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan is to document the present and future needs for housing within the Village of Wheeling, including affordable and special needs housing. In undertaking this analysis, the housing needs of the larger region need to be considered and the barriers to the production of housing identified. The condition of the local housing stock has been assessed in order to develop the strategies, programs and other actions to address Wheeling's housing needs, and provide current and future residents with a range of housing options.

EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

Housing in Wheeling is a mix of single-family and multifamily dwellings. Over half of Wheeling's housing units are one-unit dwellings; 31% are detached and 20.8% are attached one-unit dwellings. Two-unit structures make up less than 1% of the housing stock, but 3 to 4 unit buildings account for 7.4%, and 5 to 9 unit structures for 14.7% of housing units in Wheeling. Ten to 19-unit buildings make up 5% of the total housing stock, and structures with 20 units or more account for 17.5%. Finally, 3% of residents in 2000 lived in mobile homes.

Wheeling's residential growth took off beginning in the 1960s, demonstrated by the age of housing in the Village. About 10% of residential structures standing in 2000 were built during the 1990s, 28.8% during the 1980s, 33.0% during the 1970s, 17.2% during the 1960s, 11.0% during the 1940s and 1950s, and less than 1% prior to 1939.

Nearly two-thirds of owner-occupied housing in Wheeling has a value between $100,000 and $200,000, with another 25% valued between $200,000 and $300,000. Upper-end housing, above $300,000 in value, accounts for only 2.9% of owner-occupied units. Only 6.1% have a value under $100,000.

A significant proportion of both owners and renters pay more than 30% of income for housing (30 percent is the widely accepted standard for the maximum amount individuals should spend on housing). Among renters in Wheeling, 33.8% pay more than 30% of their income in gross rent, while 27.9% of owners pay 30% or more.

Most housing in Wheeling is owner-occupied and very few housing units are vacant – only 3% of units in 2000 were unoccupied, whereas 4.1% were vacant in 1990. *Table 8: Housing Occupancy Profile* shows that the number of owner-occupied units increased by almost 800 units over the ten-year period of 1990 to 2000. There was also a slight increase in the number of renter-occupied units. In general, this is in keeping with trends seen in the neighboring communities for owner-occupied housing. There was less of a pattern with respect to renter-occupied housing. The number of rental units decreased in the communities that border Wheeling, including Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Mount Prospect, Northbrook and Prospect Heights.

Table 8: Housing Occupancy Profile

	Wheeling Total (%)		Arlington Heights Total (%)		Buffalo Grove Total (%)		Mount Prospect Total (%)		Prospect Heights Total (%)	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Occupied Housing Units	12,468 (95.9%)	13,280 (97.0%)	28,810 (94.7%)	30,763 (97.0%)	13,335 (96.2%)	15,708 (97.2%)	20,281 (96.8%)	21,585 (98.3%)	6,038 (96.3%)	6,379 (97.0%)
Owner-Occupied	*8,055 (64.6%)*	*8,849 (66.6%)*	*20,914 (72.6%)*	*23,608 (76.7%)*	*11,171 (83.8%)*	*13,682 (87.1%)*	*14,009 (69.1%)*	*15,441 (71.5%)*	*4,035 (66.8%)*	*4,683 (73.4%)*
Renter-Occupied	*4,413 (35.4%)*	*4,431 (33.4%)*	*7,896 (27.4%)*	*7,155 (23.3%)*	*2,164 (16.2%)*	*2.026 (12.9%)*	*6,272 (30.9%)*	*6,144 (28.5%)*	*2,003 (33.2%)*	*1,696 (26.6%)*
Vacant Housing Units	530 (4.1%)	417 (3.0%)	1,618 (5.3%)	962 (3.0%)	531 (3.8%)	458 (2.8%)	668 (3.2%)	367 (1.7%)	232 (3.7%)	194 (3.0%)
Total Housing Units	**12,998 (100%)**	**13,697 (100%)**	**30,428 (100%)**	**31,725 (100%)**	**13,866 (100%)**	**16,166 (100%)**	**20,949 (100%)**	**21,952 (100%)**	**6,270 (100%)**	**6,573 (100%)**

Source: U.S. Census

Wheeling's housing stock is generally well maintained. However, as a result of past construction standards, not all homes were built to the high quality that is required today. This is especially true of many of the single-family homes that were built just after World War II into the early 1960s. Because of the ongoing efforts of individual property owners to maintain their homes, this housing has remained highly desirable and continues to increase in value.

POSITION WITHIN THE REGION

The 2000 U.S. Census provides a good overview of how Wheeling's housing stock compares to that of its neighbors. The occupancy pattern is similar for all communities. However, there is substantially more rental housing in Wheeling than its neighbors.

The median value of Wheeling's owner-occupied units according to 2000 U.S. Census figures was $160,900, substantially lower than neighboring communities. Conversely, the median rent for Wheeling was much higher than for its neighbors. Part of the explanation for the difference in median home values lies in the type of units that make up the housing stock of each community. Only 31% of Wheeling's housing units are detached single-family houses. In contrast, more than 50% of housing units are single-family homes in Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove and Mount Prospect. Prospect Heights, with fewer than half the number of housing units, is the only anomaly. While the median home value in Prospect Heights is $243,300, the highest in the group, the median rent is the lowest at $698.

Table 9: Median Value and Median Rent

Community	Median Home Value	Median Rent
Wheeling	$160,900	$885
Arlington Heights	$240,600	$933
Buffalo Grove	$236,200	$1,079
Mt. Prospect	$217,700	$786
Prospect Heights	$243,300	$698

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Some of the variation in median home value can be explained by the mix of unit types found in each community. For example, as shown in *Table 10: Units in Structure* Wheeling has a much higher percentage of 1-unit attached (townhouse) units than its neighbors.

Table 10: Units in Structure

Units in Structure	Wheeling		Arlington Heights		Buffalo Grove		Mount Prospect		Prospect Heights	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1-unit, detached	4,240	31.0	18,143	57.2	8,750	54.9	12,382	56.1	2,502	37.8
1-unit, attached	2,849	20.8	2,474	7.8	2,631	16.5	1,159	5.2	802	12.1
2 units	85	0.6	130	0.4	57	0.4	238	1.1	75	1.1
3 or 4 units	1,007	7.4	756	2.4	764	4.8	489	2.2	368	5.6
5 to 9 units	2,018	14.7	2,253	7.1	593	3.7	2,052	9.3	1,037	15.7
10 to 19 units	685	5.0	1,460	4.6	948	5.9	1,592	7.2	586	8.8
20 or more units	2,401	17.5	6,482	20.4	2,177	13.7	3,877	17.6	1,245	18.8
Mobile Home	406	3.0	6	-	15	0.1	292	1.3	7	0.1
Boat, RV, van, etc.	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Units	**13,691**	**100.0**	**31.713**	**100.0**	**15,935**	**100.0**	**22,081**	**100.0**	**6,622**	**100.0**

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

However, there does not appear to be a correlation between the age of housing and value. Only Buffalo Grove has a lower percentage of housing built before 1970 than Wheeling. The highest percentages of pre-1970 housing are found in Mount Prospect and Arlington Heights, both established suburbs located along commuter rail lines.

Table 11: Age of Housing Structures

Year Structure Built	Wheeling		Arlington Heights		Buffalo Grove		Mount Prospect		Prospect Heights	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1999 to March 2000	45	0.3	293	0.9	118	0.7	132	0.6	19	0.3
1995 to 1998	510	3.7	689	2.2	1,316	8.3	460	2.1	267	4.0
1990 to 1994	753	5.4	2,054	6.5	2,132	13.4	880	4.0	226	3.4
1980 to 1989	3,941	28.8	5,662	17.9	5,300	33.3	2,346	10.6	1,224	18.5
1970 to 1979	4,514	33.0	7,260	22.9	4,402	27.6	5,804	26.3	2,213	33.4
1960 to 1969	2,354	17.2	7,751	24.4	2,115	13.3	6,521	29.5	1,327	20.0
1940 to 1959	1,509	11.0	6,673	21.0	494	3.1	5,363	24.3	1,246	18.8
1939 or earlier	83	0.6	1,331	4.2	58	0.4	575	2.6	100	1.5

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

BARRIERS TO HOUSING PRODUCTION

Improving the quality and range of Wheeling's housing stock is an important Comprehensive Plan objective. Wheeling has a substantial stock of affordable housing in comparison to its neighbors. What the Village lacks is housing desirable to higher income buyers and the "move-up" market. Among the barriers to expansion of the housing supply are lack of vacant land, poor load bearing soils on many of the remaining vacant sites, and the presence of floodplains throughout much of the central portion of the Village. Because there is so little developable residential land, there is significant competition among developers seeking to maximize their profits. Over the years this has led to the development of significantly more multi-family housing than has been approved in nearby communities.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS HOUSING NEEDS

The strategies for improving the quality and range of Wheeling's housing stock fall into three basic categories:

1. Identifying locations where new, preferably upscale, single family housing can be built.
2. Strategies for upgrading the stock of the existing pre-1970 housing throughout the Village.
3. Maintenance of multi-family rental housing.

As is clear from the discussion of the Future Land Use Plan, there are only a few locations where new single-family residential houses can be built. The largest of these properties are the Schwind and Horcher holdings in the northwestern corner of the Village. While there may be some opportunity for the development of single-family homes south of Lake Cook Road between Wolf Court and the industrial land along Northgate Parkway, soil, wetland and floodplain conditions may preclude such development.

Inherent in Wheeling's housing strategy is a desire to move to a housing mix that is more like that of neighboring communities. This means decreasing the percentage of rental housing and multi-family units and increasing the percentage of owner-occupied single-family houses. To some degree, this may occur naturally as other communities become more accepting of higher density multi-family development and such housing is built. However, the Village can also act proactively by ensuring that potential development sites are zoned for single-family development and large multi-family development proposals are carefully considered.

Much of Wheeling's housing stock that was built in the 1950's and 1960's employed poor quality construction techniques. This is particularly true in the Dunhurst neighborhoods. That homes in these areas continue to sell at increasingly higher prices is testimony to the efforts of individual homeowners to maintain their properties over time and the desirability of Wheeling as a community.

Existing single-family neighborhoods can be improved with rehabilitation or through replacement. In both instances the current lot area requirements of the Wheeling Zoning Ordinance significantly impede the likelihood that significant investment will occur.

Lot sizes for single-family zoning districts range from 7,000 square feet in the R-3 district to 12,000 square feet in the R-1 zoning district. However, lot sizes in many of Wheeling's older subdivisions average approximately 6,000 square feet in size. Because these lots are substandard in terms of size, variations are required for both additions and new construction on these lots. This adds to the expense and time required for property owners or speculative builders who would like to build or expand homes in these neighborhoods.

There are two basic strategies that can be used to address the lot size issue. The first involves creating a new single-family zoning district with a 6,000 square foot minimum lot size. Communities including Evanston, Mount Prospect, Morton Grove and Skokie have single-family residential zoning districts with minimum lot sizes of 6,000 square feet and smaller. Hoffman Estates has a zero-lot line single-family zoning district with a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet, if it is part of a 10-acre subdivision.

A second option that is used in Libertyville is allow construction on existing lots of record as long as they have a lot area of at least 75% of the required lot area, while maintaining the current zoning district and lot size structure. Construction of new dwellings must comply with other applicable zoning regulations in the district except for interior side yard requirements that may also be reduced in proportion to the actual lot with divided by the required lot with up to 25% of the minimum required side yard.

The Village has had a multi-family inspection program in place for approximately 2 ½ years. While the intent is to inspect these buildings once a year, given the current staffing levels, inspection every two years appears to be a more realistic goal. While there are a number of large multi-family developments, both condominium and rental, the concern appears to be over the smaller, mostly rental buildings that are scattered along arterial streets, including Dundee Road, Wolf Road and Elmhurst Road, and in the Strong Avenue neighborhood. Until development demand increased to the point that relocation of residents and redevelopment of these properties is economically warranted, code enforcement is the best way of ensuring that these properties enhance, rather than detract from the Village's image.

8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan element is to facilitate coordination between local economic development initiatives and those of the State in order to ensure that adequate economic development opportunities are available. This effort involves identifying the strategic competitive advantages of Wheeling and the surrounding region, assessing Wheeling's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry, and defining Wheeling's and Cook County's role in furthering the community's economic development objectives.

COMPETITIVE STRENGTHS

Wheeling's competitive strengths include its location within the Chicago region, its transportation amenities, and its experienced Economic Development Department. Wheeling has an excellent transportation network that includes a rail system, several major thoroughfares and Palwaukee Municipal Airport. Milwaukee Avenue, Lake Cook Road, Palatine Road and Dundee Road connect to the regional highway system and make Wheeling accessible from all directions. O'Hare International Airport is within easy driving distance. Wheeling's industrial areas are well landscaped and attractive, making them competitive with newer industrial centers within the region. Land is still available that can accommodate new economic growth. Finally, Wheeling has a strong resident workforce as evidenced by an unemployment rate that is consistently below the Chicago metropolitan and state average.

A municipality's economic strength is often measured by its retail sales tax base. As shown in *Table 12: Retail Sales Growth*, retail sales have grown steadily since 1995, resulting in increased sales tax revenues for the Village of Wheeling. While the growth of Wheeling's restaurants over the last decade is well known, equally important is the growth in sales in the manufacturing and agriculture, extractive materials and all other categories. The growth in retail sales revenue has come even with the loss of more than 300 retail taxpayers since 1993.

Table 12: Retail Sales Growth ($ millions)

Sales Category	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001
General Merchandise	108.4	96.4	106.3	121.0	107.9
Food	25.6	19.5	26.2	33.5	37.5
Drinking and Eating Places	42.9	44.1	48.2	52.7	57.8
Apparel	1.3	1.4	.6	.7	.7
Furniture, Household & Radio	16.8	16.3	20.1	22.7	18.0
Lumber, Building & Hardware	49.7	51.9	18.8	14.9	11.4
Automotive & Filling Stations	49.4	57.9	68.6	50.9	93.1
Drugs & Misc. Retail	32.4	28.1	17.5	15.0	25.3
Agriculture & All Others	17.0	23.0	82.4	91.7	116.3
Manufacturers	16.9	18.9	37.7	38.4	39.2
Total Sales	**$360.4**	**$357.5**	**$426.3**	**$441.5**	**$507.2**
Number of Business Taxpayers	1,317	1,404	1,239	1,033	1,009

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Wheeling has made extensive use of tax increment financing (TIF) in improving its commercial districts. Wheeling established its first TIF district in 1985 and has seen substantial development occur, anchored by the One Milwaukee Place development. The use of the tax increment financing technique is seen as the most likely source of funding for the town center and other major commercial and mixed-use redevelopment efforts, in view of the scarcity of state or federal redevelopment dollars.

The land use plans contained within the established TIF districts establish the range of uses that can be supported with TIF funds. Typically, various types of mixed-use designations are used to preserve development flexibility over the life of the TIF. Where a specific land use is established, TIF funds cannot be used to assist other types of development. For example, the Crossroads TIF District designates the Arbor Court area for multi-family residential and the Cole Taylor Bank property for commercial use, which precludes their redevelopment for other types of development using TIF funds. (Redevelopment that does not involve TIF funds, however, is not precluded.) While in theory, TIF land use plans can be amended, in practice, given current notice requirements for all property owners within the district as well as adjacent residents, it is probably cost prohibitive to amend the Crossroads TIF. Any changes to the South Milwaukee Avenue/Manchester Drive TIF would need to be made before units in the Kimball-Hill development are sold and there are substantial numbers of new property owners.

The Village has also supported applications by industrial users for Cook County's Class 6B property tax incentive. Under this program, assessment levels are reduced from the industrial assessment rate of 36% for a period of 12 years for new industrial construction, substantial rehabilitation of industrial properties or reutilization of abandoned buildings. For the first 10 years, the assessment rate is 16%. The assessment rate is stepped up in year 11 to 23 percent, in year 12 to 30%, with a return to 36% in year 13. There is also the possibility of a further extension in year 10.

The Village's Economic Development Department operates an ongoing business recruitment program that includes publishing a community ***Fact Book*** that includes an up to date listing of available buildings within the Village.

COORDINATION WITH COUNTY AND STATE INITIATIVES

The Village has actively pursued grant funding for projects designed to improve Wheeling's economic base. Examples include a grant from the Regional Transportation Agency for a planning study designed to identify strategies for redeveloping the area around the train station. The cooperative effort with Pace to identify opportunities to improve transit options for Wheeling employers and their workers is another example of the Village's efforts to leverage local economic development resources.

Finally, Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan has been developed in accordance with the framework established by the Illinois Local Technical Assistance Act. Municipalities that have adopted plans may be eligible for additional preferences in State economic development programs, transportation programs and planning programs that can help support Wheeling's economic development strategies.

9. COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

The purpose of this element is to provide community facilities, establish levels of service, ensure that facilities are provided as needed, and coordinate with other units of local government that provide various community services. The coordination of telecommunications initiatives is also a component of this Comprehensive Plan element, so as to ensure that reasonable access is provided to telecommunications providers within public rights-of-way.

SCHOOLS

School District 21 serves most of Wheeling, as well as portions of Buffalo Grove, Mount Prospect and Prospect Heights. The District has thirteen school sites, seven of which are located within Wheeling. Many of the District's facilities were built in floodplain and floodway locations, and as a consequence, expansion needed to serve expanded enrollments has been a challenge. School District 23 serves the balance of the Village.

High School District 214 includes Elk Grove and Wheeling Townships and a portion of Palatine Township, an area of approximately 68 square miles. Arlington Heights, Mount Prospect, Prospect Heights, Wheeling and parts of Elk Grove, Des Plaines, Buffalo Grove and Rolling Meadows are within its boundaries. Buffalo Grove and Wheeling High Schools serve students who live in Wheeling.

PARKS

The Wheeling Park District boundaries include most, but not all, of Wheeling's corporate limits, portions of Buffalo Grove and Prospect Heights. A small portion of Wheeling falls within the boundaries of the Prospect Heights Park District. However, there are also parts of Wheeling, most notably the River Mills Crossing subdivision, that are not within the boundaries of any park district. This has created public relations issues in that residents not living within the Park District boundaries must pay higher fees for services, even though they are residents of the Village. In order to address this issue, the Comprehensive Plan includes a policy supporting annexation to the Park District when land is annexed to the Village.

LIBRARY

Wheeling is served by two library districts. The area north of Hintz Road and east of Wolf Road is served by the Indian Trails Public Library District. The balance of the Village is served by the Prospect Heights Library. The Indian Trails Public Library District also serves the Village of Buffalo Grove.

POLICE, FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Village of Wheeling provides police, fire and emergency services to property within its corporate limits. Police protection for the unincorporated property within Wheeling's planning jurisdiction is provided by the Cook County Sheriff's Department.

The Wheeling Fire Department provides a variety of services to the community including fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, emergency medical treatment and transportation, hazard mitigation and public education. In order to serve the needs of the Village, two fire stations are staffed 24 hours per day. Aircraft rescue, fire fighting and emergency medical service are also provided to Palwaukee Municipal Airport.

Wheeling's Fire Department is independently evaluated on a regular basis by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the overall capabilities of the Fire Department and probable impact on fire insurance claims. A "Class 1" rating is the best and a "Class 9" rating is the worst. The Wheeling Fire Department is currently classified as "Class 3" which allows residents and local businesses to enjoy relatively low fire insurance rates.

WATER AND SEWER

Water and sewer services are provided to Wheeling residents by the Village of Wheeling. Wheeling gets its drinking water from Lake Michigan as a result of its membership in the Northwest Water Commission.

Wheeling maintains nearly 72 miles of sanitary sewers. The collector sewers discharge into the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) sewer system, which transports flow to MWRD treatment facilities. There are also about 75 miles of storm sewers in the Village.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Telecommunications infrastructure includes telephone lines that are either above ground or in buried cable. Recent telecommunications infrastructure includes such innovations as fiber optic cable and cell towers. While necessary to ensure that residents and businesses can communicate, the provision of easements for the necessary telecommunications infrastructure is often an afterthought.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Wheeling's reputation as a community is in part due to the quality of its schools, library, parks and recreational facilities. Because Wheeling's community image and identity are so closely linked to the facilities and services provided by other taxing districts, it is important to regularly communicate with other local units of government and to cooperate in the provision of services. However, because the boundaries of these other units of government do not always coincide with the Village boundaries, cooperation can be challenging.

10. IMPLEMENTATION ACTION AGENDA

While the Comprehensive Plan establishes the Village's overall land use and physical development plan for Wheeling's future growth and development, other tools are needed to ensure that the community's vision for its future is achieved. Chief among these is the Village's zoning ordinance. The other major vehicle for Village-sponsored improvements is the Capital Improvement Program.

The probability of success in achieving the Village's land use and planning objectives depends on a number of factors. The regional economy and development market are largely outside the Village's control. However, the Village can influence individual development decisions through its development regulations and willingness to provide development incentives when needed to attract the types of development desired. Achieving Wheeling's vision for its future will necessarily involve choices among competing projects and the expenditure of public funds and will require a long term commitment on the part of local government officials to carry out multi-year improvement efforts. Most importantly, achieving the Village's development objectives will require patience.

Not every project can move forward simultaneously. Some require extensive planning and lead time. Land will need to be acquired and easements obtained before the longer segments of the pathway system can be built. Similarly, it will take time to generate development interest in transit-oriented development around the Metra station and there may significant engineering challenges associated with the development of the grade-separated crossing illustrated on the Town Center Concept Plan. This does not mean that community leaders should not move forward. It simply means that they should be realistic in their expectations and acknowledge that community improvement and renewal is an ongoing activity that will occur incrementally, and sometimes slowly. The old adage still rings true: "Rome wasn't built in a day."

PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS TO IMPLEMENT LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Typically, following the adoption of a new Comprehensive Plan, a municipality will undertake a review of its zoning regulations to ensure that the land use policies are reflected in the community's development regulations. The Village's official zoning map should also be reviewed against the land use designations contained in the Future Land Use Plan to identify inconsistencies and map amendments that should be considered to further the Village's land use goals and objectives. Among the zoning recommendations reflected in this Plan are the following:

1. Development of a strong landscape ordinance that will ensure that the community continues to improve in appearance as redevelopment occurs.

2. Amendments to the single-family residential zoning districts to facilitate the recycling of older residential houses either through teardowns or substantial additions. This issue (discussed in Chapter 7, Housing Plan) involves how best to facilitate reconstruction on lots that are less than the 7,000 square foot minimum in the R-3 zoning district. Two approaches are suggested for

consideration. The first is to create a new single-family zoning district with a 6,000 square foot minimum lot size. The second option is to allow construction on existing lots of record as long they have a lot area that is within 75% (or other appropriate measure) of the required lot area. Specific zoning text can be written to reflect the Village's chosen regulatory approach.

3. Development of a floodplain/conservation overlay district that would identify areas of the Village that have significant development limitations due to flood hazard or other environmental restrictions. The purpose of adopting such a district would be to provide a clearer indication of the land use restrictions in place on the affected properties and to help to avoid confusion regarding their use and development.

Development of a public lands district that would identify properties dedicated to schools, parks, municipal facilities and other public uses. The purpose of such a district is to avoid the problems inherent in treating public buildings and facilities as permitted or special uses in zoning districts characterized by uses and structures bearing no similarity to the public use.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Comprehensive Plan includes a number of recommendations that will require the commitment of public dollars to implement. These include recommendations related to flood hazard mitigation, development of a bike path system, commercial area improvements and streetscape enhancements. Some can be undertaken by the Village. Others could be implemented in partnership with other governmental units. Still others may involve partnerships between the Village and private developers.

The physical improvement recommendations contained in this Comprehensive Plan are not at a level of detail that would allow even preliminary cost estimates to be developed. However, it is possible to identify the overall types of costs that will need to be considered in order to move the proposed aesthetic enhancements, flood hazard mitigation and transportation system improvements forward.

1. Flood hazard mitigation will most likely involve the public acquisition of properties that are in flood prone areas and the construction of additional detention facilities. Because of the hydraulic modeling and engineering that is needed to determine whether a proposed mitigation project will function as desired, this type of activity is likely to be long, with potentially uncertain results.

2. Development of a bicycle and pedestrian pathway system has already begun. An easement agreement has been reached with Commonwealth Edison that will allow the construction of a bike path in a portion of Commonwealth Edison's right-of-way in the Village. The Village also could construct a bike path along the diversion channel on right-of-way that it owns. Easement agreements or other cooperative arrangements may be possible with the Wheeling Park District or other property owners that would allow the pathway system to be extended through other public or semi-public property. However, development of a comprehensive bike path network will also require the selective acquisition of private property. This could be undertaken either by the Village or the Wheeling Park District, which has some interest in improving access to neighborhood park facilities.

3. Commercial area improvements are more likely to involve public/private partnerships. The Village could share in the cost of façade improvements in order to stimulate private investment in existing commercial properties. It could also work to expand the supply of commercial parking in areas that are currently underserved through the selective acquisition and demolition of buildings and the construction of municipal parking.

4. Streetscape enhancements could include landscaping within the public right-of-way, the installation of sidewalks where they are presently lacking, or other improvements designed to improve the appearance of Village streets. However, the most important effort in this regard is continuation of efforts to bury the existing above grade utility lines. While it is unlikely that funding will be identified in the near term to allow Commonwealth Edison's high tension lines to be buried, this is clearly a community desire. More modest goals would be to set aside funds to allow lines to be buried along Wheeling Road and other major streets as other improvements are made.