



# UPTOWN MASTER PLAN

CITY OF PARK RIDGE



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ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF PARK RIDGE

TBD, 2025





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## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

Uptown is the signature destination and unifying neighborhood for the modern Park Ridge community. The Uptown neighborhood, anchored by the “Six Corners” intersection, sitting atop the natural ridge in the area’s topography has long been the hub of Park Ridge’s daily life, the community’s central business district, host to parades and special events, and a regional transportation nexus. While Park Ridge is certainly more than only Uptown, all of Park Ridge truly values the neighborhood as the community center. Park Ridge springs into public life when residents and visitors arrive in Uptown, and that has been true for nearly two centuries.

The Touhy Avenue alignment has roots in Indigenous Potawatomi communities, Native American trails, and portage routes, which linked the Chicago River with the Des Plaines River. Urbanization of Uptown began in the 1840s when the federal government surveyed corridors to link the City of Chicago with the City of Des Plaines, which became the Northwest Highway roadway. The federal government employees’ cabin was the first permanent structure built at the intersection of Touhy and Northwest Highway in Uptown.

Five years later, Mancel Talcott, Jr. bought 160 acres of land bound by Touhy, Belle Plaine, Cumberland, and Washington Avenues, which ultimately became the general footprint for the urbanization of the Uptown neighborhood. Talcott built a house near the present-day



Figure 1: Uptown Signage



Figure 2: The Shops of Uptown

Chase Bank building at the "Six Corners", and the First United Methodist Church located across the street in 1857, where it is still located today. In 1854, the railroad began construction, which became the Chicago & North Western Railway and today it is still served by Metra. The addition of railroad service along with Northwest Highway further strengthened Park Ridge's connection to Chicago, while also emphasizing real estate development in proximity to the train station.

The relevance to planning for today's Uptown is that the general urban design structure, land use orientation, block patterns, and transportation network is largely unchanged from these initial decisions approximately 170 years ago. Furthermore, the Uptown master planning process has affirmed a desire to maintain the neighborhood's form and function in the future, too. This plan does not propose radical redevelopment of Uptown or offer visions that fundamentally alter the character of the area, rather, it seeks to build on past and current successes. The vision for Uptown is to nurture and reinvest in a manner that reinforces the district's trademark identity that distinguishes Uptown from other downtown areas in the Chicago suburbs.

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES: PROACTIVE AND PREPARED**

The plan document represents goals and objectives for a variety of policy areas and multiple geographic locations in Uptown. Some of the objectives call for proactive leadership by the City of Park Ridge and other public agencies. In those spots, the intent is for public leaders in Park Ridge to organize resources and coordinate board actions to go out and accomplish certain goals together. These goals represent the community's own aspirations.

In other cases, the Uptown Master Plan's goals and objectives are more indirect and reactionary. In those cases the plan provides a framework and forethought for elected and appointed officials, and the community at large, to contemplate various potential future

scenarios. But the intent is not to immediately take action. The plan helps the community prepare when it is approached by private property owners, businesses, real estate developers, and others who wish to implement their ideas and private plans. In those instances, the Uptown Master Plan helps Park Ridge be more prepared for that potential consideration.

### **THE PLAN'S SHELF LIFE**

Uptown represents one of the strongest, most successful, most vibrant downtown neighborhoods in all of the Chicago suburbs. The central purpose of this plan is to build on that success story, manage that growth, and set goals to make it even better in the future. With planning work commencing in 2022, and occurring throughout 2023 and 2024, this plan is crafted to establish goals for the next 5-to-10 years.

Goals and objectives should be contemplated and read with the timescale that while not every task can be taken on simultaneously, they could potentially be accomplished within a decade. Priorities will need to be set in implementation. A lot can be accomplished in a community like Park Ridge in 10 years – in fact, it has such a track record over the course of its history. However, the plan should publish progress reports on an annual basis, providing an opportunity for additional Mayor, City Council, and Planning & Zoning Commission feedback in real-time. The plan document should also be thoroughly re-evaluated, reaffirmed, and updated in 5 years. Therefore, a general timeline for the Uptown Master Plan will cover 2025 through 2030, and its goals and objectives can be revised and updated, as needed, for the 2030s.

### **PLACEMAKING DURING THE PANDEMIC**

The City of Park Ridge adopted a comprehensive plan in 1996, conducted some city planning work for Uptown in the early 2000s, and commenced a new citywide planning effort in 2019. The need to update the city's plans was germane and timely. The process began very similarly to the eight city plans written in Park Ridge for 100 years prior,



Figure 3: Traffic on Prospect Avenue

including public outreach, surveys, economic and demographic analysis and then suddenly changed in unprecedented, unexpected ways.

After nearly a year of public outreach and analysis, as those planning efforts began to turn to drafting goals and objectives, on Friday, March 13, 2020, both Park Ridge and the entire United States went into a mandatory lock down due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. That year impacted the ongoing comprehensive planning effort in two ways. First, it ceased the planning process and made continued community outreach, public meetings, and goal considerations challenging, if not impossible at times. Secondly, as the community navigated the summer of 2021, the beginning release of vaccines, and a return to a more typical public life, certain post-pandemic changes began to emerge. These trends, shifts, and phenomenon were also present in many suburban towns all across the Chicago region. They are analyzed and detailed later in this plan document.

Thus, the planning process called for a re-examination of certain aspects of Uptown in new ways. A specific focus on Uptown commenced the renewed planning efforts that kicked off in 2022 and have culminated in this document. This Uptown Master Plan document will represent the foundation of comprehensive plan content related to these geographic parts of Park Ridge. Comprehensive planning efforts will continue and culminate in a citywide document to be adopted in 2025.

## ADOPTED HOUSING PLAN

In March 2024 the Mayor and City Council adopted an affordable housing plan and filed it with the State of Illinois. Many of the City's affordable housing goals can and likely will be achieved within the Uptown District. Future Uptown development decisions should reference, consider, and incorporate the affordable housing goals from that plan in alignment with the goals and objectives of this Uptown Master Plan. The two plans are intended to be complementary.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES & COMMUNITY VALUES

The Uptown Master Plan (2025) proposes to achieve this vision through a series of goals that recognize the guiding principles, or core values, that serve as the foundation for the vision for Uptown. These guiding principles are derived from Park Ridge's desire to preserve Uptown as a traditional Midwestern, "small town" -styled downtown that acts as the center of civic and community life. That consistent vision traces back many decades in time and has been shared with future generations almost acting as a community heirloom, of sorts. That vision can take on many forms, and contain many details therewithin, but that visualization represents the 'heart and soul' of the community's intent in drafting this plan.

That vision and the goals are derived from the principles on the following page:

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

<p>1 </p>	<p>Uptown has always been and should always remain a mixed-use and pedestrian-welcoming neighborhood.</p>
<p>2 </p>	<p>Mindful urban design and “good” architecture have been critical contributors to Uptown’s success and that approach must be preserved.</p>
<p>3 </p>	<p>Uptown is Park Ridge’s community gathering place and should remain the primary home to special events and its civic institutions.</p>
<p>4 </p>	<p>Uptown has always been inclusive of all ages-and-stages of life, and it should continue to be supportive of a multi-generational community, including youth and seniors.</p>
<p>5 </p>	<p>Uptown should continue to feature and accommodate a wide range of retail, restaurant, and service businesses that value approaches such as Shop Local and Shop Small.</p>
<p>6 </p>	<p>Future redevelopment should complement the existing fabric and character of Uptown, and not seek to transform it. Future redevelopment should prioritize infill sites and vacant lots before demolition.</p>
<p>7 </p>	<p>Uptown is a unique neighborhood and business district from any other part of Park Ridge and should continue to be managed by custom regulations, such as the B-4 Uptown zoning district.</p>
<p>8 </p>	<p>Uptown should continue to feature and accommodate a wide range of housing types.</p>
<p>9 </p>	<p>Uptown must provide adequate parking for residents and visitors as it continues to develop and grow.</p>
<p>10 </p>	<p>Transit service is important to Uptown and Park Ridge residents and must be preserved and expanded when possible.</p>
<p>11 </p>	<p>The Uptown district’s built-form can coexist with single-family homes adjacent to it through thoughtful planning and zoning administration.</p>

Figure 4: Guiding Principles



## PART 1 PAST PLANNING

In the approximately 100 years since the original plan was developed in 1926, the City of Park Ridge has written and adopted about eight formal city planning documents that address Uptown.

## INTRODUCTION

All city planning efforts must acknowledge the past documents and processes that led to today's current conditions. Often what the public views and experiences on the ground is the direct outcome or byproduct of a past plan and the decisions initiated by those planning efforts. That general urban planning principle is certainly true of Park Ridge's experience. Furthermore, the Park Ridge community has demonstrated two unique attributes in their past planning efforts.

First, the community is distinctive in its early adoption of planning and zoning and its long commitment to maintaining that public policymaking approach. Secondly, Park Ridge has been steadfast in affirming what it values about the community, while emphasizing Uptown, in these past planning efforts across many generations. The current Uptown planning process has re-affirmed and emphasized those characteristics once again.

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan created by Teska Associates includes a quote that still rings true to today's planning process, nearly three decades later:

**“Park Ridge exhibits a strong ‘spirit of community’ and ‘sense of place.’ People sharing experiences related to a specific area defines a ‘spirit of community’; the physical environment that is produced therefrom defines a ‘sense of place.’”**

Arguably, the Uptown district embodies this community culture and spirit more than any other neighborhood within Park Ridge. Uptown is one of the most identifiable neighborhoods in the northern Chicago suburbs and features a significant amount of landmark placemaking. Additionally, the shared sense of what community means in Park Ridge, the pride and spirit in the town, and local traditions are largely found in the activities and buildings located in Uptown.

As this Past Planning section demonstrates, the tradition of this spirit in Park Ridge is multi-



Figure 5: Park Ridge Chase Bank Building



Figure 6: Shops on Prospect Avenue



Figure 7: Outdoor seating in Park Ridge

generational and dates back many decades. Park Ridge has long had an established sense of who it is, what's important to the town, what the community's current goals are, and in general, a strong shared consensus around visions for its future. The 2023-2024 Uptown master planning process has identified a clear re-affirmation of these core guiding principles and community values.

## EARLY 20TH CENTURY PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Park Ridge was an early adopter of urban planning and municipal zoning as it became a popular practice in the 1920s. New York City's adoption of the 1916 Zoning Resolution is often cited as one of the first major zoning actions in the United States, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.* case in 1926. As the 1996 Comprehensive Plan notes, "The City of Park Ridge was among the first in Illinois and the nation to create a Plan Commission in 1924, even before the 1928

model law was published." The newly formed Plan Commission prioritized the creation of a formal comprehensive plan, which was accomplished in 1926. That plan identified Park Ridge's unique orientation and character, anchored by Uptown and the train station, and emphasized the importance of maintaining the "city beautiful movement" elements of the district (i.e. Hodges Park). As well as promoting value on and attention to the urban design and architecture of the area.

In the approximately 100 years since, Park Ridge has written and adopted about eight formal city planning documents that address Uptown. And these priorities, themes, and goals have remained remarkably consistent for nearly a century. The first plan was the 1926 comprehensive plan, one of the first in the State of Illinois, led by A. Cushing Smith and including contributions from noted architect Walter Burley Griffin. The 1926 plan envisioned a series of boulevards and park spaces framing the Uptown neighborhood (i.e. Hodges, Cumberland, and Hinkley), and suggested separating the government functions of the city towards its geographic center. In many ways Park Ridge's planning efforts have updated and built-up many of the visualizations shared in this 1926 document. The first update was the 1935 "Plan of Business Center" that focused on commercial activity and real estate development, primarily in Uptown. That plan's central recommendation approach was to maintain the mixed-use character of Uptown, including retaining government and civic facilities in the district, and emphasizing the axis of the district (Prospect & Main) with the train station as the focal point.

## POST-WAR PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Following the Second World War, Park Ridge experienced rapid population growth as Chicago's suburbanization expanded the community beyond the boundaries and parameters of its 1926 plan. The Comprehensive Plan of 1956, led by prominent Chicago firm Carl Gardner & Associates, guided the community through

this greatest period of growth and annexation. In an approach typical of Mid-Century land use planning practice, the Gardner plan recommended a strict separation of uses, sometimes referred to as “Euclidean zoning.” It also called for the expansion of business districts outside of Uptown, which largely gives shape to present-day districts such as Busse Highway or Higgins Road. Specific to Uptown, the 1956 plan recommended further zoning for a separation of residential and business uses and encouraged more auto-oriented designs.

By the 1980s, Park Ridge was largely built-out and landlocked from neighboring suburbs, such as Des Plaines, Niles, and Glenview; as well as Chicago to the south and east. In 1981 the City worked with the Planning & Zoning Commission as well as the Community Preservation & Development Department to draft an “in-house” update to the 1956 document. The 1981 plan prioritized the community’s residential character and focused on how to manage redevelopment as well

as community reinvestment in a manner that would preserve what residents liked about Park Ridge. The 1981 document stressed that “community planning should be a continuing process, ever sensitive to changing conditions and needs.” The plan recognized that growth management was no longer the planning need for Park Ridge, and that more site-specific and renewal approaches would be called for as the town was largely established. The 1981 plan recommended two large redevelopment opportunities in specific, the Summit of Park Ridge and Summit Condominium developments. This planning approach was the general direction until the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and the 2002 Uptown Master Plan.

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan, led by Teska Associates, reflected a new focus on creating livable spaces for the community, including pedestrian and streetscape enhancements in Uptown. The 1996 plan started to prioritize a shift away from a strict separation of uses but rather emphasized the successful nature of



Figure 8: Park Ridge Farmers Market

Uptown's mixed-use character. The document includes a special dedicated section for Uptown, which it calls the "Central Business District – CBD." The 1996 plan noted that whereas other municipalities eroded and diminished their CBDs and downtown districts during 1960s-1980s suburbanization, Park Ridge's Uptown was largely found still vibrantly intact. Further, Park Ridge had resisted the somewhat common suburban trend to build large, centralized "civic campuses" and relocate public buildings away from their historic downtowns during this era. The plan emphasized how much of Park Ridge's identity and character is contained in Uptown and noted that multiple weekly activity centers, such as the library, churches, City Hall, the Pickwick Theater, and parks were still located in Uptown. All of it, including the numerous businesses, contributed to street life and a general vitality lacking in other communities. Key 1996 recommendations included viewing Uptown through a series of identifiable sub-areas and emphasizing unique character for

each while promoting pedestrian connectivity between them; addressing traffic safety and the pedestrian environment at the "Six Corners"; eliminating automobile dealerships and similar businesses in Uptown; encouraging multi-family housing and more housing products in Uptown and the vicinity generally; promoting a healthy, vibrant mix of retail and restaurants among a general mixed-use downtown; maintain City Hall and the Library at their existing locations; preserve Hodges Park; provide for parking needs as Uptown develops; among other plan objectives as well.

### **METRA STATION "H" INTERSECTION**

The Uptown Master planning process identified the challenges associated with the "H" shaped intersection formed around the railroad tracks, which includes Summit, Prospect, Main, Vine, and Courtland streets. A significant redesign of the intersection is not achievable due to the permanence of the railroad corridor, which the initial design dates back to the 19th Century. However, the Plan establishes the goal of identifying potential pedestrian environment improvements for both safety and comfort to balance walkers with vehicle and cyclist traffic in the area.

### **METRA STATION CROSSING**

The plan's implementation should identify signage, wayfinding, lighting, and other placemaking strategies to highlight the pedestrian crossing opportunity at the Metra station platform, which connects the Library parking lots to the Main & Fairview businesses. This pedestrian bypass eliminates the need to walk down to Prospect and back-track multiple blocks between Uptown parking lots and businesses south of the tracks.

### **DISTINGUISHING UPTOWN**

Due to the emerging complexity of planning for and managing Uptown, the City pursued more sub-area plans and detailed recommendations. By and large, the 2002 Uptown master plan (led by the firm of Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne Inc.) builds upon the 1996 plan's goals, but delves into greater site-



Figure 9: Pickwick Theatre

specificity to guide redevelopment. One target area, between Touhy, Meacham, and Northwest Highway, which had been car dealerships and automotive businesses since the Mid-Century era, became the largest redevelopment in the City's history. In 2004, the City elected to create a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district and created public-private partnerships around this Uptown redevelopment activity with the company PRC Partners, LLC. Today the property, owned and operated by Phillips Edison & Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, is home to a grocery store, condominiums, restaurants, and multiple retail shops.

The City's focus on Uptown and redevelopment pursuits continued in a few additional actions after the largescale 2004 redevelopment. In 2006 there was the Executive Plaza Plan, which analyzed the area where Whole Foods developed as well as proposed ideas on how that vicinity's real estate could be more cohesive and thus more directly contribute to Uptown. Many of those proposed concepts were ultimately constructed. The City updated and modernized its Zoning Code through a series of actions in 2007 and 2008 (with support from Chicago-based firm Camiros) that amended the B-4 Uptown District as well as amended the Planned Developments process; these changes impacted various regulations that directly impacted the nature and character of redevelopment in Uptown.

## OUR VALUES IN PLANNING

All of these planning documents, unlike other communities where past plans featured grandiose visions of demolishing large swaths of the district and proposing new land uses and destinations, such as museums, stadiums, or convention centers, locally, Park Ridge lacks any such history. Generally, for the past 100 years, Park Ridge has been uniquely consistent in its policymaking approach for Uptown. Park Ridge has been aligned on the community's guiding principles that have defined Uptown's essential character for generations.

Historically, the town's planning process often starts from a simple affirmation that those values and principles are still relevant today, and proceed to update and modernize Uptown's goals via actionable tactics. Those plan goals have become increasingly site-specific. The 2023-2024 planning process fits within this city planning tradition in Park Ridge and aims to guide its continued success into the 2030s.



Figure 10: Shops on Prospect Avenue



## PART 2 SHIFTS IN SUBURBAN DISTRICTS

Many trends, even if they began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, appeared to accelerate or intensify since 2020.

## WELCOME TO PARK RIDGE!

During 2023 and 2024, the Planning & Zoning Commission studied, analyzed, and evaluated several shifts and trends that were being experienced in Park Ridge's Uptown and in other suburban downtown areas across the Chicago region. Many of these trends, even if they began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, appear to have accelerated or intensified since 2020. The Commission reviewed certain trends that were deemed most applicable to Park Ridge during the spring and summer months of 2023. The objective and intent was to draft plan goals that were cognizant that certain shifts since 2020 may not be short-term and aspects of those trends may sustain on throughout the 2020s. The potentially impactful shifts and trends are summarized here:

## REGIONAL TRAVEL & EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS CHANGED

Uptown has been impacted by shifts in where people work and how they travel to reach their employment destination. Uptown had long featured office spaces, such as the multiple American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) headquarters buildings, but the utilization and demand for office space decreased since 2020. Additionally, many Park Ridge residents traveled to Chicago Loop-based employment using Metra service, but boardings persisted at levels less than 50% into 2024 ([Metra Ridership Reports](#)). The Uptown commuter parking lots are at 61% and 70% of pre-COVID parking pass utilization rates. The Park Ridge parking experience aligns with Metra ridership and passenger boarding data, which shows that transit ridership has only rebounded to approximately 50-60% of pre-COVID levels (City of Park Ridge Finance Department). Whereas the loss of office space reduced daytime populations in Uptown in one regard, Park Ridge also experienced a significant increase in telecommuters, who appear to visit Uptown during weekdays as well. This trend is true of almost the entire Chicagoland suburban marketplace and not just Park Ridge or Uptown. Regional agencies such as the Illinois Dept. of Transportation



Figure 11: Uptown Art Deco branded signage



Figure 12: Metra Union Pacific Northwest (UP-NW) Line platform

(IDOT) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) are studying these shifts and beginning to provide data.

### THE PREVALENCE AND POPULARITY OF OUTDOOR DINING GREW

Although outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes existed in Park Ridge prior, since 2020 they have become a defining feature of Uptown. The primary impact is the seasonal, partial closure of Main Street to support a large outdoor dining gathering for the restaurants located on that street. However, other expanded outdoor dining facilities were permitted elsewhere in Uptown, too. Probably the most commonly identified topic was the impact outdoor dining has had on Park Ridge and Uptown, not only as a quality-of-life amenity for local residents, but also as an economic development opportunity for the community. Outdoor dining has transformed the vibrancy and character of Uptown.

### PARK RIDGE BECAME A CHICAGO-AREA DINING DESTINATION

Probably just as commonly mentioned with outdoor dining is that since Park Ridge has changed its liquor license laws (2016), combined with outdoor dining, the community has become a destination for dining in the Chicagoland area. Uptown’s long-established competition with Edison Park, Rosemont, and other nearby districts fundamentally transformed in the past 5-7 years. Restaurants and the Chamber of Commerce report the consumer trade area appears to be expanding into NW Chicago, Niles, Morton Grove, Rosemont, unincorporated and incorporated parts of Glenview to the north, and Des Plaines and Mount Prospect, as well.

### CYCLING & WALKING INCREASED

It appears that bicycling and pedestrian activity, particularly in regard to reaching Uptown, has increased since 2020. Informal surveys and incomplete data do not offer a final, definitive



Figure 13: Outdoor dining on Main Street

conclusion, but appear to indicate that these signature outdoor activities that grew in use and popularity during the lockdown phase of the pandemic, has sustained and continued into current practice as well.

### **A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL OUTDOOR GATHERING SPACES**

The pandemic era seems to have increased a desire for residents, visitors, and employees wanting to gather in passive open spaces. This has led to an increase in usage and demand for outdoor furniture and interesting public spaces that provide shade, seating, tables, refuse collection, lighting at night, and other amenities. Uptown is a high-activity area for this demand.

### **RETAIL BENEFITS FROM MORE ACTIVATION & EXPERIENTIAL USES**

Local retailers and “brick-and-mortar” retailers were experiencing shifts and trends prior to 2020. However, as has been noted in regional and national studies as well as the media, the pandemic was particularly challenging for many retailers. There has been a shift to online shopping and e-commerce, including a significant increase in home delivery services (like Amazon and grocery stores). Therefore, local retailers are having to start to include “experiential” activities and events as part of their overall business model. Sometimes these activities expand to be district-wide events – all with the intent of bringing foot traffic to brick-and-mortar districts. These trends appear to apply to Uptown.

### **GROWTH IN FARMERS MARKET & SPECIAL EVENTS**

Park Ridge’s farmers market, located in Uptown and occurring on Saturdays, has experienced a double-digit increase in attendees since 2021 when the market was able to fully re-open. High-traffic market days draw well in excess of 1,000 patrons and increasingly includes a more diverse range of programming and activities, in addition to the traditional vendors. Further, Uptown has seen an increase in the total number of special events and community



Figure 14: Hodges Park near City Hall



Figure 15: Park Ridge Farmer’s Market

activities since pre-pandemic levels. Some analysts have offered that since events were cancelled during the initial 12-18 months of the pandemic lockdown, it perhaps has placed a renewed interest in such events. However, it was noted during the Commission's discussions that activity has placed increased use and pressure on Hodges Park in specific, and Uptown in general. There may be a long-term need for additional special event facilities.

## **DEMAND FOR UPTOWN & DIVERSE HOUSING TYPE GREW**

Commissioners discussed that Uptown is likely the neighborhood to experience the most infill housing development over the next 5 to 10 years. While Uptown already features multi-family and townhome style housing, planning for additional units, population, and activity is an important part of the Master Plan. Senior housing has also been a focus of post-pandemic shifts. The City Council's Affordable Housing Plan, adopted March 2024, provides further guidance on achieving housing goals in the Uptown district. Housing developments in Uptown can achieve a diversity of price points, dwelling unit product types, and age and stage of life needs.

## **METRA RIDERSHIP DECLINED DRASTICALLY**

The planning discussion identified that Metra ridership has remained generally below 50% of 2018-2019 data, even in 2023-2024 ([Metra Ridership Reports](#)). It is clear the loss of ridership from the Uptown station is directly associated with telecommuting, Loop employment, and other shifts in travel to Chicago. The Master Plan should acknowledge the importance of the station, Metra service, and the linkage to Chicago, while recognizing this shift in activity.

## **TOWNS SAW SUBURBAN OFFICE CONVERSIONS**

The region is experiencing multiple office-to-housing conversions as well as office-to-warehouse campus conversions, such as the Allstate campus. Park Ridge has not yet seen a conversion project but has fielded multiple

inquiries and due diligence efforts that appear to be evaluating such projects. Uptown has long featured office units as well as some sizable, suburban single-tenant office buildings. The future of suburban office buildings and office users in Uptown for the duration of the 2020's is currently unknown.

## **CHANGES IN BUSINESS USES**

The Uptown Master Plan process began by discussing emerging land uses and types of emerging businesses that could be allowed in the Uptown district. Some of these new business models further emerged during the pandemic years and not all of them are permitted in B-4. The Commission discussed both adding new uses to the code as well as amending provisions on existing business uses. The list includes but is not limited to,

- Performance Art Instruction
- Experiential Retail Uses
- Indoor Sports Simulator
- Hotel
- New or Used Motor Vehicle Showroom
- Medical Retail
- Micro Brewery

Additional discussion on B-4 business types and land uses can be found in this plan document's Appendix.



Figure 16: Uptown Sign



## PART 3 VISION

Uptown’s goals defined by this plan seek to modernize and reinvest in the neighborhood while preserving and fostering the “small town” charm that has long defined its past.

## BRIDGING TRADITION & PROGRESS

Park Ridge has known who it is as a community and what Uptown represents to that community for generations. Uptown is where public life gathers in Park Ridge. Uptown was planned and rooted in serving as a crossroads, serving as the connecting point between multiple suburbs and Chicago, as well as the focal gathering point in local Park Ridge life too. It is the meeting place for local residents and the epicenter for visitors and business.

Uptown is a neighborhood that accommodates automobiles on multiple highways while also welcoming pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities. Across land uses, transportation networks, business services, civic institutions, parks, gathering spaces, and special events – Uptown has to balance a distinctive variety of things in its role to the Park Ridge community.

This tradition will continue to the next generation through the community's commitment to Uptown as well as strategic steps to modernize and reinvest in the neighborhood. Uptown will accomplish its future goals while preserving and fostering the “small town” charm that has long defined its past. This Uptown Master Plan asserts both are achievable and notes both are important to Park Ridge.

The City should continue to communicate, coordinate, and jointly plan for the use of Uptown public properties with the Library, Park District, and other property owners. Any plans that address Uptown should be cohesive and reinforcing.



Figure 17: Flowers with Pickwick Theatre in background



## PART 4 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Uptown's Playbook to help coordinate the town towards shared labor and common goals.

## INTRODUCTION

The ultimate purpose of a city plan is to implement its goals. If the plan itself is a call to action, the goals chapter is the actual play call. It's a "playbook" to help coordinate the town towards shared labor and common goals. This plan section begins to answer, who is going to accomplish what? And by when? Combined with the Implementation chapter, the Goals & Objectives represent the "heart & soul" of the Uptown planning process and the core function of this document. It represents the community's aspirations, values, decisions, and priorities.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The document includes 89 goals & objectives district wide and across eight geographic sub-areas of Uptown Park Ridge. The document starts with District Wide goals which represent overall trends or interact with multiple areas of Uptown. District Wide goals are framed around three topics:

1. Land Use
2. Economic Development
3. Transportation

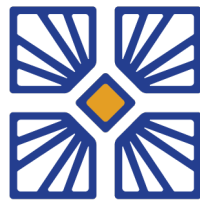
Following the District Wide goals, the document includes a sub-section for each area of Uptown. The document provides a brief description of the area, a key map showing the general zone of focus, and additional information on some concepts. All goals are listed. However, some are given additional content, either to showcase a complex idea or to bring awareness to the existing condition of a particular site.



Figure 18: Park Ridge Public Library



Figure 19: Pathway and seating near The Shops of Uptown



## PART 4.1 DISTRICT WIDE SUB-AREAS

### INTRODUCTION

The Uptown Master Plan is largely constructed by geography and how different sub-areas within the Uptown district experience different conditions. Therefore, the plan proposes different goals and objectives for each unique area. However, there are certain goals, projects, and strategic approaches that are truly district-wide in scale and impact. Those goals are presented in this section. The district-wide goals are organized into three categories: land use, economic development, and transportation.

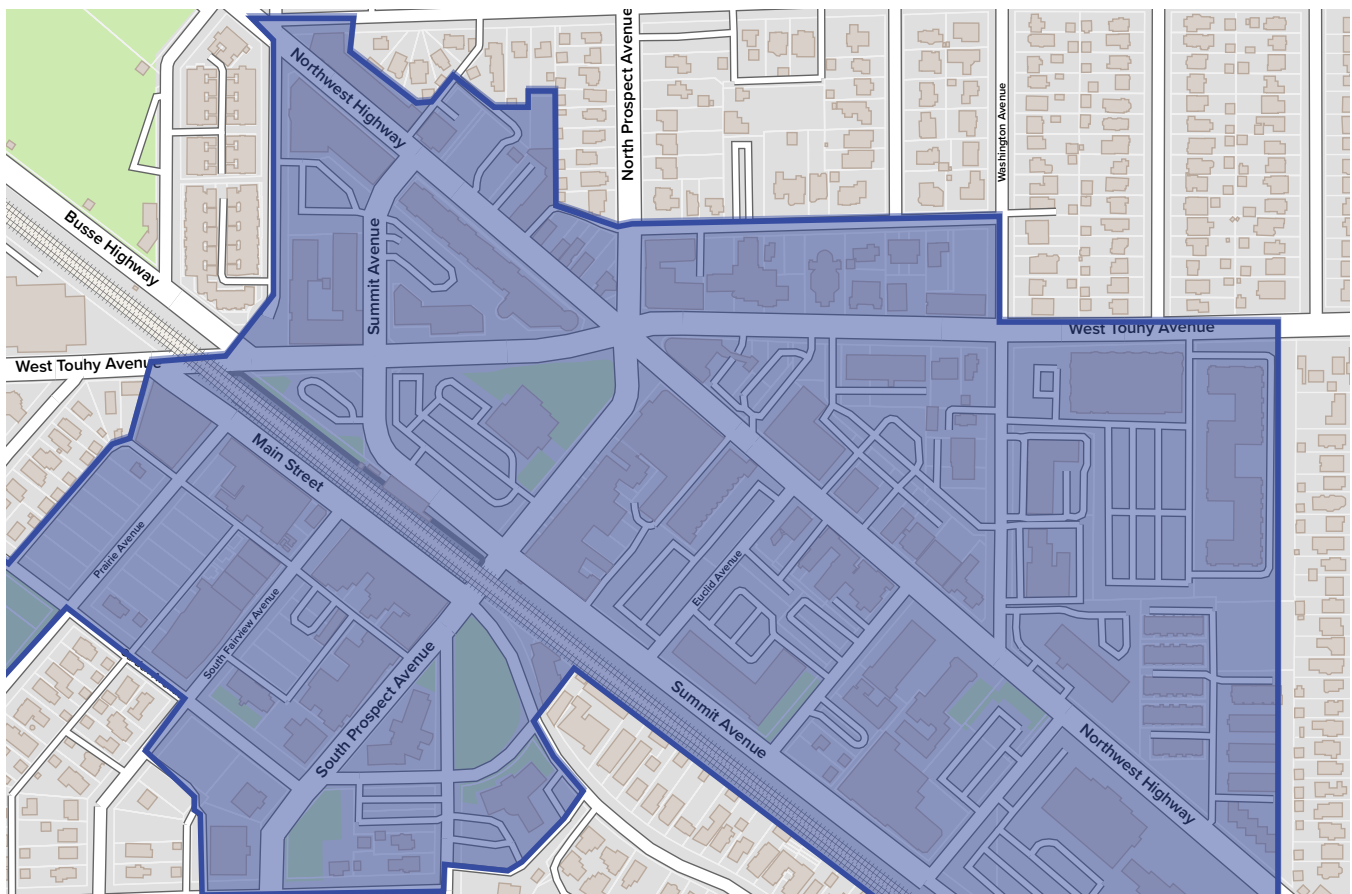


Figure 20:  Uptown Master Plan Study Area

# DISTRICT WIDE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### LAND USE

- 1 Coordinate with the private real estate and development market to promote economic development opportunities in Uptown
- 2 Emphasize and preserve Uptown’s quaint charm and unique “small town” character as compared to other suburbs
- 3 Re-affirm the need for zoning subdistricts and the specific placement of those subdistricts; maintain the B-4 zoning district as unique to the character and built-form of Uptown
- 4 Determine which parcels are part of Uptown and subsequently rezone to B-4, as appropriate
- 5 Evaluate the Planned Unit Development (PUD) requirements to allow for other types of projects to be eligible within Uptown (B-4)
- 6 Continue to encourage a wide variety of housing types in the Uptown district
- 7 Assess the demand for special event gathering spaces and plan for potential new locations and facilities
- 8 Evaluate a potential new overlay district for real estate parcels north of Touhy that would encourage lot consolidation and PUD opportunities, in order to avoid piecemeal investment
- 9 The City could consider locations for a potential hotel site
- 10 Assess the need for a Public Art Plan
- 11 Consider and incorporate the City’s Affordable Housing Plan in future Uptown redevelopment in applicant cases and development decision making



Figure 21: The Shops of Uptown



Figure 22: Entrance to Library parking lot from Summit and Prospect

# DISTRICT WIDE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 12 Shop local and shop small efforts should be a defining character of Uptown and a primary economic development strategy
- 13 Encourage and promote leveraging outdoor dining as a primary economic development driver of the Uptown District generally
- 14 The City should partner and coordinate with the Park District, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmers Market, and other special event planning organizations to create a cohesive annual calendar of events within the Uptown District in a way that is sensitive to concerns about the high-frequency use of the streets, parks, open spaces, and other properties within the neighborhood. Events should be distributed and sequenced throughout the calendar year in a strategic manner

### TRANSPORTATION

- 15 Identify locations and integrate funding into the CIP budget for additional bike parking
- 16 Improve pedestrian infrastructure and multi-modal infrastructure and the crossing throughout Uptown
- 17 Examine the role of surface parking lots in future redevelopment in Uptown
- 18 Evaluate the purpose and appropriate timeline for a parking management plan that considers future growth over the next 10 years; such a parking plan should assess the balance between public and private parking in addressing future supply-and-demand needs
- 19 Continue to prioritize CIP investments in existing transportation and utility infrastructure in Uptown among other citywide budget priorities
- 20 Maintain a quality Metra station facility, and recruit a new tenant for the Metra station retail space
- 21 Improve pedestrian infrastructure and the crosswalks at the “Six Corners” intersection
- 22 Identify potential pedestrian environment improvements for both safety and comfort to balance walkers with vehicle and cyclist traffic at the Metra Station “H” Intersection

# TRUCK TRAFFIC ROUTING

## POST-PANDEMIC TRENDS

As Uptown develops and new businesses move to the area, deliveries to businesses and residents may increase in frequency. There has been an increase in home deliveries post-pandemic and this may be contributing to the increase in truck traffic. The City's Police Department currently regulates traffic conditions in the area and will continue to do so. Large trucks (18-wheelers) are permitted on Touhy Avenue and Northwest Highway to go through Uptown. Trucks (which could include, but may not be limited to, carrier delivery trucks [Amazon, UPS, FedEx, food deliveries]) are permitted to use roadways in the area to get to their destinations. In some instances, that does include the usage of the residential streets surrounding our Uptown District.

While the trucks are permitted to use roadways to reach their destinations, a truck blocking a roadway, operating in an unsafe manner, or imposing a hazard would be something the City's Police Department addresses. This plan acknowledges that the truck traffic will continue but addresses that policy decisions may be something the City engages in the future.

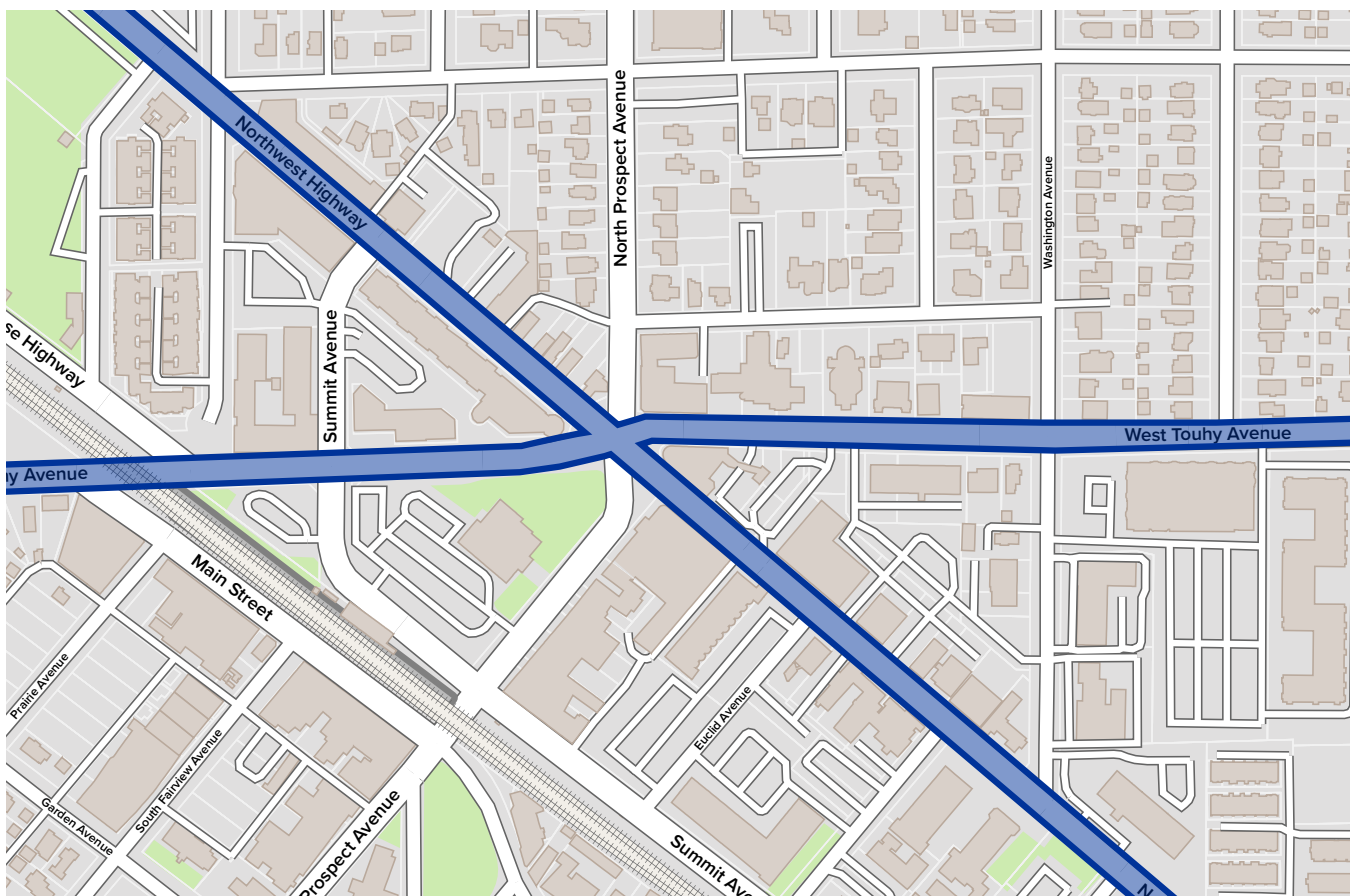


Figure 23:  Permitted roads for large trucks to pass through Uptown



Figure 24: Mixed-use development in Wheeler District



Figure 25: Wheeler District housing



Figure 26: Diversity of housing in Wheeler District

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

WHEELER DISTRICT

Oklahoma City, OK  
Ongoing Work

ENCOURAGE DIVERSE HOUSING

The “Missing Middle” urban design concept spurred development with a mix of housing sizes and configurations. Adopted by New Urbanism, the concept recognizes how towns used to be built with Grandma and Grandpa next door to the single-parent, across the street from the working professional, adjacent to the corner store, and with a variety of price points. Architectural styles could vary, like in this case study, or being more uniform to match Park Ridge’s historic styles.



Figure 27: Shops along Touhy Avenue

### PLAN FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Evaluate a potentially new overlay district that would encourage lot consolidation and PUD opportunities, in order to avoid piecemeal investment.

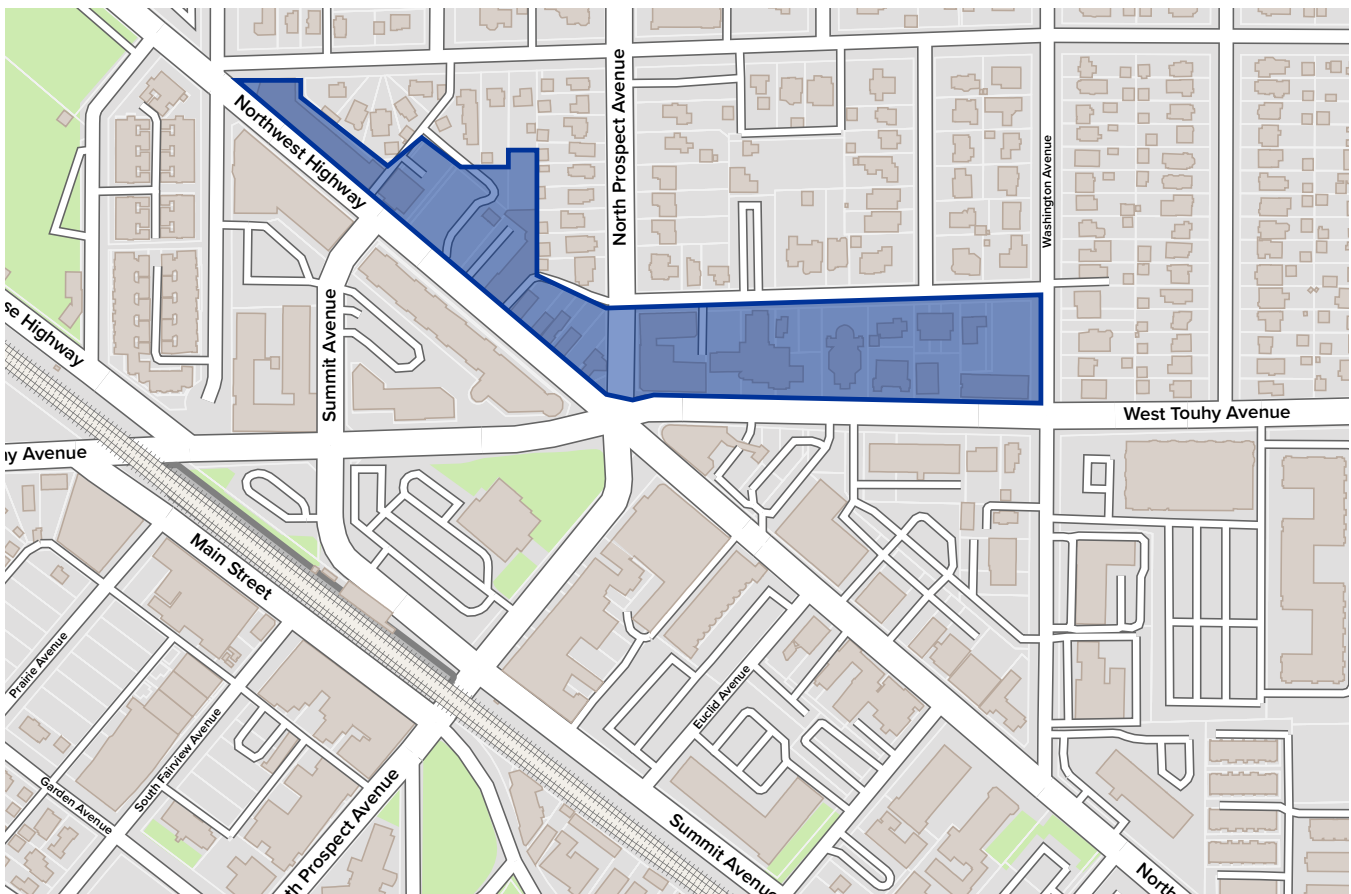


Figure 28: ■ Potential lot consolidation area



Figure 29: Boxville pop-up market in South Chicagoland



Figure 30: Bronzeville's "shop local" branding on small businesses



Figure 31: Intentional, crowd-sourced advertising helps small operations

## CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

### SHOP LOCAL, SHOP BRONZEVILLE

Chicago, IL  
Ongoing Work

#### SUPPORT "SHOP LOCAL" EFFORTS

The historic neighborhood of Bronzeville includes a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to support local commerce, run events, and maintain cleaning schedules in public spaces. They have an active social media presence that showcases local businesses and advertises how community members can support entrepreneurs. Additionally, they organize "shop local" days, for example around the holidays, to raise further awareness. The promotion of local businesses and support encourages community economic development.

SHOP LOCAL AND SHOP SMALL EFFORTS SHOULD BE A DEFINING CHARACTER OF UPTOWN AND A PRIMARY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



Figure 32: Shop local in Park Ridge

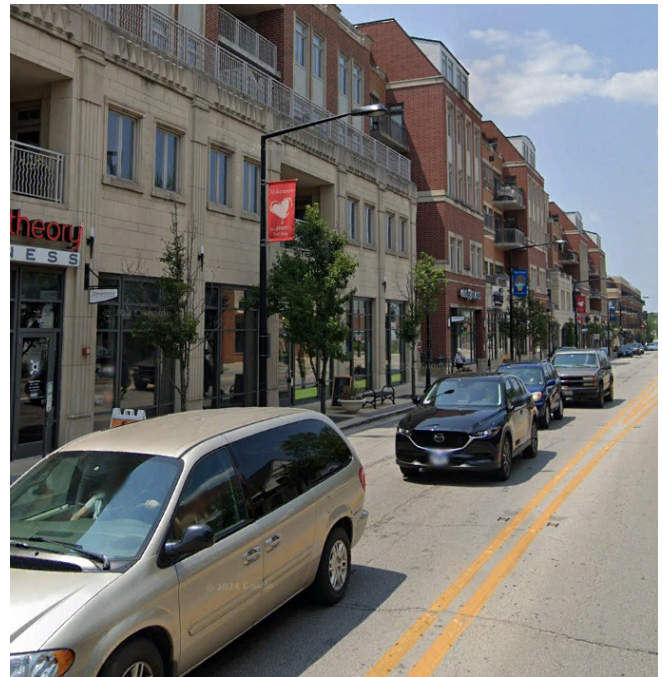


Figure 33: Shops and traffic along Northwest Highway

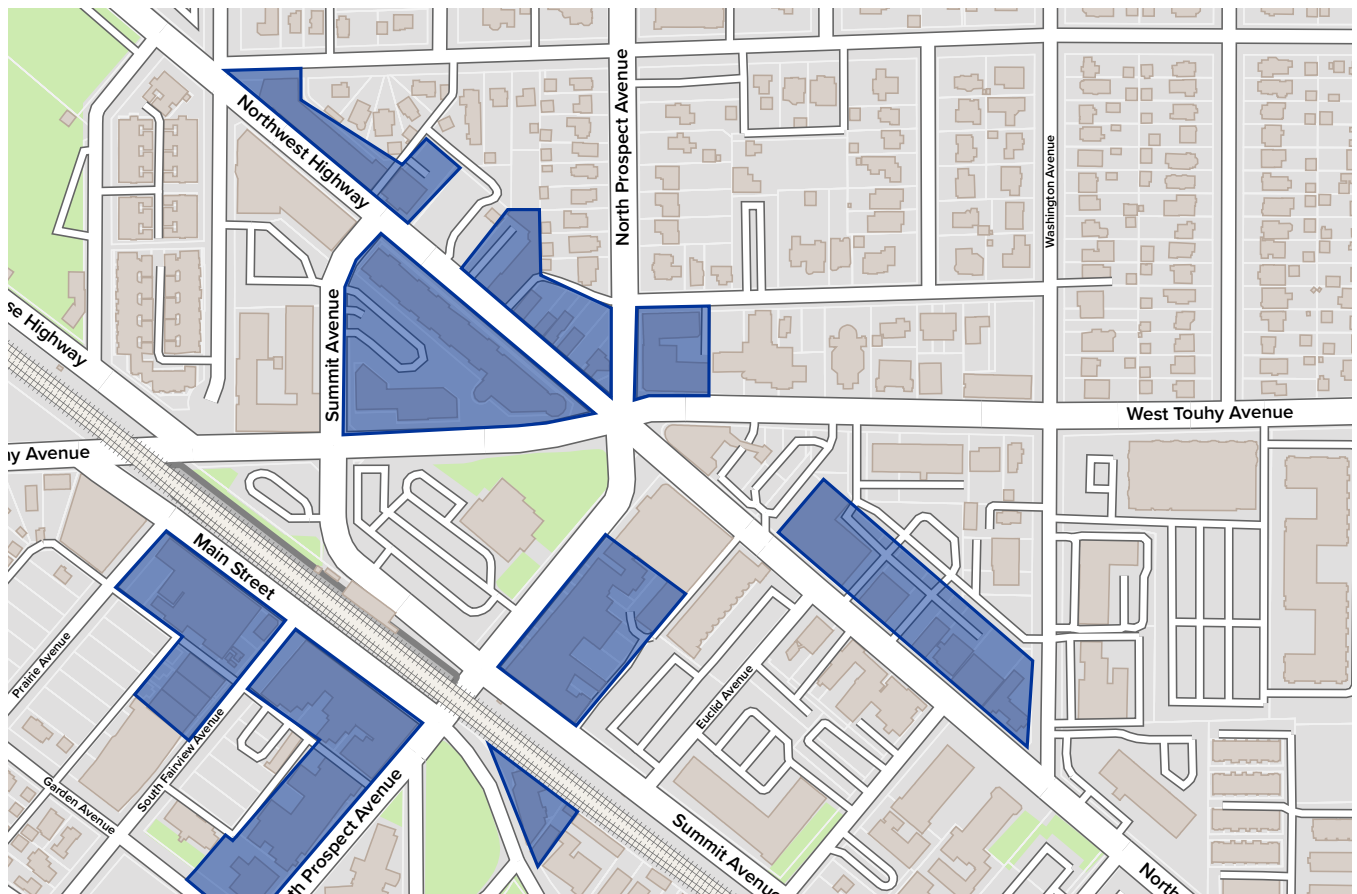


Figure 34: ■ Lots where existing small businesses are located.



Figure 35: Coup de Thai parklet seating



Figure 36: Parklet seating in Los Gatos, California



Figure 37: Construction of parklet in Los Gatos, California

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

SEMI-PERMANENT PARKLET PROGRAM

Los Gatos, California  
2021

CITY ASSISTANCE WITH PARKLETS

The Town of Los Gatos, California transformed parking spaces and reduced lanes city-wide with a subsidized semi-permanent parklet program, offered to businesses with parking facing the store front. The business would pay for the engineering service and the city provided a grant of \$40,000. Five parklet options were offered to businesses to ensure uniformity. These parklets then transform into public seating during closing hours.



Figure 38: Shrinking intersections to improve pedestrian safety



Figure 39: Using excess intersection space for murals



Figure 40: Bike lanes separated from traffic

## CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

### JERSEY CITY VISION ZERO

Jersey City, NJ  
2023

#### IMPROVING CROSSWALK SAFETY

Jersey City has recently undergone changes to its infrastructure to become more adapted to different modes of transportation besides driving. Analytical and observation plans were utilized to create an action plan on how to make the streets safer for pedestrians. Wider sidewalks, additional bike lanes, and bright markings promote these forms of sustainable transportation while increasing pedestrian safety. Including these features reduces the possibility of displacement while incorporating equitable mobility within the community.

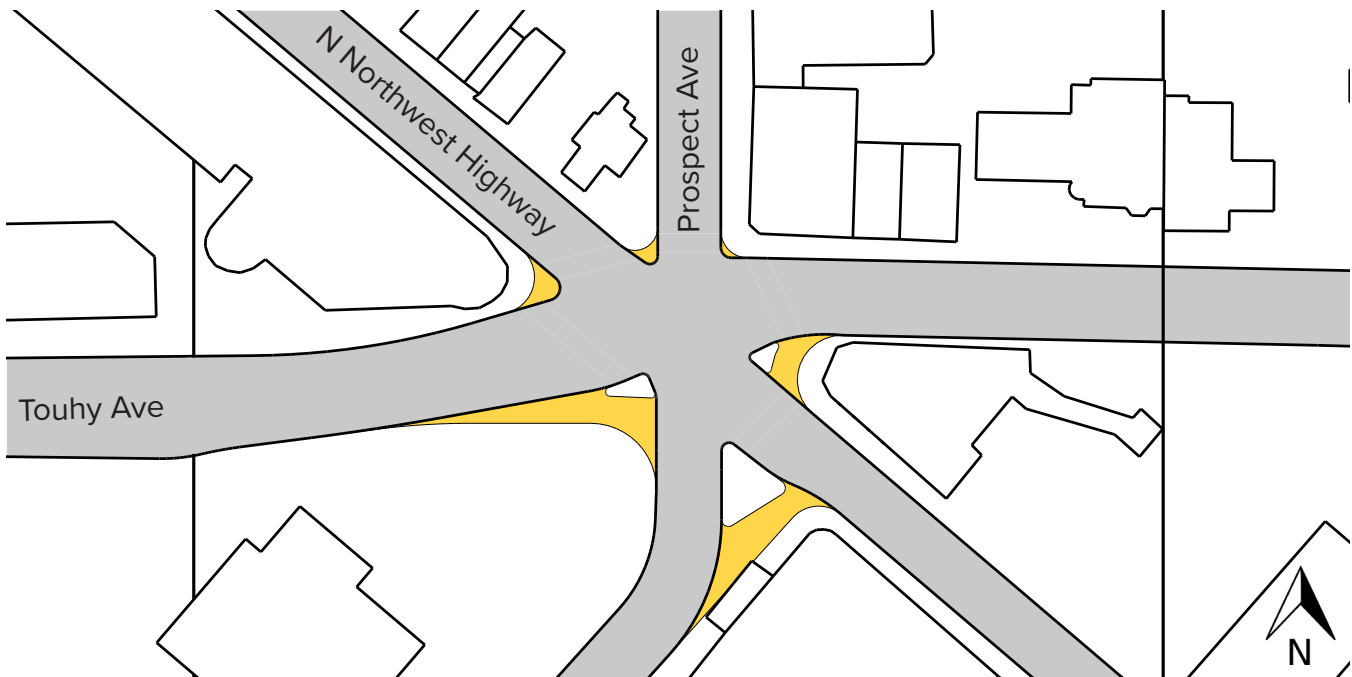


Figure 41: Conceptual simplification for pedestrian safety, ease of traffic flow, and enhanced urban space

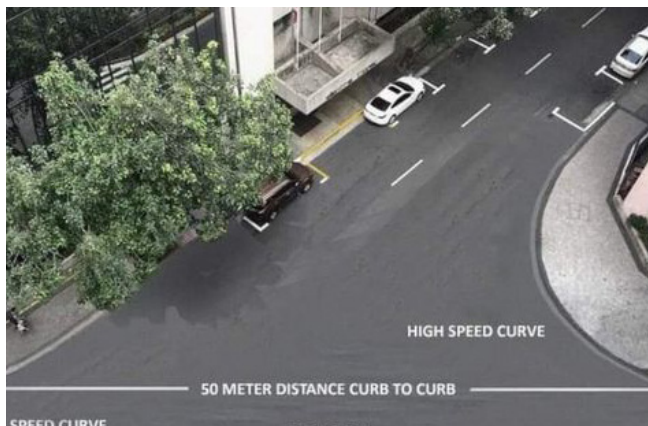


Figure 42: Before condition with a right turn slip lane at a high-speed

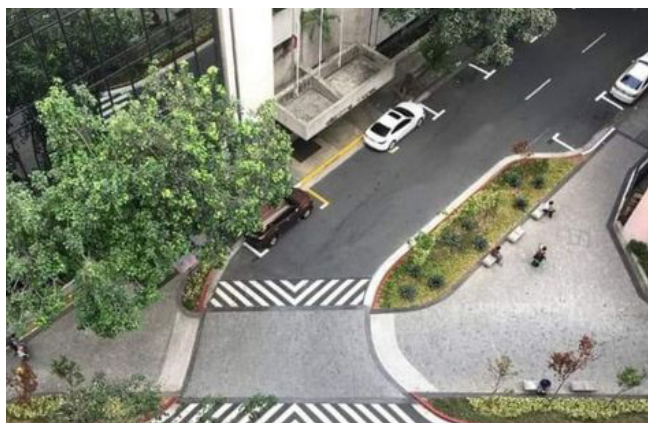


Figure 43: After condition where the lane reduction shortens the walking distance for a pedestrian and reduces traffic speed into the neighborhood

## POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS

### REDUCE TURNING RADIUS

Smaller turning radii result in slower speeds, higher visibility of pedestrians, and shorter crosswalks. Removing slip lanes creates more public space.

### CHARACTER-ALTERING POWER

Returning the road to the people can transform the feeling and walkability of a neighborhood.

### BANNERS, FLAGS, & SIGNS

Promote a stronger sense of place, enclosure, and enhanced pedestrian experience with building facade banners, pennant flags, and strategic lighting.

### CROSSWALK GRAPHICS

Incorporate patterns influenced by the existing art deco motifs of the neighborhood in a subtle color palette to reflect existing materials and promote the image of a traditional small town.

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE CROSSWALKS AT THE “SIX CORNERS” INTERSECTION

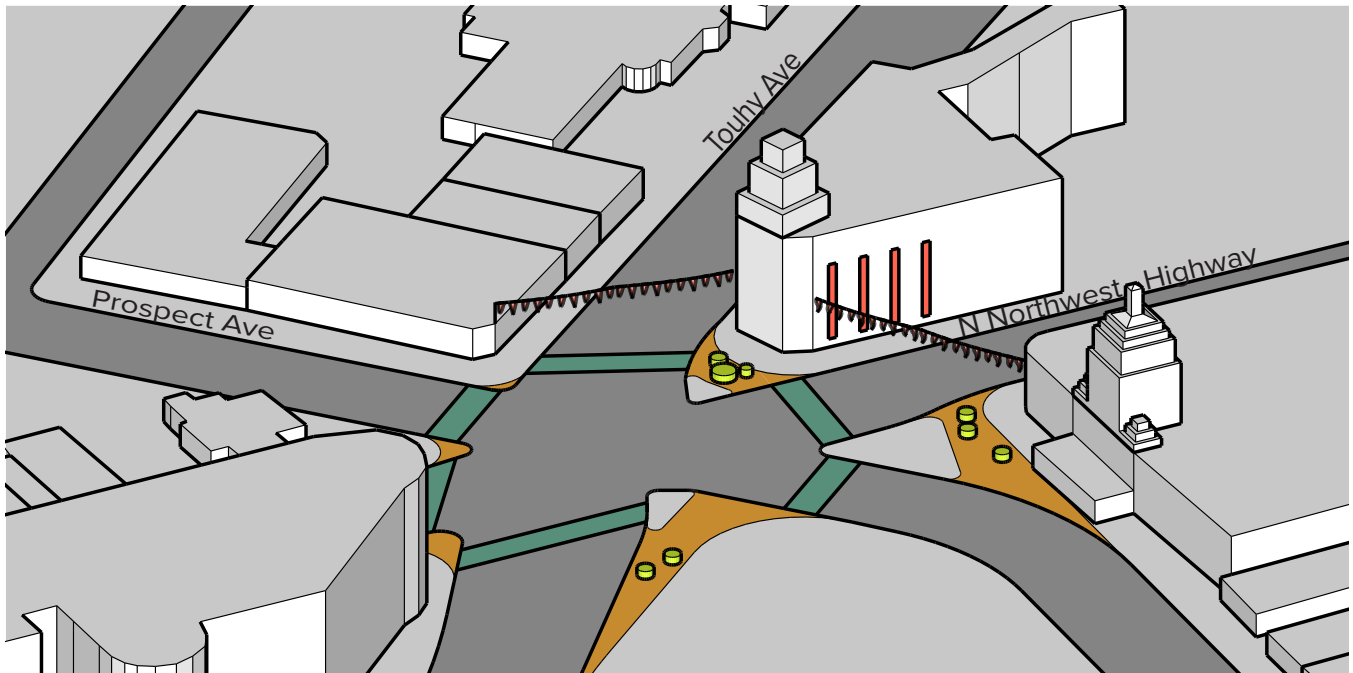


Figure 44: Rendering showing conceptual simplification of excessive curb cuts and slip lanes. Real estate can be used for outdoor dining, pop-up markets, or wayfinding.

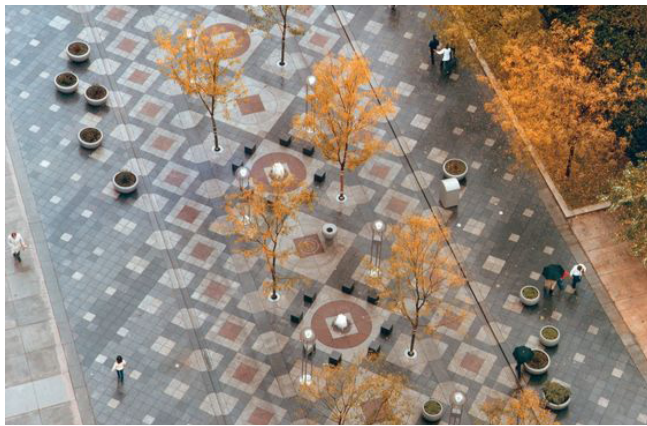


Figure 45: Art Deco themed paving could fit well in front of Pickwick Theatre



Figure 46: On Park Ridge controlled roads, overhead flags brand a district



Figure 47: Sidewalk extensions and cafe dining extend the public realm



Figure 48: Seasonal seating extends visit times to the Uptown area



## PART 4.2 PROSPECT & MAIN

### INTRODUCTION

Prospect and Main represents the historic core of Uptown, and likely represents the “heart of the district.” The buildings and streetscapes of this area provide Uptown and Park Ridge much of its recognizable character and landmarks. This central hub is anchored by the Metra station and Hodges Park, and while the "Six Corners" represents the busiest points of automobile traffic, the intersections of Summit, Prospect, and Main are likely the most frequented intersections for pedestrians and cyclists. In recent years, this epicenter has become increasingly defined by the highly visible presence of outdoor dining approximately half of the year, as well as the primary location for special events. Prospect and Main’s complex mix of multiple modes of transportation, concentration of activities, and mix of land uses presents a number of new opportunities as well as objectives to achieve.

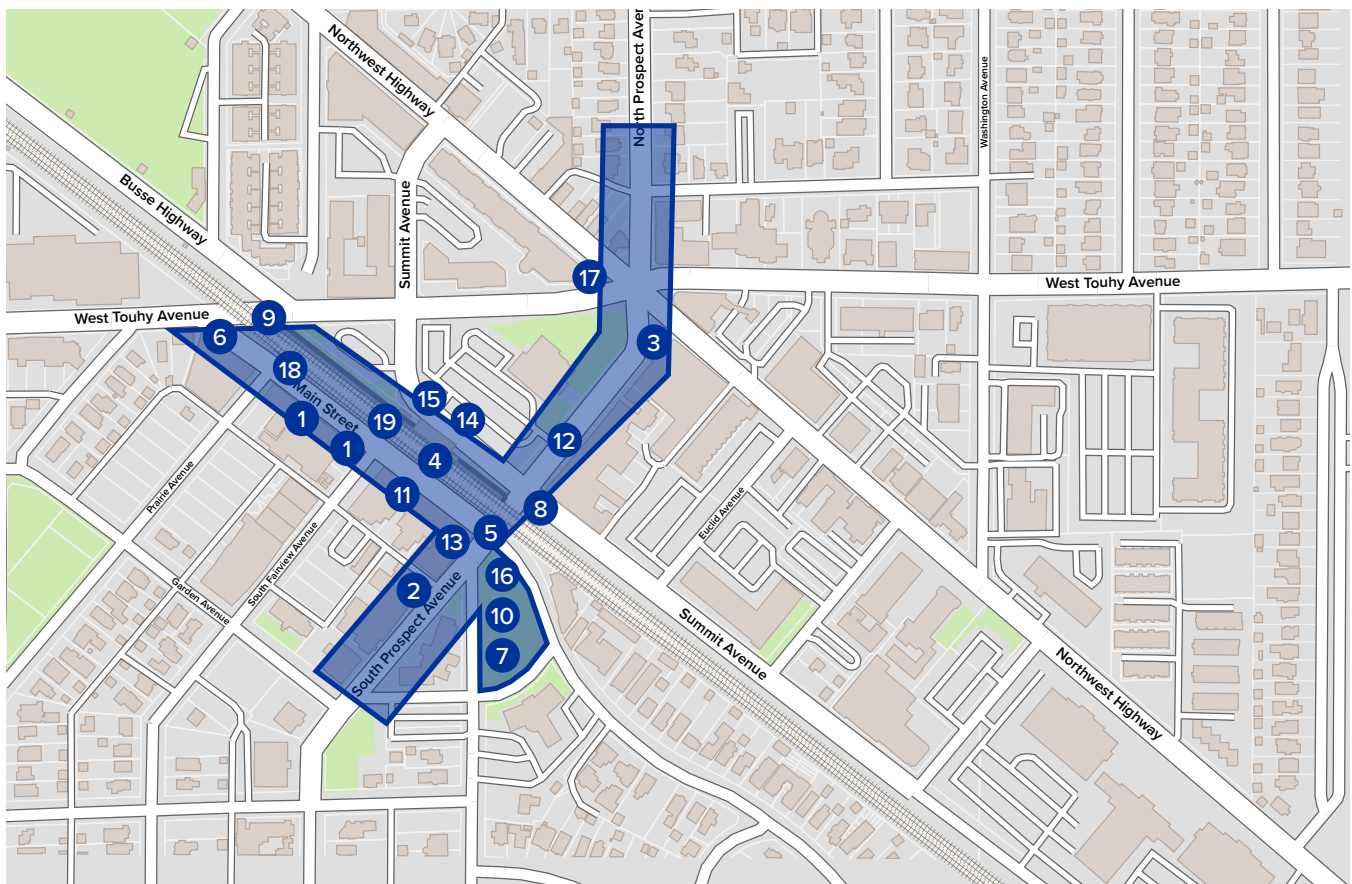


Figure 49:  Prospect and Main goal and objectives locations

# PROSPECT & MAIN

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 Support appropriate infill redevelopment on the Main Street vacant parcels (#42 and #28) in the next 5 to 10 years
- 2 Support a successful adaptive reuse development of the commercial space for 116 South Prospect
- 3 Support the continued reinvestment and success of the Pickwick Theater as an important community amenity and Park Ridge landmark
- 4 Preserve the quaint character of Uptown’s historic core (Main and Prospect corridors) while facing potential market force pressures to redevelop
- 5 Implement preservation and zoning policies to retain the Main Street and South Prospect street walls, including evaluating a mandatory “build-to line” for property frontages
- 6 Assess and amend existing zoning to better address infill bulk, mass, and height in the historic core; consider a new overlay subdistrict to establish the desired built-form and manage incremental redevelopment in the new overlay subdistrict
- 7 Analyze the capacity and appropriate frequency of use for Hodges Park as a special events location, including coordinating with the Park Ridge Park District
- 8 Identify potential locations and invest in “welcome to Park Ridge” gateway signage, including signage that welcomes Metra riders
- 9 Represent Park Ridge’s interests and participate in regional conversations to support Metra transit service
- 10 Consider landmarking Hodges Park
- 11 Establish a long-term vision, plan, and design for the Main Street outdoor dining area
- 12 Identify investments and improvements to the pedestrian areas at the Prospect railroad crossing that addresses both mobility and safety
- 13 Maintain the existing streetscape infrastructure on Prospect and look to expand such placemaking to Main, Hodges Park, Courtland, Vine, and the general vicinity
- 14 Factor Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as a consideration in future real estate project reviews in Uptown, including but not limited to reviewing parking requirements
- 15 Invest in placemaking on-and-around the Metra station that clearly communicates riders have arrived in Park Ridge, and differentiates Uptown from Chicago as well as other NW corridor suburbs

# PROSPECT & MAIN

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 16 Evaluate the potential for an updated park master plan for Hodges Park, in coordination with the Park Ridge Park District
- 17 Actively coordinate with owner of Uptown Development to address vacancies in their Uptown property, with particular emphasis on the “corner spot” at the "Six Corners", in roles appropriate for a municipality
- 18 Pursue a public mural along the Metra station retaining wall on Main Street
- 19 Identify signage, wayfinding, lighting, and other placemaking strategies to highlight the pedestrian crossing opportunity at Metra station platform between the Library parking lots and businesses on Main and Fairview



Figure 50: Businesses along Main Street



Figure 51: Wheeling Town Center amenities



Figure 52: Wheeling Town Center Plaza



Figure 53: Public events at Wheeling Town Center

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

WHEELING TOWN CENTER

Wheeling, IL  
2019

ENCOURAGE A CENTER IN UPTOWN

Adjacent to the Metra Station in Wheeling, IL, Wheeling Town Center connects residents and visitors to commercial, recreational, business, and residential areas. The usage of this center directly connects the city to the nearby station, displaying what Wheeling has to offer and creating a sense of place. This center hosts community events that bring the community together in a shared, central space.

INVEST IN PLACEMAKING ON-AND-AROUND THE METRA STATION THAT CLEARLY COMMUNICATES RIDERS HAVE ARRIVED IN PARK RIDGE, AND DIFFERENTIATES UPTOWN FROM CHICAGO AS WELL AS OTHER NW CORRIDOR SUBURBS



Figure 54: Uptown Normal Train Station



Figure 55: Characterizing infrastructure around The Circle in Uptown Normal

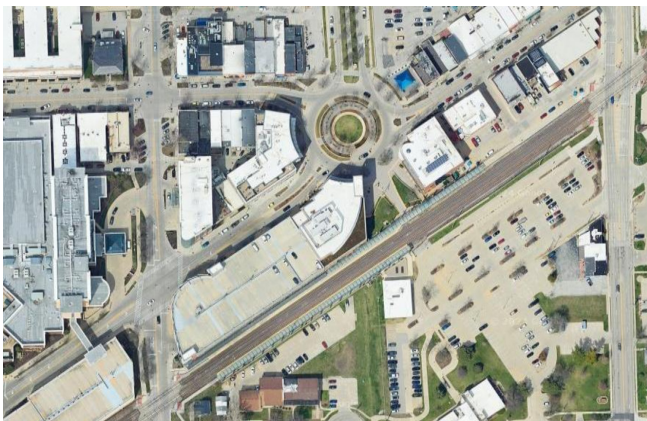


Figure 56: Aerial view of Uptown Normal Circular Intersection

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

**UPTOWN STATION**

Uptown Normal, IL  
1990

**TRAIN STATION PLACEMAKING**

Uptown Normal utilizes its Metra Station to contrast from other stations along the line. This building connects to the circular intersection that provides a city center and walkability to nearby attractions and residential areas. The principle of placemaking at the Metra station allows for community identity and connectivity at the station. Park Ridge’s station area could benefit from a monumental design that could function as a placemaking marker for the city.

INVEST IN PLACEMAKING ON-AND-AROUND THE METRA STATION THAT CLEARLY COMMUNICATES RIDERS HAVE ARRIVED IN PARK RIDGE, AND DIFFERENTIATES UPTOWN FROM CHICAGO AS WELL AS OTHER NW CORRIDOR SUBURBS



Figure 57: Characterizing infrastructure at Kalamazoo Transportation Center



Figure 58: Aerial view of Kalamazoo Transportation Center



Figure 59: Kalamazoo Transportation Center platform

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

**KALAMAZOO TRANSIT CENTER**

Kalamazoo, MI  
1987

**TRAIN STATION PLACEMAKING**

Built in 1987, the Kalamazoo transportation center is used by many major trains from across the country. It also is a key point on the international line, and the local bus systems. Since it is on the National Register of Historic Places, any updates to the building have been made with respect to the original character and features of the station.



## PART 4.3 SUMMIT & EUCLID

### INTRODUCTION

The Summit and Euclid area is defined by the railroad tracks and a large, surface parking lot. The large, surface parking lot located in the Summit and Euclid area is owned by the City of Park Ridge. Today, the parking lot provides critical public parking capacity for the area's businesses and motorists. Many individuals "park once" in this lot, and then traverse Uptown, visiting multiple locations by foot. The parking must be preserved, if not increased. However, the potential for development also exists. Pedestrian improvements could make the area safer and more welcoming. This section outlines goals and objectives to ensure parking is prioritized among other opportunities.

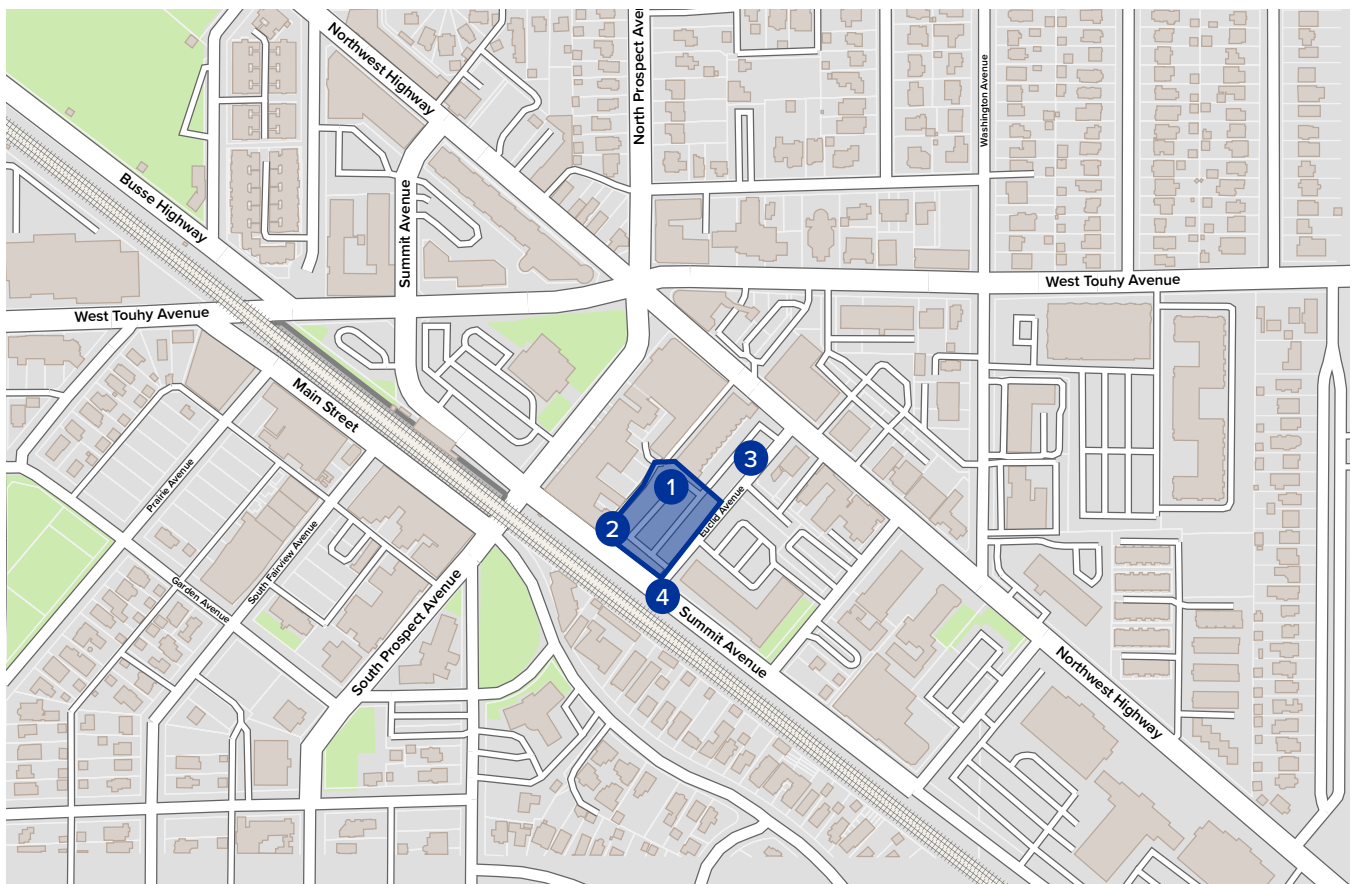


Figure 60:  Summit and Euclid goal and objectives locations

# SUMMIT & EUCLID

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 Commit to a City policy that any redevelopment that incorporates the Summit & Euclid parking lot must provide for the same number, or net increase, in public parking as well as meet its own additional private parking needs
- 2 The City could discuss a potential RFP process to solicit public-private partnerships for the redevelopment of the Summit & Euclid parking lot; such a development would transition the land to a tax-contributing real estate site, instead of a public parking lot
- 3 If the Summit & Euclid parking lot is redeveloped, that real estate project should be the catalyst to upgrade and enhance Euclid Avenue as a street, including improving the pedestrian environment
- 4 In the near term, the City should evaluate potential infrastructure improvements to improve pedestrian safety in the general Summit & Euclid parking lot vicinity

THE CITY COULD DISCUSS A POTENTIAL RFP PROCESS TO SOLICIT PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SUMMIT & EUCLID PARKING LOT



Figure 61: Existing parking lot

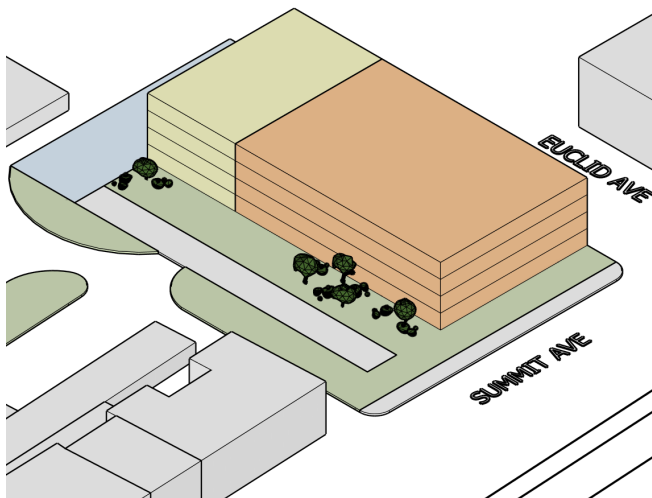


Figure 62: Conceptual building development on city-owned Summit & Euclid Parking lot

- Potential Building Massing
- Structured Parking
- Surface Parking
- Existing Green Space
- Existing Buildings

**POTENTIAL FOR NEW TAX BASE**

Such a development would transition the land to a tax-contributing real-estate site, instead of a public parking lot.

**NEW STRUCTURE POSSIBILITY**

A new building on the lot at Summit & Euclid would provide the required space for the desired tax-contributing use, an equivalent or net increase in parking, as well as act as an extension to Park Ridge’s available public green space. The public spaces could also extend the use of pedestrian infrastructure improvements envisioned at the nearby "Six Corners" intersection.

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## PART 4.4 GARDEN, FAIRVIEW, & PRAIRIE

### INTRODUCTION

The southwestern part of Uptown is largely defined by the street-walls located on Main Street and South Prospect, and then with the exception of the AT&T building, transitions into numerous surface parking lots. The parking lots buffer the single-family homes south of Garden. The Uptown Master planning process identified and analyzed that this area will likely feature the most change and most development over the next 5-to-10 years. Thus the land use intensity and character could be impacted. Therefore, careful consideration for the vision for Garden, Fairview, and Prairie, as well as how to best integrate redevelopment, was an extensive focus of the planning effort. The plan envisions cohesive blocks once redeveloped. Additionally, the Garden Avenue corridor represents a critical area in Uptown to maintain and enhance the transition from multi-story, mixed-use real estate to single-family residential neighborhoods. A key outcome from the Uptown Master Plan is for the City of Park Ridge to clearly communicate its vision and the community's aspirations for this area to the real estate development industry, providing fair certainty to the market.

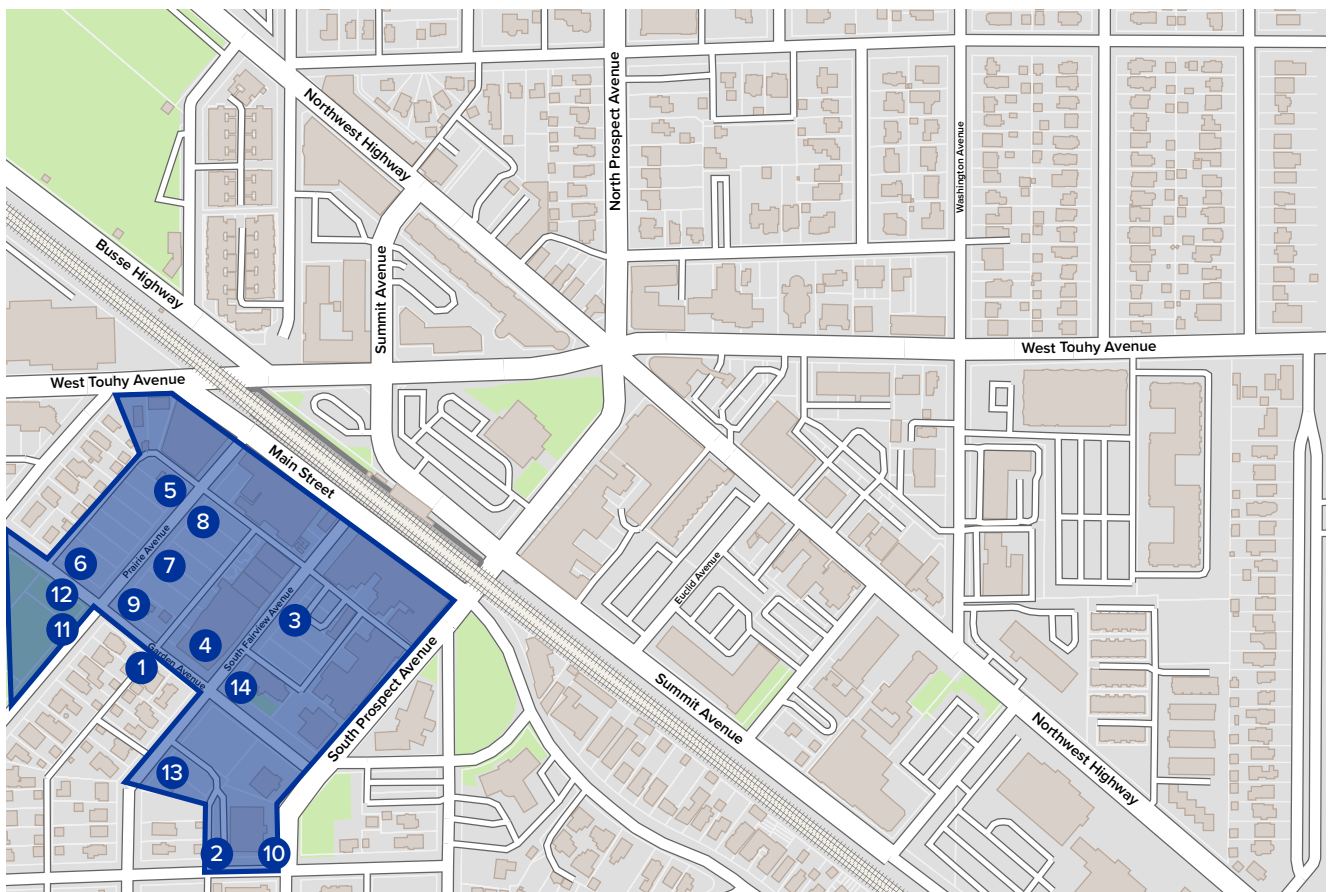


Figure 63: ■ Garden, Fairview, and Prairie goal and objectives locations

# GARDEN, FAIRVIEW, & PRAIRIE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 Maintain the importance of Garden Street as a transition from Uptown to single-family residential areas
- 2 Plan for and manage development on South Prospect, south of Garden, in a manner that appropriately transitions from Uptown zoning to single-family residential areas
- 3 Proactively rezone a number of parcels to more appropriate Uptown zoning that aligns with the City's vision of redevelopment for this area and evaluate the following properties:
  - a. Potentially rezone the Fairview Avenue B-1 parcels to B-4
  - b. Potentially rezone the Prairie Avenue parcels (R-2) to either B-4 or R-4
  - c. Potentially rezone the BJB buildings/Main Street B-1 properties to B-4
  - d. Potentially rezone the Fairview and Garden (AANA overflow parking) to support development (mixed-use, residential, townhomes)
- 4 The Uptown Master Plan acknowledges the existing height of the AT&T building within the likelihood of a future proposed adaptive re-use, but emphasizes the importance of maintaining the 40-foot height restriction for any other redevelopment in the vicinity
- 5 As redevelopment occurs and surface parking lots south of the track are eliminated, the City should address long-term parking and circulation management strategies in this portion of Uptown
- 6 Assess yard and bulk requirements for properties on Prairie Avenue to preserve the transition between Uptown and single-family residential properties
- 7 As a desired outcome of the plan, establish that the City's vision is the Fairview and Prairie blocks are part of the Uptown district, and should be redeveloped as mixed-use, multi-story properties
- 8 Consider a potential RFP process to solicit a public-private partnership for the City-owned parking lot on Prairie; any potential redevelopment must maintain, or increase, public parking
- 9 Encourage and promote the adaptive re-use of the existing AT&T building that provides greater foot traffic and vibrancy to the Uptown District
- 10 Encourage and promote continued re-investment in the former AANA headquarters (222 South Prospect) in a manner that is compatible with the adjacent single-family housing
- 11 Collaborate with the Park District to create a master plan for the future use of Cumberland Park as the area redevelops and the use of the facility increases

# GARDEN, FAIRVIEW, & PRAIRIE CORRIDOR

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 12 Engage in conversations of Cumberland Park’s use as a potential special events space in conjunction with a potential Master Plan for Hodges Park
- 13 The former vacant AANA lot, zoned R-2, should remain zoned R-2 and be redeveloped as a single-family house
- 14 The City should partner with the private property owners of the landmark property (720 Garden) and celebrate its importance in the Uptown district



Figure 64: Goal #6 suggests a gradual stepdown from a higher- to lower-density. The above example shows an abrupt transition from a 4-story condo building to a single-family home. On the opposite end of the street, the same transition occurs by gradually stepping down building heights. To make the transition effective, all buildings should hold the same setback from the street.

# PROACTIVELY REZONE A NUMBER OF PARCELS TO MORE APPROPRIATE UPTOWN ZONING THAT ALIGNS WITH THE CITY'S VISION OF REDEVELOPMENT FOR THIS AREA



Figure 65: Parcels to be potentially rezone to align with proposed Uptown Master Plan

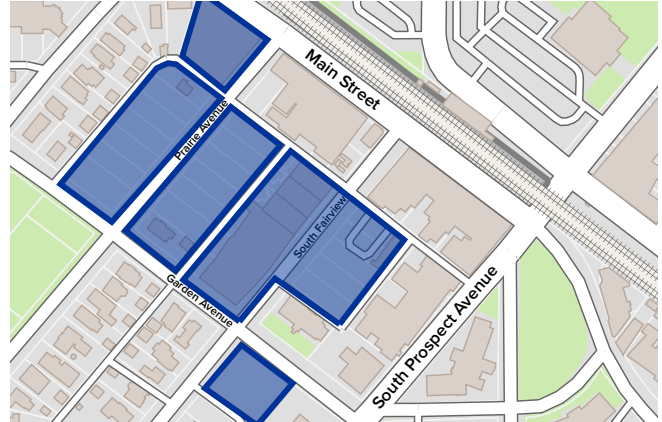


Figure 66: Areas under consideration to rezone into B-4 or R-4 zoning classes

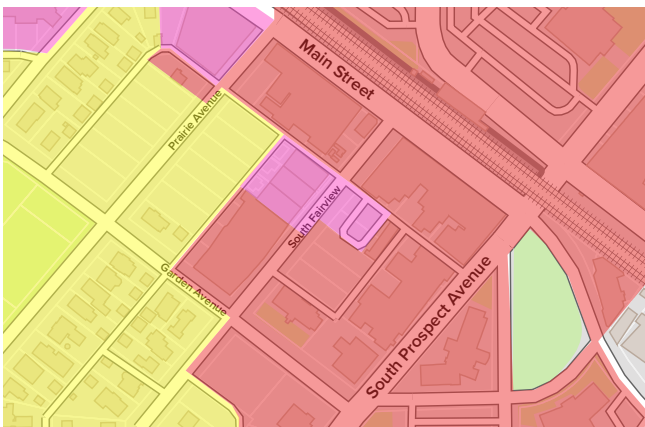


Figure 67: Zoning, Existing

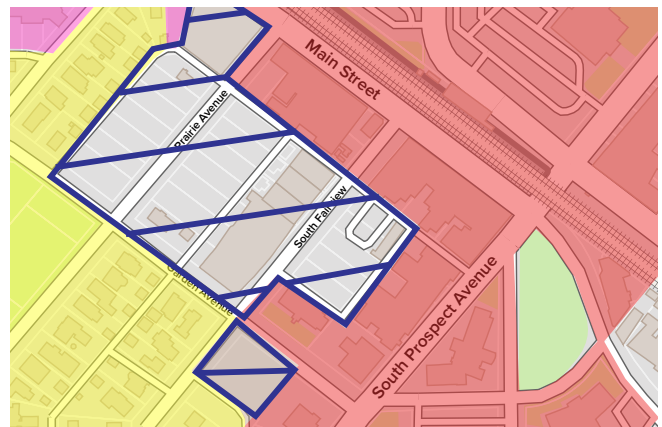


Figure 68: Zoning, diagonal lines representing potential B-4 or R-4



## PART 4.5 TOUHY & NORTHWEST HIGHWAY

### INTRODUCTION

The northeast corner of Uptown is anchored by Touhy Avenue and presents a diverse variety of both building types and land uses. The Uptown Master Plan provides goals and objectives that can help the area create more cohesion as it potentially redevelops, in future years. The plan recommends approaches regarding unified zoning, setbacks, streetscape, and transportation design. The plan does not propose preemptive action by the City, but rather provides a framework to communicate-with, and respond-to, the real estate development community and property owners. The Touhy Avenue corridor represents a critical area in Uptown to maintain and enhance the transition from multi-story, mixed-use real estate to single-family residential neighborhoods.

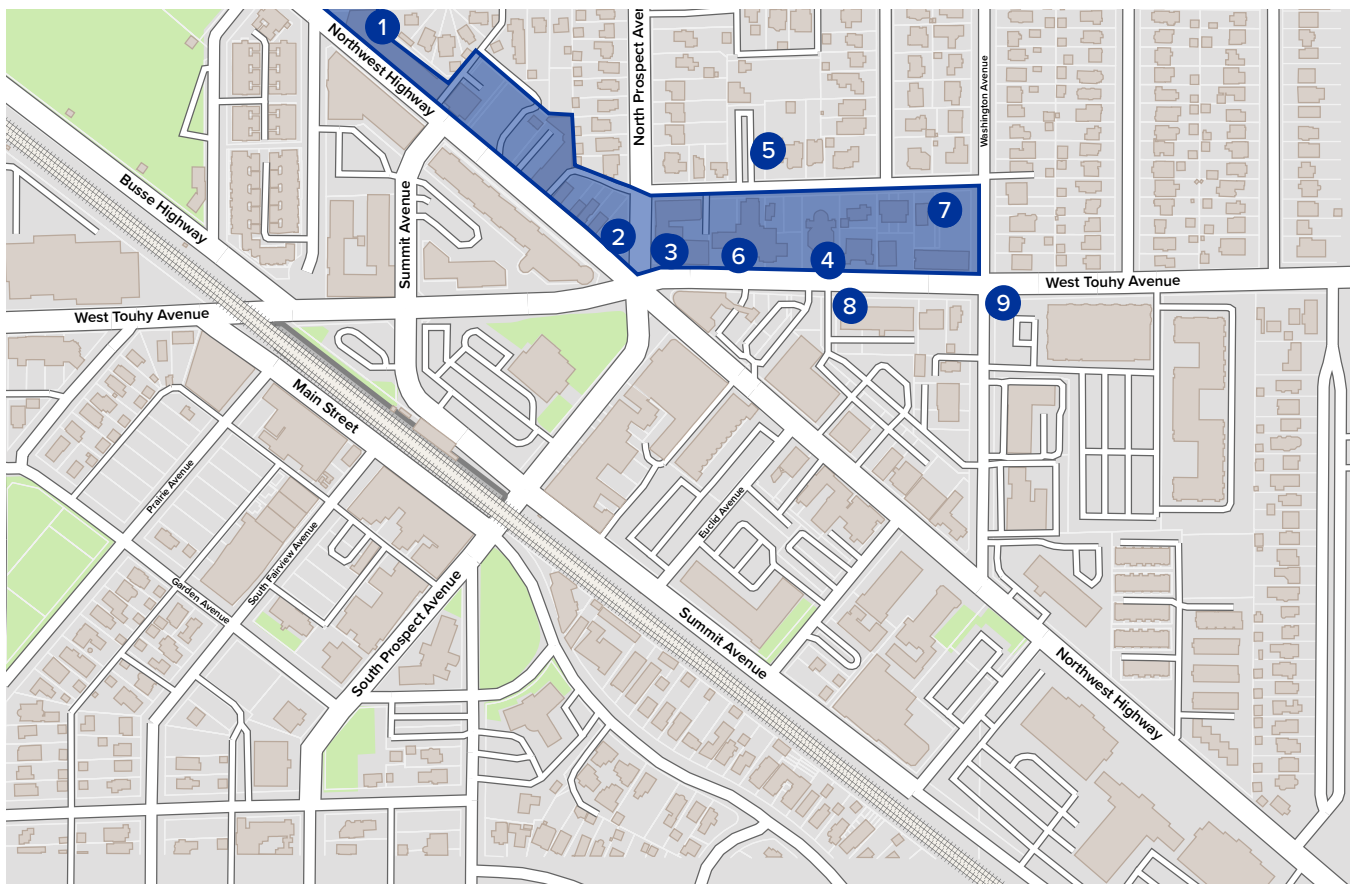


Figure 69:  Touhy and NW Highway goal and objectives locations

# TOUHY & NORTHWEST HIGHWAY

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 Assist the property owner (127-157 N NW Hwy. building) in strategies that encourage reinvestment in the building, including the retention and recruitment of tenants; the property could consider historic preservation incentives as one such strategy
- 2 Evaluate preserving and landmarking the original Carnegie library building at the “Six Corners”
- 3 Retain B-4 zoning at the corner (432 West Touhy building) and any future structure should relate to the “Six Corners” intersection at that site, in regards to orientation, architectural form, and real estate function
- 4 Assess rezoning the entire block on Touhy, from Prospect to Washington, to the R-4 district
- 5 Plan for, review, and approve any potential redevelopment on Touhy in a manner that diminishes the transformation of Grant Place’s character into an alley function
- 6 Maintain front yard setbacks and vegetation buffering along Touhy in the area’s urban design
- 7 Ensure infill redevelopment on the north side of Northwest Highway and Touhy as it relates to the street, and locates parking to the rear (north of the structure as much as possible through site design)
- 8 Redevelopment projects on Northwest Highway and Touhy, on the northern perimeter of Uptown, should minimize the existing automobile character and curb cuts, and promote an enhanced pedestrian experience and vehicular access from alleys
- 9 Invest in placemaking that recognizes the North Prospect/Washington/Touhy intersections as major gateway entry points to Uptown

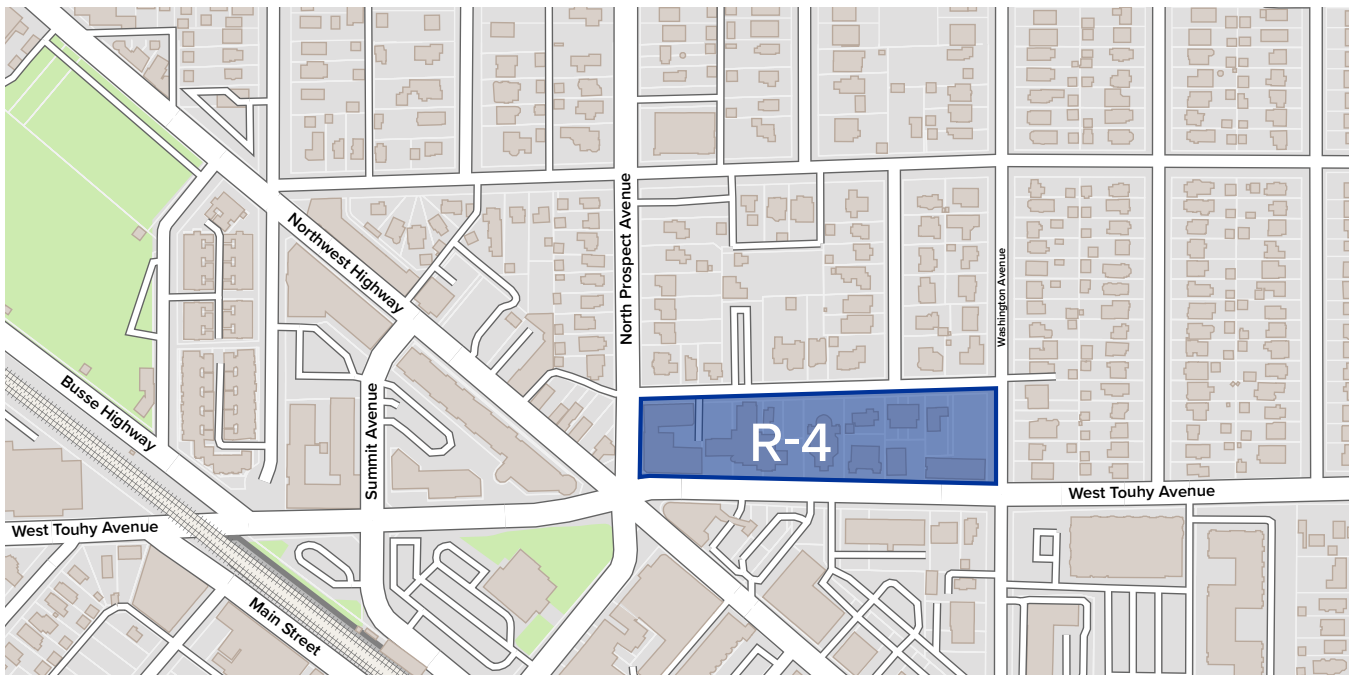



Figure 70:  Area to be potentially rezoned to R-4



Figure 71: Betel Chapel - Romanian Baptist Church on Touhy Avenue



Figure 72: @properties on Touhy Avenue

### AVOIDING PIECEMEAL INVESTMENTS

Evaluate a potentially new overlay district for real estate parcels north of Touhy that would encourage lot consolidation and PUD opportunities, in order to avoid piecemeal investment.

GOAL

5

PLAN FOR, REVIEW, AND APPROVE ANY POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT ON TOUHY IN A MANNER THAT DIMINISHES THE TRANSFORMATION OF GRANT PLACE'S CHARACTER INTO AN ALLEY FUNCTION

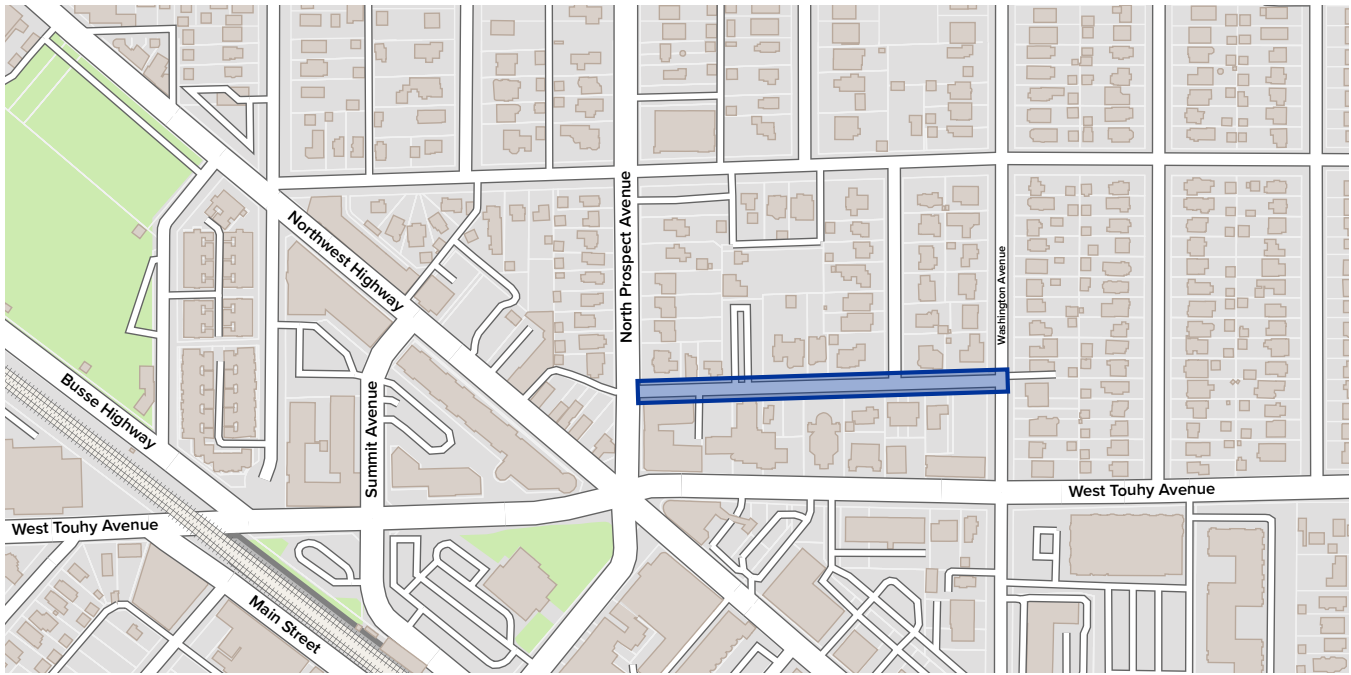


Figure 73: Grant Place



Figure 74: Grant Place

**KEEP HISTORIC CHARACTER**

Retain the existing character of Grant Place. This road is crucial to separating commercial and residential areas of Park Ridge, and changing it will influence the historic character of the community.

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON NORTHWEST HIGHWAY AND TOUHY, ON THE NORTHERN PERIMETER OF UPTOWN, SHOULD MINIMIZE THE EXISTING AUTOMOBILE CHARACTER AND CURB CUTS, AND PROMOTE AN ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE AND VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM ALLEYS



Figure 75: Mashpee Commons displaying various building setbacks



Figure 76: Mashpee Commons walkability



Figure 77: Mashpee Commons lit at night and presenting an inviting energy

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

MASHPEE COMMONS

Mashpee, MA

CONNECT STRUCTURE SETBACKS

Mashpee Commons exemplifies the usage of sidewalks to connect buildings of various setbacks from the street to promote economic growth with pedestrian walkability. Utilizing sidewalks to connect newer development with existing development dismisses the need for further construction to create uniformed setbacks. The upkeep of pedestrian pathways is crucial to improve quality of life and will assist in promoting walkability within Park Ridge.

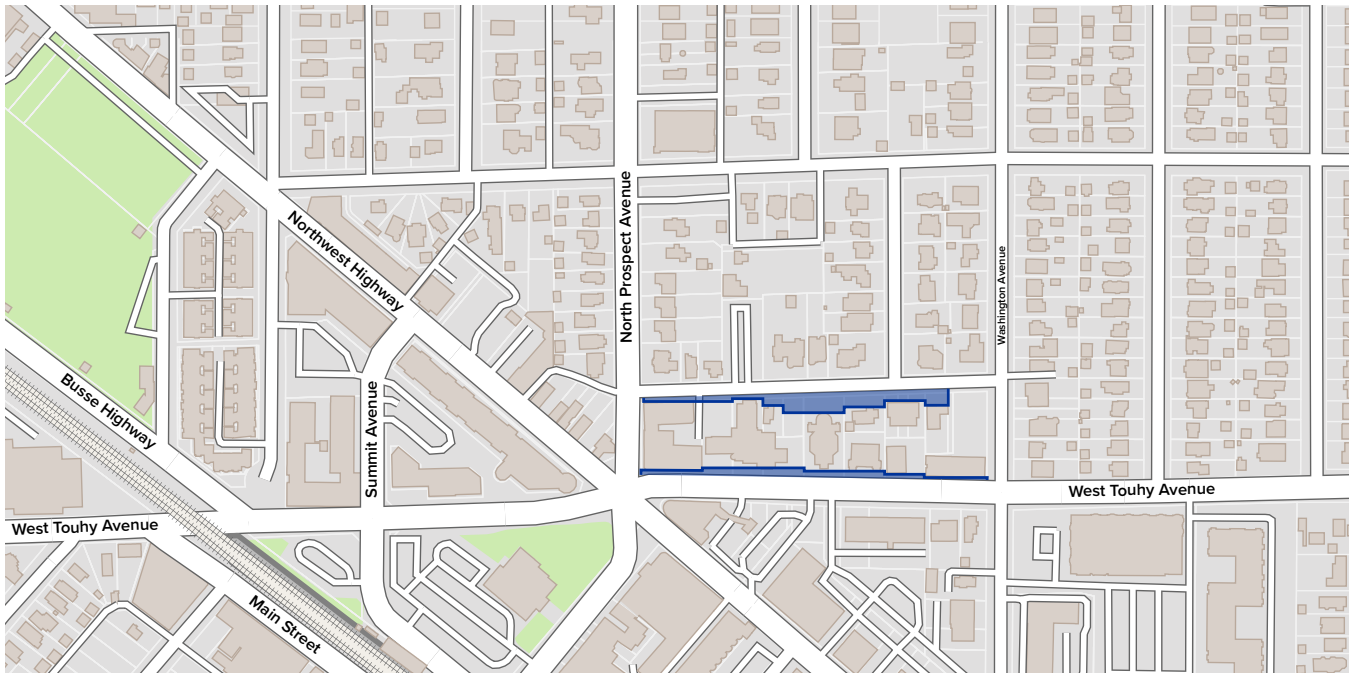


Figure 78: ■ Maintain front yard setbacks

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Current infrastructure along Touhy Avenue in Park Ridge presents various distances of setbacks, potentially eroding the image of small-town walkability.

### MAINTAINING SETBACKS

Connecting the infrastructure in Park Ridge will continue to promote pedestrian accessibility and create a cohesive walkability along Touhy Avenue. Utilizing the setback space between the existing sidewalk and the infrastructure along Touhy allows space for benches, a wider sidewalk promoting pedestrian safety, and additional foliage to increase community character.



Figure 79: Building setbacks along Touhy Avenue



Figure 80: Vegetation along Touhy Avenue



## PART 4.6 LIBRARY SITE

### INTRODUCTION

The library is an iconic, treasured place in the Park Ridge community. The Uptown Master Plan reaffirms the community's commitment to its current location. These goals and objectives also offer creative ideas to further enhance the library grounds through additional placemaking and investing in new gathering spaces. Evaluating the long-term use of the surface parking lots is a key consideration for the future too. These objectives also emphasize the pedestrian nature of the library's foot traffic and general location in Uptown.

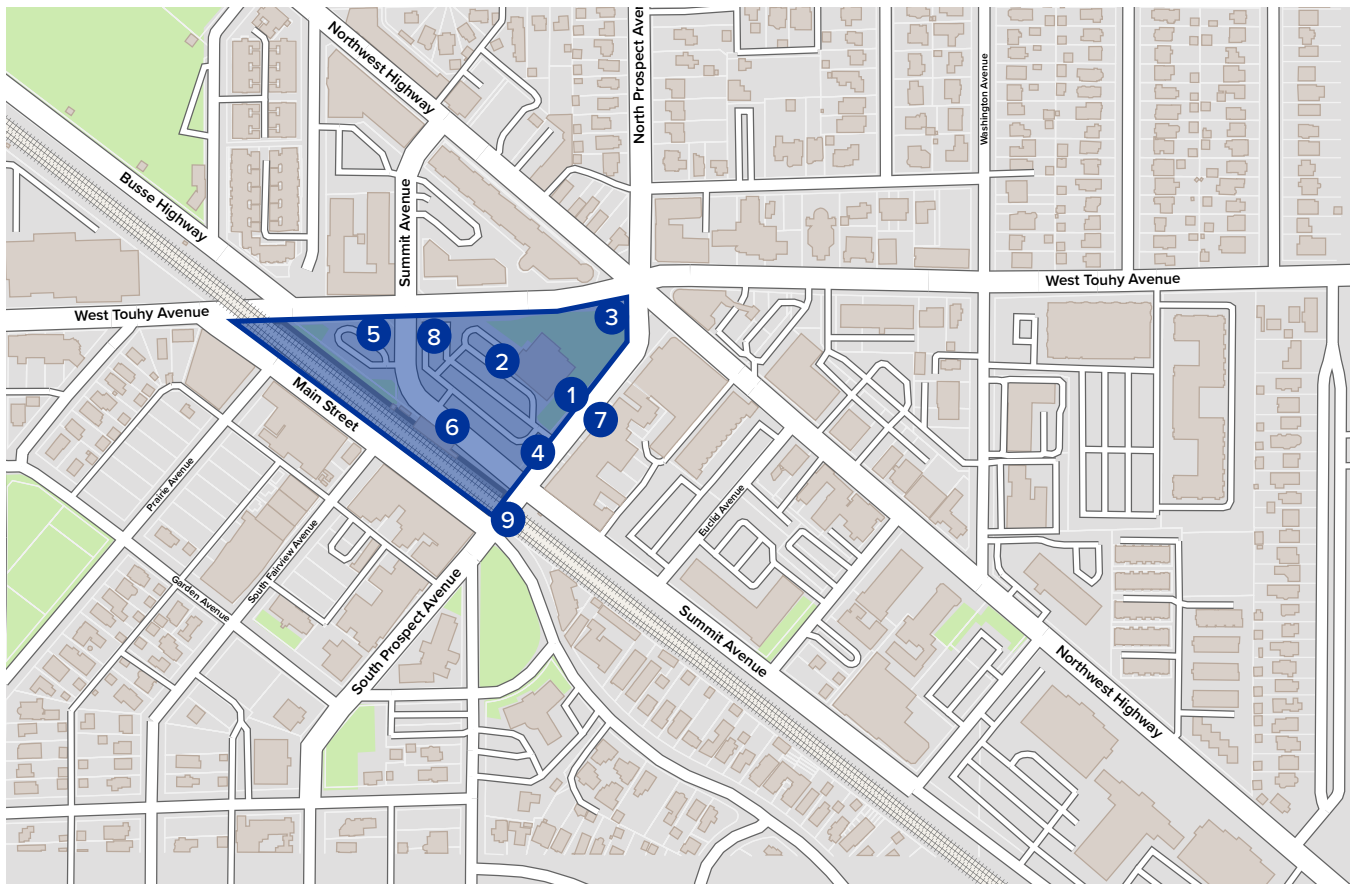



Figure 81:  Library Site goal and objectives locations

# LIBRARY SITE

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 The Uptown Master Plan reaffirms and commits to the present location of the library
- 2 Continue to partner and support the library as an important community center and foot-traffic driver for Uptown
- 3 Evaluate placemaking and activation strategies for the northeast corner of the library property (on the "Six Corners")
- 4 Evaluate the library grounds as a potential location for public art installation(s)
- 5 Research the triangle parking lot's viability as a potential redevelopment site and provide clear guidance to the real estate market on the City's goal with the parcel
- 6 Identify pedestrian-accommodating infrastructure on Summit, between the library property and Metra station, to provide a more welcoming and better-linked streetscape
- 7 Retain the mid-block crosswalk on Prospect, and identify pedestrian improvements at the Summit crosswalk "bump-out"
- 8 Continue to discuss the potential for a "library lawn" single-story structural deck concept
- 9 Assess the viability of the Summit and library parking lots as a location for additional community gatherings and special events



Figure 83: Unique swings located in Washington D.C.



Figure 82: Modern and characterizing swings identify a place

## CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

### PUBLIC SWINGS IN WASHINGTON D.C.

Washington D.C.  
Ongoing

### PLACEMAKING AT THE LIBRARY

Purple swings and interactive sculptures dot the Washington D.C. parks system. They frequently are paired with shade and other amenities and are adjacent to public buildings. They invite short and long term lounging for all ages. The inclusion of resting spots will encourage a city center in Park Ridge.



Figure 84: Public art in Mayfair, London characterizing the area



Figure 85: Art provides interactive aspect to the public

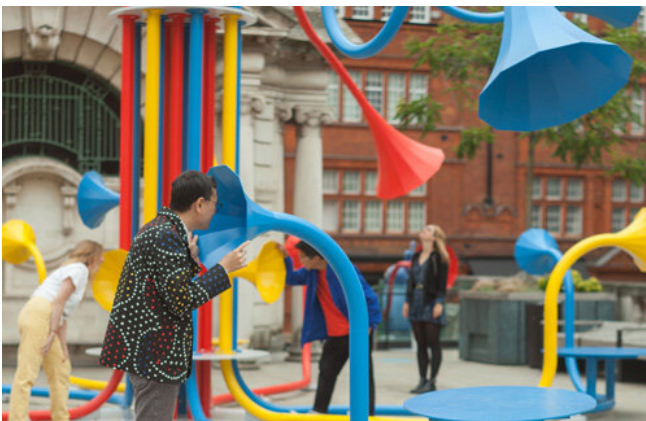


Figure 86: Interactive element of the Sonic Boom public art

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

**SONIC BOOM**

Mayfair, London  
2021

**PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS**

Designed by Yuri Suzuki, this multi-sensory installation was designed with the nature of communication in mind. The bold red, blue and yellow horns are modeled after blooming flowers. The exhibit amplifies the sounds of the city and is an interactive experience for those in the community.

IDENTIFY PEDESTRIAN-ACCOMMODATING INFRASTRUCTURE ON SUMMIT, BETWEEN THE LIBRARY PROPERTY AND METRA STATION, TO PROVIDE A MORE WELCOMING AND BETTER-LINKED STREETScape



Figure 87: Large and uniformed walkways in Mount Prospect

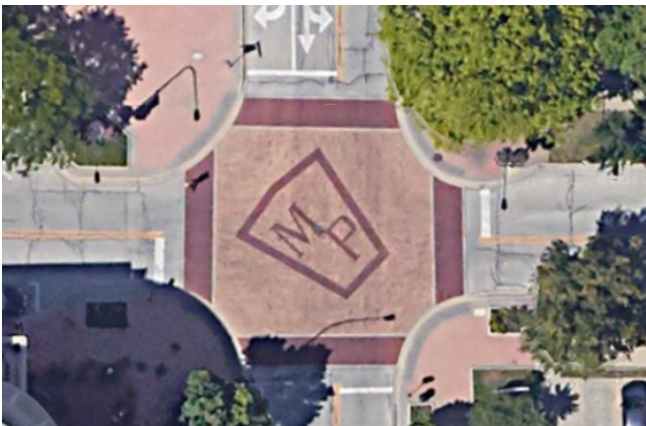


Figure 88: Mount Prospect logo placed on intersection to identify city

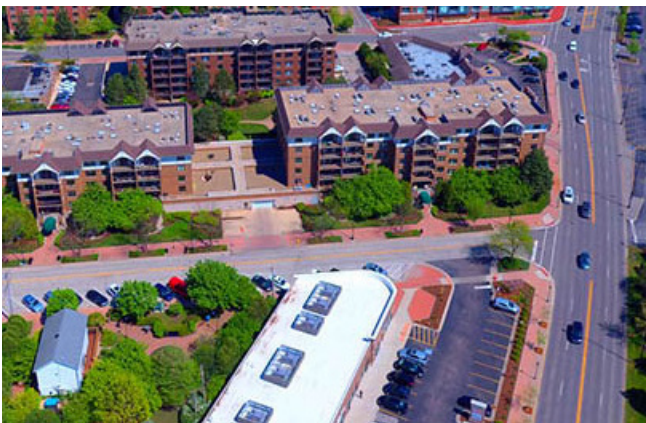


Figure 89: Abundance of wide walkways and tree coverage in Mount Prospect

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

MOUNT PROSPECT SIDEWALKS  
Mount Prospect, IL

CHARACTERIZING INFRASTRUCTURE

Pedestrian infrastructure in Mount Prospect, IL includes wide brick sidewalks to exhibit a sense of place and return the streets to the people. The uniformed sidewalk characterizes Mount Prospect with matching color and placing the city logo in select areas. The sidewalks are lined with trees, separating pedestrians from traffic to increase safety.

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

ZIEGLER PARK PARKING

Cincinnati, Ohio  
2017

GARAGE ROOFTOP PARK

Ziegler Park utilized the roof of the parking structure to create an area for leisure and reduce the amount of visible parking space. This idea can be utilized near the Park Ridge Metra station to provide more public green space.

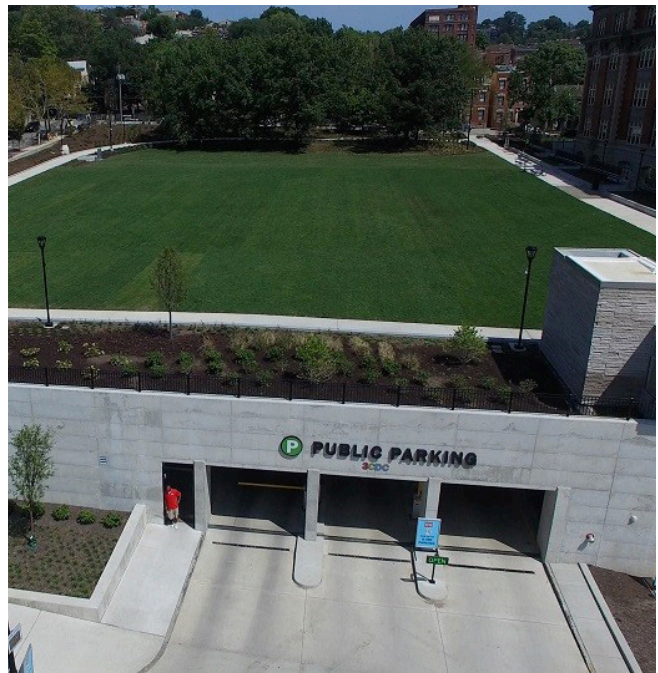
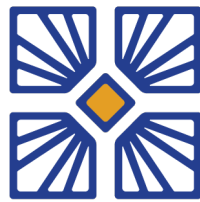


Figure 90: Structured parking at Ziegler Park in Cincinnati, Ohio



Figure 91: Potential Library lot structure concept



## PART 4.7 WASHINGTON & TOUHY

### INTRODUCTION

The eastern edge of Uptown is defined by the Whole Foods area and presents a diverse variety of both building types and land uses organized along Washington Avenue. The Uptown Master Plan provides goals and objectives that can help the area create more cohesion as it potentially redevelops, in future years. The plan recommends approaches regarding unified zoning, setbacks, streetscape, and transportation design. Further, the plan highlights that the area serves as a prominent entry-point and gateway to Uptown on both Touhy Avenue and Northwest Highway, which could be accentuated. The plan does not propose preemptive action by the City, but rather provides a framework to communicate-with, and respond-to, the real estate development community and property owners. The Washington Avenue corridor represents a critical area in Uptown to maintain and enhance the transition from multi-story, mixed-use real estate to single-family residential neighborhoods.

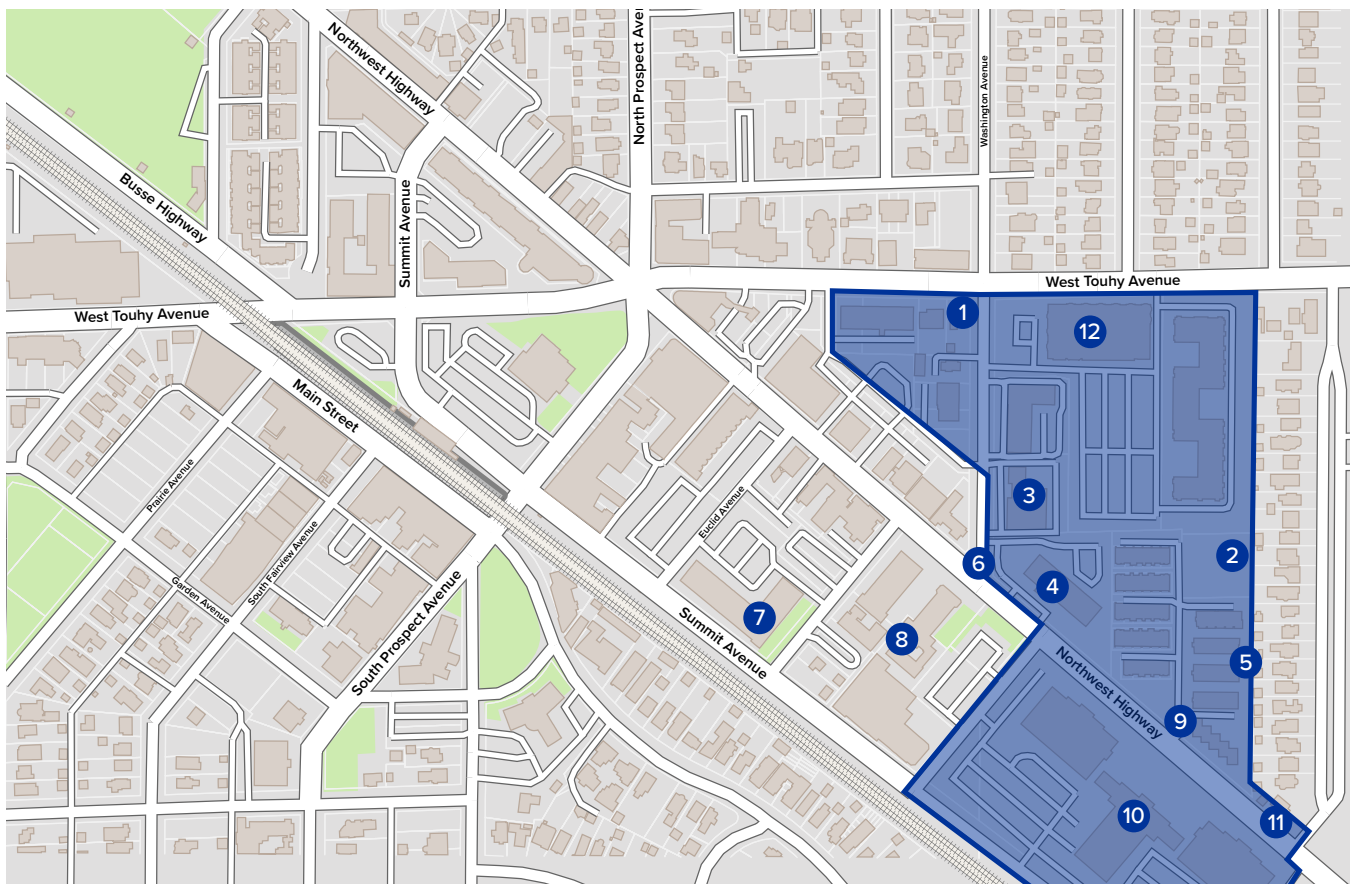


Figure 92. ■ Washington and Touhy goal and objectives locations

# WASHINGTON & TOUHY

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 Promote the potential for lot consolidation and cohesive redevelopment in the block on the southwest quadrant of Touhy and Washington
- 2 Proactively rezone the Office zoned (O) detention pond to the R-4 district located in the townhome development on Northwest Hwy, west of Berry Parkway (315 S. NW Highway)
- 3 Engage property owners of Office zoned (O) parcel at 101 South Washington (next to the Whole Foods lot) to potentially rezone to the B-1 district
- 4 In coordination with property owners of the Amita building and the City Attorney, evaluate any legal nonconformities with potentially rezoning that parcel to the B-1 district
- 5 Maintain the transitional land use planning and zoning approach as Uptown shifts from the “Six Corners” to the east, across Washington, into the single-family residences on Berry Parkway; the Uptown Master Plan affirms this zoning and this approach to managing land use transitions
- 6 Ensure through the P&Z Commission’s review and approval process that any future redevelopment and adaptive reuses on Washington are cohesively integrated into adjacent properties, as much as feasible
- 7 Maintain R-4 zoning of the Summit Condominium property
- 8 Maintain R-2 zoning for the St. Paul campus and church facilities, and maintain ongoing dialogue with the property owner about their intended long-term use of the site
- 9 Evaluate the Northwest Highway corridor for more prominent gateway signage into both Park Ridge and Uptown
- 10 Engage the property owners of the FM Global parcel about the long-term use of the site, including but not limited to:
  - Consider proactively re-zoning FM Global site to the B-4 district
  - Assess potentially splitting the parcels of the FM Global site to a blend of residential and commercial uses, distinguished by different zoning districts
  - Coordinate with any future developer of the FM Global site to consider the inclusion of new public gathering space as part of the property’s design and use
  - Evaluate parking supply and demand ratios at the FM Global site
- 11 Evaluate potential traffic calming measures on Northwest Highway upon entering Uptown from Chicago
- 12 As part of the City’s economic development program, directly coordinate with Whole Foods as the anchor and foot traffic generator for this portion of Uptown

PROMOTE THE POTENTIAL FOR LOT CONSOLIDATION AND COHESIVE REDEVELOPMENT IN THE BLOCK ON THE SOUTHWEST QUADRANT OF TOUHY AND WASHINGTON



Figure 93: Businesses and setbacks along Washington Avenue

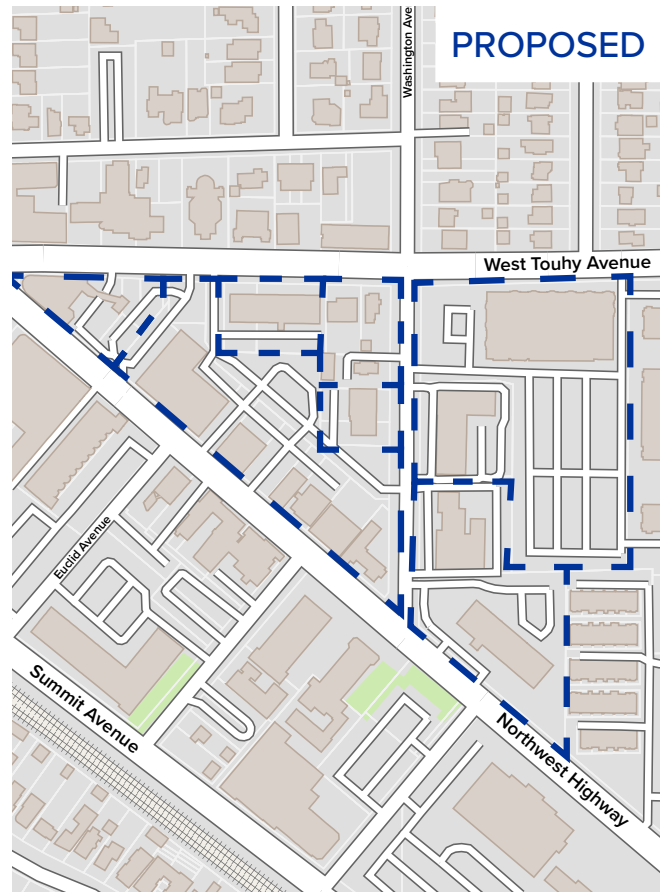
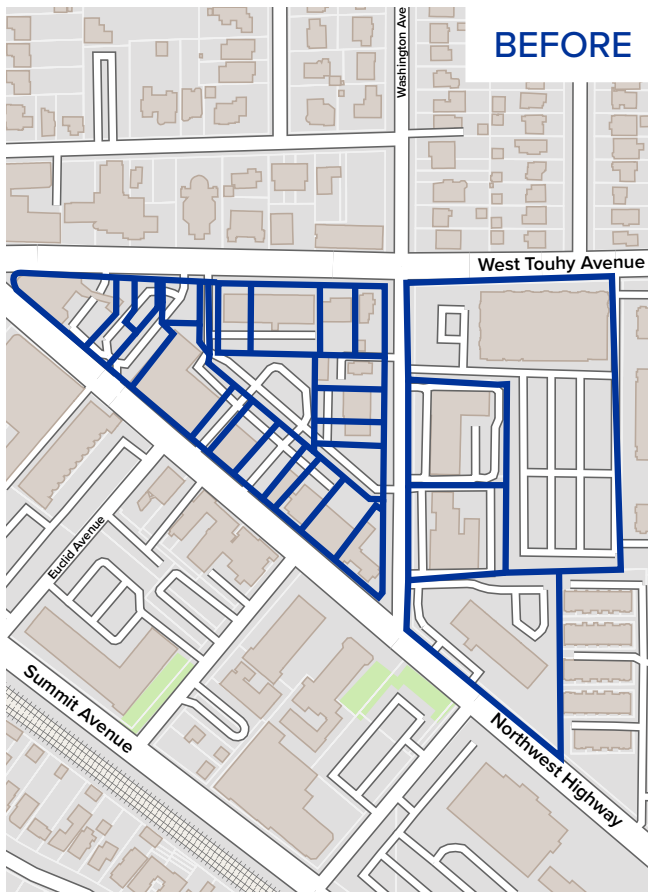


Figure 94: Before and after images of potential lot consolidation in the block on the southwest quadrant of Touhy and Washington

GOAL

2

PROACTIVELY REZONE THE OFFICE (O) ZONED DETENTION POND TO THE R-4 DISTRICT LOCATED IN THE TOWNHOME DEVELOPMENT ON NORTHWEST HWY, WEST OF BERRY PARKWAY



Figure 95: Detention pond

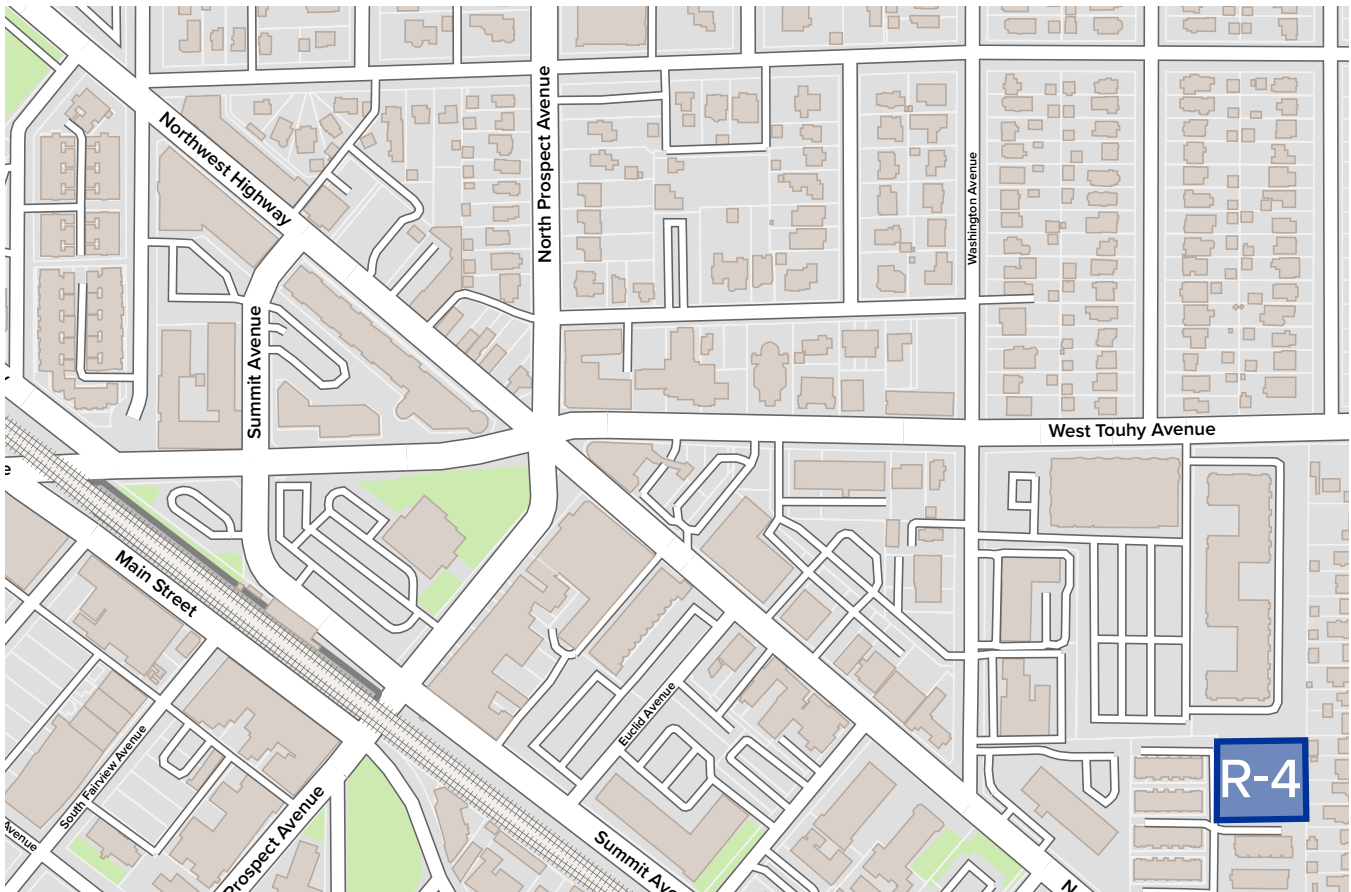


Figure 96:  Rezoning of the detention pond currently zoned as O to R-4

ENGAGE PROPERTY OWNERS OF OFFICE ZONED (O) PARCEL AT 101 SOUTH WASHINGTON TO POTENTIALLY REZONE TO THE B-1 DISTRICT



Figure 97: 101 S Washington

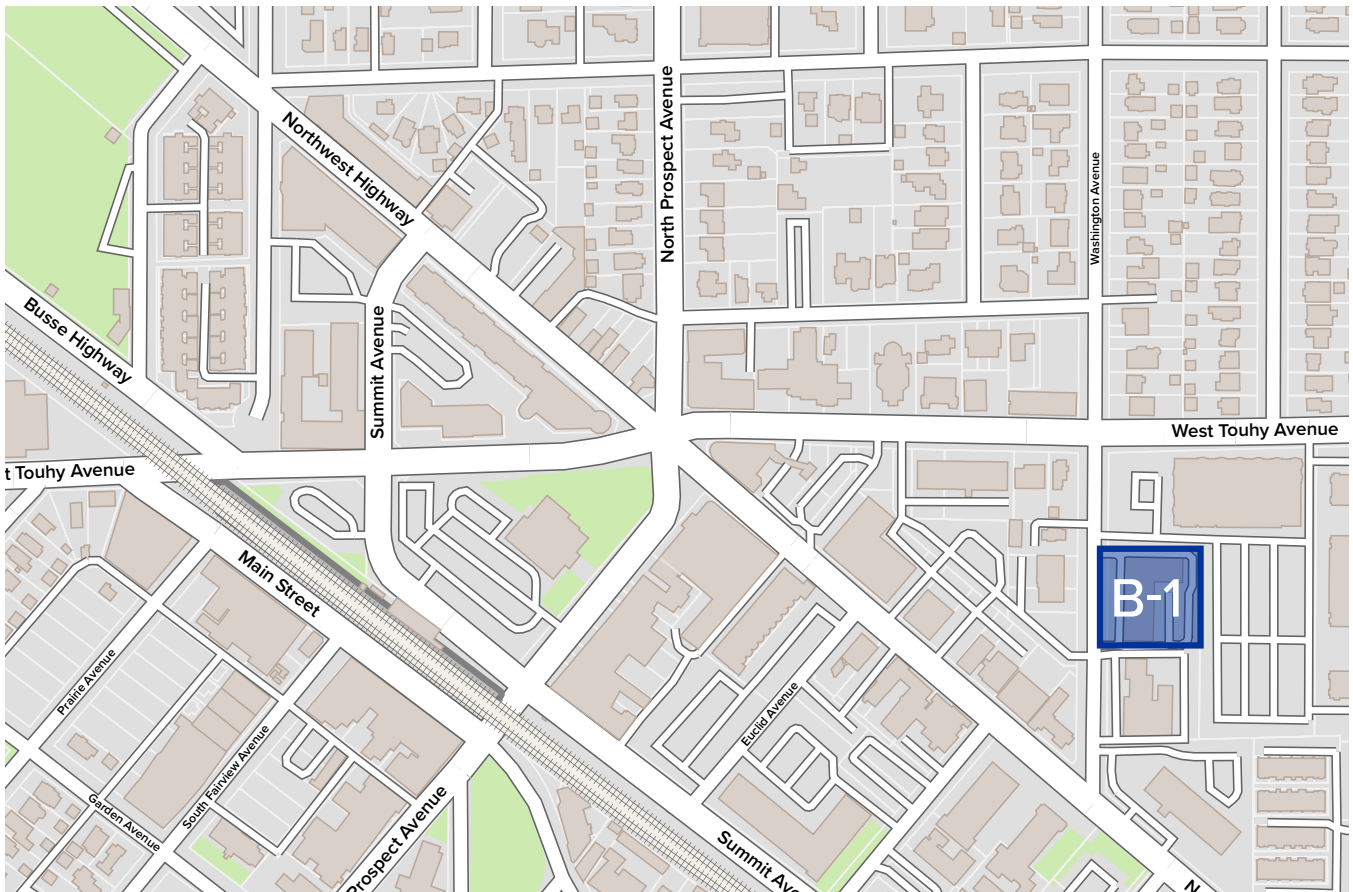


Figure 98: B-1 Rezoning of the outlet to B-1 to promote cohesive development

MAINTAIN THE TRANSITIONAL LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING APPROACH AS UPTOWN SHIFTS FROM THE “SIX CORNERS” TO THE EAST, ACROSS WASHINGTON, INTO THE SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES ON BERRY PARKWAY; THE UPTOWN MASTER PLAN AFFIRMS THIS ZONING AND THIS APPROACH TO MANAGING LAND USE TRANSITIONS

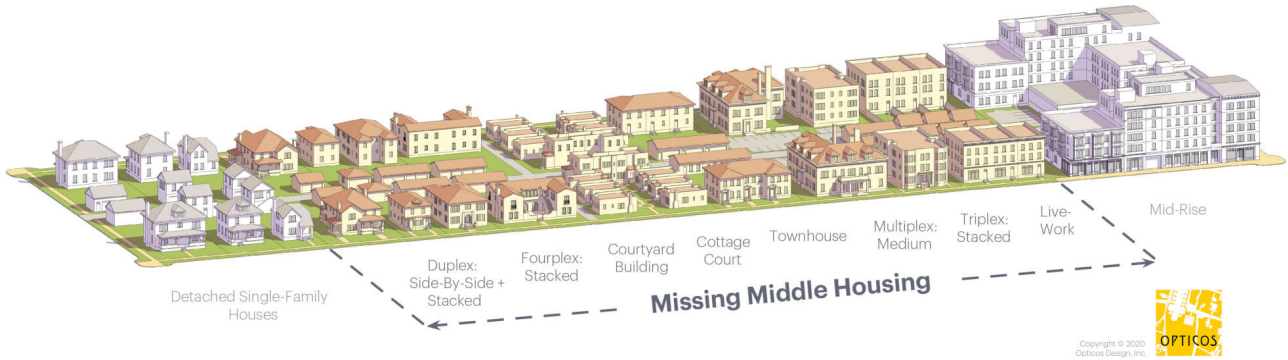


Figure 99: Missing middle housing

### MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Encourage transitional land use planning into residential zones to include the missing middle housing. The Uptown Master Plan affirms this zoning and this approach to managing land use transitions.

The City Council’s Affordable Housing Plan, adopted March 2024, provides further guidance on achieving housing goals in the Uptown district. Housing developments in Uptown can achieve a diversity of price points, dwelling unit product types, and age and stage of life needs.



Figure 100: Cottage court housing

EVALUATE POTENTIAL TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON NORTHWEST HIGHWAY UPON ENTERING UPTOWN FROM CHICAGO



Figure 101: Street calming opportunities

Project Results

SAFER DRIVING ON KEDZIE AVE

**↓ 90%** less people driving over 30 mph

POSITIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

“It’s beautiful. I’ve lived here for 30 years, and it gives [cyclists] their own space. There [was] very fast-moving traffic here on Kedzie.”

*Avondale resident*

Figure 102: Statistic from street calming project

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

NORTH KEDZIE AVENUE

Chicago, IL  
2023

MEASURES FOR CALMING TRAFFIC

The City of Chicago is implementing traffic calming measures and bike infrastructure to make the streets safer for all. Bike lanes are located between sidewalks and parking lanes to separate from traffic. Curbs are extended to slow cars and lessen crossing distance for pedestrians. Some intersections exhibit left turn traffic calming systems, raised curbs at the lane lines in the middle of the street to force left turning cars to slow down and make the turn properly and in the way safest for pedestrians.

GOAL

12

AS PART OF THE CITY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, DIRECTLY COORDINATE WITH WHOLE FOODS AS THE ANCHOR AND FOOT TRAFFIC GENERATOR FOR THIS PORTION OF UPTOWN



Figure 103: The Upton and Urban Greens area creating a community hub



Figure 104: Urban Greens



Figure 105: The Upton and Urban Greens aerial

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

THE UPTON AND URBAN GREENS

Providence, RI  
2019

BUILDING COMMUNITY HUBS

The Upton is located next to Urban Greens, a healthy source of food for the community. These two locations represent an opportunity to provide resources near residential units and create a community hub.



## PART 5 PLACEMAKING

Park Ridge’s Uptown district features a variety of architectural elements, rooflines, cupolas, and steeples that add considerable interest to the neighborhood’s character. Many contemporary buildings in the Chicago region, particularly multi-story structures that often feature mixed-uses in downtown areas, have been designed in methods where they appear as rectangular boxes. Park Ridge should be mindful of its tradition of vertical architectural elements and the role building design can play in placemaking as it reviews and approves future infill development.



# ARRIVAL BY TRAIN EXPERIENCE

## PARK RIDGE STATION STOP



Figure 106: Fencing along Metra Station lacking character and community identity



Figure 107: Infrastructure around Metra Station and parking



Figure 108: Wild foliage near Metra Station and parking

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Uptown planning process discussed the current conditions that create their arrival and characterized the sort-of “alley aesthetic” of Summit Avenue as trains depart the City of Chicago. The experience can feel like sliding in the hidden back door, rather than a ‘grand’ entrance through the main, front doors of the community. Further, the arrival at the station itself lacks any gateway welcoming presence, landmarks, or signage as folks enter Uptown and Park Ridge. Once passengers disembark and exit the station, those traveling north find bus stops and a large surface parking lot as their first steps into Park Ridge. Simply, the Master Plan proposes potential ways to elevate that Metra experience and enhance placemaking in the community.



Figure 109: Festoon lighting to bring welcoming character



Figure 110: Mural painted by residents to characterize a community



Figure 111: Custom Art Deco fencing to exhibit community identity



Figure 112: Flags along fencing to amplify color and identity

## PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

Investing in placemaking around the Metra Station will uniform the station to match the existing Park Ridge character. Art Deco fencing can be used with festoon lighting. Decorative lighting will influence the welcoming energy from the station and separate Park Ridge from others along the UP-NW Line. A mural painted by a local artist or residents will increase the sense of character and community of Park Ridge.



## PART 6 IMPLEMENTATION

The Uptown Master Plan provides a list of goals and objectives for Uptown’s development in the next ten (10) years. The implementation chart on the following pages serve as a guide for the work to come.

## INTRODUCTION

This plan acknowledges that the goals included will require further conversation and this document does not serve as approvals for any future project, but rather provides guidance on the City's standpoint for future development. City staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council will all be included in the process of implementation. While the following pages serve as a guide to the implementation process, some goals may change in prioritization as development arises.

## ADOPTION & PLAN USE

The Uptown Master Plan serves as a policy guide for the improvement and development of Uptown. The plan is intended to be used by City staff, elected, and appointed officials as a guide for land use development in Uptown. The plan should be used by staff to facilitate conversations not only among City Officials, but with residents and the development community. This plan should be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure implementation of the goals is carried out.

## ALIGN WITH OTHER CITY PLANS

The plan should work in conjunction with the City's Strategic Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and Affordable Housing Plan. The City's Strategic and Capital Improvement Plan should take into account the goals set forth in this document and use them as a roadmap for future projects within Uptown. This plan serves as a policy guide in the updating of the City's Strategic and Capital Improvement Plans.

## PROMOTE COOPERATION

The City of Park Ridge will require close coordination with other partners in the implementation of the Uptown Master Plan. A variety of other agencies, including but not limited to the Park Ridge Public Library, the Park Ridge Park District, and the Chamber of Commerce will play an integral role in the implementation of the plan goals. Maintaining the line of open communication amongst the organizations will promote cohesion in the implementation of the plan goals.

Certain goals may require or simply be more effectively implemented via intergovernmental efforts and joint planning initiatives. Neighboring communities such as the City of Chicago, Village of Niles, City of Des Plaines, and Cook County should be coordinated with when the City of Park Ridge is implementing Uptown Master Plan goals in the vicinity of their jurisdictions.

## HOW TO USE IMPLEMENTATION CHART

The goals and objectives are listed in the plan order and denoted with a distinction of whether they should be accomplished in the near, mid, or long-term. Near-term goals are items that the City expects to begin work on in the next two (2) to three (3) years. Mid-term in the next three (3) to five (5) years, and long-term in the next five (5) to ten (10) years.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The Uptown Master Plan will represent a chapter in the City's forthcoming Comprehensive Plan update. The City anticipates commencing that community planning process in 2025. The City last adopted a Comprehensive Plan that addressed all commercial districts and all future land uses in Park Ridge in 1996. Additional area planning regarding Uptown was adopted in 2005 as well as this Uptown Master Plan. This Uptown planning process commenced in 2023 and the public hearing was opened in 2024. The Comprehensive Plan will address land use and zoning for all districts in the entirety of the City of Park Ridge. The Uptown Master Plan addresses such policymaking specific to the Uptown district area and B-4 zoning district.



Figure 113: "Six Corners" intersection

## DISTRICT WIDE - LAND USE (PAGE 22)

NEAR MID LONG

1	Coordinate with the private real estate and development market to promote economic development opportunities in Uptown	●		
2	Emphasize and preserve Uptown's quaint charm and unique "small town" character as compared to other suburbs	●		
3	Re-affirm the need for subdistricts and the specific placement of those subdistricts; maintain the B-4 zoning district as unique to the character and built-form of Uptown	●		
4	Determine which parcels are part of Uptown and subsequently re-zone to B-4, as appropriate	●		
5	Evaluate the Planned Unit Development (PUD) requirements to allow for other types of projects to be eligible within Uptown (B-4)		●	
6	Continue to encourage a wide variety of housing types in the Uptown district	●		
7	Assess the demand for special event gathering spaces and plan for potential new locations and facilities	●		
8	Evaluate a potentially new overlay district for real estate parcels north of Touhy that would encourage lot consolidation and PUD opportunities, in order to avoid piecemeal investment		●	
9	The City could consider locations for a potential hotel site			●
10	Assess the need for a Public Art Plan		●	
11	Consider and incorporate the City's Affordable Housing Plan in future Uptown redevelopment in applicant cases and development decision making	●		

## DISTRICT WIDE - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PAGE 23)

NEAR MID LONG

12	Shop local and shop small efforts should be a defining character of Uptown and a primary economic development strategy	●		
13	Encourage and promote leveraging outdoor dining as a primary economic development driver of the Uptown District generally	●		
14	The City should partner and coordinate with the Park District, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmers Market, and other special event planning organizations to create a cohesive annual calendar of events within the Uptown District in a way that is sensitive to concerns about the high-frequency use of the streets, parks, open spaces, and other properties within the neighborhood. Events should be distributed and sequenced throughout the calendar year in a strategic manner	●		

15	Identify locations and integrate funding into the CIP budget for additional bike parking		●	
16	Improve pedestrian infrastructure and the crosswalks at the “Six Corners” intersection		●	
17	Examine the role of surface parking lots in future redevelopment in Uptown		●	
18	Evaluate the purpose and appropriate timeline for a parking management study that considers future growth over the next 10 years; such a parking plan should assess the balance between public and private parking in addressing future supply-and-demand needs	●		
19	Continue to prioritize CIP investments in existing transportation and utility infrastructure in Uptown among other citywide budget priorities		●	
20	Maintain a quality Metra station facility, and recruit a new tenant for the Metra station retail space	●		
21	Improve pedestrian infrastructure and multi-modal infrastructure and the crossing throughout Uptown	●		
22	Identify potential pedestrian environment improvements for both safety and comfort to balance walkers with vehicle and cyclist traffic at the Metra Station “H” Intersection		●	

1	Support appropriate infill redevelopment on the Main Street vacant parcels (#42 and #28) in the next 5 to 10 years	●		
2	Support a successful adaptive reuse development of the commercial space for 116 South Prospect		●	
3	Support the continued reinvestment and success of the Pickwick Theater as an important community amenity and Park Ridge landmark	●		
4	Preserve the quaint character of Uptown’s historic core (Main and Prospect corridors) while facing potential market force pressures to redevelop	●		
5	Implement preservation and zoning policies to retain the Main Street and South Prospect street walls, including evaluating a mandatory “build-to line” for property frontages	●		
6	Assess and amend existing zoning to better address infill bulk, mass, and height in the historic core; consider a new overlay subdistrict to establish desired built-form and manage incremental redevelopment in the new overlay subdistrict		●	
7	Invest in placemaking on-and-around the Metra station that clearly communicates riders have arrived in Park Ridge, and differentiates Uptown from Chicago as well as other NW corridor suburbs		●	
8	Identify potential locations and invest in “welcome to Park Ridge” gateway signage, including signage that welcomes Metra riders		●	
9	Represent Park Ridge’s interests and participate in regional conversations to support Metra transit service		●	
10	Consider landmarking Hodges Park			●
11	Establish a long-term vision, plan, and design for the Main Street outdoor dining area	●		
12	Identify investments and improvements to the pedestrian areas at the Prospect railroad crossing that addresses both mobility and safety		●	
13	Maintain the existing streetscape infrastructure on Prospect and look to expand such placemaking to Main, Hodges Park, Courtland, Vine, and the general vicinity		●	
14	Factor Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as a consideration in future real estate project reviews in Uptown, including but not limited to reviewing parking requirements		●	
15	Analyze the capacity and appropriate frequency of use for Hodges Park as a special events location, including coordinating with the Park Ridge Park District	●		
16	Evaluate the potential for an updated park master plan for Hodges Park, in coordination with the Park Ridge Park District	●		

**PROSPECT & MAIN (PAGE 35)**

NEAR MID LONG

17	Actively coordinate with owner of Uptown Development to address vacancies in their Uptown property, with particular emphasis on the “corner spot” at the "Six Corners", in roles appropriate for a municipality	●		
18	Pursue a public mural along the Metra station retaining wall on Main Street			●
19	Identify signage, wayfinding, lighting, and other placemaking strategies to highlight the pedestrian crossing opportunity at Metra station platform between the Library parking lots and businesses on Main and Fairview		●	

**SUMMIT & EUCLID (PAGE 40)**

NEAR MID LONG

1	If the Summit & Euclid parking lot is redeveloped, that real estate project should be the catalyst to upgrade and enhance Euclid Avenue as a street, including improving the pedestrian environment			●
2	In the near-term, the City should evaluate potential infrastructure improvements to improve pedestrian safety in the general Summit & Euclid parking lot vicinity	●		
3	Commit to a City policy that any redevelopment that incorporates the Summit & Euclid parking lot must provide for the same number, or net increase, in public parking as well as meet its own additional private parking needs	●		
4	The City could discuss a potential RFP process to solicit public-private partnerships for the redevelopment of the Summit & Euclid parking lot; such a development would transition the land to a tax-contributing real estate site, instead of a public parking lot	●		

1	Maintain the importance of Garden Street as a transition from Uptown to single-family residential areas	●		
2	Plan for and manage development on South Prospect, south of Garden, in a manner that appropriately transitions from Uptown zoning to single-family residential areas	●		
3	Proactively rezone a number of parcels to more appropriate Uptown zoning that aligns with the City’s vision of redevelopment for this area and evaluate the following properties:	●		
	a. Potentially rezone the Fairview Avenue B-1 parcels to B-4	●		
	b. Potentially rezone the Prairie Avenue parcels (R-2) to either B-4 or R-4	●		
	c. Potentially rezone the BJB buildings/Main Street B-1 properties to B-4	●		
	d. Potentially rezone the Fairview and Garden (AANA overflow parking) to support development (mixed-use, residential, townhomes)	●		
4	The Uptown Master Plan acknowledges the existing height of the AT&T building within the likelihood of a future proposed adaptive re-use, but emphasizes the importance of maintaining the 40-foot height restriction for any other redevelopment in the vicinity	●		
5	As redevelopment occurs and surface parking lots south of the track are eliminated, the City should address long-term parking and circulation management strategies in this portion of Uptown	●		
6	Assess yard and bulk requirements for properties on Prairie Avenue to preserve the transition between Uptown and single-family residential properties	●		
7	As a desired outcome of the plan, establish that the City’s vision is the Fairview and Prairie blocks are part of the Uptown district, and should redevelop as mixed-use, multi-story properties	●		
8	Consider a potential RFP process to solicit a public-private partnership for the City-owned parking lot on Prairie; any potential redevelopment must maintain, or increase, public parking		●	
9	Encourage and promote the adaptive re-use of the existing AT&T building that provides greater foot traffic and vibrancy to the Uptown District		●	
10	Encourage and promote continued re-investment in the former AANA headquarters (222 South Prospect) in a manner that is compatible with the adjacent single-family housing		●	
11	Collaborate with the Park District to create a master plan for the future use of Cumberland Park as the area redevelops and use of the facility increases	●		

## GARDEN, FAIRVIEW, & PRAIRIE (PAGE 45)

NEAR MID LONG

12	Engage in conversations of Cumberland Park's use as a potential special events space in conjunction with a potential Master Plan for Hodges Park	●		
13	The former vacant AANA lot (113 South Fairview), zoned R-2, should remain zoned R-2 and be redeveloped as a single-family house	●		
14	The City should partner with the private property owners of the landmark property (720 Garden) and celebrate its importance in the Uptown district	●	●	

## TOUHY & NORTHWEST HIGHWAY (PAGE 48)

NEAR MID LONG

1	Assist the property owner (127-157 N NW Hwy. building) in strategies that encourage reinvestment in the building, including the retention and recruitment of tenants; the property could consider historic preservation incentives as one such strategy	●		
2	Evaluate preserving and landmarking the original Carnegie library building at the "Six Corners"		●	
3	Retain B-4 zoning at the corner (432 West Touhy building) and any future structure should relate to the "Six Corners" intersection at that site, in regards to orientation, architectural form, and real estate function		●	
4	Assess rezoning the entire block on Touhy, from Prospect to Washington, to the R-4 district		●	
5	Plan for, review, and approve any potential redevelopment on Touhy in a manner that diminishes the transformation of Grant Place's character into an alley function			●
6	Maintain front yard setbacks and vegetation buffering along Touhy in the area's urban design		●	
7	Ensure infill redevelopment on the north side of Northwest Highway and Touhy relates to the street, and locates parking to the rear (north of the structure as much as possible through site design)	●		
8	Redevelopment projects on Northwest Highway and Touhy, on the northern perimeter of Uptown, should minimize the existing automobile character and curb-cuts, and promote an enhanced pedestrian experience and vehicular access from alleys	●		
9	Invest in placemaking that recognizes the North Prospect/Washington/Touhy intersections as major gateway entry points to Uptown		●	

		NEAR	MID	LONG
1	The Uptown Master Plan reaffirms and commits to the present location of the library	●		
2	Continue to partner and support the library as an important community center and foot-traffic driver for Uptown	●		
3	Evaluate placemaking and activation strategies for the northeast corner of the library property (on the "Six Corners")		●	
4	Evaluate the library grounds as a potential location for public art installation(s)		●	
5	Research the triangle parking lot's viability as a potential redevelopment site and provide clear guidance to the real estate market on the City's goal with the parcel		●	
6	Identify pedestrian-accommodating infrastructure on Summit, between the library property and Metra station, to provide a more welcoming and better-linked streetscape	●		
7	Retain the mid-block crosswalk on Prospect, and identify pedestrian improvements at the Summit crosswalk "bump-out"	●		
8	Continue to discuss the potential for a "library lawn" single-story structural deck concept			●
9	Assess the viability of the Summit and library parking lots as a location for additional community gatherings and special events	●		

1	Promote the potential for lot consolidation and cohesive redevelopment in the block on the southwest quadrant of Touhy and Washington		●	
2	Proactively rezone the Office zoned (O) detention pond to the R-4 district located in the townhome development on Northwest Hwy, west of Berry Parkway (315 S. NW Highway)		●	
3	Engage property owners of Office zoned (O) parcel at 101 South Washington (next to the Whole Foods lot) to potentially rezone to the B-1 district		●	
4	In coordination with property owners of the Amita building and the City Attorney, evaluate any legal nonconformities with potentially rezoning that parcel to the B-1 district		●	
5	Maintain the transitional land use planning and zoning approach as Uptown shifts from the “Six Corners” to the east, across Washington, into the single-family residences on Berry Parkway; the Uptown Master Plan affirms this zoning and this approach to managing land use transitions	●		
6	Ensure through the P&Z Commission’s review and approval process that any future redevelopment and adaptive reuses on Washington are cohesively integrated into adjacent properties, as much as feasible	●		
7	Maintain R-4 zoning of the Summit Condominium property	●		
8	Maintain R-2 zoning for the St. Paul campus and church facilities, and maintain ongoing dialogue with the property owner about their intended long-term use of the site	●		
9	Engage the property owners of the FM Global parcel about the long-term use of the site, including but not limited to:	●		
	a. Consider proactively re-zoning FM Global site to the B-4 district		●	
	b. Assess potentially splitting the parcels of the FM Global site to a blend of residential and commercial uses, distinguished by different zoning districts		●	
	c. Coordinate with any future developer of the FM Global site to consider inclusion of new public gathering space as part of the property’s design and use		●	
	d. Evaluate parking supply and demand ratios at the FM Global site		●	
10	Evaluate the Northwest Highway corridor for more prominent gateway signage into both Park Ridge and Uptown		●	
11	Evaluate potential traffic calming measures on Northwest Highway upon entering Uptown from Chicago		●	
12	As part of the City’s economic development program, directly coordinate with Whole Foods as the anchor and foot traffic generator for this portion of Uptown		●	



## **PART 7 APPENDIX 1 MEETING MEMORANDUMS**

The following page provides links to Planning & Zoning Commission meetings that included conversations about the Uptown Master Plan. The links will provide access to memorandums provided to the Commission, presentations made by staff and FARR Associates, and the meeting video.

## 2022

[August 9, 2022](#)

[October 12, 2022](#)

[October 25, 2022](#)

[December 13, 2022](#)

## 2023

[January 24, 2023](#)

[April 25, 2023](#)

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[July 11, 2023](#)

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[November 14, 2023](#)

[December 12, 2023](#)

## 2024

[January 16, 2024](#)

[February 27, 2024](#)

[April 9, 2024](#)

[August 27, 2024](#)

[October 15, 2024](#)

[October 29, 2024](#)

[December 10, 2024](#)

## 2025

[January 14, 2025](#)

[January 28, 2025](#)

[February 11, 2025](#)

If this plan is being reviewed in a paper format, the meeting information can be found by going to the Park Ridge website through the Agenda and Minutes page ([parkridge.us/your\\_government/agenda\\_and\\_minutes/index.php](http://parkridge.us/your_government/agenda_and_minutes/index.php))



## PART 7 APPENDIX 2 GLOSSARY

The definitions are provided for convenience. Please reference the current edition of the [Zoning Code](#) for all legal definitions.

## **ADAPTIVE REUSE**

Repurposing and modifying existing buildings or structures for new uses, while preserving their historical, cultural, or architectural value.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Affordable owner-occupied housing as that which costs no more than 30% of the household income for a household with a gross household income that does not exceed 80% of the area median household income. The City's Affordable Housing Plan, adopted March 2024, can be found [here](#).

## **BUFFER**

A designated area of land, typically planted with vegetation or left undeveloped, used to separate and mitigate potential conflicts between different land uses, such as residential and industrial zones.

## **BUILT-FORM**

Built-form is the three-dimensional arrangement of buildings, streets, and open spaces that make up a place. It includes the shape, size, and function of buildings, as well as how they relate to each other and the surrounding area.

## **CATALYST**

A project, development, or intervention that stimulates or accelerates broader economic, social, or environmental change within a community or area.

## **CIP INVESTMENTS**

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Investments outlines and prioritizes funding for long-term infrastructure projects, such as roads, buildings, and utilities, to improve community assets and services.

## **CIVIC INSTITUTIONS**

Organizations or structures that serve the public good, such as schools, libraries, government buildings, and community centers, supporting the social, cultural, and political life of a community.

## **CORRIDORS**

Major vehicular and railroad routes through the city.

## **FACADE**

Exterior front face of a building. Part of a building (facing a street, courtyard, and so on); usually the most ornate elevation.

## **MASTER PLAN**

A comprehensive, long-term planning document that outlines the vision, goals, and strategies for the development and growth of the City.

## **MISSING MIDDLE**

The gap in the housing market for medium-density options, like duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses.

## **MIXED-USE**

A development or building that has more than one use or purpose.

## **MULTI-MODAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

A transportation system that integrates various modes of transport—such as cars, buses, trains, bicycles, and pedestrians—into a cohesive network, allowing seamless movement between them to improve accessibility, efficiency, and sustainability.

## **NEW URBANISM**

An urban design movement that promotes walkable, mixed-use communities with a focus on sustainable development, community engagement, and reducing reliance on cars.

## **OVERLAY DISTRICT**

A zoning tool that applies additional regulations or requirements on top of the base zoning for a specific area, often to address unique environmental, historic, or cultural concerns.

## **PARKLET**

A small, public space created by repurposing a portion of a street or parking area, often featuring seating, greenery, and amenities.

## **PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Features that make it safer and easier for people to walk (such as sidewalks, crosswalks, curb extensions, and pedestrian signals)

## **PIECEMEAL INVESTMENT**

An incremental approach to funding and developing projects, often without a comprehensive, long-term strategy or coordination.

## **PLACEMAKING**

Designing and enhancing public spaces to create vibrant, functional, and inclusive environments that foster community engagement and identity.

## **PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD)**

A zoning approach that allows for a mix of land uses and flexible design standards within a specific area, promoting more efficient use of space and integrated communities.

## **PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

A local government body responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on land use, zoning regulations, and development proposals to ensure they align with community goals and policies.

## **PUBLIC REALM**

Spaces and areas that are accessible to all members of the community.

## **PUBLIC SPACES**

These include neighborhood streets, boulevards, parks, open spaces, religious and other institutional open space areas.

## **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

A long-term agreement between a government and a private entity that combines public and private resources to improve public services or manage public assets.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

A formal bidding document that outlines the requirements for a project and the desired services.

## **“SENSE OF PLACE”**

The unique character, identity, and emotional connection that people feel towards a specific location, shaped by its physical, cultural, and social attributes.

## **SETBACKS**

Per the City’s Zoning Ordinance, a setback is the minimum distance by which any building or structure must be separated from a property line.

## **"SIX CORNERS"**

The intersection in Uptown between Prospect Avenue, Northwest Highway, and Touhy Avenue.

## **STREETSCAPE**

Architectural forms, details, materials, colors, signs, and street furniture that are orchestrated to create characteristics of a street scene.

## **SUBDISTRICT**

A smaller, defined area within a larger planning jurisdiction, designed with specific land use and zoning regulations to address local needs and characteristics.

## **SUBSIDIZED**

Financial support provided by the government or other entities to reduce the cost of services or infrastructure, making them more affordable or accessible to the public.

## **TAX-INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)**

A funding mechanism that uses the future increase in tax revenues generated by new development to finance infrastructure improvements or revitalization within a designated district.

## **THIRD PLACE**

A social setting outside of home (first place) and work (second place) where people gather, interact, and build community, such as cafes, parks, or libraries.

## **TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)**

Urban development that mixes land uses like residential, retail, and office around public transit.

## **URBAN DESIGN**

The process of shaping the physical layout, appearance, and functionality of urban spaces while integrating elements like architecture, infrastructure, public spaces, and transportation to create livable, sustainable, and enjoyable environments.

## **URBAN PLANNING**

The process of designing and organizing the development and use of land, infrastructure, and resources in urban areas to create sustainable, functional, and livable communities.

## **WALKABILITY**

An area that exhibits safe walking infrastructure, such as sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and proximity to amenities.

## **WAYFINDING**

Signs, maps, signals, and design elements that guide people to navigate through spaces and locations.

## **ZONING**

The division of land into distinct districts or zones, each with specific regulations governing land use, building types, densities, and other development controls to guide urban growth and ensure orderly development.

## **ZONING ORDINANCE**

A local law that regulates land use and development by dividing a municipality into zones with specific rules for building types, density, and other land-use activities.



**PART 7  
APPENDIX 3  
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All other figures created by Farr Associates, 2025.



UPTOWN MASTER PLAN

THE CITY OF PARK RIDGE, IL