



Village of
University Park
TOD PLAN

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

University Park TOD Plan update is the culmination of a planning process that included participation by Village leadership, residents and business owners. Many stakeholders volunteered their time to attend interviews and community meetings. We would especially like to recognize the involvement of individuals listed below for their guidance throughout the process:

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PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Village of University Park in partnership with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) prepared this TOD Plan for the area surrounding the existing Metra Station. This Plan builds-off the 2002 TOD Plan recommendations, and identifies economic development opportunities associated with local real estate market trends, significant federal investment in the Metra Electric train station and parking upgrades.

SCB led and managed this plan update with the RTA and received local guidance and input from Village leadership. The primary goal of this TOD plan update is to encourage transit oriented development, improve local economy and strengthen community core assets. This plan proposes to leverage the Metra Station infrastructure improvements as well as Metra and Pace services to enhance multimodal connectivity and roadway safety in University Park and area surrounding the station.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan provides a unique opportunity to support economic development that will positively transform the ½ mile area surrounding the University Park Metra Station, and specifically the 77 acres of vacant land on the east side of station into a sustainable Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

sewer, power, and road infrastructure that is coordinated with development phases. The Village of University Park is actively working to expand the utilities in this area, identifying funding resources, and approaches towards implementation with the appropriate utility providers.

A cohesive district is designed with complimentary land uses including a variety of residential, mixed-use, and commercial buildings with an interconnected open space network. The plan incorporates the existing landscape and conditions that takes advantage of the natural stormwater, drainage patterns on site, creating inviting recreational amenities for the local community.

The street network is planned to support automobiles, transit, bikes, and pedestrians with connections to the nearby Governors State University, Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve, Gateway Industrial Park, and University Park Town Center.

This plan envisions a new and exciting district adjacent to the train station that will attract people and businesses into the Village. Continued collaboration between Governors State University (GSU), businesses in Industrial Park, Metra, Pace and the Village are vital for the success of this plan.

The implementation of this plan will require on-going planning and construction of water,



Aerial View of Proposed TOD Plan



Nathan Manilow Sculture Park, GSU

UNIVERSITY PARK OVERVIEW

The Village of University Park is located in the northeastern part of Will County, with a small portion in Cook County. The Village offers a healthy environment to live which can be attributed to its natural open space, close-knit community, and educational facilities.

The Village is home to Governors State University (GSU), a significant public university with 5,000 students and 1,000 employees. In 2014, GSU transitioned from a 2-year to a 4-year program offering bachelors and masters programs.

The geographic location of University Park is key to its economic growth and success. The village is well served by highways and is 50 miles from O'Hare Airport, 40 miles from Downtown Chicago, and 30 miles from Midway Airport.

The location of the Metra Station adjacent to the Industrial Park and Governors State University is beneficial for people commuting to and from work and the University.

The opening of the I-57 / Stuenkel Road Interchange in 2015 created direct access to Chicagoland from the Gateway Industrial Park, which is located in Will County and offers lower tax rates compared to neighboring Cook County. As a result, Gateway Industrial Park has attracted growing companies like Amazon and Carvana who are building large distribution facilities, and transforming the Industrial

Park into a regional distribution and transportation hub.

This economic growth has also attracted retail and commercial developments along the Stuenkel Road to provide services to businesses and their employees.

University Park has current population of 7,145. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) projects a population growth of 10,793 by the year of 2050.*

The Village's projected population growth could be attributed to the significant numbers of new jobs that are being created in Industrial Park and the anticipated housing demand. To accommodate employer growth and rising housing needs, the Village is actively seeking workforce housing, retail, and commercial development to meet current and future demand.

** This information is as per CMAP Population Forecasts 2020-2050 (updated in October 2022). The previous forecast (adopted in October 2018) projected the population growth of 20,000, which is used in Real Estate Market Analysis.*



Governors State University

UNIVERSITY PARK HISTORY

University Park was founded as part of the New Communities Movement in 1967, as an extension of Park Forest and was originally named Park Forest South. The development trends from this time period which are evident in University Park include:

- Establishing residential neighborhoods that are connected to civic uses via a network of pedestrian pathways.
- Land uses and employment centers that are separated geographically.
- A defined employment center for business and light industrial uses.
- Arterial roadway system that connects major land uses with limited secondary roads.
- Significant mass transit options serving the community

In 1969 Governors State University was established on 750 acres within the newly named Village of University Park, and the Manilow Sculpture Park was developed to compliment the vision for this new community. The ideals of new community planning supported the assembly of substantial forest preserves with naturalized wetlands, and prairies to support a high quality of life.

During the 1970's, the Illinois Central Railroad agreed to extend the train line south to University Park based on a population growth projection of 100,000 which

unfortunately never materialized. With a population of 7,145* residents today, University Park has not achieved its anticipated potential.

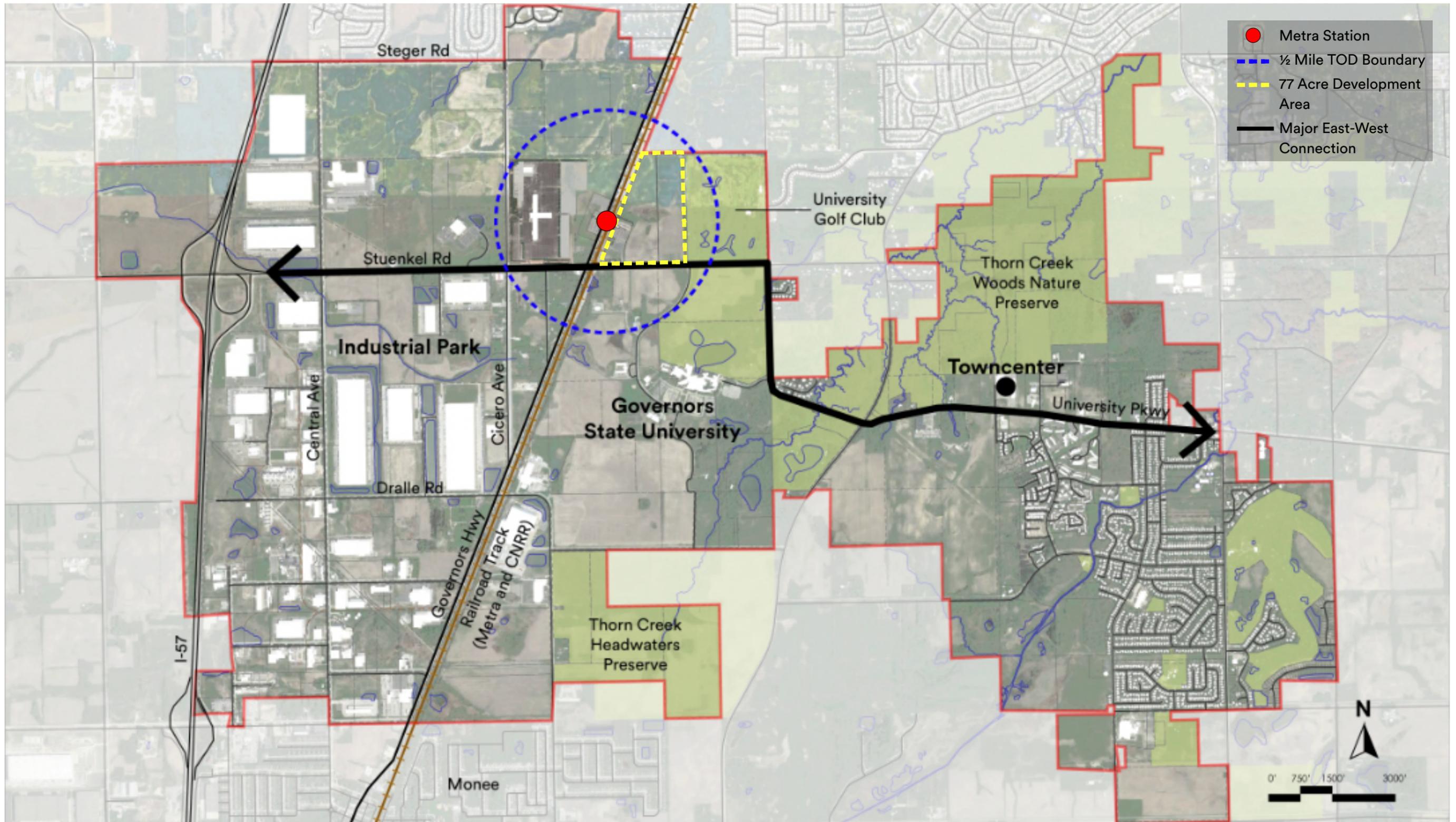
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

University Park faces many of the trends of outer ring and south-western suburbs. The market study indicates that University Park is well positioned to capture workforce housing growth that can support the rapid employment growth with the Gateway Industrial Park and expanding logistics industries.

The east-side of the Metra Station area is a greenfield site and provides a significant opportunity to develop a wide range of housing products and price points, that will be the foundation of a new transit-oriented neighborhood. With the new I-57 Stuenkel interchange, University Park's industrial base has experienced significant growth and is a major employment center in Will County, where the taxes are lower.

Post Covid-19 pandemic, Governors State University (GSU) enrollment numbers have continued to grow, and the University embarked on a campus master plan which identifies an increase of on-campus housing and potentially off-campus housing for students, faculty and staff. Ongoing coordination with the Village regarding convenient access to the train station for pedestrians, bikes, shuttles, and automobiles is important to the University.

** This information is as per U.S. Census Bureau's population estimate from April 1, 2020*



University Park Overview

UNIVERSITY PARK TOD PLAN

University Park Metra Station is served by the Metra Electric commuter rail service. It is terminus station on this line and therefore attracts a wider reach of commuters from points further south than a typical rail station.

The station is located on the east side of Governors Highway, near Stuenkel Road. It is an at-grade station, with a center platform between the train tracks. The rail platform is accessed via pedestrian tunnels from parking lots on both sides of Governors Highway. In addition, Canadian National Rail Road (CNRR) track is adjacent to the west-side of the Metra track. CNRR does not provide passenger rail service and continues south.

Average weekday boarding at the station fell from 907 in 2016 to 808 in 2018 . 80% of these passengers were driving alone to access the station. The station is also served by Pace Bus 367, which connects Metra, GSU, Town Center, Orchard Park Plaza and downtown Park Forest. Potential exists to increase multimodal access to the station as well as ridership with support of this TOD Plan.

The RTA University Park TOD Plan builds off the 2002 TOD Plan and the 2014 Comprehensive Plan to create a vision for transportation, land use, housing, economic growth, and the natural environment around the Metra Station. This plan considers area within a half-mile radius of the station, a standard 10-minute walk distance as defined by the Federal Transportation Administration

The TOD Plan will identify potential new development on the vacant parcels surrounding the station, which will best serve the needs and goals of the community.

(FTA) for transit oriented development. This proposal will provide opportunities for equitable development to address demand for affordable, mixed income and market rate housing. It will also support retail, commercial, and public activities for both Village residents and students.

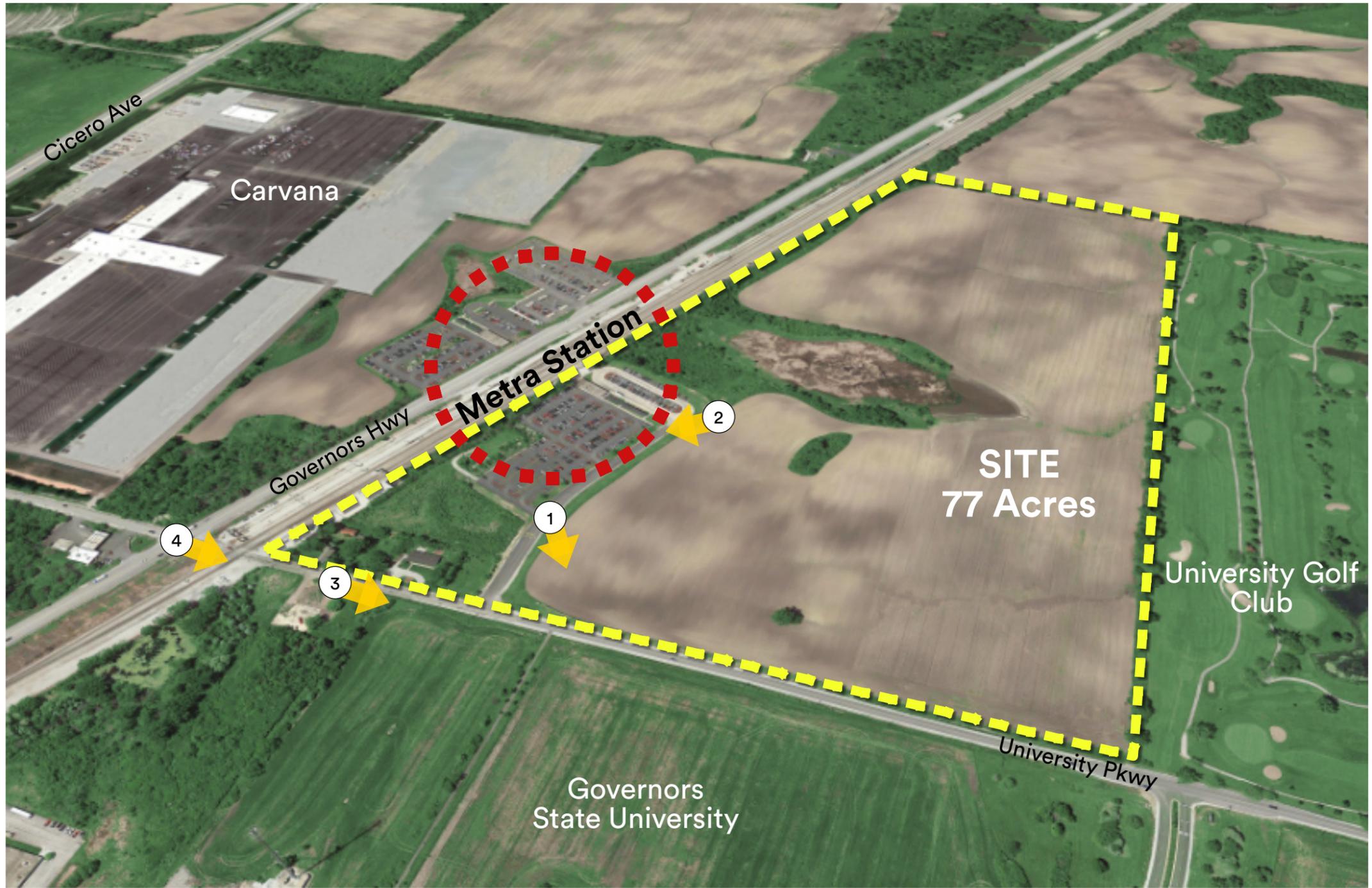
The station is in close proximity to Gateway Industrial Park and Governors State University, both of which are major contributors to the local economy. The Metra Station's location is ideal for locating new residential mixed-use development.

This plan proposes development on the 77-acre vacant parcels east of the Metra Station. This land is directly across the street from Governors State University and provides the opportunity to strengthen the connection between the station and University, and connect to Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve and Pine Lake Park. The southern edge of land along Stuenkel Road provides an opportunity for commercial development that can activate both Stuenkel Road and Governors Highway.



Site with half-mile radius

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



Site Overview
Source: Google Earth

EXISTING SITE ZONING

Existing zoning on the east side of the Metra Station has several large scale parcels that can support mixed-use development. The parcels north of the University Park Golf Course and on the southwest side of Stuenkel Road and Governors Highway intersection are unincorporated County land, but could be annexed into the Village's jurisdiction and extend the TOD alternatives.

F PUBLIC FACILITIES

The public facilities zoning designation is intended to accommodate the location of current and future public facilities, e.g., schools, universities, libraries, community centers, and auditoriums. Front yard shall not be less than 30 feet.

R-4 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

The R-4 zoning designation is intended to support and maintain the character and stability of single-family attached, semi-detached (townhouses), and multifamily residential development. Within a framework of standards, it is designed to encourage the employment of modern, efficient land planning design techniques, with minimum networks of streets and utilities. The base density is four units per acre and additional density is permitted if the development meets ordinance specified standards.

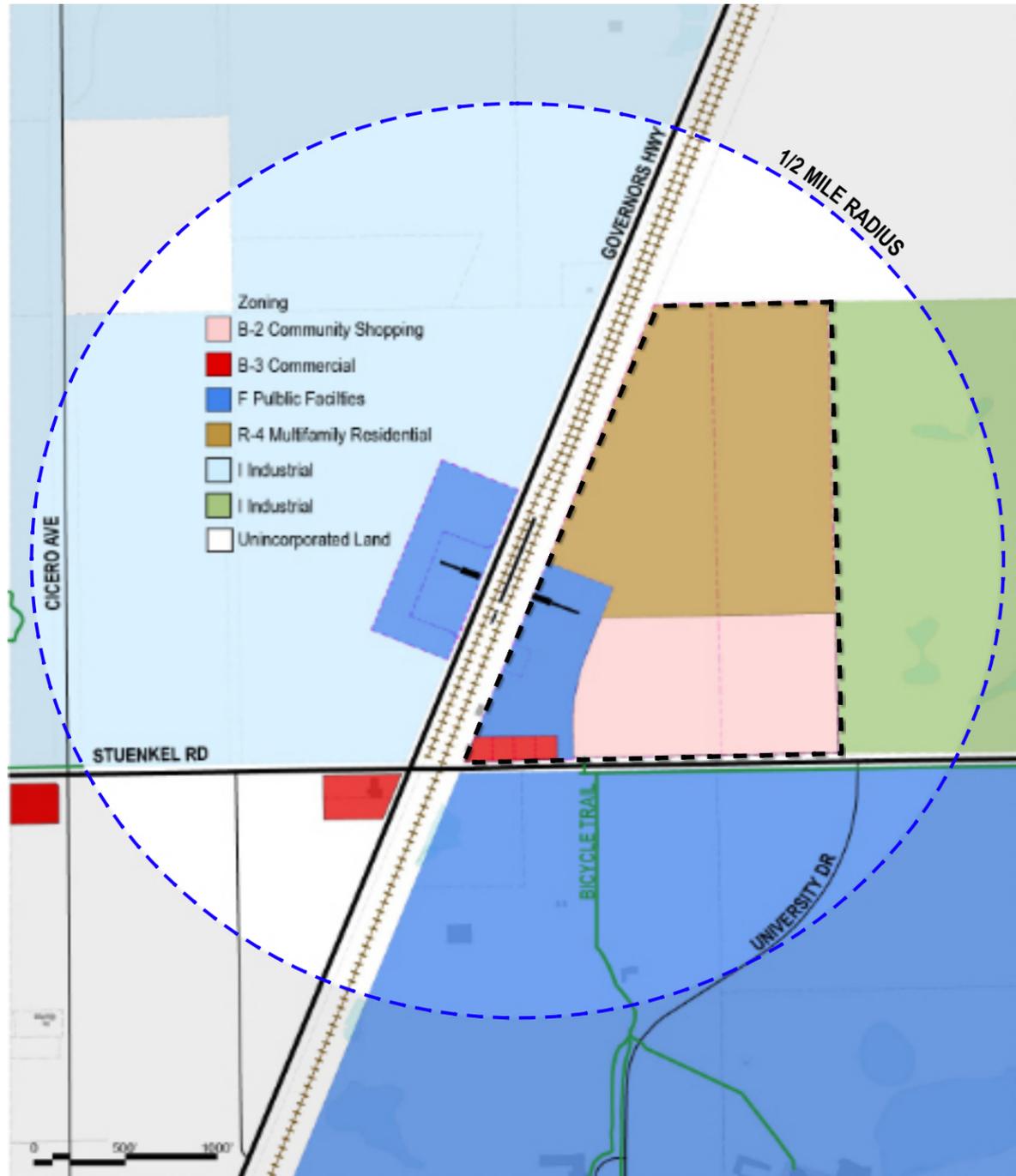
Lot widths shall not be less than 60 feet for single-family detached dwelling, 20 feet for single-family attached dwelling, 90 feet for multifamily dwelling, and 100 feet for corner lots. Building height for single-family dwellings shall not be more than 27 feet. There is no height limitation for multifamily development. FAR was rescinded for this district.

B-2 COMMUNITY SHOPPING

The B-2 zoning designation is intended to accommodate larger-scale commercial development, with a wide range of uses for both daily and occasional shopping. It also allows multi-family residential as one of the special uses. FAR shall not exceed 0.8 and building height shall be not more than 15 feet or one story. Front yard shall not be less than 12 feet.

B-3 COMMERCIAL

The B-3 zoning designation is intended to accommodate a wide range of specialized commercial and business uses, including highway-oriented service and commercial recreation types of establishments, to serve a trade area embracing the Village and inter-community traffic through the Village. FAR shall not exceed 1.2. Front yard shall not be less than 12 feet.



Study Area Zoning

SITE CONDITIONS

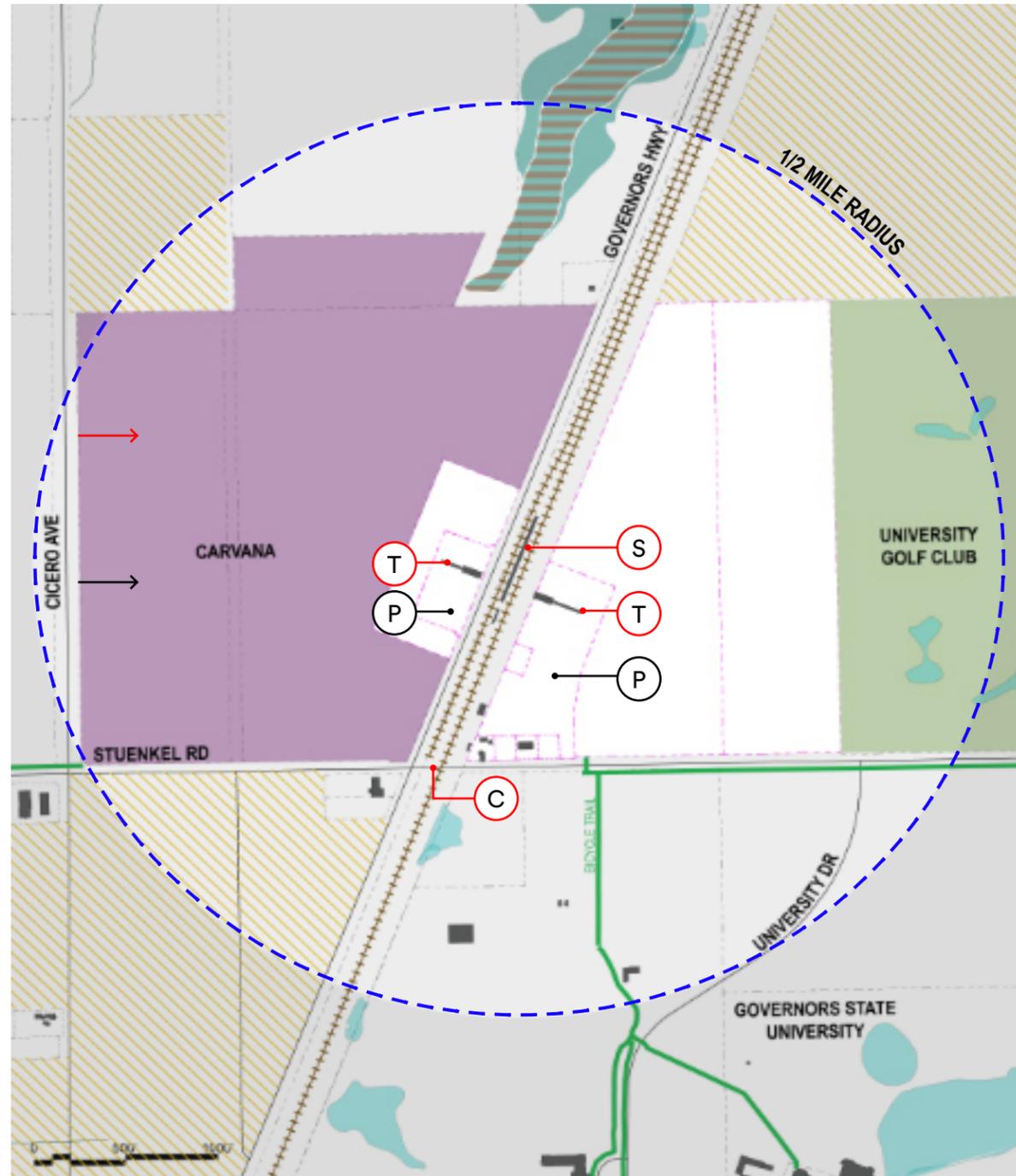
Several site-specific existing conditions pose both opportunities and constraints for consideration in the creation of a vibrant transit-oriented development and include:

- Currently the Metra Station entrance off Governors Highway lacks visibility and has poor pedestrian connectivity due to a lack of sidewalks, incomplete bike ways, and trail connections. Establish a visible, convenient and safe entrance into the Metra Station for all modes (bikes, pedestrians, vehicles and transit)
- Metra ridership decreased during the Covid 19 Pandemic but is anticipated to increase and having adequate parking is important. Maintaining access to and right sizing the Metra parking area to commuter ridership. There are currently 445 spaces in east parking lots and 655 in the west parking lots.
- With the growth of jobs, there is a need for last mile connections. Accommodate additional public transit amenities and shuttle services to industrial employers, GSU and community members.
- New roadways are needed to support development. The design of the roadway

network should be based on the proposed land uses, block sizes and densities. Create a streetscape to support the district development character.

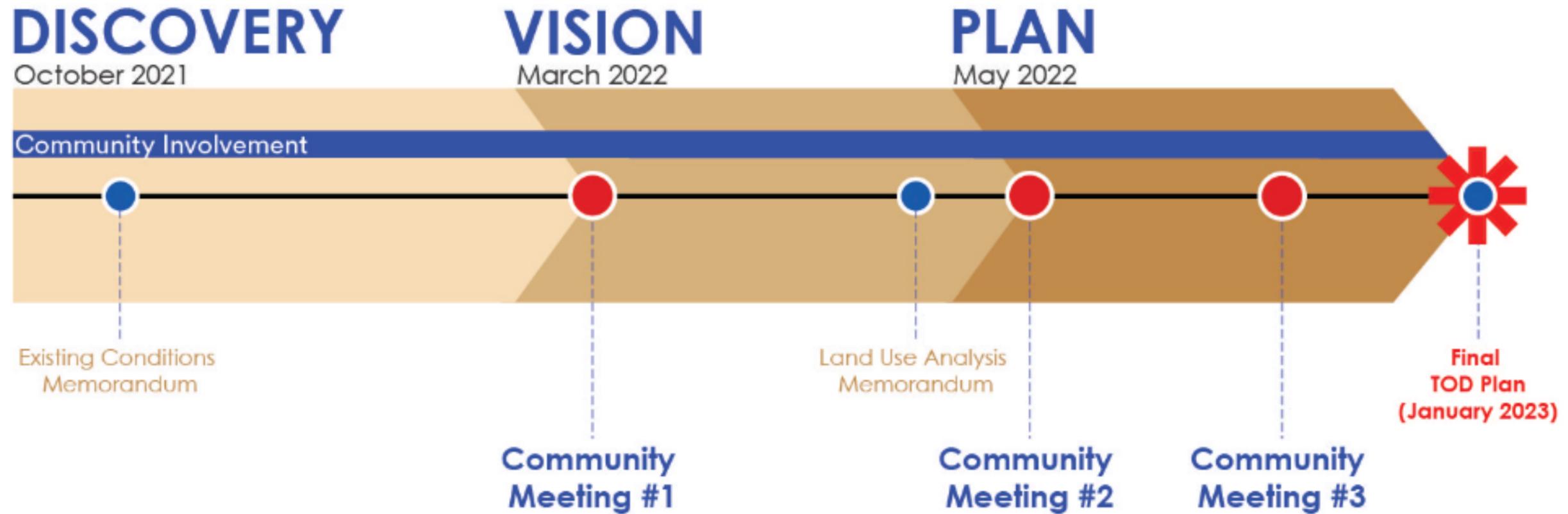
- Establish development framework for the introduction of residential, mixed-use and commercial land uses.
- Dangerous intersection of Governors Highway and Stuenkel Road, which is primarily due to the at-grade railroad crossing. Work with IDOT on improvements to that intersection to address safety concerns.
- There are limited pedestrian and vehicular crossings on Governors Highway for east-west movement, that need to be analyzed for future transportation impacts
- There are significant existing wetlands on site. Incorporate the existing wetlands and drainage patterns into the district open space plan.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
|  At grade railroad crossing |  Unincorporated parcels |  Carvana |
|  Trails and Bikeways |  Station 1/2 mile radius |  Truck Access |
|  Parking |  FEMA Zone A |  Car Access |
|  Tunnel |  FEMA Regulatory Flood Zone |  Station |



Study Area Conditions

PROJECT TIMELINE



As part of the planning process, three community-wide meetings were held for the purpose of identifying critical issues, generating ideas, establishing a vision for the plan, and evaluating proposed recommendations. These meetings engaged a broad group of stakeholders both virtually and in-person when Covid-19 health

mandates allowed group meetings. Each meeting included a presentation and a community input session. The sessions were based on an open house style, providing opportunity for informal discussions with team members by topic. Planning team representatives assisted in identifying issues, facilitating dialogues, answering questions,

and recording comments. The exhibits both on-line and in-person were intended to be interactive, with opportunities for people to provide their preferences, concerns, comments, and ideas. Outcomes of each meeting were posted on the website.

- Community Meeting 1: Visioning and Issue Identification
- Community Meeting 2: Idea Generation and Refinement
- Community Meeting 3: Review of Draft Recommendations

VISION AND ENGAGEMENT

A critical component of the planning process is collaboration with the community and its stakeholders. We held four Steering Committee meetings and three Community meetings to identify community goals and create vision for TOD site.

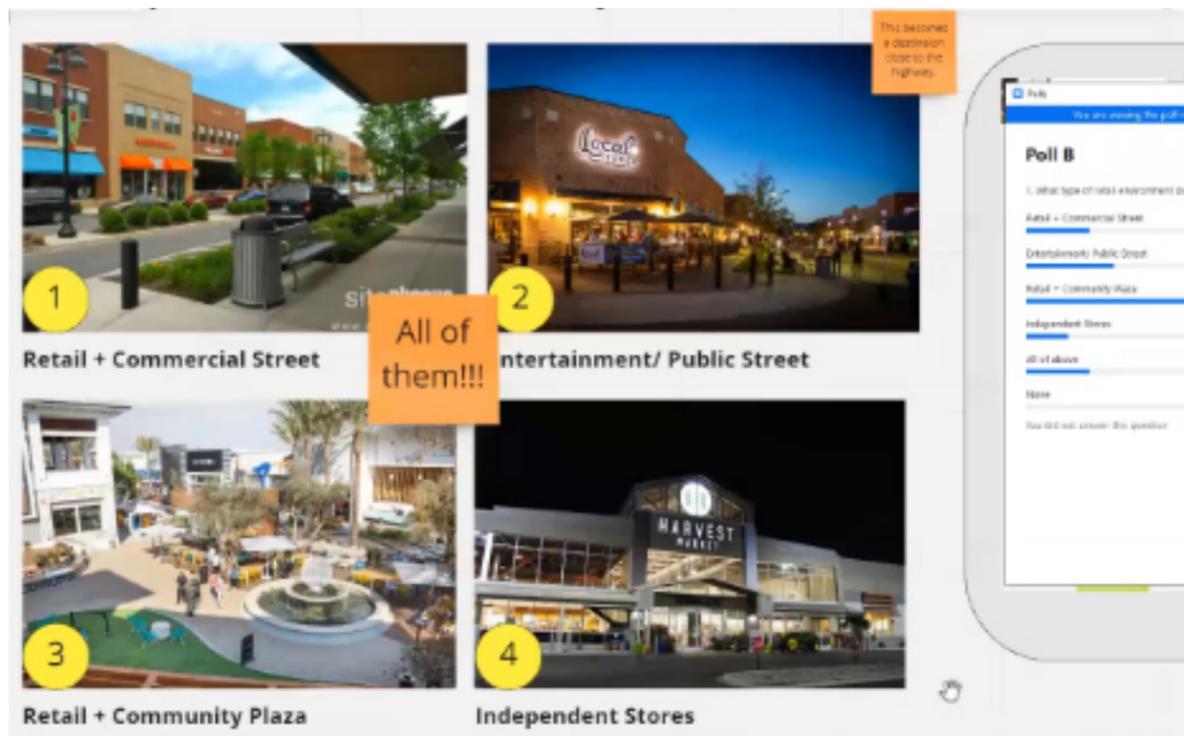
The following section shares inputs from various stakeholders.

2

COMMUNITY MEETING #1

Community	Housing	Governors State University	Business	Metra Station	Innovation and Technology
Fostering a sense of community	Mixed Use Housing	Working together for planning uses	Retail	State of the art station area	EV charging stations
Community services	Different price points	Activities for students and staff	Opportunities to blend GSU and business industry	Increase transit ridership	Sustainable strategies and technology
Gathering spaces	Rental housing	Student housing options	Other desired businesses	Leverage investment in the Metra Station	Use decisions to change their minds about how they use transit
Recreation spaces	Appropriate density		Restaurants and Entertainment		security needs to have a presence
Attract people from nearby communities					lots of people coming from far south for activities and concerts etc.

Preliminary Goals



Visual Preference Survey: Retail Environment

MEETING AGENDA

Community Meeting #1 was held virtually on Zoom across two sessions, one in the morning (25th March 2022) and one in the evening (30th March 2022), in consideration of increasing participation. This meeting focused on understanding **Community Vision and Goals** for the Metra Station and surrounding site. The following exercises were conducted :

- Discussion on **Preliminary Goals**: For understanding community’s priorities on various issues like community building, housing, collaboration with GSU, desired businesses, Metra Station development and use of Innovation and Technology in TOD
- Discussion on **Site Entrance and Connections**: For understanding existing connectivity and traffic issues on and near site, potential site entrances and potential immediate and regional connections
- **Visual Preference Survey** , via Zoom Poll : For understanding community’s vision on spatial quality and building density for TOD (refer page 30 and 31)

MEETING SUMMARY

- Create community gathering and recreation spaces
- Provide multiple housing options, especially for students
- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity to and from the station
- Provide multiple fast food options
- Create sustainable infrastructure
- Partner with GSU
- Create appropriate vehicular circulation to resolve traffic issues during peak hours
- Provide professional and personal services

STATION AREA PRECEDENTS

A Visual Preference Survey was conducted as part of Community Meeting #1, to understand community's vision on spatial quality and building density. The images shown on these two pages got highest votes in their respective categories.



Source: Avalon, Atlanta

A. Appropriate entrances for the site



Source: Newberry, South Carolina



D. Appropriate mixed-use housing for the site



Source: Sobo Loft Condos by Intrinsic Architecture, Bozeman



Source: 2nd & PCH, Long Beach, California

Retail + Community Plaza

B. Appropriate retail environments for the site



Source: Lakeland Village Center, Cypress, Texas

Entertainment / Public Street



E. Appropriate multi-family housing for the site



Source: Water Technology Park by Dahlin Group, San Mateo, California



Source: Pulaski Park, Chicago

Activity Plaza

C. Desirable community programming for the site



Source: Parklet by Shiftspace,

Active Sidewalks



Source: Dorpsweide by Atelier Loos van Vliet,

Urban Nature



Source: Townhomes designed by I.M.Pei, Chicago

F. Appropriate townhome types for the site



Source: Basecamp River North by Pappageorge Haymes Partners, Chicago

As a part of Community Meeting #1, the following vision and goals were developed with the participants to help guide the planning process and subsequent decisions about the TOD area.

VISION

‘A next generation station that fosters growth and creates a place for the University Park community to gather. It leverages job growth and transit investments to attract people and build a vibrant TOD District.’

COMMUNITY GOALS



Maximize connectivity between adjacent activities



Provide diverse housing, commercial and other services to serve community needs



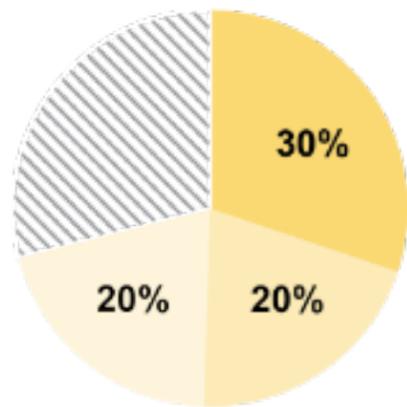
Improve traffic safety, access and multimodal transportation options by adopting a Complete Street approach to the built environment



A welcoming public realm that reflects University Park’s future

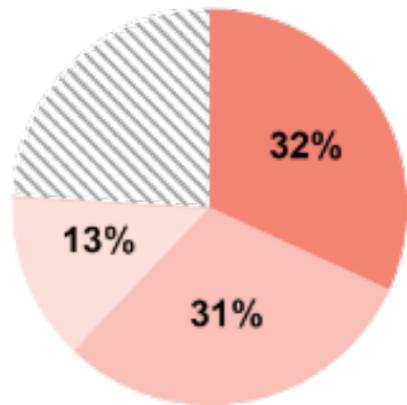
SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted with a variety of stakeholder surveys, via physical survey distribution during community events, Business After Hours event and Survey Monkey to get community's input on various issues like commercial and housing needs. 150 responses were received. These two pages show key takeaways from the survey results.



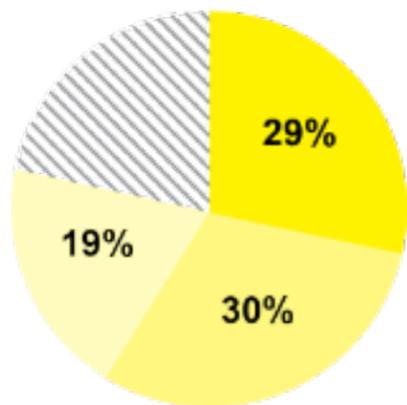
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

- Governors State University
- Access to I-57
- University Park Metra Station
- Others



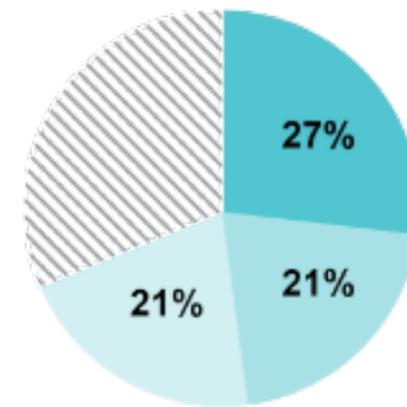
COMMERCIAL PREFERENCES

- Grocery store, drugstore or convenience store
- Fast Food/ casual restaurants
- Community Support Services
- Others



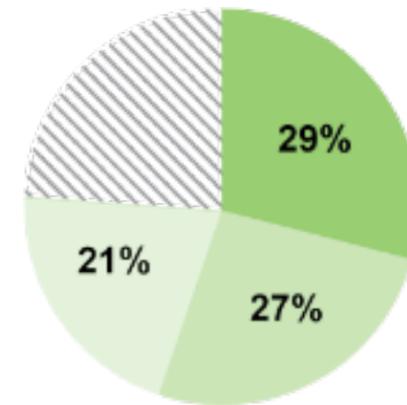
HOUSING PREFERENCES

- Townhomes
- Single Family detached homes
- 2-3 storey Multifamily residential buildings
- Others



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

- More walking and cycling trails separated from car traffic
- Safety improvements for pedestrian and cyclists
- Better bus service (more frequent or more hours of service)
- Others



COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

- Bike trails and natural setting
- Activity Plaza
- Markets/ Fairs/ Pop-Ups
- Others

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- GSU is key asset for the Village
- There is a demand for variety of food outlets and sources.
- Community is inclined towards single family dwellings.
- Community wants more pedestrian friendly connections in the Village and around Metra Station
- Community wants natural open spaces in TOD

COMMUNITY MEETING #2



Presentation by the SCB Team



Community Input Session

MEETING AGENDA

Community Meeting #2 was held at the Village Hall on May 17th 2022. This meeting focused on sharing **Land Use Strategies** for the TOD site (refer page 38 and 39) and get community's input on them. These strategies were developed using preliminary real estate market and transportation recommendations, inputs from various stakeholder engagements and survey results. After the presentation, the community members were invited to share their ideas and comments on the presented strategies.

The following topics were presented in the meeting:

- **Real Estate Market Analysis and Key Issues**
- **Connectivity Analysis and Key Issues**
- **Community Goals**, which were formulated after Community Meeting #1
- **Land Use Typologies**
- **Land Use Strategies and their Development Frameworks**

MEETING SUMMARY

- Option 2 of Land Use Strategy is feasible for the site, due to multiple site entrances including northern connection, proximity of commercial spaces to University Pkwy and privacy for residential units.
- Coordinate with Metra and Pace to discuss frequency and timings of their transit service
- Ensure proposed street network resolves traffic issues at the intersection of University Pkwy and Metra Station parking entrance

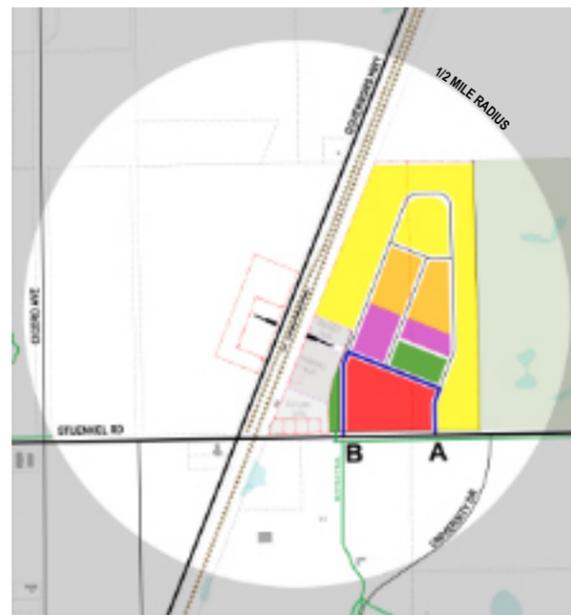
LAND USE STRATEGIES



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



Three options for Land Use Strategies were presented in Community Meeting #2 for feedback and comment from the community. Following are the key takeaways from the meeting:

OPTION 1

Creating strong northern connection and naturalized open space

OPTION 2

Creating an active and continuous open space between GSU and Metra Station entrance.

Creating strong northern connection

OPTION 3

Creating a central open space which is surrounded by various uses and can be used for large events.

With the help of community feedback, we selected Option 2 for the TOD Plan.

Following are the key features of Land Use Strategy Option 2:

RETAIL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG UNIVERSITY PARKWAY

To take advantage of the vehicular traffic along University Parkway, the plan focuses the retail and commercial uses here. This maximizes the visibility for those uses and helps attract people to the TOD area.

CENTRALIZED MIXED USE AREA

The plan places the mixed use developments at the center of the site and adjacent to the Metra Station. The intent is to create an activated center and encourage transit use.

MAIN BOULEVARD

As a main entrance to the site, the plan proposes connecting the station to the GSU entrance at University Drive with a spacious boulevard.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The plan proposes to create a residential neighborhood on the north side of the site.

NATURALIZED OPEN AREA

Working with the natural topography of the site, the plan proposes a naturalized green area to serve as the recreational center of the development.

COMMUNITY MEETING #3



Presentation by the SCB Team



Community Input Session

MEETING AGENDA

Community Meeting #3 was held at the Village Hall on July 26th 2022. This meeting focused on sharing **TOD Plan** for the site and get community's input on them. This plan was developed using Option 2 of Land Use strategy that was presented in Community Meeting #2. After the presentation, the community members were invited to share their ideas and comments on the plan.

The following topics were presented in the meeting:

- **Development Framework:**
 - Street Framework
 - Open Space
 - Land Use and Parcels
- **Project Phasing**
- **Site Programming**

MEETING SUMMARY

- Resolve existing infrastructure issues on site
- Account for time and funding needed to develop new infrastructure on site prior to TOD Plan
- Coordinate with GSU Masterplan
- Plan inclusion of green jobs and sustainable infrastructure
- Discuss potential collaboration with businesses in Industrial Park for housing and transit services for their employees

REAL ESTATE MARKET ANALYSIS

The following market analysis presents information on the demographics and employment in University Park and the surrounding communities. It provides an assessment of the current residential, industrial, and commercial real estate markets, and provides recommendations on future TOD development opportunities given the market realities.

University Park, Richton Park and Park Forest are included in the 'Market Area' for the real estate assessment.

3



MARKET DRIVERS

JOBS IN INDUSTRIAL MARKET

Growth of the industrial market has added thousands of new jobs, and continues to attract tenants that will employ hundreds more workers in mid- to high-skilled jobs. The growth of the industrial market has been strengthened by the I-57 interchange at Stuenkel Road that opened in 2015, and I-57 will continue to be a major attraction for transportation, distribution, and logistics tenants in large facilities.

GROWTH OF GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

Governor’s State University is a major anchor in the Village, and is located proximate to the Metra Station. The University adopted a new Master Plan that will guide growth and development on University grounds over the coming years. Plans to attract more full-time and international students could strengthen demand for new residential development.

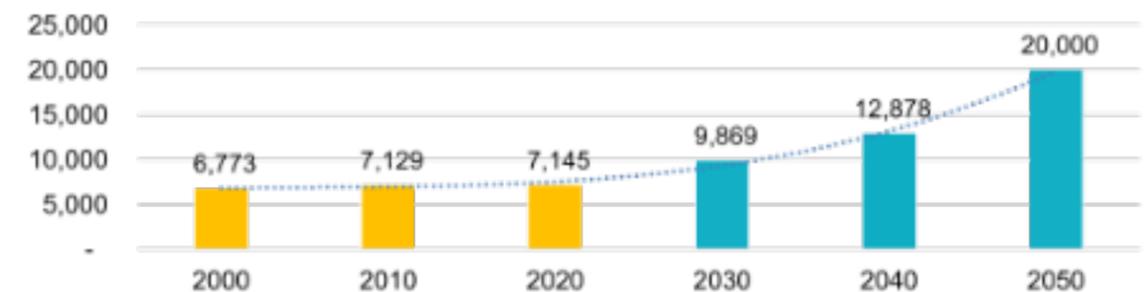
IMPROVEMENT IN METRA STATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Improvements to the University Park Metra Station can bolster ridership, which could

help support added commercial offerings in the TOD area. As University Park is the terminus of the Metra Electric Main Line, it has the potential to attract commuters from a broader market area to support some additional commercial development. \$2.5 million in STP (Surface Transportation Program) funding has been awarded to the Village to begin Phase I Engineering for station renovations, scheduled to begin early 2023. A tentative scope of improvements at the station include a rehabilitated pedestrian tunnel to address flooding, a new canopy and warming shelter for Pace riders and Kiss & Ride passengers, improvements to the platforms, new signage and other rider amenities, and improvements to the access road. These upgrades will address state of good repair issues at the station and enhance the rider experience. An additional \$32.4 million need has been identified for the Phase II Engineering and Construction

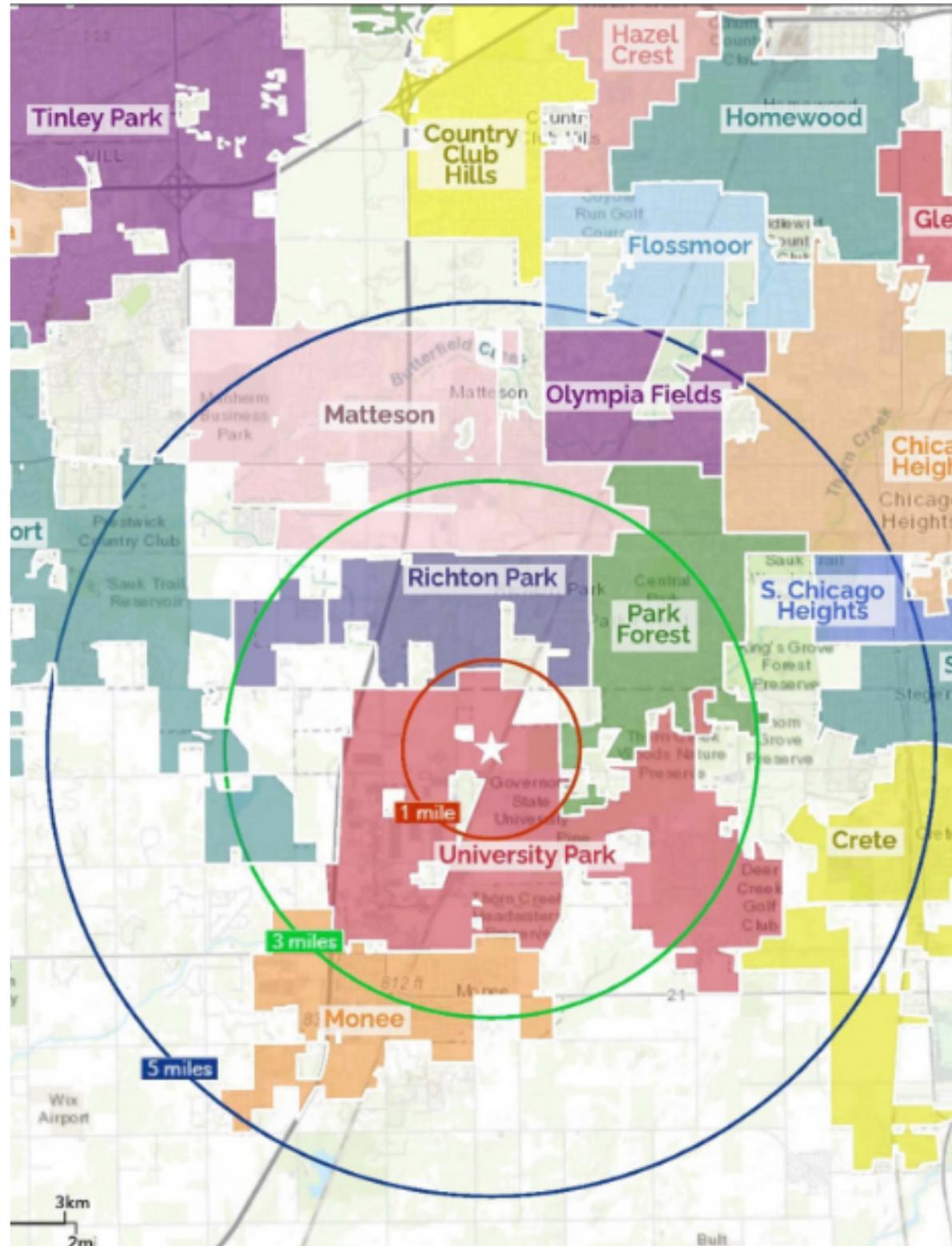
PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

CMAP has projected population growth of 20,000 by 2050, attributed to employment growth in industrial market. This may also drive the demand for additional housing.



University Park Forecast of Population, 2020-2050

Source: CMAP Population Forecasts 2020-2050 (October 2018)



University Park & surrounding South Suburban Communities
 Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2020

DEMOGRAPHICS AND EMPLOYMENT

University Park is a smaller-sized suburb in comparison to its neighbors, with a population of 7,145 in 2020. It has the lowest median age and larger household size than its neighboring communities, indicating many children and young people. More than half of its total population was under the age of 34 in 2019.

The median household income in University Park is on the lower end of the spectrum comparatively.

Enrollment numbers in GSU have fluctuated between 2012 and 2020, and have been declining since 2016. Trends over the same period show a shift to more full-time than part-time students. The University had 1000 employees and 4650 students in 2020. It adopted a comprehensive plan to guide future growth and development in August 2022.

The number of jobs in University Park continues to increase over time, with a net

\$52,250 Median Income
85% Black (Non-Hispanic) Residents
2% of jobs held by residents

1,600 jobs added between 2000 and 2019. Employment numbers are likely higher in 2022, and are expected to continue to grow with the addition of new major employers to the Village.

Most recent data estimates there were 3,351 employed residents living in University Park in 2019, with 97% of those workers commuting outside of University Park for work. A large majority of residents work in Chicago, and elsewhere in Cook County. Half of the commuters travel more than 25 miles to work, and many travel by automobile or carpool, while a smaller percentage use transit.



Inflow and Outflow Patterns, 2019
 Source: US Census Bureau OnTheMap 2018, Population aged 16 years and older

INDUSTRIAL MARKET ASSESSMENT

MARKET TRENDS

Strong demand for modern industrial space is anticipated to continue for the foreseeable future in the Far South Suburbs, with the primary limiting factor in the near-term being a lack of supply. University Park and the surrounding areas have excellent access to cross-country interstates, and are in close proximity to large labor pools, which will continue to attract large tenants to industrially zoned land.

MARKET FINDINGS

Many transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL) companies are seeking large sites to build facilities of 500,000 to one million square feet. In order to make the construction of these facilities feasible, developers require shovel-ready sites, infrastructure in place (such as roads, water, and fiber optic), a large local labor force, and appropriate local property taxes and tax

Major tenants in Industrial Park: Amazon (One Million SF), Carvana and Central Steel & Wire

incentives.

Active developers, such as Venture One, have consolidated other sites that could accommodate additional TDL facilities that could support one million more square feet. Other sites within the Gateway Industrial Park could also support additional large tenants.

In order to remain competitive with nearby I-80 Joliet and South Suburbs, University Park must consider local taxes and incentives to continue to attract developers.



University Park Industrial Inventory & Vacancy Chart

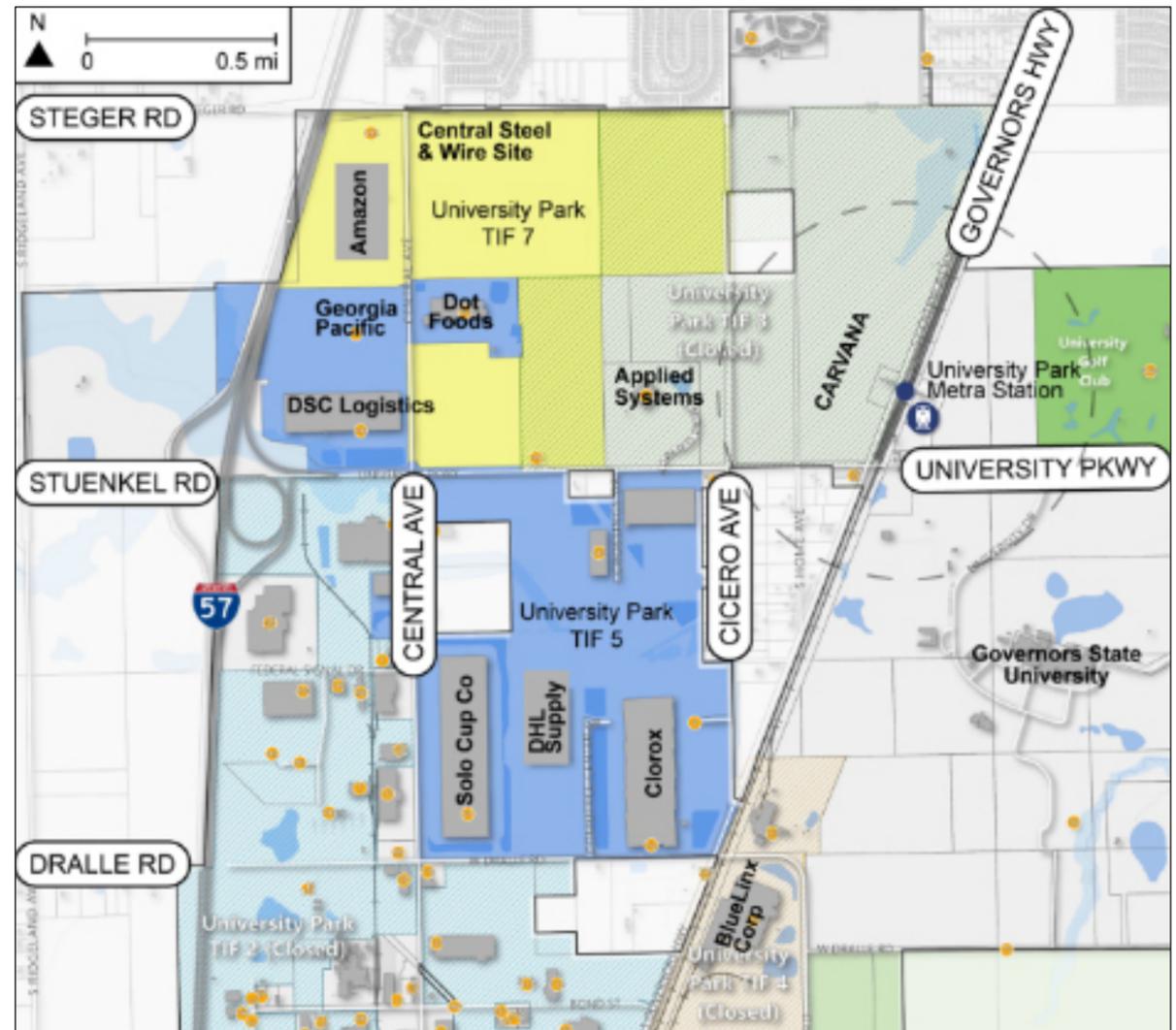
Source: CoStar, May 2022

INDUSTRIAL MARKET RECOMMENDATIONS

The TOD area near the Metra Station would be an appropriate location for added residential and commercial amenities.

People who seek shorter commutes, or work in the nearby industrial corridor, could be attracted to some added workforce housing, and utilize new commercial amenities.

The Village could attract multiple large industrial tenants to the Gateway Industrial Park under the right conditions, though this will remain west of the Metra Station, between the rail and I-57, mostly outside of the TOD area.



Gateway Industrial Park with TIFs

Source: Base map created by Antero Group, modified by Goodman Williams Group

RESIDENTIAL MARKET ASSESSMENT

MARKET TRENDS

Housing units in University Park make up only 16% of the total housing inventory within the Market Area (University Park, Richton Park and Park Forest). The vacancy rate in the Village is slightly higher than the Market Area as a whole at 12% compared to 10%. Median sale prices in 2021 in University Park for single family detached homes was higher than Park Forest, but less than Richton Park, and sales of single family attached units are highest in University Park when compared to the other communities in the market area.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Two thirds of the housing stock in the Village were built between 1970 and 1999, and only 9% of all housing units have been built since 2000.

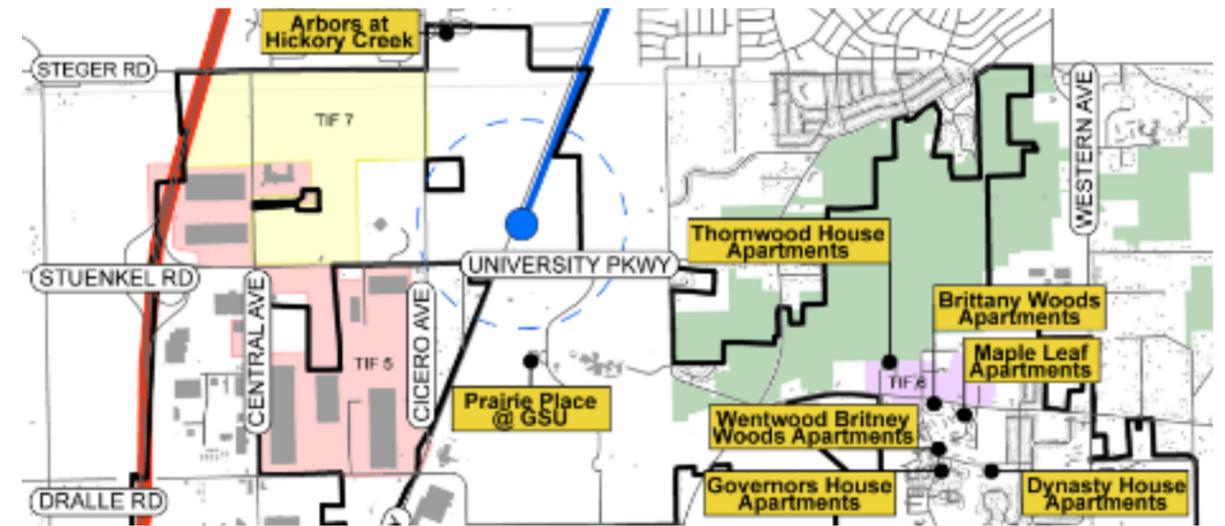
The number of total detached housing units sold has varied since the 2008 recession, peaking in 2014 with 86 sold homes. The number of total attached housing units sold has varied over the last 15 years, from a low of 11 total units in 2013 to a high of 28 units in 2018.

Median Sale Price of Single Family Detached Home: \$180,000

Median Sale Price of Single Family Attached Home: \$109,500

Foreclosure rates in University Park remain slightly higher than Will County, which experienced 0.3 foreclosures per 100 residential properties in that same year.

The market rate apartment inventory in University Park consists of garden style, low-rise and mid-rise multifamily buildings, varying in unit size from 20 units to 377 units. The majority of the properties are located primarily south of University Parkway, east of Steger Monee Road, west of Western Avenue, and north of Hickok Avenue. The current average monthly asking rent among those properties in the Village, as reported on CoStar, is \$1,200, or \$1.18 per square foot. This is lower than the Market Area as a whole, as well as Will County. The current occupancy rate among listed developments



Apartment Developments in University Park

stands at 99%, the highest rate in the last 20 years.

HOUSING DEMAND

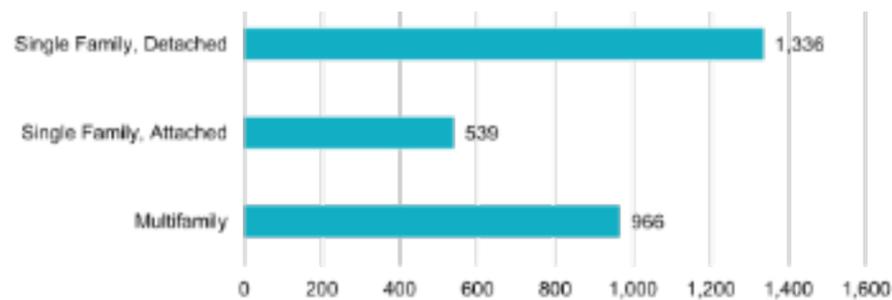
Three key assumptions were made when developing housing demand model:

- Projected household growth is used as a proxy for potential residential demand
- Not all potential newly occupied residential units by 2030 will be new construction, a portion will be satisfied by occupying existing vacant units
- The demand model represents potential new housing units throughout all of

University Park by 2030, not only within the half-mile TOD area.

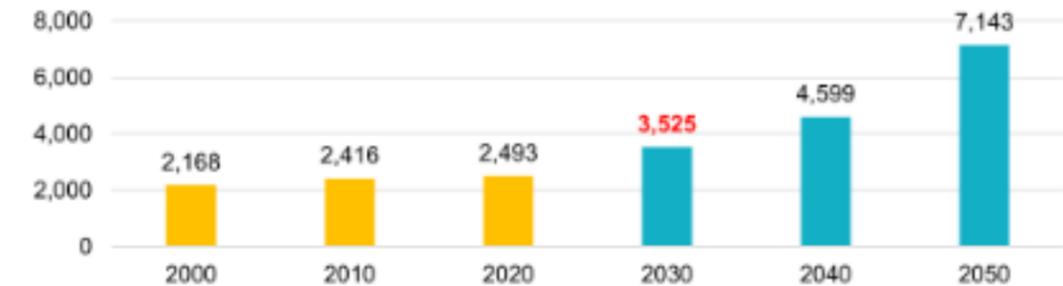
It is reasonable to assume that vacancy rates should decline by 2030 as new households move into University Park. As future vacancy rates are unknowable given available data, an assumption was made that vacancy will drop from 12% to 8% percent in the Village.

Satisfying an influx of future residential demand will take a strategic multifaceted approach and coordination among key stakeholders, including local developers, major employers, the Village of University Park, and key local, state, and other residential funding sources.



Housing by Type in University Park, 2020

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



Total Households & Households Forecasts, 2000 - 2050

Source: US Census 2000, 2010, 2020 & CMAP for 2030 - 2050 Forecasts (October 2018)

COMMERCIAL MARKET ASSESSMENT

MARKET FINDINGS

Workforce Housing: The main driver of residential demand will be from the growing workforce in University Park. A variety of workforce housing types would be appropriate, and could be made to rent or own. The target market is moderate income earners who are not dependent on government-subsidized rents. It is common in the United States to consider workforce housing for those with 80% - 120% AMI.

Student Housing: There will be demand for student housing as GSU (now a four-year university) is attracting more international students, and will soon adopt a Master Plan as a guide for future growth on University property. A variety of options would be appropriate, including a dormitory or suite style, and larger apartments or townhomes for graduate students and their families. These would need to be at appropriate price points that are manageable for students.

Rental Market: The rental market continues to show signs of strength across different market segments, with very low vacancy rates despite rising rental rates (though rental rates are still very affordable at an

average of \$1,200 per month). Growing occupancy rates amid rising asking rents suggest that new units at appropriate rents could be absorbed in the Village.

For-sale Housing: University Park could be competitive with neighboring communities if there was more inventory. Affordable median sales prices in University Park could make it attractive to potential buyers, and low turnaround time on sales highlights the area's potential desirability as an affordable place to own a single-family home – both attached and detached – however the age of the housing stock will remain an issue.

Affordable Housing: University Park has one major affordable housing development, and many naturally occurring affordable housing options within the Village. Any new residential development will need to be at appropriate price points to attract the growing workforce and student populations, and could offer some affordable housing units as a percentage of the total unit mix.

	Total	Habitable Vacant Units	New Construction
Total Potential New Households	1,032	113	919
Total Owner-Occupied Demand	568	62	505
Total Renter-Occupied Demand	464	51	414

Residential Demand Model for University Park, 2030

Source: Goodman Williams Group based on CMAP 2050 Population Forecasts

MARKET TRENDS

University Park has the lowest retail inventory compared to the surrounding communities, and therefore collects less sales tax revenue. There is a shortage of commercial space serving University Park residents, and that residents must travel five to ten miles to access commercial / retail destinations. The limited retail offerings in University Park are concentrated on the main arterial that have higher traffic counts in some freestanding retail buildings, and one neighborhood shopping center.

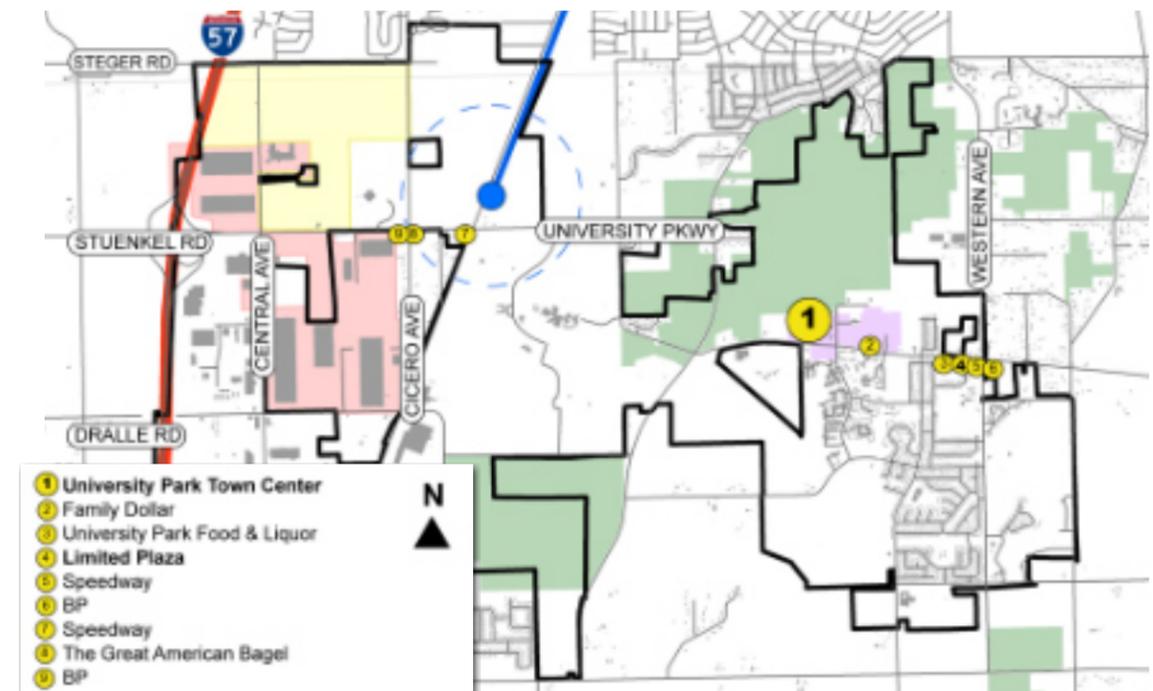
MARKET FINDINGS

University Park has a very low inventory of

commercial space, yet continues to struggle with high vacancy rates, especially in the University Park Town Center.

The commercial development west of the Metra tracks is mostly auto-related commercial space, including two gas stations that service trucks and autos utilizing the I-57 interchange. This area is likely to continue to attract more commercial tenants of this variety that serve workers in the industrial park.

The Village is working to make infrastructure improvements to University Park Town Center, and fill vacancies. Continued efforts will be required to make this a successful shopping center.



University Park Retail Destination

Source: CoStar 2022



RESIDENTIAL MARKET RECOMMENDATIONS

Variety of housing types to be tailored to workforce and/or student housing.

- **INITIAL PHASE**

Up to 200 multifamily rental units, with rents ranging from \$1,200 to \$2,200 per month.

Some ground floor commercial that services the tenants, though should not exceed 10,000 square feet.

- **SUBSEQUENT PHASES**

Single-family attached housing, such as townhouses or condos, on the north end of the TOD area.

COMMERCIAL MARKET RECOMMENDATIONS

- **INITIAL PHASE**

Up to 10,000 square feet of free-standing retail on the north side of University Parkway, with attractive design, pedestrian access and adequate vehicular parking and access

Example: coffee shops, cafes, fast-casual eating places

- **SUBSEQUENT PHASES**

Ground floor commercial space in mixed-use building with residential above. New commercial space would be limited, and would not likely exceed 10,000 square feet. Example: fitness center, hair salon, medical office, or a fast-casual, convenience or a pharmacy.

CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS

Multi-modal connectivity is a key element of successful TOD. The transportation network surrounding the University Park Metra Station is primarily one suited for private vehicles, with limited pedestrian and bicycle access and transit services.

The following connectivity analysis discusses existing travel patterns and opportunities and uses the following principles for TOD Plan recommendations:

Improve connectivity to support walking, biking, and transit use

Promote transit use with improved connections to the Metra Station

Promote safety and walkability with pedestrian-friendly development and sustainable design standards

Support expanded bicycle infrastructure

Provide enhanced street and intersection design

4



EXISTING TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

Around 3,265 people living in University Park commute to work outside the Village and around 3,832 commute to the Village for work. People from nearby southern areas also travel to the station for their work commute. It will be beneficial to provide multimodal connectivity to the station, which is currently restricted due to several factors.

TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity to and from the station is constrained by existing Pace Bus 367 routing, stops, frequency, and span (every 45 to 60 minutes, and no Sunday service). However, the GSU shuttle also operates within the 10-minute commute shed, as an option for students, faculty, and staff. It serves stops on campus and connects to the Metra Station hourly on days. Weekend service also connects to the Richton Park Walmart.

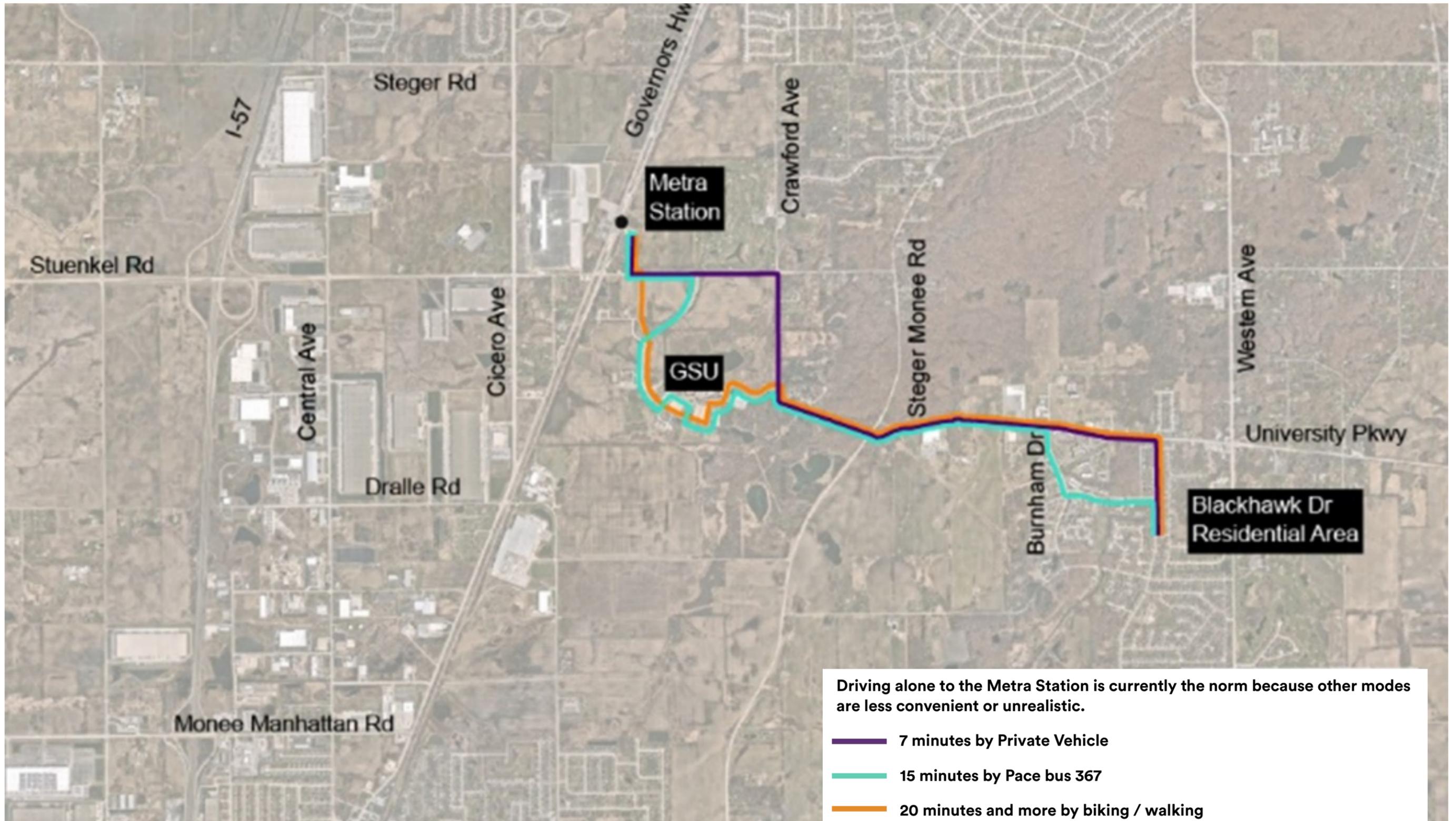
BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Bike and pedestrian connectivity to and from the station is extremely limited because no infrastructure connects the final quarter mile to the station entrance. No bike or pedestrian connectivity currently exists to the path west of Cicero Avenue. The Village is working towards expanding this infrastructure.

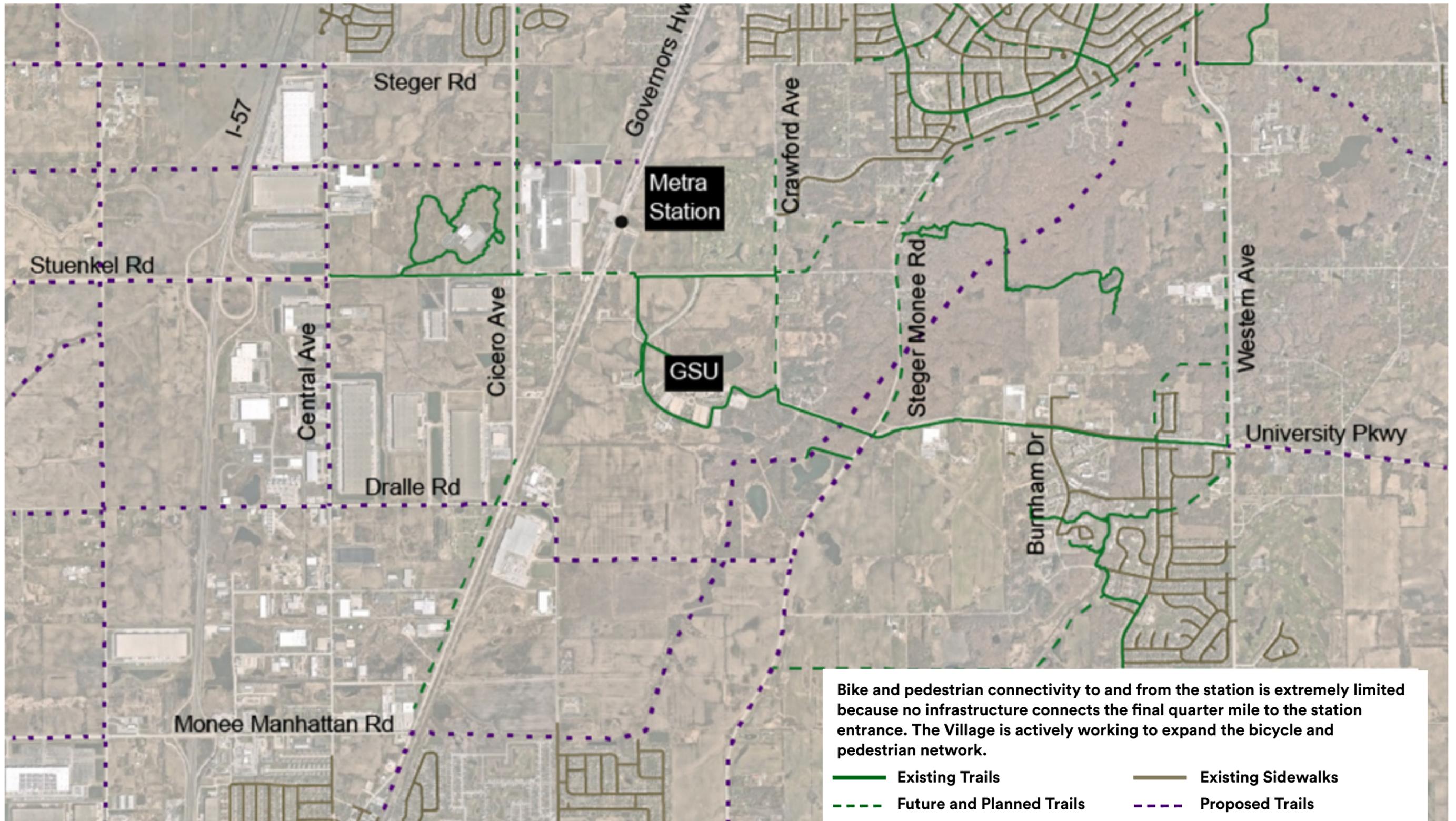
80% of Metra passengers access the station by driving alone. Potential exists to increase multimodal connectivity.

VEHICULAR CONNECTIVITY

Existing vehicular connectivity to the station is via three driveways off of Governors Highway (access to the western parking lots) and one driveway off of University Parkway (access to the eastern parking lots). The station is conveniently located near the I-57 Stuenkel Road interchange for regional trips, as well as Cicero Avenue and Governors Highway for more local trips. Public input suggests that connectivity to the station is reduced due to traffic during peak commute times (approximately 6am and 5pm). Freight trains also cause backups on University Parkway westbound. To reach the driveway off of University Parkway, stakeholders reported that drivers sometimes drive in the median turn lane. Merging out of the eastern parking area can also be difficult because University Parkway traffic does not stop, and sight lines may be obscured by vegetation.



University Park Commutes



University Park Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

COMPLETE STREET ELEMENTS

- **SPEED LIMITS**

Residential streets should be designed for target vehicle speeds of no more than 20 miles per hour. Mixed-use and commercial streets should be designed for target vehicle speeds of no more than 30 miles per hour.

- **TRAVEL LANE WIDTH**

Travel lane widths should not exceed 10 feet, except for truck or transit routes, where lane widths should not exceed 11 feet.

- **CURB RADII**

Use the minimum feasible corner curb radius to increase pedestrian space and visibility, shorten pedestrian crossing distances, and slow vehicle turns.

- **SIDEWALKS**

Provide sidewalks on both sides of all streets in compliance with ADA requirements. Determine required widths for each street typology.

- **BIKEWAY NETWORK**

A network of multiuse paths, protected bikes, and traffic-calmed streets allows for connectivity for bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

- **LIGHTING**

All pedestrian crosswalks and bus stop locations should have street lighting to ensure pedestrian visibility.

- **ACCESSIBILITY**

Build curb ramps at all pedestrian crossings per federal, state, and local accessibility standards.

- **CROSSWALKS**

Pedestrians should not have to walk more than a total of three minutes out of their way to legally cross a street (including walking to the crossing and doubling back to get to their intended destination). This rule of thumb suggests marked pedestrian crossings roughly every 600 to 800 feet.

- **RAISED CROSSWALKS**

They increase the visibility of pedestrians to drivers, can slow vehicle movement at crossings, and emphasize pedestrian priority.

- **HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS**

High visibility crosswalks are more visible to drivers than standard parallel crosswalk lines, alerting them to the presence of pedestrians. Continental crosswalks feature wide painted bars in line with traffic flow and create more visible crosswalk markings. Crosswalks need to be repainted periodically to maintain their high-visibility nature.

- **CURB CUTS**

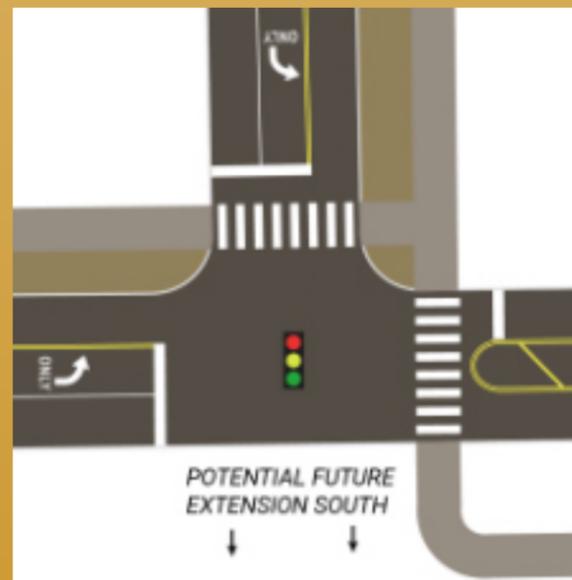
Design and locate driveway curb-cuts to minimize impact to streetscape amenities and minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. Consolidate access points and share access wherever possible.

- **ON-STREET PARKING**

On-street parking is an appropriate use of excess street space when it does not compete with space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Restrict parking within 25 feet of corners for pedestrian visibility at crosswalks. Parking lane widths of 7-9 feet are preferred.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- A dense, grid-like network with many streets and intersections to support multimodal activity and better vehicular capacity.
- Shorter block lengths and four-way intersections to maximize access and minimize trip distances.
- Secure and enclosed bike parking at the Metra Station to encourage public transit.
- Multiple access points to TOD area.
- Realignment of existing driveway accessing the Metra Station from University Parkway with the TOD area for better connectivity.
- Alignment of existing signal at University Drive or a new signalized roadway intersection between Governors Highway and the existing Metra driveway.
- Coordination with the ICC (Illinois Commerce Commission) due the proximity to the rail tracks.
- Adjustment of existing multiuse path to maximize the visibility of crossing pedestrians and cyclists.
- Bus service to be provided by Pace in the TOD area.
- Future roadway and pedestrian improvements to be reviewed by Pace through technical review process to ensure transit accommodations are included.



University Pkwy at Metra Station driveway / existing multiuse path

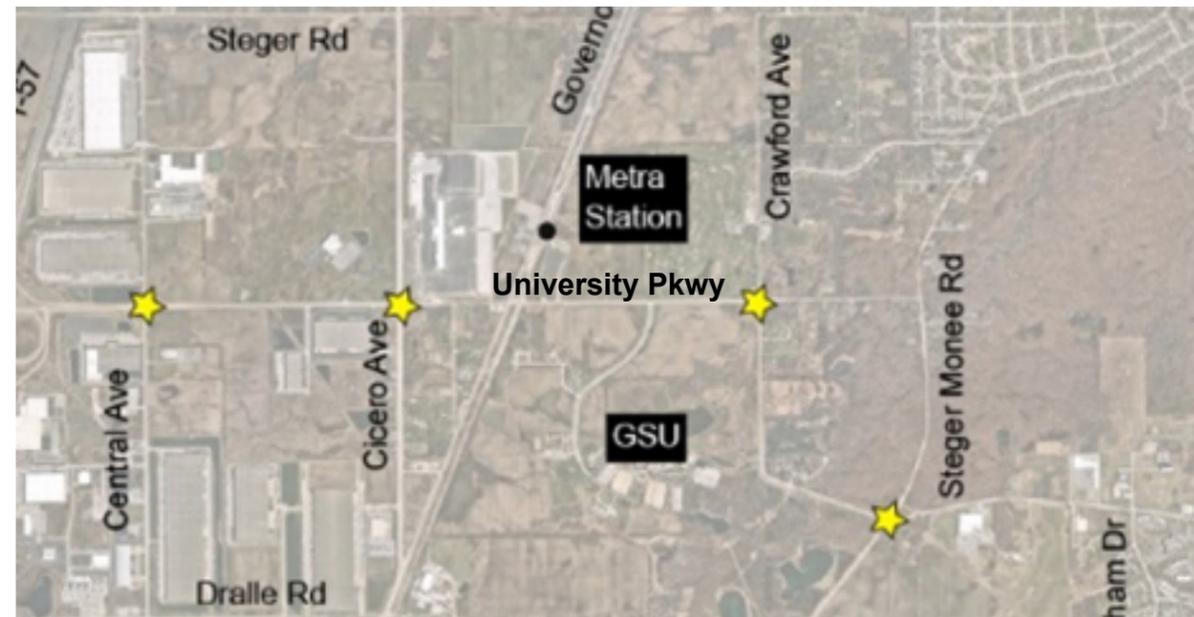


University Pkwy at University Drive: Concept Design

RECOMMENDATIONS: SURROUNDING INTERSECTIONS AND VILLAGE WIDE



University Parkway at Governors Highway Concept Design



University Park Potential Intersection Improvement Locations

SURROUNDING INTERSECTIONS AND ROADWAYS

(TOP-LEFT IMAGE)

The intersection of University Parkway at Governors Highway and its approaches are adjacent to the TOD area and ripe for improvement. The image depicts a recommended concept design. This concept was developed to align with community goals to connect the TOD site with future development along Governors Highway, improve bicycle and pedestrian connections, and improve safety. The proposed roadway configurations are based on available traffic volumes and design best practices from FHWA and NACTO. The Village can also move forward to fill the gap in the multiuse path along Stuenkel Road/University Parkway, connecting the existing east-west path at Cicero Avenue to the path on the south side of University Parkway at the TOD site. This would involve active coordination with IDOT on intersection design and other associated work that is planned in the area.



Raised Crosswalks



Pedestrian Activated Signals

VILLAGE WIDE

(BOTTOM-LEFT IMAGE)

An analysis of recent crashes (detailed in the Existing Conditions Report) informed potential locations for improvements throughout the Village. The image shows selected intersection locations. Improvements can include pedestrian activated signals, lighting, crosswalks and filling gaps in the existing multiuse path, as well as its extension to reach residential areas and the Industrial Park.



Multiuse Path

VISION ZERO TOOLBOX

- **RIGHT-SIZED VEHICLE LANES:**

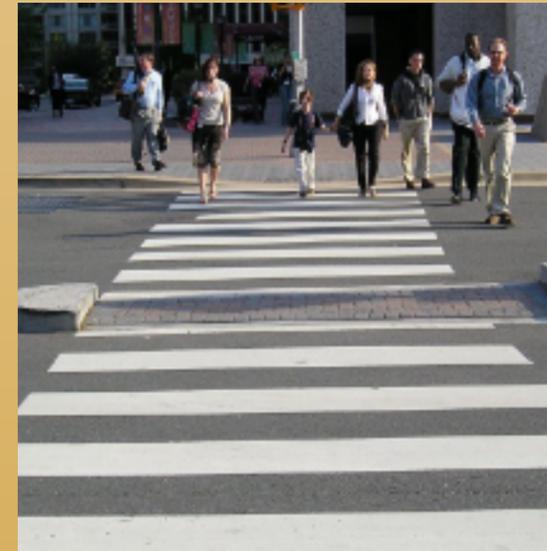
Travel lane widths should not exceed 10 feet, except for truck or transit routes, where lane widths should not exceed 11 feet. For streets within the TOD area, the default lane width should be 10 feet, with wider lanes being designed only for exceptional, specific circumstances.

- **TARGET SPEED LIMITS:**

Residential streets in the TOD area should be designed for target vehicle speeds of no more than 20 miles per hour, while mixed-use and commercial streets should be designed for target vehicle speeds of no more than 30 miles per hour.

- **ROAD DIET:**

A road diet reduces the overall number and/or size of travel lanes on a street—often going from four travel lanes to two travel lanes with a center left turn lane—and repurposes that space for bicycle facilities, dedicated transit facilities, public space, etc. Because most road diets include a center left turn lane, these benefits can often be achieved with minimal impact on vehicle travel times. Governors Highway is a candidate for road diet evaluation.



High-Visibility Crosswalks



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon



Raised Crosswalks



Curb Extension

VISION ZERO TOOLBOX

- **RESIDENTIAL SLOW STREET:**

Residential streets in the TOD area should be designed to accommodate vehicle access to and from residences, but at speeds that help keep pedestrians and bicyclists safe. Where low on-street parking demand is expected, the total curb-to-curb width should not exceed 24 feet, with street parking allowed on one side. With high on-street parking demand, total curb-to-curb width should not exceed 30 feet, with street parking allowed on both sides.

- **RIGHT-SIZED CURB RADII:**

Within the TOD area, curb radii in mixed-use/commercial areas should be no more than 15 feet, although corners accommodating bus routes may require slightly larger radii. On residential streets, curb radii should be no more than 10 feet.

- **STREET TREES AND PLANTINGS:**

Street trees should be part of the standard design for all streets in the TOD area, and a space at least 6 feet wide between the curb and sidewalk should be provided for healthy tree growth.

- **FREQUENT MARKED CROSSINGS:**

Marked pedestrian crossings should be sited within the TOD area about every 800 feet.



Mini Traffic Circles



Buffered Bike Lane



Off-Street Shared-Use Path



Bicycle Conflict Pavement Markings

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Multiple land use options were proposed in the Community Workshop #2 to achieve Community Vision and Goals. The results of that discussion were developed into the final Development Framework.

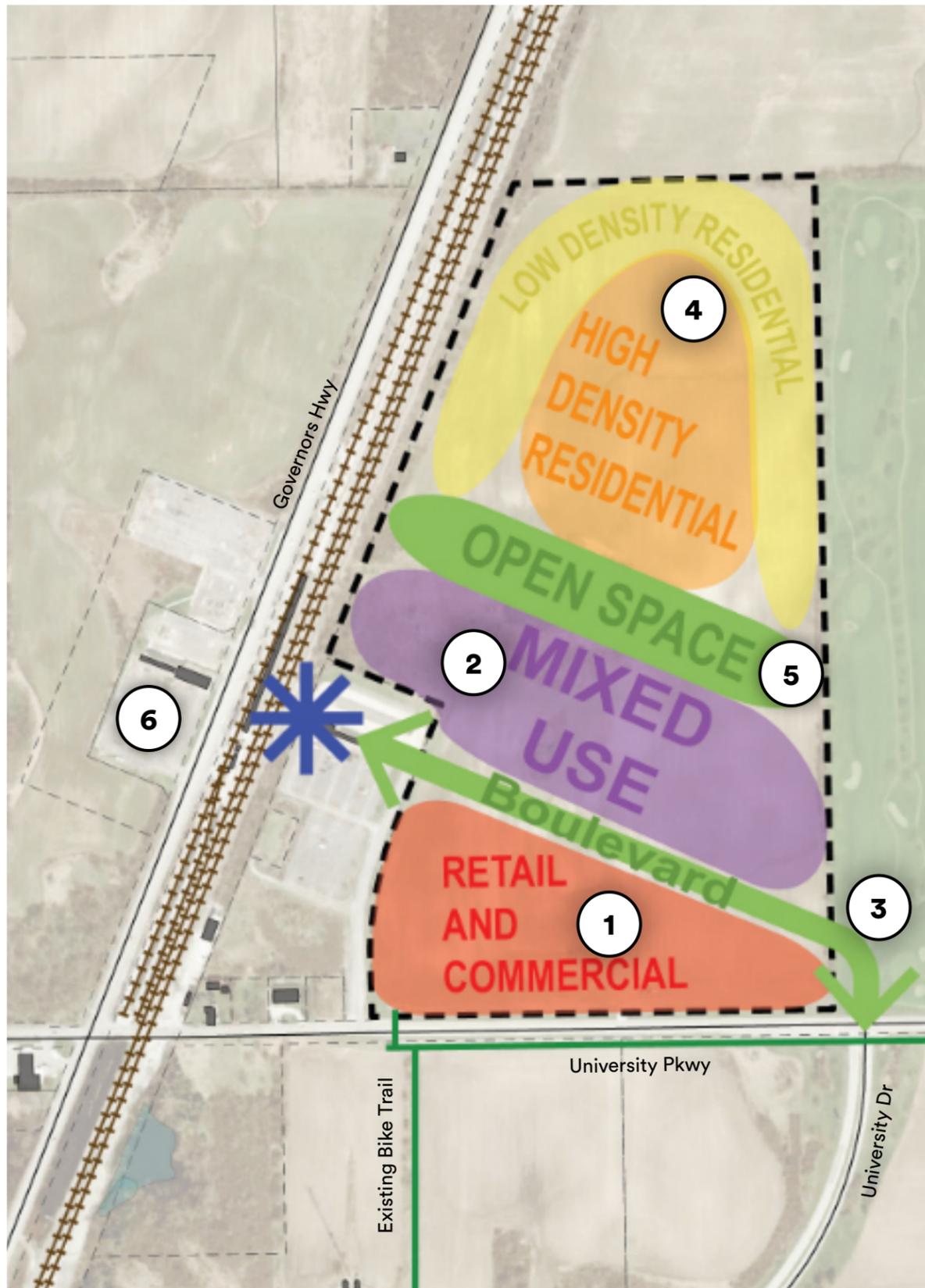
The following section discusses planning strategies used to maximize connectivity and creating a welcoming public realm on the TOD site. These strategies also considered market and transportation recommendations.

5

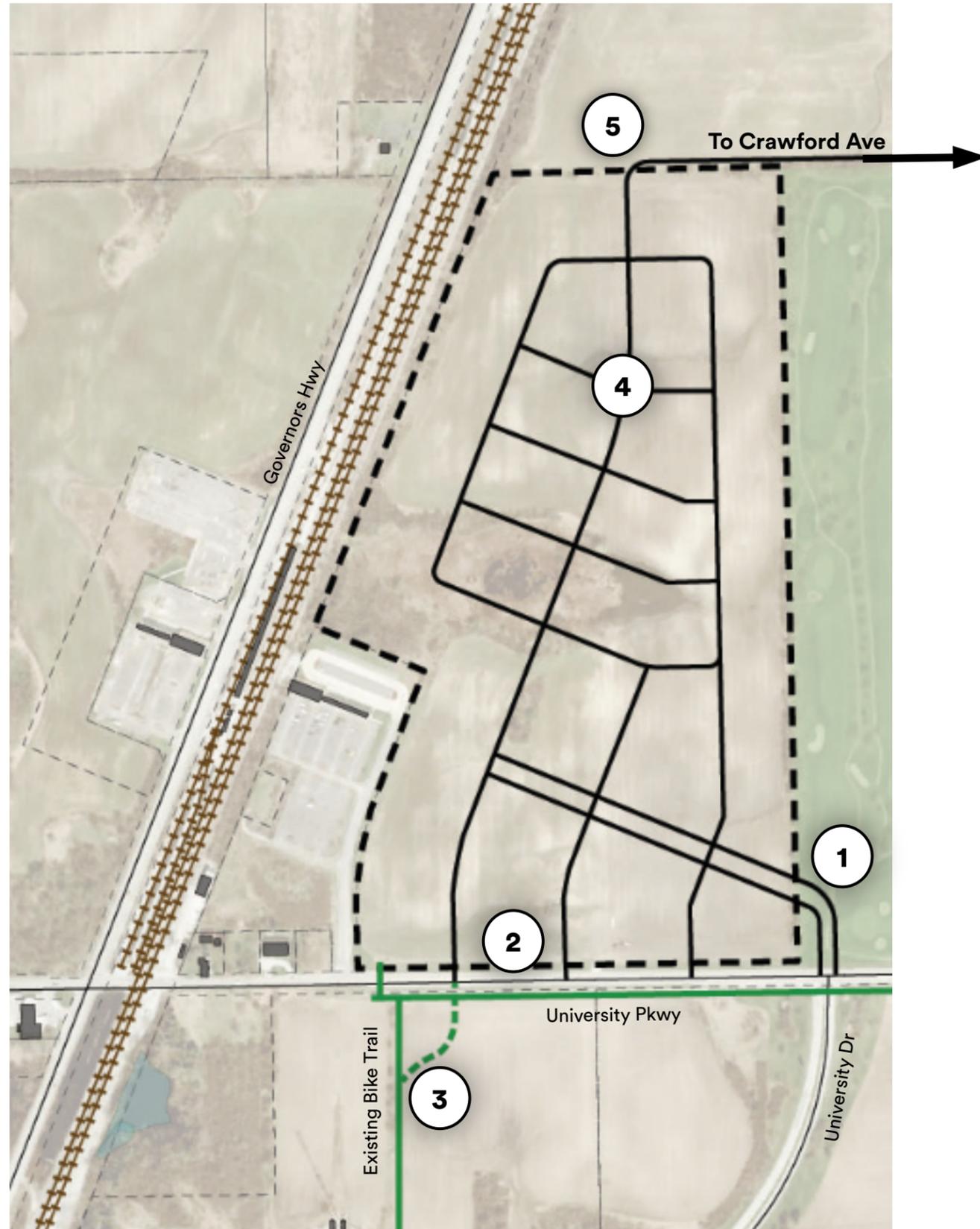


CONCEPTUAL SITE PROGRAMMING

Based on community feedback, market analysis and existing conditions, the conceptual site zoning strategy on the adjacent page was developed. It is focused on maximizing the site assets and leveraging the surrounding context. Key considerations are:



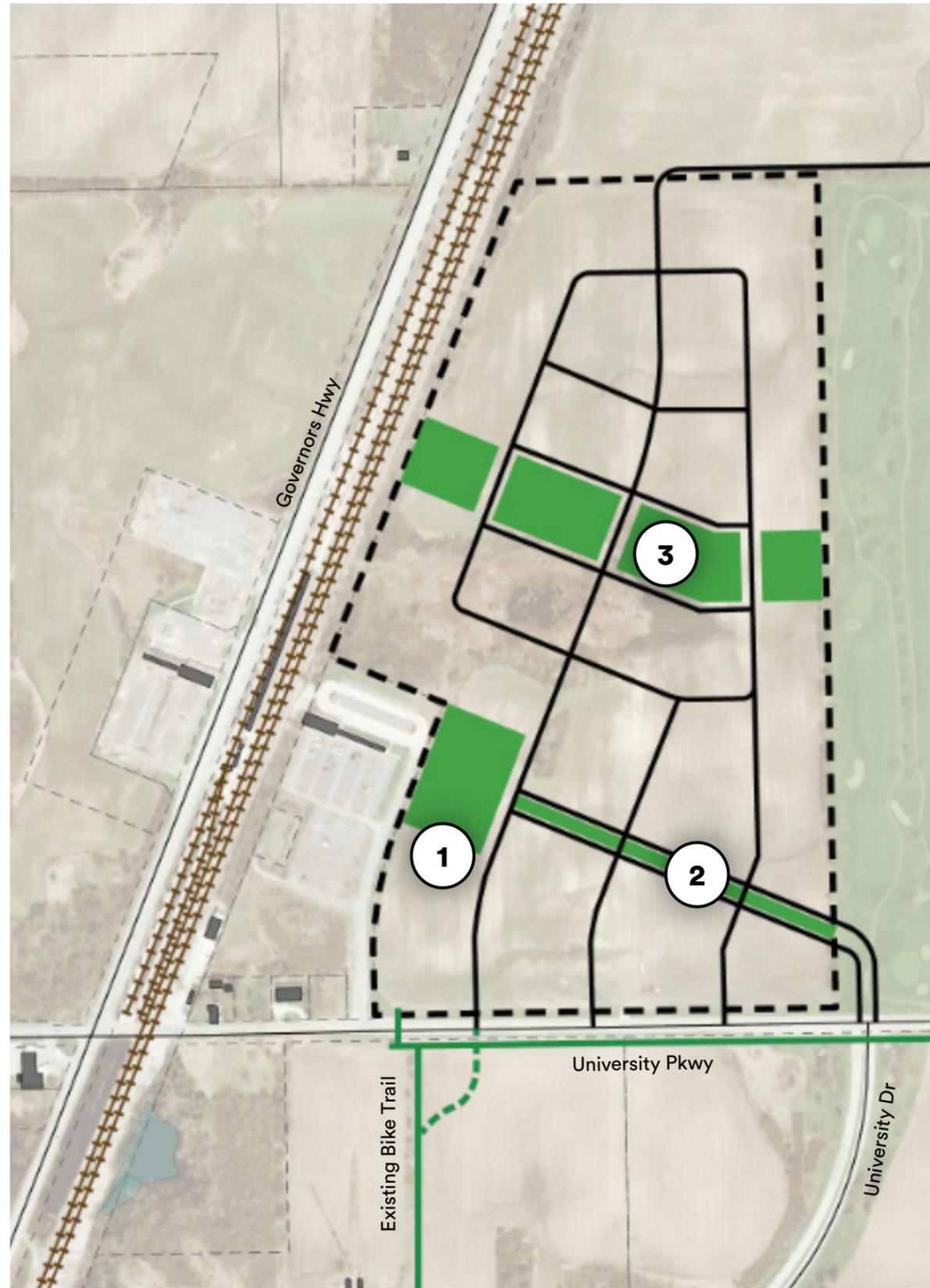
- 1 RETAIL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG UNIVERSITY PARKWAY**
 To take advantage of the vehicular traffic along University Parkway, the plan focuses the retail and commercial uses here. This maximizes the visibility for those uses and helps attract people to the TOD area.
- 2 CENTRALIZED MIXED USE AREA**
 The plan places the mixed use developments at the center of the site and adjacent to the Metra Station. The intent is to create an activated center and encourage transit use.
- 3 MAIN BOULEVARD**
 As a main entrance to the site, the plan proposes connecting the station to the GSU entrance at University Drive with a spacious boulevard.
- 4 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**
 The plan proposes to create a residential neighborhood on the north side of the site.
- 5 NATURALIZED OPEN AREA**
 Working with the natural topography of the site, the plan proposes a naturalized green area to serve as the recreational center of the development.
- 6 WEST SIDE TRANSIT SERVICES**
 The plan proposes a shared mobility service on west side of the station to accommodate commuters from Industrial Park. It will be beneficial in avoiding delays caused due to railway crossing at University Pkwy and Governors Hwy.



DEVELOPMENT & CIRCULATION FRAMEWORK

To develop the conceptual site zoning into a comprehensive plan and realize the vision of the TOD area, the development and circulation framework on the facing page was developed. The key considerations are:

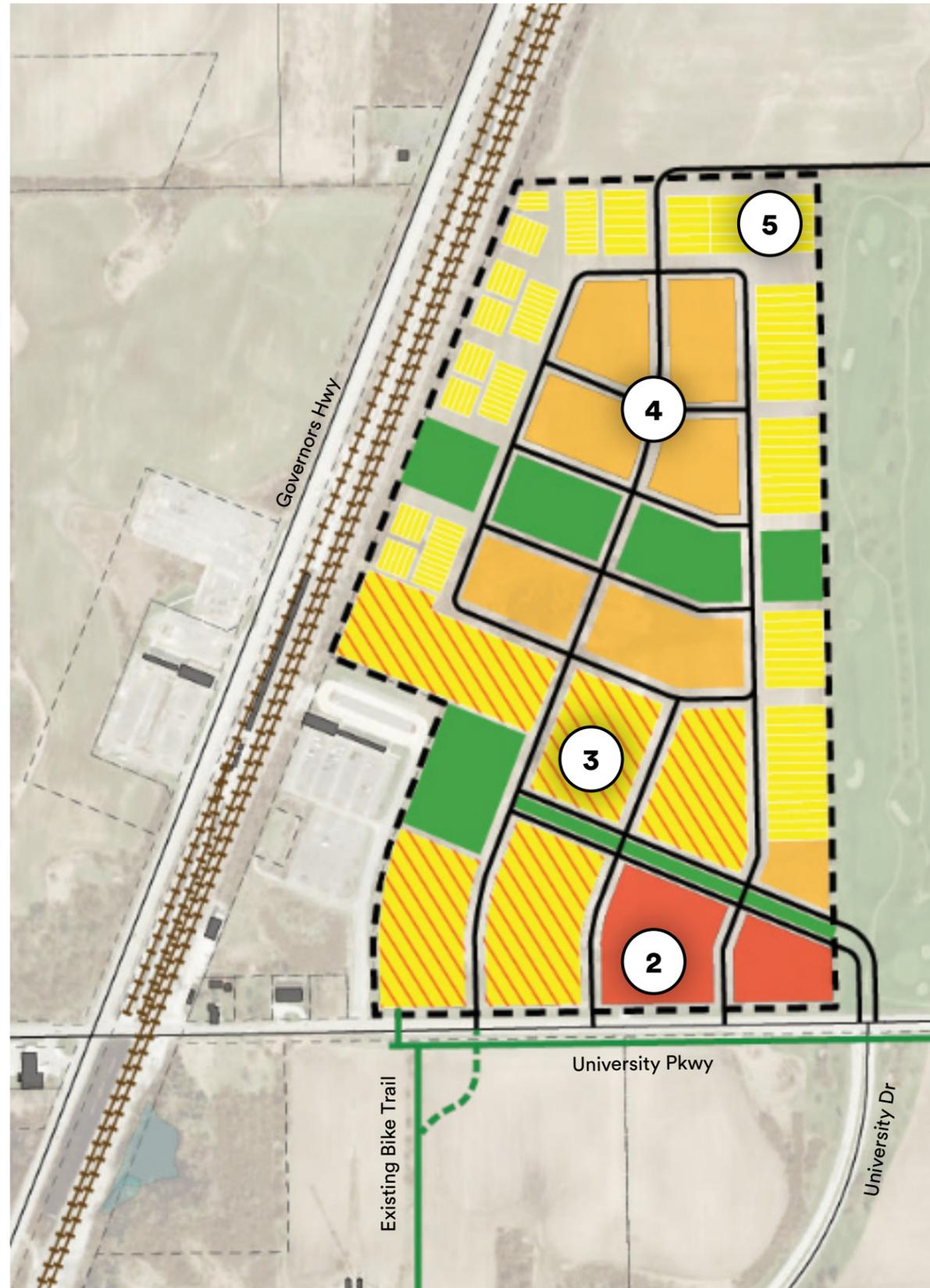
- 1 CONNECTION OF UNIVERSITY DRIVE**
 The primary entrance to the site in the future will be at the intersection of University Drive and University Parkway. This capitalizes on existing infrastructure and provides convenient access to the station.
- 2 MULTIPLE ACCESS POINTS TO THE STATION**
 In addition to the main boulevard entrance, the plan is proposing smaller connections on University Parkway to facilitate access to the site.
- 3 PEDESTRIAN AND MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS**
 In addition to vehicular access, the plan will provide enhance pedestrian and multimodal access. One main connection will be via the existing bike trail to GSU's campus.
- 4 PEDESTRIAN SCALE BLOCK STRUCTURE**
 Another key factor to encouraging multimodal connections is providing smaller pedestrian scale blocks.
- 5 NORTHERN CONNECTION TO CRAWFORD ROAD**
 Lastly, to improve connectivity of the site and multiple access points to the station, the plan proposes a northern connection that would extend east to Crawford Avenue.



OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK

Any good development includes a thoughtful approach to integrating landscape and open space. These spaces provide vital functions for health and wellness as well as providing numerous opportunities for sustainable development practices. Most importantly they play an important role in increasing the overall value of the development. The key considerations are:

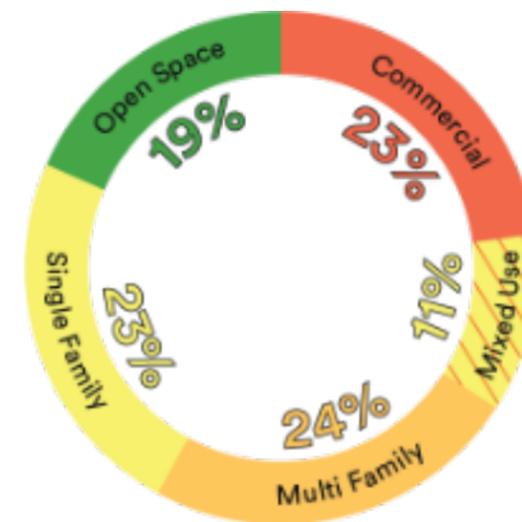
- 1 STATION PLAZA & PARK SPACE**
 The main public space of the development will be a plaza and park space designed to provide a place for the University Park community to gather. Convenient access to and from the station is a key component of activating the space and attracting people to the development.
- 2 BOULEVARD ENTRY DRIVE**
 To help reimagine the site, the plan is proposing a generous boulevard to serve as the main entrance to the site and provide generous pedestrian access to the station. Transit access to the station would need to be designed to accommodate new circulation networks.
- 3 NATURALIZED GREEN ZONE**
 Lastly, to take advantage of the natural features of the site, the plan proposes a naturalized green zone that will serve the residents of the site and provide critical access to nature.



LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

Building on the feedback from community meetings and circulation and open space frameworks, parcels and uses were developed to realize the overall vision of the TOD plan. Parcel size and use were calibrated to market demands and align with the overall conceptual zoning of the site. Key considerations are:

- 1 BALANCED APPROACH TO RESPOND TO MARKET CONSIDERATIONS**
 Based on the market analysis and best practices when developing TOD areas, the plan proposes a balanced approach to land use. This diversity of uses is intended to help activate the site throughout the day, week and year.
- 2 RETAIL & COMMERCIAL USES ALONG UNIVERSITY PARKWAY**
 As mentioned previously, the parcels along University Parkway are focused on attracting customers to the site and providing key community services.
- 3 MIXED USE CENTER**
 At the heart of the site is our mixed use developments that provides an urban district feel directly adjacent to the station. By providing the mix of uses and density of activity next to the station, the development is maximizing access to transit while encouraging ridership.
- 4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL PARCELS**
 The plan places the medium density residential developments towards the north end of the site and adjacent to the naturalized open space.
- 5 LOWER DENSITY RESIDENTIAL PARCELS**
 Lastly, the plan proposes the lowest density residential parcels around the perimeter of the site.



Percentage of proposed Land Use

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



COMPLETE STREETS:

Strong pedestrian scale connections to reduce congestion on University Pkwy and increase multimodal connectivity to surrounding context



OPEN SPACE:

Boulevard along the main street, ending in public plaza near the station entrance. This plaza becomes the gateway to University Park and can be used for temporary outdoor events.



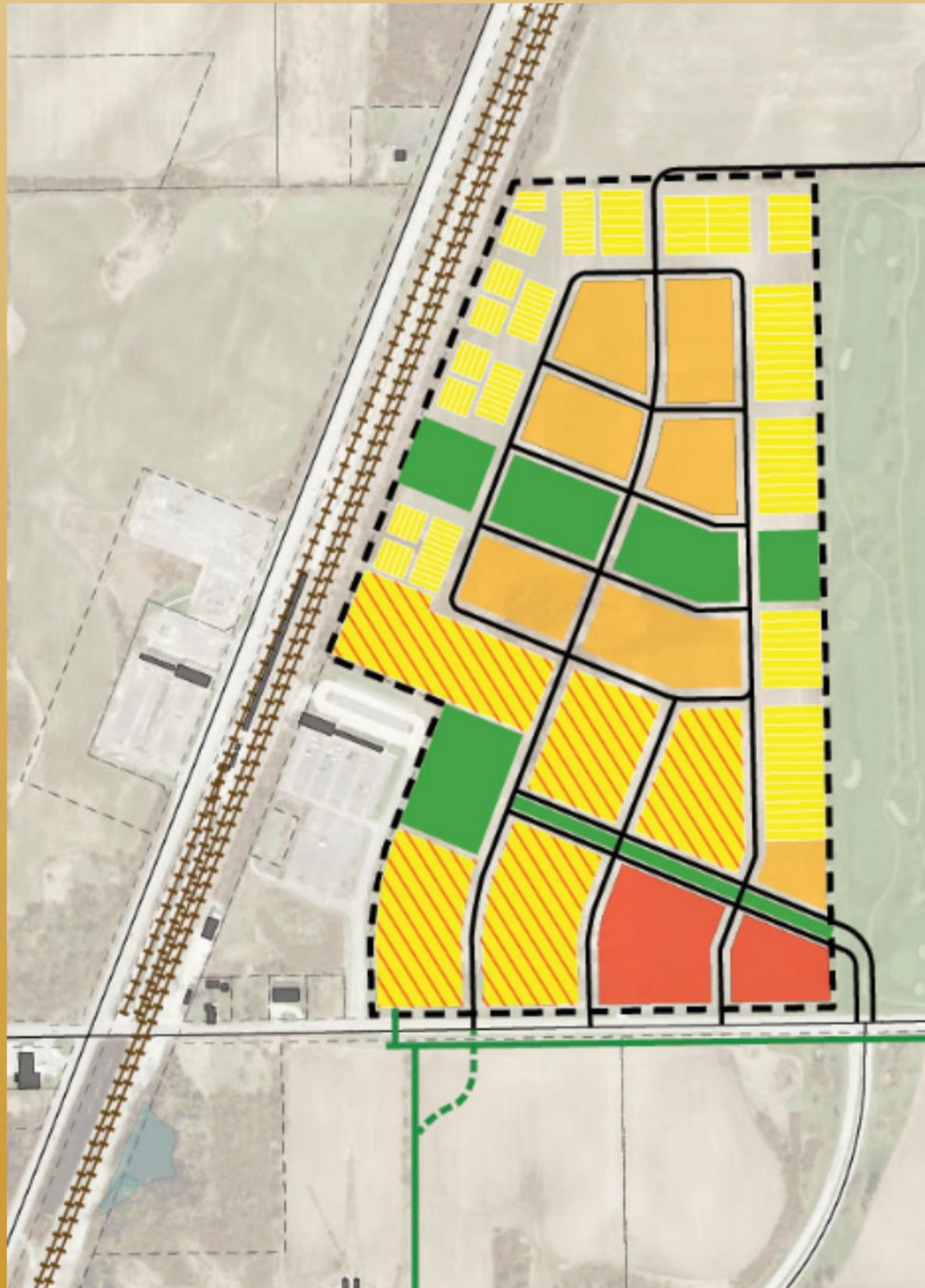
NODES:

Public realm amenities clustered around the station for activating the entrance and encouraging transit use.



RETAIL & COMMERCIAL:

Community services located along University Parkway and mixed use around the station for better access & connectivity



FINAL CONCEPT PLAN

Development Framework was used to create conceptual layout for the TOD Plan.

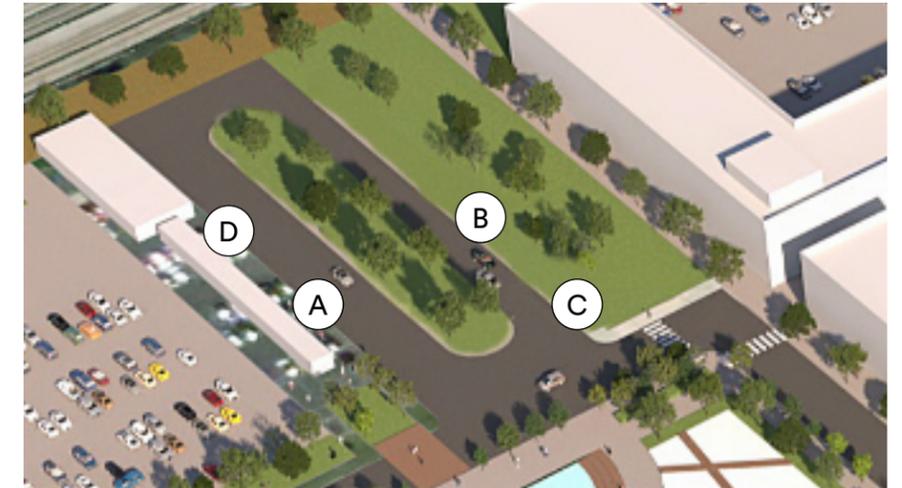
The following section discusses phasing and community programming of this plan. Real Estate Market Recommendations were used to propose project phasing. Community Meeting #1 findings were taken into consideration for proposing community programming, sustainable infrastructure and street design elements. Vision Zero Toolbox was also referred for street design elements.

6

TOD PLAN



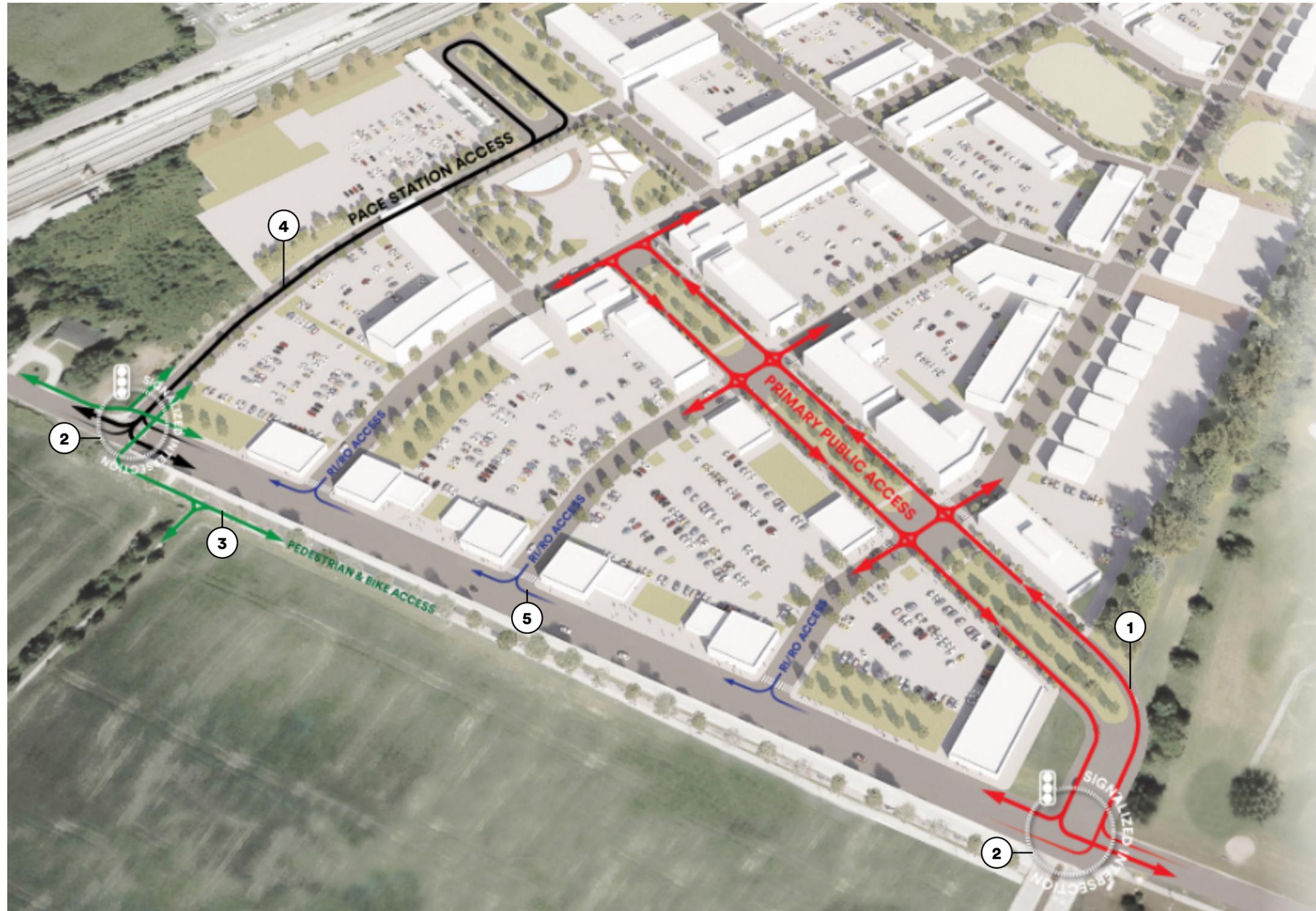
Aerial View of Proposed TOD Plan



Multimodal Transit Hub

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Main street connecting to GSU, aligning with University Dr | Stop with solar roof (A), EV Stations (B), Bike Stations (C), TNC/Taxi Pickups (D) |
| 2 Creating a welcoming boulevard connecting GSU and Metra Station | 8 Townhomes in the northern part of the site |
| 3 Creating mixed-use buildings and active sidewalks in proximity to the station | 9 Multifamily buildings along the main north-south connection and residential hub |
| 4 Creating Public Plaza to support variety of activities and connecting it to Metra Station | 10 Creating a northern connection to site from Crawford Ave |
| 5 Independent commercial building with quick access on University Pkwy | 11 Creating naturalized green space with bike and pedestrian trails. It also preserves existing water flow on site. |
| 6 Aligning existing driveway and bike trail for better connectivity and creating a signalized intersection. | 12 Single Family homes along the edge of Golf Course |
| 7 Improving mobility hub : Bus | 13 Maintaining existing transit routing to the station |

SITE CIRCULATION PLAN



- 1 Primary public access to the site would be from the intersection at University Parkway and University Drive.
- 2 The Plan proposes the identified intersections should be signalized to improve circulation and safety.
- 3 Pedestrian and Bicycle access to the Metra Station should be provided as shown.
- 4 Access to the Mobility Hub by Pace and other Transit providers is proposed via the existing drive and should not be impacted by any site activities (e.g. festivals or events in the park). Access to the Metra Station for Metra riders via the existing drive will be maintained.
- 5 Secondary access off University Parkway should be provided as needed based on future development.

PHASE 1

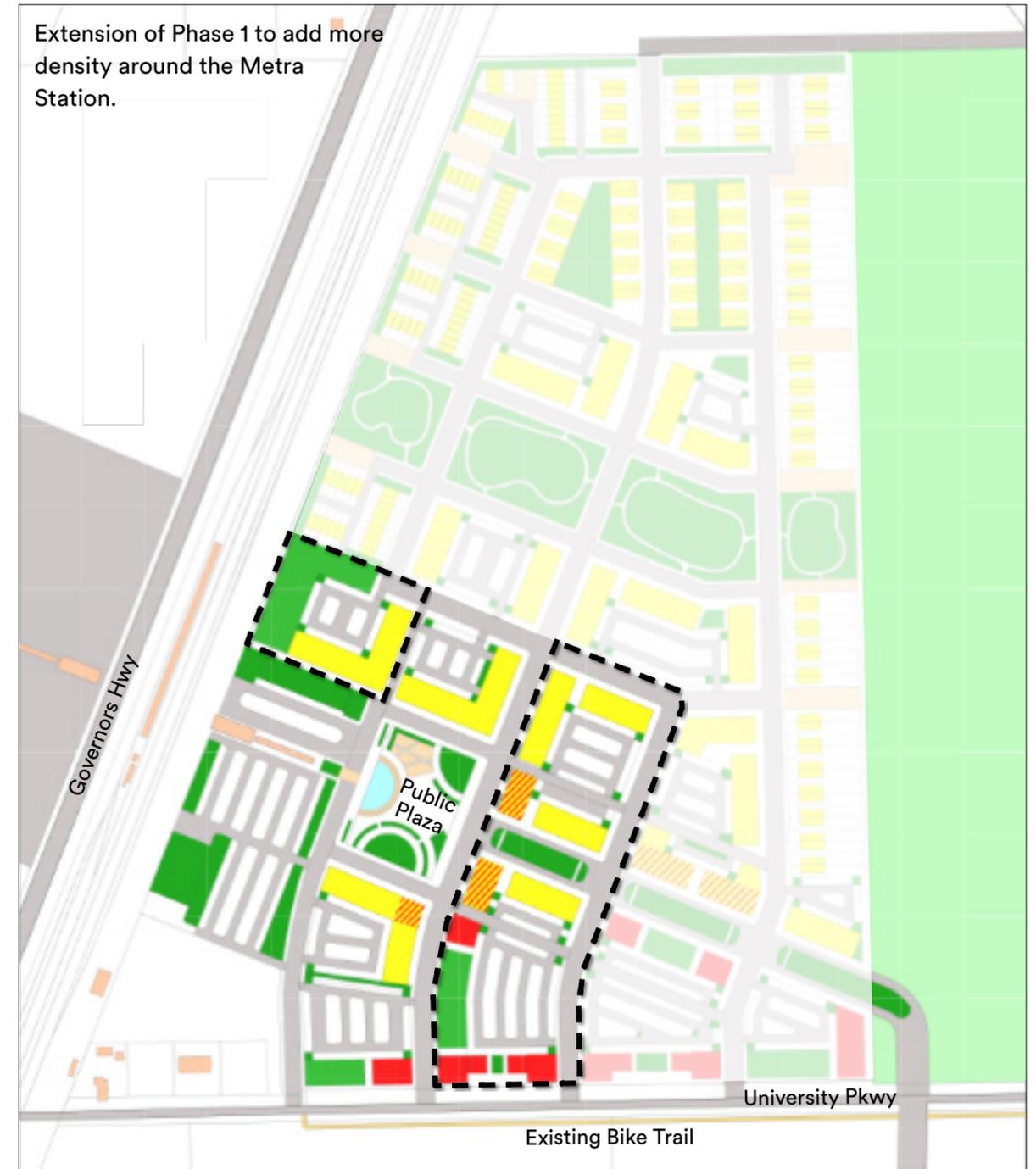
Development of area around the Metra Station entrance, with public plaza, mixed used buildings and an independent commercial unit to attract people and further development. It includes two buildings of 100 multifamily rental units each, with ground floor building amenities and commercial space. This phase development is in accordance with Real Estate Market Recommendations.



Creating catalyst site

PHASE 2

Extension of Phase 1 to add more density around the Metra Station.



Creating an activity hub around the Metra Station

- Open Space
- Residential
- Commercial
- ▨ First Floor Commercial

PHASE 3



Creating open and green spaces

PHASE 4



Creating a peaceful residential hub

- Open Space
- Residential
- Commercial
- First Floor Commercial

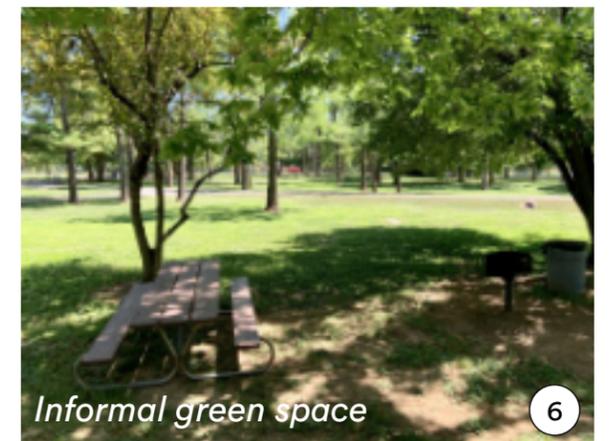
COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

The Village is interested in variety of public spaces to promote community culture. The public plaza, adjacent to the Metra Station will become a central node for these activities. The terminal location of the Metra Station will be an added benefit for these public spaces as it will increase footfall.



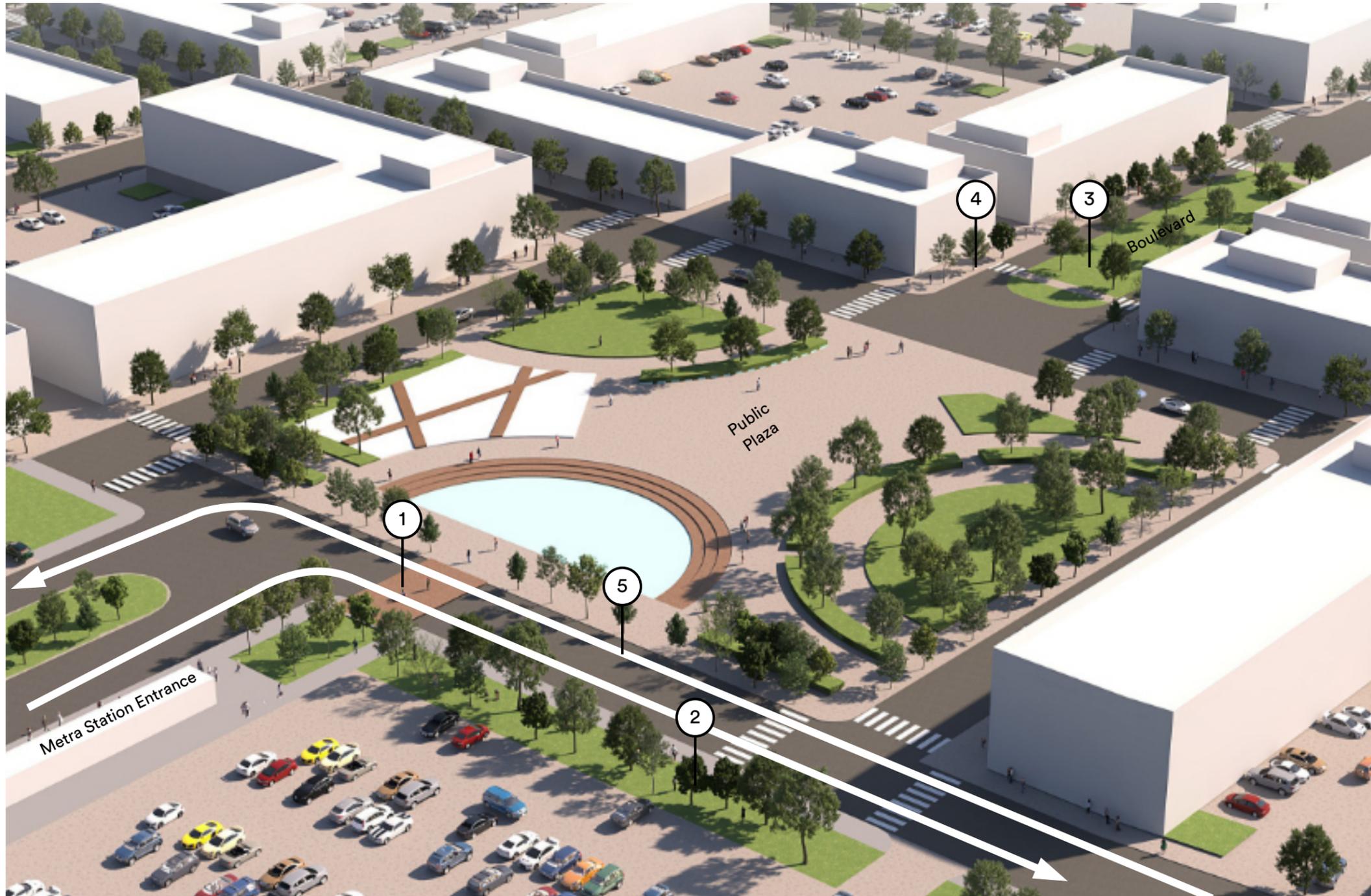
COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

The public plaza is proposed as a multi-use space. Its uses can be changed with season, for e.g. the waterbody turning into an ice skating rink. The design also caters to all age groups in the Village.



STREET DESIGN ELEMENTS

As mentioned in the Connectivity Analysis section, we proposed multiple Complete Street elements and programs to activate streets. The paved and raised crosswalk (1) will be essential in connecting station entrance to the plaza.



Maintain access to Mobility Hub for Transit providers 5

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Development and Concept Plan depict the pedestrian and vehicular circulation, public open space amenities, and land use and development. The Development Framework incorporated the findings from the market study, transportation improvements, and the community's goals for the TOD area, and has outlined a phased development approach to implement the TOD Plan.

The following section details the implementation strategy for the initial development of the first phase of the TOD. These strategies can be utilized and adapted for the development of subsequent phases to create a new and complete community.

The strategy is broken down into four components: Leadership, Pre-Development Activities, Residential Market, Retail and Commercial. They are organized into the recommended order of priority. However, to maximize the flexibility of the plan these strategies can happen in any order or simultaneously based on market opportunities.

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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following strategies will be useful with implementing the plan recommendations:

LEADERSHIP A successful development outcome stems from strong leadership working collaboratively with clear implementation goals and responsibilities. A partnership entity formed intentionally to implement the TOD Plan should include Village elected officials and staff, regional economic development organizations, executive management from large local employers, community leaders, and civic and business stakeholders.

Governors State University (GSU):

<https://www.govst.edu/>

With their recently completed strategic plan, GSU is pursuing growth in their educational offerings and student population, and as an employer of choice. Their community development goals are aligned with the TOD plan, particularly in their employer-assisted pilot program which can connect to the TOD's housing opportunities. GSU's close proximity to the TOD area creates a natural partnership to advocate for commercial development, housing, open space, and transportation improvements.

South Suburban Employer Housing (EAH) Consortium:

<http://southsuburbanhousingcenter.org/>

The EAH advocates for housing policies, links employees with homebuyer education and counseling, and offers down payment and rental assistance. EAH will play a crucial role as more companies partner to create employer-assisted housing programs which can link to the TOD housing options.

Southland Development Authority (SDA):

<https://southlanddevelopment.org/>

The SDA can leverage their network of committed business leaders to link to the TOD Development Plan and address the current limited local housing options for area employees. Promoting the Employer Housing Consortium's home ownership efforts is where SDA can serve as a strong partner in the success of the TOD area.

Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (CSEDC):

<https://csedcworks.org/>

The CSEDC leads economic development initiatives which target the growth of the manufacturing and logistics base of the South Suburbs. CSEDC can advocate for public and private resources to support the TOD redevelopment goals, creating much-needed housing options for the employees of local large industrial and commercial businesses near the TOD.

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA):

<https://www.ssmma.org/>

The SSMMA represents over 45 municipalities in the South Suburbs, supporting their growth and development with a collaborative, cross-border approach. SSMMA's experience in all facets of community and economic development as an intergovernmental agency will be a valuable asset for the implementation of the TOD plan.

PRE - DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure improvements delivered by the public sector can accelerate private investment by creating development-ready building sites. Key pre-development elements are:

Land Acquisition:

Assembling property under single, public ownership creates a consolidated development site and allows for cost savings and efficiency during the infrastructure and site development stage. Single ownership allows individual development parcels to be ready and available for interested developers. The South Suburban Land Bank may serve as a resource for the land acquisition efforts. Offering village-owned land for low or no-cost for projects which meet the TOD redevelopment goals can attract and incentivize developer interest.

<https://www.SSLBDA.com/>

Infrastructure & Development:

Completing site infrastructure work for the whole Phase 1 site maximizes resources and supports timely redevelopment. Site due diligence will determine any environmental remediation, water connections, and utility service needs. The construction of the new roadways, the plaza, boulevard and other open spaces can streamline the development of the future individual project sites.

Gaps in the existing multi-use path surrounding the site should be filled in, and existing sections Village-wide should be maintained and improved to help ensure that bicyclists and pedestrians feel safe and comfortable.

Entitlements:

Due to the unique characteristics of the proposed plan, current site zoning should be revised to facilitate the implementation of the plan. Establishing a zoning district, via a planned unit development or as-of-right zoning, gives developers reliable and transparent development rights so they can prepare their development plans and secure financing.

Developer Attraction:

Issuing a Request For Proposal or Qualifications, to an inventory of developers or a through a broker engagement, will identify potential master developers for the entire property and smaller developers to construct the individual building sites.

DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

RESIDENTIAL

Residential uses occupy the majority of the space within the new mixed-use buildings. Targeting a broad range of housing sectors can expand market reach and accelerate the lease-up-rate. Potential housing populations include:

Rental Housing:

In response to current market conditions, the Phase 1 mixed-use, multi-story buildings will likely be comprised of rental housing. As the for-sale market strengthens and lower density, townhome-style units are built in later phases, owner-occupied units will follow. Demand for rental housing will come from the growing workforce in the nearby industrial corridor, faculty and students from Governors State University, and existing residents looking to downsize or reside in an amenitized modern building.

Workforce Housing:

Employees with moderate incomes, especially those who work in the nearby growing industrial corridor, can live close to employment opportunities in these new housing developments.

Employer – Assisted Housing:

Local businesses and large employers will encourage employees to live and work in University Park through home ownership or rental assistance incentives. Governors State

University has launched a pilot program with the South Suburban Employer Housing Consortium.

Mixed Income Housing:

Mixed-income buildings with a blend of market rate and potential affordable housing offer a variety of housing options for the existing and new residents.

RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL

Retail and services will locate in the mixed-use buildings near the train station and along University Parkway to serve the existing community, commuters, and the growing residential population.

Convenience Retail and Services:

Small-scale, convenience retail and services will locate on University Parkway offering easy access from a highly trafficked street. Attracting national retailers and service businesses can continue through participation in ICSC National and Chicagoland, and with marketing efforts with local brokers.

Service Businesses:

Personal and business services and a limited amount of retail can be recruited and supported to open on the first floor of the new mixed-use buildings near the train station. New or existing businesses can grow and relocate into new spaces.

Development Resources address gaps in financing the development opportunities as described in the TOD land use plan. This includes the pre-development phase creating new roadways, open spaces, and targeted development sites as well as the completion of new mixed-use and commercial buildings. Potential resources are described below.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Financial and technical assistance programs offer valuable support for the predevelopment infrastructure required to create marketable development opportunities.

Tax Increment Financing:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be a useful tool for encouraging and enabling new development. The current TOD site is outside of any existing TIF district. If appropriate, creating a new TIF district or expanding existing ones, should be considered by the Village. The timing of any consideration would be dependent on developer interest.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) State Revolving Fund:

Improvements to water infrastructure and access.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/state-revolving-fund/Pages/default.aspx>

Rebuild Illinois Public Infrastructure and Regional Economic Development programs:

Roads and utility infrastructure.

https://dceo.illinois.gov/communitydevelopment/rebuildillinois_programs.html

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS CAPACITY

Existing and potential incentives and capacity building programs can attract new or relocated businesses to the new TOD developments.

University Park Incentives:

- Develop or promote incentives to support new business development, such as permit fee waiver, expedited permit and business license review.

Will County Center for Economic Development:

<https://willcountyced.com/>

- Capacity-building and workforce development services to small businesses.

- Partner with University Park to introduce a tax abatement incentive for developers who purchase tax-exempt commercial (including mixed-use and multi-family) property for development, similar to the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association's Southland Reactivation Act available in Cook County.

State of Illinois Small Business Programs and Incentives:

- Small Business Development Center – South Suburbs, (SBDC)₂ offers programs to support small business growth.

<https://southlandsbdc.com/>

- Illinois Business Enterprise Program, (BEP)₂ builds the capacity of minority- and women-owned businesses.

<https://cei.illinois.gov/business-enterprise-program.html>

- Advantage Illinois, below-market financing for business expansion.

<https://dceo.illinois.gov/smallbizassistance/advantageillinois.html>

ACCESS TO QUALITY HOUSING

Diverse housing options can be offered in the new mixed-use buildings and supported by subsidies and financing tools designed to augment private investment.

University Park Incentives:

- Develop or promote incentives to support new housing development, such as density bonuses and employer-assisted programs. Adding affordable housing requirements could benefit existing Village residents.

South Suburban Employer Housing Consortium:

- Partnership with Governors State University to provide financial and technical assistance to GSU employees for the purchase of a new home.

- Expansion of Employer Assisted Housing Consortium to increase home ownership for employees in University Park to live where they work.

Will County Affordable Housing Programs:

- The We WILL Build Initiative offers down payment assistance programs.

<https://willcountyillinois.com/County-Offices/Economic-Development/Will-County-Land-Use-Department/Community-Development-Division/Grant-Administration/We-WILL-Build>

- The County's HOME program funds acquisition and construction costs for new affordable housing developments through a qualified application process.

Illinois Housing Development Authority Affordable Housing Financing Tools:

- The Illinois Affordable Housing Tax credit attracts private investment into housing development projects through the tax credit syndication.

- The Multi-family Financing Program offers first mortgage and bond financing with low-interest construction and permanent financing.

- The Next Generation Capacity Building for BIPOC developers includes loans, training and technical assistance for affordable housing projects.

<https://www.ihda.org/developers/developer-resource-center/>

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

ACTION ITEMS	POTENTIAL AGENCIES/ PARTNERS
Land Acquisition	Southland Development Authority (SDA) South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (SSLBDA)
Infrastructure & Development	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA)
Developer Attraction	South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative (SSEGI) Will County Community Development Division Will County Center for Economic Development
RESIDENTIAL	
Rental Housing:	Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA)

DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES	TIME-FRAME		
	1-5 yrs	5-10 yrs	10+ yrs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Suburban Land Bank 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax Increment Financing Illinois Environmental Protection Agency State Revolving Fund Rebuild Illinois Public Infrastructure and Regional Economic Development programs 	X		
University Park Incentives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density bonuses Tax-exemption on new developments Next Generation Capacity Building for BIPOC developers Will County Housing Development Workshops 	X	X	
RESIDENTIAL			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will County's HOME program funds Illinois Affordable Housing Tax credit 	X	X	

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

ACTION ITEMS	POTENTIAL AGENCIES/ PARTNERS
RESIDENTIAL	
Workforce Housing:	Will County Community Development Division Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA)
Employer – Assisted Housing:	Governors State University (GSU) South Suburban Employer Housing Consortium
Mixed Income Housing:	Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) Will County Community Development Division
RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL	
Commercial Retail and Service Businesses:	Southland Development Authority (SDA) Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) Will County Center for Economic Development

DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES	TIME-FRAME		
	1-5 yrs	5-10 yrs	10+ yrs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density Bonus Incentive, to be developed • We WILL Build Initiative • Multi-family Financing Program 		X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with GSU & Employer Housing Consortium • Expansion of South Suburban Employer Housing Consortium to local employers • Illinois Affordable Housing Tax credit 	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will County’s HOME program funds • We WILL Build Initiative • Multi-family Financing Program 		X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Park Incentives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permit fee waiver – Expedited permit – Business license review – Tax-exemption on new developments – Capacity-building and workforce development services 	X	X	X

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This planning effort is only the beginning. Over the past year, the team has worked with the Village and the community to define a Vision and framework for the future of the TOD area around the University Park Station. To keep the momentum of this plan moving, the following steps are proposed along with the tools and resources in the previous section.

1. Village TOD plan approval process and re-zoning to Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planned Development District (PD).

2. Preliminary Implementation Steps

- a. Property owner coordination*
- b. Developer solicitation and determine interest*
- c. Infrastructure plan, phasing, estimated budget and funding resources*
- d. Preparing funding and grant applications*
- e. Potential Village land acquisition if necessary*
- f. Distribution of developer request for proposals (RFP)*
- g. Review of developer proposals and negotiation*
- h. Preparation of development agreement*
- i. Review plans with Metra and Pace*

