Grand Avenue Corridor Plan

Adopted March 2025



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

THE VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN PARK ILLINOIS

Acknowledgments

This project's success is due to the residents, business owners, village employees, and elected officials who helped create this plan.

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Introduction

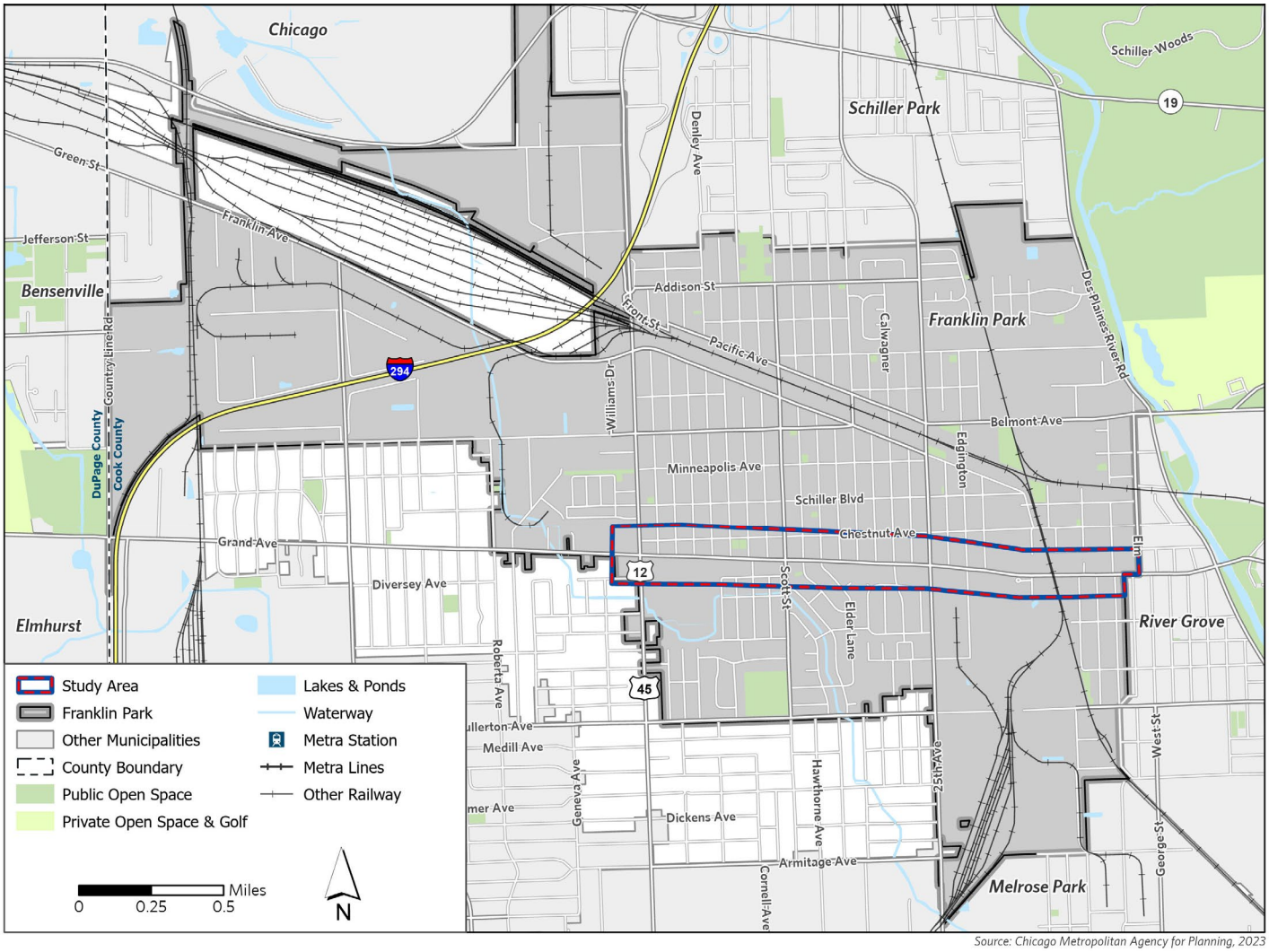
Project overview

The Grand Avenue Corridor Plan was created through a collaborative process that engaged residents, interest groups, village staff, and others who call Franklin Park home. Research, data collection, and deep community engagement shaped the planning process in this corridor plan, which is meant to guide the vision for Grand Avenue over the next ten to twenty years.

The plan is a policy document and is not legally binding. The plan will serve as a framework for elected officials, village staff, and community members to make informed decisions regarding land use, transportation, economic development, and other infrastructure improvements along Grand Avenue in Franklin Park. The plan is flexible and should be adapted as changes occur.

ON TO 2050, the regional comprehensive plan for northeastern Illinois, serves as a blueprint for the 7 counties and 284 municipalities of the region on how best to accommodate and prepare for future conditions. The Grand Avenue Corridor Plan addresses transportation safety and economic development considerations that align with ON TO 2050 principles of resiliency, inclusive growth, and prioritized investment.

Figure 1: Study area map



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2023

Why Grand Avenue needs a corridor plan

Grand Avenue in Franklin Park is a suburban commercial corridor with strong potential, supported by stable household sizes and income levels, demand for dining, and convenient access to public transit and O'Hare International Airport. However, competition from neighboring districts, persistent vacancies, aging infrastructure, and limited new development have influenced perceptions of the corridor. While the village is working towards a cohesive development strategy for the corridor, the car-centric layout and fragmented land uses remain challenging. Nonetheless, Franklin Park's growing population of older, affluent residents and business travelers presents opportunities for future development.

Transportation is critical along Grand Avenue, a busy regional thoroughfare with safety concerns affecting drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Pace bus route 319 provides transit access, but walkability improvements are needed for a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Currently, Grand Avenue has few areas suitable for walking and leisure, and stakeholders have called for a more visually appealing corridor with placemaking elements like planters, greenery, and public art.

Environmental sustainability is another priority for Franklin Park, especially given Grand Avenue's location within the Silver Creek Watershed and its large amount of impervious surfaces. Building on recent village sustainability efforts, there are opportunities to enhance green infrastructure, tree canopy coverage, and stormwater management along the corridor.

In addition to these challenges, Grand Avenue has opportunities to leverage Franklin Park's increasingly diverse population. Continued village engagement will be crucial to encouraging and guiding development and helping realize the full potential and cohesive vision of this key corridor.

Corridor segments and nodes

Grand Avenue is a diverse corridor with varying development patterns throughout. CMAP defined four segments of the corridor, based on their overall character, land uses, scale, and function within the community. The corridor plan specifies which segments are relevant to each strategy.



Regional commercial: Larger regional commercial uses exist on the western end of the corridor around the Mannheim Road and Grand Avenue node. Characterized by large parking areas and auto-oriented design, this area accommodates high-traffic retail and uses that serve a broad regional audience.



Local commercial: Around Scott Street, more local commercial establishments begin to appear. Smaller scale retail uses dominate this stretch of the road until the 25th Street node. Development patterns are more pedestrian-friendly.



Technology infrastructure business cluster: East of 25th Street, light industrial uses — such as the data center — become more common. With proximity to the Franklin Park Milwaukee District West Metra station and existing technology infrastructure businesses, this area is a potential employment center along Grand Avenue.



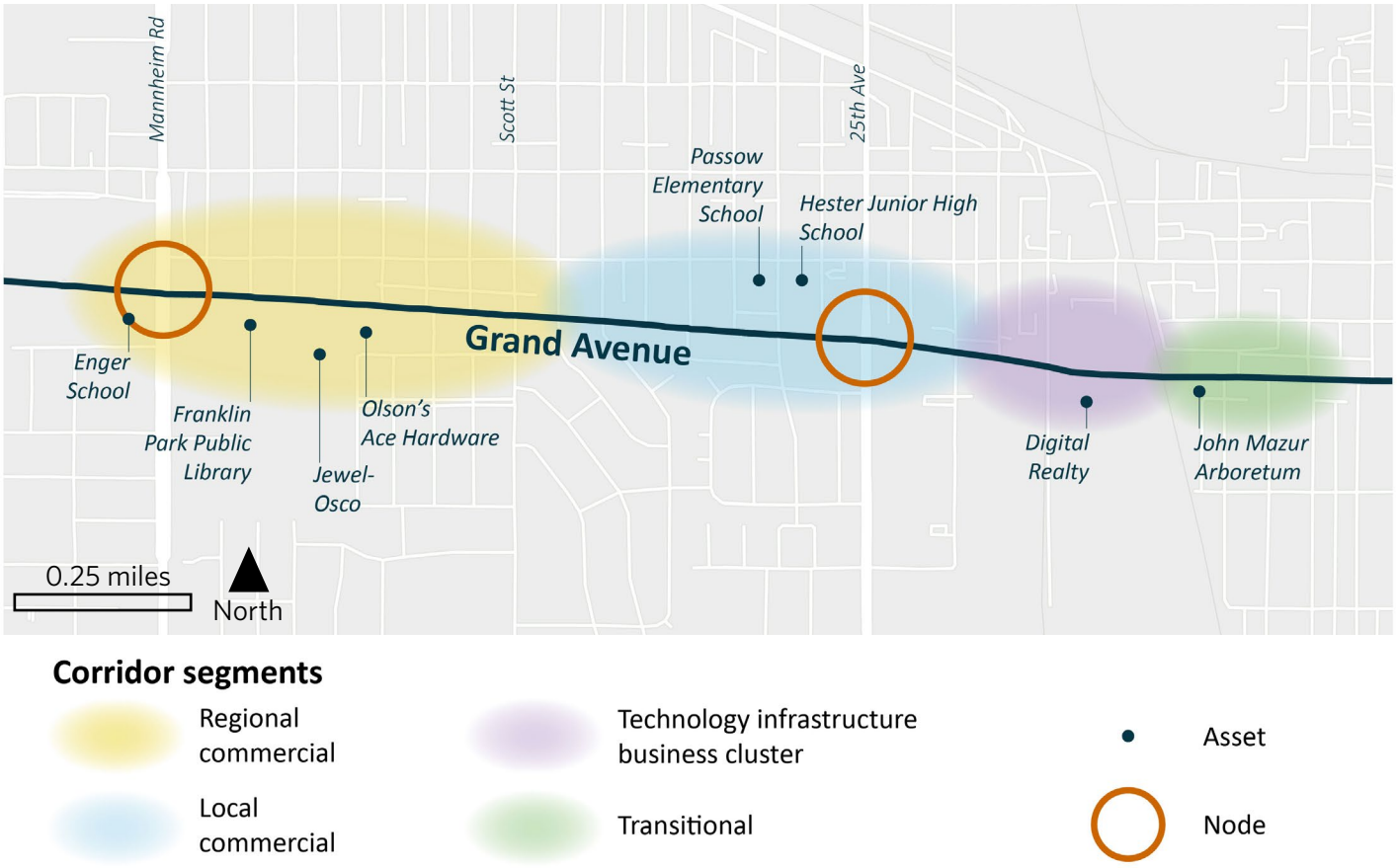
Transitional: The eastern edge of the corridor serves as a transitional area between nearby industrial uses and residences. Currently, this area is comprised of the John Mazur Arboretum, single-family homes, and intermittent commercial businesses.



Nodes: Defined by the area around key intersections and activity hubs along the corridor, each node has unique characteristics and anchors intersecting land uses. Two primary nodes exist along the Grand Avenue corridor:

- Grand Avenue and Mannheim Road node
- Grand Avenue and 25th Avenue node

Figure 2: Grand Avenue corridor segments and nodes

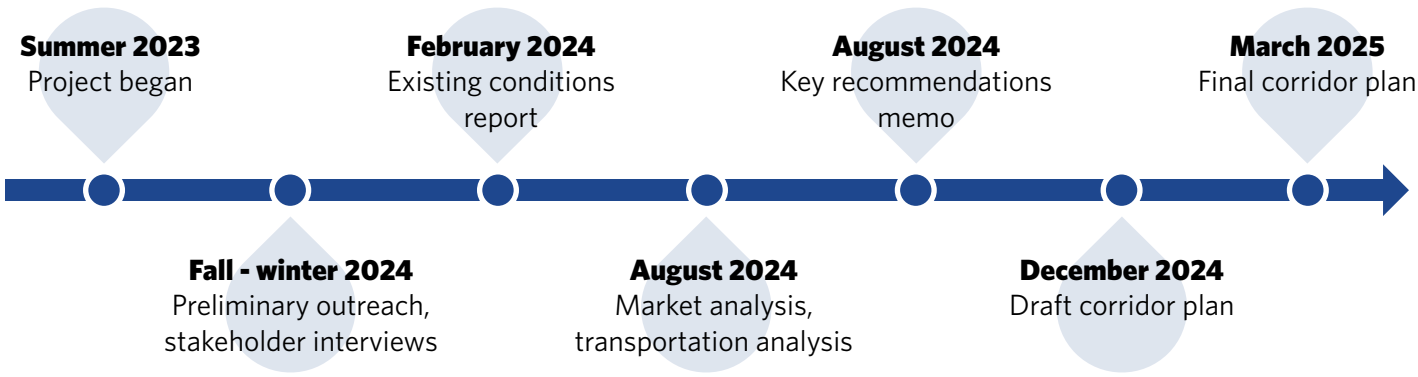


Project timeline

The project kicked off in the summer of 2023 when the project team learned more about the community through outreach, stakeholder interviews, and an analysis of existing conditions. These efforts were summarized in an existing conditions report published in February 2024. Once the team had the opportunity to get to know the community and understand key stakeholders, a steering committee was formed to review deliverables and guide the project.

The team continued to seek feedback from community stakeholders as the project moved into the development of key recommendations in the summer of 2024, with the plan drafting phase occurring in the fall of 2024. The plan was finalized in March 2025.

Figure 3: Project timeline



Community outreach

Community engagement is a critical part of the planning process. The team worked hard to learn about the corridor's challenges and opportunities to ensure that recommendations reflected what we heard.

The team collected feedback from a wide range of stakeholders including residents, senior citizens, transit riders, property owners, and the business community to ensure that all voices had an opportunity to provide input. Stakeholders contributed through interviews, steering committee meetings, targeted surveys, conversations, as well as ideas and feedback submitted through the project website.

During the public review process, the team gathered additional feedback through engagement tools on the project website as well as in-person events. The team attended numerous community events including the Holiday Tree Lighting, Franklin Park Fest, Summer Concert Series, Passow Elementary School Open House, Fall Fest Parade and Pumpkin Fest, virtual and in-person visioning workshops, and more.



Tree lighting and Winterfest
December 2023



Community workshop
January 2024



Franklin Park Fest
June 2024



Street Dance
June 2024



Passow Elementary School Open House
August 2024



Summer Concert Series
August 2024



Fall Fest Parade and Pumpkin Fest
October 2024



Visioning workshop
October 2024

Grand Avenue today

Three key studies were conducted to understand the corridor's existing conditions, each providing unique insights about Grand Avenue as it is today and helping to inform key themes for the plan. *To read the analyses, see the Appendix.*

Existing conditions report: Provides an overview of existing conditions in Franklin Park and around Grand Avenue, and summarizes key factors influencing the corridor plan recommendations. The report includes supporting charts, maps, and other graphics.

Market analysis: Identifies feasible economic development opportunities and strategies to support existing small businesses, and approaches for vacant and underutilized properties along the corridor.

Transportation analysis: Provides in-depth data analysis of transportation conditions that impact the Grand Avenue corridor to inform recommendations in the plan.

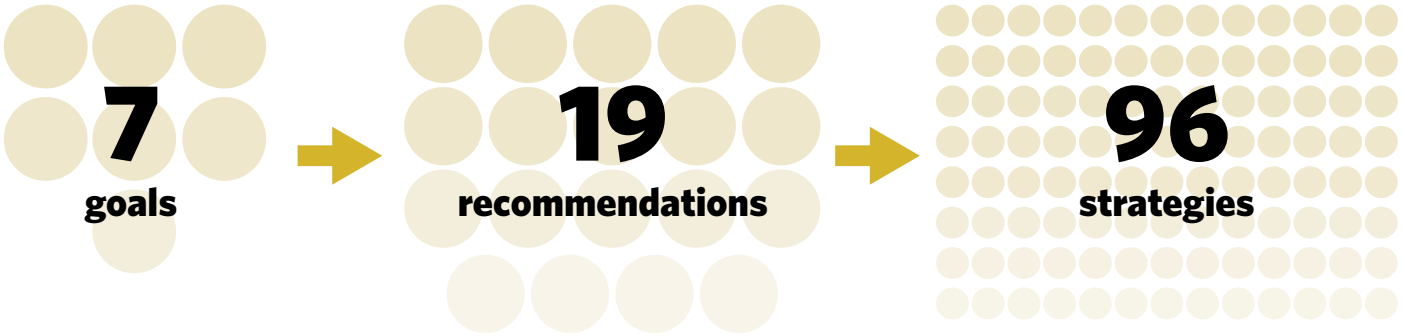
Key themes

Several key themes emerged from stakeholder engagement and existing conditions analysis, which informed the overarching goals for the future:

1. Create a unified corridor that promotes pedestrian activity, maximizes safety, and enhances the liveliness of Grand Avenue.
2. Ensure that Grand Avenue is resilient to changing market conditions.
3. Support a flourishing and equitable community in the Grand Avenue corridor with improved transportation.
4. Improve safety for all users along Grand Avenue.
5. Diversify housing along Grand Avenue and within Franklin Park.
6. Leverage the Grand Avenue Corridor to promote climate resilience in Franklin Park.
7. Improve the quality of and access to natural assets in Franklin Park.

Plan structure

The plan is organized by overarching goals, recommendations, and strategies.



Overarching statements that reflect the community's aspirations for the corridor's future

Detailed guidance for steps to reach the plan's goals

Specific actions that bring the recommendations to life, including sources, resources, timelines, and corridor segment applicability

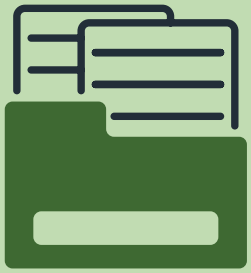
Implementation matrix

This tool ensures a structured approach to implementation and organizes plan recommendations and strategies into a user-friendly matrix. The matrix also includes a timeline, funding opportunities, and resources for each strategy, as well as applicable segments of the corridor. Each section of the plan is followed by an implementation matrix.



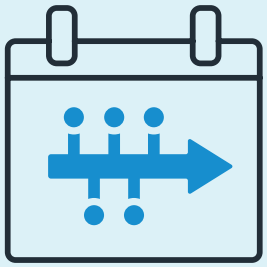
Funding sources

Potential funding options the village can pursue to support project implementation. These may include grants, technical assistance, staff time, or other financial resources relevant to each strategy.



Resources

Guides, online resources, articles, and other materials that provide additional information to support implementation of each strategy.



Timeline

Estimated length of time it would take to implement the strategy. This chronological framework helps track progress and ensure that the implementation stays on course. Short-term is 5 years or less, medium-term is 5 to 10 years, and long-term is 10 years or longer.



Segment applicability

Aligns with the corridor segment map (figure 2) to identify the geographical area along the corridor where each strategy should be implemented.

Goal:

Create a unified corridor that promotes pedestrian activity, maximizes safety, and enhances the liveliness of Grand Avenue



Recommendation 1

Incentivize compact developments that prioritize pedestrians and serve nearby residential areas

By decreasing the need for cars and encouraging walking, biking, and public transit use, compact developments can help decrease air pollution, enhance public health, and foster a livelier community. Furthermore, compact developments can conserve open space by curbing urban sprawl and encouraging denser development in already developed areas.

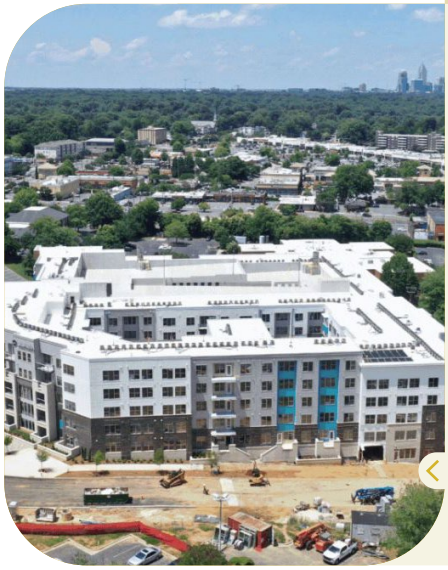
Compact developments are medium-to-high-density, mixed-use areas that prioritize pedestrians over cars. They are often located in developed areas and typically include a mix of residential, commercial, and office spaces, allowing residents to live, work, and play nearby. The 2017 Franklin Park Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of unifying the Grand Avenue's character, and the following strategies build those recommendations.

A compact, walkable environment should include reduced parking requirements because of the reduced demand for parking. Drivers can park once and access multiple destinations on foot and pedestrian access is increases in neighboring areas. Excess parking has a negative effect on walkability and reduces the economic potential of development.

Strategy 1.1

Work with property owners along the regional commercial segment of the corridor to devise solutions to reimagine the use of large parking fields, improve pedestrian mobility, and enhance landscaping and streetscape design.

Case study



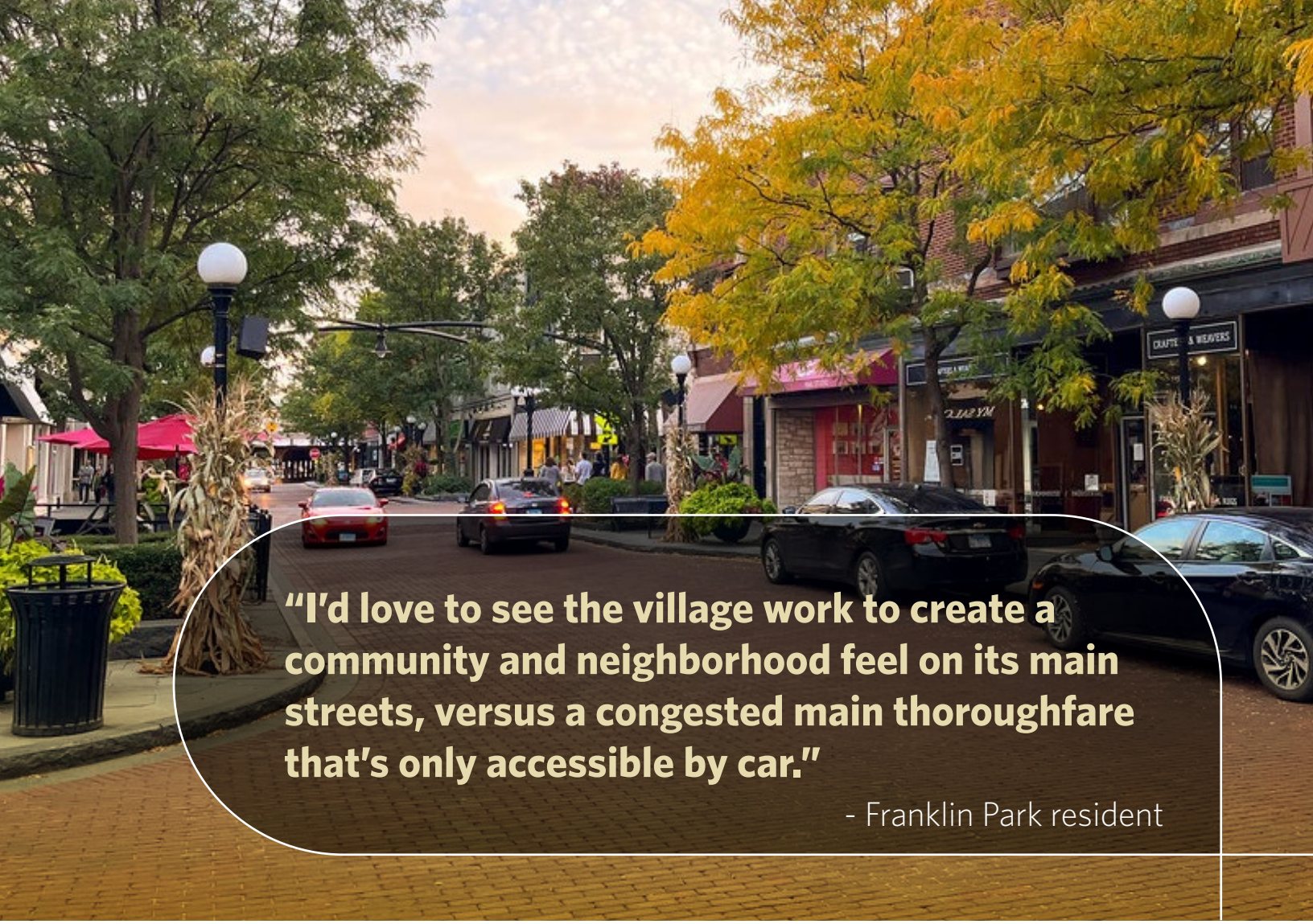
Montford Park phases I & II
Montford, Charlotte, NC

After acquiring an aging office park in Charlotte's Montford neighborhood, Grubb Properties transformed the surrounding parking lots into a mixed-use community. They began with energy-efficient renovations of a 1970s office building and added an additional ten-story office structure. The project includes a shared parking model that serves office tenants and residents, enhances sustainability, and reduces costs for both the developer and consumers.

Case study source: The Evolution of Montford Park from Parking Lot to Community

Construction of Link Apartments on a reclaimed parking lot.

Photo source: Grubb Properties



"I'd love to see the village work to create a community and neighborhood feel on its main streets, versus a congested main thoroughfare that's only accessible by car."

- Franklin Park resident

Strategy 1.2

Provide transportation infrastructure that can help boost foot traffic and overall business patronage, including: electric vehicle charging stations; bicycle parking; protected on-street bike lanes; neighborhood greenways; signage and designated routes to regional trails and main bicycle routes; enhanced bus shelters; trolley or shuttle service for holidays; etc.

> *A well-connected environment helps attract foot traffic and boost local businesses. By enhancing transportation infrastructure, Grand Avenue can become more inviting to visitors. For more detailed recommendations, funding sources, and resources for transportation infrastructure improvements, see Goal 3: Support a flourishing and equitable community in Franklin Park's Grand Avenue corridor with improved transportation.*

Strategy 1.3

Allow existing and new businesses to create interactive elements on their premises (e.g., walk-up service windows, activated alleys, retractable decorative garage doors, murals or public art, etc.).

Recommendation 2

Implement placemaking projects that transform vacant areas into vibrant community spaces

Placemaking creates vibrant and engaging public spaces that reflect a community's unique character and needs. These projects can be temporary installations or permanent developments that transform underutilized or neglected areas into lively, functional spaces for people to gather, play, and interact. The Grand Avenue corridor offers a fantastic opportunity for placemaking projects to revitalize the area. With several parking lots and vacant lots available, the village can create engaging and dynamic community spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Strategy 2.1

Create "third places" like public parks, libraries, neighborhood cafes, and communal spaces, to be included in new public and private developments along the Grand Avenue corridor or as part of placemaking initiatives.

Case study



New classrooms were built to add to the library's capacity, as well as a public outdoor plaza.

Photo source: Project for Public Spaces via GAF

The Shafter Library & Learning Center as a third place
Shafter, CA

The Shafter Library & Learning Center underwent a significant expansion and redesign led by Project for Public Spaces with support from GAF, a local roofing manufacturer. The enhancements include a new children's reading room, expanded classrooms, and an outdoor plaza for community gatherings and activities. Serving a predominantly Spanish-speaking community, the Learning Center provides resources for all ages in literacy, adult job preparedness, STEM, and vocational skills. The newly transformed library doubled its capacity for patrons and is a beloved hub for educational and recreational activities in the community.

Case study source: Project for Public Spaces

Strategy 2.2

Streetscaping can include plazas with interactive features, spaces for outdoor dining and shopping, public art, creative crosswalk designs, intersection stamping, gateway features at corridor entry points, and more.

Case study



Fairland and Briggs Chaney Placemaking Festival
Fairland, MD

Organized via a partnership between the Montgomery County Planning Department and nonprofit Better Block Foundation, the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Placemaking Festival was held on a reclaimed section of the Briggs Chaney Park and Ride in 2022. This community-driven event included interactive art installations, food vendors, and family activities. Residents collaborated with planning staff and the Better Block Foundation team to create temporary public spaces that encouraged social engagement and showcased potential improvements from the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan. The festival highlighted short-term solutions for public spaces, engaged the community in redesigning local streets, and gathered data for future permanent designs.

Case study source: Montgomery County Planning Department

Materials like furniture and play equipment were built for the festival, and portions of the parking lot were painted to create a temporary and safe pedestrian space.

Photo source: Montgomery County Planning Department

Strategy 2.3

Actively involve residents in planning processes through surveys, workshops, or other forms of engagement to ensure that prospective placemaking projects are supported by the community.

Strategy 2.4

Collaborate with stakeholders to identify potential locations for placemaking projects, provide resources for their implementation, and ensure that the projects reflect the interests of residents.

Strategy 2.5

Explore external funding options for materials, design services, or other resources to help facilitate placemaking projects.

Case study



Friendship Neighborhood Intersection Redesign
Pittsburgh, PA

The Friendship Community Group collaborated with the City of Pittsburgh to improve a complex five-way intersection near a popular community gathering space. This project aimed to enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists by widening sidewalks, adding crosswalks, and repositioning stop signs while reclaiming asphalt for extra parklet space. Residents contributed to the design through workshops, leading to significant safety improvements such as a 40 percent reduction in speeding and 61 percent fewer conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. The design cost approximately $15,000 and supplies averaged $10,000.

Case study source: Bloomberg Philanthropies

A before and after photo of the Baum Grove intersection redesign. Multiple schematics were created by residents and designers.

Photo source: Bloomberg Philanthropies

Strategy 2.6

Experiment with placemaking concepts like pop-up parks and temporary art installations before making permanent modifications.

Case study



The Park at Forest-Audelia/Audelia Urban Park
Dallas, TX

Through a partnership between the Better Block Foundation and the Dallas Park Department, a pop-up park was created on an underused portion of a shopping center parking lot. The space features a community garden, play area, weekend farmers' market, and public seating. The park is part of a larger initiative by the Dallas Park Department to develop a permanent recreational area that will include an expanded neighborhood park, library, and police station.

Case study source: Better Block Foundation Dallas Park Department

Photo source: Better Block Foundation

Strategy 2.7

Install public art along Grand Avenue that represents and celebrates the community's diversity and culture. Public art plays a crucial role in placemaking by contributing to the creation of a distinct identity and fostering a sense of place.

Recommendation 3

Review and update the village's zoning code to align with the future vision of Grand Avenue

It is essential to review and update the village's zoning code, building on recent updates that have laid a strong foundation. This process will ensure that zoning regulations continue to support the desired mix of uses, densities, and design standards that are key to transforming Grand Avenue into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly corridor that attracts investment.

Strategy 3.1

Ensure standards support mixed-use development, particularly by establishing a mixed-use overlay district along Grand Avenue between 25th Avenue and Scott Street. This may include standards and policies that allow for shared parking.

For more details on shared parking, see recommendation 2, strategy 2.1.

Strategy 3.2

Allow for the types of uses envisioned along the Grand Avenue corridor.

Strategy 3.3

Review and amend building setback and yard requirements along the Grand Avenue corridor, possibly integrating specialized requirements as part of the potential mixed-use overlay district.

Strategy 3.4

Permit freestanding lots and infill development on existing strip mall properties.

Case study



Fox Valley Mall 2.0 redevelopment plan
Shafter, CA

Fox Valley Mall is one of several malls nationwide that have adapted to changing market needs by redeveloping vacant or underused parking lots and buildings into housing. Phase 1 of the mall's redevelopment included the construction of the Lumen luxury apartment complex with 304 units, which replaced a former Sears building. Phase 2 of the mall's redevelopment plan includes a 323-unit luxury apartment community and a 212-unit senior housing development, with an anticipated completion date of fall 2025. The mall's redevelopment will also include two new public greenspaces — Fox Yard and Center Park.

Case study source: Fox Valley Mall

Bird's-eye view of the Lumen housing property, the first phase of redevelopment at Fox Valley Mall.

Photo source: Chicago Business Journal

Strategy 3.5

Incentivize redevelopment of underused land into compact, mixed-use developments by offering zoning incentives like density bonuses and reduced parking requirements in exchange for aspects like sustainable design, creative site design, affordable housing options, etc.

Implementation matrix

Goal: Create a unified corridor that promotes pedestrian activity, maximizes safety, and enhances the liveliness of Grand Avenue.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Incentivize compact developments that prioritize pedestrians and serve nearby residential areas.		
1.1		
Work with property owners along the regional commercial segment of the corridor to devise solutions to reimagine the use of large parking fields, improve pedestrian mobility, and enhance landscaping and streetscape design. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term, as properties redevelop or change ownership **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	Transportation Alternatives Program Funds non-motorized transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle improvements, as well as streetscape projects Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Can be used for streetscape improvements, pedestrian facilities, and other enhancements that improve the quality of life in commercial corridors Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Municipal bonds Local business improvement districts Corporate/foundational grants Public-private partnership	A Business Case for Dropping Parking Minimums Parking Policy Reform (Shared Parking) Parking Policy Innovations in the United States RTA Transit Friendly Communities Guide Pace Transit Supportive Guidelines National Complete Streets Coalition Active Transportation Alliance Complete Streets: Chicago Region Case Studies
1.2		
Provide transportation infrastructure that can help boost foot traffic and overall business patronage, including: electric vehicle	Transportation Alternatives Program Available for bike and pedestrian infrastructure, greenways, and improvements that enhance non-motorized transportation and access to regional trails Urbanized Area Formula Grants (5307) Provides funds to public transit systems in urbanized areas for capital planning projects	RTA Transit Friendly Communities Guide Pace Transit Supportive Guidelines National Complete Streets Coalition

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
charging stations; bicycle parking; protected on-street bike lanes; neighborhood greenways; signage and designated routes to regional trails and main bicycle routes; enhanced bus shelters; trolley or shuttle service for holidays; etc. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Bus and Bus Facilities Program Can be used to construct bus facilities and modernize fleets Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (FHWA) Funding for multimodal pedestrian and bicycle projects that prioritize safety Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Can fund bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including bike parking, greenways, and signage for regional routes Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Supports smaller infrastructure projects that improve access to public transit, such as enhanced bus shelters and signage for pedestrian and bicycle routes Illinois Safe Routes to School Program Funds projects that enhance safety for children of all abilities who walk, roll, or bike to school EV charging providers (e.g., ChargePoint, EVgo) Some EV charging providers offer partnerships with local governments and businesses to install EV chargers at low or no cost	Active Transportation Alliance Complete Streets: Chicago Region Case Studies. Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and ComEd EV Readiness Program AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit
1.3		
Allow existing and new businesses to create interactive elements to their premises (e.g., walk-up service windows, activated alleys, retractable decorative garage doors, murals or public art, etc.). **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants Can be used to support local businesses and improve community spaces, particularly in low-to-moderate-income areas. Funds could be used for façade improvements or public art installations. Illinois Arts Council Agency Grants Can be used to fund murals, interactive sculptures, or other artistic enhancements to business premises. Local business improvement districts Kresge Foundation Knight Foundation Patronicity	Grand Avenue Facade Rebate Program Funded by CDBG funds, the Facade Rebate Program is intended to assist business owners revitalize local businesses along the Grand Avenue corridor, including commercial and industrial businesses. Activating Alleys for a Lively City Green Alleys: Detroit's Opportunity for Innovation Walk-Up Windows an Emerging Trend Reclaiming Lost Spaces: Activating Alleyways CMAP Arts and Culture Toolkit

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
	In Our Backyards National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants	Chicago's Best Walk-Up Windows Reclaiming Lost Spaces: Activating Alleyways CMAP Arts and Culture Toolkit Chicago's Best Walk-Up Windows
Recommendation 2: Implement placemaking projects that transform vacant areas into vibrant community spaces.		
2.1		
Create "third places" like public parks, libraries, neighborhood cafes, and communal spaces, to be included in new public and private developments along the Grand Avenue corridor, or as part of placemaking initiatives. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants Can be used for the development of public spaces like parks, plazas, and other communal spaces in low- to moderate-income areas. This is a versatile source for funding third places that promote social interaction and community vitality. Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program Provides grants to local governments for the development and acquisition of land for parks and open spaces, which would be essential for creating accessible greenspaces and communal areas along the corridor. Trust for Public Land Provides funding and support for the creation of parks and public spaces, particularly in underserved communities. Their Parks for People program could be a good fit for developing new parks along the corridor. Developer contributions Developers can be incentivized or required through zoning or density bonuses to include public parks, plazas, or cafes as part of their developments. This can be part of a negotiated agreement in exchange for higher density or other zoning allowances. Impact fees Municipalities can impose impact fees on new developments, which can be used to fund public spaces like parks, plazas, or communal gathering areas as part of private developments along the corridor.	Vanishing third places and what can be done "Third Places" as community builders Project for Public Spaces APA Placemaking Resources AARP Placemaking Resources

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.2		
Use streetscape design to make the Grand Avenue corridor a memorable place to shop, dine, and visit. **Timeline:** Short term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants Safe Streets and Roads for All National Association of Realtors Placemaking Grants Building and Supporting Equitable Development by the Kresge Foundation Local Initiatives Support Corporation Creative Placemaking Patronicity In Our Backyards Project for Public Spaces Community Placemaking Grants Better Block Foundation Grants Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge Asphalt Art Initiative Grants America Walks Community Change Grant National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants	Fairland and Briggs Chaney Placemaking Festival Front and Schiller Park Creative Placemaking Project Richfield Area Resident Engagement Creative Placemaking Project AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit ULI Building Healthy Corridors Guide
2.3		
Actively involve residents in planning processes through surveys, workshops, or other forms of engagement to ensure that prospective placemaking projects are supported by the community. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	A Playbook for Inclusive Placemaking Community Engagement Through Public Art Master-planning & Creative Placemaking Placemaking, Public Participation, and Transit Oriented Development

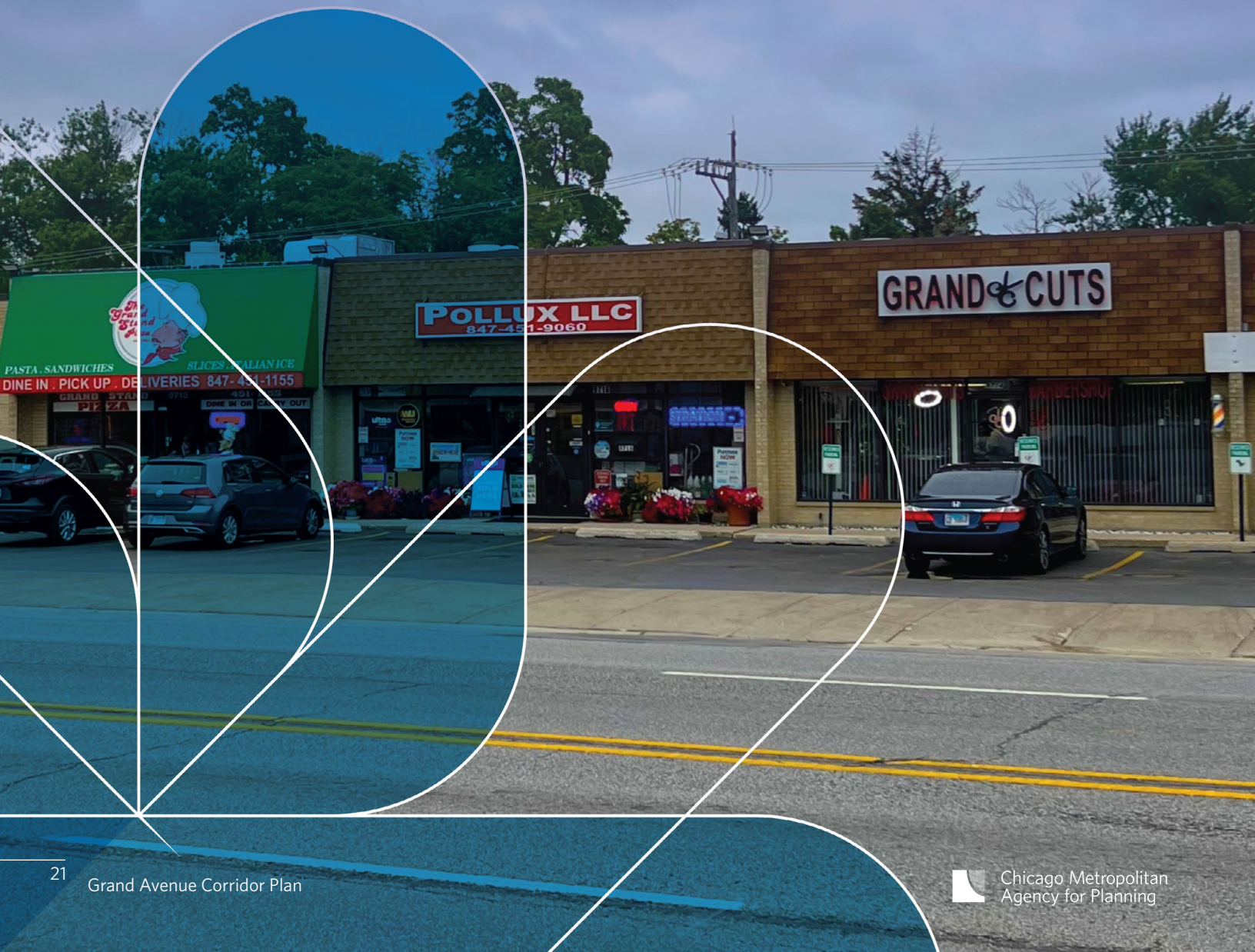
Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.4		
Collaborate with stakeholders to identify potential locations for placemaking projects, provide resources for their implementation, and ensure that the projects reflect the interests of residents. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	See strategy 2.3	See strategy 2.3
2.5		
Explore external funding options for materials, design services, or other resources to help facilitate placemaking projects. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants Kresge Foundation Grants Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge Better Block Foundation Grants	Activate Mill Street "Seeing Spartanburg In A New Light" Bloomberg Public Art Challenge Friendship Asphalt Art Project Bloomberg Public Art Challenge/ Asphalt Art Initiative
2.6		
Experiment with placemaking concepts like pop-up parks and temporary art installations before making permanent modifications. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Better Block Foundation Grants AARP Community Challenge Grants Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge KABOOM! Play Everywhere Challenge	The Park at Forest-Audelia Pogo Park #1 – Elm Playlot Placemaking Riverdale Metro McAllen Swing-and-Ride Mathieu Court Alley Play Street AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.7		
Install public art along Grand Avenue that represents and celebrates the community's diversity and culture. Public art plays a crucial role in placemaking by contributing to the creation of a distinct identity and fostering a sense of place. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge	Thriving Together "Seeing Spartanburg in a New Light" CMAP Arts and Culture Toolkit APA Public Art Resources
Recommendation 3: Review and update the village's zoning code to align with the future vision of Grand Avenue.		
3.1		
Ensure standards support mixed-use development, particularly by establishing a mixed-use overlay district along Grand Avenue between 25th Avenue and Scott Street. This may include standards and policies that allow for shared parking. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial	RTA Community Planning Program Supports updates to zoning codes to make them more supportive of transit, which would include Grand Avenue and its access to buses and proximity to Metra. Staff time	Metropolitan Area Planning Council Shared Parking Examples Parking Strategies for TOD
3.2		
Allow for the types of uses envisioned along the Grand Avenue corridor. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	RTA Community Planning Program Includes developer panels that can discuss TOD potential, which would apply to Grand Avenue and its access to buses and proximity to Metra. ULI Chicago Technical Assistance Services	Mixed Use Zoning: A Planner's Guide | Metropolitan Area Planning Council Bethesda Overlay Zone

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
3.3		
Review and amend building setback and yard requirements along the Grand Avenue corridor, possibly integrating specialized requirements as part of the potential mixed-use overlay district. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial	Staff time	Design Guidelines for Residential Mixed-Use Projects
3.4		
Permit freestanding lots and infill development on existing strip mall properties. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	Staff time	New Commercial Strip Mall Policy Provides Great Affordable Housing Development Opportunities Repurposing Underutilized Strip Malls to Create Multifamily Housing Strip Malls as a Housing Solution Turning Malls into Neighborhoods Infill Ordinances
3.5		
Incentivize redevelopment of underused land into compact, mixed-use developments by offering zoning incentives like density bonuses and reduced parking requirements in exchange for aspects like sustainable design, creative site design, affordable housing options, etc. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Community Development Block Grants Illinois Housing Development Authority Trust Fund Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund HUD HOME Investment Partnerships Program Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program Affordable Housing Program Cook County Affordable Housing Assessment Program	Montgomery County Moderately Price Dwelling Unit Program Developers are allowed a density increase of up to 22% above the normal density permitted under the specific zone. Affordable Housing Zoning Bonus How One Developer Is Delivering Urban Infill Housing Innovations Program: Density Bonuses

Goal:

Ensure that Grand Avenue is resilient to changing market conditions



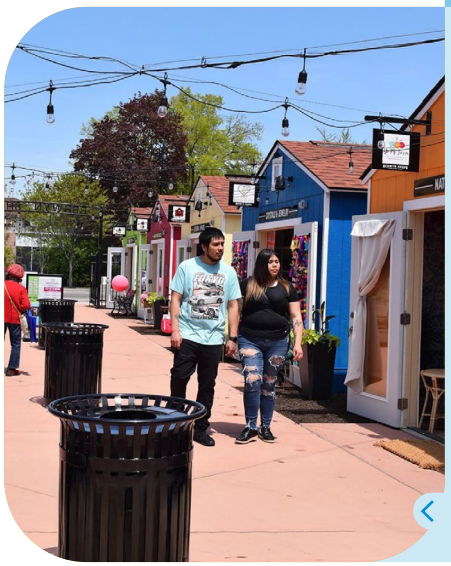
Recommendation 1 | Activate vacant properties and market the corridor

Commercial real estate along Grand Avenue is primarily made up of retail properties. The pandemic was particularly challenging for this market, leading to an increase in vacancies in recent years. These vacancies present an opportunity for new uses that can serve the corridor's residents and visitors.

Strategy 1.1

Support property owners in utilizing vacant land or spaces for temporary uses, such as pop-up stores and restaurants, outdoor dining, art installations, pop-up parks, community events, startup spaces for entrepreneurs, and more.

Case study



Berwyn Shops: A Homegrown Project
Berwyn, IL

Located along the historic Roosevelt Road Corridor, the Berwyn Shops offer a supportive launchpad for local makers, artisans, and entrepreneurs. Inspired by the Batavia Boardwalk Shops, this incubator features twelve 12'x15' cottage-style storefronts that allow vendors to showcase their products while accessing critical resources for growth, including business education, promotion, and operational support. The shops create lasting economic value for Berwyn by cultivating future business tenants for the community. By attracting shoppers and generating foot traffic, this incubator strengthens nearby local businesses and sparks renewed interest in the Roosevelt Road Corridor.

Case study source: Berwyn shops

Strategy 1.2

Coordinate with the Grand Chamber by O'Hare Airport to identify shops, restaurants, or other businesses in their coverage area that may be seeking places to expand or relocate, as well as new businesses that may be seeking to break into the O'Hare Airport market.

Strategy 1.3

Create a corridor design plan that includes elements like corridor branding, gateway features, wayfinding signage, streetscape design, and a Complete Streets approach to create a unique sense of place and beautify Grand Avenue.

Strategy 1.4

Evaluate new offerings to expand the village's economic development incentives, including Class 7 incentives, grants for façade improvements, business relocation, business expansion, interior modernization, waived or reduced permit fees, etc.



"I would love things to attract residents to Grand Avenue on a weekend, like an arts and crafts fair or farmers' market."

- Franklin Park resident

Strategy 1.5

Create a Franklin Park economic development portal on the village website to promote available sites with pertinent site data, list available development incentives, provide links to municipal codes and ordinances, and share asset maps for the Grand Avenue corridor and overall community.

Case study



West Chicago Development Portal
West Chicago, IL

An innovative online portal streamlines access to information for developers and attracts new investment. This user-friendly platform also consolidates resources, making it easier for developers to evaluate opportunities in West Chicago and navigate the development process.

Key features of the portal include a community profile with demographic information and a data dashboard. Developers can also explore available properties and information about incentive programs, business districts, and development plans. The interactive zoning map further enhances usability by allowing users to visualize boundaries and zoning requirements.

Case study source: West Chicago Development Portal

Strategy 1.6

Cluster employment generating developments along Grand Avenue in areas that are within walking distance of the downtown Metra station, particularly east of the Grand Avenue and 25th Street node.

Recommendation 2 | Target development that aligns with current market trends

To maximize the Grand Avenue corridor's potential, it is important to target development that aligns with current market trends. This approach involves identifying and attracting businesses and developers that cater to emerging consumer demands. The market analysis showed that there is an opportunity for businesses catering to Franklin Park's increasing population of older, more affluent residents, as well as to business travelers. By focusing on development that meets these market trends, the village can create a dynamic and competitive corridor that attracts both local residents and visitors.

Strategy 2.1

Provide spaces with shared amenities for short-term office uses (e.g., coworking spaces and offices with open layouts, targeting business travelers, entrepreneurs, and startups).

> *This should be done in coordination with seeking advice from economic development professionals. See recommendation 3, strategy 3.1*

Strategy 2.2

Evaluate reuse of vacant buildings to create specialized business incubators.

> *This may include shared space kitchen with communal equipment and facilities; shared salon space with individual chair rental space for entrepreneur hair and nail stylists; makerspaces for artists, artisans, and other creatives; etc.*

Strategy 2.3

Coordinate with the Grand Chamber by O'Hare Airport and local colleges to identify trends in workforce gaps and emerging skills to better target investments in business attraction and skills training.

Strategy 2.4

Consider business travelers' common amenity needs (e.g., lodging, gyms, workspaces, dining, entertainment, etc.), to include in future development sites or fill vacant spaces along the Grand Avenue corridor, with a focus on the new Wyndham hotel in the Grand Avenue and Mannheim Road node.

Strategy 2.5

Build up broadband and technology supportive infrastructure to attract new tech and data-centered businesses, clustering them near similar businesses that are located on the east end of the Grand Avenue corridor near the Grand Avenue and 25th Street node.

Strategy 2.6

Provide services and housing that cater to Franklin Park's growing cohort of older, wealthier residents, including specialized healthcare, wealth management, and housing for seniors and downsizing households.

Recommendation 3

Proactively engage the development and business communities

Building strong relationships with developers, investors, and local business owners can help the village better understand their needs, challenges, and aspirations. By fostering open communication and collaboration, the village can attract quality developments that align with the corridor's vision and market potential. Engaging these key stakeholders early and often will be critical to the corridor's long-term success and vibrancy.

Strategy 3.1

Engage a panel of economic development experts, with support from CMAP and other organizations like Urban Land Institute, to solicit advice for redevelopment of key vacant commercial and office spaces, underdeveloped sites, or sites subject to redevelopment.

Strategy 3.2

Host a "Franklin Park Developer Day" to showcase available properties and potential developments along Grand Avenue.

Strategy 3.3

Promote Franklin Park at commercial trade conferences like the International Council of Shopping Centers.



Digital Realty at the southeast corner of Grand Avenue and Martens Street redeveloped their space in 2016 to accommodate growing businesses and announced plans to acquire and redevelop more property nearby.

Implementation matrix

Goal: Ensure that Grand Avenue is resilient to changing market conditions.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Activate vacant properties and market the corridor.		
1.1		
Support property owners in utilizing vacant land or spaces for temporary uses, such as pop-up stores and restaurants, outdoor dining, art installations, pop-up parks, community events, startup spaces for entrepreneurs, and more. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	APA Grayfields Reuse and Redevelopment Resources AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit Local examples: McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes Batavia Boardwalk Shops Berwyn Shops The Rustic Fox CloudKitchens Ghost Kitchens
1.2		
Coordinate with the Grand Chamber by O'Hare Airport to identify shops, restaurants, or other businesses in their coverage area that may be seeking places to expand or relocate, as well as new businesses that may be seeking to break into the O'Hare Airport market. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	Grand Chamber by O'Hare Cook County Bureau of Economic Development Local examples: Lombard Business Grants West Chicago Economic Development Incentives

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.3		
Create a corridor design plan that includes elements like corridor branding, gateway features, wayfinding signage, streetscape design, and a Complete Streets approach to create a unique sense of place and beautify Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	All Together Studio Guide Studio Locality Studio
1.4		
Evaluate new offerings to expand the village's economic development incentives, including Class 7 incentives, grants for façade improvements, business relocation, business expansion, interior modernization, waived or reduced permit fees, etc. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Development of a village funding pool to support incentives	Cook County Bureau of Economic Development Cook County Property Tax Incentives Local examples: Lombard Business Grants West Chicago Economic Development Incentives
1.5		
Create a Franklin Park economic development portal on the village website to promote available sites with pertinent site data, list available development incentives, provide links to municipal codes and ordinances, and share asset maps for the Grand Avenue corridor and overall community. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Staff time	West Chicago Development Portal

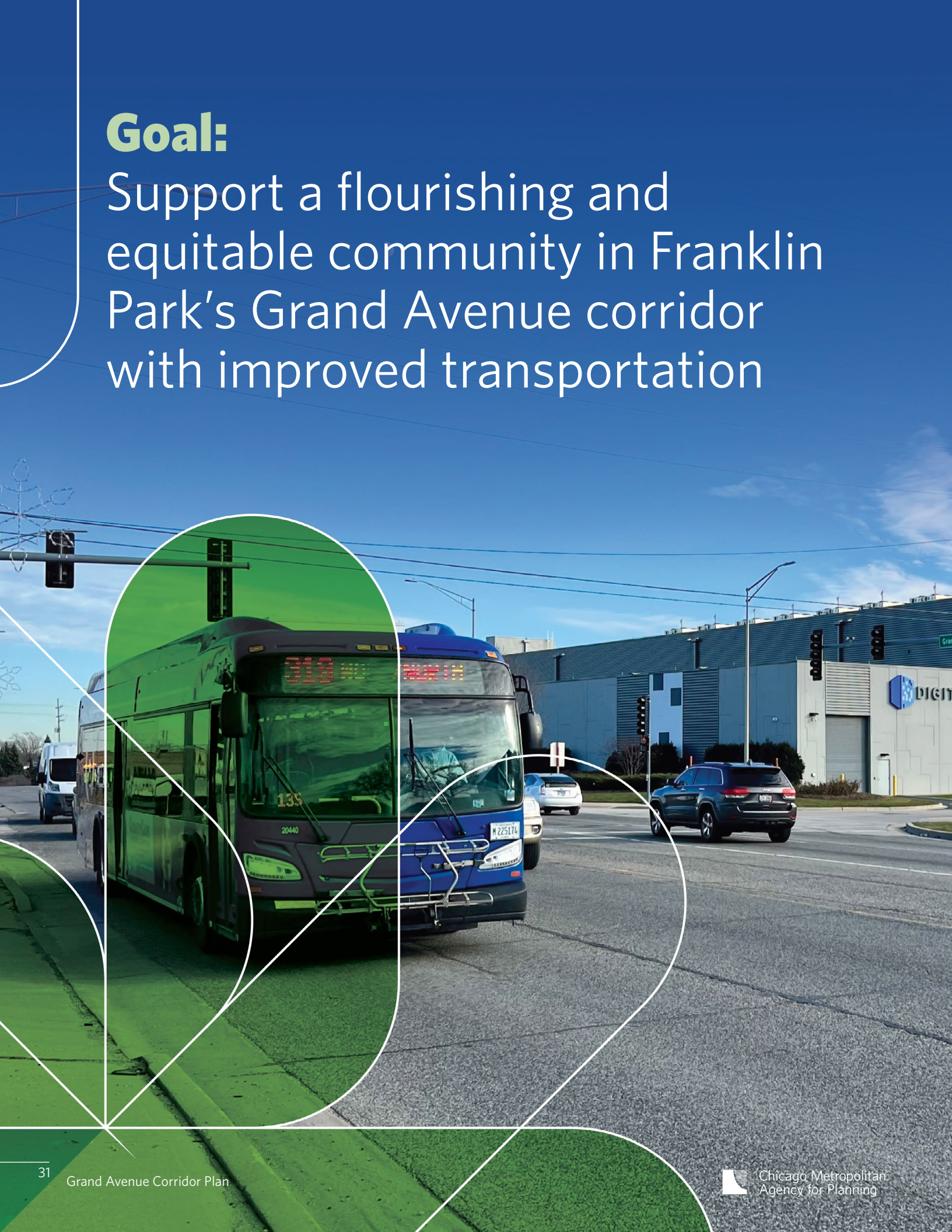
Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.6		
Cluster employment generating developments along Grand Avenue in areas that are within walking distance of the downtown Metra station, particularly east of the Grand Avenue and 25th Street node. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Technology infrastructure business cluster	Tax increment financing districts Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	RTA Mapping and Statistics TOD Plans
Recommendation 2: Target development that aligns with current market trends.		
2.1		
Provide spaces with shared amenities for short-term office uses (e.g., coworking spaces and offices with open layouts, targeting business travelers, entrepreneurs, and startups). **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial	See strategy 3.1	See strategy 3.1
2.2		
Evaluate reuse of vacant buildings to create specialized business incubators. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial	Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	APA Grayfields Reuse and Redevelopment Resources AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes Salon Booth Rentals Salon Chair Rentals Makerspaces Local examples: Batavia Boardwalk Shops Berwyn Shops The Rustic Fox CloudKitchens Ghost Kitchens The Hatchery Chicago (non-profit food and beverage incubator)

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.3		
Coordinate with the Grand Chamber by O'Hare Airport and local colleges to identify trends in workforce gaps and emerging skills to better target investments in business attraction and skills training. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	Grand Chamber by O'Hare Triton College School of Business
2.4		
Consider business travelers' common amenity needs (e.g., lodging, gyms, workspaces, dining, entertainment, etc.), to include in future development sites or fill vacant spaces along the Grand Avenue corridor, with a focus on the new Wyndham hotel in the Grand Avenue and Mannheim Road node. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	See strategy 3.1	See strategy 3.1
2.5		
Build up broadband and technology supportive infrastructure to attract new tech and data-centered businesses, clustering them near similar businesses that are located on the east end of the Grand Avenue corridor near the Grand Avenue and 25th Street node. **Timeline:** Medium-long-term **Segment applicability:** Technology infrastructure business cluster	Illinois Office of Broadband Grants Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program Broadband Grant Programs	Illinois Office of Broadband Illinois Broadband Lab Cook County Digital Equity Map

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.6		
Provide services and housing that cater to Franklin Park's growing cohort of older, wealthier residents, including specialized healthcare, wealth management, and housing for seniors and downsizing households. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial, transitional	Tax increment financing districts Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives) AARP Community Challenge Grants	AARP Livable Communities Resources
Recommendation 3: Proactively engage the development and business communities.		
3.1		
3.1 Engage a panel of economic development experts, with support from CMAP and other organizations like Urban Land Institute (ULI), to solicit advice for redevelopment of key vacant commercial and office spaces, underdeveloped sites, or sites subject to redevelopment. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	RTA Community Planning Program Includes developer panels that can discuss TOD potential, which would apply to Grand Avenue and its access to buses and proximity to Metra ULI Chicago Technical Assistance Services	RTA Mapping and Statistics Developer Panels ULI Chicago Technical Assistance Services
3.2		
Host a Franklin Park Developer Day to showcase available properties and potential developments along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Staff time	Greater Muskegon Developer Day Greater Cadillac Area Developer Day
3.3		
Promote Franklin Park at commercial trade conferences like International Council of Shopping Centers **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Staff time	International Council of Shopping Centers

Goal:

Support a flourishing and equitable community in Franklin Park's Grand Avenue corridor with improved transportation



Recommendation 1

Support an equitable community by providing travel options along and near Grand Avenue

Grand Avenue today prioritizes vehicular mobility and access over that of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. Residents have expressed interest in safer and more convenient access on foot and by bicycle for destinations along Grand Avenue, whether for work, school, shopping, services, or community. We heard in our project outreach that people want to have a choice when traveling, but feel compelled to drive — even just to cross Grand Avenue — because of safety and the lack of options. Having a variety of travel options will bring more people into Franklin Park and activate Grand Avenue in an equitable way.

Strategy 1.1

Provide protected, high-visibility pedestrian crossings at a spacing of approximately 1/4-mile apart to ensure that people can reach businesses, transit, and community facilities on foot regardless of where they live.

Case study



Madison Street
Forest Park, IL

The Village of Forest Park installed a raised crosswalk accessible to people with disabilities. Ways to improve safety can be seen along this corridor:

- Slower vehicle speeds
- Moderate traffic volumes
- Curb bumpouts built around street parking to reduce crossing distances

The traffic volume, AADT (the Annual Average Daily Traffic), is 12,200 in this section of Madison Street. Along Grand Avenue it's 20,800 east of 25th Avenue, and 23,000 west of 25th Avenue.

Another effective strategy are median refuge islands, which allow pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time.

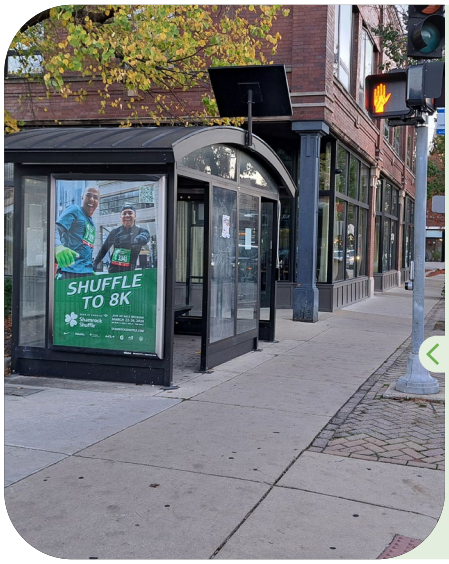
Source: CMAP

Strategy 1.2

Work with Pace to upgrade bus stops from flag stops to designated stops with full accessibility for people with disabilities and located at safe crossings along Grand Avenue.

> *At flag stops, passengers can board or alight the bus at any intersection along the route where the driver deems it is safe to do so. At posted stops, passengers can board or alight the bus only at posted Pace bus stop signs or Pulse stations.*

The village should ensure that transit stops are adjacent to safe crossings on Grand Avenue marked with high-visibility crosswalks. Each bus stop on Grand Avenue should be accompanied by a pedestrian actuated, fully accessible traffic signal or a median refuge with a safety device such as rapid flash rectangular beacons or pedestrian hybrid beacon. The village should participate in the Pace ReVision process to update the bus route network. Initial maps indicate a potential westward extension of the Grand Avenue bus service, consistent with serving Grand Avenue commuters bound for DuPage County.



An example of a Pace bus stop and shelter
Pace bus stops should be well drained and kept clear of ice, snow, and debris. Waiting areas and shelters should be located to the rear of the sidewalk to keep transit customers away from the road spray kicked up by vehicles during storms. Stops should be well lit to ensure that waiting passengers and passing pedestrians are visible to bus drivers and other motorists. Concrete bus pads should also be considered, to prevent pavement rutting and cracking.

Source: CMAP



"I would like to bike and walk on Grand Avenue, especially in the summer since it's more enjoyable and a lot of businesses are close to my house and don't require a car."

- Franklin Park resident

Strategy 1.3

Provide safe and protected bikeways to reach destinations along Grand Avenue, including parallel streets or a bike boulevard — sometimes known as neighborhood greenways — along Chestnut Avenue.

> *The village should develop a broader plan for bicycle routes to connect the homes and destinations within the study area to other nearby existing and planned bicycle facilities, such as Franklin Avenue and the Des Plaines River Trail; support bicycle route wayfinding with signage and bicycle signals across Grand Avenue at designated locations; and ensure that bicycles have clear directions to transit stops and that transit stops include bicycle parking.*



Cycling on a neighborhood greenway along Chestnut Avenue — with significantly less daily traffic — will feel more comfortable than along Grand Avenue. Scott Street already has some shared-use bike markings.

Case study



Dickens Avenue Neighborhood Greenway
Chicago, IL

The Dickens Avenue Neighborhood Greenway transformed a wide, one-way street into a safe bike route for families and children. The greenway provides an alternative, low-stress route to nearby busy streets like Armitage Avenue.

Contraflow painted bike lanes were added to the stretch of Dickens Avenue in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. The greenway also included a new 20 mph speed limit, concrete bumpouts, raised crosswalks, and bike-friendly speed humps to promote safety for both cyclists and motorists.

One access point for the greenway was originally closed to vehicles, but has since reopened.

Case study source: City of Chicago

Brightly painted contraflow bike lanes and raised pedestrian crosswalks were added to Dickens Avenue.

Photo source: City of Chicago

Strategy 1.4

Promote accessibility for people with disabilities on the public right-of-way through the self-assessment and transition plan process, as required by federal rules.

The village should incorporate prioritized improvements into future reconstruction projects along Grand Avenue and implement easily completed improvements as funds allow.

Accessibility at crossings is particularly important. All signals include accessible pedestrian signals. Crossing times in signal time plans must be adequate to accommodate the walking speed of pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

Examples of inaccessible public rights-of-way along the Grand Avenue corridor.



This sidewalk crossing has excessive cross-slope and deterioration, which can be challenging to walk or roll across.



This transit stop lacks any dedicated space for passengers to board or disembark from the bus.



This sidewalk change in level is greater than 1/4 inch, not beveled or flush, which can be hazardous for those walking or rolling across it.



This pedestrian crossing button can't be reached from the sidewalk. The button is too far away, facing the wrong direction, and obstructed by another pole.



Several sections of sidewalk have obstructions that block the pedestrian access route. Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines state sidewalk segments must be 4 feet wide, clear of obstructions (IDOT guidelines call for 5 feet-wide sidewalks, 7 feet-wide if the sidewalk is on the back of a curb). If the sidewalk is less than 5 feet wide, passing spaces rules apply.

Strategy 1.5

Provide children with safe and healthy routes to school, whether by walking, cycling, electric school bus, or private automobile.

> *This effort can and should include programmatic, policy, and infrastructure components, which together, can create a comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools program.*

Case study



School Travel Plan
Berwyn, IL

North Berwyn's School District completed a school travel plan with the Active Transportation Alliance. The plan's recommendations combined education initiatives, an increased crossing guard presence, and infrastructure improvements. These improvements included on-street bicycle facilities, new or improved lighting, and new signage at intersections. IDOT's Safe Routes to School grant program funded infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements.

Case study source: Active Transportation Alliance

A crossing guard directs children to school along one of the North Berwyn School District's Safe Routes.

Photo source: Active Transportation Alliance

Strategy 1.6

Support low-cost mobility options like e-bikes, scooters, rental cars, and car-sharing.

Case study



Koloni Bike Share
Aurora, IL

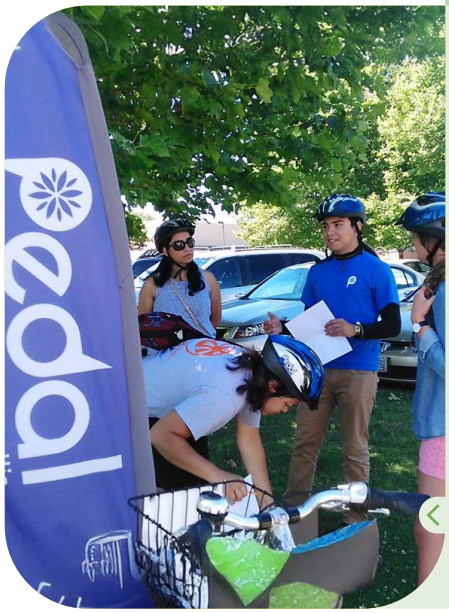
The city of Aurora partnered with Koloni Fleets to add bike sharing in downtown Aurora. The city hosts three bike share stations to make navigation easier, encourage economic growth, and offer options for recreation.

Case study source: City of Aurora

Koloni bikes docked in one of downtown Aurora's three stations.

Photo source: City of Aurora

Case study



Pedal Corvallis
Corvallis, OR

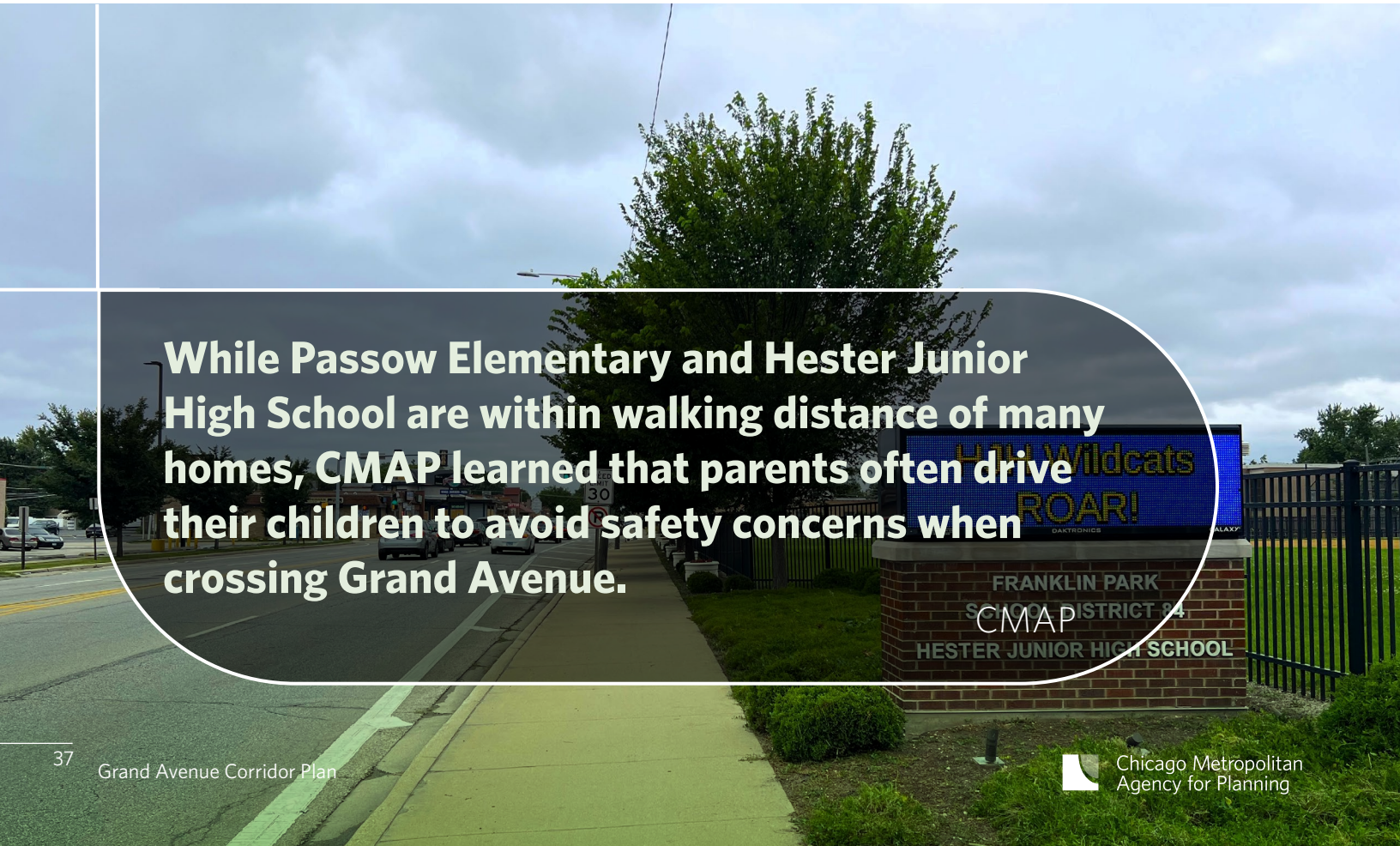
Corvallis launched a community bike share program as a collaboration between the region's Medicaid provider and the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments. Pedal Corvallis is focused on connectivity, health, and livability goals.

The bike network currently includes 8 stations, over 40 bicycles, and 2 adult tricycles. Members can check out and return bikes at any location, and Medicaid members are eligible for free passes.

Case study source: Open Streets Corvallis

Cyclists learn about the Pedal Corvallis bike share program and receive helmets.

Photo source: Open Streets Corvallis



While Passow Elementary and Hester Junior High School are within walking distance of many homes, CMAP learned that parents often drive their children to avoid safety concerns when crossing Grand Avenue.

Recommendation 2

Support a flourishing community with thoughtfully managed transportation access that supports commercial and residential development

Businesses and consumers on Grand Avenue should find a ready market with easy access by multiple modes of travel. To bind a local community to the local market, less is often more: excessive auto capacity, parking, and driveways prevent the activation of Grand Avenue. Auto access is crucial but needs to be balanced with options that complement the local travel market. There are land use strategies to consider as well, including focusing retail and service development to nodes along the corridor that can be supported with bus stops on both sides, shared parking supplies, and high-quality pedestrian access to and from destinations like shopping, dining, and parking.

Strategy 2.1

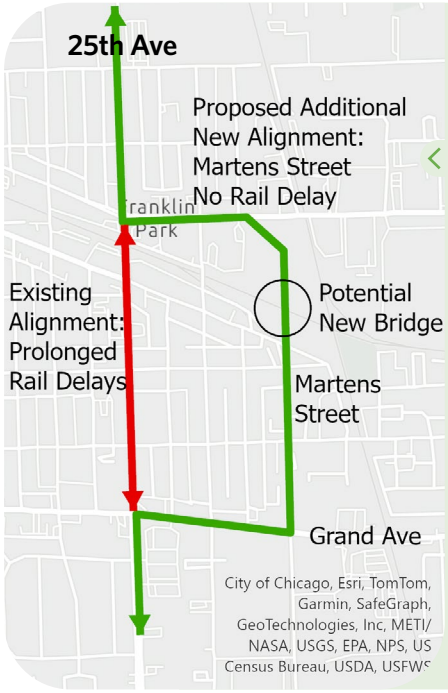
Improve transportation network connectivity by supporting the ongoing study of a new separated highway crossing for the Metra Milwaukee District West Line, extending Martens Street across the railroad.

> *To maintain a safer environment with lower speeds and to reduce structure and pavement costs, the cross-section should be minimized to one through travel lane in each direction, with a center turn lane where access is needed.*



Grade separations allow roads to pass over or under railroads to connect communities separated by railroad tracks.

Source: CMAP, created with Open AI's Dall-E 4o.



The village could align a new grade-separated Martens Street under the Metra Milwaukee District West Line tracks, providing an alternative to 25th Avenue, which is often blocked by trains.

Source: City of Chicago, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/ NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS

Strategy 2.2

Improve transportation network connectivity by initiating a study of a new grade-separated roadway crossing of the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad on the Fullerton Avenue corridor.



An extension of Fullerton Avenue would provide a local or collector-road connection across the tracks to supplement the arterial service provided by Grand Avenue. By doing so, CMAP models indicate that traffic volumes on Grand Avenue would fall, improving the prospects for safer travel options on Grand Avenue.

Extending Fullerton Avenue across the tracks creates additional community accessibility, diverting more local trips away from Grand Avenue.

Source: City of Chicago, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS

Case study





Oak Street Bridge replacement
Hinsdale, IL

Hinsdale replaced an over 100-year-old one-way bridge above the BNSF railway. Oak Street leads to Hinsdale Hospital, which for decades posed a challenge to emergency vehicles, frequently requiring them to wait for rail traffic at nearby grade-level intersections.

The new bridge improved traffic flow, diverting many vehicles from grade-level crossings with high levels of rail activity. The reconstructed roadway eliminated the signal control for the one-way bridge and includes ADA-compliant, stop-controlled intersections.

The bridge is notable for being locally oriented and well-integrated into the neighboring community. The focus of the project is local, with street trees, careful design, and just one lane in each direction.

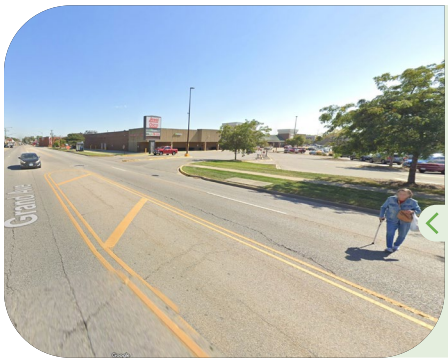
Case study source: HR Green Engineering

Photo source: Illinois Commerce Commission

Strategy 2.3

Continue pursuing a traffic signal and associated safety and access improvements at the intersection of Grand Avenue and George Street.

> *The village should ensure the high-quality pedestrian facilities are included, such as high-visibility crosswalks, accessible pedestrian signals, appropriate crossing times for pedestrians, and ADA-compliant ramps and landing pads. With George Street being one-way southbound, a pedestrian refuge opposite the eastbound left-turn lane into the Jewel-Osco parking lot presents an opportunity to substantially improve crossing safety for non-motorized users. Other strategies related to improving traffic operations are discussed below.*



This existing-conditions image shows a pedestrian with a shopping bag using a cane and crossing Grand Avenue at George Street in 2024.

The photo demonstrates the potential benefit of a median refuge at the crossing as part of the signalization project.

Source: Google Street View



"My friends and I usually cross Grand without problem, but sometimes there are those close calls where the car turns nearly getting close in contact with us, or there's just the scary feeling of a car hitting you."

- Franklin Park resident

Strategy 2.4

Consider additional traffic signals and other traffic controls to facilitate safe crossings of Grand Avenue and consolidate access.

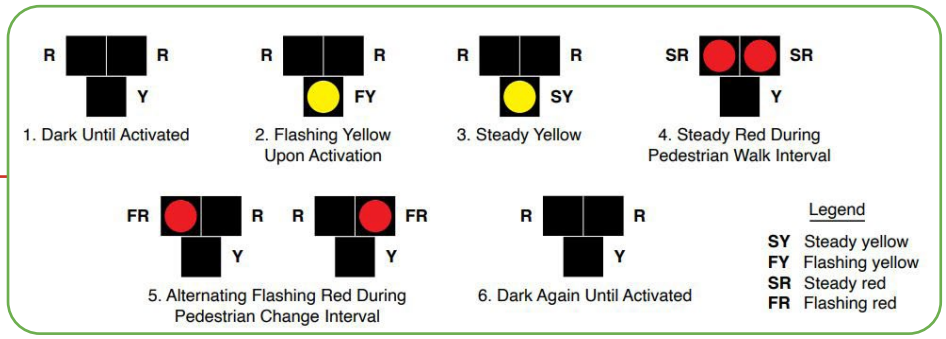
As elements of this plan are implemented, the village should monitor traffic patterns and safety data including demand for crossing Grand Avenue at locations near retail activity, bus stops, and schools.

Sight-distance is an important aspect of pedestrian crossing safety, and intersection safety for motorists as well. Daylighting is a strategy to assure visibility at intersections so that traffic conflicts do not surprise users. Clear lines of sight are required for bicyclist-pedestrian-motorist and motorist-interactions.

Signalized intersections are recommended as pedestrian crossing locations. With the green indication, signals also assign right-of-way to minor streets where entering vehicles would otherwise need to wait for a sufficient gap in traffic — and misjudgments about gaps are a serious problem. New signals are often advantageous on urban streets with higher traffic volumes. However, the cost of a new signal is substantial, so for locations where motor vehicle access is not a concern, but non-motorized crossing safety is an issue, the following two options may improve safety and may be appropriate to evaluate as an alternative:

Pedestrian hybrid beacons are pedestrian-activated. They are mounted on a mast arm over the traveled way to increase driver awareness and to provide additional visibility to a crossing.





A pedestrian hybrid beacon in Oak Park at the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Harvey Avenue.

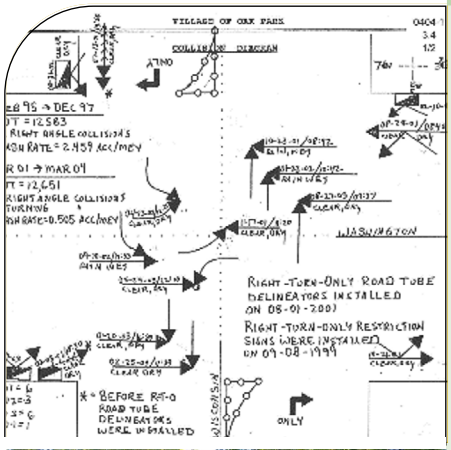
Sources: FHWA

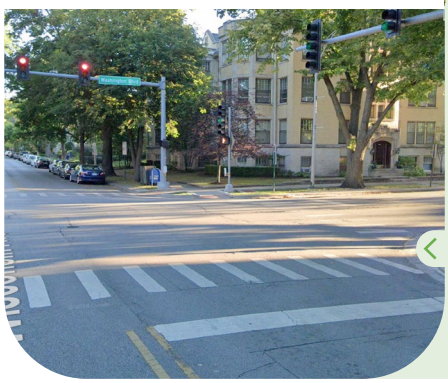


Rectangular rapid-flash beacons (RRFBs) also add visibility to a crosswalk and increase driver awareness. RRFBs are much simpler than a hybrid beacon. They are either flashing or not flashing, but there is no walk signal to aid the pedestrian.

Source: CMAP

Case study





Washington Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue
Oak Park, IL

As part of its traffic study, the Village of Oak Park identified the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue as a high-crash location. Many of the crashes were right-angle, t-bone crashes. The village installed right-turn-only restrictions with pork-chop islands — triangular concrete islands that provide a waiting area for pedestrians while vehicles are turning. The collision diagrams to the left show that changes at the intersection reduced the number of right-angle collisions from 30 over a nearly 3-year period (1995-1997) to just 5 (2001-2004). However, despite the success in improving safety, there were concerns about reduced in access to a nearby business district. Pedestrian crossings were also an unaddressed concern. When funding became available in 2016, a further improvement included installation of a traffic signal with full vehicle turning-movement access and a safer pedestrian crossing.

Case study source: Chicago Tribune

The installation of a new traffic signal transformed the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue into a pedestrian-friendly area.

Photo source: Tom Murtha, Oak Park Parking and Traffic Commission records; Google Street View

Strategy 2.5

Consider additional traffic signals and other traffic controls to facilitate safe crossings of Grand Avenue and consolidate access.

> *In coordination with zoning changes and land use decisions, the village can support walkable centers of activity that are served by transit, a shared-parking supply and high-use retail, dining, and services.*

Case study



Downtown Western Springs
Western Springs, IL

Downtown Western Springs is located directly across from a heavily used Metra commuter rail station. Commercial offerings including dining, shopping, and health and financial services. While parking is offered at the Metra station and various commercial locations, walkability is encouraged through narrow streets and small scale, co-located destinations.

Future plans for the downtown include a tax increment financing district to improve building facades, repair deteriorated pavement, and address commercial vacancies or underutilization.

Case study source: Western Springs

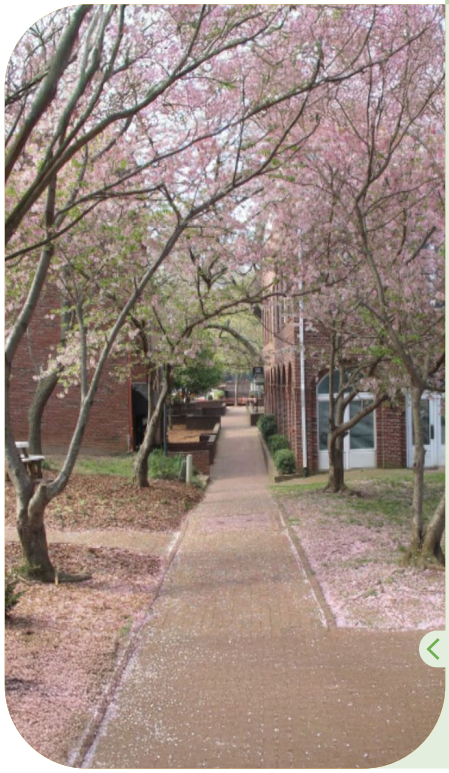
Downtown Western Springs commercial locations with paid parking.

Photo source: Western Springs

Strategy 2.6

Establish urban design criteria within walkable commercial centers such as build-to lines along Grand Avenue and high-quality pedestrian connections between businesses.

Case study



Site and building design standards
Davidson, NC

Davidson experienced significant population growth in 2013, raising concerns about the town's historic character and urban sprawl. In response, the municipality overhauled its zoning code and design guidelines to encourage walkability. Key design principles in the adopted ordinance included sidewalk requirements, mixed-use zoning, human-scale architecture, and green infrastructure.

Years after these design guidelines were adopted, a health impact assessment and further studies revealed several positive outcomes of community-oriented design, like improved walkability and increased local economic activity. Residents also reported a higher level of satisfaction with accessibility, community feel, and design.

Case study source: Town of Davidson

Buildings fronting a pedestrian alley in Davidson, which provides pedestrian access between buildings.

Photo source: Town of Davidson

Strategy 2.7



Evaluate opportunities for parking enclaves along the side-streets accessing Grand Avenue. Where appropriate, parking enclaves may be part of an access management program to create cul-de-sacs for local minor streets intersecting Grand Avenue.

This is a photo of enclave parking in Forest Park, IL, developed to support the Madison Street business district. This parking facility is largely in the Thomas Avenue right-of-way, which updated to a cul-de-sac. Forest Park also established diagonal parking in the commercial district along local streets with low traffic-conflict potential.

Strategy 2.8

Create a model shared parking agreement and support its use along the Grand Avenue corridor.

Strategy 2.9

Study and implement, as appropriate, a fully reconstructed three-lane roadway cross-section to replace the current four-lane cross section.

Case study



City of Batavia Illinois Route 31 road diet
Batavia, IL

The City of Batavia completed a road diet for Illinois Route 31. The goal was to enhance safety for all road users by reducing the number of lanes and implementing a center turn lane. This reconfiguration improves traffic flow, reduces crashes, and creates a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the roadway. The project engineer, TranSystems, estimates that collisions will fall by 27%.

Case study source: City of Batavia

The newly striped three-lane cross-section on Illinois Route 31 in Batavia demonstrates a road diet that reduced the former four-lane cross-section into two lanes with a shared center turning lane.

Photo source: City of Batavia

Future cross-sections for Grand Avenue

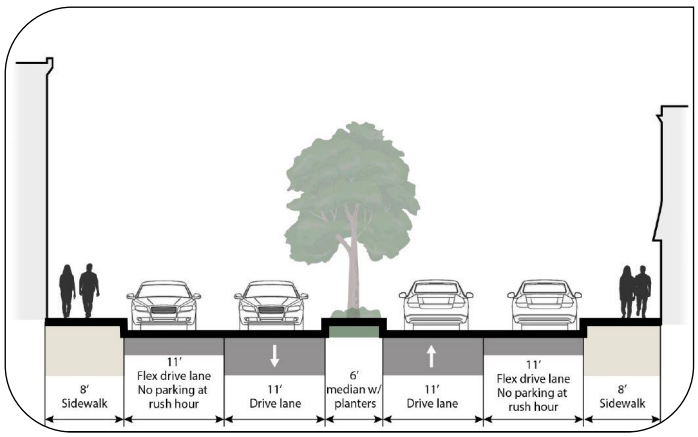
This plan identifies recommendations and strategies that reflect an analysis of corridor conditions and stakeholder input. As the plan is implemented — including recommendations like improving network connectivity in Franklin Park and supporting bicycle and pedestrian access to and within the corridor — it will become possible to consider a three-lane cross-section for Grand Avenue, as traffic volumes are expected to be well below appropriate thresholds. A three-lane cross-section consists of one travel lane in each direction and a center turn lane, which can be a median at locations where access is managed appropriately. Additional uses and amenities like transit stops, parallel parking lanes, street trees, and wider sidewalks may be included individually, depending on the available right of way. See below for some examples and see *Appendix: Transportation Analysis* for more details on forecasted traffic volumes for Grand Avenue.

A three-lane cross section aligns with the goals identified by the village and stakeholders, including reduced speeding; safer crossings for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users; and fewer vehicle crashes. Additionally, a three-lane cross-section supports goals related to economic development, walkability, and improving accessibility and compliance with ADA requirements, as excess roadway capacity may be devoted to these uses.

In the interim, the village may continue with a four-lane cross-section, especially in conjunction with desired streetscape improvements happening in advance of the longer-term network improvements described above. Examples of potential near-term and long-term cross-sections are shown below.

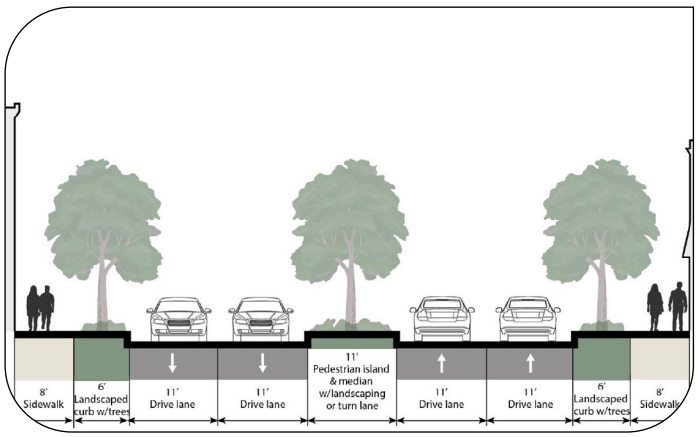
The public right-of-way within the corridor varies between 66′ and 83′ wide. Without information on existing easements, CMAP has developed potential cross-sections that will work within those two existing widths of the right-of-way.

Interim cross-sections for each of the corridor widths



66′-wide cross-section: median with flex lanes

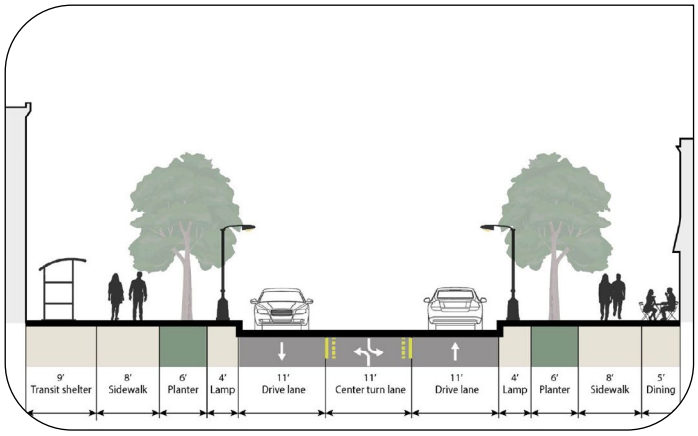
This cross-section includes four travel lanes, a planted median and an 8′ sidewalk on both sides. Also shown is a planted median that can serve as a pedestrian refuge at mid-block crossings. Mid-block crossings can be a safer crossing option compared to high-volume intersections, when indicated appropriately, as turning movements are eliminated. The outer two travel lanes shown here could become flex lanes, allowing temporary parking at off-peak travel times, which would help pilot the three-lane cross section. The village should consider regular towing service to enforce the flex lanes during peak hour traffic.



83′-wide cross-section: median or turn lane

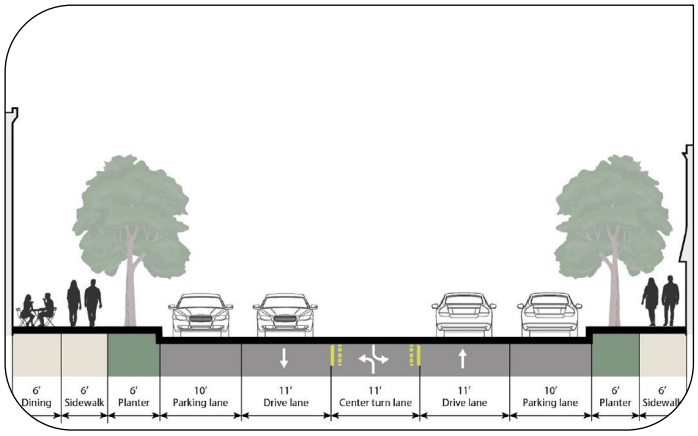
This option includes four travel lanes, 8′-wide sidewalks on both sides, a planting strip on each side of the street as well as an 11′ planted median in the center, which could taper to facilitate a left-turn lane at intersections. Again, the median could serve as a pedestrian refuge at appropriate mid-block crossing locations.

Potential long-term cross-sections for each of the corridor widths



83′-wide lane cross-section: local orientation

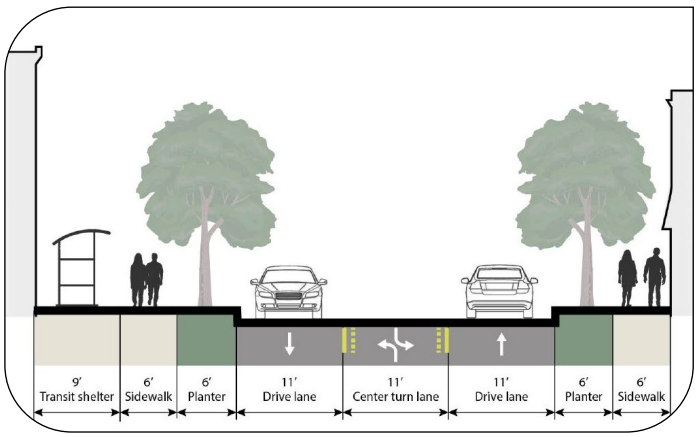
This cross-section shows the three-lane cross-section. The wider right-of-way accommodates street lighting, trees, and a wider sidewalk with room for sidewalk cafes and transit shelters, depending on the presence of a transit stop and restaurants.



83′-wide lane cross-section: local and parking

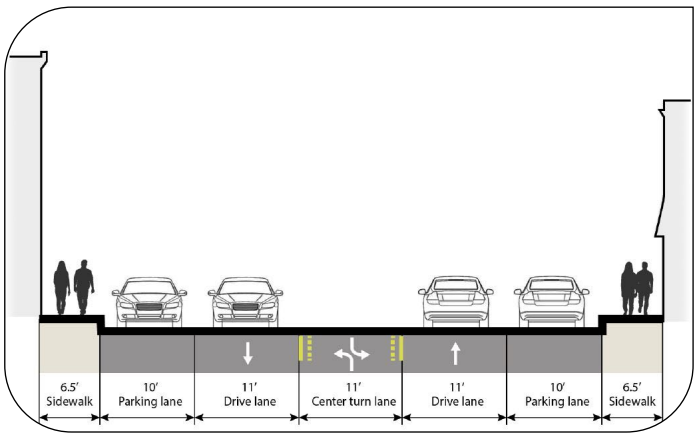
This cross-section includes a ten-foot parking lane to support local businesses with no off-street parking. The parking lane also provides a buffer for pedestrians walking along the corridor on a comfortable six-foot-wide sidewalk. Also shown here are a six-foot street tree planting strip and room for outdoor dining on one side of the street.

Interim cross-sections for each of the corridor widths



66′-wide 3-lane cross-section: local orientation

This cross-section accommodates six-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of the street and a six-foot-wide tree planting strip on both sides of the street, but only leaves room for a transit shelter on one side of the street. Planting strip space can be used to accommodate a transit shelter on both sides of the street.



66′-wide 3-lane cross-section: local and parking

This cross-section has on-street parking lanes on both sides of the street. This section of roadway would not allow for street trees or transit shelters and should only be used in sections with no designated transit stops.

Strategy 2.10

Provide safe, comfortable, and inviting facilities for pedestrians traveling along and across the corridor.

> *Consider a zone system for sidewalks consisting of a building frontage zone (where doors may open and building features like awnings and fire-fighter access may exist), pedestrian zone (clear for travel by foot, wheelchair, scooter, etc.), furniture and planting zone, and curb zone.*

Strategy 2.11

Seek funding to provide bicycle parking at existing businesses along Grand Avenue, building on the village's requirements to install bike parking at new developments.

> *While supporting expanded bicycle parking requirements within code, the village can also seek funding for additional bicycle parking at key destinations throughout the corridor. These locations may include community destinations such as the library, shared parking facilities, transit stops, and school areas.*

Case study



Bicycle parking program
Forest Park, IL

The Village of Forest Park received funding from the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program to supply bicycle parking near transit stations. The village received more than $100,000 from the state and matched it at 10 percent.

Case study source: Forest Park Review

CMAP has funded numerous bike parking projects across the region, sometimes as part of larger projects, such as the Arlington Heights Metra station.

Photo source: CMAP

Strategy 2.12

Work with appropriate jurisdictions to identify truck routes to ensure truck access to local businesses. To manage through travel of the largest trucks on Grand Avenue, update previous CMAP truck-route study recommendations before new truck size and weight laws took effect.

"I'd love to see more bike racks along Grand Avenue. it would make it easier and safer for residents to bike to local businesses and shops."

- Franklin Park resident

Implementation matrix

Goal: Support a flourishing and equitable community in Franklin Park's Grand Avenue corridor with improved transportation.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Support an equitable community by providing travel options along and near Grand Avenue.		
1.1		
Provide protected, high-visibility pedestrian crossings at a spacing of approximately 1/4-mile apart to ensure that people can reach businesses, transit, and community facilities on foot regardless of where they live. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Safe Streets and Roads for All Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program Programmed through the North Central Council of Mayors Highway Safety Improvement Program Illinois Safe Routes to School Program Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund If this strategy is packaged with other transportation strategy recommendations below in a corridor reconstruction project of sufficient size to be eligible for this fund; the minimum project size is now $5 million State and regional (not requiring a federal project-development process) Illinois Transportation Enhancements Program Motor-fuel taxes Invest in Cook Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Local: Tax increment financing Special service areas Bond funds	Safe Routes to School Guide, "Crossing the Street" National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Urban Street Design Guide, "Crosswalks and Crossings" National Cooperative Highway Research Program Synthesis 498, Application of Pedestrian Crossing Treatments for Streets and Highways

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.2		
Work with Pace to upgrade bus stops from flag stops to designated stops with full accessibility for people with disabilities and located at safe crossings along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide: At bus stop locations	Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Carbon Reduction Program Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund	ReVision: Pace's Network Restructuring Project Transit Supportive Guidelines with guidelines for Pace Pulse infrastructure and facilities (March 2013, updated August 2024) NACTO Transit Street Design Guide National Aging and Disability Transportation Center/Easter Seals Project ACTION Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety
1.3		
Provide safe and protected bikeways to reach destinations along Grand Avenue, including parallel streets or a bike boulevard — sometimes known as neighborhood greenways — along Chestnut Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-medium **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Transportation Alternatives Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Illinois Safe Routes to School Program Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program State and regional: Invest in Cook Program Motor fuel taxes Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Technical Assistance Program	NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, Bicycle Boulevards

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.4		
Promote accessibility for people with disabilities on the public right-of-way through the self-assessment and transition plan process, as required by federal rules. **Timeline:** Short: Begin as soon as is feasible for the village **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program State and regional (not requiring a federal project-development process) Motor-fuel taxes Invest in Cook Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Local: Tax increment financing Special service Areas Bond funds	CMAP Technical Assistance Program web page with additional guidance and resources for accessibility for people with disabilities Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines
1.5		
Provide children with safe and healthy routes to school, whether by walking, cycling, electric school bus, or private automobile. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Within walking distance of both Passow Elementary and Hester Junior High Schools, ideally 1-mile radius of each school	Federal: Illinois Safe Routes to School Program State and regional sources (not requiring a federal project-development process) Motor-fuel taxes Invest in Cook Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Local: Tax increment financing Special service areas Bond funds	National Safe Routes to School for guidance and resources Village of Glencoe Suggested Walking and Biking Routes

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.6		
Support low-cost mobility options like e-bikes, scooters, rental cars, and car-sharing. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Carbon Reduction Program Transportation Alternatives Program Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program State and regional (not requiring a federal project-development process): Motor-fuel taxes Invest in Cook Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Local: Tax increment financing Special service areas Bond funds	Cook County is evaluating the feasibility of a suburban bike-share program. Participation in this program would be beneficial to Franklin Park. The Shared Use Mobility Center case studies of micromobility programs throughout the country
Recommendation 2: Support a flourishing community with thoughtfully managed transportation access that supports commercial and residential development.		
2.1		
Improve transportation network connectivity by supporting the ongoing study of a new separated highway crossing for the Metra Milwaukee District West Line, extending Martens Street across the railroad. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial, technology infrastructure business cluster	Federal: Railroad Crossing Elimination Program Currently funded for engineering Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund State and regional: Illinois Commerce Commission Grade Crossing Protection Fund Currently funded for engineering Invest in Cook Program Railroads typically contribute about 5% to the cost of a grade separation	This project is in the regional TIP as project 04-24-0028, but the representation of the new alignment on the TIP maps will need to be reviewed. To do so, work with the project's engineer and the North Central Council of Mayors Planning Liaison.

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.2		
Improve transportation network connectivity by initiating a study of a new grade-separated roadway crossing of the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad on the Fullerton Avenue corridor. **Timeline:** Long: It is expected that the Martens Avenue grade separation will proceed first. Any study of the Fullerton Avenue corridor should follow the Martens Avenue project proceeds to letting **Segment applicability:** This project would have corridor-wide benefits, though the project location would lie south of the corridor	Federal: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund State and regional: Illinois Commerce Commission Grade Crossing Protection Fund Invest in Cook Program	Same as strategy 2.1
2.3		
Continue pursuing a traffic signal and associated safety and access improvements at the intersection of Grand Avenue and George Street. **Timeline:** Short: The regional TIP indicates that construction is scheduled for FY 2027 **Segment applicability:** At the intersection of Grand Avenue with George Street	This project is funded with federally-designated community project funding (a legislative earmark) and is included in the regional Transportation Improvement Program as project 04-24-0034	Medians and Pedestrian Refuge Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas
2.4		
Consider additional traffic signals and other traffic controls to facilitate safe crossings of Grand Avenue and consolidate access. **Timeline:** Medium-long-term **Segment applicability:** At appropriate locations where crossing demand increases, such as new posted bus stops, and other centers of pedestrian activity	Federal: Highway Safety Improvement Program Carbon Reduction Program Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Safe Streets and Roads for All Illinois Safe Routes to School Program State and regional: Invest in Cook Program	NCHRP Synthesis 498: Application of Pedestrian Crossing Treatments for Streets and Highways IDOT TRA-23: Guidelines for establishing pedestrian crossings Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons Rectangular Rapid-Flash Beacons

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.5		
Support walkable commercial centers at key locations throughout the corridor, co-located with transit stops and parking lots. **Timeline:** Medium-long-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Carbon Reduction Program Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program State and regional: Invest in Cook Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program	As part of the ON TO 2050, CMAP developed recommendations for walkable communities
2.6		
Establish urban design criteria within walkable commercial centers such as build-to lines along Grand Avenue and high-quality pedestrian connections between businesses. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Staff time	Highwood's downtown zoning ordinance City of Madison, Wisconsin Urban Design Commission Ordinance
2.7		
Evaluate opportunities for parking enclaves along the side-streets accessing Grand Avenue. Where appropriate, parking enclaves may be part of an access management program to create cul-de-sacs for local minor streets intersecting Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Parking enclaves could be integrated into a larger reconstruction project for Grand Avenue, whose funding is described in other strategies	Local examples: Village of Oak Park (supporting older housing without off-street parking) Village of Forest Park (supporting the Madison Street commercial district)

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.8		
Create a model shared parking agreement and support its use along the Grand Avenue corridor. **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Staff time	Shared parking in Victoria Transport Policy Institute's TDM Encyclopedia Saint Charles, Missouri sample joint-use parking agreement Albuquerque, New Mexico shared parking agreement
2.9		
Study and implement, as appropriate, a fully reconstructed three-lane roadway cross-section to replace the current four-lane cross section. **Timeline:** A study can be initiated in the next few years. Construction would be expected in the medium or long term. **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Federal: Highway Safety Improvement Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Safe Streets and Roads for All State and regional: Invest in Cook Program	Federal Highway Administration Road Diet Informational Guide Federal Highway Administration Proven Safety Countermeasures: Road Diets Federal Highway Administration national case studies of road diets
2.10		
Provide safe, comfortable, and inviting facilities for pedestrians traveling along and across the corridor. **Timeline:** Medium-long-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	N/A	IDOT Designing for Pedestrian Safety module FHWA Improving Pedestrian Safety on Urban Arterials

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.11		
Seek funding to provide bicycle parking at existing businesses along Grand Avenue, building on the village's requirements to install bike parking at new developments. **Timeline:** Short, as development opportunities are presented **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Illinois Safe Routes to School Program Federal Recreational Trails Program via the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Invest in Cook Program Locally-Programmed Surface Transportation Program	CATS (now CMAP) Council of Mayors/City of Chicago Bike Parking for Your Business Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Essentials of Bike Parking
2.12		
Work with appropriate jurisdictions to identify truck routes to ensure truck access to local businesses. To manage through travel of the largest trucks on Grand Avenue, update previous CMAP truck-route study recommendations before new truck size and weight laws took effect. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	General village funds Ongoing programs	O'Hare Subregion Truck Route Plan (requires staff-led minor updates to reflect new laws) Truck routing explanation OPER 753 presents a graphical representation of how trucks are regulated in Illinois Existing designated Class I and Class II truck routes map

Goal:
Improve safety for all users along Grand Avenue



Recommendation 1

Support lower operating speeds throughout the corridor

Speeding was identified as the primary cause of 176 crashes on Grand Avenue between 2017 and 2022, 10 of which resulted in fatal or serious injuries. Speeding increases risks for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. It also decreases Grand Avenue's attractiveness as a destination for people to live, work, shop, and dine along the corridor. The goal is to constrain speeds by physically and visually narrowing the roadway, which should be considered in any future changes to Grand Avenue.

Strategy 1.1

In alignment with planned economic activity, determine whether a reduced speed limit is appropriate for the corridor or a section of it, and conduct an engineering study to determine a speed limit that is safe for all road users.

> *This can inform future roadway infrastructure that supports compliance with the lower speed limit, such as medians, narrower travel lanes, speed feedback signs, and other design features to create friction for drivers along Grand Avenue. Determining whether a speed limit change is appropriate involves conducting n corridor engineering study. New guidance from the FHWA supports lower speed limits in areas where walking and bicycling is expected and encouraged.*

Strategy 1.2

Add speed feedback signs at locations throughout the corridor where speeding is often observed.

Case study



Speed management program with feedback signs
Evanston, IL

Evanston installed speed feedback signs in multiple locations throughout the city to help support compliance with speed limits in residential and commercial zones. In addition, the city funded school-zone speed feedback signs to enforce the 20 mile per hour speed limit, with included a flashing school zone beacon. The city also reduced its citywide speed limit by ordinance from 30 mph to 25 mph in 2012.

Source: Daily Northwestern

Photo source: CMAP

Strategy 1.3

Work with appropriate jurisdictions to identify truck routes to ensure truck access to local businesses. To manage through travel of the largest trucks on Grand Avenue, update previous CMAP truck-route study recommendations before new truck size and weight laws took effect.

Case study



Traffic safety and safe speeds awareness program
Batavia, IL

The City of Batavia partnered with the school district, park district, and public library on the "Please Drive Carefully" campaign, which included yard signs. Other communities paired such efforts with social media posts, public service announcements, and other communications to promote consistent messaging on important traffic safety issues. These programs can be partially funded through IDOT's Highway Safety Plan, which includes multiple grant opportunities related to education and enforcement.

Case study source: City of Batavia

Photo source: City of Batavia

Strategy 1.4

Promote traffic safety awareness — safe driving speeds, pedestrian and bicyclist awareness, and yielding to turning vehicles — in village and school district programs and communications. These programs can be implemented within school curricula, as media campaigns, and as part of regular village communications to residents.

Case study



Safe Routes to Schools program
Glencoe, IL

The Village of Glencoe received a Safe Routes to Schools grant from IDOT to develop safe walking routes to each of the village's schools and to create a guidebook, which was shared to teach parents and students about safe walking practices and to support more active transportation to schools.

Case study source: Glencoe Safe Routes to Schools

Photo source: Glencoe Safe Routes to Schools

Recommendation 2

Improve the infrastructure at intersections and driveways; manage access for safety

More than a quarter of the crashes along Grand Avenue happened when vehicles were turning, and five of those crashes resulted in fatal and serious injuries from 2017-2022. Many conflicts happen at locations like intersections and driveways, where cars turn onto or off the corridor. Aside from crashes between cars and pedestrians, those that happen where cars are turning are the most serious. Reducing vehicle speeds is an effective countermeasure for turning crashes, as it provides drivers more time to react by slowing down or stopping.

Strategy 2.1

Where increased economic activity is planned and increased pedestrian crossings are anticipated, design corners to slow turning movements with tighter corners (small curb radii).

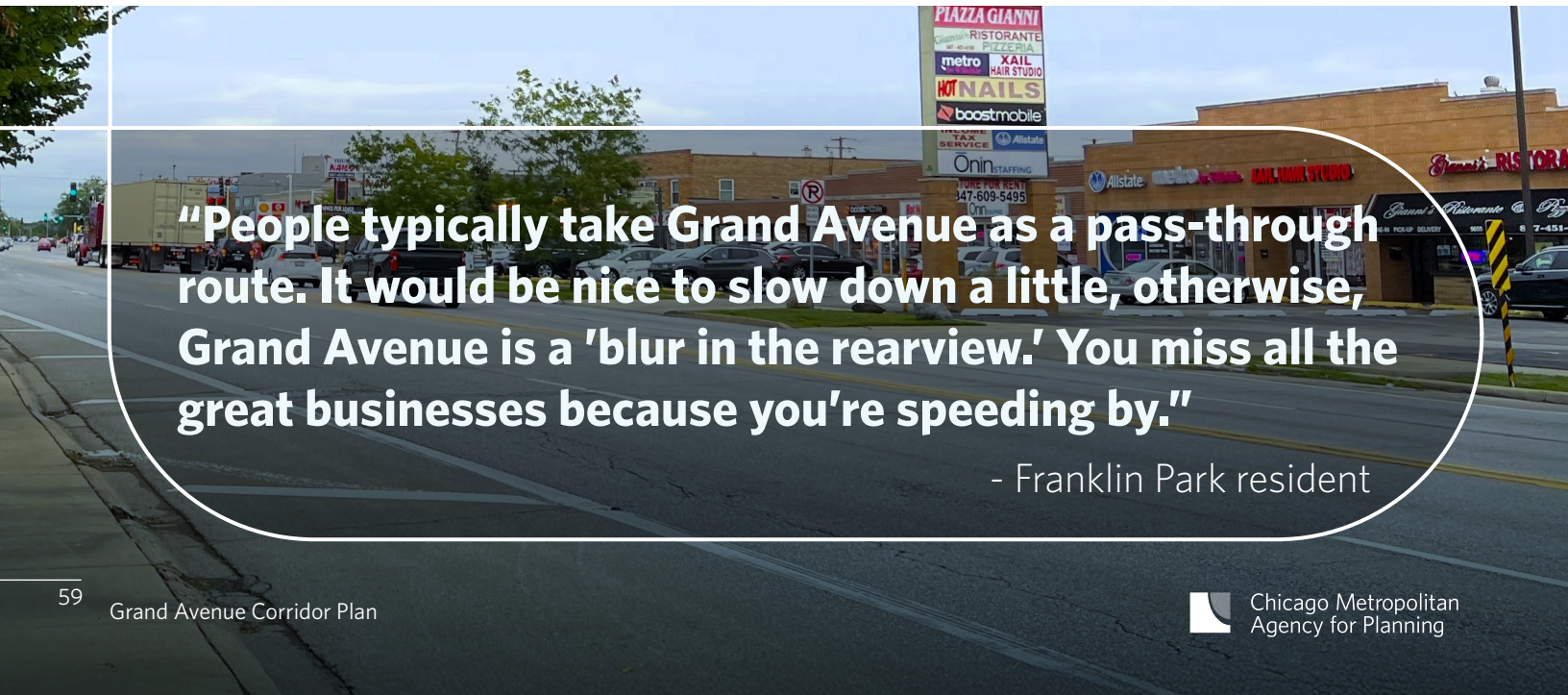
Strategy 2.2

Consider focusing drive-through served businesses to a limited area along the corridor.

> *Drive-through businesses would remain part of the Grand Avenue business environment. However, they have a detrimental impact on traffic safety. Drive-through businesses should be located on land that is best available to access them, which would ensure that queues of waiting vehicles don't back up onto arterial traffic lanes.*

Strategy 2.3

Consolidate the number of driveways used to access businesses and ensure that all driveways are ADA compliant and as narrow as allowed to provide the required access, which can improve pedestrian safety and convenience.



"People typically take Grand Avenue as a pass-through route. It would be nice to slow down a little, otherwise, Grand Avenue is a 'blur in the rearview.' You miss all the great businesses because you're speeding by."

- Franklin Park resident

Implementation matrix

Goal: Improve safety for all users along Grand Avenue.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Support an equitable community by providing travel options along and near Grand Avenue.		
1.1		
In alignment with planned economic activity, determine whether a reduced speed limit is appropriate for the corridor or a section of it, and conduct an engineering study to determine a speed limit that is safe for all road users. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Invest in Cook Program	NACTO City Limits Vision Zero Network
1.2		
Add speed feedback signs at locations throughout the corridor where speeding is often observed. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Highway Safety Program (IDOT) Speed management grants) Illinois Safe Routes to School Program	National Traffic Safety Administration, Dynamic Speed/Feedback Signs
1.3		
Continue to enforce speed fairly and use high-visibility enforcement techniques, paired with educational initiatives through media campaigns and signage, with enhanced outreach for drivers who receive speeding citations. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Locations where speeding is presenting risks to vulnerable road users, such as schools and locations with higher pedestrian activity.	Highway Safety Program (IDOT) Speed management grants STEP grants for high-visibility enforcement	Illinois Highway Safety Plan (various grants) 2024 IDOT Speed Mini Grant Orientation Meeting

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.4		
Promote traffic safety awareness, including safe driving at safe speeds, being aware of pedestrians and bicyclist awareness, and yielding to turning vehicles, in village and school district programs and communications. These programs can be implemented within school curricula, as media campaigns, and as part of regular village communications to residents. **Timeline:** Short-term	Illinois Safe Routes to School Program Including past awards in 2022 and in 2024 IDOT Highway Safety Plan grants for speed management, pedestrian safety	Illinois Highway Safety Plan (various grants) 2024 IDOT Speed Mini Grant Orientation Meeting
Recommendation 2: Improve the infrastructure at intersections and driveways; manage access for safety.		
2.1		
Where increased economic activity is planned and increased pedestrian crossings are anticipated, design corners to slow turning movements with tighter corners (small curb radii). **Timeline:** Ongoing **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	This strategy can be implemented on a spot basis with the motor fuel taxes or other local funding sources, but would more likely be implemented as part of a reconstruction with funding sources as noted in the previous section	NACTO Urban Street Design Guide, Corner Radii
2.2		
Consider focusing drive-through served businesses to a limited area along the corridor. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Consider prohibiting drive-through facilities in local commercial and transitional corridor segments. Require that traffic queues for drive-through facilities in regional commercial and technology infrastructure business cluster segments stack away from Grand Avenue.	N/A	Sustainable Development Code, Prohibit or Limit the Use of Drive-Through Services

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.3		
Consolidate the number of driveways used to access businesses and ensure that all driveways are ADA compliant and as narrow as allowed to provide the required access, which can improve pedestrian safety and convenience.	This strategy can be implemented on a spot basis with motor fuel taxes or other local funding sources, but would more likely be implemented as part of a reconstruction with funding sources as noted in the previous section. Access management and driveway design review can also be implemented during all development reviews.	Michigan Access Management Guidebook (2001) Transportation Research Board Access Management Manual (2014) (fee required) Texas A&M Transportation Institute, Texas Mobility Investment Priorities: System Modification Strategies, Access Management

Goal:
Diversify housing along Grand Avenue and within Franklin Park



Recommendation 1 | Enhance Franklin Park's housing choices and access to the corridor's amenities

The Grand Avenue corridor primarily consists of commercial development, but there are opportunities to develop more housing in the area, particularly when paired with commercial uses on the ground floor. Expanding housing near commercial corridors like Grand Avenue can stimulate economic activity by increasing the local customer base and encouraging local investment. Additionally, increased housing choice can help address the growing demand for affordable rental units, multi-family housing, and senior housing in Franklin Park. The village should leverage Grand Avenue to boost economic activity and meet the growing demand for underrepresented housing types.

Strategy 1.1

Ensure that there is a balance of housing types and prices along and near the Grand Avenue corridor.

Strategy 1.2

Expand the supply of underrepresented housing types, including attached single-family dwelling units and small-scale multi-family housing, that is consistent with the design character of Grand Avenue.

> *The Missing Middle framework identifies five key characteristics of housing that Franklin Park can use as a guide when exploring what missing middle options might fit best in the existing development context of Grand Avenue:*
>
> - *Located in livable communities (walkable context)*
> - *Compatible with single family homes*
> - *Provide small, well-designed units*
> - *Provide fewer off-street parking spaces*
> - *Create a strong sense of community*
>
> *Stakeholders value Franklin Park's low-density, suburban character. Using the Missing Middle framework, more diverse housing options can be implemented along Grand Avenue without changing the community's existing character.*



Source: Opticos Design, Inc.

Recommendation 2 | Incentivize new housing in strategic locations along Grand Avenue

Strategically developing new housing along Grand Avenue will maximize its potential as a mixed-use corridor. Targeting vacant and underutilized parcels for future mixed-use projects can help promote revitalization, support existing businesses, and attract new ones. Prioritizing connectivity ensures residents have easy access to public transportation, retail, services, and other assets along Grand Avenue.



This is an example of missing middle housing along Grand Avenue. Each building contains two housing units, and blends with the character of the surrounding residential area.

Housing characteristics and preferences

Stakeholders were surveyed on their visual preferences for housing development along Grand Avenue, and the results reflected a strong desire for lower-density multi-family housing that blends with the community's existing character. Respondents favored retail on the ground floor, though there were concerns about ensuring these spaces are filled. Traditional building materials like brick and stone were preferred over modern, manufactured alternatives. Walkability and "eyes on the street" were also highlighted as key features to promote safety and enhance the neighborhood's appeal.

The three most favored images are shown below. In addition to the village's existing design standards, these images can serve as a visual guide for future housing development opportunities along Grand Avenue.



Location: Vernon Hills, IL
Source: CMAP



Location: Beavercreek, OH
Source: Peter French, Flickr



Location: Mount Prospect, IL
Source: Norwood Builders

Case study



Skyview Park Apartments
Irondequoit, NY

Skyview Park Apartments transformed a portion of the former Irondequoit Mall into a vibrant senior housing community. The redevelopment included retrofitting the old Sears department store into 73 affordable rental units for seniors and constructing a new four-story building with 84 additional senior apartments on an adjacent abandoned parking lot. These two buildings are connected by a skybridge, creating a cohesive, walkable space. Skyview Park offers 157 rental homes for adults aged 55 and older, with 78 units reserved for elderly residents at risk of homelessness, who receive supportive services through Rochester General Hospital's ElderONE program.

The redevelopment prioritized green space and community connection. The former department store now features three open-air courtyards, providing residents access to natural light, fresh air, and areas for community gardening and relaxation. Additionally, the apartments offer easy access to senior programming at the nearby Irondequoit Community Center built on the former mall site. The project was financed through a mix of public funding sources, including Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grant funding, and support from New York State and Monroe County.

Case study source: Enterprise Community Partners Christina Construction

Strategy 2.1

Identify and repurpose vacant parcels for mixed-use housing development to accommodate young professionals and seniors looking to downsize or age in place.

> *Access to amenities like shopping, pharmacies, and grocery stores along Grand Avenue benefits nearby residents, particularly young professionals and seniors. Housing developed along the corridor can be versatile and appeal to a wide range of residents.*
>
> *The 2017 Franklin Park Comprehensive Plan recommends a senior-friendly approach for all housing, which, unlike age-restricted communities, is open to all ages but prioritizes walkability and accessibility to meet senior needs.*

Strategy 2.2

Support the redevelopment of obsolete commercial properties into mixed-use developments with residential units.

> *As the retail landscape evolves, communities are rethinking development patterns along their commercial corridors and integrating residential uses. A report by Enterprise Community Partners estimates that converting underused strip malls could generate over 700,000 new homes nationwide. Adding housing along commercial corridors not only addresses housing needs but creates vibrant, mixed-use areas where residents can easily access shops, services, and transit.*

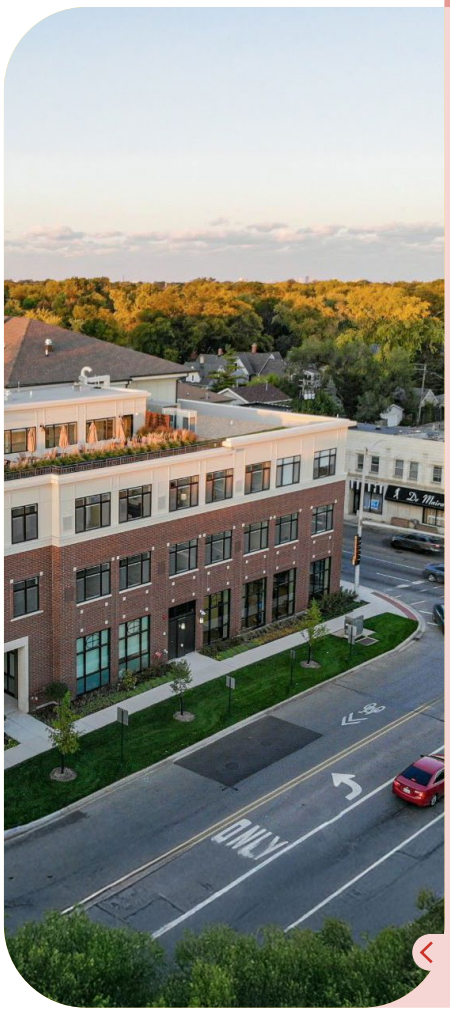
Recommendation 3 | Update zoning regulations to promote mixed-use and multi-family housing development along Grand Avenue

Updated zoning regulations will help Grand Avenue become a more adaptable and resilient corridor by enabling different types of development that meet modern housing and commercial needs. By revising local regulations, the village can encourage a diverse range of developments that combine residential, commercial, and public open spaces. These changes will promote increased investment and contribute to a more vibrant and economically robust corridor.

Strategy 3.1

Incentivize senior housing development along Grand Avenue by amending the zoning ordinance to permit residential care facilities in the C-2 and C-3 districts.

Case study



Sheridan at River Forest
River Forest, IL

River Forest recognized the need for high-quality senior housing and collaborated with Senior Lifestyle Corporation and Kaufman Jacobs to develop a modern assisted living and memory care facility. Located at 800-826 N. Harlem Avenue, the four-story building occupies 1.5 acres and reflects the urban character of the neighborhood while paying homage to the nearby Frank Lloyd Wright House.

The facility includes 125 units, with 91 for assisted living and 34 for memory care, providing seniors with comfortable housing and easy access to the vibrant River Forest community. Assisted living units are priced at an average of $5,500 per month, while memory care units are approximately $6,800 per month. Residents have access to amenities like an outdoor terrace, art center, fitness equipment, and beauty and barber shops.

In addition to fulfilling a vital housing need, the development has a positive economic impact on the area. An economic impact study projected that the project would generate $581,000 in overall revenue for local taxing districts, with at least $68,000 benefiting the Village of River Forest. Through this project, River Forest has not only improved housing options for seniors but also strengthened its local economy.

Case study sources: The Sheridan at River Forest, Senior Lifestyle Corporation, Wednesday Journal

Photo source: The Sheridan at River Forest

Strategy 3.2

Incentivize developers to include affordable residential units in future developments through methods like density bonuses or reduced parking requirements.

Strategy 3.3

Implement more flexible parking requirements to facilitate mixed-use and residential development on existing small lots along Grand Avenue.



"We need more apartments at reasonable rents for the young people starting out. Our suburbs are great for this since we are already located next to Metra!"

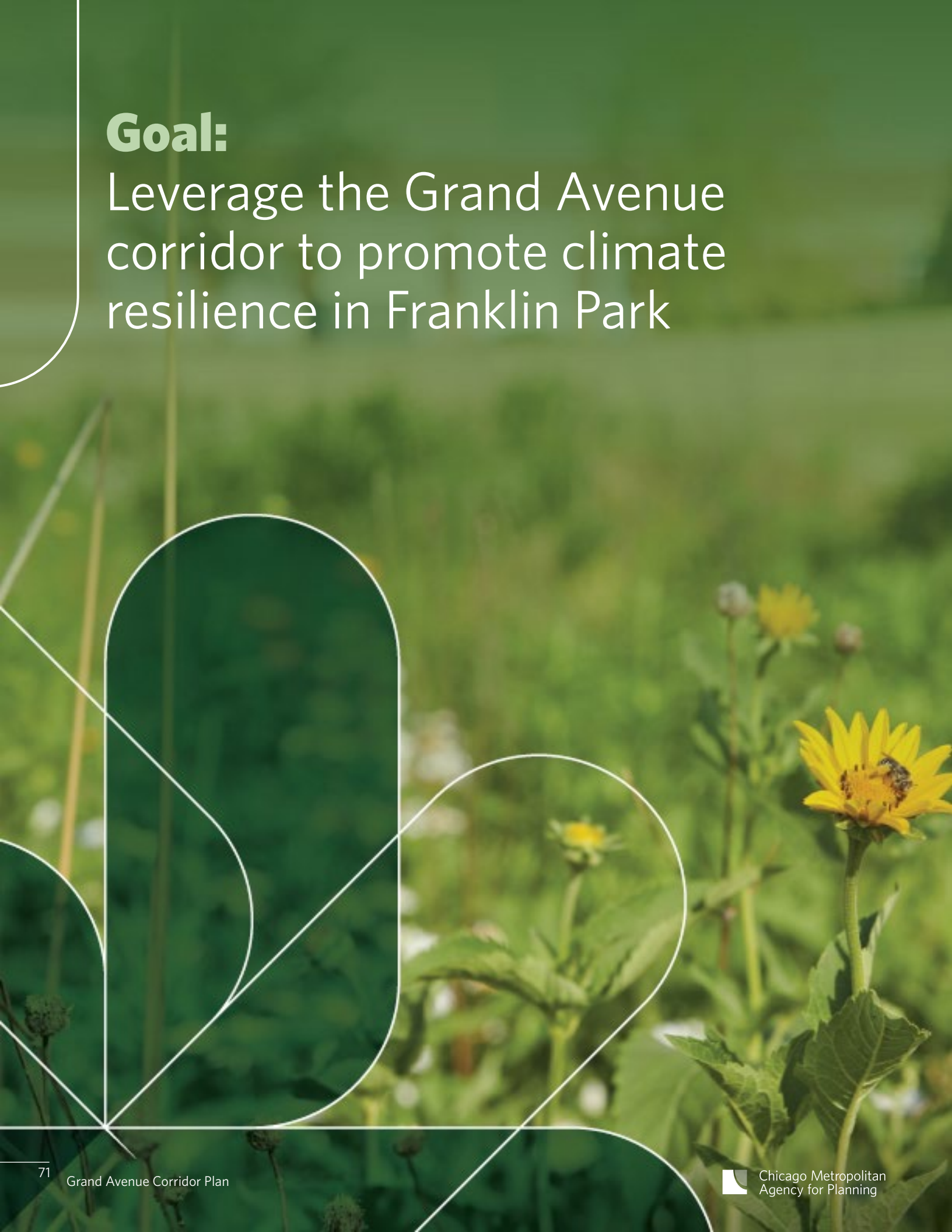
- Franklin Park resident

Implementation matrix

Goal: Diversify housing along Grand Avenue and within Franklin Park.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Support an equitable community by providing travel options along and near Grand Avenue.		
1.1		
Ensure that there is a balance of housing types and prices along and near the Grand Avenue corridor. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial, transitional	IHDA Low Income Housing Tax Credits Program Provides housing to seniors and low-income renters earning below the regional median. IHDA awards LIHTC to potential housing developments once a year following scoring laid out in its Qualified Allocation Plan. Community Development Block Grant Local economic development incentives	Making Room - Housing for a Changing America Increasing the Supply of New Affordable Housing: A Primer Map of opportunity development sites The village can consider how potential development sites along Grand Avenue will be used for future housing development
1.2		
Expand the supply of underrepresented housing types, including attached single-family dwelling units and small-scale multi-family housing, that is consistent with the design character of Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial, transitional	Private investment	Missing Middle Housing What Is Missing Middle Housing?
Recommendation 2: Incentivize new housing in strategic locations along Grand Avenue.		
2.1		
Identify and repurpose vacant parcels for mixed-use housing development to accommodate young professionals and seniors looking to downsize or age in place. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial, transitional	Local economic development incentives Private investment	Making Multigenerational Communities Happen

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.2		
Support the redevelopment of obsolete commercial properties into mixed-use developments with residential units. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial, transitional	Local economic development incentives Private investment	Repurposing Underutilized Strip Malls to Create Multifamily Housing America is full of abandoned malls. What if we turned them into housing?
Recommendation 3: Update zoning regulations to promote mixed-use and multi-family housing development along Grand Avenue.		
3.1		
Incentivize senior housing development along Grand Avenue by amending the zoning ordinance to permit residential care facilities in the C-2 and C-3 districts. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial, transitional	Staff time	N/A
3.2		
Incentivize developers to include affordable residential units in future developments through methods like density bonuses or reduced parking requirements.	Local economic development incentives Staff time	People Over Parking
3.3		
Implement more flexible parking requirements to facilitate mixed-use and residential development on existing small lots along Grand Avenue.	Staff time	A Business Case for Dropping Parking Minimums

Goal:
Leverage the Grand Avenue corridor to promote climate resilience in Franklin Park



Recommendation 1 | Incorporate green infrastructure in renovations, street improvements, and new developments along Grand Avenue

Green infrastructure — such as rain gardens, permeable pavements, bioswales, and green roofs — mitigate flooding, improve water quality, and combat extreme heat. Franklin Park has made headway incorporating green infrastructure through its partnership with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago along Pacific Avenue and an upcoming project along Washington Street. Adding green infrastructure to the Grand Avenue corridor is critical given the concentration of impervious surfaces and risk of flooding in the study area.

Throughout the community engagement process, residents often expressed a preference for green infrastructure improvements, especially ones that would also beautify the corridor.

Examples of green infrastructure that were popular among participants in the visioning workshop and visual preference survey



Green storm drain
Source: CMAP



Stormwater garden curb extension
Source: City of Grand Rapids



Street trees and shade
Source: CMAP

Strategy 1.1

Incorporate green infrastructure like rain gardens and stormwater tree pits in street improvements and traffic calming measures along Grand Avenue.

Strategy 1.2

Continue partnering with the MWRD on green infrastructure projects and explore additional project types like green alleys and permeable parking lots.

Strategy 1.3

Establish zoning incentives to encourage green infrastructure.

Using zoning to promote climate resilience

Several zoning tools are available to planners to encourage or mandate green stormwater infrastructure. Some examples of communities that have successfully implemented these approaches include:

Lexington, KY
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government requires various levels of vegetated area coverage for its zoning districts but incentivizes the use of green infrastructure by decreasing the required vegetated coverage amount based on the incorporation of green infrastructure into projects. Other examples of zoning policies that could incentivize green infrastructure are density bonuses or reductions of parking minimums.

Source: Lexington-Fayette Unified Development Code

Norfolk, VA
Norfolk uses overlay districts — including a coastal resilience overlay that requires the use of native plant species, preserves open space, and enforces a resilience quotient on new developments, based on points assigned to activities under three components: risk reduction, stormwater management, and energy resilience.

Source: City of Norfolk Zoning Ordinance

South Elgin, IL
South Elgin maintains a floodplain overlay district to restrict uses in floodplains and floodways. In the floodway, permitted uses are constrained to community gardens, parks, utilities, open space, and multimodal paths or trails — many of which are conducive to stormwater infiltration.

Source: South Elgin Code of Ordinances

Strategy 1.4

Develop a plant species list to encourage the use of native plantings with deep root systems where appropriate.

> *The village's zoning ordinance requires a landscape plan for new developments. The landscape plan must include plant species that are native to northeastern Illinois. The village also maintains lists of approved and prohibited trees. To further support the use of native plants, the village should provide a recommended list of native plants.*

Strategy 1.5

Partner with schools and the library to develop a Greener Grand educational green infrastructure program, involving the installation of rain gardens, trees, or rain barrels.

Strategy 1.6

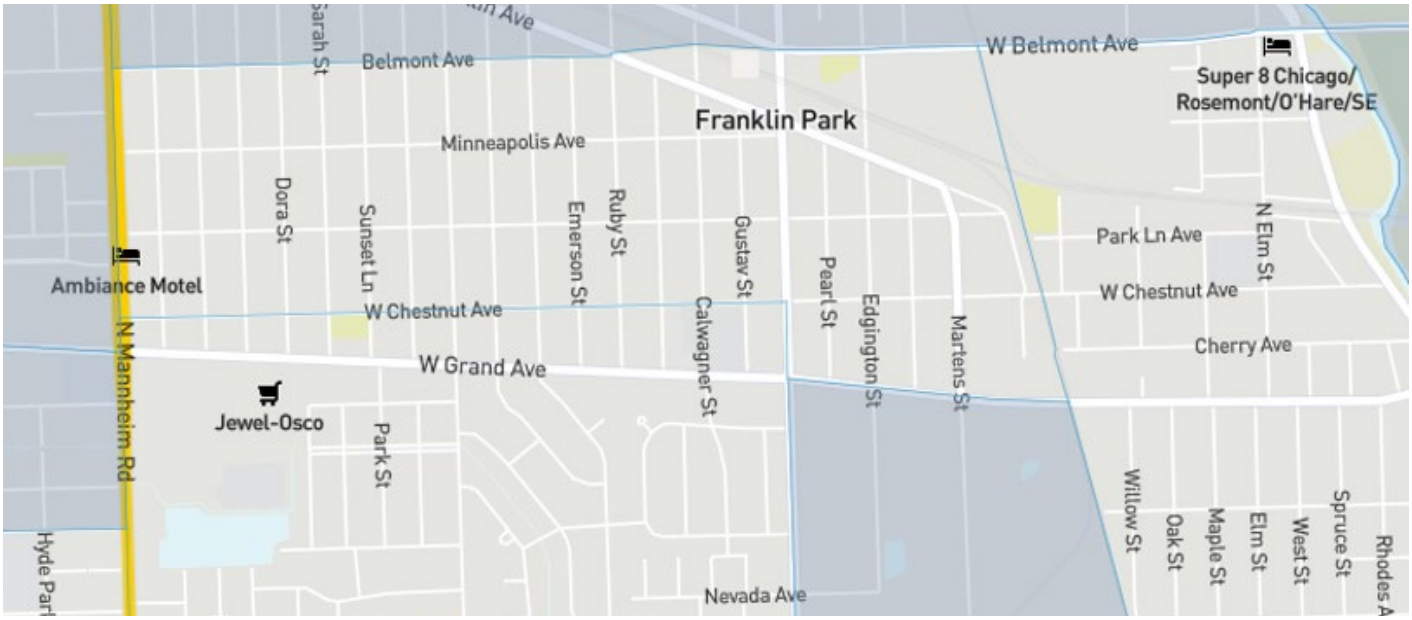
Explore the feasibility of adding green roofs to existing buildings and new developments along Grand Avenue, especially on large industrial and commercial buildings.

Strategy 1.7

Leverage Justice40 designation to access federal investments for projects within eligible areas of the corridor.

> *The area between 25th Avenue and the underpass along the corridor falls within a Justice40 disadvantaged census tract. This area is home to large industrial buildings and makes up the technology infrastructure business cluster corridor segment. This area, as well as the census tract east of it, are also identified as disadvantaged communities under the EPA Disadvantaged Community Environmental and Climate Justice Program. These designations enhance access to federal investments for projects in these areas.*

Figure 4: Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool highlights areas along Grand Avenue that falls within a Justice40 disadvantaged census tract (shown in gray)



Strategy 1.8

Use permeable pavement in street parking lanes along Grand Avenue.



The City of Evanston, in partnership with the MWRD, installed permeable pavers in on-street parking spots on Main Street in September 2024. A similar project could be successful along Grand Avenue in Franklin Park.

Source: MWRD

Strategy 1.9

Incorporate green infrastructure recommendations in the village's Climate Resiliency Plan in partnership with Cook County.

Recommendation 2 | Increase the tree canopy along Grand Avenue

Franklin Park has consistently demonstrated a commitment to its tree canopy's health and coverage. The village has a tree care ordinance, maintains the Tree Preservation Commission, established an arboretum on Grand Avenue, and received a grant from the Morton Arboretum's Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI) in the summer of 2024 to support work in the village.

Yet, the village has lower canopy coverage than Cook County as a whole, and there are significant gaps in tree coverage within the corridor. Trees can mitigate extreme heat, which poses a health risk to corridor users. Further, corridor patrons have expressed an interest in more shade along Grand Avenue to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Strategy 2.1

Leverage the momentum and networks of existing programs (such as its tree care ordinance, arboretum, Tree Preservation Commission, Tree City USA status, village arborist, and a recent grant from CRTI) to increase tree canopy coverage along Grand Avenue, prioritizing the western end of the corridor.

Strategy 2.2

Require any nonconforming surface parking lot to come into compliance with greenspace and landscape requirements with expansions of the lot.

Strategy 2.3

Establish a tree shading requirement for large surface parking lots.

Case study

Shading parking lots
Sacramento, CA

The City of Sacramento maintains a tree shading requirement for all surface parking facilities, regardless of the size of the lot. Within 15 years of the development of the lot, at least 50% of the lot must be shaded.

When a nonconforming, pre-existing lot is expanded, either the expansion or the entire lot must comply with this requirement depending on the size of the expansion.

Alternate versions of this strategy could require a different coverage percentage or allow shade structures or solar canopies to count toward the shade requirement. Lexington, KY, has even established minimum tree canopy standards for each category of land use.

Case study sources: City of Sacramento, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government

Strategy 2.4



Add street trees as part of any sidewalk improvements, ensuring installation does not jeopardize accessibility or quality. Use stormwater tree pits where feasible.

Example of properly placed street trees and planters along Grand Avenue near Passow Elementary School.

Implementation matrix

Goal: Diversify housing along Grand Avenue and within Franklin Park.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Incorporate green infrastructure in renovations, street improvements, and new developments along Grand Avenue.		
1.1		
Incorporate green infrastructure like rain gardens and stormwater tree pits in street improvements and traffic calming measures along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program MWRD Green Infrastructure Partnership Program Invest in Cook Program US EPA Green Infrastructure Funding and Technical Assistance Opportunities	Retrofitting Streets for Stormwater Integrating Green Infrastructure
1.2		
Continue partnering with MWRD on green infrastructure projects and explore additional project types like green alleys and permeable parking lots. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	MWRD Green Infrastructure Partnership Program	MWRD Stormwater Partnership

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.3		
Establish zoning incentives to encourage green infrastructure. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time ULI Technical Assistance	Green Infrastructure case studies, US EPA Municipal handbook, US EPA
1.4		
Develop a plant species list to encourage the use of native plantings with deep root systems where appropriate. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	N/A
1.5		
Partner with schools and the library to develop a Greener Grand educational green infrastructure program, involving the installation of rain gardens, tree plantings, or rain barrels. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, local commercial	Illinois Green Schools Project An Illinois Green Alliance program that helps schools design and implement a personalized, no to low-cost sustainability initiative Illinois Department of Natural Resources Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program Educational programs are eligible project types for 319 grants ComEd Green Region Grant Wild Ones of West Cook - Garden for Nature Grant Program	Openlands educational programs Tree Campus K-12 Schools along the corridor could consider becoming Tree Campus K-12 schools recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation to complement the village's Tree City designation Rain Garden School Activity Guide Tree planting activity Community waters science unit

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.6		
Explore the feasibility of adding green roofs to existing buildings and new developments along Grand Avenue, especially on large industrial and commercial buildings. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial, technology infrastructure business cluster	Illinois EPA Wastewater/Stormwater and Drinking Water Loans Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program	Green Roof and Wall Policy Guide US EPA Community Planning and Green Infrastructure
1.7		
Leverage Justice40 designation to access federal investments for projects within eligible areas of the corridor **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Technology infrastructure business cluster, transitional	Great Lakes Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program (forthcoming) Through the EPA's Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program, the Minneapolis Foundation has been tasked with administering environmental justice grants to organizations serving disadvantaged areas.	Justice40 Resource Guide Justice40 funding finder Blacks in Green (BIG) Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (EJ TCTAC) The EPA has selected BIG as an EJ TCAC to provide technical assistance to communities with environmental justice concerns through help "navigating federal grant application systems, developing strong grant proposals, and effectively managing grant funding" as well as providing guidance on community engagement and translation and interpretation services
1.8		
Use permeable pavement in street parking lanes along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-medium-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial	Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program MWRD Green Infrastructure Partnership Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Invest in Cook Program	N/A

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
1.9		
Incorporate green infrastructure recommendations in the village's Climate Resiliency Plan in partnership with Cook County. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	Franklin Park Climate Resiliency Plan
Recommendation 2: Increase tree canopy along Grand Avenue.		
2.1		
Leverage the momentum and networks of existing programs (such as its tree care ordinance, arboretum, Tree Preservation Commission, Tree City USA status, village arborist, and a recent grant from CRTI) in the village to increase tree canopy coverage along Grand Avenue, prioritizing the western end of the corridor. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	Village of Franklin Park Tree Conservation Chicago Region Trees Initiative Franklin Park Urban Forestry Summary Tree Preservation, Planting and Maintenance; Tree Preservation Commission Ordinance
2.2		
Require any nonconforming surface parking lot to come into compliance with greenspace and landscape requirements with expansions of the lot. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	Trees and Parking Lots

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.3		
Establish a tree shading requirement for large surface parking lots. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	N/A
2.4		
Add street trees as part of any improvement to the sidewalk, ensuring installation does not jeopardize sidewalk accessibility or quality. Use stormwater tree pits where feasible. **Timeline:** Long-termv **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Transportation Alternatives Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Invest in Cook Program Chicago Region Trees Initiative Urban and Community Forestry Grants Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities ComEd Green Region Grant	Trees and sidewalks: A strategic approach to conflicts Urban Street Stormwater Guide – Stormwater Tree

Goal:
Improve the quality of and access to natural assets in Franklin Park



Recommendation 1 | Mitigate Grand Avenue's impacts on water quality in nearby waterbodies

Runoff from Grand Avenue and surrounding impervious surfaces pollutes nearby water bodies, harming the quality of local waterways like Silver Creek. In addition to decreasing impervious surface coverage in the corridor, the village could take steps to protect stream health and aquatic habitats through recommendations outlined in the Silver Creek Watershed-Based Plan and the village's Stormwater Master Plan.

Strategy 1.1

Protect the Jewel-Osco and Grand Plaza shopping center from flooding by converting concrete channels along Silver Creek to naturalized creek corridors with floodplain connections and native plantings.

Case study



St. George Rainway
Vancouver, CA

In Vancouver, Canada, a buried stream caused flooding in streets and home basements along St. George Street. Daylighting the stream was not feasible, so at the request of the community, the City of Vancouver devised a rainway that follows the path of the buried creek. The rainway consists of pebbles, soil, and plants, and once completed, the project will be able to drain nearly 4.5 million gallons of water per year. The rainway will also filter runoff from the street and beautify the corridor. Rains in October 2024 tested the rainway, which successfully prevented street flooding.

A rainway could be an appropriate form of green stormwater infrastructure in the areas of Franklin Park most prone to flooding, particularly in places along Silver Creek, adjacent to Jewel-Osco, and along Riverside Street and Parker Avenue.

Case study sources: City of Vancouver, CBC News

Illustration of the St. George rainway.

Photo source: City of Vancouver

Strategy 1.2

Work with the property owner to install bioswales in the parking lot west of Riverside Street.

Strategy 1.3

Incorporate green infrastructure throughout the corridor in the public right-of-way and on private property.

Case study

Green Business Award
Niles, IL

One way to encourage environmental sustainability in the private sector is through an award or designation celebrating businesses' commitment to sustainable practices. The Village of Niles has an award that businesses may receive based on their commitment to waste reduction and recycling; water conservation and stormwater pollution prevention; energy conservation; public education and awareness; and transportation.

Winners are celebrated at a village board meeting and chamber of commerce luncheon, highlighted in village communications, and receive a plaque and window clings designating them as a Green Business Award winner.

Skokie, Gurnee, and Lake Zurich also have similar programs.

Source: Village of Niles Green Business Award

Recommendation 2 | Enhance bike and pedestrian connectivity to village parks and neighboring forest preserve from Grand Avenue

Residents often cite the village's parks as one of their favorite aspects of living in Franklin Park. Yet, many must drive to visit parks. There are 1.65 accessible park acres per 1,000 residents — less than half of accessible park acreage per 1,000 residents in Cook County.

The village is working to develop a bike path along Franklin and Belmont Avenues to the north of the corridor but should also prioritize bike and pedestrian safety along Grand Avenue. Ensuring bike and pedestrian access to existing and new green space along Grand Avenue will provide residents with increased opportunities for recreation, community connection, and nature.

Strategy 2.1

Locate pedestrian crossings in areas that promote safer access to nearby parks and open space.

Strategy 2.2

Include park and bicycle route signage and wayfinding along Grand Avenue.

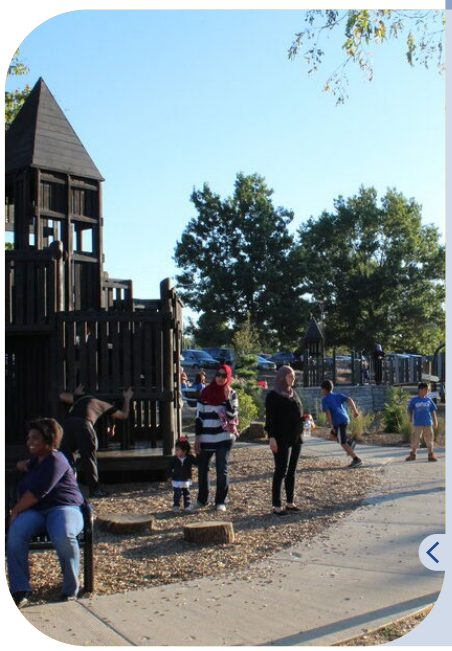
Strategy 2.3

Partner with the village of River Grove and IDOT to ensure safe and cohesive pedestrian and bicycle experience on Grand Avenue to the Des Plaines River Trail.

Strategy 2.4

Amend the zoning ordinance to require open space in multi-family and mixed-use developments, with exemptions if the development is within a specified distance along a walkable route of a park, greenway, or forest preserve.

Case study



Zoning to support open space
Lexington, KY

Lexington reshaped its zoning code to ensure equitable park access for its residents, requiring common open space for its residential and mixed-use zoning districts with more than 25 dwelling units. Exemptions for common areas may be awarded if developments are within a specified walking distance of parks, greenways, or other public open space.

This measure ensures that new residential developments do not worsen inequities to open space and promotes development around existing parks to increase access.

Case study sources: Trust for Public Land, Lexington-Fayette Urban County

Jacobson Park in Lexington is an example of common spaces reshaped by zoning requirements.

Photo source: Element Design

Recommendation 3 | Incorporate public green space along Grand Avenue

There are opportunities to increase green space in the village through small-scale interventions along Grand Avenue. Additional public green space would reduce impervious surfaces along the corridor and mitigate extreme heat, helping the village adapt to climate change while providing gathering spaces for corridor users. Public green spaces can boost economic activity along commercial corridors by attracting more visitors and encouraging them to spend time and money in the area. Such an intervention would also help to beautify the corridor, a desire many residents expressed during community engagement.

Strategy 3.1

Consider transforming one or more vacant lots along Grand Avenue into pocket parks.

Case study





Westmont Pocket Park
Westmont, IL

Through a partnership between the Village of Westmont and the Westmont Park District, an empty lot slated for redevelopment has been transformed into a temporary pocket park. Upcycled features — such as an old archway sign, reused tables and benches, and trees that had been relocated from another property — enabled the beautification of the space with minimal investments. There were no immediate plans for the lot, so it could have sat vacant and empty indefinitely, but instead was transformed into another public space for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Case study sources: Village of Westmont

Before and after photos of the empty lot that was converted into a temporary pocket park in downtown Westmont.

Photo source: Village of Westmont

Strategy 3.2

Work with the library to activate the lawn along Grand Avenue through prairie landscaping, benches, and picnic tables.

Case study



Case study: Activating a library lawn
Traverse City, MI

When faced with the need for innovative programming during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Traverse City District Library moved summer programming outside. This, coupled with community feedback expressing a desire for more outdoor program offerings, prompted the library to rethink its front lawn space.

The library funded improvements to its lawn using a successful $25,000 crowdfunding campaign and matching grant funds from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Improvements included a new library sign, benches, landscaping, water fountain, and electricity to the lawn and new sign. This enabled the library to expand existing programs as well as host new ones, such as outdoor storytelling and yoga.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Patronicity funding campaign, and The Traverse Ticker

Strategy 3.3

Develop parklets — public seating platforms that convert curbside parking spaces into vibrant community spaces — in traffic calming bump-outs.



This parklet example with colorful planters, seating, and decorative pavement was popular among community members.

Source: Urban Design Studio



I would love for Grand Avenue to look more inviting! With greenery and benches along the way so that families can take walks, drives, or bike around this area and increase business prosperity for our community.

- Franklin Park resident

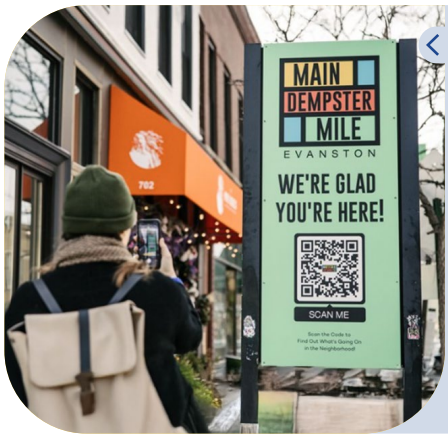
Recommendation 4 | Enhance pedestrian experience through wayfinding and streetscape improvements

Many residents expressed the desire for Grand Avenue to be a more walkable commercial destination, emphasizing the importance of a pleasant aesthetic experience for pedestrians. Some noted that the corridor could be a more welcoming entry point to the village. Currently, traffic noise, unsafe crossings, and a lack of seating and landscaping in portions of the corridor discourage people from walking on Grand Avenue.

Strategic wayfinding, design elements, streetscaping, public art, pedestrian-oriented businesses and placemaking efforts can help achieve this community vision.

Strategy 4.1

Develop a wayfinding system for Grand Avenue, including signage to corridor amenities such as parks, schools, restaurants, and the library.



Residents responded positively to smaller-scale wayfinding signs and banners, such as this example in Evanston, IL.

Source: All Together

Strategy 4.2

Coordinate with downtown beautification committee and park districts to ensure cohesive signage and aesthetics across village wayfinding.

Strategy 4.3

Install additional lighting throughout the corridor and public art underneath the underpass.

> *Stakeholders have expressed a desire for additional lighting and art throughout the corridor. Under current conditions, patrons reported feeling unsafe in poorly lit areas. Street lighting and art would not only beautify Grand Avenue but would also make pedestrians feel safer and contribute to a greater sense of place.*

Strategy 4.4

Strategically place street trees to provide buffers from traffic noise.

Strategy 4.5

Establish a Grand Avenue mural program, building on existing public art along Grand Avenue.

Strategy 4.6

Collaborate with restaurant owners to spread awareness of the village's outdoor eating cafe permitting requirements.

> *Residents repeatedly emphasized a desire for more opportunities for outdoor dining in Franklin Park, favoring the images below as examples of what types of outdoor dining they would like to see.*



Source: Dan Burden Photo Library



Source: Village of Franklin Park

Strategy 4.7

Invest in streetscape improvements in the public right-of-way, particularly benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, street trees, and colorful vegetation.





Examples of streetscaping improvements, like increased lighting and vegetation, in Downtown Franklin Park.

Source: Village of Franklin Park

Implementation matrix

Goal: Diversify housing along Grand Avenue and within Franklin Park.		
Strategy	**Funding sources**	**Resources**
Recommendation 1: Incorporate green infrastructure in renovations, street improvements, and new developments along Grand Avenue.		
1.1		
Protect Jewel-Osco and Grand Plaza shopping center from flooding by converting concrete channels along Silver Creek to naturalized creek corridors with floodplain connections and native plantings. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program MWRD Green Infrastructure Partnership Program Illinois EPA Wastewater/Stormwater and Drinking Water Loans	Retrofitting Streets for Stormwater Integrating Green Infrastructure
1.2		
Work with the property owner to install bioswales in the parking lot west of Riverside Street. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Illinois EPA Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program MWRD Green Infrastructure Partnership Program Illinois EPA Wastewater/Stormwater and Drinking Water Loans	The Value of Green Infrastructure: A Guide to Recognizing Its Economic, Environmental and Social Benefits Green Values Strategy Guide: Linking Green Infrastructure Benefits to Community Priorities Communicating the value of green infrastructure to businesses and homeowners will be important to increasing buy-in from the community and the private sector
Recommendation 2: Enhance bike and pedestrian connectivity to village parks and neighboring forest preserve from Grand Avenue.		
2.1		
Locate pedestrian crossings in areas that promote safer access to nearby parks and open space. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	N/A	Safe Routes to Parks

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
2.2		
Include park and bicycle route signage and wayfinding along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives) Transportation Alternatives Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program	Urban Bikeway Design Guide: Bike Route Wayfinding Signage and Markings System
2.3		
Partner with the village of River Grove and IDOT to ensure safe and cohesive pedestrian and bicycle experience throughout Grand Avenue to the Des Plaines River Trail. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	Des Plaines River Trail Improvements
2.4		
Amend the zoning ordinance to require open space in multi-family and mixed-use developments, with exemptions if the development is within a specified distance along a walkable route of a park, greenway, or forest preserve.	Staff time	N/A

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
Recommendation 3: Incorporate public green space along Grand Avenue.		
3.1		
Consider transforming one or more vacant lots along Grand Avenue into pocket parks. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Cook County Arts forthcoming creative placemaking grant program AIB/CN EcoConnexions From the Ground Up Grants Program Community Development Block Grants Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Program ComEd Green Region Grant	Trust for Public Land pocket park toolkit
3.2		
Work with the library to activate the lawn along Grand Avenue through prairie landscaping, benches, and picnic tables. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Regional commercial	Project for Public Spaces Placemaking Grants Marion Public Library in Marion, Indiana recently received this grant to transform an outdoor space that can "host expanded and more visible educational opportunities and community-wide programming." National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant Requires partnership with nonprofit arts organization Illinois Department of Natural Resources Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant AIB/CN EcoConnexions From the Ground Up Grants Program ComEd Green Region Grant	AARP Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit Temporary pop-up activations can serve as pilot programs for more permanent placemaking and landscaping efforts American Library Association on the importance of creative placemaking for libraries.
3.3		
Develop "parklets" in traffic calming bump-outs. **Timeline:** Medium-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial	Private investment In Philadelphia and New York City, private business owners who invest in parklets often recoup their investments in five years (source: UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs)	Several jurisdictions have published parklet guidelines to ease business owners' development of parklets: City of Aurora parklet guidelines San Francisco parklet manual Springfield, IL parklet program

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
	In Toronto, parklets that replaced street parking produced"49 times more revenue than what parking fees would have generated (source: Strong Towns) National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grants Kresge Foundation Grants	The City of Springfield has a clear parklet design guide and provides grants of up to $10,000 to restaurants and bars for the development of a parklet Reclaiming the Right-of-Way: A Toolkit for Creating and Implementing Parklets Parklets: Best Practices for Design and Implementation
Recommendation 4: Enhance pedestrian experience through wayfinding and streetscape improvements.		
4.1		
Develop a wayfinding system for Grand Avenue, including signage to corridor amenities such as parks, schools, restaurants, and the library. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Tax increment financing districts Special service areas Village economic development incentives (existing and potential future incentives)	Global Street Design Guide: Wayfinding Downtown Naperville Wayfinding Master Plan
4.2		
Coordinate with downtown beautification committee and park districts to ensure cohesive signage and aesthetics across village wayfinding. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Staff time	N/A
4.3		
Install additional lighting throughout the corridor and public art underneath the underpass. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grants Illinois Arts Council grants	Funding Sources for Public Art CMAP Arts & Culture Toolkit

Strategy	Funding sources	Resources
4.4		
Strategically place street trees to provide buffers from traffic noise. **Timeline:** Long-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	Transportation Alternatives Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Invest in Cook Program Chicago Region Trees Initiative Urban and Community Forestry Grants Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities ComEd Green Region Grant	Using Trees and Shrubs to Reduce Noise Conservation Buffers: Design Guidelines for Buffers, Corridors, and Greenways
4.5		
Establish a Grand Avenue mural program, building on existing public art along Grand Avenue. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Corridor-wide	National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants Illinois Arts Council grants General village funds	The Role of the Arts and Culture in Planning Practice Funding Sources for Public Art CMAP Arts & Culture Toolkit City of DeKalb public mural program The City of DeKalb advertises possible mural sites for interested artists to include in their mural application. The Village of Franklin Park could similarly maintain a public list of available sites for public art. Americans for the Arts Design and Review Criteria for Public Art Start a Public Art Program with Murals Municipal-Artist Partnerships guide

4.6		
Collaborate with restaurant owners to spread awareness of the village's outdoor eating cafe permitting requirements. **Timeline:** Short-term **Segment applicability:** Local commercial	Staff time	This collaboration could involve developing a resource guide with a section on frequently asked questions. Information could also be included in a toolkit, which was recommended in the village's 2017 comprehensive plan. Another example is the Village of Niles Business Guide. The village could coordinate with the Grand Chamber by O'Hare to assist in communicating with businesses.
4.7		
Invest in streetscape improvements in the public right-of-way, particularly benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, street trees, and colorful vegetation.	Transportation Alternatives Program Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program ITEP may fund improvements such as benches, street lighting, etc. as part of larger transportation projects Regional Transportation Authority Access to Transit Program Safe Streets and Roads for All	N/A

Appendix

Existing conditions report

Market analysis

Transportation technical report

FY25-0021

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the region's comprehensive planning organization. The agency and its partners developed and are now implementing ON TO 2050, a long-range plan to help the seven counties and 284 communities of northeastern Illinois implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues.

See **cmap.illinois.gov** for more information.

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THE VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN PARK ILLINOIS