



VILLAGE OF **GLENWOOD** STATION AREA STUDY

DRAFT
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EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK REPORT



Prepared for:



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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Project Background

The Village of Glenwood, in anticipation of potential future Metra commuter rail service along the SouthEast Service (SES) line, has partnered with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to undertake a station area planning study centered on the anticipated station location. By engaging in this planning activity, the Village of Glenwood is proactively seeking to leverage large-scale transit service investment to catalyze local economic development opportunities. This planning effort also provides the Village with an opportunity to improve the transit-supportiveness of nearby land use patterns, a policy action that will support reinvestment in the community and encourage future transit usage.

Community Background

As shown in Figure 1, the Village of Glenwood is located in Cook County, approximately 23 miles south of downtown Chicago, and is bounded to its north and west by Cook County Forest Preserve land. The 2000 United States Census reported 9,000 residents, a figure which is projected to grow to 11,367 by 2030, an increase of over 26 percent.¹ The number of households is projected to increase at approximately the same rate: 25.5 percent from 3,373 households to 4,232 by 2030.² The employment forecast reveals a high rate of growth during this period, anticipating an increase in the number of jobs in Glenwood from 3,014 in 2000 to 9,232 in 2030, an increase of more than 206 percent.³ This rapid expansion in the employment base may be partially driven by Glenwood's proximity to IL-394, a roadway which provides direct access to several major interstates, including I-80, I-90, and I-94. Because the Village of Glenwood is almost entirely built out, these high rates of anticipated population, household and employment growth are presumed to be accommodated in a comparatively denser pattern of development.

The Cook County Forest Preserve land that borders Glenwood is an invaluable community asset, but also functionally constrains the number and alignment of roadways providing access to and from the historic core of Glenwood. Glenwood is proximate to IL-394 which, as mentioned above, provides direct connections to multiple other interstates, but the physical orientation of the Village, as constrained by the Forest Preserve land, has resulted in one main east-west access route (Main Street) through the historic commercial core of the Village. Glenwood's location between the Metra station at Homewood and the pool of commuters in Indiana and adjacent south suburban communities results in a high volume of commuter through traffic. The combination of high traffic volumes at peak commuting times with a constrained roadway network that funnels traffic through an active at-grade freight railroad crossing results in a pattern of intermittent congestion and delay. The proposed implementation of Metra service along the SouthEast Service line and the construction of a station in Glenwood could reduce through traffic by capturing some of this commuter demand, while providing residents a travel option that can be accessed from within the Village.

¹ Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), "Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission 2030 Forecasts of Population, Households and Employment by County and Municipality, September 27, 2006"

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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INSERT FIGURE 1

Proactive planning to direct Glenwood's projected growth in a manner that will complement the valued small-town character of the Village, while accommodating the projected influx of population and economic development activity, will position the Village to enjoy sustained success over the next several decades while improving residents' regional mobility.

Historical Context⁴

Originally settled in the 1840s as Hickory Bend, Glenwood's early growth was fueled in the 1870s by its proximity to the recently-completed Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad. In 1887, the Glenwood School for Boys was founded by Robert Todd Lincoln, President Abraham Lincoln's son. The school, which has grown and evolved over its more than 120 years of existence, is a privately-funded, residential, co-educational school for children from troubled and low-income families.

Glenwood was also an important stop on the Underground Railroad in the period leading up to the Civil War. Escaping slaves and their guides would stop at the Fireside Chalet, a restaurant which was located at approximately the current site of Nugent Square, before continuing on their northward journey. While many of the stops on the Underground Railroad were not actually accessed by trains, the Fireside Chalet's proximity to the recently-completed Chicago & Eastern Railroad made it an ideal resting and transfer point for the escapees that were travelling by train.⁵

At the time of village incorporation in 1903, the approximately 500 residents were mainly employed as local farmers and railroad workers. The Village maintained its small population base through the 1950s, but the construction of nearly 3,000 homes between 1960 and 1980 drove the population to its peak of 10,538. This explosion in population also brought increased racial diversity: fewer than 40 Village residents were African-American in 1970, but by 2000 there were approximately 4,600 white, 4,000 black, and 450 Latino residents. These residents largely live in owner-occupied homes (86.2 percent in 2000) and have a median household income that, at \$67,161 in 1999 dollars, was slightly more than 34 percent higher than the national average.⁶ With the closest Metra station in neighboring Homewood, fewer than 1 in 13 Glenwood residents take transit to work, and the average resident spends more than one hour per day commuting to work by car.⁷

Station Area Planning Study

The RTA, through its Community Planning Program (formerly known as the Regional Technical Assistance Program (RTAP)), has worked with more than 50 communities to create station area or transit-oriented development (TOD) plans. Through this program, the Village of Glenwood has hired HNTB Corporation and Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc. to provide planning, urban design, and market consulting services for this station area study. The planning process will be organized into the following steps, some of which will occur concurrently. This report summarizes the work undertaken in the first two steps listed below:

- An analysis of the existing land use patterns, demographic trends, access and circulation patterns, and transit characteristics of Glenwood,

⁴ The Encyclopedia of Chicago, "Glenwood, IL" www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org

⁵ The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, www.visitchicagosouthland.com

⁶ 2000 United States Census

⁷ The Encyclopedia of Chicago, "Glenwood, IL" www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org

- A market assessment (available under separate cover) to identify the level of market support for land uses most appropriately suited to the immediate station location and broader study area,
- The development of two alternative concept plans for the Glenwood station area that offer distinctly different land use mixes, quantities and intensities of development, and access patterns,
- The selection of a locally-preferred concept plan from the two alternative concept plans,
- The creation of design guidelines to complement the preferred concept plan and convey the Village's level of expectation regarding development quality to potential developers, and
- The creation of implementation and financing strategies to outline the actions that the Village should undertake in preparation for the potential future introduction of commuter rail service.

During the course of these technical tasks, the consultant team will engage the project Steering Committee and other civic leaders, developers, and the general public for help in defining and refining the alternative concept plans, and in selecting the locally-preferred concept plan. The Steering Committee is comprised of local stakeholders and transportation agency representatives that will provide oversight and feedback throughout the planning process.

Study Area Boundary

Transit station areas are typically defined as the area included within a half-mile radius of an existing or future station location. This half-mile radius represents the distance travelled during a typical 10-minute walk, which is generally considered comfortable for pedestrians. As shown in Figure 1, the Village has identified a 17-acre parcel of land on the eastern edge of the existing railroad tracks that is roughly bounded by Maple Drive on the north, Cedar Lane to the east, Center Street to the south, and the existing rail line to the west, as a potential site for the proposed station and related facilities. The study area radius (see Figure 1) encompasses residential neighborhoods, the municipal center, the historic commercial core of the Village, and the Brookwood Intermediate and Junior High Schools. For general purposes, the implications of potential station area redevelopment for areas further to the east and west along arterial roadways will also be considered.

Transit-Supportive Development

Transit-oriented development (TOD) refers to a pattern of higher-density, mixed residential, retail, commercial, and office space uses whose design is meant to maximize access to transit systems and encourage transit ridership. TOD is not simply a single parcel or project located next to a transit station, but a comprehensive vision for the neighborhood within a quarter- to half-mile radius of the station, a distance that is considered comfortably walkable. By proactively planning for transit-oriented development in locations that can support it, TOD can also protect open spaces and low-density areas from encroachment by sprawling, medium-density development.

TODs are often defined by the three "D"s of design, diversity, and density:

- TODs are designed to create to an environment that is attractive and comfortable to pedestrians: streetscaping, pedestrian-scale development, and walkability soften the perception of comparatively higher-density development around transit stations.

- Diversity of use encourages transit ridership by making the station area interesting to pedestrians and creating efficiencies through the consolidation of trips. This use diversity reduces the number of trips that will need to be taken by car by nearby residents in order to accomplish daily errands, and makes the area more appealing to residents and business employees.
- Density is the most important factor when creating a transit-oriented development: transit systems must attract riders in order to be successful. Higher-density development creates a pool of residents and workers from which the system can draw riders and which, by the design and diversity of uses, makes transit usage more attractive than driving a car.

The mixed-use, higher density, human-scale development that is associated with TODs is a return to a more traditional pattern of “town center” development. This pattern of development, while not called TOD, is commonly found in older cities along the East Coast and in the Midwest. This pattern of development, which previously has occurred naturally, is now being planned as TOD. The simultaneous demise of the streetcar and rise of the automobile during the middle of the twentieth century encouraged the contemporary suburban, auto-oriented style of sprawl development. As we move into the twenty-first century, however, this pattern of development has become increasingly unsustainable from an economic, environmental, and social perspective. The cost of infrastructure investment, the negative impact of greenfield development on the environment, and the demographic shift toward smaller households that desire a more urban style of living have combined to create a greater market demand for TOD. Federal and state funding support for development in the future is also likely to support this development pattern.

Some communities have chosen to harness these market and demographic trends to leverage transit investments for broader economic development. “Newer” communities use transit investment to guide a more compact, sustainable vision for growth and development, while “older” communities use their investments to encourage infill and redevelopment within their existing core area. As the experiences of cities across the country show, simply installing new commuter service will not spontaneously create transit-supportive new investment:

- Careful planning efforts must also be undertaken by the municipality and transit agency, in association with the affected communities and stakeholders, to ensure that targeted public infrastructure investments support broader economic and social goals.
- Because TOD is still considered a new development template for most real estate developers, it is essential that a stable policy environment is created to facilitate transit-supportive development through clear regulations and appropriate incentives.
- While TOD is a niche market, it is still sensitive to fluctuations of the larger real estate market, and may take years to be considered successful.

Proposed Transit Service

Metra’s proposed SouthEast Service (SES) Line would serve the south side of Chicago and the suburban communities of southern Cook County and Will County. The proposed 33-mile rail line would operate along a series of four existing rail rights-of-way. It would operate on the Union Pacific/CSX right-of-way from near Balmoral Park Race Track in Crete to Dolton Junction, on Union Pacific right-of-way from Dolton Junction to Oakdale Junction, on the Chicago Rail Link right-of-way from Oakdale Junction to Gresham Junction, and on Metra’s Rock Island District right-of-way from Gresham Junction to LaSalle Street Station in downtown Chicago. The proposed SES Line would serve two existing Rock Island District stations (LaSalle Street and Gresham stations), a planned 35th Street Station on the Rock Island District, and ten new stations. The Village of Glenwood has been identified as a potential station location. This potential new commuter

service would link suburban populations that are currently underserved by transit with employment opportunities in downtown Chicago and within communities along the proposed alignment. New transit service would also catalyze real estate development and reinvestment along the alignment, which would increase each community’s tax base and improve the quality of life. In addition to increasing employment access and generating economic development opportunities, the SES would allow commuters to leave their cars at home more often, a choice that would contribute to decreased levels of congestion on Chicagoland roadways.

Metra estimates that commuter rail service would allow the state to reduce spending by more than \$4 million on annual highway construction and maintenance costs. The magnitude and scale of the planning and construction of the project are expected to generate more than 550 jobs and more than \$262 million in wages paid over the project’s approximately 10-year engineering and construction period. Illinois businesses are projected to benefit from more than \$550 million in business sales.

Project benefits identified by Metra include:⁸

- Potentially serving more than 50 major businesses, including St. James Hospital & Health Centers, Ford Motor Co. Chicago Stamping Plant, ConAgra Foods, Inc., Roadway Express, Inc., Nicor Gas, and AT&T



⁸ Metra, <http://metraconnects.metrarail.com>

- Facilitating commuter travel to downtown Chicago
- Generating economic development by attracting jobs and businesses to transit-oriented development areas
- Providing an alternative to driving for thousands of regional employees

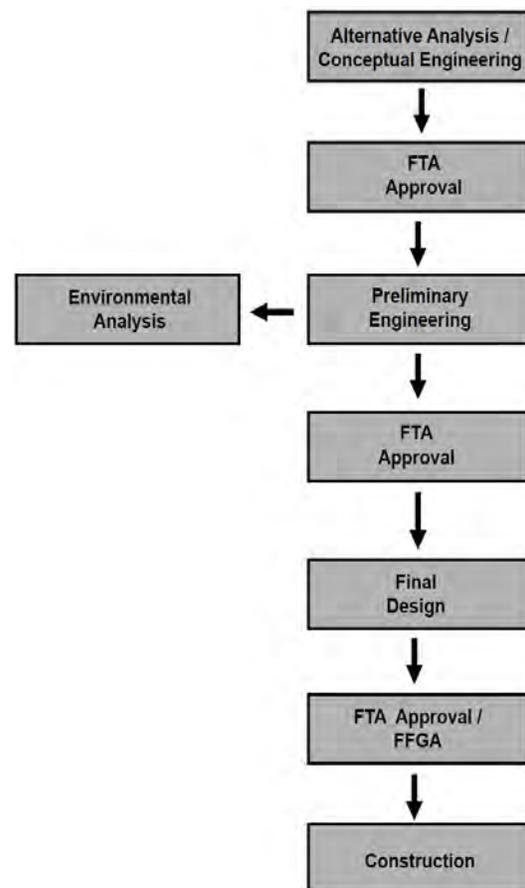
The study is currently in the Alternatives Analysis (AA) phase of the FTA's New Starts process.

New Starts Criteria

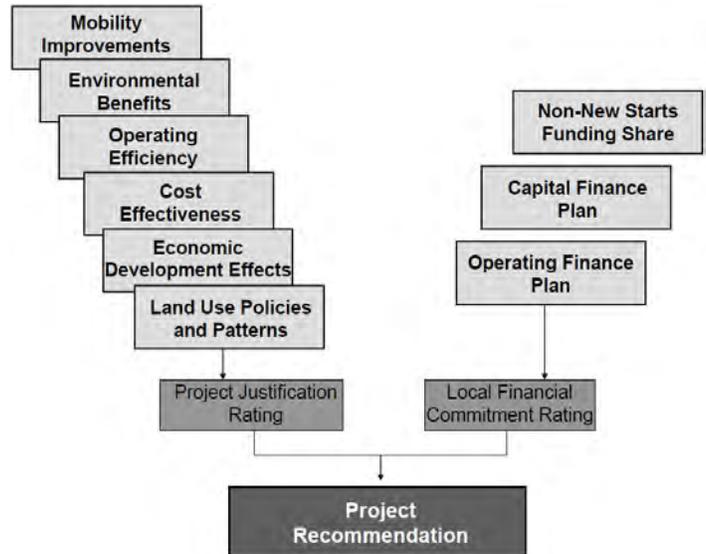
New Starts is the federal government's discretionary financial program for supporting transit capital investments. This program is administered through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Each fiscal year the FTA makes New Starts budget recommendations to Congress based on a formal evaluation of applicant projects.

Projects seeking New Starts funding – like all federally-funded transportation investments in metropolitan areas – must emerge from a locally-driven, *multimodal* corridor planning process. There are three key phases in the planning and project development process for projects seeking New Starts funding: 1) Alternatives Analysis, 2) Preliminary Engineering, and 3) Final Design. The SouthEast Service project is currently in the Alternatives Analysis phase, which is projected to be completed during the fall of 2009.

An Alternatives Analysis (AA) identifies a specific transportation need, identifies alternative actions to address these needs, and generates data needed to select an option for further engineering and implementation. Once a locally-preferred alternative is selected and adopted in the region's long range plan, the project sponsor may request FTA entrance into preliminary engineering (PE). PE includes additional engineering analysis and results in the completion of all federally-mandated environmental requirements. The next stage of development is final design, which also requires FTA approval. It is within final design that candidate projects are considered by FTA for a Full Funding Grant Agreement, at which point federal funding for the project is secured. The total process typically takes between six and 12 years, from the start of planning through to the start of transit operations.



At the conclusion of the AA, the FTA evaluates projects based on two main criteria: the project justification rating and the local financial commitment rating. As shown to the right, six criteria contribute to the project justification rating, including land use policies and patterns.



In its evaluation of land use patterns and policies, the FTA considers the following transit-supportive land use categories and factors.

Land Use Rating Category and Associated Factors
I. EXISTING LAND USE
a. Existing Land Use
II. TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE PLANS AND POLICIES
a. Growth Management
b. Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies
c. Supportive Zoning Regulations Near Transit Stations
d. Tools to Implement Land Use Policies
III. PERFORMANCE AND IMPACTS OF POLICIES
a. Performance of Land Use Policies
b. Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use
IV. OTHER LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS (Optional)
Exceptional Examples

Funding for New Starts is an extremely competitive process, with numerous projects from across the nation seeking funds. Therefore, the extent to which a project can demonstrate commitment to transit-supportive land uses and policies at the local level can be critical to the awarding of federal funding support. While these land uses and policies do not necessarily have to be in place at the time of project evaluation by the FTA, it is critical that communities have taken concrete steps towards their implementation.

Planning Context

Any future development and planning activity that occurs within the Village of Glenwood is undertaken within the context of existing land use patterns, development character, plans and policies, public transit service, access and circulation patterns, and urban design conditions. The following five sections describe the existing conditions of the Village, which together create the framework within which redevelopment and reinvestment can occur. This report should be reviewed in conjunction with separate market assessment report prepared by Valerie Kretchmer Associates, Inc., which describes the level of market support for different land uses, including retail, office, entertainment and residential development, within the study area.

Existing Land Use Patterns

As depicted in Figure 2, the majority of Glenwood's existing land uses are single-family residential, open space, and Cook County Forest Preserve land. The residential uses of the Village can be grouped into five neighborhoods from east to west: Brookwood Pointe (which includes West Pointe), Glenwood Forest, Old Glenwood, Glenwood Manor, and the Estates. Old Glenwood contains the oldest existing residential uses in the Village and is characterized by the smallest lot sizes and an absence of sidewalks.

The Cook County Forest Preserve maintains Glenwood Woods North, Glenwood Woods South, and the Thorn Creek Trail within the municipal limits of Glenwood. Brownell Woods, Jurgenson Woods, and Sweet Woods are located just north and east of Glenwood's boundaries. The Village also maintains its own park facilities, including Estates Park, Arquilla Park, Strand/Callahan Park, Forest Park, and Hickory Glen Park. Glenwoodie Golf Course is a municipal golf course. The 18-hole course, which was established in 1926, is a regional attraction.

Glenwood's commercial uses are scattered along Main Street, Glenwood Lansing Road, and Glenwood Dyer Road, but the greatest concentration of commercial uses is along the Village's western boundary on Halsted. Older strip mall developments are located along Halsted north of 187th Street, while newer, big box commercial uses have been developed along Halsted south of 187th Street. The existing commercial and retail uses that are scattered throughout the rest of the Village are typically small-scale and, in the case of the Glenwood Town Center along Glenwood Lansing Road, are suffering from vacancies and disinvestment.

The Village is bounded on all sides by Cook County Forest Preserve land, which limits annexation opportunities. Development opportunities are largely limited to the redevelopment of existing sites. Nugent Square, a mixed-use development located northwest of the intersection of Main Street and the railroad tracks, was recently completed and features retail uses on the ground floor with residential uses on the upper floors. Across Main Street from Nugent Square, the Hickory Bend commercial development includes space for four tenants, but is not fully occupied. Three restaurants located along Main Street within the Village, Gabe's Place, Glenwood Oaks Restaurant, and Sanfratello's, serve both local and regional diners.

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INSERT FIGURE 2

Institutional uses are scattered throughout the Village. The Village Hall, Police Station, and Senior Center are all located between Center Street and Asselborn Way just west of the railroad right-of-way and north of Main Street. Four public schools are located in Glenwood: Longwood Elementary School in the Glenwood Manor neighborhood on the western edge of the Village, Brookwood Junior High School and Brookwood Intermediate School, both located at the intersection of Main Street, Glenwood Dyer Road, and Glenwood Lansing Road in the center of the Village, and Hickory Bend School on Cottage Grove Avenue, along the eastern edge of the Village. The two public high schools which serve Glenwood residents, Homewood-Flossmoor High School and Bloom Township High School, are located outside of the Village. The Glenwood School for Boys and Girls is a private school located immediately west of 187th Street and Glenwood-Chicago Heights Road. Two fire stations also serve the community: Fire Station #1 (605 East Glenwood Lansing Road) and Fire Station #2 (corner of Arquilla and Roberts Drives).

Office and industrial uses within the Village are generally clustered along Chicago-Heights Road, and a large industrial development is located south of the Glenwoodie Golf Course in Chicago Heights.

Development Character

The following images illustrate the character of development found within the Village.



Image 1: Nugent Square mixed-use development in the proposed station area



Image 2: Glenwood Village Hall and Municipal Complex in the proposed station area



Image 3: Brookwood Middle School



Image 6: Commercial uses along Main Street west of Brookwood Junior High School



Image 4: Glenwood Woods North, Cook County Forest Preserve District



Image 7: Single-family residential in the Old Glenwood neighborhood



Image 5: Multi-family residential (Thornwood Apartments) east of the proposed station area



Image 8: Entrance marker for Glenwoodie Golf Course



Image 9: Glenwood Town Center commercial development at the eastern edge of the study area



Image 10: Single-family residential in the Glenwood Forest neighborhood



Image 11: Looking north along the railroad tracks from Main Street toward proposed station site

Existing Plans and Policies

Through the use of its planning and regulatory powers, the Village can influence development patterns that will support the community's vision for future growth. Zoning regulations can be used to help implement the land use patterns that are defined in the Village's Comprehensive Plan, and the creation of Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts helps to financially support private development that may not occur without public infrastructure investment. The Village's Zoning Ordinance, Comprehensive Plan, and existing TIF district are described below.

Zoning Regulations

As shown in Figure 3, the Village of Glenwood is divided into nine zoning districts, eight of which are mapped within the study area boundary. The vast majority of the study area is mapped as one of the four residential districts, with the balance of the area zoned as one of two business districts. The

business districts within the study area are mapped along either Main Street or Glenwood Lansing Road. The four residential districts are:

- R1: single-family detached residence
- R2: single-family residence
- R3: single-family residence
- R4: general residence

The residential districts vary in allowable density from a minimum lot area of 8,400 square feet for the R1 district, to 6,000 square feet for R3 districts. In addition to comparatively small differences in allowable density, the greatest differentiator between the residential districts is diversity of dwelling types allowed. The only residential development type allowed in districts R1, R2, and R3 are single-family detached dwellings. The R4 district permits a wider variety of dwelling unit types, including single-family detached, single-family attached, single-family semi-detached, two-family detached, and multiple-family dwelling units. The minimum lot size for a one- or no-bedroom unit is 2,000 square feet, for a two-bedroom is 2,500 square feet, for a three-bedroom is 3,000 square feet, and a four-bedroom or larger is 3,500 square feet.

This level of residential density could generally be considered supportive of commuter rail service because it exceeds the acknowledged industry standard minimum density of one to two units per acre.⁹ The FTA, however, uses a stricter standard when rating the transit-supportiveness of residential neighborhoods.¹⁰ Of the five FTA rating categories (high, medium-high, medium, low-medium, and low), Glenwood's existing station area residential development pattern would score in the low-medium category of five to 10 dwelling units per acre. None of the residential districts permit commercial, retail, or businesses uses, which effectively prevents the mixture of land uses in the majority of Glenwood's developed area.

Glenwood has two business districts: B1 and B2. The B1 district is designed for use in prime business centers and planned shopping centers that are characterized mainly by non-automotive oriented retail stores and shops. The B2 district is intended to allow highway-oriented retail business, in addition to general business activity. The maximum floor area ratio (FAR), which is the common measure of non-residential building density, of the B1 district is 1.50. Because the B1 district could be considered Glenwood's central business district, this level of density would rate in the low category (lower than 4.0 FAR) when evaluated according to the FTA's standards. The B2 district, however, which also allows a maximum FAR of 1.5, would rate a medium FTA ranking because it is located outside of the central business district and is subject to more relaxed standards.

⁹ Boris S. Pushkarev and Jeffrey M. Zupan, "Public Transportation and Land Use Policy," Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1977

¹⁰ Federal Transit Administration, Office of Planning, "Guidelines and Standards for Assessing Transit-Supportive Land Use," May 2004, p. 40

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INSERT FIGURE 3

Neither B districts have maximum height limits for buildings, but the comparatively small lot size of parcels in Glenwood combined with the low allowable FAR effectively discourages the construction of comparatively tall buildings. The zoning code does not currently define maximum lot sizes, a decision which does not encourage compact, transit-supportive patterns of commercial and retail development. Functionally, however, the small percentage of land that is available for redevelopment, in combination with the comparatively small average lot sizes, makes the assembly of large tracts of land for commercial/retail/business development unlikely. The B districts do not allow residential uses, except by special permit in the B1 district when the residential uses are located above commercial uses. The segregation of these land uses will make the creation of a mixed-use, transit-supportive environment more difficult to implement.

The zoning code defines minimum parking requirements by land use type, including:

- Two spaces per multi-family dwelling unit
- Two spaces per single-family dwelling unit up to a maximum of four spaces
- Two spaces per unit for two-family residential dwelling units
- One space per 300 square feet of floor area for business, professional, and public administration uses
- One space per 150 square feet of floor area for other business or commercial uses
- One space per 100 square feet for restaurants, not including drive-ins

Each of the non-residential uses listed above would rank in the low category (more than 3.25 spaces per 1,000 square feet in the central business district, and more the 3.75 spaces per 1,000 square feet outside of the central business district) when rated according to FTA criteria.

The zoning code defines off-street parking exemptions for the B districts: if the existing requirements result in the provision of not more than three off-street parking spaces, the user is exempt from providing any off-street parking. If, however, two or more users are providing off-street parking in a common lot and are each eligible for the above exemption, only one user may take advantage of the exemption. Residential developments are excluded from this exemption.

Shared parking facilities are allowed as long as each user meets their individual parking provision requirement. Parking for residential uses must be provided on the same lot as the building served, but parking facilities for non-residential uses may be provided off-site, as long as the parking facility is located within 600 feet of the use it is serving.

The zoning code does not include a mixed-use designation, but the PD planned development district is intended to provide greater design flexibility than is available under other designations. This district is intended for parcels whose topographic or natural character would benefit from the flexibility available through the planned development review process. The PD district can be mapped as an overlay, which means that it supplants the regulations of the underlying district.

Village of Glenwood Comprehensive Plan

Glenwood adopted its original Comprehensive Plan in 1972, and last updated the Plan in 2000. Recognizing that Glenwood is a mature community with limited opportunity for new development, the 2000 update focused on achieving sustainable neighborhoods, maintaining aesthetics, and increasing economic development activity. One of the goals in the updated Plan was to “achieve a higher level of east-west surface transportation access and connection to IL-394 as well as increased access for

commuter roadways and public transit to major job locations throughout the region.”¹¹ The Plan refers to the Village acquisition of the parcel of land just east of Village Hall for the development of a commuter rail station, commuter parking lot, and related development.¹² The Plan also references the existing Metra station in Homewood, its use by Glenwood residents, and its positive economic influence on Homewood, as documented in several cited studies. The Plan also recommends the construction of an east-west roadway connecting Vollmer at Halsted on the west to IL-394 on the east. This roadway would reduce congestion along Main Street, but would also function to divert drivers away from Glenwood’s existing commercial district. This roadway would also require an at-grade crossing with the tracks along which the proposed SES would be operating.

The Plan also identified major economic trends that would shape the future of the Village, including the development of the parcel of land southwest of the intersection of Glenwood Dyer with IL-394 for commercial and employment uses, the importance of growth in the employment base to sustain long-term growth, and the need for a Village Center, commuter rail station and downtown shopping to create a strong Village identity. These trends, among others, were recognized as critical to shaping future land use policy. The Plan sites a survey which identified only 14 vacant residential lots in the Village that could be developed, although many of these lots are used as expanded yards by abutting residential uses.¹³ Approximately 10 vacant industrial sites were identified for possible development opportunities, although some of these parcels abut existing industrial uses that may be holding them for potential future expansion of existing facilities. Commercial development opportunities were identified as even more limited, with only scattered parcels available for development along Main Street. The Plan also identifies the parcels along Halsted behind the Glenwood School as a potential development opportunity; these parcels are currently being developed as part of a master commercial/retail development (“Marketplace of Glenwood”).

A 1999 amendment to the 1972 Future Land Use Plan designated the 600 acres of land southwest of the intersection of IL-394 and Glenwood Dyer Road for industrial, office, commercial, and hotel uses. There were no other changes to the Future Land Use Map until the 2000 Plan Update. The Plan found that “the pattern of land called for in the 1972 Comprehensive Plan has not changed dramatically during the twenty-two year period since the 1972 Plan was prepared. While major changes to the amount of land developed have occurred since the preparation of the 1972 Plan, almost all new development [has] taken place in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan contained in the 1972 Plan.”¹⁴

The land use changes recommended in the 2000 Plan focus on the development of the IL-394 interchange and the direction of commercial development to the center of Village in an effort to reinforce the “town center” concept while supporting the commercial viability of Halsted. Additional recommendations include:

- Expansion of commercial and related uses to the land abutting the railroad tracks at Main Street supported by the implementation of a Main Street Beautification Program
- Redirection of commercial uses to the Glenwood Plaza Shopping Center on Halsted Street
- Development of residential uses abutting the Glenwoodie Golf Course

¹¹ Village of Glenwood Illinois, “Comprehensive Plan Update Summary, “ 2000

¹² Ibid, p. 57-58

¹³ Ibid, p. 72

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 73

- Development of a commercial/industrial business park on the 600-acre parcel southwest of the IL-394/Glenwood Dyer intersection
- Development of a storm water or wetland preserve in the southern portion of the Village as an amenity to the surrounding land uses and for expansion of the Forest and Open Space Preserve surrounding the Village
- Construction of a bikeway to connect Village parks with Forest Preserve facilities, while also providing connections to inter-community trails

Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District

A Tax Increment Finance District was adopted in 2000 by the Village which encompasses a portion of the study area, as depicted in Figure 6. The TIF District generally includes commercially zoned parcels fronting on Main Street on the north side, stretching twelve blocks and encompassing 35.1 acres (including street and alley rights-of-way). The District generally extends from the western edge of the Glenwood Oaks Restaurant property on the west to the western edge of the Brookwood Middle School property on the east. The TIF District does not include the 17-acre parcel targeted for potential station facilities and related development, nor does it include the Glenwood Town Center east of Brookwood Middle School. The TIF District was adopted to address the Village's goal of revitalizing the area on a comprehensive and planned basis. The anticipated benefits of the TIF District include enhancement of the economic base arising from rehabilitation and new development, an increased sales tax resulting from new retail development, and an increase in employment opportunities.

Public Transit Service

Glenwood is served by Pace suburban bus routes 352, 452 and 890, and its residents can access multiple Metra stations in neighboring communities for service to downtown Chicago's Millennium Station. On-demand service is also available for senior citizen and disabled residents through either Bloom or Thornton Townships. Existing public transit routes within the Village are depicted in Figure 4.

Pace Bus Service

Glenwood's Pace routes all run for some portion of their route along Halsted at the western boundary of the Village. In June 2009, service was significantly upgraded when Route 352 was shifted to serve this portion of Halsted and Route 370 was discontinued. Route 352 connects the CTA Red Line 95th Street Station to the Pace Chicago Heights Terminal along Halsted south of Glenwood. The route provides transfers to the West Pullman Station and the Harvey Station on the Metra Electric Main Line. The route also provides a connection to the Pace Homewood park-and-ride lot at Halsted and Ridge and the Pace Harvey Transportation Center in downtown Harvey, as well as access to St. James Hospital and Prairie State College.

Route 452 briefly travels along Halsted as part of its east-west weekday circulation route between Metra's Homewood Station and the residential area abutting Glenwood Plaza east of Halsted. The route primarily functions as a peak period Metra feeder service, but also provides access to Homewood's Village Hall and Senior Activity Center for residents of the Glenwood Manor neighborhood in Glenwood.

Route 890 is a weekday north-south route that connects the Chicago Heights Terminal at Vincennes and 16th Street with the United Parcel Services facility in Hodgkins. The route travels along Halsted before travelling west and connecting to I-294. The route also offers connections to the Harvey Metra Station and Harvey Transportation Center, as well as Prairie State College.

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INSERT FIGURE 4

A summary of June 2009 Pace boarding and alighting counts for stops within Glenwood on the Routes described above is provided below.

Pace Route	Total Boardings and Alightings Weekday	Total Boardings and Alightings Saturday	Total Boardings and Alightings Sunday
352	143	128	52
452	34	--	--
890	21	--	--

Source: Metra 2006 Origin-Destination Survey

Metra Commuter Rail Service

The Homewood Station on Metra’s Electric District Line is the station that is most frequently used by Glenwood residents: 41 percent use Homewood, compared to 26 percent for Calumet Station and 10 percent for Harvey. A summary of Metra stations used by Glenwood residents is provided below, based on an origin-destination survey conducted by Metra in the Fall of 2006.

Metra Stations Used by Glenwood Residents (Fall 2006)	Number	Percent
Homewood	134	41
Calumet	84	26
Harvey	31	10
Other	18	6
Hazel Crest	15	5
147 th Street / Sibley Blvd.	14	4
Kensington, 115 th Street	13	4
Ivanhoe	7	2
Flossmoor	5	2
Total	322	100

Source: Metra 2006 Origin-Destination Survey

The Homewood Metra Station, located approximately 3.2 miles from the proposed Glenwood Station site, accommodates 28 inbound and 28 outbound trains Monday through Friday. On Saturday, the Homewood Station has 23 inbound and 23 outbound trains. On Sunday, the Homewood Station has 10 inbound and 10 outbound trains. The Homewood Station has significant commuter parking capacity: 527 parking spaces, including 516 non-restricted spaces, 9 handicap spaces and 2 employee spaces. The parking facilities are 92 percent utilized. 46 percent of the commuters at the Homewood Station drive alone, 26 percent are dropped off, 17 percent walk, and the remainder carpool, bike, or take the bus.

The Calumet Metra Station, located approximately 3.3 miles from the proposed Glenwood Station site, accommodates 29 inbound and 26 outbound trains Monday through Friday. On Saturday, the Calumet Station has 23 inbound and 23 outbound trains. On Sunday, the Calumet Station has 10 inbound and 10 outbound trains. The Calumet Station has significant commuter parking capacity: 1,124 parking spaces, including 1,078 non-restricted spaces, 32 handicap spaces and one employee space. The parking facilities are 95 percent utilized. 78 percent of the commuters at the Calumet Station drive alone, 10 percent are dropped off, 4 percent walk, and the remainder carpool, bike, or take the bus.

The Harvey Metra Station, located approximately 6.7 miles from the proposed Glenwood Station site, accommodates 28 inbound and 26 outbound trains Monday through Friday. On Saturday, the Harvey Station has 23 inbound and 23 outbound trains. On Sunday, the Harvey Station has 10 inbound and 10 outbound trains. The Harvey Station has significant commuter parking capacity: 909 parking spaces, including 870 non-restricted spaces, 35 handicap spaces and 4 employee spaces. The parking facilities are 48 percent utilized. 71 percent of the commuters at the Harvey Station drive alone, 14 percent are dropped off, 4 percent walk, and the remainder carpool, bike, or take the bus.

A summary of daily boarding and alighting counts for the three most commonly used stations by Glenwood residents is provided below, based on a system-wide count conducted in the Fall of 2006.

Metra Boarding and Alighting Counts (weekday) (Fall 2006)		
	On	Off
Homewood	1,456	1,494
Calumet	1,363	1,342
Harvey	937	955

Bloom Township Senior Transportation

Bloom Township offers curb-to-curb services within the township’s boundaries for senior and disabled residents of the township. Lift-equipped buses are available for residents in a wheelchair, walker, or with limited mobility. Residents must call by 2:00 p.m. on the day preceding the trip, and the trip must be taken on Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 3:40 p.m. A donation of \$2.00 is suggested for a round-trip ride.

Curb-to-curb transportation service is also available for medical purposes outside of Bloom Township to Ingalls, South Suburban Advocate, St. James Olympia Fields Hospitals and affiliated medical centers. To

use the service, residents must call by 2:00 p.m., two days preceding the trip. A donation of \$4.00 is suggested for a round-trip ride.

Thornton Township Senior Transportation

The Thornton Township Senior Transportation operates a curb-to-curb service for township seniors over 60. This service, which operates between 8:00 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. Monday through Friday, provides transportation to any point within the township and to designated medical centers outside of township boundaries. Appointments are made on a first call, first serve basis, and medical appointments are given priority. The suggested donation per one-way trip is \$1.00. The service also provides a scheduled trip to local shopping destinations on a rotating, daily basis, including: Halsted Street (Monday), Jewel, Wal-Mart, Aldi's, Ultra Foods, and Wal-Mart (Tuesday), River Oaks, East and West (Wednesday), K-Mart (Thursday), and Fairplay and Almar Plaza (Friday).

Access and Circulation

The existing access and circulation features within the study area and the Village are also illustrated in Figure 4. The railroad track alignment, the residential character of the Village, and Glenwood's proximity to Cook County Forest Preserve property have all heavily influenced roadway geometry and configuration. The existing Union Pacific / CSX railroad tracks run through the center of the Village, an alignment which, in combination with a single at-grade crossing, virtually eliminates the possibility of a grid street network and hampers east-west movement. Because of the strong residential character of the community, the neighborhood streets that feed the collector and arterial roadways typically run through residential areas and are not designed to accommodate non-local traffic. The Cook County Forest Preserve land that surrounds the Village further constrains access and mobility patterns by reducing the geographical opportunities to construct new through roadways.

Vehicular Access and Circulation

The study area is located within a 2.5 mile radius to major north-south and east-west regional routes: Interstate 80 (I-80), 2.5 miles to the north; US Route 30 (US-30), 2.5 miles to the south; Interstate 394 (IL-394), 1.5 miles to the east; and, Illinois Route 1 (IL-1, Halsted Street), 1.25 miles to the west. The Village is located approximately in the middle, with the only east-west roadway connecting IL-394 to Halsted Street. The proposed study area is located adjacent to this east-west connection; a combination of 187th Street, Glenwood Chicago Heights Road, Main Street and Glenwood Dyer Road. A proposed extension of Vollmer Road east to Cottage Grove Avenue would improve east-west connectivity in the vicinity of the study area if completed in the future (see Figure 1).

Figure 4 illustrates the existing roadway network in the vicinity of the study area and within the Village boundaries. Roadway classifications, roadway types, existing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), signalized intersections and other modes of travel are illustrated.

Focusing within the study area's half-mile radius, the only east-west route crossing the Union Pacific/CSX tracks is Main Street, a two-lane minor arterial serving an ADT of approximately 15,200 vehicles per day. Immediately to the east of the at-grade crossing is a signalized intersection at Young Street. The northern approach is a local street, serving a predominately single-family residential neighborhood with an approximately 17-acre wooded vacant site directly to the north. The southern approach is a two-lane minor arterial with relatively minor ADT volumes. Young Street follows railroad right-of-way heading south with the Forest Preserve to the west and the Glenwoodie Golf Club to the

east. As a result of the intersection of Main Street and Young Street being the only route to cross the existing railroad tracks, significant back-ups occur as trains pass the crossing, creating intermittent significant delays for all approaches. It was observed that once the trains pass and the crossing arms rise, the eastbound and westbound approaches are favored. These movements have longer green times to allow the traffic backups to dissipate.

Due to the presence of the Forest Preserve and the Glenwoodie Golf Course, the ideal location for the potential station platforms and most associated parking would be north of the Main Street and Young Street intersection. To maintain the residential character of the area and facilitate non-local traffic, vehicle entrances/exits to the station-related facilities should be kept at a minimum. Ideally, another way to access the station area should be provided, such as an upgraded cross-section and potential additional crossing at School Street. Along School Street, the houses have comparatively large setbacks, so to accommodate non-local traffic while still maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood and safety of the residents, the roadway could be widened by a few feet to accommodate two 12-foot lanes with curb and gutter. Traffic calming devices could be installed to maintain slow speeds through the residential area. This connection of School Street to Glenwood Chicago Heights Road could decrease the potential traffic volume along Young Street and mitigate impacts to intersection operations at Main Street and the existing at-grade crossing when the station is in operation. Ample parking should be provided within the station area to decrease spillover into surrounding residential neighborhoods, with an appropriate balance of parking provided east and west of the railroad tracks based upon projected rider origins, when they become available.

Main Street from North Main Street to Young Street has been recently reconstructed. The improvements include new curb and gutter, sidewalk and utility adjustments. Outside of the study area and within the Village boundaries, several improvements are slated for IDOT's FY 2010-2015 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. These projects include resurfacing of Glenwood Chicago Heights Road south of 193rd Street, bridge beam replacement and a new deck of the bridge along Glenwood Chicago Heights Road at Thorn Creek, and bridge replacement and jurisdictional transfer of the bridge along Glenwood Chicago Heights Road at Butterfield Creek.

Traffic accident information was obtained from IDOT for the years 2005, 2006 and 2007. These years represent the most recent data available and summarize the number of crashes for the Village of Glenwood. Exact locations are not given in the summary; however, crash type, weather condition, road surface condition, light condition and traffic control are among the classifications. In 2005, a total of 209 crashes were reported, with the majority occurring in ideal weather, light and roadway conditions (clear, daylight, dry). The most notable type of crashes were split between fixed objects (10 percent), parked vehicles (11 percent), rear end (29 percent), angle (10 percent) and turning (22 percent). Of the 209 crashes, 58 percent occurred where no traffic control was present and the remaining occurred at traffic control locations, such as traffic signals and other regulatory signs. In 2006, a total of 192 crashes were reported. Again, the majority occurred in ideal weather, light and roadway conditions with no traffic control present. Rear end and turning crashes accounted for over half of the total crashes, at 32 percent and 26 percent, respectively. In 2007, a total of 201 crashes were reported. The majority occurred in ideal weather, light and roadway conditions with no traffic control present. Rear end and turning crashes accounted for over half of the total crashes, at 33 percent and 23 percent, respectively. Over the course of the three year period, nine pedestrian/cyclist crashes were reported: three in 2005, four in 2006, and two in 2007. More detailed analyses can be conducted when the locations of crashes are provided. For example, the crash types and directions could be reviewed to determine if roadway geometrics, traffic control or signing factor into the crashes occurring within the study area.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Within the study area, there are no designated bike lanes or multi-use trails to be used for alternative modes of transportation. Outside the study area, a disconnected multi-use trail, Thorn Creek Trail, follows vacated rail property to the west of the study area as well as to the northeast, within Forest Preserve property.

The northwest section of the study area has limited sidewalk access through the residential area; sidewalks are present along Main Street, however, heading east over the tracks to Young Street. At the intersection of Main Street and Young Street, pedestrian push buttons with signal heads and marked cross-walks are present. Sidewalks are sparse directly north of the intersection, but within the northeast residential section, sidewalks are located along every local street and cul-de-sac.

Urban Design Conditions

The urban design conditions for the Village are depicted in Figure 5. Gateways into the Village, key wayfinding signage, natural features, and urban design features are identified in Figure 5, and the physical and aesthetic environment that they create is described below.

Exterior Building Conditions

The conditions of private and public buildings through the Village of Glenwood vary, with the most recent development activity occurring in the station area and along Halsted south of 187th Street. Residential homes are typically kept in good condition, but the building maintenance and landscaping of the Village's commercial uses varies widely. The older strip-style commercial uses, particularly the Glenwood Town Center and Glenwood Plaza, are exhibiting signs of age and disinvestment, with deferred upkeep and minimal landscaping. Newer commercial uses, such as the Marketplace of Glenwood development on Halsted south of 187th Street, are typically better-maintained and landscaped.

The mixed-use Nugent Square development and Village Hall complex located in the historic downtown core of the Village make a strong visual statement through the use of high-quality building materials and the incorporation of significant site improvements.

Natural Features

Glenwood's proximity to Cook County Forest Preserve land generates a wide variety of opportunities to enjoy numerous natural features, including access to Glenwood Woods North and Glenwood Woods South.

The Forest Preserves offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities that can be taken advantage of by residents of Glenwood and the surrounding communities, including the Thorn Creek Trail, which runs along abandoned rail lines. The trail, which travels along the western edge of Glenwood Woods South before terminating just south of Main Street across from Glenwood Woods North, will be connected to the next leg of the trail, which picks up just north of Maple Drive and travels south along Cottage Grove Avenue and east along Glenwood Lansing Road. This trail improvement is currently in the planning stages, and is funded through eventual construction.

Two creeks, Thorn and Butterfield, run through Glenwood and provide fishing and additional wildlife viewing opportunities.

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INSERT FIGURE 5

Condition of Public Improvements

The quality of existing urban design improvements in the Village varies. Nugent Square, in the downtown area, exhibits the highest quality of urban design and public improvements in Glenwood. These improvements include the installation of pedestrian streetlights, wayfinding elements, decorative pavement treatments within crosswalks, accent intersection pavement, community identity banners, and landscaped plaza space. The decorative and accent pavement, however, is beginning to show signs of wear and there are two types of pedestrian lighting used in the area that do not match. Sidewalks along Main Street near Nugent Square are too narrow, which can be hazardous for pedestrians, and cracked pavement rimmed with weeds detracts from both the investment made in Nugent Square and from the identity of the historic downtown area in general.

Outside of the historic downtown area, Glenwood's quality of urban design and public improvements varies greatly. For example, the sidewalk network is incomplete, which lowers the level of pedestrian accessibility and discourages pedestrian usage. In addition, there appear to be no consistently applied standards for street lighting, commercial signage, parking lot screening, landscaping requirements, community identity signage, or wayfinding elements. The variance in design creates a visual inconsistency that detracts from community aesthetics and cohesion.

Gateway/ Entry Features

At the intersection of Glenwood Chicago Heights Road and 187th Street, the vehicular-scale flag posts on the bridge across Thorn Creek acts as a Village gateway. Additional gateway entry features can be found at the intersections of Halsted and 187th Street, Glenwood Avenue and Main Street, and Glenwood Dyer Road near the IL-394 Bishop Ford Freeway. Each of these gateways uses a similar sign scheme to indicate entrance into the Village. Each gateway features a landscape component with varied elements: the gateway on Halsted features a large planter with various shrubs and trees, the Glenwood Avenue gateway features a small planter with a pedestrian-scale plaza space, and the Glenwood Dyer Road gateway features a small planter with minimal plantings.

Wayfinding

Throughout Glenwood there is a variety of different wayfinding signage used. In the downtown area there are custom signs that direct visitors to the Village Hall and Police Department. Outside of the downtown, a standard signage program is used to denote key destinations such as Main Street and Glenwoodie Golf Course, as well as street directional guidance. This standard signage program is primarily functional rather than decorative.

In addition to this standard wayfinding signage, various entities, including the Glenwoodie Golf Course and Glenwood Oaks Restaurant, have posted customized wayfinding signage throughout the Village to advertise their facilities and provide direction to motorists.

Streetscape

Major streetscape upgrades have been made in the vicinity of the Nugent Square development at the intersection of Nugent Street and Main Street, including the installation of pedestrian streetlights, wayfinding elements, decorative pavement in crosswalks and intersection pavement, and community identity banners. The remainder of the Village, however, does not exhibit consistent streetscaping elements.

Early Community Input

This section presents a summary of the initial project kick-off meeting and the key stakeholder interviews that were held during the Summer of 2009. The kick-off meeting was designed to provide Project Steering Committee members the opportunity to meet with Village leadership, the consulting team, and representatives from the RTA, Metra, and Pace and to provide feedback on study area issues and opportunities. Following this meeting, and based upon the recommendations of the Village, interviews were held in order to provide the consulting team with the opportunity to engage in more detailed discussions with community stakeholders. These meetings and interviews are summarized below.

Study Kick-Off Meeting

The project kick-off meeting, held on July 15, 2009, provided an opportunity for members of the consulting team to present an overview of the project background, scope of work, and schedule to members of the Project Steering Committee. Staff from Metra and Pace also attended and provided information about existing and future transit service plans. During the second half of the meeting, Steering Committee members were each asked to fill out a worksheet to identify issues and opportunities within the study area. After completing the worksheet, the consulting team led the Steering Committee members in a discussion of responses. A number of common themes emerged during this exercise, including:

- The need to engage the entire community within the planning process,
- The need to leverage transit investment to support sustainable redevelopment, and
- The need to attract new and retain existing residents.

A compilation of the five written responses is provided below.

List the five (5) most important problems or issues currently confronting the Glenwood study area.

- Redevelopment potential within the area
- Limited access across the railroad tracks
- Need to complement adjacent residential development
- Vacant Village-owned land
- Integration of future station into the fabric of the community
- Potential congestion resulting from transit service
- Lack of existing businesses
- Crime
- Accessibility
- Maintenance of area
- Communication between subdivisions
- Demographics of surrounding areas
- Main Street widening

- Crossing safety
- Impacts of potential transit service on subdivisions and existing businesses
- Attracting young people into the community
- Bringing in new business and retail
- Developing housing designed to attract families
- Further development of the community: improving streets and the business area
- Generating adequate ridership to make transit investment feasible
- Providing adequate parking facilities for transit riders

List, in the order of importance, the three (3) most important issues identified thus far.

1. Redevelopment potential
2. Complement adjacent residential
3. Integrate station into fabric

1. Congestion
2. Accessibility
3. Lack of business

1. Communicating with entire community
2. Demographics of surrounding area
3. Businesses

1. Attracting new residents to Glenwood
2. Building upon ongoing community improvements

Identify three (3) projects or improvements that you would like to see completed in the Glenwood study area within the next ten (10) years.

- Retention / attraction of businesses (four responses)
- Improved existing housing supply (three responses)
- Transit station / parking (two responses)
- New commercial and residential development
- Extend pedestrian access
- Bike trails
- Demographic change
- Roads and community beautification

List the primary assets and advantages of the Village of Glenwood.

- Glenwoodie Golf Course (three responses)

- Proximity to IL-394 / Halsted (two responses)
- Opportunity to create Village Center
- Adjoining residential housing
- Proximity to Indiana
- Forest Preserve
- Glenwood Oaks
- Open land available for redevelopment

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Each of the stakeholders that were interviewed expressed enthusiastic support for the introduction of commuter rail service through Glenwood. Interviewees readily identified several of Glenwood's existing assets, including:

- Proximity to the Cook County Forest Preserve,
- Residential character of the community,
- Easy roadway access to downtown Chicago via IL-394, and
- Comparatively affordable housing stock.

Within the context of support for commuter rail service, interviewees expressed a series of common concerns and potential opportunities regarding the implementation of the service and the construction of a station along the existing railroad right-of-way near Main Street. The concerns most often cited were the impact of the service on traffic circulation and how vehicular access to any commuter parking lots would affect abutting residential uses. The opportunity most often identified by interviewees was the catalytic effect of commuter service on business and residential attraction and retention activities. Numerous participants commented on the aging of the current population, the decline of existing retail and commercial development, and the transition of formerly-commercial uses along Main Street back to their original residential use. Commuter rail service is seen by the participants as a way to maintain the small-town residential character of the Village while also improving access and transportation options and generating and sustaining commercial redevelopment.

Additional common concerns cited and opportunities identified during the interviews include:

- The aging demographic of existing Glenwood residents,
- The increasing incidence of residential foreclosures,
- The need for revitalization at existing commercial and retail centers,
- The ability to leverage transit investment for broader economic development,
- The power of a community "image" to influence investment decisions,
- The access and circulation impacts of limited east-west access across Glenwood,
- The limited access to alternative transportation modes,
- The role of access to public schools in influencing housing decisions,
- The necessity of investment in new infrastructure, including stormwater management systems and expanded roadways,

- The impact of commuter rail service on public safety, and
- The implications of Glenwood's proximity to Indiana.

The details of the concerns and opportunities voiced by participants can be organized into the following categories:

Existing Residential Uses

- Recent homebuyers in Glenwood have typically "upgraded" from other south suburban communities
- The recent rise in the rate of foreclosures has negatively impacted the stability of neighborhoods and property values
- As in neighboring communities, home values will be positively influenced by investment in transit
- Glenwood homes have not appreciated at the same rate as neighboring communities
- Commuter traffic generated by the proposed station could negatively impact existing access and circulation patterns in residential neighborhoods
- The existing population is aging and there is no designated senior housing in Glenwood
- Construction of a new commuter rail station could displace current residents
- Recent residential construction was priced too high for targeted buyers
- The rate of residential turnover has been increasing in some neighborhoods
- Transit-related investment must be palatable to existing residents

Economic Development

- Scarce retail options in Glenwood result in the leakage of retail activity to neighboring communities, such as Homewood and Flossmoor
- Local government plays a major role in attracting new business
- Halsted is a major shopping destination
- A commuter rail station would encourage people to stop in Glenwood rather than driving through to either Indiana or Homewood
- Existing commercial and retail properties are excellent redevelopment opportunities
- Commercial and retail redevelopment could include a grocery store
- Commercial and retail redevelopment could be supported by TIF (Tax Increment Financing) incentives
- The creation of additional TIF districts could negatively impact the school district
- Unemployment is an issue in the community
- Existing assets (Glenwood Oaks, Glenwoodie Golf Course, the Cook County Forest Preserve, etc.) are a regional draw and position Glenwood as a destination
- A commuter rail station could be used to "brand" the community

- The station could support additional retail formats not currently feasible in the Village, including bakeries, coffee shops, etc.
- Planned residential developments could generate riders and benefit from proximity to commuter service
- Misperceptions of Glenwood negatively influence development and investment activity
- Glenwood has limited annexation opportunities, and the last large-scale development opportunity is the residential project planned near the Glenwoodie Golf Course
- Glenwood would benefit from additional restaurant and entertainment options
- The economic downturn has placed planned and approved development projects on hold
- Existing and potential residents are drawn to Indiana because of lower tax rates, better schools, better retail options, and more “bang” for the residential investment buck

Access and Circulation

- Existing freight traffic is heavy and results in traffic congestion
- The presence of only one east-west access route results in high traffic volumes and bottleneck congestion
- Easy access to IL-394 improves the mobility of Glenwood residents and provides more direct access to downtown Chicago than is available to residents of Homewood
- Commuter traffic from Indiana uses Glenwood-Dyer Road to access the Homewood Metra station
- Congestion on the Bishop Ford Freeway encourages drivers to detour through Glenwood
- Many residents of Glenwood work downtown
- Pace used to have a route through Glenwood but now only operates an on-call service
- Residents without reliable private transportation have limited access to cultural, educational, and employment opportunities
- In addition to improving access to downtown, commuter rail would improve inter-suburban access
- This service could eventually function as a link to the proposed “third” south suburban airport
- The connection of existing residential roadways across the railroad tracks could have serious traffic implications for residential neighborhoods
- Access to the vacant 17-acre parcel northeast of the intersection of the rail right-of-way and Main Street could require substantial roadway reconfiguration or new construction
- Parking facilities must be adequate to meet the needs of commuters without negatively impacting abutting residents and businesses
- Construction of the planned bike trail extension through Cook County Forest Preserve land would support alternative access to a commuter rail station

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

- Access to existing community facilities requires auto use
- Commuter service would improve access to community assets with a regional draw, including the Glenwood Roller Rink, Glenwood Oaks, and the Glenwoodie Golf Course, while increasing the exposure of locally-known community assets
- The existing floodplains affect development patterns and require effective stormwater management techniques
- The existing sewer system along Main Street is currently being upgraded in an effort to reduce flooding
- Options for vehicular access to the vacant 17-acre parcel could include a viaduct under the existing railroad tracks or the construction of a new through roadway north of Merrill Street

Quality of Life

- Commuter rail service may cause noise disturbances to residential neighborhoods
- Residential investment decisions are driven by access to preferred public schools
- There is a high percentage of schoolchildren in Brookwood School District #167 living in households that fall below the poverty line
- Commuter rail service is perceived as having a potentially negative impact on public safety

A Planning Framework

The preceding inventory of existing conditions helps to establish a framework from which a preliminary Vision Statement and supporting Planning Principles have been created. This Vision Statement is a summary expression of the Village's aspirations for future growth and development, and the Planning Principles create conceptual guidelines to assist the Village in realizing the Vision. The Alternative Concepts that will be developed through the next phase of the process will be conceived of within the context of the Vision Statement and Planning Principles, and will present potential opportunities to achieve the Village's development goals.

Figure 6 depicts several key planning influences in the study area that are discussed in this chapter and will be further explored in subsequent phases of this project. These planning influences can function as both opportunities and constraints: the TIF district that is currently mapped within the station area and the property along Main Street that is zoned for commercial uses but currently used for other purposes both represent potential opportunities to encourage targeted redevelopment. The presence of flood plains and wetlands, open space, Cook County Forest Preserve land, and institutional uses constrain the Village's ability to develop land within its existing borders or to consider annexation to generate new development opportunities. It is within this context that the following Vision Statement has been drafted.

Vision Statement

The Village of Glenwood is a well-established community whose residents value a small town quality-of-life within the context of a major metropolitan region. Commitment to the preservation of the residential character of the Village, support for smaller-scale local retail uses, and appreciation for the multitude of recreational opportunities provided by Cook County Forest Preserve land is supported through targeted development and redevelopment projects and an increased number of transportation options.

The downtown core, centered near the intersection of Main Street and the railroad tracks, will be anchored by the proposed Metra SouthEast Service Line commuter rail station, the municipal center on Asselborn Way, and a variety of smaller-scale commercial and retail outlets on the frontage along Main Street. Recent developments, such as Hickory Bend and Nugent Square, will combine with additional infill redevelopment to retain the Village's historic character while accommodating more modern, mixed-use development patterns. Restaurants and new retail establishments accommodate commuters on their way to and from trains, while providing increased dining and shopping options for residents in the established neighborhoods surrounding the station.

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INSERT FIGURE 6

The downtown core is easily accessed by pedestrians through a network of complete sidewalks and crosswalks, and strolling and window shopping is encouraged by a streetscape that features pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaping, signage, and building orientation. Bike racks are plentiful and heavily-used by bicyclists on the Thorn Creek Trail, and parking is accommodated in convenient parking lots from which drivers and their passengers can easily access any downtown destination. Outdoor civic gathering spaces near the Village Hall are the site of concerts, plays, and festivals, and provide an opportunity for Village residents from different neighborhoods to interact.

Residential neighborhoods are thriving, active, communities where young couples, families with children, and seniors have created a stable environment from which all residents benefit. Homes are well-maintained, and neighborhood associations are active and provide a vital link between Village government and residents. Property values are supported by the increased demand generated by the Village's proximity to the new commuter rail line. Workers with jobs in downtown Chicago that had previously not considered living in Glenwood because it lacked rail service are now drawn to the Village for its quality of life and increased levels of accessibility. This population influx supports both the increase in residential property values and an increase in non-residential reinvestment throughout the Village.

Just as the construction of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois freight rail line in the 1870s spurred the development of what was then called Hickory Bend, the implementation of commuter rail service along that same rail line over 140 years later will catalyze reinvestment and support sustainable and cohesive growth patterns within the Village of Glenwood.

Planning Principles

The Vision of the Village of Glenwood, as described above, will be achieved through adherence to the following series of land use, access and circulation, and urban design principles. These principles do not dictate on which parcels redevelopment should occur or define the specific process through which development will occur. Instead, these principles will provide guidance to the Village and other stakeholders in achieving the community described in the Vision Statement. A series of more detailed recommendations based on these principles will be developed and presented in the next phase of this planning project.

Land Use Principles

1. Mixed-use development, as supported by the market, should be accommodated within the downtown core of the Village.
2. Retail and restaurant development should be accommodated within the immediate station area and along portions of Main Street that are currently zoned for commercial uses.
3. Infill development and redevelopment should be directed to areas within existing TIF boundaries; in the case of other areas well suited for redevelopment, the Village should consider the creation of new TIF districts.
4. Existing regional draws, such as the Glenwoodie Golf Course, Glenwood Oaks Restaurant, and Gabe's Place, should function as anchors for additional targeted, supportive infill development.

5. The potential redevelopment of existing larger-scale commercial centers, such as Glenwood Town Center, should result in a reconfigured site plan that encourages landscaping, pedestrian-friendly access, and more effective integration with adjacent land uses. The business mix appropriate for the downtown core and more auto-oriented centers should be thoughtfully considered.
6. Future development should not negatively impact existing wetlands or floodplains, and should incorporate appropriate stormwater management systems.

Access and Circulation Principles

1. Complete and clearly-marked bicycle and pedestrian routes throughout the Village should be provided, linking neighborhood residents to retail and commercial opportunities in the downtown core and along Main Street, institutional uses, rail stations and bus stops, and recreational trails.
2. Shared parking lots for retail uses and a complete sidewalk network will encourage shoppers to walk, rather than drive, between destinations, which will increase pedestrian traffic and streetscape vitality.
3. Commuter parking should be located within a quarter-mile of the station where off-peak use of the lots can be maximized and where commuter walking patterns will encourage the patronage of local businesses.
4. Parking facilities at the commuter rail station should be adequate enough to discourage on-street commuter parking in nearby residential neighborhoods.
5. Secure bicycle parking facilities should be accommodated at the commuter rail station, commercial developments, and institutional uses.
6. Appropriate wayfinding signage to commuter parking facilities will reduce the likelihood of commuter traffic driving through residential neighborhoods.
7. To the extent feasible, the pedestrian and vehicular crossing at the railroad tracks should be enhanced with nearby streetscaping elements to minimize the physical sense of separation across this barrier. Improvements will need to be undertaken outside of the railroad right-of-way and in coordination with Metra and the freight operators to ensure that necessary sight lines and access are maintained.
8. The Village should work with Pace to ensure that future bus routing is appropriate to support maximum access to the commuter rail station.

Urban Design Principles

1. The commuter rail station should serve as a visual anchor and activity hub for the Village, facilitating transit ridership and encouraging commuters to linger in the area or return at other times.
2. Public gathering spaces should be accommodated in the vicinity of the municipal complex to accommodate community programs and events and to function as an additional draw to the downtown core.

3. Markers to highlight the location of historically significant events or sites, such as the Underground Railroad stop at the Fireside Chalet, should be installed with appropriate wayfinding signage.
4. Design standards should be implemented for new development near the station to ensure visual cohesion and compatibility with existing structures and patterns of development.
5. Separate design standards should be developed for the more auto-oriented commercial uses further east and west along Main Street and Glenwood-Lansing Road. These standards should address the location of parking facilities, landscaping, lighting, signage, and ground-floor transparency requirements, among other issues.
6. Existing gateway treatments should be enhanced at Village entry points to better define Village boundaries for visitors entering Glenwood to access the commuter rail station and other destinations.
7. Surrounding neighborhoods should be buffered from the commuter rail station and downtown core uses through appropriate building setbacks, landscaping, and/or fencing in a manner that does not interfere with pedestrian access and circulation patterns.

Next Steps

The Village of Glenwood is a mature community that has an opportunity to guide infill and redevelopment within the context of large-scale transit investment, better serving a growing population that will seek a wider variety of housing choice in areas accessible to transit, shopping and other amenities. The comparatively higher-density characteristics of transit-supportive development will make it an effective land use pattern through which the Village can accommodate a portion of projected population growth over the coming decades. Accommodating future growth within a thoughtful and deliberate land use, access and circulation, and urban design framework will support sustainable growth patterns that complement the quality of life that current Glenwood residents value so highly.

This Station Area Study will develop alternative concept plans that will provide potential solutions to land use, redevelopment, transportation and facilities needs within the context of the market and the framework of the Vision Statement for Village consideration. After providing the project Steering Committee with the opportunity to review and provide feedback on this report in conjunction with the market assessment report prepared by Valerie Kretchmer Associates, Inc., the project team will hold a community visioning workshop. This workshop will provide an overview of the planning process, the New Starts funding process, and TOD planning objectives. The market assessment findings, synthesis of physical conditions, preliminary Planning Framework, and the Vision Statement and Development Principles will be discussed. An interactive group exercise will provide participants with the opportunity to provide feedback. After the workshop, the next phase of the study will include the preparation of alternative concept plans for Steering Committee and community review and comment.