



# Village of Westchester

## Existing Conditions Report



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# Introduction

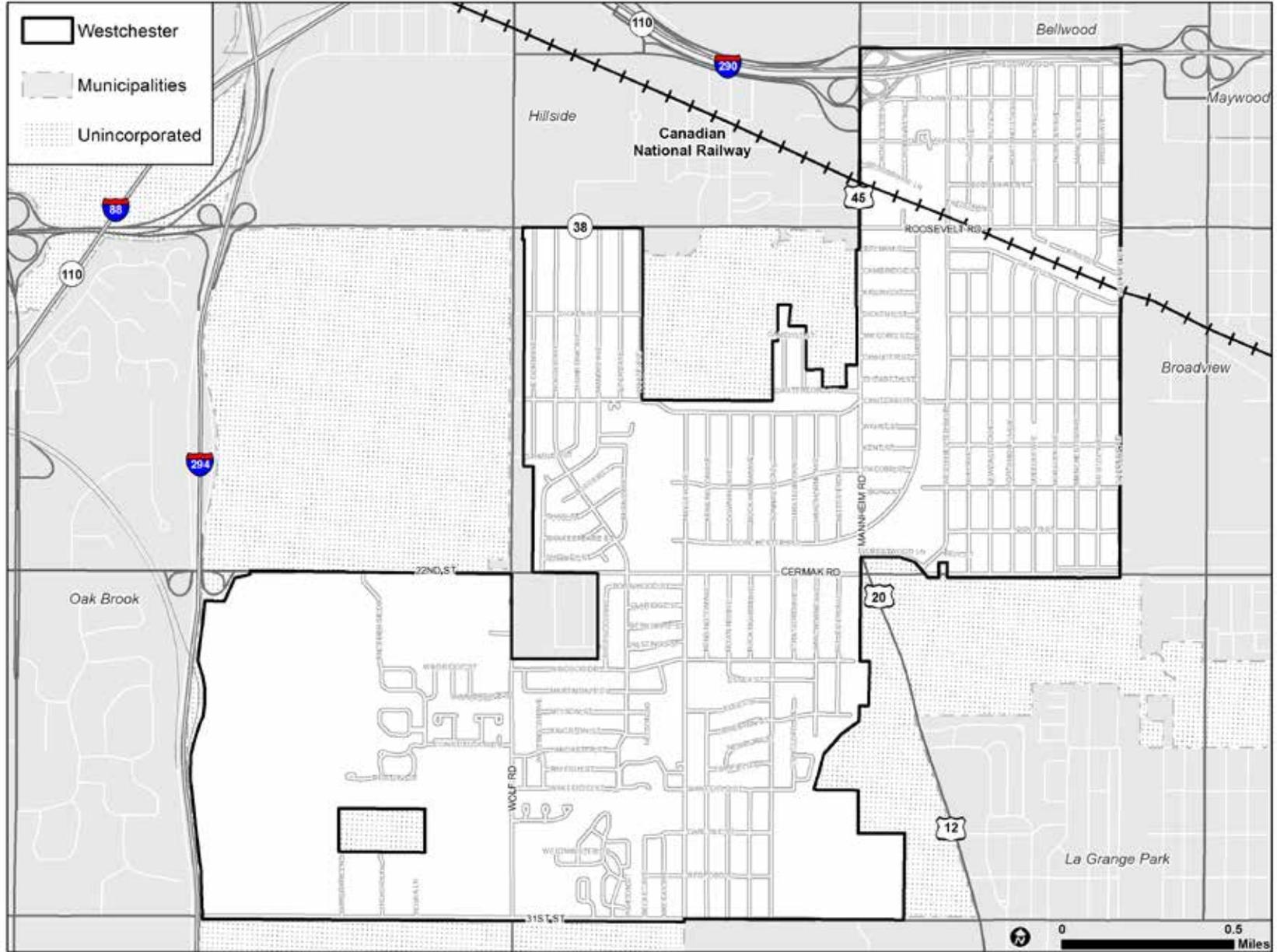
The Village of Westchester has decided to create a new Comprehensive Plan, which will define the vision of what the community wants to become and the steps needed to make that vision reality. Having an accurate understanding of the Village’s existing conditions is necessary in order to develop an appropriate and effective Comprehensive Plan that addresses the correct issues and concerns of the community.

## **Purpose of the Existing Conditions Report**

This Existing Conditions Report—representing the accumulation of research, analysis, and public outreach activities—provides an overview of the current conditions in Westchester and is designed to provide an agreed upon “starting point” by which to move forward and create a shared vision. The Existing Conditions Report is organized in the following sections:

- Introduction
- Section 1: History and Regional Context
- Section 2: Previous Plans
- Section 3: Community Outreach
- Section 4: Demographic Profile
- Section 5: Economic Assessment
- Section 6: Land Use and Development
- Section 7: Housing
- Section 8: Transportation
- Section 9: Natural Environment
- Section 10: Community Facilities and Services
- Section 11: Image and Identity
- Section 12: Looking Forward

Figure 1. Study Area



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

## Why Does Westchester Need a Comprehensive Plan?

The Village of Westchester is situated approximately 14 miles west of the City of Chicago. The Village is surrounded by other western suburbs and major roadways—Hillside, Bellwood and Interstate 290 to the north, Broadview to the east, La Grange Park to the east and south, and Oak Brook and Interstate 294 to the west. See Figure 1 for the study area.

Westchester is built-out with few parcels available for development. There is, however, opportunity to plan for the redevelopment of areas in the Village. Recognizing these possibilities, the Village embraces the need to create a shared vision that will help guide future land use and development decisions.

Westchester’s first and only comprehensive plan was completed in 1955. It was created at a time when the Village’s population was increasing rapidly, and there was a need to plan to accommodate the current and future growth. The plan responded to the Village’s growth by outlining various goals related to infrastructure and other aspects of development. For more than half a century, the Village has not had an adequate guide to rely upon. An up-to-date comprehensive plan will direct elected officials, municipal staff, community residents, business owners, and potential investors as they make informed decisions affecting the future of Westchester.

In an effort to better plan for the future, the Village of Westchester has sought out technical assistance from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). With the assistance of CMAP, the Village is determined to preserve its strengths, address its issues, invest in its future and ultimately ensure that Westchester continues its legacy of providing a high quality of life to its residents and future generations to come.

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan outlines the vision for the community and the policies that will help to achieve that vision. In addition to providing a well-defined framework for the preservation and enhancement of community assets, the plan guides development and investment decisions in the best interest of community residents.

Typically, a comprehensive plan is written to provide guidance for a community to work towards its vision over a 10 to 20 year time period. Although the plan should be viewed as a long-term visioning document, it should also be thought of as a plan to be used daily by the community to assist in land use and development decisions. The comprehensive plan should also be flexible and adaptable to changing conditions. The municipality can choose to update its comprehensive plan at any time to match local needs, interests, or opportunities, but an update every 5-10 years is common to stay current.

## What is the Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan?

The main objectives behind a comprehensive plan are:

- Present the big picture and state the vision
- Involve the citizenry
- Guide regulation and public investment
- Give direction
- Protect the community

## Elements of a Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is composed of a series of distinct, yet interrelated elements, defined within the Illinois Local Planning Assistance Act (Public Act 92-0768). The key elements addressed in the Westchester Comprehensive Plan will be based upon those outlined in the State Statute:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Natural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Economic Development
- Implementation

In addition to the primary elements listed above, comprehensive plans have also begun to include additional elements that may either be unique sections in the plan, or may be incorporated as common themes woven throughout the document. Additional elements that will be included in the Westchester Comprehensive Plan are the demographic profile, community facilities, infrastructure, and community character.

Under the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-12-5(1)), a municipal plan commission is responsible for preparing and recommending a “comprehensive plan for the present and future development or redevelopment of the municipality.” The code continues to say “that the plan may include reasonable requirements with reference to streets, alleys, public grounds, and other improvements.”

### Relationship with the GO TO 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan

The Village of Westchester Comprehensive Plan’s high priorities should be to provide guidance at the local level and to address community needs and desires. However, the plan should also reflect how Westchester fits into the larger region, to help the Village understand and plan for the impact of regional economic and demographic changes.

A summary of the recently released GO TO 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan prepared by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is included in Section One. In addition to an overview of GO TO 2040’s themes and policies, that section identifies specific regional recommendations relevant to Westchester.

GO TO 2040 states that “municipalities are critical to the success of GO TO 2040 because of their responsibility for land use decisions, which create the built environment of the region and determine the livability of its communities. The most important thing that a municipality can do to implement GO TO 2040 is to take this responsibility very seriously.” By undertaking a planning process to create a new comprehensive plan, Westchester has taken on this responsibility and demonstrated its commitment to helping shape the future of the region.

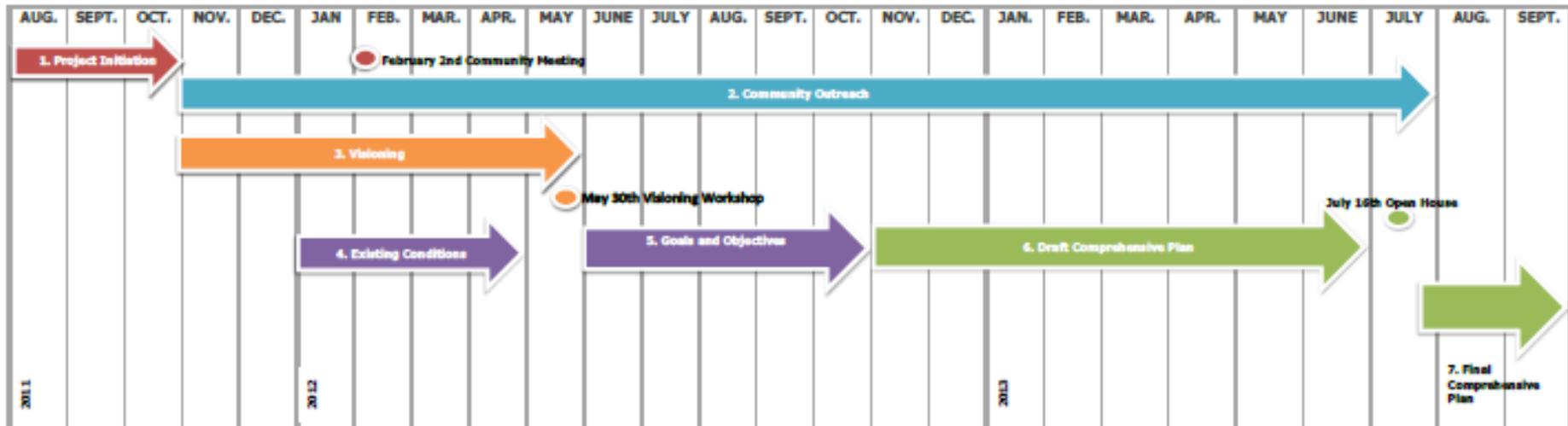
### Planning Process

The planning process to create the Village’s Comprehensive Plan will last for more than a year and will include multiple steps. The process has been crafted with assistance from Village officials and has been designed to include the input of community residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. The stages of the planning process can be found below in Figure 2: Village of Westchester Plan Draft Timeline.

### Next Steps

After presenting the Existing Conditions Report to the Village Staff and Steering Committee, the next stage in the process is to work with residents, business owners, elected and appointed officials, and Village staff to create a shared vision for Westchester. A visioning charrette workshop will be held with the community. Based upon the results from the visioning workshop and from the data and information compiled in the Existing Conditions Report, a common vision with associated goals and objectives will be prepared. Following the Steering Committee’s approval of the vision, goals, and objectives, CMAP will begin to develop the elements of the new Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 2: Village of Westchester Comprehensive Plan Timeline







# Section 1

## History and Regional Context

This section provides an overview of the history of Westchester and how the community fits into the larger northeastern Illinois region. Understanding the community's past and its regional position will provide a context for the Village's issues and potential opportunities.

### History of Westchester

#### Early Beginnings

The 19th Century brought farmers of German heritage to Westchester's prairie soil. In 1852, a group of nine settlers purchased forty acres of land at the intersection of Cermak and Wolf roads. By 1853, they constructed a school building with two rooms, one of which served as a classroom and the other met the needs of the Immanuel Lutheran Church. (Remnants of this school building still exist as part of today's Franzosenbusch Prairie House on Constitution Drive.)

#### Samuel Insull's Contributions

Westchester's German beginnings were later influenced by English culture when in 1924 the area enticed businessmen who saw the community's potential. They had a vision for this western suburb situated just 14 miles from Chicago, and planned to have the "L" (elevated train) to provide speedy service between Chicago's downtown and the soon-to-be western suburb. This group of businessmen led by Samuel Insull, born in London, aspired to create a Chicago suburb that would emulate English life and become Chicago's first planned suburb. These visionaries could see the opportunity in the uninterrupted vast lands that provided easy access to transportation.

The original plan for Westchester included the Village's Civic Center to be located at the intersection of Mannheim Road and Cermak Road/22nd Street. The Village Civic Center was to feature the village hall, a library, a foundation and a cultural center. See Figure 3 for artist Jacob L. Crane's interpretation of the Village Civic Center layout.

With high hopes, the developers predicted that Westchester's population would eventually become home to tens of thousands of residents. In an effort to meet the infrastructure needs of this anticipated population, miles of streets and sidewalks were constructed prior to homes being built.

#### A Lull in Development

By 1929, during the Depression, Westchester was home to less than 400 people in small housing clusters divided by acres of untouched prairie. A portion of this land still exists today; this black soil, known as the Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve and located at the northwest corner of 31st Street and Wolf Road, is rare in northeastern Illinois.

By 1940, the population of Westchester had reached about 620 people and there were approximately 150 buildings. At this time, most of the village property was tied up in contracts and tax delinquencies, creating challenges to sell and develop the land. The only way to sell homes was to subdivide more land and building more homes.

#### Resurgence

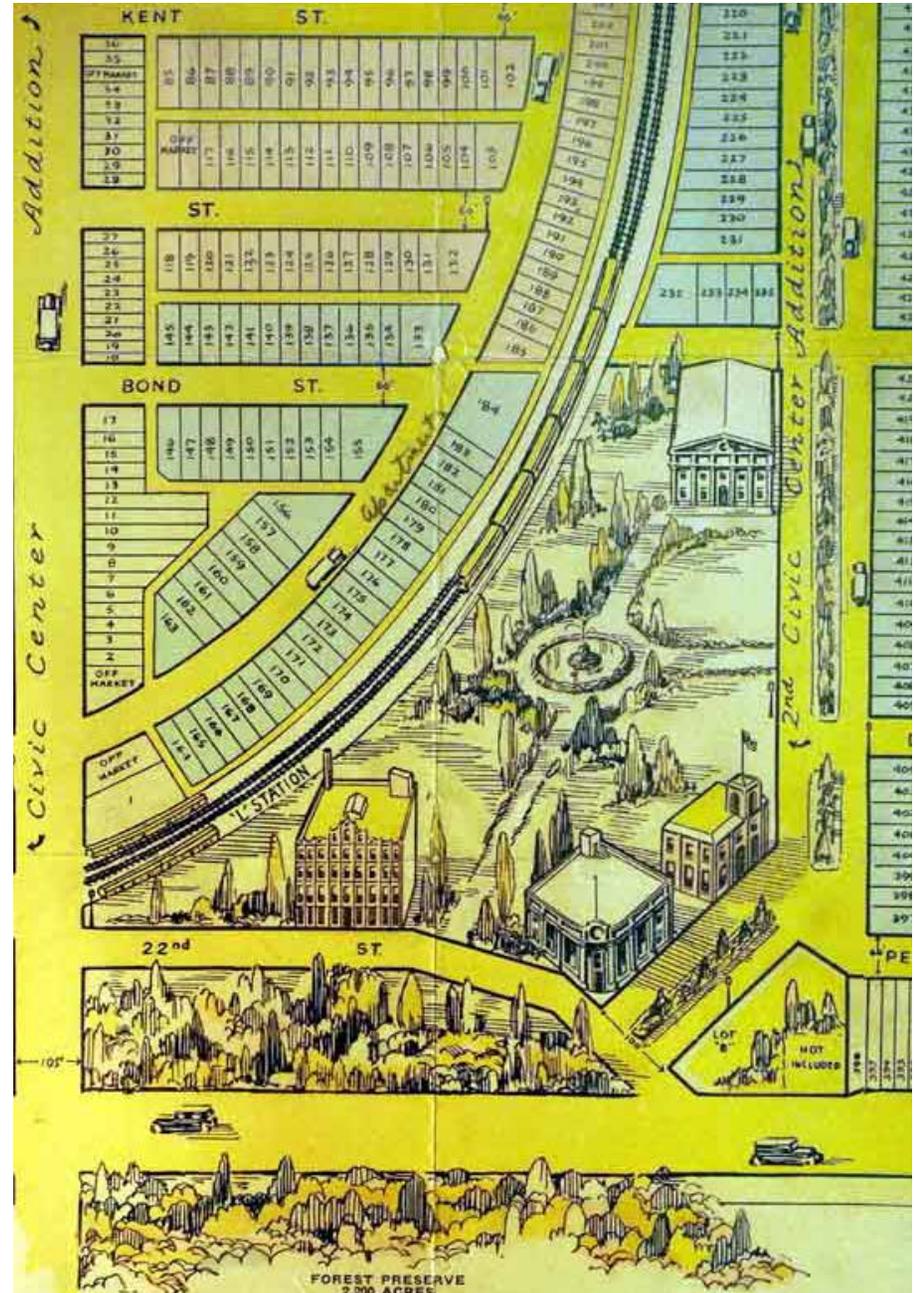
Homes in Westchester later became occupied by World War II industry workers. Throughout the 1940s, many religious institutions were established in the Village. By the 1950s, Westchester's population increased to more than 4,300 residents. This growth in population inspired the Village Board to create a comprehensive plan in 1955 to guide the future of Westchester. (The Village of Westchester Comprehensive Plan of 1955 is discussed in Section 2: Previous Plans.) However, this increase in population never led to the number of residents the Village's visionaries imagined. Hence, the infrastructure that

was laid was not utilized and the “L” service was removed along Balmoral Avenue. Please see the following page for the Westchester Historical Timeline.

**Looking Forward**

Over the past few decades, Westchester’s residents have characterized the Village as neighborly, and have appreciated the Village’s excellent schools and active park system. Within the last ten years, the Village has witnessed change within its borders as the population becomes more diverse, and has been impacted by the significant development occurring just outside the community’s limits. Recognizing these shifts, Westchester is eager to build on its strengths and strategically plan for community improvement and reinvestment.

Figure 3. Interpretation of Village of Westchester’s Civic Center Layout by Jacob L. Crane



## Westchester Historical Timeline

1832	First European settler, Aaron Parsell, moved to the area that would become the Village of Westchester.	1949	First Catholic School opened
1853	Nine local German settlers constructed a school building with two rooms, which today is partially contained in Franzosenbusch Prairie House on Constitution Drive.	1951	CTA replaced service for the Westchester branch line with the #17 bus.
1905 - 1906	Construction of a special branch off the Chicago Aurora and Elgin Railroad to provide access to the Mount Carmel and Oak Ridge cemeteries, located along the northern border of Westchester.	1954	Westchester Fire Department founded on a voluntary basis.  High Ridge School is constructed at Haas Avenue and Canterbury Street.
1924	Samuel Insull and a group of businessmen bought 2,200 acres of farmland 14 miles west of Chicago, which became the Village of Westchester.	1955	First comprehensive plan adopted.
1925	Westchester was incorporated as a village.  The first election of Village officials, where 35 votes were cast, and Mr. Otto Tatterow became the first president of the Village.	1956	Westchester Public Library was founded and occupied an area in the Village Hall.
1926	Westchester's charter was filed with the State of Illinois.  Westchester Police Department received its charter.  The first phase of the Westchester branch line serviced opened with a station at Roosevelt Road.	1959	Mary Jane Kennedy School constructed at Downing and Windsor.
1928	School District 92 1/2 was created from four school districts.  First officer on the police force.	1964	Residents passed a referendum for the construction of a public library building and funding to increase the size of the library.
1929	Westchester Public School System was founded and a two-room school building was constructed and named Grant N. Britten School at Gladstone Street and Newcastle Street.	1964	6-mile bike path created along the edge of Salt Creek
1930	A one-mile long extension was added to the Westchester branch "L" service between Mannheim and Cermak to accommodate the Village's future downtown area.  Nixon School was constructed at Norfolk and Canterbury	1972	Save the Prairie Society is established to save the Wolf Road Prairie, a remnant of black soil.
1931	George F. Nixon School opened.	1981	Britten and Kennedy schools closed. High Ridge School became Westchester Elementary School. Nixon School became Westchester Middle School.
		1982	Construction of Westbrook Corporate Center begins.
		1985	Westbrook Corporate Center Tower #1 first occupied.  Incorporated in this year, Westchester Historical Society relocates the original two-room school building, built in 1853, from Wolf Road and 22nd Street to Constitution Drive. The building is owned by the Save the Prairie Society.
		1986 - 2000	Residential subdivisions constructed in the southern sections of Westchester.
		2005 - 2006	Strip mall near Westbrook Corporate Center was constructed.

## Regional and Sub-regional Context

Westchester is located directly west of Chicago’s downtown. Figure 4 shows that although the Village sits in Cook County, it borders DuPage County. Westchester’s location provides easy access to interstate highways—Interstate 290 on the north and Interstate 294 on the west. Figure 4 also illustrates that the Village is surrounded by the western suburbs of Hillside and Bellwood to the north, Broadview to the east, La Grange Park to the east and south, and Oak Brook to the west.

Westchester is similar to other western Cook County suburbs. It exhibits similar density and character as other communities within the western suburban area. The Village’s immense residential makeup, access to major roadways, open space opportunities, and historic legacy, however, distinguish it from other areas.

Westchester’s access to interstate highways deem it to be one of the region’s gateway suburbs to the western Cook County communities. Road networks especially provide the Village with accessibility to major employment centers, hospitals, universities, parks, and major airports such as Midway International Airport and O’Hare International Airport. The list below summarizes the regional transportation options available in the Village as well as the major regional destinations or points of interests. The approximate distance recorded considers the Westchester Village Hall as the starting point.

### Nearby Destinations

#### Major Interstates

Interstate 290 – 0.4 miles

Interstate 294 – 2.0 miles

Interstate 88 – 2.3 miles

Interstate 55 – 5.8 miles

Interstate 355 – 8.3 miles

#### Regional Public Transit

Bellwood Metra Rail State serving Union Pacific West (UP-W) – 1.9 miles

La Grange Road Station serving Burlington Northern Santé Fe (BNSF) – 3.4 miles

#### International Airports

Midway International Airport – 9 miles

O’Hare international Airport – 9 miles

#### Other Major Destinations

Brookfield Zoo – 6 miles

City of Chicago Downtown Loop – 14 miles

Des Plaines River Trail – 2.7 miles

Downtown Naperville – 19 miles

Oak Brook Center – 5 miles

Woodfield Mall – 18 miles

## Westchester and GO TO 2040

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning is the official regional planning organization for the northeastern Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. CMAP developed and now guides the implementation of GO TO 2040, metropolitan Chicago’s first comprehensive regional plan in more than 100 years. To address anticipated population growth of more than 2 million new residents, GO TO 2040 establishes coordinated strategies that help the region’s 284 communities address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues.

The recommendation area of the GO TO 2040 plan that is most relevant to Westchester is creating a more livable community, which would include achieving greater livability through land use and housing; managing and conserving water and energy resources; and expanding and improving parks and open space.

Figure 4. Sub-regional Location



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013



# Section 2

## Previous Plans

This section provides a summary and analysis of existing Village plans, studies, and reports that will likely inform and impact the recommendations within the new Comprehensive Plan. The previous documents have been reviewed to build upon current or relevant findings and plans.

Existing Plans, Studies, and Reports reviewed in this section:

- Comprehensive Plan (1955)
- Strategic Economic Development Plan for Commercial Corridors (2006)
- Buxton Community ID Report (2008)
- Sanitary Sewer Mitigation and Corrective Action Plan (2011)
- Strategic Plan Research Report (2011)
- Transportation Improvement Projects (Ongoing)

### Comprehensive Plan - 1955

Westchester's first and only comprehensive plan was completed in 1955 as a response to the rapid growth in the community. Between 1950 and 1953, the Village's population rose by 85.2%, from 4,308 residents to 7,979 residents. This population increase inspired the Village Board of Trustees and the Board of Education to hire planning consultants Evert Kincaid and Associates to create a comprehensive plan for the Village. In 1953, the planning firm began to survey the community immediately, and in a little more than a year found that the survey needed to be redone because the population reached more than 10,000 residents.

The comprehensive plan projected that Westchester's 812 acres of vacant land could support the Village's projected 1965 population of 20,000 by 1960. The consultants outlined several recommendations that were critical to the future Westchester. These recommendations included infrastructure improvements, specifically utilities and streets; creation of a Park District to develop public parks and park facilities on school grounds; and constructing a village hall at Canterbury Street and Westchester Boulevard, as part of the Village Civic Center (See Section 1 for Figure 3: Interpretation of Village of Westchester's Civic Center by Jacob L. Crane). The village hall would accommodate both the police department and fire department, office space for Village operations, and rooms for Board meetings and public meetings. Westchester's Comprehensive Plan of 1955 featured several plans and maps to help visualize the future growth in Westchester:

- General Development Plan – featuring proposed land uses

- Paved Streets – also showed which streets were unimproved
- Water System – also showed areas not served
- Sanitary Sewer System – also showed areas not served
- Storm Sewer System – also showed areas not served
- School Population
- Trade Area Map

The comprehensive plan also listed recommendations pertaining to residential, commercial and industrial land uses including locations for each.

### **Residential**

At the time of the creation of the comprehensive plan, there were 2,951 single-family homes, one two-family housing unit and approximately six multi-family developments. The plan mentions that the Village was originally platted with lots 30 to 35 feet in width. These narrow lot sizes were changed by the Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance requirements and caused the Village to increase the minimum lot size requirement to 50 feet in width and 120 feet in length, allowing for a minimum area of 6,000 square feet. The comprehensive plan made the following recommendations regarding residential land uses:

- Adopt and enforce the building code and zoning ordinance; and
- Support multi-family developments.

### **Commercial**

The plan mentioned that Village officials hired the firm of Stanton and Rockwell in 1950 to assess where commercial development should be located in Westchester. The comprehensive plan featured a Trade Area Map that showed the Village's close proximity to the commercial districts in Broadview, La Grange, La Grange Park and Oak Park. The map also indicated a proposed shopping center in Hillside, a suburb north of Westchester. Despite the 35 retail business in existence in the Village at the time of the comprehensive plan, the consultants concluded that there was little demand for retail business in Westchester. It was recommended that future retail consist of convenience goods, clothing stores for women and children, and service-related businesses. The comprehensive plan also recommended that commercial districts be located where there would be off-street parking as detailed in the zoning ordinance. Specific locations included:

- The then proposed town center (or Village Civic Center) at Mannheim Road and Cermak Road/22nd Street (See Section 1 for Figure 3: Interpretation of Village of Westchester's Civic Center by Jacob L. Crane);

- A second shopping center proposed at Mannheim and Roosevelt roads, where six acres of land were available; and
- A possible third center along Wolf Road at either Roosevelt Road or Cermak Road/22nd Street. The comprehensive plan pointed out that a supermarket and one or two convenience goods stores would be the best uses for the third shopping center.
- Other businesses considered to be non-retail, like drive-in restaurants and service shops, were to locate along the north side of Roosevelt Road spanning from the Illinois Central Railroad to Gardner Road.

### **Industrial**

The comprehensive plan noted that light manufacturing (or light industrial) would be most appropriate for the Village. The heavier manufacturing or industrial uses would have a negative impact on residential areas. The comprehensive plan recommended that industrial uses be located in the following areas:

- On the south side of Roosevelt Road from Gardner Road to the Illinois Central tracks; and
- North of the Illinois Central Railroad and extend west from Mannheim Road to the right-of-way of the old West Suburban Railroad. (The areas to the east and north of this area were proposed to be park spaces, which would serve as buffers between the industrial and residential uses.)

Prior to the official adoption of the comprehensive plan, the Village had already begun implementation of recommendations by taking steps to meet the rapid growth, including:

- Platting of three subdivisions, which in turn led to the School District obtaining a school and park site;
- Conducting engineering studies for extensions and improvement of storm and sanitary systems; and
- Installing traffic signals and other thoroughfare improvements.

## **Strategic Economic Development Plan for Commercial Corridors – 2006**

The Strategic Economic Development Plan for Commercial Corridors, created by Camiros, sought to increase the Village's tax base, retain businesses, attract new business and positively impact the quality of life in Westchester through various development opportunities. To achieve this goal, the report outlined the following strategies to be implemented by the Village and business community:

- Expand the diversified economic base
- Identify and create sites that are ready for redevelopment
- Develop and implement a marketing program that will attract development
- Enhance and beautify existing commercial areas
- Create a “village center”
- Demonstrate collaborative, effective leadership to create a positive climate for economic development

These recommended strategies would help improve the following commercial areas:

- Roosevelt Road
- Mannheim Road and Cermak Road
- Cermak Road and Enterprise Drive
- 31st Street and Wolf Road
- Roosevelt Road and Highridge Avenue

The consultant assessed the characteristics of each of these five focus areas and then offered redevelopment strategies illustrated by future land use plans.

### **Buxton Community ID Report – 2008**

In an effort to attract retail development, the Village hired the firm Buxton to assess retail potential for the Roosevelt and Mannheim roads area. Using customer data, Buxton found that this area was located within close proximity to a mix of consumers who would appeal to a range of retailers and restaurants. The report concluded that Westchester had the potential to attract twenty specific retailers and restaurants to the Roosevelt and Mannheim roads area.

### **Sanitary Sewer Mitigation and Corrective Action Plan – 2011**

V3 Companies of Illinois was hired to prepare the Sanitary Sewer Mitigation and Corrective Action Plan. This study was conducted to assess the sanitary sewer system. Back in the early 1990’s the Village identified and corrected defects in the sanitary sewer system. Like other western suburbs, Westchester experienced severe flooding that impacted streets, homes and businesses in the summer of 2010. The storm sewer system did not have the capacity to handle the excessive amount of water. This problem then impacted the sanitary system, and led to sewage backups and the overflowing of manholes.

The results of V3’s analysis concluded that the Village is out of compliance, especially during wet weather. The Plan recommended that the defects in the sanitary sewer system

be addressed in phases which could take place over a three to five year period. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) expects such problems to be corrected with newly engineered sanitary sewers. Also, because Westchester’s sanitary sewers discharge to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD’s) for treatment, the Village must comply with MWRD’s requirements.

### **Strategic Plan Research Report - 2011**

Created by graduate students of the University of Illinois at Chicago’s College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs program, the Strategic Plan outlines priorities for the Village. These recommendations are the results of a SWOT analysis – identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – involving the input of the Village President, Board of Trustees, Economic Development Commission and Planning Commission. Among several of the recommendations, creating a comprehensive plan for Westchester was primary. Other recommendations included:

- Branding the village
- Business retention
- Code compliance
- Civic pride
- Determining residents’ perception of the Village
- Maintaining and improving infrastructure
- Revising ordinances

### **Transportation Improvement Projects–Ongoing**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a comprehensive list of planned surface transportation projects in the Chicago metropolitan region. The TIP list of projects include all federally financed projects as well as regionally significant, non-federally financed projects scheduled for implementation in the next four years. The following TIP projects are either in Westchester or border the community:

- Mannheim Road streetscape and I-290 bridge improvements. This project is slated to be completed in 2013.
- Interstate 294 resurfacing of highway and reconstruction of bridges. This project is slated to be completed in 2014.
- Wolf Road resurfacing with no lane widening from Roosevelt Road in Westchester to Harrison Street in Hillside. This project is slated to be completed in 2015.



# Section 3

## Community Outreach

For the Westchester Comprehensive Plan, a primary goal is to optimize community engagement in the planning process. A public outreach strategy was formulated by CMAP staff to emphasize broad-based inclusion of Westchester residents, businesses, and other stakeholders, such that the concerns and interests of the Village's diverse community would be reflected in the goals of its comprehensive plan.

### Stakeholder Meetings

CMAP staff conducted interviews, held meetings and attended events to learn more about Westchester's issues and opportunities. During interviews and meetings with community stakeholders, the following questions were presented:

- What do you consider to be the most important issues or concerns regarding the economic and physical growth in Westchester?
- What projects, partnerships, and/or actions would you like to see completed in the Village to address your concerns?
- Please describe the strengths of Westchester in a sentence or two, as if you were describing the Village to a visitor.
- How do you envision Westchester in 2025? What do you want Westchester to be known for in the Chicago region?

An overview of each meeting is described below and details about common issues and strengths follow. Tables A.1 and A.2 in the Appendix list all the issues and strengths mentioned throughout the public participation process, and identify which are most popular across the various stakeholder groups.

### First Steering Committee Meeting

The Westchester Comprehensive Plan's Steering Committee is comprised of a wide variety of interests and perspectives, including institutional leaders, business owners, elected officials, and residents. The Steering Committee held their first meeting the evening of December 1, 2011. At the meeting, CMAP staff provided details about the comprehensive planning project and gathered input from Steering Committee members about the Village's issues and opportunities. In addition to the most common concerns that the Committee raised, members also discussed revitalizing commercial corridors, the lack of long term planning, streets and streetscaping, and the redevelopment of aging facades. Steering Committee members would like to see a wide variety of shopping experiences, and family-friendly restaurants to make Westchester a destination location. Committee members suggested working collectively from within to improve education at Proviso West High School (located in Hillside) to retain and attract families to Westchester.

### Divine Providence Over 50 Club Meeting

The Divine Providence Parish has a seniors club that is dedicated to planning gatherings and activities for senior citizens in and around Westchester. CMAP staff members attended one of the group's monthly meetings on February 1, 2012 to speak to over 100 club members and learn about their concerns in the Village. The seniors were particularly concerned with the need for more sit-down restaurants and shopping options, as well as the need for streetscaping, street lights and traffic controls in residential areas for public safety. The seniors viewed the community's amenities as a strength. Overall, this group

was pleased with the quality of Village services, and appreciated the the variety of places of worship.

## Public Kick-Off Meeting

In addition to meeting with particular groups of stakeholders in Westchester, CMAP also held a community-wide meeting that was open to the general public. To ensure the meeting was inclusive of all residents in the Village, there were Spanish-language materials created to promote the event and Spanish-speaking staff members were available to help facilitate discussion during the meeting. Over 85 residents, business owners, and community leaders attended this public meeting on the evening of February 2, 2012, at the Westchester Community Church, to share their thoughts about what should be addressed in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Participants first heard from CMAP staff about the overall planning process, and then worked in smaller groups to discuss their ideas about the issues and opportunities facing Westchester. Each small group prioritized their major ideas with the help of a facilitator, and then one member of each group reported back to the entire room about the challenges and strengths of the community. Next, the group participated in a live polling exercise, with real-time results; and residents were able to see each other's responses regarding their top three issues, what they would like to preserve, and what they would like to enhance about Westchester. Many thoughtful ideas were shared by participants. Residents mentioned business attraction to vacant sites and the redevelopment of the main commercial areas in the community. Ideas for new business types and amenities in those key locations ranged from sit-down family, friendly-restaurants to diverse shopping experiences. Participants also raised concerns about the rapidly aging infrastructure and suggested better flood control management. Meeting participants overwhelmingly agreed that the Village's greatest strengths were its friendly and family-oriented character and



## Stakeholder Interviews

In order to gain further insight into the issues and opportunities that exist in Westchester, CMAP staff conducted interviews on March 12 and March 16, 2012 with several key stakeholders throughout the community. These individuals represented a wide variety of interests and perspectives, and ranged from institutional and community leaders to business owners and elected officials. These stakeholders held many of the same concerns, and in general expressed the desire to preserve the strengths of Westchester while adjusting to the changing economic and social conditions that exist today.

Stakeholders interviewed included:

- Patrick Casey, Board Member, Westchester Park District
- Argelia Garbacz, Village Staff, Village of Westchester
- Larry Godson, President, Franzosenbusch Heritage Project
- Leonard Gramarossa, Principal, Divine Infant School
- Ron Hoover, Principal, St. Joseph High School
- Neil James, Deputy Director and Policy Analyst, West Central Municipal Conference
- Gary Kasanders, Executive Director, Westchester Park District
- Pam Kouimelis, Realtor, RE/MAX
- Barb Lappe, Teacher, Westchester Primary School
- Rebecca Laskey, Resident, Village of Westchester
- Albert Laskey, Resident, Village of Westchester
- Greg Lebon, Principal, Westchester Middle School
- David G. McCreery, President, St. Joseph High School
- Joe Mills, Pastor, Westchester Community Church
- Frank Perry, Village Board Trustee, Village of Westchester
- Sam Pulia, Village Board President, Village of Westchester
- Maureen Masterson-Pulia, former Village Clerk and Village Trustee, Village of Westchester
- Shirley Slanker, Historian, Franzosenbusch Heritage Project
- Claire L. Thompson, President, School Board 92 1/2
- Tom Yurkovich, Village Board Trustee, Village of Westchester

## Middle School Students

To gain insight into the youth perspective of the Village, CMAP staff visited Westchester Middle School on April 12, 2012 to speak with a group of students representing different grades. First, CMAP staff described the comprehensive planning process to the students, with a particular emphasis on the importance of community members taking ownership of this long-range plan. Next, the group participated in a visioning exercise, where they imagined what they would like Westchester to look like in 2025. Students envisioned a modern Westchester with safer and bigger parks, restaurants with healthy food options, and jobs that contribute to economic growth. Students were then asked to do a mapping activity using MetroQuest, an online community engagement tool. They then identified ideal locations for shops and recreation. The students also pointed out areas that could be improved for pedestrian access and where public transportation options could be expanded. Students reported that their favorite aspects of Westchester are the parks, sports clubs, schools, tight-knit community character, and location to neighboring communities and shopping areas.

## Common Issues

The various groups and stakeholders brought up a wide range of issues. However, there were common issues that were priorities for several groups. These common issues that can be addressed through this comprehensive planning process include:

- **Transportation:** A common issue was making public transportation accessible to all residents, in particular senior citizens. Stakeholders suggested a public-private partnership with the churches and local businesses to offer a loop shuttle service that would travel along Westchester Boulevard, Roosevelt Road and Mannheim Road. Another main concern was high speed traffic in residential areas and at the corner of Mannheim and Cermak roads. Stakeholders suggested installing more traffic controls to create more pedestrian friendly streets.
- **Business attraction and revitalization:** Stakeholders raised the concern about the lack of a centralized downtown district, making Westchester a pass-through community. Participants suggested improving commercial areas by constructing new developments along key commercial corridors to accommodate residents' needs and to attract new businesses and visitors.
- **Stormwater management:** Many stakeholders expressed concerns about flooding in their neighborhoods, both in private residences and in public areas. This is a common problem across much of the Chicago region, and it highlights the need for improved stormwater infrastructure and other mitigation practices.
- **Public High School:** Improving education at the public high school was a top priority across all meetings. While comprehensive plans do not directly address

education issues, we encourage stakeholders to continue to pursue conversations with the Village and School District 92 1/2 about creating a strategic plan to address this priority issue.

- **Preserve open space:** While the Village is home to Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve and borders a beautiful and vast Forest Preserve, residents emphasized the need to preserve existing parks and open spaces as well as expand opportunities for community gathering areas.
- **Infrastructure improvements:** This issue includes the need for improvements to sidewalks, streets, and utility infrastructure in certain areas of the Village where the infrastructure may be aging. Stakeholders also expressed concern about public safety and suggested the installation of more street lights.
- **Residential Properties:** In an effort to attract more families to Westchester, residents would like to preserve Westchester's housing stock by improving building facades and encouraging code compliance. Stakeholders also suggested the need for senior housing to meet the needs of the Village's more mature population.

## Common Strengths

Although several community strengths were expressed by residents, Village officials, and local business owners, the following list represents the core of common assets that the Village benefits from:

- **Community character:** When asked about the strengths of Westchester, every stakeholder group described the Village as friendly and family-oriented. Many families have been residents of Westchester for decades, and people agree that it is a tight-knit, supportive community.
- **Regional location:** Westchester's proximity to the City of Chicago, O'Hare International and Midway airports, the interstate systems, and beautiful network of parks and open space are strengths for the Village. Residents recognize that the Village's location provides them with convenient access to jobs and other amenities.
- **Village services:** A common strength expressed was the Village's services and community facilities such as the upkeep of streets, fire and police protection, the park district and public library system.
- **Schools:** When asked what attracted residents and their families to move to Westchester, majority of the stakeholders expressed the elementary schools, both public and private. Stakeholders suggested building off that strength to improve public education at Proviso West High School in Hillside to retain and continue to attract families to Westchester.



# Section 4

## Demographic Profile

To gain insight into the market and demographic dynamics that impact the Westchester community, data from the U.S. Census was gathered for analysis. Data discussed in this section comes from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, all of which are collected by the U.S. Census Bureau. For comparisons and trend analysis, data was also gathered for the same periods for Cook County and the Chicago, IL-IN Urbanized Area, which includes all contiguous areas with a population density of more than 1,000 persons per square mile.

### Key Findings

- **Overall, Westchester’s population has remained steady between 2000 and 2010.** The population has decreased slightly by 106 residents or 0.6%.
- **Although Westchester’s population has remained rather stable, the composition has changed during the past decade.** The Hispanic or Latino population has increased by 150%, with an increase from 956 to 2,485. The Black or African-American population nearly doubled, growing from 1,207 to 2,349. The Asian population and residents who identify as “Other” have also increased by 14.4% and almost 25%, respectively. The Caucasian population has declined by one-fifth, going from 13,919 to 11,108.
- **Westchester is a middle-income community.** The median income is \$69,679.
- **Westchester is one of the older communities in the region.** While eight percent of residents in the region are 65 and over, approximately 22% of Westchester’s residents are within this age range. Other communities in the region that are considered older with a larger proportion of residents who are 65 and older include La Grange Park (21%), Norridge (24.8%), Niles (25.7%) and Lincolnshire (33.0%).
- **Over one-third of Westchester residents have earned a bachelor’s degree or greater.** A large proportion (87.6%) of Westchester residents holds a high school diploma.
- **Approximately 94% of the employable in Westchester are working.** Over 13% of the employed are in the health care and social assistance industries.

## Population and Households

Overall Westchester's population has remained steady between 2000 and 2010, lingering near 17,000 residents. Westchester's marginal decrease in population by 106 or 0.6% is similar to the decline in population that the county has experienced in the last ten years. The county's population has decreased by 3.4%. On the other hand, the seven-county region has experienced a slight increase of 3.5% in population.

Westchester's household size is slightly less than the county and the region. With a current population of 16,718, Westchester has 6,865 households. Westchester's average household size of 2.42 is less than the county and the region. This could be due to the older population that the Village has in comparison to the county and region; older households tend to be of a smaller size because they are less likely to have children. (See Table 4.5 for data on age.)

**Table 4.1 Population, Households, and Household Size, 2010**

	Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region
Total Population	16,718	5,194,675	8,431,386
Total Households	6,865	1,966,356	3,088,156
Average Household Size	2.42	2.60	2.73

Source - 2010 Census

**Table 4.2 Change in Population, 2000-2010**

	Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region
Population, 2000	16,824	5,376,741	8,146,264
Population, 2010	16,718	5,194,675	8,431,386
Change, 2000-10	-106	-182,066	285,122
Change as %, 2000-10	-0.6%	-3.4%	3.5%

Source - 2000 and 2010 Census

## Race and Ethnicity

Westchester is a predominantly Caucasian community, and has been since its inception. Proportionately, the Village's Caucasian population is especially greater than the county. The Hispanic or Latino population continues to increase in the Village, mirroring trends in the county and region. Although the Black or African-American population is increasing in the Village, this group has seen population decline in the county as well as the region. The Black or African-American population has declined in the county by over 124,000 or 9%; and in the region by approximately 72,000 or 4.7%. This decrease in Blacks or African-Americans, as well as Caucasians, contributed to the county's overall population loss of 182,066 residents. Like the Hispanic or Latino population, the Asian population is steadily increasing in the Village, county and region.

**Table 4.3 Race and Ethnicity, 2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Caucasian	11,018	65.9%	2,278,358	43.9%	4,486,557	53.2%
Hispanic or Latino*	2,485	14.9%	1,244,762	24.0%	1,823,609	21.6%
Black or African-American	2,349	14.1%	1,265,778	24.4%	1,465,417	17.4%
Asian	659	3.9%	318,869	6.1%	513,694	6.1%
Other**	207	1.2%	86,908	1.7%	142,109	1.7%

Source - 2010 Census

\* includes Hispanic or Latino residents of any race

\*\* includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races

**Table 4.4 Change in Race and Ethnicity, 2000-2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Change in Population	Percent Change	Change in Population	Percent Change	Change in Population	Percent Change
Caucasian	-2,901	-20.8%	-280,351	-11.0%	-200,702	-4.3%
Hispanic or Latino*	1,529	159.9%	173,022	16.1%	414,407	29.4%
Black or African-American	1,142	94.6%	-124,670	-9.0%	-72,117	-4.7%
Asian	83	14.4%	61,026	23.7%	137,701	36.6%
Other**	41	24.7%	-11,093	-11.3%	5,833	4.3%

Source - 2000 and 2010 Census

\* includes Hispanic or Latino residents of any race

\*\* includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races

## Age

In comparison to the county and region, Westchester is a more mature community that has more residents who are 50 and older. This segment of the population within the Village accounts for almost 45% of the total population, and 22% of the population are over 65, nearly twice the county and regional averages. Other communities in the region that have a substantial population that is 65 and older include La Grange Park (21%), Norridge (24.8%), Niles (25.7%) and Lincolnshire (33.0%). In contrast, Westchester's age group of 20 to 34 years is much smaller than county and regional averages, and the Village also has fewer residents under 19 years of age.

**Table 4.5 Age Cohorts and Median Age, 2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Under 19 years	3,543	21.2%	1,374,096	26.5%	2,346,937	27.8%
20 to 34 years	2,334	14.0%	1,204,066	23.2%	1,790,049	21.2%
35 to 49 years	3,365	20.1%	1,067,351	20.5%	1,807,886	21.4%
50 to 64 years	3,781	22.6%	928,833	17.9%	1,534,488	18.2%
65 to 79 years	2,249	13.5%	436,799	8.4%	679,470	8.1%
80 years and over	1,446	8.6%	183,530	3.5%	272,556	3.2%
<b>Median Age (2010)</b>	46.2		35.3		N/A	

Source - 2010 Census

## Income and Educational Attainment

Westchester's median income is greater than the county. This difference in median income is attributed to a greater percentage of residents in Westchester earning more than \$100,000 than in the county. The county has a greater percentage of residents who earn less than \$25,000.

**Table 4.6 Household Income, 2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Less than \$25,000	954	15.4%	458,462	23.7%	594,251	19.5%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	1,148	18.5%	443,011	22.9%	650,102	21.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,378	22.2%	349,011	18.0%	553,681	18.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	967	15.6%	240,948	12.4%	414,960	13.6%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	1,240	20.0%	249,666	12.9%	460,697	15.1%
\$150,000 and over	523	8.4%	195,383	10.1%	370,397	12.2%
Median Income (2010)	\$69,679		\$53,942		N/A	

Source - 2006-2010 American Community Survey

The levels of education of Westchester's residents are comparable to both the county and region. Most residents have high school diplomas, and more than one-third of residents have earned post-secondary degrees, which is comparable to county and regional averages.

**Table 4.7 Educational Levels, 2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Population, 25 year and over	12,206	100.0%	3,413,901	100.0%	5,450,630	100.0%
High school diploma or higher	10,691	87.6%	2,840,274	83.2%	4,661,868	85.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	4,190	34.3%	1,131,925	33.2%	1,899,328	34.8%

Source - 2010 Census

## Employment Trends of Westchester Residents

In the county and region, approximately two-thirds of the population older than 16 is a part of the labor force. In contrast, less than 63% of Westchester residents participate in the labor force, largely due to the concentration of older residents. Of the residents who work, few residents are unemployed. The percentage (6%) of residents who are unemployed is less than the county (almost 10%) and region (nearly 9%).

**Table 4.8 Employment Status, 2010**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Population, 16 years and over	13,697	100.0%	4,074,129	100.0%	6,481,308	100.0%
In labor force	8,566	62.5%	2,708,191	66.5%	4,429,414	68.3%
Employed	8,055	94.0%	2,438,989	90.1%	4,020,137	90.8%
Unemployed	511	6.0%	267,681	9.9%	395,392	8.9%
Not in labor force	5,131	37.5%	1,365,938	33.5%	2,051,894	31.7%

Source - 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Although Westchester residents are employed in a number of industries, they are mainly a part of the health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and educational services industries. See Table 4.9 for more details.

**Table 4.9 Employment of Westchester Residents by Industry Sector, 2010**

	Count	Percent
Total Primary Jobs*	7,164	100%
Health Care and Social Assistance	976	13.6%
Educational Services	801	11.2%
Manufacturing	667	9.3%
Retail Trade	663	9.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	514	7.2%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	484	6.8%
Finance and Insurance	459	6.4%
Wholesale Trade	427	6.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	385	5.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	370	5.2%
Public Administration	321	4.5%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	266	3.7%
Construction	203	2.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	180	2.5%
Information	174	2.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	140	2.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	99	1.4%
Utilities	29	0.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3	0.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	3	0.0%

Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Primary Jobs include public and private-sector jobs. Primary jobs represent the highest paying job for an individual worker.

One-third of Westchester's labor force travels to Chicago for work. Only four percent of employed residents work in the Village; others work in nearby communities like Oak Brook, Elmhurst and Maywood. These figures are similar to other small suburban communities. See Table 4.10 for employment locations of Westchester residents.

**Table 4.10 Employment Locations of Westchester Residents**

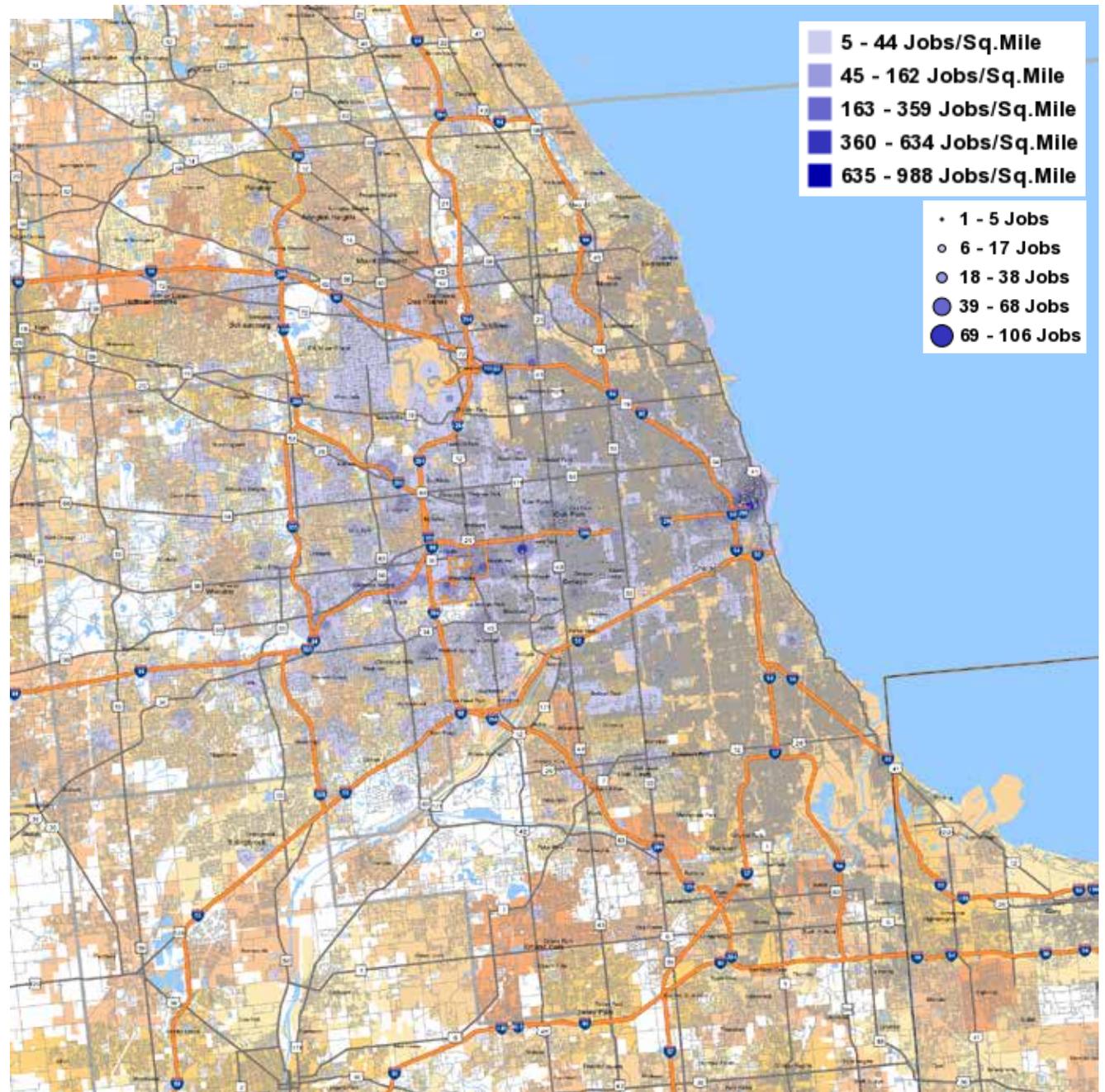
	Count	Percent
Total Primary Jobs*	7,164	100%
Chicago, IL	2,158	30.1%
Westchester, IL	268	3.7%
Oak Brook, IL	189	2.6%
Elmhurst, IL	184	2.6%
Maywood, IL	167	2.3%
Downers Grove, IL	163	2.3%
Oak Park, IL	137	1.9%
Elk Grove Village, IL	128	1.8%
Cicero, IL	110	1.5%
Broadview, IL	108	1.5%
Other Locations		
In Cook County	2,180	30.4%
In DuPage County	834	11.6%
In Lake County	117	1.6%
In Will County	104	1.5%
In Kane County	73	1.0%
In Other Counties	244	3.4%

Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

\*Primary Jobs include public and private-sector jobs. Primary jobs represent the highest paying job for an individual worker.

**Figure 5. Where Westchester Residents Work**

Figure 5 (to the right) provides a depiction of where Westchester's residents work. Westchester is outlined on the map in orange. Darker blue areas indicate higher concentrations of workers. Please note that this map does not depict the full extent of where Westchester residents work, but it does depict all major concentrations and the majority of workers.





# Section 5

## Economic Assessment

A key aspect to any community is its economic health. This section examines key economic and market indicators in Westchester such as employment trends, dominating industries, equalized property values, and commercial property trends. Various data resources were utilized and analyzed in assembling this assessment including the Illinois Department of Security, U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD), Illinois Department of Revenue, and CoStar Data.

### Key Findings

- **While Westchester's employment base has suffered job losses since 2000, these have been less than other communities throughout the region.** The number of private sector workers in Westchester decreased seven percent between 2000 and 2011, better than the decreases for Cook County (13 percent) and the Chicago region (10 percent).
- **Westchester has a balanced employment base.** Two-thirds of jobs in Westchester are concentrated in the administration, professional services, health care and social assistance, and finance and insurance industries. Each industry is growing relative to other sectors of the regional economy.
- **Westchester's diverse and balanced employment base is reflected in the types and size of businesses within its list of top employers.** The Village has a strong base of medium-to-large employers, which may shield it from the fluctuations associated with large manufacturing employers.
- **Westchester attracts workers from Chicago as well as a large part of the region's western suburbs.** The Village's workers come from all over the region, but principally from within a ten-mile radius of the Village boundaries.
- **Westchester's residential properties account for 67 percent of the overall property value in the Village, and commercial properties account for an additional 30 percent.** Like most communities, Westchester's total property value is largely made up of residential properties. However, the presence of the Westbrook Corporate Center office complex gives the Village more commercial property value than communities of a similar size.
- **Commercial space vacancy rates in Westchester are more than double than that of its surrounding submarket or of the Chicago region.** Competition from the retail districts and shopping centers of surrounding municipalities have an adverse impact on retail space in Westchester, and vacancies within the Westbrook Corporate Center have an inordinate impact on commercial vacancies in the Village overall.

## Employment Trends

Westchester's employment base has not suffered the same job losses as other communities throughout the region. Between 2000 and 2011, Westchester experienced a seven percent decline in private sector jobs. While the decline is significant, Westchester was able to hold on to a larger portion of its private sector jobs compared to Cook County (13 percent) and the region (10 percent). It appears that the balanced nature of Westchester's economy may have prevented more severe declines due to the recent recession.

**Table 5.1 Private Sector Employment Estimates**

	Westchester	Cook County	6-County Region*
Employment, 2000	7,734	2,340,639	3,487,542
Employment, 2010	7,211	2,037,597	3,192,426
Change, 2000-11	-523	-303,042	-354,491
Change as %, 2000-11	-6.8%	-12.9%	-10.2%

\*The 6-County Region includes those counties with detailed employment data available through IDES. These counties include Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry and Will Counties.

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

Westchester has a balanced employment base with two-thirds of jobs concentrated in the administration, professional services, health care and social assistance, and finance and insurance industries. Approximately 67 percent of all of Westchester's jobs are in the aforementioned sectors, while the remaining 33 percent are scattered among several other sectors. Westchester's numbers in the above industries is substantially higher than that for Cook County (40 percent) or for the region (38 percent). Administration and support services are the single biggest employment sector representing 22 percent of all Westchester jobs. Combined employment in the professional services, health care and social assistance, and finance and insurance sectors comprise nearly 45 percent of Westchester's employment base, with many of the businesses located in the Westbrook Corporate Center office complex located at Cermak and Wolf roads. That complex alone accounts for more than one million square feet of office space, or more than 60 percent of all office space in the Village

**Table 5.2 Private Sector Employment of Workers by Industry Sector, 2011**

Industry	Count	Percent
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	1,583	22.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,382	19.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	979	13.6%
Finance and Insurance	842	11.7%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	506	7.0%
Wholesale Trade	426	5.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	312	4.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	259	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	256	3.6%
Construction	236	3.3%
Manufacturing	141	2.0%
Educational Services	126	1.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	87	1.2%
Information	16	0.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	15	0.2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%
Public Administration	--	n/a
Utilities	--	n/a
Total	7,211	100.0%

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

Westchester's diverse and balanced employment base is reflected in the types and size of businesses within its list of top employers. Westchester is not overly reliant on a small number of large employers, within a small range of industry sectors; rather, it has a large number of medium-to-large businesses, across various industry sectors. According to data compiled by ESRI Business Analyst and Co-Star, the largest employer is CPS, Inc., a managerial search company located in the Westbrook Corporate Center.

**Table 5.3 Top Ten Westchester Employers, 2011**

Employer	2011 Employment
CPS, Inc.	461
Nonni's Food Company	250
Corn Products, Intl.	210
Sogeti USA, LLC	200
Village of Westchester	199
Jewel-Osco	150
Chicago Laborers and Pensions	125
Insurance Auto Auctions, Inc.	120
Westchester Health and Rehab	110
American Imaging Mgmt.	100
Belmor	100
Fersenius Medical Care	100

Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Co-Star

Westchester attracts workers from Chicago as well as a large part of the region's western suburbs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics, twenty percent of Westchester's workers live in Chicago while just fewer than five percent live in Westchester. Westchester employers appear to reach throughout the western suburbs for workers, with workers coming from as far west as Aurora and as far south as Orland Park. Most Westchester workers reside in the surrounding suburbs, generally within about a ten mile radius of the Village (Note: discrepancies between the employment number reported by the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the U.S. Census Bureau are due to differences in the reporting of jobs; the IDES' broader definition of employment includes part-time employment, while the Census data does not).

Figure 6. Where Westchester Workers Live

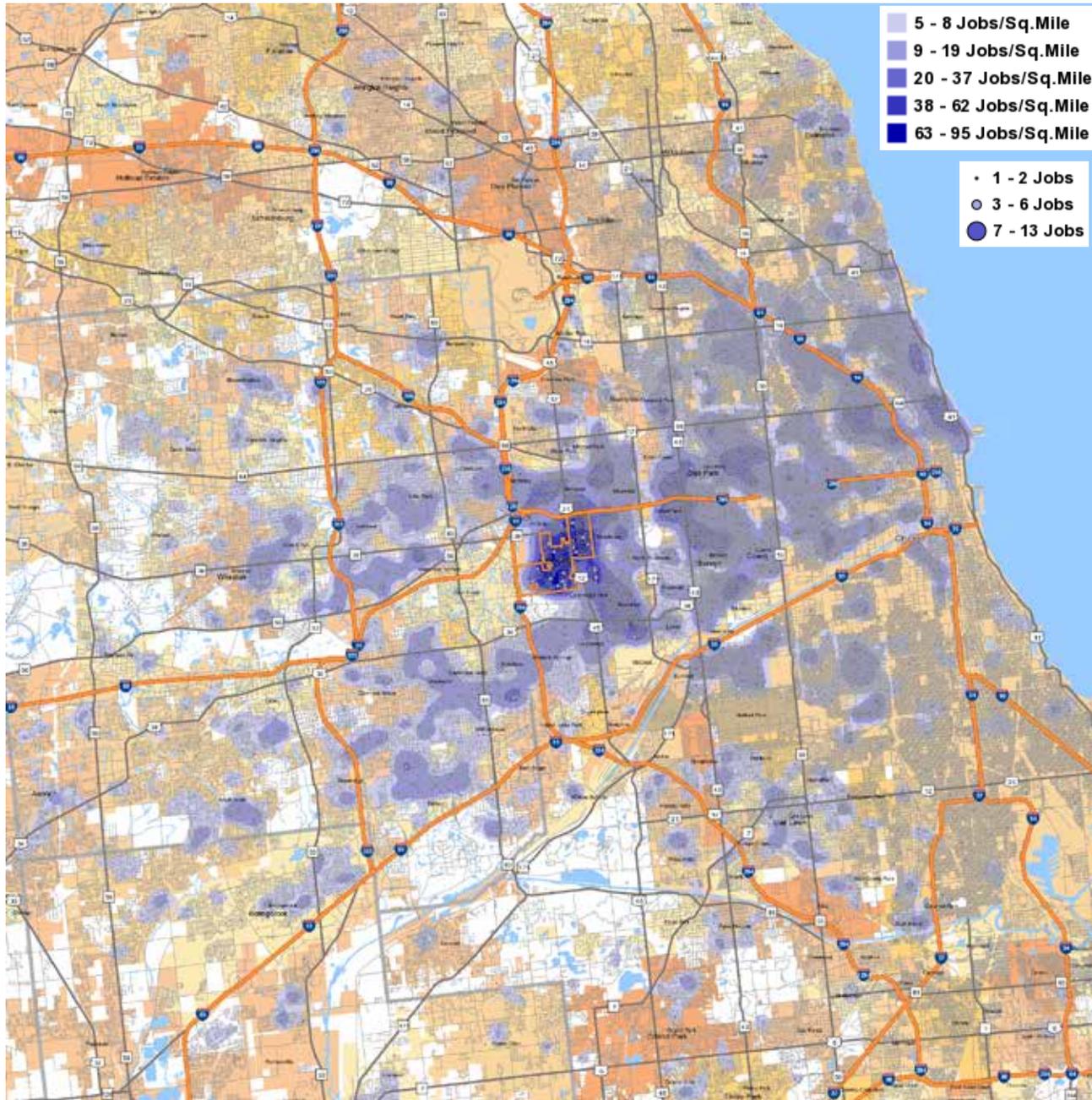


Figure 6 (to the left) provides a depiction of where Westchester workers live. Westchester is outlined in orange at the center of the image. Darker shades of blue indicate areas that contribute a greater proportion of Westchester's employment base and lighter shades of blue show those contributing a lesser proportion. Please note that this map does not depict the full extent of where Westchester workers live, but it does depict major concentrations and the majority of workers.

**Table 5.4 Residence Location of Workers in Westchester, 2010**

	Count	Percent
Total Workers	5,828	100%
Chicago	1,197	20.5%
Westchester	268	4.6%
Naperville	128	2.2%
Aurora	91	1.6%
Lombard	77	1.3%
Downers Grove	76	1.3%
Brookfield	75	1.3%
Berwyn	74	1.3%
Cicero	73	1.3%
Oak Park	70	1.2%
Elmhurst	65	1.1%
Bolingbrook	62	1.1%
Wheaton	59	1.0%
Bellwood	54	0.9%
Oak Lawn	54	0.9%
La Grange Park	51	0.9%
Hillside	50	0.9%
Forest Park	48	0.8%
Orland Park	46	0.8%
Hinsdale	45	0.8%
Darien	44	0.8%
Joliet	44	0.8%
Westmont	41	0.7%
Arlington Heights	40	0.7%
Maywood	40	0.7%
All Other Locations	2,956	50.7%

ource: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

## Property Values

Westchester's residential properties account for 67 percent of the overall property value in the Village, and commercial properties account for an additional 30 percent. Similar to other bedroom communities throughout the region, Westchester's residential properties account for the large majority of the \$650 million in property value in the Village. However, the presence of the Westbrook Corporate Center likely pushes the value of commercial properties to 30 percent of EAV, slightly higher than the 25 percent for all of Cook County and the 23 percent for the Chicago region. Industrial and railroad properties round out the final three percent.

**Table 5.5 Westchester Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) by Property Type, 2008**

Property Type	Estimated EAV
Residential EAV	\$439,774,795
Commercial EAV	\$194,188,226
Industrial EAV	\$16,189,377
Railroad EAV	\$37,165
Farm EAV	\$0
Mineral EAV	\$0
Total EAV	\$650,189,563

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

## Commercial Property

Commercial space vacancy rates in Westchester are more than double that of its surrounding submarket or of the Chicago region. The Village has approximately 2.2 million square foot of commercial space, most of which is office (77 percent), followed by retail (16 percent) and then industrial space (7 percent). Through the third quarter of last year, data compiled by Co-Star showed that 24 percent of Westchester's commercial space is vacant, a rate more than twice as much for its surrounding submarket (12 percent) or the region (11 percent). Of particular note is the high vacancy rate for industrial space in the Village (48 percent). While the total amount of industrial space in Westchester is small (150,000 square feet) and the vacancy rate indicative of the loss of just one or two industrial employers, it should serve as a note of concern.

**Table 5.6 Commercial Real Estate Square Footage and Vacancy by Type, 2011 3Q**

	Westchester		Near West Chicago Metropolitan Submarket*		Region**	
	Total RBA	Vacancy Rate	Total RBA	Vacancy Rate	Total RBA	Vacancy Rate
Retail	346,014	13.0%	12,769,759	7.0%	500,973,298	8.5%
Industrial	151,528	48.3%	34,679,925	13.0%	1,117,236,680	11.1%
Office	1,685,568	24.4%	4,969,211	15.0%	455,272,308	14.8%
Total Commercial Real Estate	2,183,110	24.2%	52,418,895	11.7%	2,073,482,286	11.3%

Source: CMAP Analysis of CoStar data

\*Submarket Includes Berwyn, Cicero, Maywood, Lyons, Hillside, La Grange, Brookfield as well as other communities.

\*\* CoStar's Chicago Region includes portions of Northwest Indiana and southwest Wisconsin

**Westchester's retail and office vacancy rates have been relatively stable since 2006, but industrial space vacancy rate has risen dramatically.** A closer look into the community's commercial space reveals that while retail and office space has remained unchanged over the past five and ten years (respectively), the vacancy rate for industrial space rose from just two percent in 2001 to 48 percent in 2011. The stability in the retail and office vacancy rates is likely due to the fixed supply and slow turnover in the retail and office markets, while the dramatic jump in the industrial space vacancy rate is indicative of the loss of a major industrial employer.

**Table 5.7 Retail Vacancy Rates, 2006 and 2011 (4Q)**

	Total Retail SF, 2006	2006 Vacancy Rate	Total Retail SF, 2011 (4Q)	2011 (4Q) Vacancy Rate
Retail Vacancy Rate	349,541	13.1%	346,014	13.0%

Source: CoStar

**Table 5.8 Office Vacancy Rates, 2001 and 2011 (4Q)**

	Total Office SF, 2001	Vacancy Rate, 2001	Total Office SF, 2011 (4Q)	Vacancy Rate, 2011 (4Q)
Office Vacancy Rate	1,685,568	25.7%	1,685,568	24.4%

Source: CoStar

**Table 5.9 Industrial Vacancy Rates, 2001 and 2011 (4Q) Retail Sales**

	Total Industrial SF, 2001	2001 Vacancy Rate	Total Industrial SF, 2011 (4Q)	2011 (4Q) Vacancy Rate
Industrial Vacancy Rate	151,528	2.1%	151,528	48.3%

Source: CoStar

**Westchester generates substantially less revenue from retail sales on a per capita basis compared to the county and region.** In 2010, Westchester generated approximately \$65 million in general merchandise retail sales, or nearly \$3,900 per resident. The per capita rate of retail sales falls short of that for Cook County (\$8,600) and the region (\$9,700). The comparatively small retail sales per capita rate is likely due to the small amount of total retail space in Westchester, and the retail competition that retailers in Westchester experience due to their proximity to shopping destinations in Oak Brook (Oakbrook Center), Hillside (West Point Shopping Center and the Target-anchored shopping center at I-290 and Mannheim Road), North Riverside (North Riverside Mall) and La Grange (downtown La Grange).

**Table 5.10 General Merchandise Retail Sales, 2010**

	Westchester	Cook County	7-County Region
Retail sales	\$64,505,304	\$44,903,843,176	\$81,925,804,488
Retail sales per capita	\$3,858	\$8,644	\$9,717

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue



# Section 6

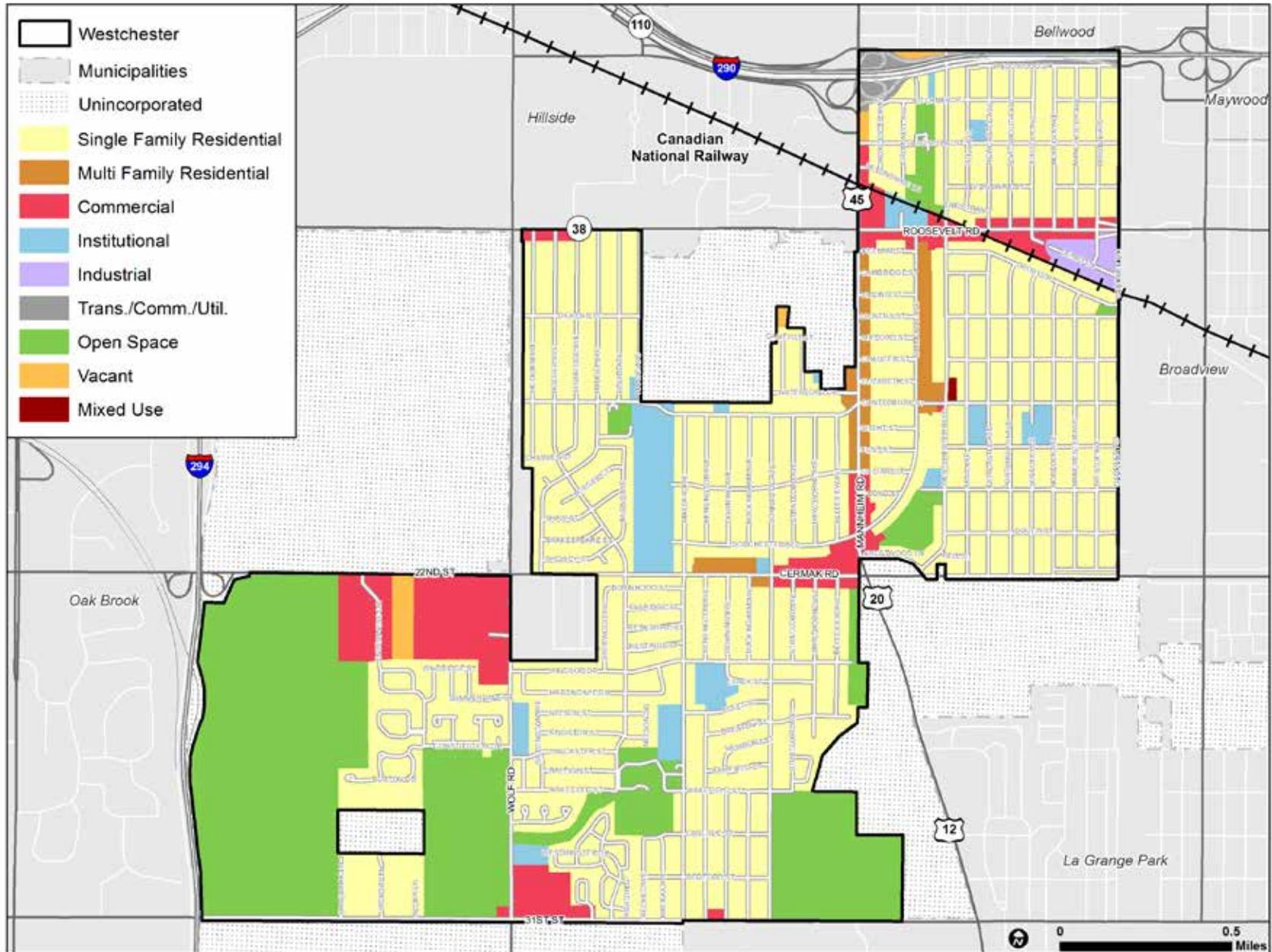
## Land Use and Development

This section describes the existing land use and development conditions within Westchester with a focus on types of uses, existing zoning, and the built environment. The information in this section has been obtained from CMAP's Geographic Information System (GIS) database, and a visual assessment of the community undertaken by the project team in winter 2012.

### Key Findings

- **Westchester's predominant land use is residential.** Approximately 64 percent of the land use in the Village is made up of residential property, most of which is single family.
- **Approximately two percent of the Village's land area is devoted to multi-family housing.** To accommodate the aging population and attract young families, it will be necessary to increase this land use in the community.
- **Open space makes up the second largest land use category in Westchester.** Over one-fifth of Village land is dedicated to this land use, and comprises the Chicago Highlands Club, Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve and Forest Preserve District of Cook County.
- **The Village has a small amount of vacant land.** Less than one percent of Village land is considered vacant and consists of approximately 18 acres.

Figure 7. Existing Land Use for Westchester, 2005



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

## Land Use

The following table breaks down Westchester's land use by category. The amount of acres in each category was calculated using GIS data, which includes roads in the calculations. See Map 5 for existing land uses in the Village.

**Table 6.1 General Land Use, 2005**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Single-Family Residential	1477.3	62.1%
Open Space*	527.9	22.2%
Commercial	162.6	6.8%
Institutional	99.2	4.2%
Multi-Family Residential	46.0	1.9%
Transportation	31.0	1.3%
Vacant	18.1	0.8%
Industrial	16.3	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2378.4</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CMAP 2005 Land Use Inventory

\*The total acreage of open space listed above is different than the open space acreage provided in Section Nine: Natural Environment. The calculation listed above does not account for school parks and other open space areas that are classified as "Residential" by CMAP data.

## Residential

Westchester, a bedroom community, is primarily residential in character with over two-thirds of the Village's land dedicated to this land use. The residential areas are not confined to particular sections in the Village; this land use can be found on all streets, including principal and minor arterials like Mannheim Road, Wolf Road, Cermak Road, and 31st Street. The majority of Westchester's residential areas consist of single-family homes; about 1477 acres (or 62%) of the Village's land is occupied by this housing type. Multi-family housing (consisting of two or more units), located on 46 acres (nearly 2%) of the Village's land, is mainly situated in the northeast section of Westchester along Mannheim Road and Balmoral Avenue. Multi-family housing can also be found along Cermak Road. Most of the residential dwellings were built prior to the 1970s.



## Open Space

Westchester has approximately 530 acres of open space, which makes up more than one-fifth of the community's total land. The greatest portion of open space is comprised of a golf course, the Chicago Highlands Club. The Club's property covers roughly 270 acres in the southwestern area of Westchester, spanning between Cermak Road and 31st Street.

Another large portion of open space in Westchester is dedicated to the Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve. Consisting of 80 acres, this area is located at Wolf Road and 31st Street. The land was platted in the 1920s and is owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and managed by the Save the Prairie Society. The Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve is home to the Franzosenbusch Prairie House Nature Center and Museum. (Franzosenbusch is German for "Frenchman's woods." The Save the Prairie Society is a part of the Franzosenbusch Heritage Project, an organization committed to preserving and restoring this original school building.)

Other open space lands are dedicated to school and community parks as well as the Forest Preserve District of Cook County in the southeastern section Westchester, which also lead into La Grange Park. Map 6 depicts land uses directly outside Westchester's borders.



## Commercial and Mixed-Use

The commercial areas in the Village make up almost approximately 163 acres (or 7%) of Westchester's land area. Most of the areas are located near major intersections-- Mannheim Road and Cermak Road, Wolf Road and Cermak Road, and Wolf Road and 31st Street. Commercial uses can also be found along 31 Street, Roosevelt Road and Westchester Boulevard.

Commercial uses consist of small, one-story retail stores, restaurants, and professional office in stand-alone buildings or in strip centers. Mixed use buildings are sprinkled throughout the commercial areas, and consist of small-scale retail and office establishments with residential units above. These buildings are generally two stories tall. Most of the commercial and mixed use buildings were built in the 1950s and 1960s.

Westchester's largest commercial area, Westbrook Corporate Center, is located near Wolf Road and Cermak Road. The Corporate Center was built during a fourteen-year period, between 1986 and 2000. The Corporate Center consists of five ten-story towers, a parking garage and conference center with hotel. The towers and conference center are actually separated by a strip of vacant land. The Westbrook Corporate Center sits back from Cermak Road. This setback has allowed for the recent development of a strip mall, constructed between 2005 and 2006. This strip mall features small retail made up of restaurants and office-related uses that are supported by the Corporate Center.



## Institutional

Almost 100 acres of the Village's land are classified as institutional. Institutional land use includes all land identified by CMAP GIS data as educational, government, institutional, medical and religious. These uses are scattered throughout the Village.

## Vacant

Overall, the Village has very little vacant land. According to the CMAP Land Use data, approximately 16 acres of the Village's land are vacant. Although the data shows the strip of woodland situated between the West Brook Corporate Center towers and the conference center as vacant, this under-utilized area should be designated as 'Commercial' like its neighboring properties. The other identified vacant land is located at the intersection of Wolf Road and Cermak Road/22nd. This land is occupied with a commercial building. Lastly, the so-called vacant land at the north end of Waverly Avenue serves as a buffer between the residential neighborhood and the Oak Ridge/Glen Oak Cemetery.



## Transportation and Industrial

Transportation land use is comprised of the railroad's right of way, and all streets and roads. This land use accounts for roughly 31 acres in the Village. The original rail line Illinois Central Gulf Railroad, known as IC, is owned by the Canadian National Railway as of 1998, and is a subsidiary of the CN Southern Region.

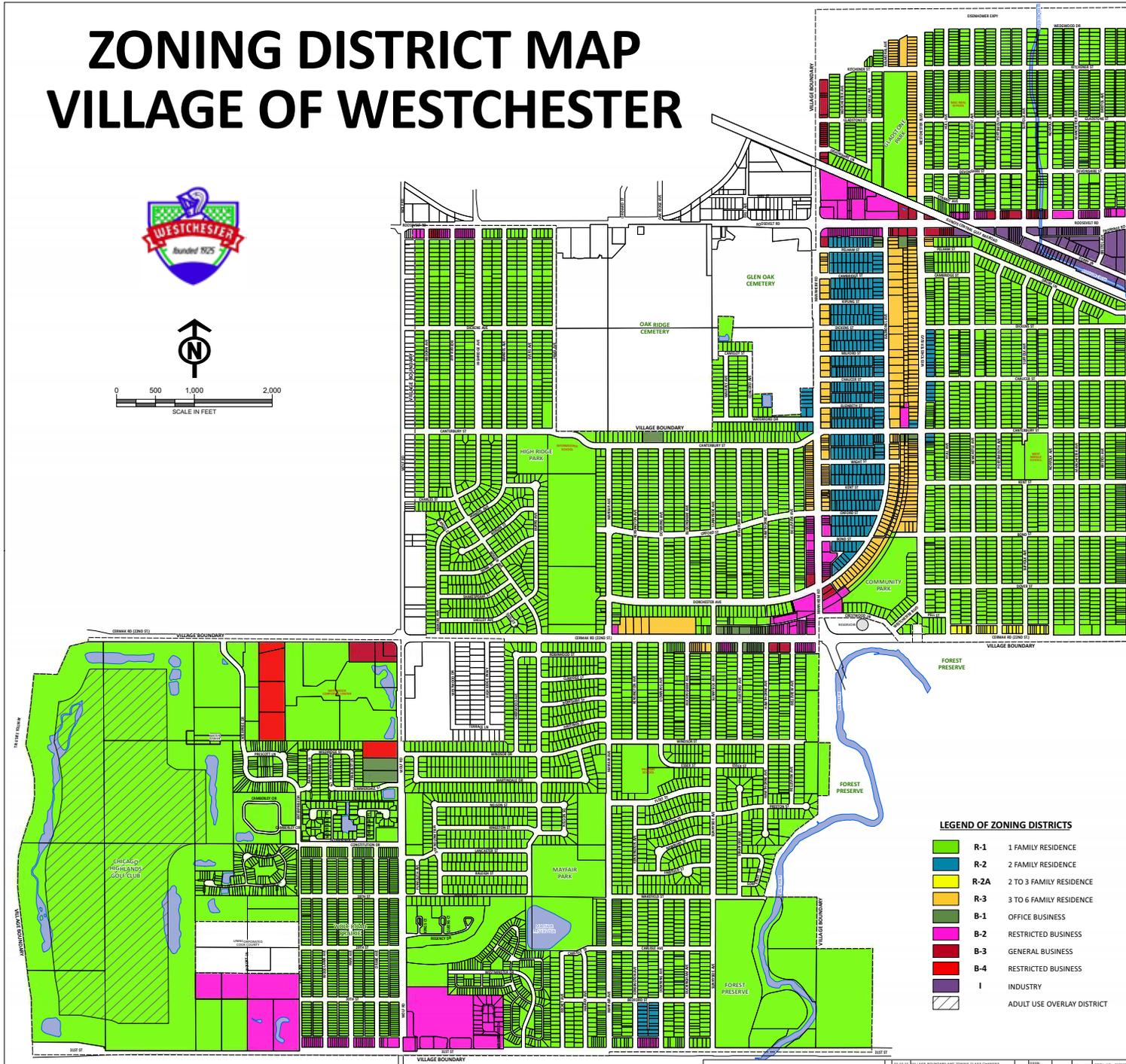
Industrial use makes up only 0.7 percent (16.3 acres) of Westchester's land. The community's industrial area is situated in the northeastern section of the Village. Some light manufacturing is located along Roosevelt Road. Heavier industrial uses are located in a triangular area bordered by Roosevelt Road on the north and Gardner Road to the east, and the IC to the south. These buildings are generally one-story and were constructed in the 1950s.

## Zoning

The Zoning Code was revised in 1964. Given the document's age, the Ordinance does not accurately reflect the Village's more recent development pattern. See Table 6.2 for zoning regulations associated with residential, commercial and industrial lands. This table also lists the required conditions for the commercial and industrial districts. The Code does not note conditions for the residential districts. Figure 7 shows the Village's most recent zoning.



Figure 8. Zoning Map for the Village of Westchester, 2010



**Table 6.2 Key Characteristics of the Residential, Commercial and Industrial Districts****Residential Districts**

Zoning Classification	Examples of Permitted Uses	Setbacks	Height Restrictions	Area Regulations
R-1, One Family Residence District	Detached residence containing only one household living unit; public and parochial schools; convents, rectories and parish houses; parks and playgrounds.	Single-family residence: Rear yard – 20% of the lot depth or a rear depth of a minimum of 25', whichever is smaller  Residential buildings: 25' minimum setback  Side lot line shall be 10% of plot width (if located on the front 70' thereof)	Not to exceed two stories (excluding the basement)	Not to exceed 40%
R-2, Two-Family Residence District	Any use permitted in R-1. Detached residences containing two household living units.	Same as R-1 district.	Same as R-1 district.	Same as R-1 district.
R-2A, Two to Three-Family Residence District	Any use permitted in R-1 district. Detached residences containing one to six household living units.	Same as R-1 district.	Not to exceed one story (excluding the basement).	None listed
R-3, Three to Six-Family Residence District	Any use permitted in R-1 district. Detached residences containing one to six household living units.	Same as R-1 district.	None listed	None listed

**Industrial District**

Zoning Classification	Examples of Permitted Uses	Setbacks	Height Restrictions	Area Regulations
I, Industrial District	Industrial and light manufacturing uses. Any permitted use in the business districts.	None listed	None listed	None listed

Zoning Classification	Examples of Permitted Uses	Setbacks	Height Restrictions	Area Regulations	Key Required Conditions
B-1, Office Business District	Business offices; offices for professional persons including physicians, dentists, attorneys, architects, engineers, outpatient medical and dental clinics; art gallery for display purposes only; funeral homes; photography studios; and public librariesschools; convents, rectories and parish houses; parks and playgrounds.	None listed	None listed	None listed	Residential living units are allowed above the ground floor.  Retail sales, personal services, manufacturing are not allowed in this district. Hospitals and veterinarian practices are not allowed. No window display of goods or merchandise or any other display including floor samples, which is readily visible from the public way or from adjoining properties.
B-2, Restricted Business District	Uses permitted in B-1 District  Personal service establishments, retail, restaurants, schools focused on art, dancing, vocational, professional and business.	Same as B-1 District.	None listed	None listed	Residences can be located above the first floor. All goods produced on the premises shall be sold as retail on the premises where produced. Establishments featuring a drive-in are not allowed in B-2 district.
B-3, General Business District	Any use permitted in B-2 district.  Amusement establishments; automobile sales and service shops; hotels and motels; meeting halls; drive-in restaurants; indoor theaters.	Same as B-1 district.	None listed	None listed	None listed
B-4, Restricted Business District	Similar to permitted uses in B-3 district.  Banks and similar institutions; restaurants (not including drive-ins).	For the first 100' of frontage adjacent to property in a residence district fronting on the same street, all buildings in B-4 district shall be set back from the front property line for a distance of not less than 25', provided that such 100' requirement may be reduced by the width of any street or alley intervening between the property and the property in B-4 district. Side lot line (adjoining or separated only by an alley from property in a residential district): 10' minimum. Front setback (across from a street that is within a residential district): 10' minimum.	Not to exceed four stories, excluding basements.	None listed	Basements shall be counted as a story when 50% or more of the finished floor-to-ceiling height of basement is above curb level or finished grade.



# Section 7

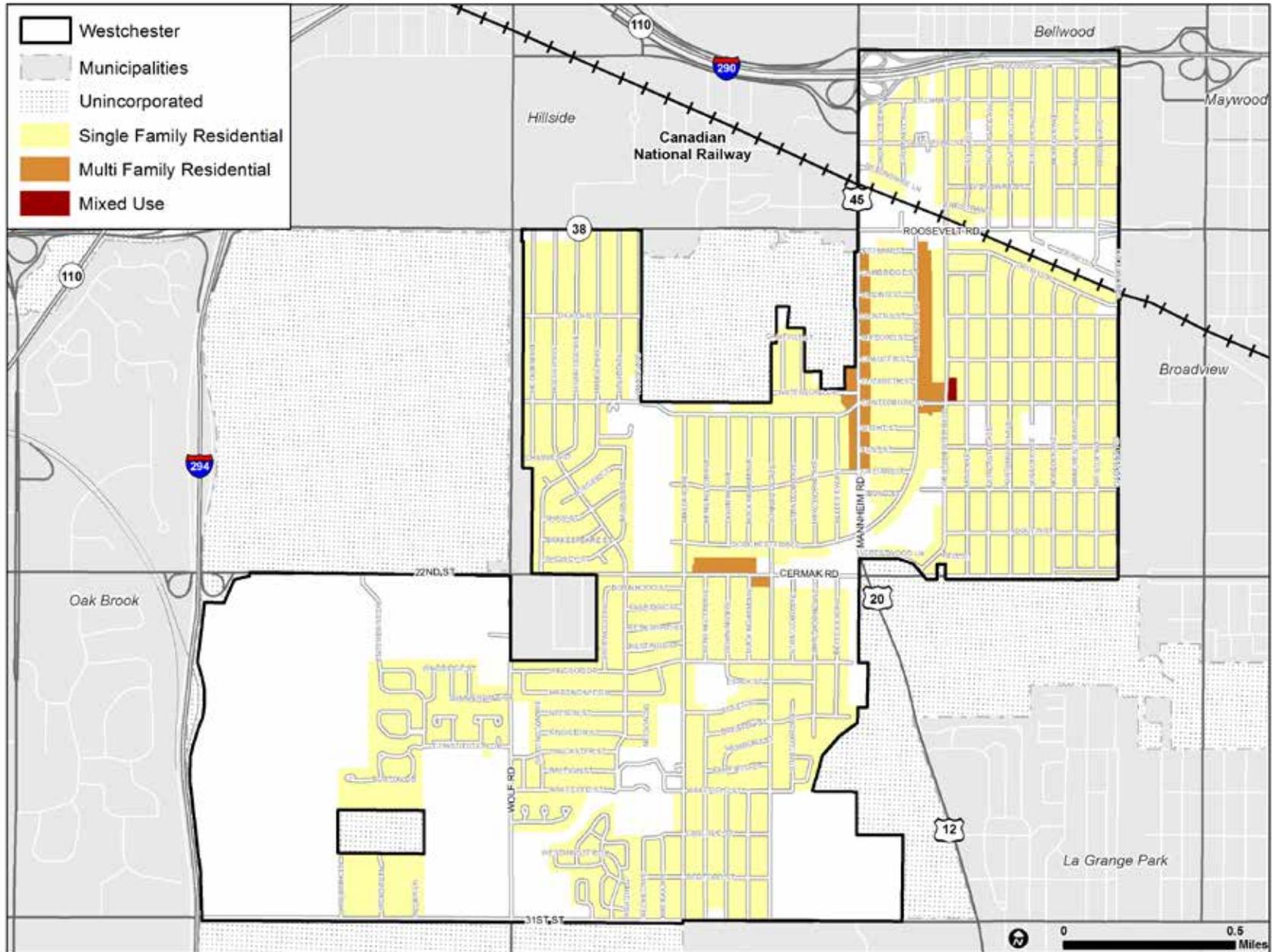
## Housing

Housing is central to Westchester's makeup. This section provides an overview of the Village's housing stock, occupancy, tenure, and value. Information in this section was obtained from a variety of sources including 2010 U.S. Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Trulia and RealtyTrac.

### Key Findings

- **Westchester's housing stock consists predominantly of single-family, detached homes.** Approximately 82 % of Westchester's housing units are single-family, detached homes.
- **Less than 10% of housing units consist of multi-family developments.** To attract new residents and retain the older population, it is imperative that multi-family housing options be increased in the Village.
- **Majority of the housing stock in Westchester is owner-occupied.** Approximately 92% of housing units are owner-occupied. Very few homes (8.4%) are occupied by renters.
- **More than half of Westchester's housing stock is 55 years old.** Majority of Westchester's housing stock was constructed between 1940 and 1969.
- **Like other communities throughout the region, Westchester has foreclosures.** One in every 604 housing units has received a foreclosure filing in the Village. This rate is greater than Oak Brook (1 in every 1,584), and LaGrange Park (in every 1,167); but less than Bellwood (1 in every 108), Hillside (1 in every 156) and Broadview (1 in every 221).

Figure 9. Housing Types



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

## Housing Type, Size and Age

### Type

More than 80% of the housing units in Westchester are single-family, detached homes. See Figure 8 for types of housing located in the Village. The Village's proportion of single-family, detached homes is double that of the county and more than 1 1/2 times the region. The Village was originally laid out to accommodate single-family, detached housing. Multi-family housing is more recent to Westchester. At the time of the comprehensive plan in 1955, approximately four percent of the village's land was devoted to multi-family housing. Today, less than 10% of the Village's housing stock represents this kind of development. Conversely, one-third or more of the housing units in the county and region consists of three or more units. There may be a need to increase the amount of multi-family units to attract new residents and allow seniors to remain the Village.

**Table 7.1 Housing Type (Units)**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Total	6,513	100.0%	2,173,433	100.0%	3,352,393	100.0%
Single, detached	5,328	81.8%	867,126	39.9%	1,668,716	49.8%
Single, attached	625	9.6%	118,871	5.5%	252,984	7.5%
2 Units	217	3.3%	223,617	10.3%	249,178	7.4%
3 to 4 Units	310	4.8%	248,890	11.5%	282,452	8.4%
5+ Units	33	0.5%	698,189	32.1%	870,930	26.0%

Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey

### Size

The median size of the housing units in Westchester increased slightly between 2000 and 2010. The average housing unit in Westchester is larger than the average unit in the county. This could be due to the concentration of single-family homes as well as the more recent construction of larger homes in the Village.

**Table 7.2 Housing Size**

	Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region
Median rooms, 2010	6	5.2	N/A
Median rooms, 2000	5.8	5.1	N/A

Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey, U.S. Census



## Age

The majority of Westchester's homes (73.1%) were constructed between 1940 and 1969, when the Village was developing most rapidly. In contrast, the region and the county have a lower proportion of housing in this age range, and more that is both older (constructed before 1940) and newer (constructed in 1970 and after).

**Table 7.3 Housing Age**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Built 2000 and after	117	1.8%	143,400	6.6%	350,664	10.5%
Built 1990 to 1999	208	3.2%	125,255	5.8%	347,516	10.4%
Built 1980 to 1989	576	8.8%	146,131	6.7%	301,291	9.0%
Built 1970 to 1979	537	8.2%	265,670	12.2%	474,801	14.2%
Built 1960 to 1969	942	14.5%	285,399	13.1%	408,344	12.2%
Built 1950 to 1959	3,041	46.7%	348,491	16.0%	464,267	13.8%
Built 1940 to 1949	772	11.9%	183,369	8.4%	223,884	6.7%
Built 1939 or earlier	320	4.9%	678,756	31.3%	781,626	23.3%
Median age, 2009	1957		1957		N/A	

Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey, U.S. Census



## Housing Occupancy, Tenure, Value, and Foreclosures

### Occupancy

Less than 5% of the Village's housing units are vacant. Comparatively, the housing units in the county and region have much higher vacancy rates than the Village.

**Table 7.4 Housing Occupancy**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Occupied	6,865	95.1%	1,966,356	90.2%	3,088,156	91.6%
Vacant	354	4.9%	214,003	9.8%	284,601	8.4%

Source: 2010 Census, U.S. Census Bureau

### Tenure

Almost 92% of Westchester's occupied housing units are owner-occupied. Conversely, approximately two-thirds of the housing units in the county and region are owner-occupied. The county and region have a greater proportion of housing dedicated to renters.

**Table 7.5 Housing Tenure**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Total occupied units	6,865	100.0%	1,966,356	100.0%	3,088,156	100.0%
Owner-Occupied	6,286	91.6%	1,143,857	58.2%	2,022,176	65.5%
Renter-Occupied	579	8.4%	822,499	41.8%	1,065,980	34.5%

Source: 2010 Census, U.S. Census Bureau



## Value

According to the latest Census figures, the median housing value for homes in Westchester (\$285,600) is higher than the county's (\$267,200). Nearly 90% of the homes in the Village are valued at \$200,000 or more, and most (approximately 80%) are between \$200,000 and \$400,000 in value.

Proportionately, the county and region have more than double the amount of housing units that are less than \$200,000, but also more on the higher end of the value spectrum. According to Trulia, the median sales price for homes was \$149,500 at the end of the first quarter in 2012. The sales price of homes has been decreased by 49.5% over the past five years. At the end of 2007, the median sales price for homes was nearly \$296,000. Many of the communities surrounding Westchester have also experienced depreciation in home values, ranging from a decrease of 44% to 72% in value. Nearby Oak Brook, however, has seen an appreciation in home values at 25%.

**Table 7.6 Housing Value**

	Westchester		Cook County		Chicago Region	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Less than \$100,000	73	1.3%	80,638	6.9%	113,707	5.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	148	2.6%	110,071	9.4%	177,951	8.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	454	7.9%	173,572	14.8%	316,893	15.4%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	1,104	19.3%	177,492	15.2%	336,106	15.9%
\$250,000 to \$299,000	1,527	26.6%	136,431	11.7%	249,048	12.1%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	1,891	33.0%	218,436	18.7%	390,494	19.0%
\$400,000 to \$499,999	329	5.7%	107,276	9.2%	192,274	9.4%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	185	3.2%	101,657	8.7%	178,620	8.7%
\$750,000 or more	21	0.4%	64,418	5.5%	107,562	5.2%
Median value, 2009	\$285,600		\$267,200		N/A	

Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey, U.S. Census

## Foreclosures

According to RealtyTrac, there are 196 foreclosed homes in Westchester with an average foreclosure sales price of \$143,100. This means that 1 in every 604 housing units received a foreclosure filing in March 2012. Surrounding communities to Westchester have the following foreclosure rates:

- Bellwood - 1 in every 108
- Broadview - 1 in every 221
- Hillside - 1 in every 156
- LaGrange Park - 1 in every 1,167
- Oak Brook - 1 in every 1,584

Westchester's foreclosure rate is greater than Oak Brook and LaGrange Park; but less than Bellwood, Broadview and Hillside. The Village's foreclosure rate is also less than the county (1 in every 331) and state (1 in every 383). It's slightly greater than the U.S.'s foreclosure rate of 1 in every 662.



## Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index

According to national standards, residents should spend no more than 30% on housing costs. Spending more than this is considered “overpayment”, and can limit the ability to meet other household needs. However, looking only at housing costs ignores transportation costs, which can be significant. The average Westchester household devotes almost 50% of their income on housing and transportation costs combined, which is above the standard of 45%. Westchester’s households fare well when it comes to housing costs; the average household spends no more than 27% of income on housing. This percentage is comparable to the county (27%) and slighter lower than the region (28%). Transportation costs, however, for Westchester households comprise a greater portion of income than the standard. The average Westchester household spends almost 23% of income on transportation. This amount is greater than the county (20%) and region (22%), and can be attributed to the greater number of miles Westchester households travel than the county.

**Table 7.7. Housing & Transportation Costs as Percent of Income per Household**

	Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region
Housing Costs as percent of income	26.80%	26.75%	28.15%
Transportation Costs as percent of income	22.98%	19.57%	21.82%
“H+T” Costs as percent of income	49.78%	46.32%	49.97%

Source: CNT, “H+T Affordability Index”: <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>

Note: *Red text if the percentage exceeds the standard threshold of affordability: 30% for housing costs and 45% for housing and transportation costs combined.*



# Section 8

## Transportation

This section describes the existing transportation system within Westchester with a focus on streets, public transit, and walking and bicycle infrastructure. The information in this section was obtained from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra, Pace, and based upon a visual analysis of existing conditions.

### Key Findings

- **Westchester's location is well-served by roads, which make it an ideal location for accessing Chicago and other parts of the region by automobile.** In addition to its predominate grid system, the Village has connections to major roadways and interstates that allow for intrastate and interstate travel.
- **Westchester's predominant mode of travel is automobile.** The only public transportation option in the community is the Pace bus service, with routes that travel east-west and north-south throughout the Village.
- **Although there are sidewalks located throughout the Village, the sidewalks along major roads do not provide pedestrians with a safe environment.** There may be a need to install traffic calming measures along these roadways to enhance safety for pedestrian and encourage more foot traffic to support commercial areas.

## Street Network

The Village's street network serves as the backbone of the transportation system, enabling personal and professional travel, goods delivery, refuse haulage, delivery of emergency services, and the fulfillment of other mobility needs. Westchester has a primarily grid-based system of streets. The more recently developed areas of the Village, in the southern section of the community, contain subdivisions built as cul-de-sacs. The streets could use some improvement and the sidewalks are generally in good condition.

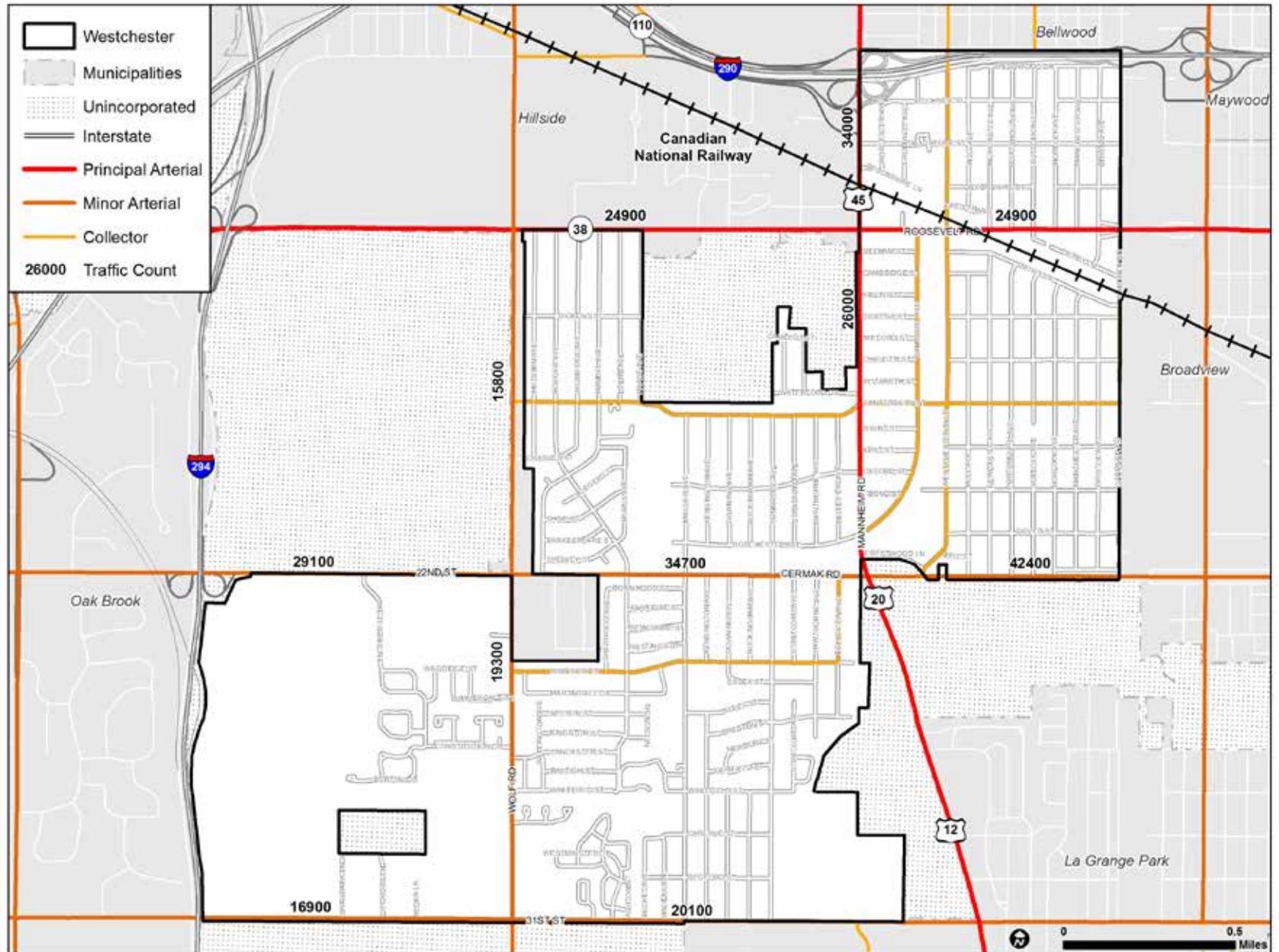
### Roadways

Roadways in Westchester have been placed in hierarchical categories based on a “functional classification” system utilized throughout the United States. The functional class of a street segment dictates the planned function for the road as well as the road's eligibility for certain types of federal transportation funds. Functional classification is determined by two main factors:

- **Automobile traffic type:** Whether drivers use the road for shorter or longer distance travel
- **Automobile access:** Whether drivers on the road can enter (via driveway) adjacent properties

Figure 9 shows the classification of Westchester's roads. More details about these roadways are described below in Table 8.1. There are two principal arterials that run through the existing commercial areas in the Village. There is little foot traffic along these major roadways, as they are traveled at higher speeds and lend safety concerns to pedestrians. To retain existing business and pursue redevelopment, attracting foot traffic is crucial. Hence, the Village may want to consider installing traffic-calming measures along the principal arterials. This type of strategy would also provide improved pedestrian access and overall safety to residents and visitors. Like the principal arterials, there is a little foot traffic along the minor arterials. The remaining roadways in Westchester are classified as local streets and are maintained by the Village. This classification also includes alleys, which are mainly used for additional vehicular access, refuse haulage, or deliveries.

Figure 10. Roads



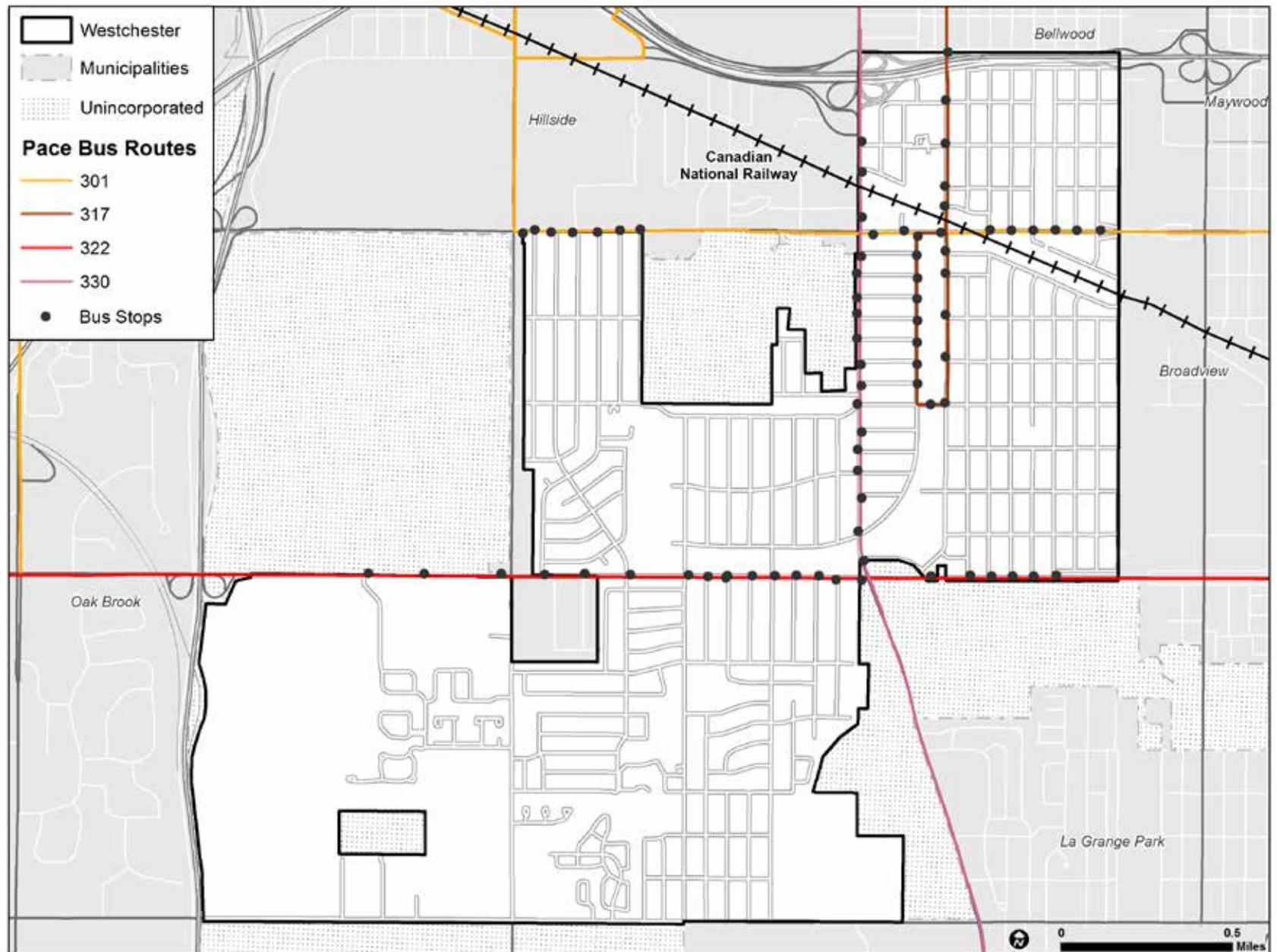
Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

**Table 8.1 Streets in Westchester, Approximate Average Annual Daily Traffic, Amount of Trucks and Jurisdiction, 2010 and 2011**

Road Type	Road Name	between	Approx. AADT	Amount of Trucks	Year	Jurisdiction
Principal Arterial	Roosevelt/ IL-38	Gardner and Wolf	24,900	Not counted	2011	IDOT
		Mannheim and Wolf	24,900	1050	2011	IDOT
	Mannheim	I-290 and Roosevelt	42,000	2,900	2011	IDOT
		Roosevelt and Cermak	26,400	2,225	2011	IDOT
Minor Arterial	31st Street	N La Grange and Wolf	20,100	Not counted	2010	IDOT
		Wolf and I-290	16,900	Not counted	2010	IDOT
	Cermak /22nd	Gardner and Mannheim	42,400	Not counted	2010	IDOT
		Mannheim and Wolf	34,700	Not counted	2010	IDOT
	Wolf Road	Roosevelt and Cermak/22nd Street	15,800	Not counted	2010	IDOT
		Cermak/22nd Street and 31st Street	19,300	Not counted	2010	IDOT
Collector Road	Balmoral	Roosevelt and Mannheim	Not counted	Not counted	N/A	Village
	Canterbury	Gardner and Wolf	2,250	Not counted	2010	Village
	Westchester Boulevard	1-290 and Cermak/22nd	7,500	Not counted	2010	Village
	Windsor	Bellevue and Wolf	Not counted	Not counted	N/A	Village

Source: [www.GettingAroundIllinois.com](http://www.GettingAroundIllinois.com), Illinois Department of Transportation

Figure 11. Bus Routes



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

## Transit

### Pace Bus Service

Westchester's public transit options consist of the Pace bus service, which is concentrated mostly in the northeastern part of the community. A total of four Pace bus routes run through Westchester (See Figure 10 for bus routes throughout the community):

- 301 – Roosevelt Road – travels from the east in Broadview along Roosevelt Road then north along Wolf Road to Hillside
- 317 – Westchester Boulevard – travels from the east in Maywood to Westchester along Westchester Boulevard, which is the endpoint for this route
- 322 – Cermak Road/22nd Street – travels from the east in Broadview to Cermak Road in Westchester and heads to Oak Brook
- 330 – Mannheim-LaGrange Roads – travels from south in La Grange Park to Mannheim Road in Westchester, where it continues into Melrose Park
- Two additional routes, 310 and 325, run in close proximity to the Village but do not enter it

### Metra

Metra does not have stations in Westchester. There are, however, stations in Bellwood, LaGrange, Maywood, Melrose Park and Western Springs. The stations in LaGrange and Bellwood provide the closest access.

### Freight

The rail tracks in Westchester in the northeastern section of the Village serve freight trains. The rail line is owned by Canadian National Railway as of 1998, and is a subsidiary of the CN Southern Region. Freight rail operations link Dubuque, Iowa with rail junctions in central Chicago. There are no freight rail facilities in the Village; all freight trains represent through traffic.

**Table 8.2 Pace Bus Routes – Service, Links to Bus Route Map and Schedule, and Possible Points of Interest**

PACE Route number and name	Weekday Ridership	Saturday Ridership	Sunday Ridership	Possible Points of Interest for Westchester residents
301 Roosevelt Road	1,072	433	159	Proviso Math and Science Academy Proviso West High School
317/17 Madison Westchester	365	422	410	Proviso East High School
322 Cermak Road - 22nd Street	2,146	1013	596	Immaculate Heart of Mary High School St. Joseph High School Oakbrook Center Yorktown Center
330 Mannheim - LaGrange Roads	1,073	433	N/A	O'Hare Airport Kiss-n-Fly Amtrak/Metra BNSF Line La Grange Road Station

Source: Pace at [www.pacebus.com](http://www.pacebus.com)

## Bicycling and Walking

There are sidewalks on every street throughout the Westchester community. When the community was initially planned, the developers wanted to make sure that residents had pedestrian access throughout the Village. The sidewalks can be used for walking as well as bicycling. There are also walking and biking opportunities along the trails in Westchester Community Park and Mayfair Park. The trail in Westchester Community Park leads to the Salt Creek Trail located in the Forest Preserve area. Other points of connection to the Salt Creek Trail throughout the Village include:

- Newcastle Avenue and Cermak Road (22nd Street)
- Mannheim Road and Cermak Road (22nd Street)
- Mannheim Road and Windsor Street
- East Wakefield Street
- Sunnyside Avenue and 31st Street

## Travel Behavior

Figure 11 shows the various modes of transportation that are accessible to the Westchester community—automobile, Pace bus, Metra trains (with stations in neighboring municipalities) and bike trails.

**Commuting to Work.** The majority (87%) of Westchester residents commute to work by automobile. In comparison to the county and region, the proportion of Westchester workers who drive to work is larger—87% for Westchester compared to 78% and 73% for the county and region, respectively.

Most commuters who do not drive either carpool or use transit. The proportion of Westchester residents who use transit to commute to work (6%) is approximately one-half of regional averages and slightly below the average of suburban Cook County. This is likely due to the limited public transit options available to residents. Few Westchester residents walk or use other methods to get to work. See Table 8.3 for further detail.

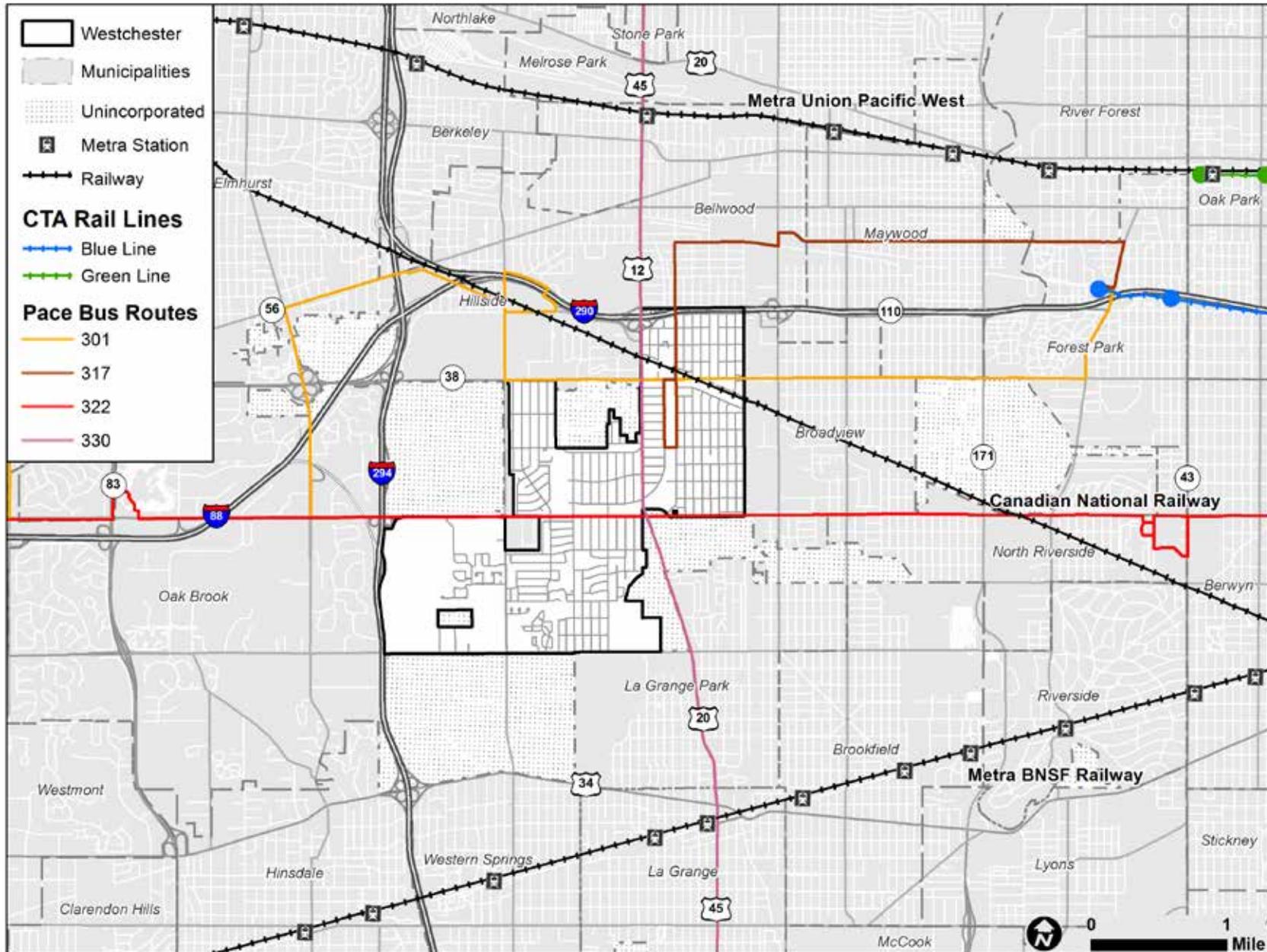
**Table 8.3 Mode Share, as Percentage of Commuting Workers**

	Westchester	Suburban Cook County	Chicago Region (compiled from workers in the seven counties)
Total Workers	7,851	1,146,787	3,844,599
Worked at Home	243	46,443	181,715
Total Commuting Population	7,608	1,100,344	3,662,884
Drive Alone	87.0%	78.2%	72.8%
Carpool	5.2%	9.8%	9.1%
Transit	6.2%	8.3%	12.8%
Walk	0.6%	2.3%	3.4%
Other	1.1%	1.4%	1.8%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (for county and region figures); 2006 - 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (for municipal figures). U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Mode shares are expressed as percentages of the working population excluding those who work from home.

Figure 12. Regional Transportation Options



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

Westchester's households can access almost 42 percent of the region's jobs by automobile within 45 minutes or less, which is higher than the county and regional averages. Also, Westchester households can access 24 percent of the region's jobs by transit within 75 minutes or less, which is slightly higher than regional averages but lower than Cook County overall. Figure 11 further illustrates this type of accessibility by showing Westchester in the larger context of roads, freeways, and public transportation.

**Table 8.4. Access to Jobs in the Region, by Travel Mode, 2010**

	Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region
Regional Jobs Accessible by Automobile (commute time of 45 minutes or less)	41.8%	27.4%	15.9%
Regional Jobs Accessible by Transit (commute time of 75 minutes or less)	24.4%	31.2%	20.9%

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, weighted travel model for roadway and public transportation.

Westchester's annual miles travel per household of 17,926 is greater than the county (15,780) and less than the region (18,272). The higher number of miles traveled by Westchester residents can be attributed to residents having to travel to other parts of the region for employment, shopping and other trips, in addition to their limited transit options. See Table 8.5 for further detail.

**Table 8.5 Total Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per Household (HH), 2010**

Westchester	Cook County	Chicago Region (MSA)
17,926 Annual Miles	15,780 Annual Miles	18,272 Annual Miles

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, "H+T Affordability Index" website: <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>



# Section 9

## Natural Environment

This section provides information on the existing open space infrastructure within Westchester with a focus on water resources, parks and natural habitat. The information in this section was obtained from Cook County, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, the Village of Westchester and based upon a visual assessment of existing conditions in the community.

### Key Findings

- **The Village enjoys clean drinking water from a reliable source.** Westchester does not exceed its daily allocation of water and the most recent quality report shows no violations.
- **The streams that traverse Westchester are Salt Creek and Addison Creek, both of which are impaired, and prevent Westchester residents from enjoying them to their fullest.** These impairments include swimming, aquatic life and fish consumption (for Salt Creek only).
- **Portions of the Village experience flooding and sewage backups during wet weather.** Westchester experienced severe flooding in 2010, and as a result has had the sanitary sewers assessed in an effort to take corrective action.
- **Although Westchester does not have any community gardens or agricultural lands within its boundaries, residents do attend a farmers market held in the Village.** Residents have an opportunity to purchase local food from a farmers market between the months of July and October.
- **Westchester's average household energy consumption is greater than Cook County's.** However, Westchester's households emit less greenhouse emissions per capita than the county.

# Water

## Drinking Water Quality

Westchester is required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.EPA) to produce an annual water quality report (also known as consumer confidence report) by the Safe Drinking Water Act. The latest report covers 2010.

The report indicates that lead and copper found in the village's water supply may be due to the corrosion of household plumbing systems and the erosion of natural deposits into surface water sources. Westchester's water supply also contains regulated contaminants such as chlorine which is used as a water additive in small amounts to control microbes.

## Water Supply

Westchester purchases its water from the Broadview-Westchester Water Agency, which in turn acquires Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago. Lake Michigan is the sole source of drinking water for Westchester. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is responsible for the management of this resource and its use for not only Westchester but approximately 200 other systems through an allocation program. The Illinois diversion of Lake Michigan water is limited by a 1967 U.S. Supreme Court Decree to around 2.1 billion gallons of water per day. In 2010 the Village was allocated 2.100 million gallons a day from Lake Michigan; however the actual use was less at around 1.656 million gallons a day.

The Lake Michigan water supply serves the 16,718 residents in Westchester. As of February 2012, the current water rate is \$6.86 per 1000 gallons and the sewer rate is \$1.22 per 1000 gallons. Between 2010 and 2012, Westchester increased its water rate by \$1.08 to recoup the increase in water rates from the City of Chicago.

## Watersheds

A watershed is the land area from which rainwater and snowmelt drains into a body of water such as a stream or lake. Watershed boundaries are defined by nature and are largely determined by the surrounding topography.<sup>1</sup> There are multiple concentric layers of watersheds that expand in size; smaller watersheds are part of larger watersheds which are part of larger watersheds and so on.

For example, the Village of Westchester is a part of three layers of watersheds. See Map 12 for details. Westchester is immediately located between two sub-watersheds— Lower Salt Creek and Addison Creek. These two sub-watersheds flow into the Salt Creek watershed network, which in turn flows into the Des Plaines River Watershed Basin, the largest watershed of the three groups. This relationship is shown in Figure 12.

### Lower Salt Creek and Addison Creek

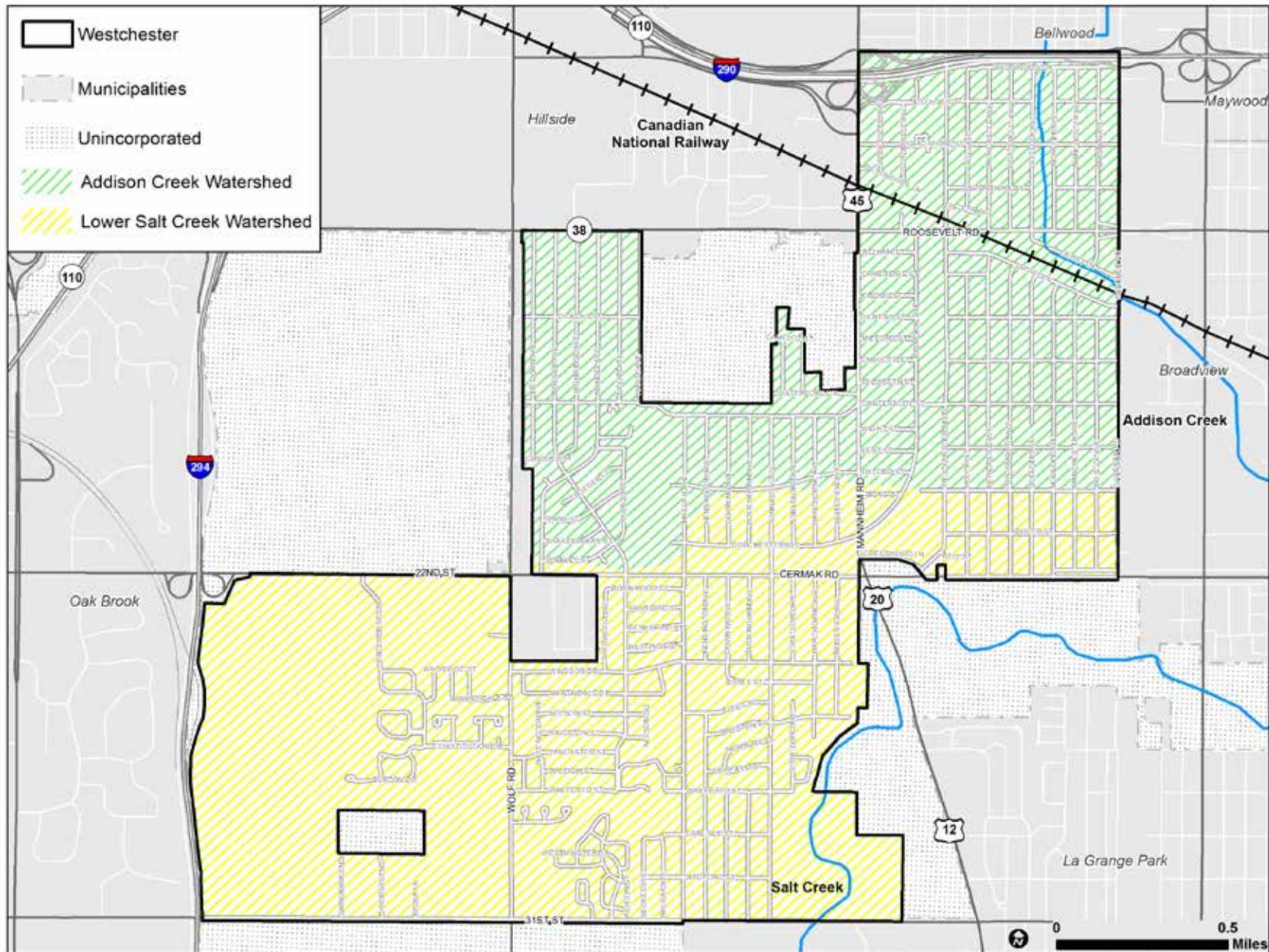
Westchester is located within the Addison and Lower Salt Creek watersheds, which is part of the larger Des Plaines River Watershed Basin. Two streams run through Westchester, Salt Creek and Addison Creek. According to the Illinois EPA's Section 303 (d) List, both stream segments are impaired-meaning that they are not meeting Illinois' standards for water quality.<sup>2</sup> Salt Creek is impaired for designated uses: Fish Consumption, Primary Contact Recreation (swimming), and Aquatic Life; while Addison Creek is only impaired for two designated uses: Aquatic Life and Primary Contact Recreation. More information is provided in Table 9.1.

These impairments can be connected to a range of potential sources including contaminated sediments, channelization, loss of riparian habitat, combined sewer overflows, municipal point source discharges, urban runoff/storm sewers, upstream impoundments, dam or impoundment, impacts from hydrostructure flow regulation/modification, atmospheric deposition – toxins, and other unknown sources.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from A Guide to Illinois Lake Management, NIPC, 1991

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/tmdl/303-appendix/2010/appendix-a2-303d-list-alphabetized-draft-3-26-10.pdf>

Figure 13. Watersheds



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

### Salt Creek

The Salt Creek watershed network is situated in northeast Illinois. It covers approximately 150 square miles and touches more than 30 municipalities that have a cumulative population of approximately 500,000 residents. Salt Creek also runs through forest preserves and trails. Given the creek's location at some points, there are many opportunities for habitat for wildlife as well as recreation opportunities for individuals. According to the Salt Creek Watershed Network website, many entities, including the forest preserve districts, communities, and counties, located along the creek are working together to build the Salt Creek Greenway Trail, a multi-purpose, multi-county trail system.<sup>3</sup>

### Des Plaines River Watershed

The Des Plaines River Basin covers northeastern Illinois and the southeastern tip of Wisconsin. The watershed covers over 1,300 square miles, some of which touch the Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Lake and Will. The watershed is comprised of lakes and streams. The main causes of water quality problems are organic enrichment (low dissolved oxygen), siltation, and suspended solids caused by urban runoff and contaminated sediments.<sup>4</sup> The Des Plaines River Watershed has six planning councils that work with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater of Chicago (MWRD) to communicate the needs and interests of residents and village officials. Westchester is a member of the Lower Des Plaines Watershed Planning Council, which works with MWRD to communicate the needs and interests of residents and village officials.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.saltcreekwatershed.org/Live.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Des Plaines River Watershed information found on Illinois Environmental Protection Agency website at: <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/water-quality/report-1996/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-02.html>

**Table 9.1 Impaired Streams**

Stream Name	Miles of Stream	Designated Use	Cause of Impairment
Salt Creek	12.04	Fish Consumption	Mercury, Polychlorinated biphenyls
		Primary Contact Recreation	Fecal Coliform
		Aquatic life	Aldrin, Methoxychlor, Sedimentation/Siltation, Total Suspended Solids (TSS), pH, Phosphorus (Total)
Addison Creek	6.69	Aquatic Life	Aldrin, Chromium (total), DDT, Hexachlorobenzene, Nickel, Phosphorus (Total)
	6.69	Primary Contact Recreation	Fecal Coliform

Source: Illinois Environmental Protection Agency at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/tmdl/303d-list.html>

### Flooding

According to Figure 13, the floodplain areas lie in the northeastern section of the Village between I-290 on the north, Chaucer Street on the south, Balmoral Avenue on the west and Gardner Road on the east; and in southern portions of the Village and a small section in the central area of Westchester. The northeastern section, one of the older areas of the Village, has experienced more flooding issues than the southern areas.

## Open Space and Natural Resources

Westchester not only contains several neighborhood park areas, but it is also bordered by greenspace on the southern end of the Village. Of the 543 acres of open space in Westchester, approximately 275 acres is dedicated to a private country club; the remaining 268 acres is open to the public. Figure 14 shows all the open spaces accessible by Westchester residents. Table 9.2 outlines all the open space opportunities in the Village and the amenities offered by each.

Excluding the country club, the total acreage of public open space in the Village allows for 16 acres per 1,000 people. This number is less than the regional average of 28 acres per 1,000 people. It is, however, greater than the standard of 10 acres of open space for 1,000 residents established by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and recommended in GO TO 2040. Hence, according to NRPA, Westchester surpasses their standard for open space availability for residents.

### Public Parks

The Westchester Park District manages 16% (84.2 acres) of the total open space in the Village. Eight park spaces (75.2 acres) are actual Park District properties. The remaining two park spaces (9 acres) are located on School District properties and are leased by the Park District as open space opportunities for residents.

### Forest Preserve District of Cook County

Westchester residents have access to 126 acres of Forest Preserve, which is located to the south and east of the Village. Access to the forest preserve is an important asset for the community. Residents can enter the preserve just south of the Village by crossing 31st Street and enjoy the natural space of the Salt Creek Woods, including the creek itself and the greenway trail along the creek, which connects to the broader regional greenway network. Further along the creek is Westchester Woods, which is also accessible by crossing the village boundary at Cermak Road on the east side of the Village. The presence of the Cook County Forest Preserve adjacent to the community provides a rich opportunity for experiencing a natural environment without the village creating and maintaining public park space.

### Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve

Approximately 80 acres of land comprise the Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve, which is situated at Wolf Road and 31st Street. This area consists of several parcels owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. The Save the Prairie Society manages these lands. These entities have collaborated in an effort to preserve the prairie which is black soil, a rarity in northeastern Illinois.

### Other Green Space

The western border of the village is made up of two golf courses—Chicago Highlands Club and Meadowlark Golf Course. The former is located in the Village, while the latter is situated outside the Village. There are several cemeteries that surround the Village including Our Lady of Sorrows, Queen of Heaven, Oak Ridge/Glen Oak, and Immanuel Lutheran. There are other nearby cemeteries—Mount Carmel and Oak Hill. All cemeteries are located in unincorporated Cook County.

## Agriculture and Food

There are no community gardens in the Village of Westchester. Residents, however, do attend a farmers market organized by The Farm between July and October. The Farm is a family-owned farm that grows fruits and vegetables in Kendall County. The Farm also holds farmers markets throughout Cook County.

## Energy & Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Westchester's energy and emissions profile was analyzed as part of the Municipal Energy Profile Project, spearheaded by the Center for Neighborhood Technology, for the seven-county Chicago Metropolitan Area. This information can be used to provide baseline metrics as well as indicators of where to target strategies to reduce energy use and emissions.

Electricity consumption per household in Westchester is higher than the rest of Cook County. Table 9.3 shows that, on average, Westchester households use 1,378 kWh more than other areas in the county. This greater use of electricity in the Village could be attributed to the size of homes; the behavior of occupants; the efficiency and use of air conditioning; and the efficiency of lighting, appliances, and other systems.

Natural gas is commonly used to heat homes and is a source for clothes dryers and cooking. On average, Westchester households use more natural gas (126 Therms) than the county. Factors affecting Westchester's natural gas usage include building size, age and building envelope efficiency; the efficiency of the furnace, boiler, and water heater; occupant behavior; and building operations and maintenance. As homes and buildings become more efficient, residential and commercial/industrial sectors are decreasing their use of natural gas.

## Energy Consumption

**Table 9.3 Electricity (kWh and Natural Gas Consumption (Therms), 2007**

	Westchester	Cook County
Total electricity consumption	132,353,956	50,580,468,305
C&I electricity consumption	72,761,331	35,664,503,040
Residential electricity consumption	59,592,626	14,915,965,265
Residential electricity consumption per household	9,070 kWh	7,692 kWh
Annual electricity cost per household	\$976	\$828
Total natural gas consumption	9,936,860	3,634,277,500
C&I natural gas consumption	1,683,887	1,442,823,862
Residential natural gas consumption	8,252,973	2,191,453,638
Residential natural gas consumption per household*	1,256 Therms	1,130 Therms
Annual natural gas cost per household	\$1,115	\$1,274

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology Municipal Energy Profile Project, 2007

\*Based on number of households in 2007: Westchester - 6,570; Cook County -1,939,190

## Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions are related to energy—electricity and natural gas. However, emissions from electricity consumption are different than those from natural gas emissions. This is because of the differences in the production of energy from different sources. Included in the greenhouse gas emissions profile are the leading contributors to emissions—energy and transportation. The profile also provides estimates for solid waste, waste water and product use. Table 9.4 shows the estimates for emissions in the Village.

**Table 9.4 Westchester Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector, 2007**

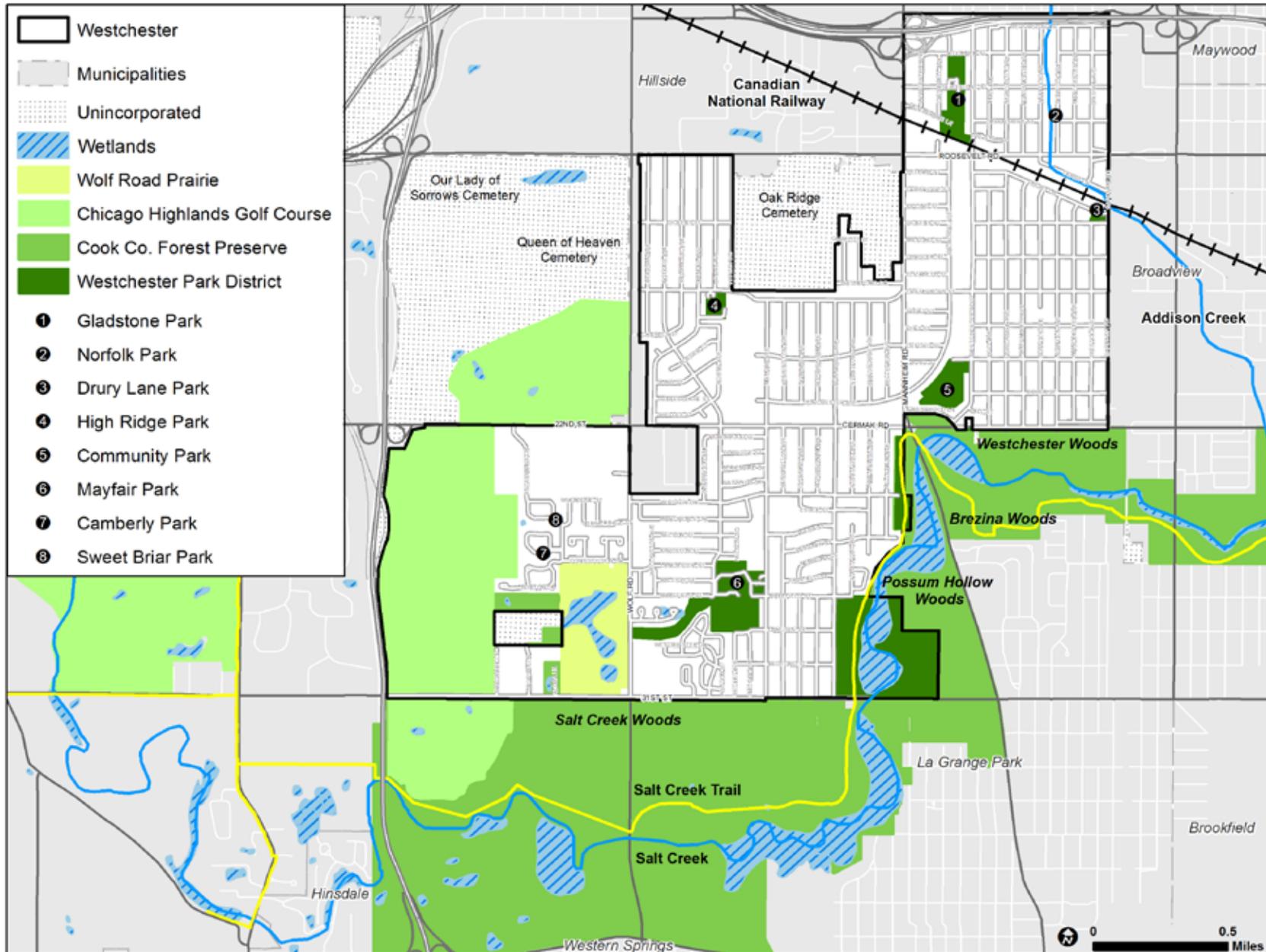
Sector	Emissions (MMT CO <sub>2</sub> e*)
Electricity	0.093
Natural gas	0.053
Transportation	0.059
Solid Waste	0.011
Waste Water	0.002
Product Use	0.008
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.226</b>
Emissions per capita	14.34 (MT CO <sub>2</sub> e)

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology Municipal Energy Profile Project, 2007

Like most communities, stationary sources of emissions, such as electricity and natural gas consumption, accounted for 65% of emissions in the Village in 2007. Mobile sources of emissions, which are represented by the transportation sector, made up 26% of total emissions. Together energy and transportation sectors contributed to 91% of the emissions in Westchester. The emissions from transportation were calculated based on the amount of annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by Westchester residents (14,211 miles per household in 2007). The amount of driving is influenced by access to jobs, proximity of businesses and amenities, availability of public transit and general walkability of the Village. Demographic factors such as income, household size and workers per household also impact VMT.

According to Westchester's Energy and Emissions Profile, the Village's total emissions per capita of 14.34 metric tons are slightly less than Cook County's 2007 emissions per capita rate of 14.86 metric tons per person. The Village's relatively low emission rate may be at least partially explained by the smaller volume of industrial spaces located in Westchester, compared with many other municipalities in the County. Commercial and industrial properties tend to have a higher rate of energy consumption than the residential properties.

Figure 14. Parks and Open Space



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

**Table 9.2 Open Space and Natural Resource Sites, Acreage, Management and Amenities**

Name	Acres	Managed by	Amenities
Chicago Highlands Golf Club	274.8	The Chicago Highlands Club, LLC	Family-oriented country club that features an 18-hole golf course; personal best practice facility; full-service clubhouse; swimming pool; tennis and paddle tennis courts; and ice skating
Bemis Woods (North and South), Brezina Woods, La Grange Park Woods, Possum Hollow Woods, Salt Creek Woods, Westchester Woods	103.6	Forest Preserve District of Cook County	Natural resource and public open space; regional trail connection to Salt Creek Trail
Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve	80	Illinois Nature Preserve Commission	Natural resource
Mayfair Park	37	Westchester Park District	2 playgrounds; 1 soccer field; 9-hole disc golf course; 2 lighted ball fields; 20,000 square foot recreation facility; fitness center; indoor playground; banquet rooms
Gladstone Park	14	Westchester Park District	2 ball fields; outdoor handicapped accessible playground; seasonal soccer field; lighted tennis court/batting cage
Community Park	13	Westchester Park District	Handicapped accessible playground; 2 baseball fields; seasonal soccer field; 20,000 square foot Community Center; gymnasium; preschool; daycare, 50-meter outdoor swimming pool; 4 lighted tennis courts
Primary School Athletic Fields	5	Westchester Park District (leased from School District 92 1/2)	2 ball fields; seasonal football field
High Ridge Park	4.5	Westchester Park District	2 ball fields; handicapped accessible playground; skate park; inline hockey rink
Middle School Athletic Fields	4	Westchester Park District (leased from School District 92 1/2)	2 ball fields
Norfolk Park	3	Westchester Park District	Handicapped accessible playground
Camberly Park	2	Westchester Park District	Landscaped area with gazebo
Drury Lane Park	1.4	Westchester Park District	Handicapped accessible playground; 2 lighted tennis courts
Sweet Briar Park	0.25	Westchester Park District	Handicapped accessible playground
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>542.6</b>		

Source GIS CMAP land use data

\*The total acreage of open space listed above is greater than the open space calculation listed in Section Six: Land Use. The calculation listed above accounts for school parks and all Forest Preserve areas that are actually open space areas and not "Residential" as classified by CMAP data.



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# Section 10

## Community Facilities and Services

This section describes the existing community services and facilities for the Westchester community. The current system of services is provided by a number of village departments, non-profit organizations, regional organizations, and private entities.

### Key Findings

- **A number of community services and facilities exist in the community.** Westchester has a number of services and facilities that are maintained by a variety of entities.
- **Public and private educational facilities are dispersed throughout the community.** Westchester residents have access to neighborhood schools within walking distance. However, the lack of a public high school in the Village is a concern for many residents.
- **The Village is rich in a variety of religious institutions.** A number of the religious institutions also offer education services that supplement the public education system.

Figure 15. Community Facilities



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2013

## Community Facilities

A number of community facilities serve the residents of Westchester, as shown in Figure 15. Community services are provided by governmental agencies such as the Village of Westchester and others. The following community service facilities are located in Westchester:

- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Westchester Chamber of Commerce
- Westchester Park District
- Westchester Public Library
- Westchester School District 92 1/2
- Westchester Village Hall
- U. S. Post Office

## Educational Institutions

Westchester School District 92 1/2 provides instruction in elementary school education, from pre-kindergarten to grade eight across three schools—Westchester Primary School, Westchester Intermediate School and Westchester Middle school. The Westchester Park District offers pre-school instruction through their Smart Start Early Childhood Education Center. There are fees associated with this program. There are also two private elementary schools in the Village, including Divine Providence and Divine Infant Jesus Catholic schools.

There is no public high school in the Village. Proviso Township High School District 209 serves public high school residents. Proviso West High School of Hillside provides educational instruction to these students, and serves seven villages: Bellwood, Berkeley, Broadview, Hillside, Northlake, Stone Park, and Westchester. High school residents interested in attaining a public education also have the option of applying to Proviso Math & Science Academy, located in Forest Park, which has selective enrollment and accepts students from ten feeder communities. Westchester offers private education options for high school residents at St. Joseph High School.

In Westchester, there is one private school, MacNeal School, that provides special education for residents ranging from kindergarten to high school. Students from School District 92 1/2 and other School Districts must be referred to attend MacNeal.

Table 10.1 below lists some educational indicators for the schools located in Westchester. Overall, the student-teacher ratio in Westchester is largely on par with the State of Illinois average of 15-19 students per teacher.

**Table 10.1 Public and Private Enrollment in Westchester Schools, 2009-2010**

	School	Grades	Enrolled Students	Student-Teacher Ratio
Public	Westchester Primary School	Pre-K - 2nd Grade	431	17.4
	Westchester Intermediate School	3 - 5	363	14.07
	Westchester Middle School	6 - 8	406	13.10
	Proviso West High School*	9 - 12	2447	17.5
Private	Alpha Montessori School	K - 12	4	1.1
	Divine Infant Jesus School	Pre-K - 8th Grade	179	11.6
	Divine Providence	Pre-K - 8th Grade	184	14.8
	St. Joseph High School	9 - 12	741	19.5
	MacNeal School	K - 12	55	5

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences

\* Proviso West High School, located in Hillside, serves as the public high school for Westchester high school residents. A portion of Proviso West High School students are residents of Westchester.

## Recreation Facilities

As described in Section Nine: Natural Environment, the Westchester Park District maintains ten park areas, two of which are leased from School District 92 1/2. In addition to these traditional park spaces comprised of various types of fields and playgrounds, the Park District offers a number of recreation facilities outlined in Table 9.2.

Westchester Community Park has a 20,000 square foot Community Center that houses a 7,000 square foot gymnasium with locker room facilities, and a daycare facility, where Smart Start preschool classes (mentioned above) are held. This park also features a community swimming pool with a diving board and water play structures including a slide. The pool is open from June to Labor Day, and daily admission or season passes are available for access. The Park District also maintains the Mayfair Fitness Center and Banquet Facility at Mayfair Park. In addition to various fitness equipment, the Fitness Center staffs certified personal trainers. Monthly and annual memberships are available for the Mayfair Fitness Center. The Banquet Facilities contains three rooms that are available for rental as well as a staffed playroom for children under the age of 6 at an additional cost.

In addition to park facilities, Westchester Park District also organizes events throughout the year including the Baseball Parade. The Baseball Parade takes place as the beginning of the baseball season, and all teams participate. In addition to these events, the Westchester Park District continues to run the Westchester Girls' Softball League which was first organized in 1971.

## Library

The Westchester Public Library is located at 10700 Canterbury Street in a residential area east of central portion of the Village. The library was established in 1958 in a different location. In addition to library services, the Library has a website that features an online catalog, free passes to museums and cultural institutions, and links to various community services available to kids, teens, seniors and businesses.

## Religious Institutions

There are several religious institutions located in Westchester, including Westchester Community Church, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Divine Infant Catholic Church, Westchester Bible Church, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Divine Providence Catholic Church, Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church, Amazing Grace Community Church, Grace Lutheran Church, Faith Lutheran Church, and Westchester Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

## Health Care Facilities

Although there is no hospital in Westchester, there are outpatient centers and medical clinics. Children Memorial Hospital has an outpatient center in Westchester - the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Prairie Medical Center of Westchester, affiliated with the Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush, is located on Wolf Road. Other medical clinics and offices are located along Wolf Road and Enterprise Drive as well as in the Westbrook Corporate Center towers. Residents can also access health services at Gottlieb Memorial in Melrose Park, Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital in La Grange, Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood, Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare in Elmhurst, MacNeal Hospital in Berwyn, Westlake Hospital in Melrose Park, and Adventist Hinsdale Hospital in Hinsdale.

# Community Services

## Village Services

The Village of Westchester includes five departments – Administration/Finance, Building, Fire, Police and Public Works. These departments perform a number of services for the Village’s residents, including providing water and sewer, garbage and recycling pick-up, street maintenance, snow removal, local park maintenance, and business and health inspections. The fire department operates out of two stations, one of which is at the Village Hall, and the other one is located on the southwest side of Westchester. The Village Hall is also home to village offices and the Police Department. In addition to providing various services to Westchester residents, the Village organizes the July Fourth Parade.

### Beautification

The Village has taken on beautification efforts, such as enhancing the look of Village Hall by installing brick pavers, decorative street lights and a new sign. These beautification efforts have expanded out to the greater community at the northeast corner of Mannheim and Cermak roads, where a pocket park has been created with stone trails and flowers. The Village has also created the Garden Club, which is responsible for the median plantings along Westchester Boulevard.

### Environmental Programs

The Village also offers a number of programs related to the environment including an electronics recycling program (E-waste Recycling Program), pharmaceutical collection (Prescription Drug Take-Back Program), the Community Shredding Program, a paint recycling event, rain barrel program, leaf bags and a solar compactor.

### Governmental Transparency

Over the past few years, the Village of Westchester has enhanced communication and transparency between the Village and residents. The Village has implemented the following means to provide information to residents: cable access channel, website, newsletters that are published monthly, Nixle which offers advisories, alerts, and community events information; and YouTube which has allowed the posting of Village Board meetings.

### Infrastructure Improvements

The Public Works Department has taken on projects to improve the community’s infrastructure such as cleaning and televising all the sanitary sewer lines; lined over three miles of sanitary sewer lines; painted the inside of the water tower; reconstructed and repaved over 30 roadways; replaced one mile of water mains; and installed new sidewalks where needed. The Village does not have a Capital Improvement Plan, which is much needed.

### Business Services

The Westchester Chamber of Commerce (WCC) is the local chamber of commerce for the Village. In an effort to develop and support community-wide events and programs, the Chamber works to bridge the gap between the business community, the political community, community organizations and area residents. Members of the Chamber enjoy networking events; have access to the business reference guide and business referrals. The Chamber holds several events, including monthly events, a golf outing, trip to Springfield, a Celebrate Westchester dinner, and a Christmas luncheon and the Veterans Day Run. The Chamber also organizes the The Fest, which takes place in July. At The Fest, community residents can enjoy dozens of food vendors and live entertainment.

### Non-Governmental Resources

Westchester is home to several non-profit and community groups. The Westchester Community Image Council (WCIC), created in 2006, has taken on the charge to beautify the Westchester community by giving the median at Mannheim and Cermak a makeover; this area is no longer filled with weeds but with a flower garden. The group has also assisted the Westchester Library and Post Office with their landscaping. The Garden Club has planted 75 median gardens along Westchester Boulevard. Since its inception, WCIC has received the Governor’s Home Town Award (2007) and the Westchester Chamber of Commerce’s Image Award (2007). The following groups are also located in Westchester:

- Westchester Garden Club
- Westchester Lions Club
- Franzosenbusch Prairie House



# Section 11

## Image and Identity

This section details the physical characteristics and distinguishing elements of the Village of Westchester. A review is provided for the main categories of land use in Westchester which are the residential areas, the commercial areas, as well as some discussion regarding the streetscaping along the commercial corridors.

### Key Findings

- **Westchester has an attractive and well-maintained base of single-family homes.** The character and quality of Westchester’s residential base, old and new, is viewed as a strong asset by Village residents.
- **Newer residential development in Westchester stands in contrast to older development.** Portions of Westchester closer to adjacent Oak Brook tend to have a newer built environment much more like its neighbor, which, while appealing, is in contrast with much of the rest of Westchester.
- **The condition and appearance of commercial areas is uneven.** The Village’s commercial areas are generally attractive, if dated. Some of the older commercial areas are in need of façade or parking area improvements.
- **There is a general lack of consistent streetscaping in the Village.** This lack of consistent streetscaping is likely due to the State’s ownership of Roosevelt and Mannheim roads, and the jurisdiction of half of many of the boundary arterial streets (Wolf Road, 31st Street) falling under adjacent municipality jurisdiction.
- **The lack of a town center, however defined, is a common concern among residents.** Many Village residents have expressed a desire to “complete” Westchester with a town center that would serve as a community identifier and gathering spot.

## Residential Areas

Westchester's residential areas are overwhelmingly single-family in character, comprising approximately 90 percent of the residential base. The residential areas of the community are attractive and well maintained. The older homes are typically 1.5 story detached homes on small lots. Most of the older homes have detached garages in the rear yards that are either accessed via alleyways or driveways. Within the last decade, many homes constructed additions primarily resulting in two-story homes.

Over the last couple of decades, Westchester's most recent residential developments sprouted in the southwest quadrant of the community. Several new developments, like Westchester Prairie, Westchester Pointe, Ashley Woods and Avondale, have resulted in larger homes on larger lots that establish a character that may be more consistent with Oak Brook (just to the west) than the bulk of Westchester.

Multifamily developments in Westchester are primarily located along Mannheim and Cermak roads. Multifamily dwellings generally consist of 2-4 unit buildings that are often owner-occupied, or structures that have recently been converted to condominiums.



## Commercial Areas

The condition and appearance of the commercial areas is wide-ranging. Primarily the newer developments are attractive, consisting of high quality architecture and design, while the older commercial properties, especially many of the strip centers and heavily-trafficked commercial corridors, are in need of improved maintenance.

Adding to the inconsistent image of the commercial areas is the variety of business signage. Signs vary greatly in terms of size, type, and height.

### Streetscaping

Westchester's streetscape elements – streetlights, signage, street furniture, landscaping and the like – are generally sound in appearance but often lack branding or unifying elements. This is consistent with comments generated by participants at various public meetings, who mentioned that drivers often pass through their community without any knowledge of where they actually were.

### Community Identity

A common concern raised throughout the early part of the planning process was the lack of a central place in Westchester. While some residents might bring this up while referring to limited retail/commercial selections within the Village or others as a location for civic institutions, generally all agree that Westchester is in need of a center that can be a source of pride for the community. Today, no such place exists within the Village.





# Section 12

## Looking Forward

The Village of Westchester possesses an ideal location as a western suburb of Chicago. It is surrounded by an excellent road system, and its close proximity to the Forest Preserve District lends access to trails, creeks, and other recreation opportunities. Within the Village, the housing stock consists of a combination of solid, brick homes and more contemporary housing developments. There are also a number of parks for residents to enjoy. Based on the data and information gathered for this Existing Conditions Report through discussions with Village residents, officials and staff, this Comprehensive Plan serves an opportunity to create an even better Westchester. The priority issues to be addressed by this comprehensive plan are as follows:

- Establish a sense of place in the Village so that passers-by can immediately identify that they are in Westchester.
- Coordinate streetscaping and beautification projects along commercial corridors and throughout the Village.
- Create a village center that would contain mixed-used development.
- Develop policies and recommendations that support aging in place.
- Create a more pedestrian-friendly environment throughout the Village.
- Preserve existing open space and transform the Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve into a greater asset for the Village.
- Improve infrastructure by installing additional streetlights and repaving streets.
- Diversify housing stock to include more multi-family housing options.



# Appendix

**Table A.1 Common Issues Expressed Across Stakeholder Groups in Westchester**

Common Issues	Steering Committee	Senior Citizens	General Public	Stakeholder Interviews	Middle School Students
Business attraction / revitalize commercial corridors	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Flood control		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Power outages		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		
Preserve open space		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Public services	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>			
Quality of education at public high school	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Restaurants and Shopping	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Streets and streetscaping (trees, streets, sidewalks)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Transportation (public transit, traffic control, pedestrian friendly)		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Upkeep of residential properties		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

**Table A.2 Common Community Strengths Expressed Across Stakeholder Groups in Westchester**

Common Strengths	Steering Committee	Senior Citizens	General Public	Stakeholder Interviews	Middle School Students
Location in the region	<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Neighborhood friendly, family-oriented, and tight-knit community character	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Parks and open space (including Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve)		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Public amenities	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		
Quality housing stock	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		
Religious institutions		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Schools (public and private)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Village services	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	

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## Acronyms

**AADT** – Average annual daily traffic

**CMAP** – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**GIS** – Geographic Information System

**HUD** – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**IDNR** – Illinois Department of Natural Resources

**IDOT** – Illinois Department of Transportation

**LTA** – Local Technical Assistance Program

**NRPA** – National Recreation and Parks Association

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the region's official comprehensive planning organization. Its GO TO 2040 planning campaign is helping the region's seven counties and 284 communities to implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality of life issues. See [www.cmap.illinois.gov](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov) for more information.



Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning

233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60606

312 454 0400  
info@cmap.illinois.gov

www.cmap.illinois.gov

