

To better understand the updating of the Official Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Itasca, there should be an understanding of what a Comprehensive Plan is, what it includes and what it is to accomplish, as depicted in Chapter 24 of the Illinois Revised Statutes.

"A comprehensive plan is a plan for the Village of Itasca including graphic and written proposals indicating the general locations recommended for the streets, parks, schools, public buildings, land use areas, and all physical developments of the Village, including any unit or part of such plan separately adopted and any amendment to such plan and parts thereof, recommended by the Village Plan Commission and adopted by the Village Board of Trustees."⁵

There is no better way to evaluate a community than to obtain factual data from the physical factor report(s) which is a compilation of information collected, reviewed and analyzed as part of the planning process. The analysis of the Village will begin with 1974, and the physical factor data prepared for the second Comprehensive Plan will be used. Also, the physical factor data collected for the 1985 update of the Comprehensive Plan will be evaluated.

The conditions to be addressed are any changes in the existing land use, community facilities and environmental characteristics. Any problems and/or opportunities for overall development in the Village also are included as local conditions.

The conditions in the Village of Itasca, in brief, include the existing land use depicting residential, business and commercial, industrial, office, research and development facilities, schools, fire and police, parks, forest preserves, rights-of-way, (streets, highways and railroads, etc.), agriculture, and how this has changed and increased since the original Comprehensive Plan. Also, the environmental characteristics include flood areas, wetlands, etc., as well as possible problems and opportunities for development within the corporate area.

The patterns, trends, and decisions which emerge at the metropolitan level in regard to such issues as transportation, land use, the economy, and population cannot be isolated from Itasca's daily functions. Planning for Itasca should not overlook such regional interrelationships and consider them accordingly in the Comprehensive Plan for the Village.

When the preparation of the Plan started in 1974, the estimated population of the Village was 5,400. In 1976, the population had grown to an estimated population of 6,340. The average growth during this period was estimated at 256 people per year.

⁵Itasca Zoning Ordinance, amended February, 1990, Section 3.02.

During that time the principal area of residential development was located between Walters Lane on the north, the corporate limit line on the south, Prospect Avenue on the east, and I-290 on the west. There were subdivisions in the Village that were platted but not developed, such as between Theodore Lane on the north, Bryn Mawr Avenue on the south, the corporate limit line on the west, and Elm Street on the east. In 1976, the residential area developed amounted to over 466 acres as single family and 46 acres of multiple family, or a total of 512 acres of residential land use. This amounted to a combined residential use of 18.5 percent of the total corporate area, or 27.9 percent of the total developed area.

The manufacturing area between I-290 on the east, Rohlwing Road on the west, Elgin-O'Hare proposed expressway on the north, and the Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul and Pacific Railroad on the south was less than fifty (50) percent developed.

The manufacturing area along Industrial Drive was predominantly vacant.

The area that is known as the Regional Office Center District (ROC) located between the proposed Elgin-O'Hare Freeway on the south, the corporate line on the north (Devon Avenue), I-290 on the west and the then corporate line on the east was vacant. This planned area consisted of 275 acres with a future build out of 25 buildings. The first phase started to develop in 1979. The first project included the construction of the hotel, a connector building and the first office building. The first phase of the development also included a parking deck.

The area between Granville Avenue on the north, Bryn Mawr Avenue extended on the south, Arlington Heights Road on the west, and Prospect Avenue on the east was vacant.

The area between Prospect Avenue on the west, corporate limit lines on the north, the east and the south was undeveloped.

In 1976, the total developed area⁶ of the Village amounted to 1,835.1 acres while the total area included 2,775.0 acres. Thus, over 939 acres was used for agriculture.

The realistic way to evaluate a community to determine change is by land use and, particularly, when the Village has had four (4) existing land use evaluations; namely, in 1974, 1985, 1990 with an update in June, 1992.

Beginning with June, 1992 and each year thereafter, new land uses or changes in existing land use should be recorded on a print of the Existing Land Use Map and evaluated. This map alone has many uses such as, but not limited to:

⁶Total area translates to entire corporate area.

- The Village Board of Trustees
- The Village Plan Commission
- The Zoning Board of Appeals
- The Building Department
- School Districts
- Park Districts
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- U.S. Postal Authority
- Others:
 - Sales management companies
 - Highway Departments

Between 1976 and 1985 there were very few changes in the corporate boundaries of the Village of Itasca. Other than several single-lot annexations and minor statutory boundary changes, the principal additions of land have occurred on Nordic Road adjacent to the Nordic Hills Country Club and on Thorndale Road east of I-290.

The annexations and boundary changes have added little acreage to the Village since 1976. The total land area in 1985 was 2,744 acres compared to 2,774 acres in 1976. The apparent drop in total acreage is due to refinements and updating of the base map which was used to calculate the 1985 acreage numbers, not because of a decline in the size of the Village.

The total developed area⁷ in the Village had increased 22 percent by 1985, adding 402 acres, while the vacant/agricultural land area decreased by 46 percent, losing 432 acres.

The Village in 1985 was 82 percent developed compared to 66 percent in 1976. There were 2,236 acres developed in 1985 as compared to 1,834 acres in 1976.

In 1976, the six largest land use categories, with 90 percent of the total acreage, were agricultural/vacant land, rights-of-way, single-family residential, open space, industrial uses, and transportation, communication, and utilities.

In 1985, these categories were still the largest, but the order changed. The largest land use category was single-family residential followed by agricultural/vacant land, rights-of-way, industrial land, open space, and transportation, communications and utilities.

In 1990, these categories remained the largest but the order had again changed. The largest is single-family residential followed by industrial land, rights-of-way, open space

⁷The total developed area includes only the area within the corporate area that is physically developed.

and transportation, communication, and utilities (TCU). Vacant land decreased from 18.5 percent in 1985 to 17.02 percent in 1990.

Nearly all the residential land in Itasca is contained within a one square mile area bounded by Thorndale Avenue on the north, George Street on the south, Lombard Road/Willow Street on the west and Prospect Avenue to the east. Newer residential uses are west of Willow Street along I-290 and north of Bryn Mawr Avenue toward Thorndale Avenue.

Virtually every part of Itasca west of I-290, north of Thorndale Avenue, and east of Prospect Avenue in 1985 was non-residential. Everything within those borders, with the exception of the town center business uses along Irving Park Road, is residential, related to residential (schools, open space), or vacant. In the unincorporated area, however, there is a substantial amount of single family residential development west of Rohlwing Road. There is also multiple family development on Irving Park Road in Itasca west of Baker Drive and on Norwood Avenue west of Hilltop Drive.

The multiple family uses decreased by eight acres from 1975 to 1985. This apparent decrease was due to the reclassification in 1985 of two parcels of land which are part of the apartment complex at Norwood Avenue and Hilltop Drive from multiple family to vacant. This property, which fronts on a short cul-de-sac in Medinah, is used as a buffer between the single and multiple family developments.

Excluding the above two parcels from consideration, there was an increase in multiple family land use between 1975 and 1985. The block between Rush and Cherry Streets north of Irving Park Road has been developed to complete the multiple family development that existed in 1976. New multiple family development has occurred and is occurring on the north side of Walters Lane west of Arlington Heights Road.

Two-family residential uses were included in the multiple family category in 1976. In 1985, two-family residential uses were separated from the multiple family category because two-family residential uses are not considered to be multiple family.

Between 1985 and 1990 the corporate area of the Village changed along the north corporate area and the east and west area along Rohlwing Road. In addition, a few subdivided lots were annexed in the Oak Street, George Street area and in the general area along Thorndale Avenue west of Rohlwing Road.

The area that is today known as the AMLI Realty Spring Lake Business Park, includes the area southerly from Irving Park Road to the corporate limit line on the south and from Rohlwing Road (Ill. 53) on the west to I-290 on the east which was predominantly vacant. The principal use in this area at that time was the Holiday Inn hotel located northeast of the subject property. Since the annexation (1987) of the Business Park area which includes additional area already included in the corporate area, the Office Research District is developing using the Planned Development process.

In 1990, the area in Itasca commonly known as "Hamilton Lakes" (ROC Zoned District) was renamed "The Chancellory" and will continue to be a prestigious place to work in the Village of Itasca.

Since the 1985 land use study was completed, other areas are being developed as large quality office research areas such as Spring Lake Business Park and Hamilton Lakes East which have been annexed into the Village.

In the 1976 and the 1985 land use study, all two-family residential uses were included with multiple-family uses. It is particularly important if a community is implementing a zoning ordinance that two-family uses be separated from multiple-family uses. By zoning definition, two-family uses are not multiple-family uses. Three (3) dwelling units or more are classified as multiple-family.

The total developed area in the Village in 1990 amounted to 83 percent with over 17 percent to be used for future development. This compares to 66.1 percent in 1976 or an increase of 17.02 percent. It took fourteen (14) years for the Village to develop as it is today.

There were 1,834 acres totally developed in 1976 within the corporate area as compared to 2,236 acres in 1985 to 2,462 acres in 1990 now fourteen (14) years later.

The existing land uses in the unincorporated area were updated during the 1990 existing land use survey but they were not measured. It is evident from the new existing land use map that the vacant land is continuing to disappear. Some of this land as previously mentioned has been annexed to the Village of Itasca.

Single-family residential land uses increased by 19 acres since 1990 or over eight (8) percent in the last five (5) years. Single-family residential land uses have increased 101 acres or over 12 percent between 1976 and 1990. A new single-family residential area has developed since 1985 east of Arlington Heights Road and north of Bryn Mawr Avenue extended.

A new mixed single-family residential area is being developed west of Rohlwing Road, between Shelley Drive on the south and Woodview Drive on the north. This development will include 60 single-family homes (including one existing single family) and 36 townhomes in three (3) and four (4) unit buildings.

The multiple-family uses decreased between 1976 and 1990. A new multiple-family development located north of Irving Park Road and west of Rush Street will include 36 townhouse dwelling units. The general area along both sides of Theodore Lane between Walters Lane on the north and the north corporate limit between Walnut Street on the west and Cherry Street on the east is being developed as multiple-family. This area was started several years ago and the area now is being built out.

Two-family residential uses were included in the multiple-family category in 1976 and 1985. In the 1990 land use survey the known two-family uses were separated and now such uses can easily be detected on key existing land use maps. Two-family uses are now identified within the corporate area and most of these uses are conversions of older single-family units.

The amount of land devoted to commercial uses in the Village has increased from 85 acres in 1985 to 105 acres in 1990. Over 14 acres for the former Stouffer Hotel area in the ROC District was removed from a commercial classification and included in the office research area for 1990. There has been a total increase of over 34 acres of commercial between 1985 and 1990.

Industrial land use increased from 1976 to 1990 by 36 percent. Previously, the industrial uses were identified as manufacturing and non-manufacturing uses. It is difficult to continue this breakdown because of changes of land use; e.g., a building in 1985 used for non-manufacturing may now be used for manufacturing. Therefore, all industrial land uses are now considered as manufacturing, warehouse and office uses within industrial area as one single category. Industrial uses are no longer separated.

Between 1985 and 1990 the industrial land uses increased 118 acres or 51 percent. Totally, between 1976 and 1990, the industrial land use increased over thirty-six (36) percent. Such a large industrial area should mean a substantial Village tax base.

The two industrial areas in the Village are substantially built out. A new area being developed as industrial is in the Thorndale corridor between Rohlwing Road on the east and the corporate limit line on the west.

Office, research and development land uses had the largest rate of development between 1976 and 1985 amounting to 1,062.5 percent.

In 1985, another new area commenced development for office-research located east of Rohlwing Road and south of Irving Park Road. Part of this was annexed into Itasca. The two (2) areas increased by 92 acres between 1985 and 1990. Between 1976 and 1990, the office, research and development type of land use increased over 10 percent. The two (2) areas within the next few years will undoubtedly be built out. Between the industrial land uses, and the office research land uses, the Village tax base should increase substantially.

TOWN CENTER

The Town Center area as delineated in 1976 is not a Town Center in the true concept.

The core of the Town Center area bounded by Center Street on the north, Milwaukee Railroad on the south, Elm Street on the east, and Maple Street on the west includes the true "downtown" or Town Center Core Area.

In ascertaining the 1990 existing land use study, it was considered to map this area because of the uses above the first floor and the potential parking problems.

There are not less than five (5) buildings in this supportive area which have uses above the first floor which include residential dwelling units and one (1) office use that existed at the time of the land use survey.

Part of the Town Center Core Area was changed by rezoning two (2) areas to allow the building of two-family residential units and townhouses.

At the time of the existing land use survey, it was apparent that there should be restriping on the streets to show off-street parking areas which allows for proper separation of parking stalls. To meet the Illinois Accessibility Code to provide handicapped parking will be a problem because of lack of existing off-street parking areas.

If the existing residential uses were converted to office uses, then parking would be scarce.

At the present time, a public bus service (Pace) provides a transportation connection with the Itasca Railroad Station with business areas in this area. An increase of this service may cause refinement of the traffic circulation within the Town Center Core area.

Now with sixteen (16) years of existing land uses accountable, which represents physical growth and development since 1976, it is now evident where the remaining vacant acres for future development are located and the areas that should be considered for annexation and future development.

Now that the Comprehensive Plan adopted in August, 1977 is being updated, it can be determined how the remaining vacant land will be developed. Also, include the unincorporated areas that are totally surrounded by the Village that should be annexed. Since the 1990 existing land use survey, there have been several single family and townhouse units built. New offices, warehouses, and a child care facility have been added to the building stock. A new building added to the Town Center includes offices on the first floor with apartments on the second floor.

ITASCA AS A PARTNER IN REGIONAL PLANNING

DU PAGE COUNTY

The Village of Itasca was included in a large planning area, namely, the DuPage County Regional Planning area which originated in 1970.

In 1988 or prior, Itasca was included in the northeast cluster planning study area of DuPage County. DuPage County has been updating the 1985 County Land Use Plan and

has divided the county into six cluster areas. Each cluster includes several corporate communities. At some point in time, it appears that each proposed cluster land use plan will be combined to form the updated 1985 County Land Use Plan Map.

The northeast cluster area includes some of the following communities:

- Addison
- Bensenville
- Bloomingdale
- Elk Grove Village (in part)
- Elmhurst
- Glendale Heights
- Glen Ellyn
- ITASCA
- Lombard
- Villa Park
- Wood Dale

The northeast cluster encompasses approximately 56 square miles of which Itasca occupies about 8.29 percent of the cluster area. The Village is the smallest corporate area, by population, within the sub-planning area.

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS PLANNING COMMISSION

In addition, the Village of Itasca is also part of a much larger regional planning area by being included in the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) area which includes the six collar counties excluding the City of Chicago.

The past and future planning in Itasca will influence the area surrounding the land use which could impact, etc., adjacent corporate areas.

On June 18, 1992, NIPC adopted what could become an historically important planning document. The new plan is titled "A Strategic Plan for Land Resource Management." The principles of this document should become a working guide for local, county and state officials.

PROBLEMS VERSUS OPPORTUNITIES FOR OVERALL DEVELOPMENT IN ITASCA

In the previous Comprehensive Plans, there appears to be a lack of addressing any problems and/or opportunities other than existing land use in developing the Village of Itasca.

What better way to ascertain any problems or opportunities for developing the Village than through the non-bias Plan Commission and others. A Plan Commission membership includes members representing various professional inputs and experiences gained as a resident. The Plan Commission is familiar with proposed developments as they come before this body and also with Village Codes and Ordinances.

Therefore, as a preliminary insight into development problems in Itasca, a letter was directed to each Plan Commissioner and others in order to better understand any problems. The following questions were pursued:

1. What are some of the problems for overall development in Itasca?
2. What are some opportunities for overall development in Itasca?

There was a seventy-three (73) percent response to the letter in addressing any problems or opportunities in the development of the Village.

Following is a listing of problems as extrapolated from the received letters:

1. STREETS

- a. Traffic congestion (daytime).
- b. Local residential streets are narrow.
- c. Some streets are used for short cuts.
- d. During rush hours, streets are overloaded.

2. PARKING

- a. Parking shortage is a major problem in the downtown area.
- b. Not enough parking space for new business development in vacant stores.
- c. Village of Itasca should not be responsible for providing parking for Elk Grove Village's users of the commuter trains.

3. POPULATION INCREASE AND PROBLEMS

- a. When population increases, it requires more municipal services, such as police, fire, public works, etc.
 - (1) Growth creates traffic.
 - (2) If the buildings are not maintained, then redevelopment becomes necessary.
 - (3) More noise and air pollution.
 - (4) Need for more collector streets.
 - (5) Inadequate shopping in the Town Center.

4. GENERAL COMMENTS

- a. Land for development not available without annexations.
- b. No incentives offered, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) programs, etc., to assist in upgrading the Town Center. (A TIF is a financing tool used to

rejuvenate ailing areas by setting aside revenue generated by assessment increases inside the delineated project boundary for improvement to only these areas.)

- c. The type of business located in the Town Center does not require too much parking.
- d. Strict interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance with regard to density, wetland protection and aesthetics.
- e. Stricter reviews of business design when reviewing site plans, etc.
- f. Consider blocking off certain streets to protect areas. (Terminate a street using a cul-de-sac.)
- g. Any available land seems to be used for business and not residential uses.
- h. Area is becoming congested and getting out of control.
- i. When is Irving Park Road going to be widened to relieve parking backups?
- j. Need a traffic light at Catalpa and Irving Park Road to keep traffic moving.
- k. Development should be linked by overall development plan.
- l. Plan Commission should make sure that the transitional and peripheral undeveloped areas are developed properly.
- m. Plan Commission should strive to allow development which is beneficial to Itasca and still allow the developer to have a marketable product.
- n. The redevelopment of the center of town needs to be planned. As individual parcels become available for development, the Plan Commission needs to keep the objectives of that plan in mind.
- o. The flow of traffic should be a concern of the Plan Commission since the property of the businesses in town depend on it to keep profitable. The Plan Commission should be aware of the rising problem of traffic in the Village.
- p. Additional parking area needed.
- q. Limited land area to develop single family housing.

- r. Some of the overall development is related to zoning. Variances requested are usually trying to "stretch" the zoning intent while allowing the property owners to achieve a "gain."
- s. Improve commercial areas to provide needs for residents so that purchases do not have to be made out of the community, thus losing revenue.

Comments to the second question were not as responsive as to the first question. Following are general comments as to the opportunities for overall development in the Village:

1. The Village of Itasca has a variety of opportunities for development including land available for new regional office center, office research, and residential development. Also available are some select sites for business and manufacturing development. In addition, the Village of Itasca has several business and manufacturing zoned properties which are unoccupied and readily adapted to new uses.

Those areas available for development were formerly relatively flat farm land. In general, they have good soil conditions for construction, many have public utilities in close proximity and are located close to major expressways including I-290, I-355, and the west leg of the Elgin-O'Hare Expressway. Metra provides commuter rail service with a train station located almost in the center of the Village.

2. Good planning can make a "town" self sustaining.
3. In a self-sustaining community, you can live, shop and work.
4. Real Estate tax base can be lower by having commercial and industrial areas. (These uses require less services including schools, parks, etc.)
5. Control the types of land use in a community if they are planned for.
6. Build condominiums and townhouses of good quality with reasonable prices to allow senior citizens to remain in Itasca.
7. Development of the land between Devon and Thorndale Avenue.
8. Possible annexations of various unincorporated areas along the corporate boundaries of Itasca.
9. Keep Itasca on the positive track which it has always followed.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Environmental characteristics are major concerns in the overall development of the Village. These are all the conditions, circumstances, and influences, surrounding and affecting any development in the Village.

The natural and environmental resources inventory (Chapter 4) included in the 1977 General Development Plan Report "Part One: Background Studies for Planning" covers an in-depth study of the subject matter. (See Appendix II.)

The purpose of the natural and environmental resources inventory as included in the above report was to provide the basic information necessary to understand and evaluate the natural and, in some instances, man-made features of the environment in the Itasca planning area in terms of the opportunities and constraints they place on urban development.

The natural and environmental inventory deals primarily with natural features of the earth, such as soil, water and air.

In the above report nine major environmental aspects of the planning area were inventoried: meteorology, geology, physiography, hydrology, vegetation, wildlife, noise levels, soils and aesthetics.

Reference to Chapter 4 (see Appendix II) of this report is encouraged because the basic data is invaluable in the formation of the comprehensive plan or a comprehensive amendment to a plan.

Also reviewed is recent information pertaining to the noise exposure areas generated by aviation activity at O'Hare International Airport.

Environmental characteristics will be addressed in a following section of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

There have been, and there appears that there will be, changes in the overall development in the community caused by any projected increase in activity from O'Hare International Airport.

Also the completion of the Wood Dale/Itasca Reservoir storm water project to curtail flooding along Salt Creek and possibly increase development. Areas that were restricted because of storm water problems may be relieved and returned to the development market.

SUMMARY

Analyzing the existing conditions in the Village of Itasca since 1977 clearly indicates a controlled growth and development which is consistent with the past and present planning concepts and standards in the adopted Comprehensive Plans.

Even though the Village lost population as recorded in the 1990 United States Official Census, the community has enjoyed quality development which is reflected in the tax base.

The Village should continue in this direction and strongly consider annexing unincorporated area(s) that is/are surrounded by the Village and/or adjacent land with boundary agreements being considered. Also, the Village should also continue updating physical conditions which have been taking place, such as infrastructure and public buildings, etc.

There has been a strong emphasis over the past few years on non-residential growth and development, such as industrial, office-research and regional office use. This continues to emphasize economic growth.

Some restraints on development will be environmental, such as floodplains, wetland areas, noise impacts from aircraft from O'Hare Airport, etc.

As the 1990 existing land use study indicated, there is vacant land available within the corporate area of the Village. Not all of the land may be buildable because of environmental concerns.

In developing the updated General Development Plan (map) included in the Comprehensive Plan, consideration was given to evaluate any vacant land that will not fill the long range needs of the Village as zoned. Such proposed land uses may better serve the residents in another location.

