

Village of Homewood

Downtown Master Plan



Prepared for:
Village of Homewood, Illinois
Prepared by:
The Lakota Group
Metro Transportation Group

March 2005

Village of Homewood

Downtown Master Plan

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ORDINANCE NO. M-1610

AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN
FOR THE VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD

WHEREAS, the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Homewood have determined that a Downtown Master Plan is necessary and appropriate in order to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the Village of Homewood and to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the President and Board of Trustees, have held public meetings from time to time over the past year to review the existing conditions of Downtown Homewood and to review and consider the proposed Downtown Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Village desires to sustain and enhance the Downtown Homewood area; and,

WHEREAS, the Village employed The Lakota Group, a professional consultant specializing in the review and modernization of downtown areas; and

WHEREAS, the President and Board of Trustees, Plan Commission, Zone Board of Appeals, and Appearance Committee have held public hearings in December, 2004 and January of 2005, with notice properly given, for the purpose of considering the adoption of the proposed Downtown Master Plan and have directed that revisions be made to the proposed Downtown Master Plan in response to those public hearings; and

WHEREAS, both The Lakota Group and Village staff now recommend the adoption of the new Downtown Master Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Homewood, Cook County, Illinois;

SECTION ONE:

That a Downtown Master Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A and made a part hereof, is hereby adopted.

SECTION TWO:

That the Director of Community Development is hereby authorized and directed to publish the Downtown Master Plan in book or pamphlet form, and that copies of such shall be

made available for public inspection as an official record of the Village and may be sold to the general public at such cost as may be established by the Village.

SECTION FIVE:

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect ten days after its passage, approval, and publication in book or pamphlet form.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Homewood, Illinois, on the 11th day of January, 2005.


Village President

ATTEST:



AYES: 5 NAYS: 0 ABSENCES: 1 ABSTENTIONS: 0

Village of Homewood

Downtown Master Plan

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Village of Homewood

Introduction

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Planning Mission

In 2004, the Village of Homewood engaged The Lakota Group and Metro Transportation Group to prepare a Master Plan for improvement and development of its Downtown. The Village's goal for the planning process was to evaluate the area's land-use and physical conditions and make recommendations for enhancing Downtown as a thriving, mixed-use district focused on transit-oriented development.

The Master Plan recommendations summarized in this report highlight a variety of short-term and long-term opportunities to:

- Sustain and enhance Downtown Homewood.
- Improve and augment the area's overall land-use mix.
- Attract new shopping and service business opportunities.
- Increase Downtown housing opportunities.
- Support and increase transit use.
- Improve the overall physical conditions of the area.
- Maintain an attractive pedestrian environment.
- Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation.



Planning Process

The Lakota Group, a team of city planners and landscape architects, along with Metro Transportation Group, transportation and parking consultants, were retained to facilitate the planning process with the Village and property owners and craft the Master Plan for Downtown.

The planning process focused on a comprehensive assessment of the area and generation of a range of development ideas and design concepts, including options for future mixed-use development. It resulted in a Master Plan that serves as a coordinated improvement and development guide for the Village, property owners, business owners, and developers. It highlights numerous opportunities to improve the area and maintain its status as one of the top downtowns in Chicagoland. The Downtown Planning process involved the following phases:

PHASE 1 – AREA ANALYSIS

The first phase of the study included a comprehensive assessment of site constraints and opportunities regarding land use, physical conditions, pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation, parking, open space, landscaping, and development opportunities. This phase started with a walking tour of Downtown with residents, business and property owners, Village Staff, and officials. It also included subsequent focus-group meetings with Downtown stakeholders and surveys of people who frequent Downtown as well as property/business owners. Input from the various stages of Phase 1 was used in the Community Visioning phase.

PHASE 2 – COMMUNITY VISIONING

During this phase various redevelopment concepts were generated with varying degrees of improvements, densities, and building massing. The concepts sought to improve the area by adding to its land-use mix, improving physical conditions, and defining optimal access and circulation patterns. Three-dimensional design concepts of vacant and underutilized sites, potential gateway locations, and signage were also prepared. The development and design concepts were presented at a community workshop for review and feedback.

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PHASE 3 – DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Based on the analysis and input from Phases 1 and 2, a Preliminary Master Plan was prepared that summarized the preferred development direction for Downtown. It was reviewed and refined with community leaders and residents at a second workshop.

The Final Master Plan was then prepared to reflect the short-term and long-term development objectives for Downtown. The Master Plan also addresses design guidelines, wayfinding/signage, and possible zoning changes.



The Downtown Master Plan includes development opportunities, design guidelines, and concepts for building massing, streetscape, and wayfinding/signage.

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

SECTION 2: AREA ANALYSIS

Area Overview

The Village of Homewood, which had a population of 19,543 in 2000, is located in the south suburbs of Chicago. Its Downtown Study Area consists of approximately 106 acres and includes portions of the Ridge Road, Dixie Highway, and 183rd Street commercial corridors. It also includes the Village Hall, Village Fire and Police Stations, Public Library, Amtrak and Metra train stations, Irwin Park, and a range of retail, restaurant, office, service and residential uses.

The Study Area is generally bounded by (see Figure 1: Study Area Boundary):

- **North:** Pine Road
- **South:** 183rd Street.
- **East:** East edge of retail/office uses along Dixie Highway and Ridge Road to Gladville Avenue.
- **West:** Ravisloe Country Club.



Downtown includes civic uses such as the Village Hall (left), Library, and Post Office.



Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

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Figure 1: Study Area Boundary

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

Land Use

The Downtown Study Area contains a wide range of land uses. Residential uses include both single and multi-family housing, and commercial uses include retail, restaurant, office, and service businesses. Parks and open space include the Veterans Memorial and Irwin and Independence Parks. Institutional uses include several civic and church facilities. The total Downtown land area is approximately 106 acres.

Open space and recreation opportunities exist within the parks and nearby Ravisloe Country Club. Irwin Park is a large community-level park. It also functions as a Downtown “green” or plaza, as it is used for numerous special events and festivals.

Commercial and service uses exist along Ridge Road, Dixie Highway, and 183rd Street, providing a variety of small-scale shopping and dining opportunities. Numerous dental, medical, and business offices operate there. Institutional uses include the Village Hall, Library, churches, and the Historic Society.

Table 1: Existing Land Use Summary

Land-Use Category	Included in Category	Acres	Percentage
Residential	Single-Family Multi-Family	20	19%
Park/Open Space	Irwin Park Independence Park Veterans Memorial Park Future Rail Platform & Park	6	5%
Commercial	Retail Restaurants Office/Service Mixed-Use	38	30%
Institutional	Village Hall Library Post Office Churches Historical Society	9	7%

Note: The above land uses total 73 acres. The remaining 33 acres include streets, parking lots, the Train Stations, and some light-industrial uses.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Overall, the majority of existing land uses complement each other and contribute to the vitality of Downtown. However, the following existing uses do not appear to be compatible or optimal uses within a transit- and pedestrian-oriented town center:

- Auto shop north of Library.
- Auto shop east of Train Stations.
- Industrial/service uses along Harwood and 183rd Street.

These businesses would be more suitable in an industrial zone or auto-oriented commercial corridor because of adjacent land uses and their locations at entries or gateways into Downtown. These properties need careful consideration for redevelopment.

Most residential uses near and within the Study Area appear to be compatible with their surroundings. However, some single-family and multi-family housing south of Hickory Road and in the center of Downtown has potential for redevelopment because of adjacent commercial land uses, the presence of denser multi-family housing, and deteriorating physical conditions.

A residential neighborhood exists northwest of the Study Area, west of the railroad tracks. This area is primarily single-family with the exception of a few multi-family buildings along Park Avenue. It also includes a dental office. It is isolated from Downtown by the barrier of the railroad tracks.

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Area Analysis

Zoning

The Downtown Study Area contains six zoning districts:

- **B-1** – Central Business District
- **R-1** – Single-Family Residence District
- **R-2** – Single-Family Residence District
- **R-3** – Townhouse/Transition District
- **R-4** – Multiple Family Residence District
- **PL-2** – Public Land and Open Space District

The zoning districts in Downtown permit a wide variety of business, residential, and institutional uses. This contributes to the vitality of Downtown, but the variety permitted also might allow incompatible uses that do not fit the character of Downtown.

B-1 BUSINESS DISTRICT

The purpose of the B-1, Central Business District, is to allow commercial uses that provide goods and services to the Village as a whole. The B-1 District provides for a mix of commercial, residential and entertainment uses while maintaining a pedestrian-oriented environment and accommodating larger scale buildings.

The uses and bulk regulations are generally appropriate for a central business district. The B-1 District permits retail, office, dwelling units above the first floor, and multi-family buildings, which encourages mixed-use, denser development. However, multi-family residential buildings without commercial uses on the ground floor should not be permitted in the central Downtown blocks or along its primary commercial corridors. These locations should be maintained for mixed-use buildings with retail, restaurant or high-traffic service uses on the first floor. The maximum height allowed is 50 feet, which might be too restrictive to allow some four-story buildings.

The B-1 also permits funeral homes. This use often has unique requirements or impacts that require special consideration. Allowing this use without a special-use permit could result in incompatible development.



Retail uses in the B-1 District.



Office use in the B-1 District.

The B-1 District permits a Floor Area Ratio of 3.0. This ratio is a measure of development density and allows a building that is three times the size of the lot area. This FAR might be too restrictive to encourage multi-story mixed-use buildings.

Parking regulations for uses permitted in the B-1 District are relatively similar to common parking requirements throughout the region. Parking requirements, which apply to all districts, are:

<u>Use</u>	<u>Spaces required</u>
Single-Family Residential	2 per unit
Multi-Family Residential	1.5 per unit
Townhouse Residential	2 per unit
Retail	3 or 4 for every 1,000 square feet*
Office	4 for every 1,000 square feet*
Restaurants	10 for every 1,000 square feet

* These show requirements for most retail and office uses. Some uses have different requirements.

Parking regulations also require mixed-use developments to add up all the spaces required for the various uses in the developments. They also allow shared parking lots, but each use must have the spaces required under the parking rules. Regulations also prohibit parking spaces from being used for more than one use.

The proximity of the Train Stations, the pedestrian orientation of Downtown, and the potential to share parking among uses may warrant reviewing, and potentially reducing, certain parking requirements for retail, office, and residential uses.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

The purpose of the R-1, Single-Family Residence District, is to protect and maintain detached single-family residential development while preserving the low-density character of the neighborhood. One R-1 District exists in the Study Area at the northwest corner, west of Park Avenue. This area contains a mix of single-family homes, with some in very good physical condition and others in fair physical condition. The current density permitted by the R-1 is about 4 units per acre with maximum building heights of 30 feet or 2.5 stories, whichever is lower.

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Similar to the R-1, the purpose of the R-2, Single-Family Residence District, is to protect and maintain detached single-family homes while preserving the low-density character of the neighborhood. One R-2 District exists in the south central portion of the Study Area along Morris and Martin Avenues up to and including a portion of 183rd Street. This area primarily contains single-family homes, although it appears some buildings contain more than one dwelling unit.

The current density permitted by the R-2 is approximately 5 units per acre with maximum building heights of 30 feet or 2.5 stories, whichever is lower. Rezoning this area to allow higher densities should be considered. Although a mature neighborhood, the presence of an adjacent R-3 District, Downtown commercial blocks, and the train station warrants consideration for rezoning and higher densities.

The purpose of the R-3, Townhouse/Transition District is to promote and maintain the development of attached single-family residential development and to allow limited commercial uses appropriate to the context of the area. The intent is to provide a mix of uses and encourage alternative forms of housing at low-rise densities that buffer single-family neighborhoods from the Downtown.

Four separate R-3 Districts are within the Study Area. These areas contain a range of housing types including flats, duplexes and multi-unit buildings. The R-3 District permits two-family attached units and townhouses. Multi-unit buildings are permitted with a special-use permit. The current density permitted by the R-3 is about 10 units per acre, which may be low for locations near Downtown and transit service. Higher densities should be explored. The maximum building height in the R-3 zone is 35 feet or three stories, whichever is lower. The potential for shared parking may warrant a reduction in current parking requirements for projects in Downtown.

The purpose of the R-4, Multiple-Family Residence District, is to promote and maintain the development of multiple-family units, attached single-family, and other limited uses. The intent is to provide convenient living at higher densities in mid-rise buildings.



Residential neighborhoods in and around Downtown contain single-family and multi-family homes.



The Fire Station is part of the PL-2 District.



Irwin Park is in the PL-2 District, which is designed to protect and maintain public properties.

One small R-4 District exists in the Study Area on the west side of the tracks just south Oak Street. A multi-unit building exists on this property. The R-4 District permits multi-unit buildings, two-family attached units and townhouses. The current density permitted by the R-4 is about 10 units per acre for townhouses and 14 units per acre for multi-unit buildings. The maximum building height in this district is 50 feet or five stories, whichever is lower. This type of density is warranted in and near Downtown but still may be considered low to accommodate mixed-use residential development. The potential for shared parking could warrant a reduction in current parking requirements for projects in an R-4 District Downtown.

PUBLIC LAND AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

The purpose of the PL-2, Public Land and Open Space Zoning District, is to protect and maintain public properties. Development standards are flexible to allow local government/quasi-governmental bodies to use their land while protecting nearby residential uses. Four separate PL-2 Districts are within the Study Area. Uses in these districts include the Library, Village Hall/Fire/Police Complex, Irwin Park, Independence Park and a portion of the railroad tracks and parking lot along Park Avenue south of the train stations. Currently the PL-2 does not include the actual train stations and rail right of way. Overall, the PL-2 District and uses are appropriate for their current locations and function, although the railroad portion should include the train stations.

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Area Analysis

ZONING SUMMARY

Overall, it appears the Downtown has the appropriate zoning districts to encourage a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented walking environment close to transit, restaurants, and other daily service needs. However, increased residential densities should be evaluated for locations nearer the Downtown core commercial blocks and along the major road corridors. To achieve these increased densities in a pedestrian-oriented downtown, the maximum building height of 50 feet, shared parking requirements, and ground floor uses need review and adjustment.

The Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) regulates building and sign design through zoning controls as part of a Village planning or building permit process. However, the SPRC lacks formal standards for its process. The City should consider adopting the Master Plan Design Guidelines to supplement the SPRC procedures as referenced in Section 2.14 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Physical Conditions



Streetscape elements in the core Downtown blocks are attractive and in good condition.



Trash cans and benches appear dated.

Homewood's Downtown streetscape is generally in good to excellent condition in the central core blocks. Ridge Road contains attractive streetscape elements such as pavers, light poles, planters, hanging baskets, and seating areas that enhance the pedestrian "Main Street" environment.

The Village has continued the streetscape program by installing new lighting and pavers along Harwood Avenue. Trash cans and benches in the core blocks, though, appear dated and new elements should be considered.

Streetscape conditions along Dixie Highway and 183rd Street need improvement. Although some improvements have been provided along Dixie, they should be continued to 183rd Street. In particular, conditions along the 18200 block of Dixie Highway need significant improvement. 183rd Street lacks landscaping and street trees. Some portions lack parkways, and sidewalks are directly adjacent to the street.

The small pedestrian plaza and streetscape along Martin Avenue from Ridge to Kroner is in excellent condition and provides an attractive seating area.

The two viaducts leading into Downtown on 183rd Street and Dixie Highway serve as gateways into Downtown. Improving these viaducts is essential to enhancing pedestrian and vehicular safety. While the 183rd viaduct is fairly new and in good physical condition, it has a stark appearance. The Dixie Highway viaduct is dark and narrow, and also is unattractive.

Independence Park at the Dixie/Hickory intersection is in fair condition but needs new pavers and landscaping to further enhance its use as a pedestrian space.

Overall physical conditions vary in the Study Area from fair in the southwest portion of the area to good in the northwest and central portions of Downtown. More specifically, properties along the railroad tracks and along Harwood Avenue south of Olive are in fair condition. Properties along Dixie south of Hickory are also in fair condition. Properties along Dixie and Harwood north of Hickory and along Ridge are mostly in good condition.

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Although the streetscape is generally attractive in Downtown's core blocks, other areas lack street trees, furniture, planters, and other streetscape elements.

The residential neighborhoods in and around the Study Area are in generally good physical condition with tree-lined streets. The neighborhood west of the railroad tracks is in very good condition and contains a mix of residential styles. The area in the south-central portion of Downtown is mostly in fair condition and would benefit from property improvement and maintenance.

Commercial, office, and institutional properties along Dixie, Ridge, Harwood, and 183rd are in generally good to fair condition. The older warehouse buildings along Harwood are an exception and are in fair to poor condition. Façade improvements are needed for buildings along the primary commercial corridors (Ridge, Dixie and 183rd).

The eastern portion of the Study Area includes Irwin Park and the Community Center, office uses, and a residential neighborhood. These uses are in generally good condition. However, Ridge Road east of Homewood Avenue is in need of streetscape enhancement.



The attractive streetscape in the core Downtown blocks does not continue the length of Dixie Highway to 183rd Street.

Transportation



Intersection of Ridge Road and Dixie Highway, where backups can occur at peak travel times.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

To gather current traffic volume data, peak-hour intersection counts were conducted at the following intersections:

- Dixie Highway/Ridge Road
- Dixie Highway/Park Avenue
- Dixie Highway/Harwood Avenue (north leg)
- 183rd Street/Park Avenue
- 183rd Street/Harwood Avenue

The counts were conducted during the weekday morning (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) and weekday evening (4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) peak periods. The time periods were chosen because they coincide with the anticipated peak periods of the Study Area roadway system. The results indicate the peak hour of existing traffic occurred from 7:15 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. during the weekday morning peak period and from 4:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. during the weekday evening peak period. The existing traffic volumes are illustrated on Figure 2: Existing Traffic.

ROADWAY CAPACITIES

Roadways were analyzed to evaluate the existing capacity of critical intersections within the Study Area. The analyses were conducted for the weekday morning and evening midday peak hours, and the results are shown in Table 2.

The effectiveness of how well an intersection operates is measured in terms of Levels of Service (LOS). Levels of Service, as outlined by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, range from “A” (best) to “F” (worst). The minimum intersection LOS that is generally accepted by industry standards is “D.” The following is a more detailed description of each level of service, as well as a summary of intersection conditions in Downtown Homewood:

- **LOS A** is free flow. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to the motorist is excellent.
- **LOS B** is in the range of stable flow. The level of comfort and convenience provided is somewhat less than that of LOS A because the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to affect individual behavior.

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- **LOS C** is in the range of stable flow but marks the beginning of significant interference to an individual's movement caused by others in the traffic stream. The general level of driver comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.
- **LOS D** represents dense but stable traffic flow. The driver experiences reduced level of comfort and convenience.
- **LOS E** represents operating conditions at or near capacity. Operations at this level are usually unstable and driver comfort and convenience levels are extremely poor.
- **LOS F** represents forced or breakdown traffic flow. It is the point at which more vehicles are arriving than exiting the area, causing a queue, or line, to form. Operations within the queue are characterized by stop-and-go conditions.

Table 2: Intersection Level of Service

Intersection	Existing Conditions	
	A.M. Peak Hour	P.M. Peak Hour
Dixie Highway/ Ridge Road (signalized)	<u>Intersection:</u> ¹ C	<u>Intersection:</u> ¹ D
	Eastbound Approach: C	Eastbound Approach: D
	Westbound Approach: C	Westbound Approach: C
	Northbound Approach: D	Northbound Approach: E
	Southbound Approach: C	Southbound Approach: ² D
Dixie Highway/ Park Avenue	Westbound Left-Turn: A	Westbound Left-Turn: B
	Northbound Approach: D	Northbound Approach: ³ F
Dixie Highway/ Harwood Avenue (north)	Eastbound Left-Turn: A	Eastbound Left-Turn: A
	Southbound Approach: C	Southbound Approach: C
183 rd Street/ Park Avenue	Eastbound Left-Turn: B	Eastbound Left-Turn: B
	Southbound Approach: C	Southbound Approach: D
183 rd Street/ Harwood Avenue (signalized)	<u>Intersection:</u> ¹ C	<u>Intersection:</u> ¹ D
	Eastbound Approach: C	Eastbound Approach: D
	Westbound Approach: C	Westbound Approach: D
	Northbound Approach: C	Northbound Approach: D
	Southbound Approach: C	Southbound Approach: C

¹ Full intersection Levels of Service for signalized intersections only.

² Southbound Left-turn movement operates at LOS E during P.M. Peak Hour

³ Although a low LOS, the intersection has few vehicles on the northbound approach.



Homewood's Downtown Metra stop averaged about 1,400 daily boardings in 2002.

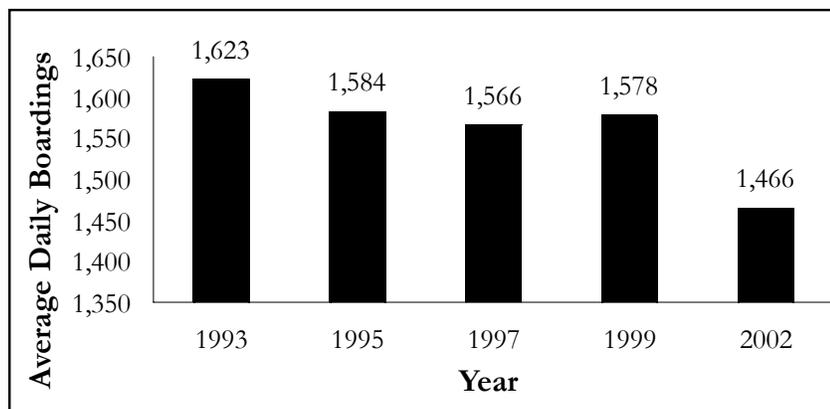
TRANSIT USE

As of 2002, Homewood's Downtown Metra station ranked 22nd in passenger boardings among the entire Metra commuter rail system and ranked 2nd among stations on the Metra Electric Main Line. Table 3 presents ridership data collected by Metra between 1993 and 2002.

There are three dedicated parking lots serving commuters at the Homewood station immediately adjacent to the tracks with additional permit parking spaces in the municipal parking lot on the east side of Harwood Avenue. The three parking lots immediately adjacent to the tracks (two daily lots on the west side and one permit lot on the east side) are each privately owned. In 2003, Metra collected parking occupancy data at the three lots adjacent to the tracks. Although the surveyed spaces in Lot 3 are not fully occupied on a daily basis, permits have been sold for all spaces. Based on this data, the three commuter parking lots are essentially fully occupied. This data is summarized in Table 4.

In 2002, Metra conducted mode-of-access surveys to determine which mode of transportation (car, bus, on foot, etc.) commuter transit riders used to get to the Homewood station. Based on the data, the highest percentage (46%) of commuters drive to the station in a single-occupancy vehicle. Approximately 24% are dropped off at the station. Approximately 18% of the riders walk to the station. The remaining riders arrive by carpool or Pace bus.

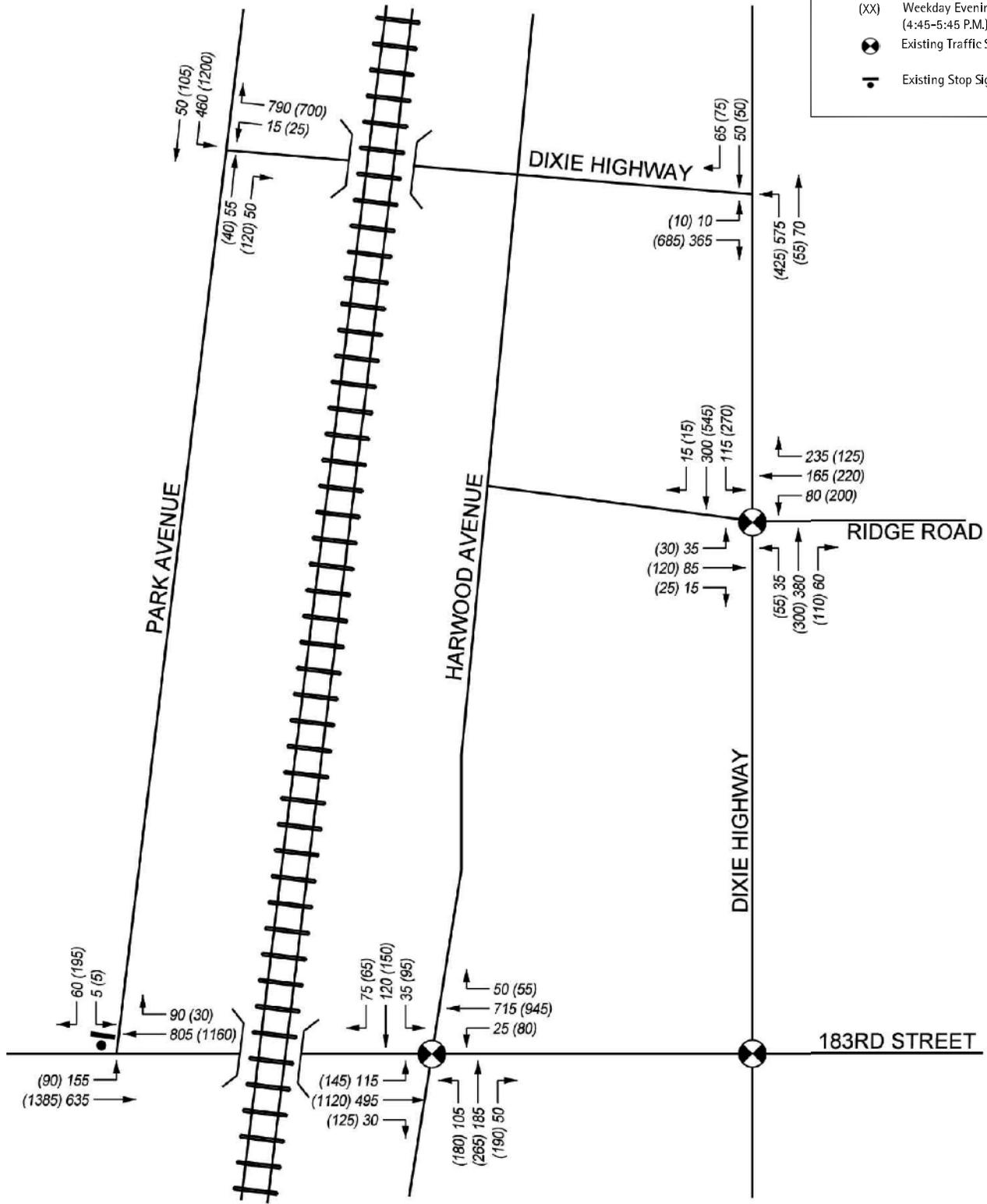
Table 3: Downtown Homewood Metra Boardings



Source: Metra Planning Division

Legend

- XX Weekday Morning Peak Hour (7:15-8:15 A.M.)
- (XX) Weekday Evening Peak Hour (4:45-5:45 P.M.)
-  Existing Traffic Signal
-  Existing Stop Sign



Village of Homewood, Illinois

Downtown Plan

Figure 2: Existing Traffic

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Area Analysis

Table 4: Commuter Parking Lot Use – 2003

Station	Lot	Parking Spaces	Occupied Spaces		Percent Occupied	
			Use	Effective Use	Use	Effective Use
Homewood	1 - West Side (daily - north)	220	221	221	100.5% ¹	100.5% ¹
	2 - West Side (daily - south)	126	125	125	99.2%	99.2%
	3 - East Side (permit)	107	87	107 ¹	81.3%	100.0% ²
Total		453	433	453	95.6%	100.0%

Source: Metra Planning Division

¹ Lot 1 was over capacity when survey was conducted.

² Permits sold for all parking spaces. Effective use is 100%.

Although bicycle use did not surface in the survey results, bicycle use is encouraged and bicycle racks are available at the station. The mode-of-access data are summarized in Table 5.

PARKING

As indicated by Metra parking-occupancy data and field observations, the commuter parking lots are effectively fully occupied (see Table 4: Commuter Parking Lot Use). Village staff and business/property owners indicated that spillover commuter parking occurs illegally in some privately owned parking lots and on some neighborhood streets. Some adjacent landowners appear to be setting aside a portion of their parking lots to sell monthly parking permits to Metra commuters.

To gain a sense of the existing parking occupancy within the Study Area, Metro collected hourly parking demand data between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at selected on-street and off-street locations. This time frame would include midday parking demand for Downtown businesses, municipal services, and spillover Metra commuter parking.

Using overall parking supply data provided by Village staff and the collected parking demand data, existing parking occupancy at selected on-street and off-street locations was determined. The parking occupancy data is summarized in Table 6.

Of the surveyed parking spaces, just more than half are occupied. However, select off-street and on-street parking locations within

Table 5: Mode of Access – 2002

Mode of Access	Percent
Drive Alone	46%
Dropped off	24%
Walk	18%
Carpool	7%
Bus	5%
Total	100%

Source: Metra Planning Division

Table 6: Parking Occupancy Survey

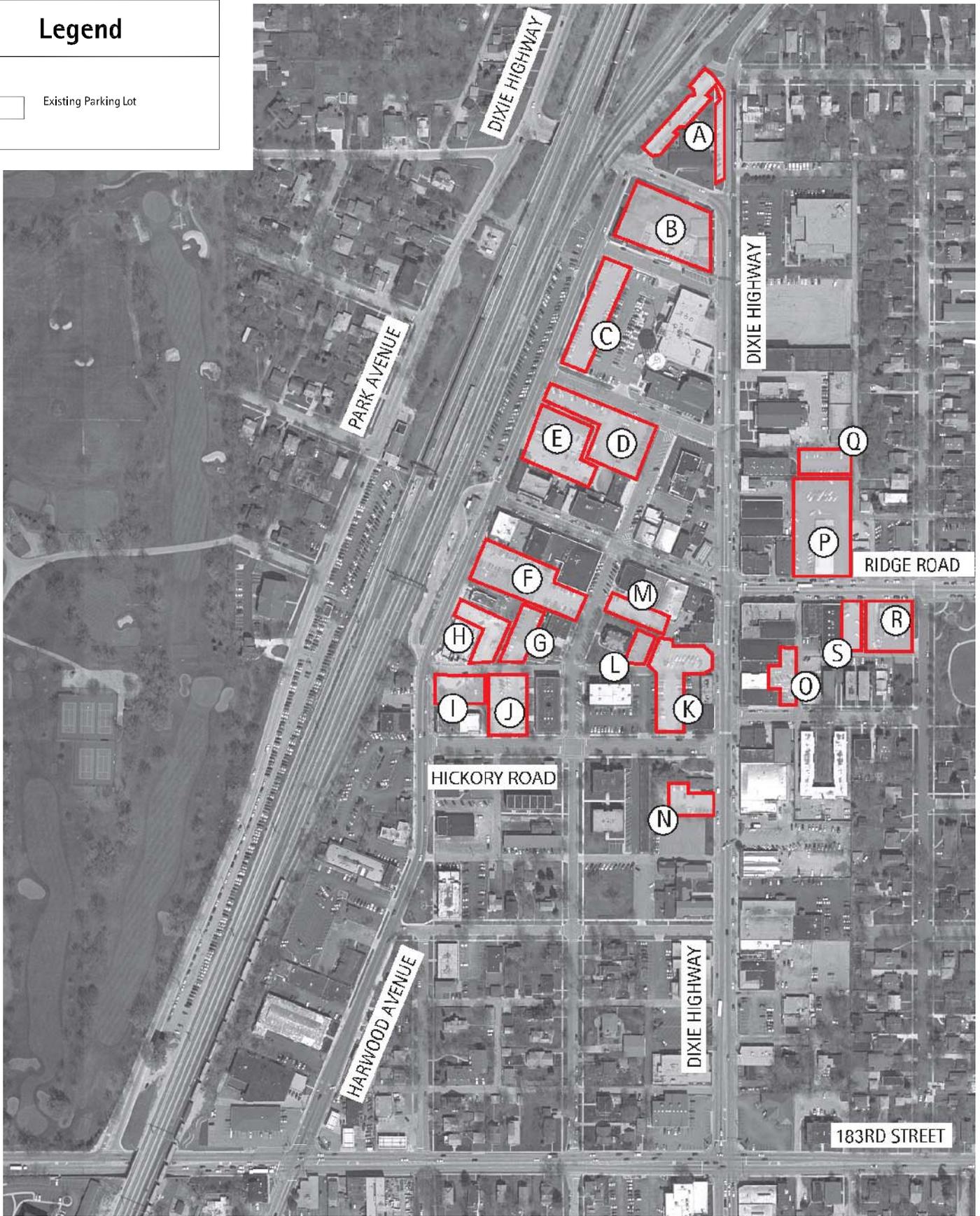
Off-street parking lots	Supply	Time						Occupancy		
		10 a.m.	11 a.m.	12 p.m.	1 p.m.	2 p.m.	3 p.m.	Average	Min.	Max.
A	49	19	21	23	17	20	20	41%	35%	47%
B	42	17	23	20	17	19	24	48%	40%	57%
C (permits)	74	58	64	59	65	62	66	84%	78%	89%
D	85	27	35	28	23	26	32	34%	27%	41%
E	44	29	28	31	34	36	39	75%	64%	89%
F	59	49	52	49	53	50	50	86%	83%	90%
G	28	18	18	14	17	21	22	65%	50%	79%
H	32	8	10	7	10	10	12	30%	22%	38%
I	24	6	8	7	10	11	9	35%	25%	46%
J	48	31	25	28	25	27	24	56%	50%	65%
K	52	26	26	29	26	22	27	50%	42%	56%
L	17	5	6	9	4	5	6	34%	24%	53%
M	22	17	19	22	22	20	20	91%	77%	100%
N	20	7	7	14	9	8	9	45%	35%	70%
O	24	16	15	16	15	12	12	60%	50%	67%
P	82	48	43	48	49	43	28	53%	34%	60%
Q	28	19	16	19	18	20	22	68%	57%	79%
R	20	7	7	8	9	3	7	34%	15%	45%
S	20	2	1	1	2	2	2	8%	5%	10%
Sub Total	770	409	424	432	425	417	431	55%	53%	56%
On-street										
Various	354	167	184	201	194	191	200	54%	47%	57%
Total	1124	576	608	633	619	608	631	54%	51%	56%

the Downtown core area experience a high rate of occupancy with few available spaces during peak periods. The designated commuter permit parking spaces within the municipal lot have a maximum occupancy of 89 percent. Although the permit spaces within the municipal lot are not fully occupied, permits for all available spaces have been oversold (the number of permits sold exceed the number of spaces).

Parking lots E, F, and M (as shown in Figure 3) serve the businesses along Ridge Road between Harwood Avenue and Dixie

Legend

Existing Parking Lot



Village of Homewood, Illinois **Downtown Plan**

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Figure 3: Off-Street Parking Locations

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

Highway as well as along Dixie Highway south of Ridge Road. These parking lots may also be occupied by spillover Metra commuter parking. These parking lots experience peak parking occupancies of 89 percent to 100 percent.

In addition to off-street parking, on-street parking locations along Ridge Road (Dixie Highway to Harwood Avenue), Martin Avenue (Ridge Road to Hickory Road), and Dixie Highway (just south of Ridge Road) also have a high rate of occupancy.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The following issues reflect current conditions within Downtown Homewood:

- **Heavy, sub-regional traffic on Dixie Highway:** Dixie Highway leads to/from an interchange at Interstate 80 just north of Homewood. Currently, a large percentage of traffic with a primary destination other than Downtown Homewood appears to be traveling along Dixie Highway to Ridge Road and 183rd Street. One reason for this is likely because of drivers bypassing congestion along Interstate 80.
- **Dixie Highway viaduct sight distance and safety issues:** The numerous structural supports, narrow width, close proximity of adjacent intersections, and “jog” configuration of Dixie Highway create safety issues for vehicles and pedestrians traveling through this viaduct.



The Dixie Highway viaduct creates traffic and pedestrian-safety problems because its narrow width and structural supports make it difficult for motorists to see other vehicles and pedestrians.



Metra parking is often fully occupied.

- **Congestion north, south, and east of the Dixie Highway/Ridge Road intersection:** Because of high traffic volumes through the intersection and its limited capacity, the intersection experiences considerable delay, especially during evening peak hours.
- **Spillover parking from fully occupied commuter lots:** Property/business owners are complaining about the spillover commuter parking occupying spaces for potential customers. The Village does not enforce parking regulations in all privately owned lots but has enforcement agreements with some lot owners and is seeking agreements with others.
- **Numerous on-street parking regulations:** With numerous hourly parking restrictions in different locations within Downtown, it is difficult for visitors to understand where it is convenient to park and what the parking rules are in each location. The non-uniform restrictions also make it difficult for the police to enforce. Uniform restrictions would clarify the situation for visitors and enforcement.
- **Unsafe cut-through traffic in alley:** Cut-through traffic using an alley parallel to Dixie Highway behind the church and library creates safety issues. Village and library staff members indicate that drivers use the alley behind the buildings to bypass peak-hour traffic congestion.

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

The following are potential opportunities for addressing existing Downtown transportation issues:

- **Create alternate traffic route around Downtown:** Potential improvements to remove sub-regional traffic from Downtown vary but may include new directional/wayfinding signage, a new traffic signal at the 183rd Street/Park Avenue intersection, reconfiguration of the Dixie Highway/Park Avenue intersection, and/or reconfiguring the intersection of Dixie Highway and the north leg of Harwood Avenue.
- **Eliminate on-street parking along Dixie Highway north of Ridge Road:** To allow southbound traffic to bypass the left-turn vehicle queue, on-street parking along Dixie Highway north of Ridge Road would be eliminated.

Village of Homewood

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- **Pursue funding and work with other agencies to reconstruct Dixie Highway viaduct:** The Village should work with the viaduct's owners to establish a plan for its improvement. Reconstruction of the viaduct to reduce or eliminate internal structural supports would improve sight lines, safety, and the appearance of the viaduct for motorists and pedestrians.
- **Identify additional dedicated parking for commuters:** Existing commuter parking lots on the west side of the railroad could be reconfigured to gain efficiency. Additional parking spaces could be developed as part of redevelopment concepts within Downtown.
- **Establish parking enforcement agreements:** The Village should seek agreements with private parking lot owners within Downtown to allow the Village to enforce parking restrictions in private, off-street parking lots. Parking enforcement in these lots will ensure that the spaces are used by downtown business patrons and not occupied by spillover commuter parking.
- **Develop consistent on-street parking restrictions:** Consistent on-street parking restrictions throughout Downtown will clarify parking options for Downtown visitors in addition to simplifying parking enforcement.
- **Reduce truck traffic through downtown:** Dixie Highway and Ridge Road serve as a truck route, particularly for trucks traveling to and from a nearby quarry. Heavy truck traffic through Downtown creates noise and compromises safety while adding to traffic congestion. Alternative routes to Dixie Highway and Ridge Road outside of Homewood are needed to encourage trucks to bypass Downtown. Consideration should be given to a jurisdictional transfer of a portion of Ridge Road from state jurisdiction to local jurisdiction. Although the burden of maintenance falls on the Village, this would allow the Village to prohibit truck traffic along this section of Ridge Road, thus significantly reducing the number of large trucks traveling through Downtown Homewood.

Constraints/Issues Summary

The following constraints and issues were identified in Downtown Homewood:

- **Civic Cluster** – The Downtown civic facilities need streetscape, parking lot, and traffic circulation improvements. Fire Station egress is problematic during periods of traffic congestion.
- **Low Density** – Downtown is comprised of one-story and two-story buildings along Ridge Road, Dixie Highway and other nearby streets. Considering existing activity in the area, the Train Stations, large blocks, potential redevelopment sites and parking locations, it appears that density could be increased to allow larger buildings with a wider range of uses.
- **Gas Stations** – Three gas stations exist in Downtown and need landscaping, signage, and driveway enhancements. The Clark Station at the northwest corner of Dixie Highway and Ridge Road is small, has difficult access, and is at a key corner location. It is also a sub-optimal auto-oriented use within the center of a pedestrian shopping environment. Gas stations along 183rd Street are more compatible with the 183rd Street corridor but need landscape improvements and curb-cut consolidations.
- **Railroad Barrier** — The railroad tracks act as a physical



This gas station at the key corner of Dixie Highway and Ridge Road is small, has difficult access, and needs landscape improvements.

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

barrier to Downtown from the west. Accessing the area from the west occurs via the viaducts at Dixie, 183rd Street, or the pedestrian tunnel that travels under the tracks.

- **Viaducts** – Two viaducts exist on the western edge of Downtown, at Dixie Highway and at 183rd. Both act as gateways or entrances to Downtown and need physical improvements to enhance the area’s attractiveness, access, and safety. Improvements are especially needed on the north viaduct at Dixie Highway.
- **Train Station Access** – Access to the area’s commuter rail service is difficult as commuters must travel underground from Downtown via a pedestrian tunnel to reach the stations on the west side of the tracks. The tunnel is unattractive and has drainage and odor problems. It needs cleaning, maintenance, and physical improvements.
- **Area Streetscape** – The streetscape around the Downtown core blocks is attractive and in good condition. Outside of the central blocks, the streetscape is not attractive, lacks street trees, plantings, benches, and waste cans. Overall, benches and trash cans have a dated look that detracts from the area’s attractiveness. Downtown streetscape improvements should continue along Ridge, Dixie, and 183rd, as well as side streets.
- **Architecture/Facades** – Although many buildings are attractive, in good condition and have façade improvements, some are dated in appearance regarding architectural style, materials, and signage. Rear façades also need improvement and maintenance to enhance views and access from rear parking lots.
- **Parking** – Parking has been identified as an issue in Downtown due to numerous factors. Existing commuter parking lots for the Metra Station are regularly full, placing heavy demand on nearby private lots. Commuters sometimes use Village streets or private lots to park all day. There is also no overnight parking available for Amtrak riders. A lack of enforcement within private lots limits the number of spaces for shoppers and visitors. In some instances, parking lots are behind buildings and are not adequately signed for easy access



The underground tunnel to the Metra platform is unattractive and has drainage problems.



The streetscape outside the core blocks is unattractive in places and lacks street trees, benches, waste cans, and decorative lights.

and convenience. Parking regulations are broad and limitations vary throughout different portions of Downtown regarding use and time.

- **Truck Traffic** – Ridge Road and Dixie Highway serve as truck routes, particularly for trucks traveling to and from a nearby quarry. Heavy truck traffic through Downtown creates noise, compromises safety, and adds to traffic congestion. Alternative routes outside of Homewood are needed to encourage trucks to bypass Downtown.
- **Traffic Congestion** – In general, traffic congestion is common through Downtown during peak traveling periods. Dixie Highway frequently backs up because of heavy traffic and awkward turning movements at the rail viaduct near Park Avenue. The use of alleys and side streets to bypass traffic has been observed.
- **Wayfinding** – Downtown lacks a wayfinding and signage system. Also, within the Downtown there is minimal signage to direct motorists and pedestrians to activity generators and parking lots. A successful wayfinding system would guide motorists from major roadways, encourage a walkable downtown and highlight bicyclist-friendly routes.
- **Zoning** – Overall, existing zoning is appropriate for transit-oriented development. However, limits on residential density and building height restrict some development.

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

Positives/Strengths Summary

The following positives and strengths were identified in Downtown Homewood:

- **Civic Cluster** – The Village Hall, Police/Fire Stations, Library and St. Joseph’s Church create a large civic activity generator at the north end of Downtown.
- **Streetscape** – Overall, the Downtown streetscape is in good condition and provides a design theme for further improvements. It contributes to a favorable walking environment throughout most of the area. Streetscape improvements need to be continued along the primary corridors, side streets, and arterials.
- **Demographics** – Homewood’s population is about 20,000, a number that is expected to rise in the next 25 years along with employment.
- **Activity** – Downtown Homewood experiences about 1,500 Metra boardings each day, which brings people to the area. The Study Area also sees about 14,000 cars a day on 183rd Street and Dixie Highway, providing potential shoppers and restaurant patrons for Downtown.
- **Redevelopment Sites** – Numerous sites exist for re-use or redevelopment because of incompatible or suboptimal land uses, vacant parcels, key locations, and deteriorated conditions.
- **Architecture** – Some buildings, as well as nearby single-family homes, display good examples of an architectural style and character reminiscent of Homewood’s history and a traditional downtown setting. Most of the buildings along the core shopping blocks (Ridge, Martin, Harwood) have an attractive “Main Street” appearance.
- **Recreation** – Passive and active recreational opportunities exist throughout and adjacent to Downtown. Irwin Park and Ravisloe Country Club provide regional draws and act as anchors at the east and west ends of the area. Independence Park also provides open space but is in need of maintenance and landscape improvements.
- **Regional Draws** – Downtown Homewood contains some



Downtown core blocks have a charming “Main Street” feel.



The streetscape in the core Downtown blocks is in good condition.



Some buildings include quality architectural elements that contribute to Downtown’s charm.

specialty businesses/restaurants/uses that attract visitors from the Chicago region including the Dance Center, Dollhouse Museum, Melody Mart, and Climb On.

- **Train Stations** – Downtown includes an Amtrak Station, as well as a Metra Station. These facilities provide a key transportation amenity for the community. Preservation and enhancement of the station area will encourage more ridership. The Amtrak Station building will close in the near future, and service will be provided from the platform. The structure has potential as a gift shop or small museum.
- **Restaurant Mix** – Downtown Homewood contains a wide variety of local and regional restaurants that have helped establish Homewood as a regional dining destination.
- **Rear Entrances** – Several Downtown businesses on Ridge Road maintain rear entrances from parking lots located behind buildings. Some backs of buildings are improved with murals, paintings, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities that further add to the area’s streetscape and attractiveness.
- **Dixie Highway/Historic Corridor** – The promotion of Dixie Highway as an historic regional corridor contributes to the character of Homewood and provides further marketing and interest for the Downtown. Continued promotion and special events should be encouraged for the Dixie Highway. Cultural/historical elements should be incorporated into streetscape and open space improvements.



This mural makes an attractive rear facade.

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

Activity Generators

Downtown Homewood has numerous activity generators that attract visitors to the area on a daily basis:

Within Downtown

- Village Hall
- Public Library
- St. Joseph's Church and School
- Irwin Park and Community Center
- Post Office
- Restaurants – Balagio's, Aurelio's, Bamboo Blue, Bogart's
- St. Paul's Community Church
- Amtrak and Metra Train Stations

Near Downtown

- Ravisloe Country Club
- Coyote Run Country Club
- Calumet Country Club
- Idewilde Country Club
- Flossmoor Country Club
- Olympia Fields Country Club
- Canadian National Corporate Office
- Homewood-Flossmoor High School
- Homewood-Flossmoor Park District Headquarters
- Izaak Walton Preserve
- Walt's Grocery Store

Development Opportunities



Office building on Morris



Tom's Restaurant

There are several development opportunities throughout Downtown. Such opportunities have been considered as short-term or long-term depending on the anticipated time frame for redevelopment. The time frames were established by such factors as location, site utilization, physical condition, and surrounding uses. The sites or blocks were identified based on sub-optimal land uses, deteriorating buildings, underutilized sites, key corner locations, and/or the potential to consolidate small parcels of land to create larger sites.

The following sites have redevelopment potential:

SHORT-TERM

- **1726-1757 Ridge** - Vacant Site, Looks Hair/Nails and Esposito Stained Glass.
- **1940,44 Ridge** – Tom’s Restaurant, Village Square Dry Cleaners and adjacent parking.
- **2020 Chestnut** – Village Hall Parking Lot.
- **18009 Harwood** – Bank Parking Lot.
- **18154 Harwood** – LGC Staffing and Parking Lot.
- **18220/240/250 Harwood** – Housing Center, Spornette International, Peerless Paper.
- **Harwood/Kroner Intersection (West Side)** – Office Uses.
- **Olive/Morris (Southeast Corner)** – Low-rise Office Building.
- **17900 Dixie** – Low-rise Office Building.
- **17926/28/32 Dixie** – Standard Bank, Eighner’s Florist, Restaurant Use.
- **18027/31/33 Dixie** – Homewood Kitchen/Bath, Foul Ballz, Fentons.
- **18225 Dixie** – Bogarts Char House.
- **1918/30 Ridge** – Hair Designers, Cameo House.
- **2056/58/60/66 Ridge** – Health Hut, Cerullo Realty.

Village of Homewood

Area Analysis

- **Harwood/Morris Triangle** – All uses except gas stations.
- **North Side of 183rd (between Morris/Martin)** – Single-family Homes.
- **South Side of 183rd (between Morris/Martin)** – Single-family Homes.
- **Hickory/Gottschalk (Northwest Corner)** – Dental Office, Residences, Adjacent Properties
- **18200 Dixie Highway** – St. Paul's Parking Lot.
- **18136 Dixie Highway** – Savoia's To-Go Restaurant.
- **2030 Ridge Road** – Great Lakes Bank.
- **18301 Dixie Highway** – Vacant (former site of Chuck's House of Magic.)
- **Dixie Highway and Hickory Road (Southwest Corner)** – Independence Park.



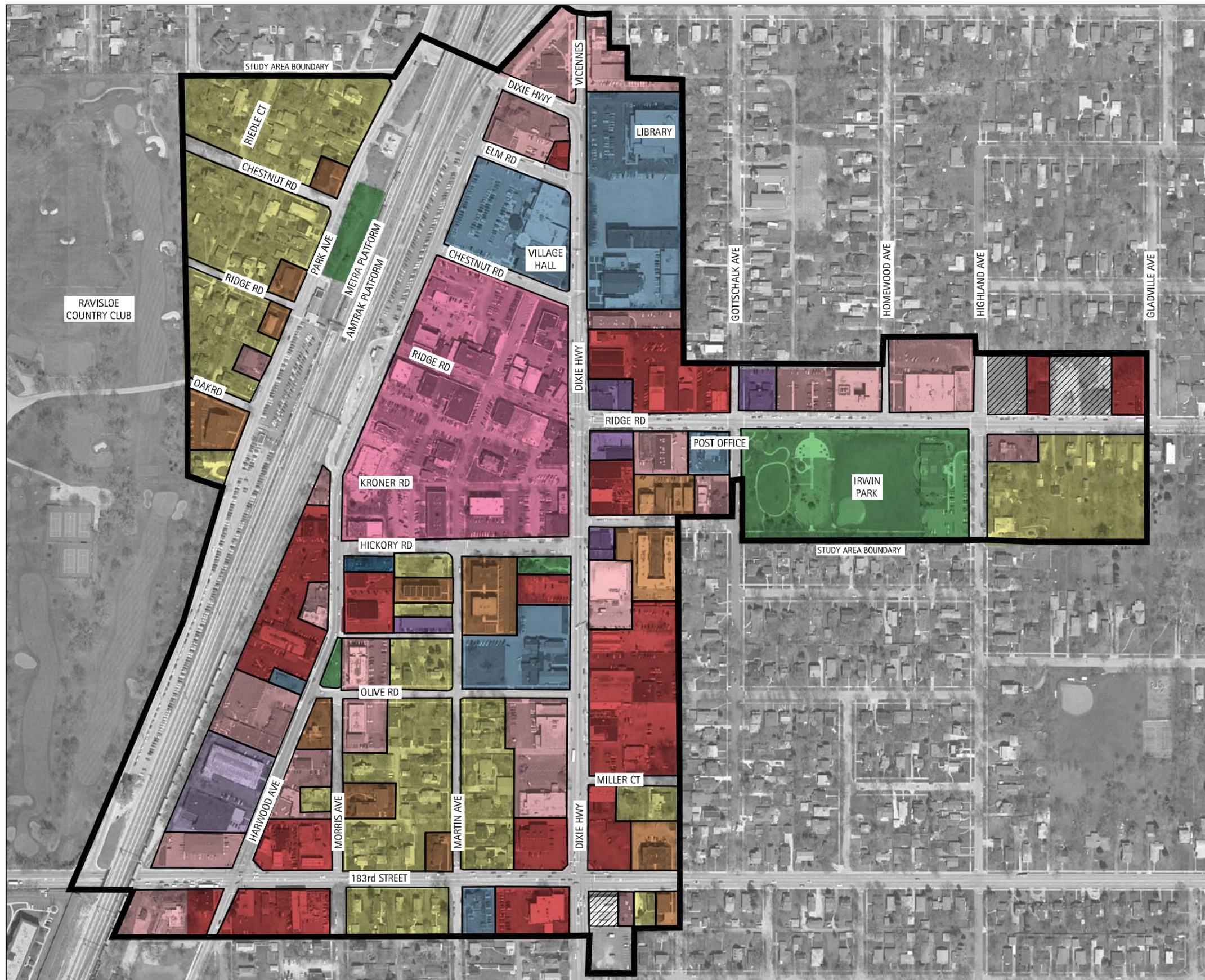
Evergreen Office Center



Office use on Harwood

LONG-TERM

- **1800-1818 Ridge** – Bright Start Learning Center.
- **1818 Ridge** – Eagle Ridge Office Parking Lot.
- **17901 Dixie** – Hedstrom Automotive.
- **17907 Dixie** – Hoekstra Heating and Air.
- **2018/26 Ridge** – Tae Kwon Do, Skate Shop.
- **Dixie/Ridge (Northwest Corner)** – Clark Station.
- **Martin Between Hickory/Olive (West Side)** – All uses except newer townhomes.
- **Olive and Martin (Southwest Side)** – Single Family House.
- **Miller Court Properties** – Office/Residential.
- **Dixie Highway and 183rd (Southwest Corner)** – Charter One Bank.
- **2125 183rd Street** – Wilson's Rental.

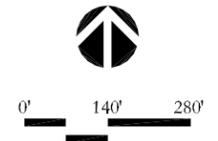


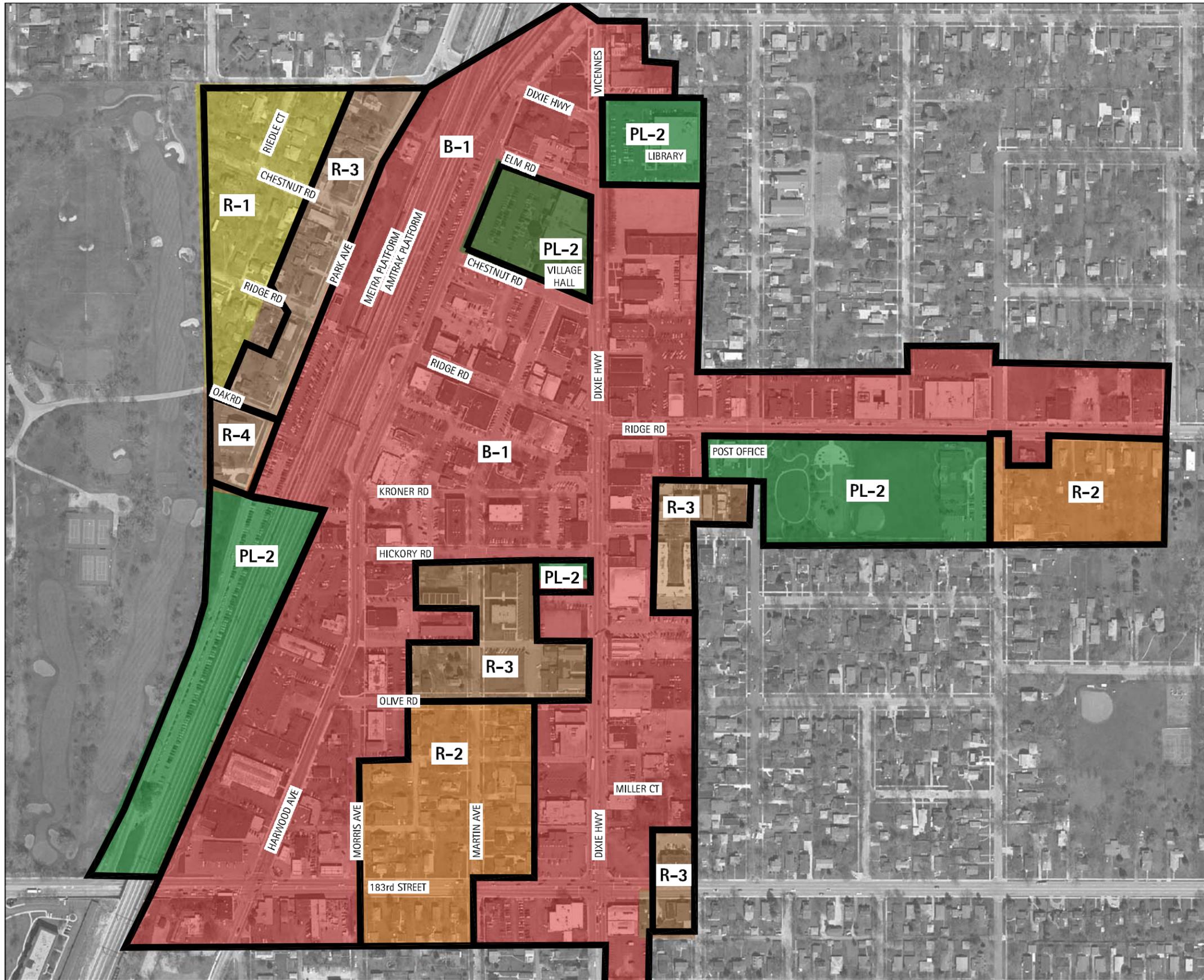
Legend

- Open Space/Park
- Civic/Institutional
- Single Family
- Light Industrial
- Multiple Family
- Commercial
- Professional Office: Service/Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Central Downtown
- Vacant
- Study Area Boundary

Village of Homewood, Illinois Downtown Plan

Figure 4: Downtown Land Use





Legend

B-1	Central Business District
R-1	Single Family Residence District
R-2	Townhouse/Transition District
R-3	Townhouse/Transition District
R-4	Multiple Family Residence District
PL-2	Public Lands and Open Space District

Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 5: Existing Zoning



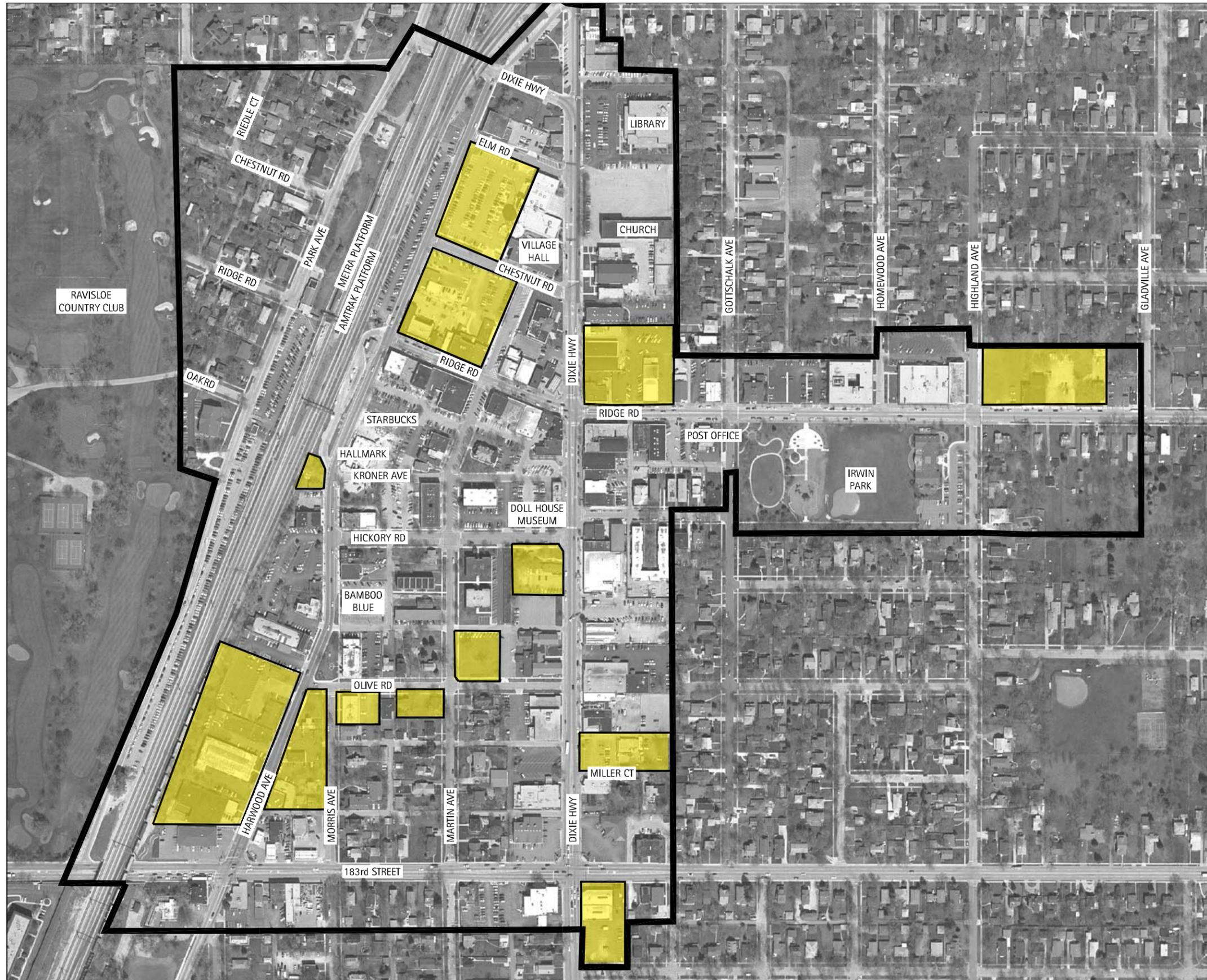
Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 6: Downtown Analysis



Legend

-  Transportation Issue
-  Transportation Issue
-  Transit Station
-  PACE Route
-  Primary Travel Route
-  Alternate Travel Route
-  Parking Survey Area
-  Commuter Parking
-  Existing Traffic Signal
-  Potential Traffic Signal



Legend

- Study Area Boundary
- Short-Term Redevelopment Opportunities

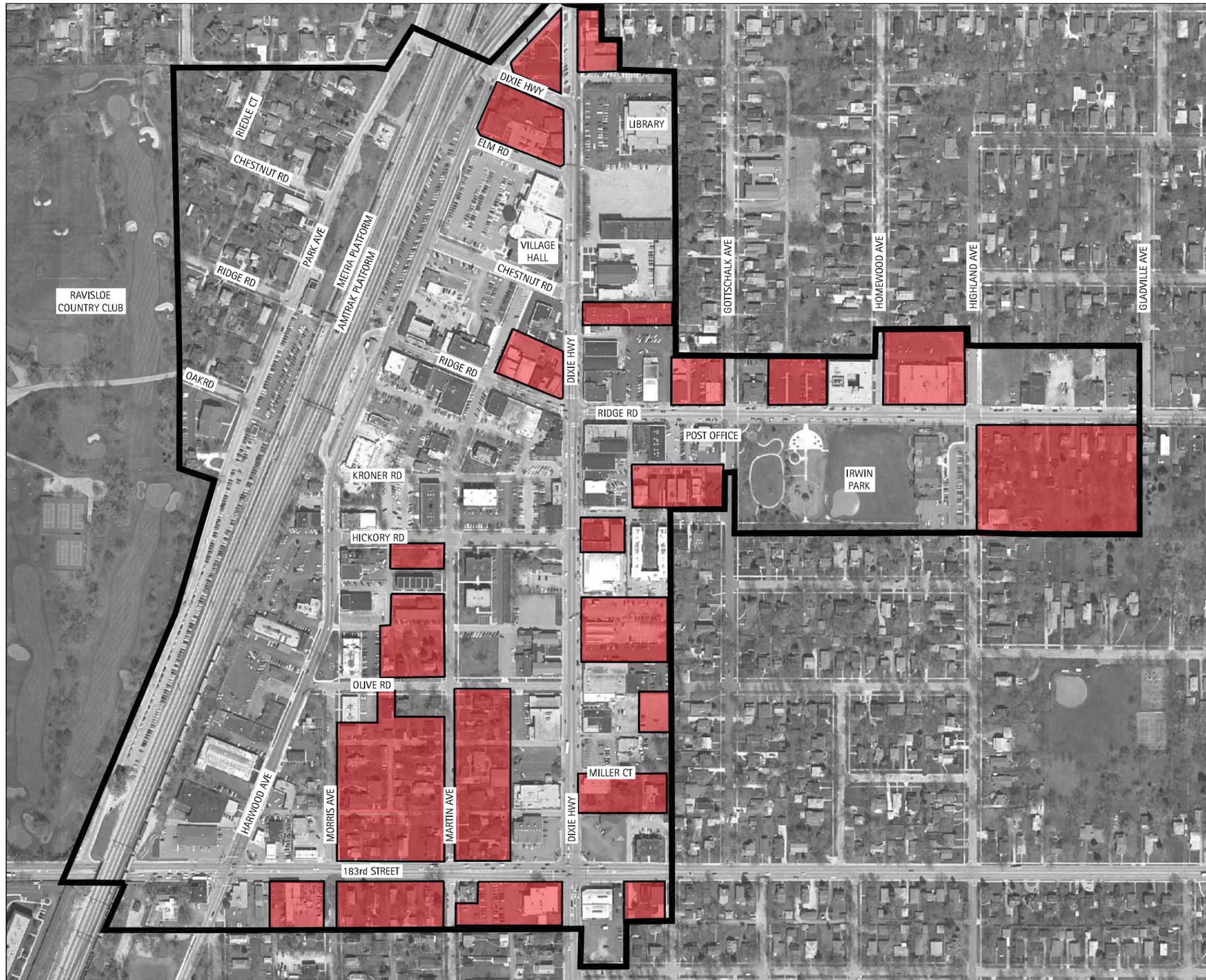
Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 8: Short-Term Redevelopment Opportunities



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Legend

- Study Area Boundary
- Long-Term Redevelopment Opportunities

Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 9: Long-Term Redevelopment Opportunities



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Village of Homewood

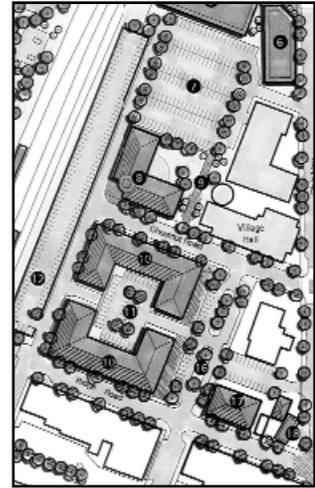
Master Plan

SECTION 3: DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

The following are recommendations for enhancing the physical character of Downtown Homewood and developing it as an active, moderate density town center with a mix of retail, office, residential, and public uses. The goal of the Master Plan is to increase commercial activity and residential densities in Downtown, while maintaining the “small town” character that makes Homewood a desirable place to live. The Plan builds upon Homewood’s small town image and character through enhanced streetscape, signage, open spaces, architecture, and site design.

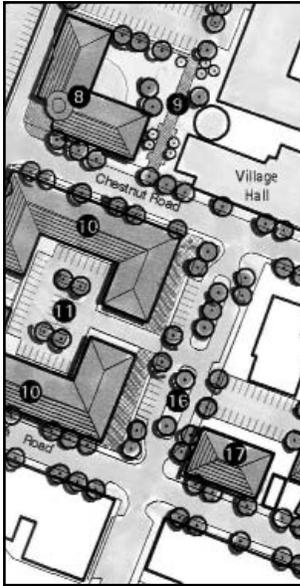
The following are key Master Plan objectives:

- Sustain and enhance Downtown Homewood as a regional draw for the South Suburbs.
- Encourage mixed-use development of key opportunity sites to create a more active “18-hour” downtown.
- Increase commercial development to provide more goods and services for residents and visitors.
- Increase commercial development to enhance the economic base of the Village.
- Increase residential densities throughout Downtown to support transit use and new commercial activity.
- Increase use of the Amtrak and Metra stations.
- Encourage new residential development that provides a wider range of housing products in the Village, including apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing.
- Enhance and increase open space within Downtown.
- Significantly improve physical conditions by expanding streetscape improvements to all Downtown blocks, upgrading street furniture, and improving the pedestrian tunnel and viaducts under the tracks.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation.



The Master Plan includes development opportunities near Village Hall that encourage a mix of retail, office, residential, and public uses. The full Plan is shown in Figure 10 on Page 3.11.

Central Downtown



The Plan shows a greenway on Martin Avenue to connect Village Hall with the Ridge Road shops. New mixed-use developments also are shown on the west side of Martin Avenue and Village Hall. The full Plan for Downtown's North Zone is shown in Figure 11.

The core Downtown blocks near Village Hall and the Train Stations contain a variety of retail, restaurant, and public uses, as well as large un-landscaped parking lots and underdeveloped sites. The Master Plan envisions redevelopment of portions of this area to increase shopping and housing opportunities near transit. More specific recommendations include:

- **Central Greenway:** A greenway is proposed on Martin Avenue between Ridge Road and Chestnut Road. This green is intended to enhance the center of Downtown and physically connect commercial blocks with Village Hall. It is designed to create a focal point with Village Hall as the terminus of Martin Avenue.
- **New Mixed-Use Development:** New development is shown on blocks along Chestnut and Ridge Road to increase density and residential uses near the train station. New mixed-use developments are shown on the northeast corner of Chestnut Road and Harwood Avenue adjacent to Village Hall and on the block bounded by Harwood, Chestnut, Martin and Ridge that includes the large bank parking lot. These developments are intended to increase retail frontage in the Downtown, provide residential units in close proximity to the train station, develop large underdeveloped sites, and close the large physical gaps between the central shopping area, Village Hall, and stations.
- **Enhanced Streetscape:** The streetscape and pedestrian environment in the central blocks is generally in good condition and has contributed to the pedestrian, small-town character of Downtown. New benches and trash cans, along with landscape and curb-cut improvements at the gas station at the northwest corner of Dixie and Ridge, will further strengthen the image of these blocks.
- **Enhanced Pedestrian Experience to Stations:** The pedestrian tunnel leading from Downtown to the stations should be significantly improved regarding maintenance, lighting, and painting. Decorative murals are proposed for the tunnel walls, and additional art and architectural design features should be considered.

Village of Homewood

Master Plan



This mixed-use downtown development has retail shops on the first floor and condominiums above. Shopper and visitor parking is in the rear.



This mixed-use downtown development has condominium units above first-floor retail shops.

- **Preservation of Amtrak Station Building:** The Amtrak Station is housed in an older, traditional train depot. If feasible, preservation and enhancement of this building is recommended with potential new uses such as a gift shop or museum.
- **Rail Park:** A rail park has been proposed for the west side of the tracks just north of the Amtrak Station, which will include an old train engine and caboose to be enclosed with fencing and landscaping. Consideration should be given to expanding this park concept north to Dixie Highway and the viaduct to possibly include special landscaping and gardens, pedestrian paths, signage displaying information on the history of train activity in Homewood, and a small parking lot.
- **Commuter Parking Deck:** A new one-story parking deck is indicated in the Master Plan in the same location as the commuter parking lot on the east side of the tracks. The deck is intended to increase the number of parking spaces for commuters to accommodate spaces that would be lost if the Village Hall parking lot is developed. Depending on the density and uses of the developments along Harwood, this deck could have more floors to increase commuter parking, as well as provide convenient shared parking for shoppers, employees, restaurant patrons or residents. A taller deck would also provide a good visual and sound barrier for new development along Harwood Avenue.

Decks can feature attractive architecture while adding parking to a downtown.



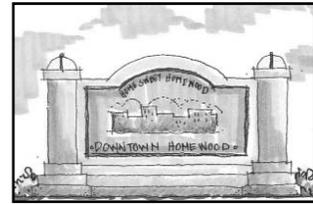
Village of Homewood

Master Plan

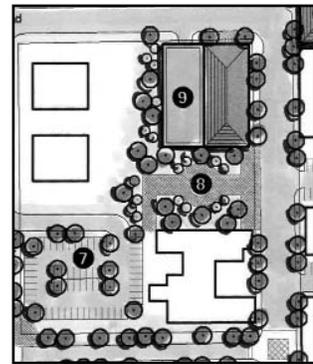
Dixie Highway Corridor

The Dixie Highway Corridor from 183rd Street on the south to the Viaduct at the north end of Downtown is a regional road link that provides access to and from the north and south. The highway carries significant regional and local traffic to the area. Enhancement, beautification, and development of this corridor are important to maximize its role as a gateway and primary route into and through Downtown. Specific recommendations include:

- **Gateway and Streetscape Enhancement:** Recognizing Dixie Highway as a historic route and gateway to Downtown is important to emphasize an image and identity for the area. Gateway enhancements at the north and south ends of the corridor, as well as creating a unified streetscape, are key elements that will enhance the area's character.
- **Mixed-Use Development:** New mixed-use developments at the southwest and southeast corners of the Dixie/183rd Street intersection are shown at this gateway to Downtown. Infill development is proposed at varying locations along this corridor to create more of a building "streetwall" that minimizes curb cuts and enhances the pedestrian shopping environment.
- **Open Space:** Independence Park is at the southwest corner of Dixie Highway and Hickory Road. It is a small plaza that needs landscape and signage improvements. The Master Plan delineates a new mixed use development on this corner and moves the open space to the center of the block adjacent to St. Paul's Church. This larger plaza would create a more useable open space within the south end of Downtown, along Dixie Highway. Shoppers, residents, employees, visitors, and parishioners could use the park, and it could include special gardens, a fountain, and historical elements/signage. Church parking would be relocated to the rear of the Church.



Gateway signage, along with streetscape improvements, could enhance Downtown's image.

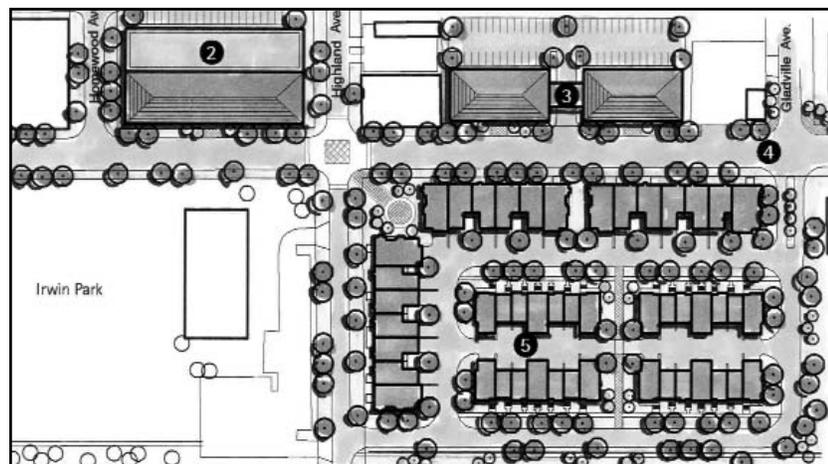


The Plan shows a mixed-use development at Hickory Road and Dixie Highway and a new central plaza between shops and St. Paul's Church. The full Plan for the South Zone is shown in Figure 12.

Ridge Road Corridor

The Ridge Road corridor is the third regional corridor that provides regional access to Downtown Homewood. Access is provided from the east and terminates near the Metra Station at Harwood Avenue. The Master Plan envisions strengthening the Ridge Road corridor with residential uses as it enters Downtown near Gladville Avenue. The Ridge/Gladville intersection also provides an identity gateway opportunity. Further development and enhancement is recommended as Ridge travels into the core of Downtown. More specific recommendations include:

- **Townhouse Development:** A new townhouse development is envisioned at the southeast corner of Ridge Road and Highland Avenue across from Irwin Park. This area is currently developed with single-family houses on deep lots. Such a development would provide a transition from nearby single-family homes, while providing additional “in town” housing opportunities for residents seeking to live near shopping, transit, and a park/recreational facility. Senior housing would also be appropriate in this area.



The Plan shows condominiums, mixed-use developments, and townhomes near Irwin Park on Ridge Road. The full Plan for the East Zone is shown in Figure 13.

Village of Homewood

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- **Mixed-Use Development:** New mixed-use development along the corridor will strengthen the link between Irwin Park and central shopping blocks. Such development is indicated along the north edge of the corridor, especially at the northeast corner of Ridge and Dixie. This large site presents a significant redevelopment opportunity at a key Downtown intersection. Building and site design will be critical to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- **Gateway and Signage Enhancement:** Acknowledgement of Ridge Road as a gateway and maintaining a unified streetscape are important elements that will help incorporate these eastern blocks and Irwin Park into Downtown. A primary gateway element should be located near the corner of Ridge Road and Gladville Avenue.

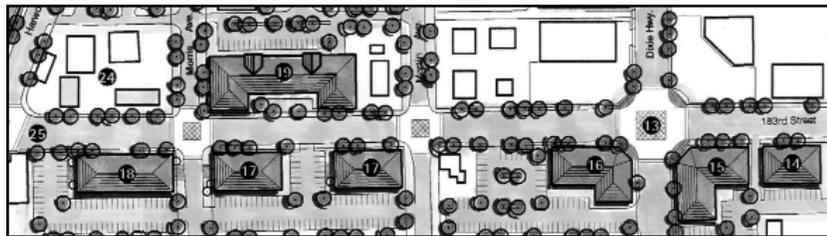


Condominiums with good architectural details and attractive streetscape can help add vitality to Downtown while fitting into the area's character.

183rd Street Corridor

Similar to Dixie Highway, 183rd Street is a regional corridor that travels along the southern boundary of Downtown providing gateway access from the east and west. Specific recommendations include:

- **Gateway and Streetscape Enhancement:** Recognizing 183rd Street as a Downtown gateway and edge is important to emphasize an image and identity for the area at its southern border. Implementing gateway features at the viaduct and key intersections (Harwood and Dixie Highway), as well as creating a recognizable Downtown streetscape are also important elements for this corridor.
- **Mixed-Use Development:** New mixed-use development along the corridor will play a critical role in transforming the southern blocks in this area from primarily residential to mixed use with office, retail, and residential uses. Developing underutilized and deteriorated properties will also help create a unified image at the south end of Downtown.



The Plan shows a variety of office, retail, and residential development opportunities along 183rd Street that "hold the corners" and establish more of a downtown character. The full Plan for the South Zone is shown in Figure 12.

Village of Homewood

Master Plan

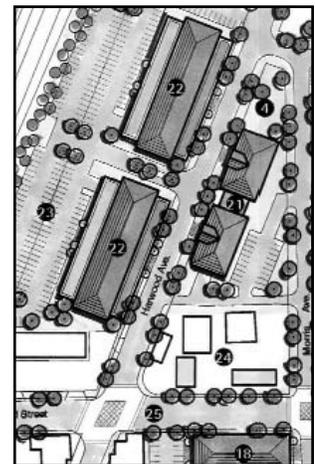
Harwood Avenue Corridor

Although not a regional corridor, this local road has the potential for significant redevelopment that would contribute to the overall viability of Downtown. This underdeveloped corridor contains light-industrial and service uses to the south and retail shops and restaurants closer to the center of Downtown. The Master Plan transforms this roadway into a more active pedestrian-oriented “Main Street” with consistent, visible storefronts and streetscape. Specific recommendations include:

- **Mixed-Use Development:** Mixed-use development along the west side of Harwood will help unify the streetscape and create a “streetwall” that enhances the pedestrian environment. Such development will also change the incompatible industrial and manufacturing uses located near residences, restaurants, and offices. New multi-family housing is envisioned on the east side of Harwood on the underdeveloped blocks north of 183rd to increase Downtown housing opportunities and activity.
- **Rail Walk:** A pedestrian rail walk is envisioned along the tracks behind the new mixed-use buildings.
- **Olive Avenue Closure at Harwood Avenue:** The plan envisions closing Olive Avenue at Harwood Avenue. This closure would allow for an enlarged and enhanced Veteran’s Memorial open space.
- **Harwood Avenue Closure at Dixie:** The Master Plan also indicates the potential for closing Harwood Avenue at Dixie Highway, adjacent to the viaduct, to eliminate this inefficient and difficult intersection. Closure of this access point will improve safety.



Railwalks can provide a safe and attractive way for commuters and shoppers to navigate Downtown.



The Plan shows new development along Harwood Avenue north of 183rd Street. The full South Zone Plan is shown in Figure 12.

Master Plan Density

Overall, the Master Plan envisions a comprehensive, coordinated, and balanced redevelopment of the area that would create significant new retail, office, and residential opportunities for Downtown Homewood.

The site designs illustrated in the Master Plan drawings indicate conceptual development densities, site plans, landscaping, and parking layouts. Actual building locations, heights, and densities, as well as site design, will vary as property owners, businesses, and developers generate more specific site plans. Each site will need to address parking needs within the context of the overall Study Area in regards to existing parking availability, shared parking potential, and linked parking lots.

Conceptually, the Plan delineates 30 redevelopment sites within Downtown. A summary of the land uses and overall potential building densities of these sites is presented in Table 7. Some of the square footage listed in Table 7 will be new commercial or office space for Downtown Homewood. Some it will result from redevelopment and replace existing space. Ideally, many of the businesses on sites suggested for redevelopment will find new locations in the Study Area and continue to make Downtown Homewood a great place to live, work, and shop.

Table 7: Effects of Redevelopment

Use	New Development Shown in Master Plan	Removed During Redevelopment**
Retail/ Service/ Restaurant	246,500 to 285,000 square feet*	94,671 square feet
Office	53,000 to 70,000 square feet	133,814 square feet
Industrial	0	34,115 square feet
Residential:	450 to 599 units*	83 units

* There is a range of potential densities because the Master Plan includes denser long-term concepts for some blocks.

** Retail, office, industrial, and residential buildings potentially removed by private developers working with property owners include a variety of inefficient, dated, sub-optimal, or deteriorating structures throughout Downtown.

Legend

— Zone Boundaries

North Zone

South Zone

East Zone



Village of Homewood, Illinois Downtown Plan

Figure 10: Downtown Plan

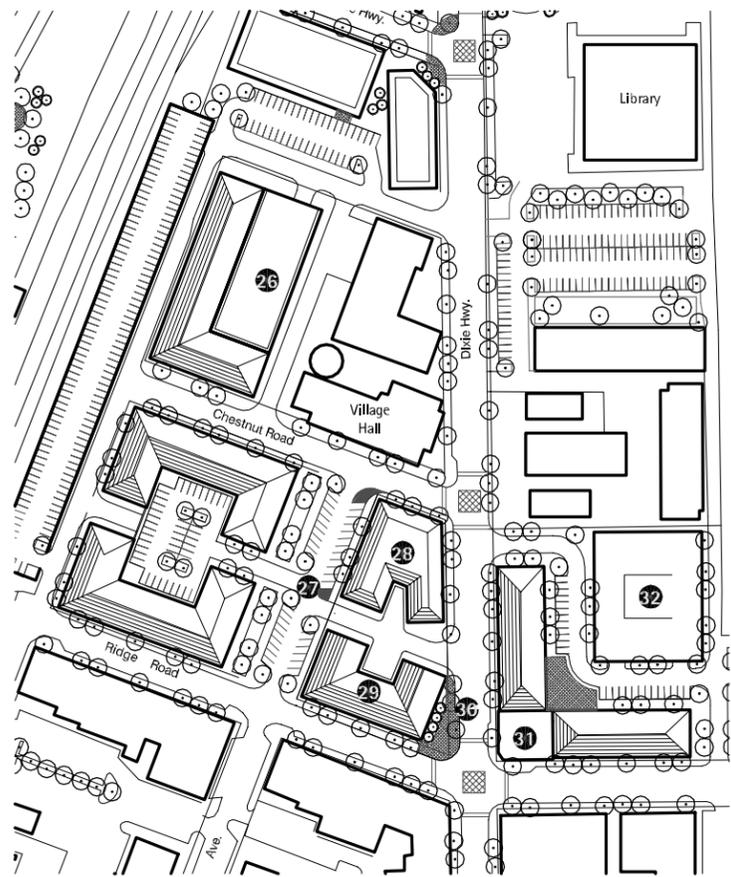


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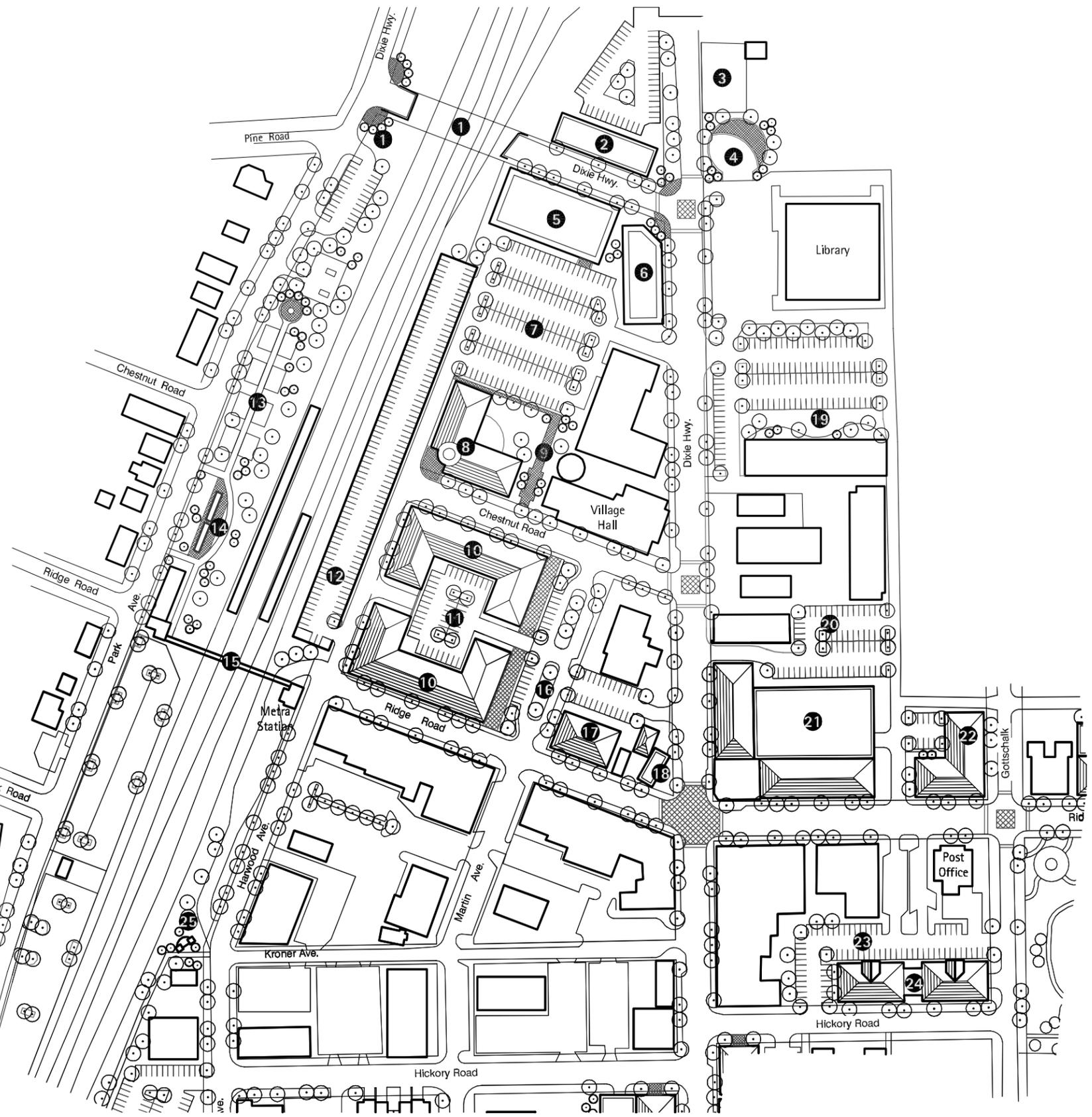
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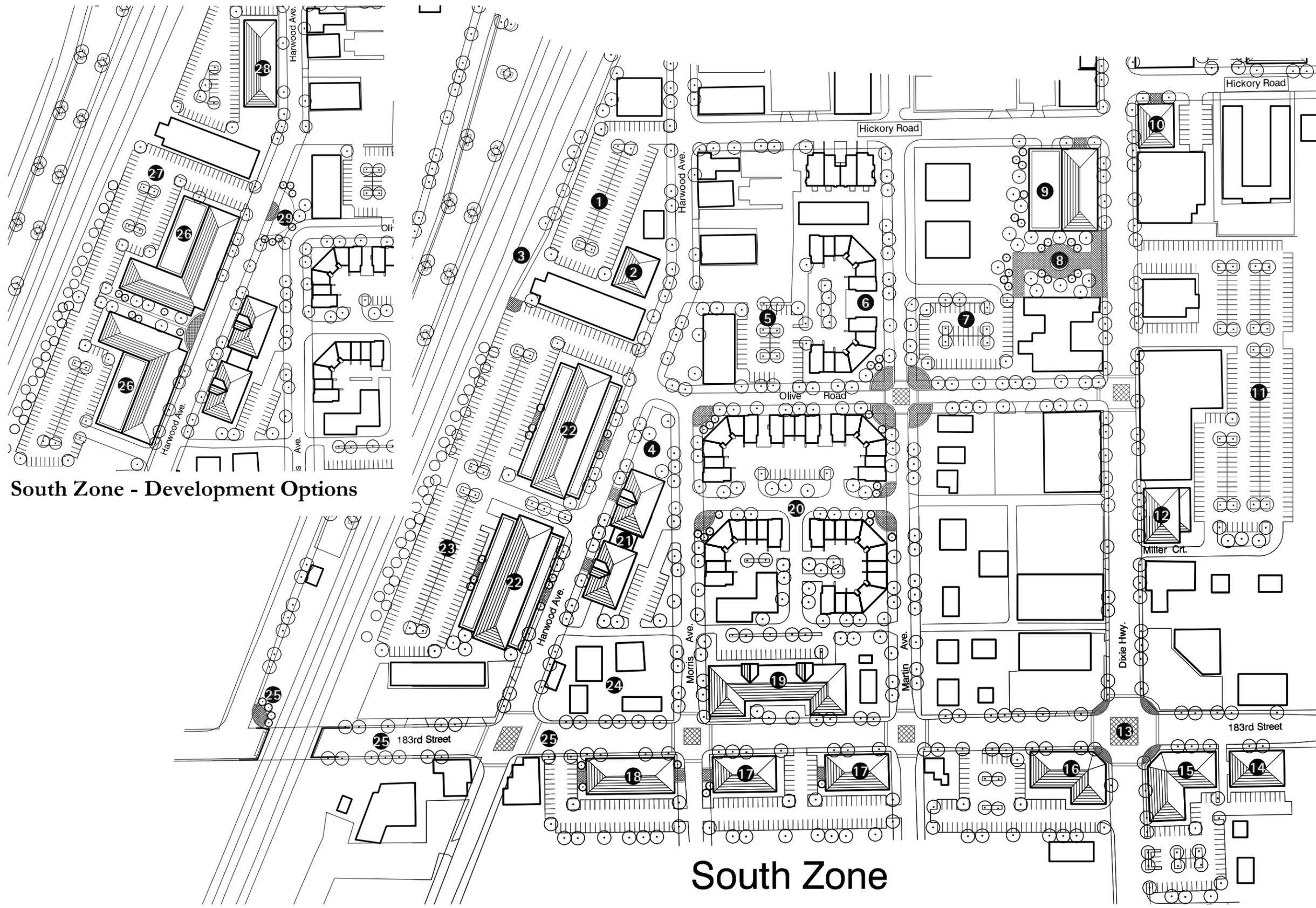


North Zone - Development Options



Downtown Plan: North Zone

- 1 Downtown Gateway Feature and Improved Viaduct
- 2 1-Story Office Building
8,500 square feet -45 parking spaces
- 3 Transitional Residential Use
- 4 Library Reading Garden
- 5 1-Story Retail Building
19,500 square feet
- 6 1-Story Retail Building
10,000 square feet
- 7 Shared Surface Parking Lot - 160 Spaces
- 8 3-Story Multi-Use Building
42,000 square feet
- 9 Pedestrian Promenade
- 10 (2) 4-Story Mixed-Use Buildings
25,000 square feet / 30 residential units each
- 11 Shared and Underground Parking
250 total spaces
- 12 2 Level Commuter Parking Deck - 260 spaces
- 13 Garden Park with Short Term & Overnight Parking
- 14 Rail Park
- 15 Improved Pedestrian Tunnel
- 16 Central Green and Realigned Martin Avenue
- 17 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
6,500 retail square feet / 10 residential units
- 18 Enhanced Gas Station with Reduced Curb Cuts
- 19 Reconfigured Church Parking Lot with Outdoor Playground for School
- 20 New Shared Parking Lot - 63 spaces
- 21 4-Story Mixed-Use Building
19,500 retail square feet / 45 residential units / 90 parking spaces
- 22 4-Story Mixed Use Building
7,500 retail square feet / 30 residential units / 23 parking spaces
- 23 New Parking Lot - 67 spaces
- 24 4-Story Condominium Building
20 residential units / 50 interior spaces
- 25 Proposed Train Viewing Platform
- DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS:**
- 26 4-Story Condominium Building
60 residential units / 177 interior spaces
- 27 Realigned Martin Avenue with Linear Plaza
- 28 2-Story Mixed-Use Building
17,000 retail square feet / 17,000 office square feet
- 29 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
15,000 retail square feet / 30,000 office square feet
- 30 Downtown Corner Plaza
- 31 4-Story Mixed Use Building w/ Outdoor Cafe
7,500 retail square feet / 30 residential units / 23 parking spaces
- 32 3-Story Parking Garage - 225 spaces



South Zone - Development Options

South Zone

**Downtown Plan:
South Zone**

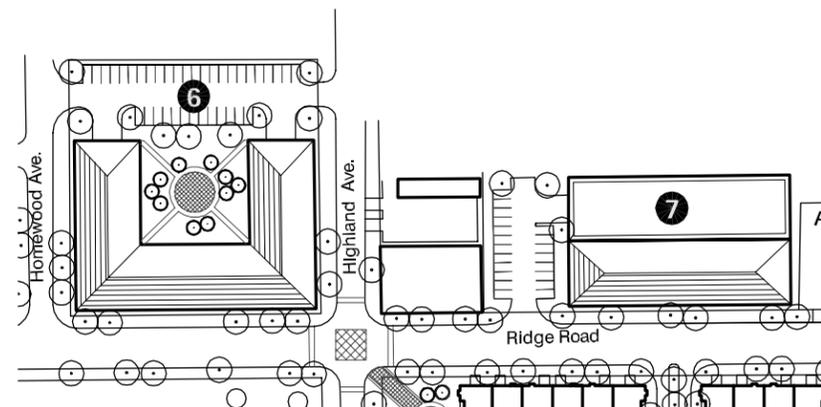
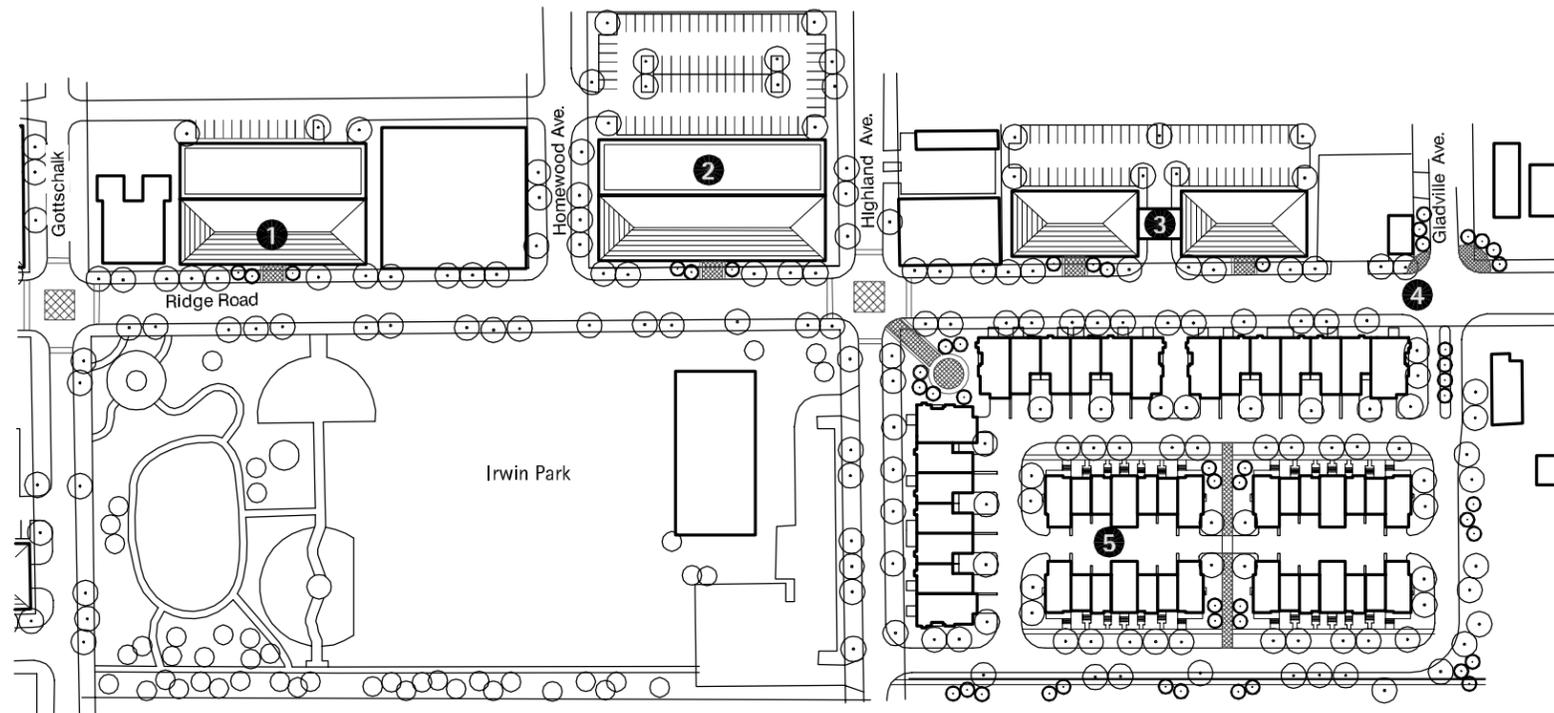
- 1 Shared Parking Lot - 112 parking spaces
- 2 2-Story Mixed-Use Building
5,000 retail square feet / 5,000 office square feet
- 3 Pedestrian Connection to Train Stations
- 4 New Corner Open Space
- 5 Shared Parking Lot - 39 parking spaces
- 6 16 Townhomes
- 7 Relocated Church Parking Lot - 59 parking spaces
- 8 Expanded / Relocated Independence Park
- 9 4-Story Mixed-Use Building
9,000 retail square feet / 24 residential units / 50 interior spaces
- 10 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
5,000 retail square feet / 12 residential units / 16 surface spaces
- 11 Surface Parking Lot - 264 parking spaces
- 12 1-Story Restaurant
8,000 square feet
- 13 Downtown Intersection & Gateway Feature
- 14 3-Story Residential Building
10 residential units / 18 interior parking spaces
- 15 2-Story Mixed-Use Building
11,500 retail square feet / 11,500 office square feet / 60 parking spaces
- 16 2-Story Mixed-Use Building
10,500 retail square feet / 10,500 office square feet / 77 parking spaces
- 17 (2) 2-Story Mixed-Use Buildings
7,500 retail square feet / 7,500 office square feet / 78 parking spaces
- 18 2-Story Mixed-Use Building
10,500 retail square feet / 10,000 office square feet / 63 parking spaces
- 19 4-Story Condominium Building
36 residential units / 77 total parking spaces
- 20 36 Townhomes with New Streetscape
- 21 4-Story Condominium Building
30 residential units / 61 total parking spaces
- 22 (2) 4-Story Mixed-Use Buildings
15,000 retail square feet / 30 residential units / 50 interior spaces each
- 23 Reconfigured Shared Parking Lots - 273 parking spaces
- 24 Enhanced Gas Station Sites
- 25 Downtown Gateway Feature, Improved Crosswalks and Viaduct
- DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS:**
- 26 (2) 4-Story Mixed-Use Buildings
12,500 retail square feet / 50 residential units / 33 parking spaces each
- 27 Reconfigured Shared Parking - 218 parking spaces
- 28 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
10,000 retail square feet / 18 residential units / 87 parking spaces
- 29 Expanded Veteran's Memorial

Downtown Plan: East Zone

- ① 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
12,000 retail square feet / 30 residential units / 73 parking spaces
- ② 4-Story Mixed-Use Building
14,500 retail square feet / 36 residential units / 133 parking spaces
- ③ 3-Story Mixed-Use Building
8,000 retail square feet / 18 residential units / 56 parking spaces
- ④ Downtown Gateway Feature
- ⑤ 48 Townhomes

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS:

- ⑥ 4-Story Condominium Building
72 residential units / 119 parking spaces
- ⑦ 4-Story Mixed-Use Building
14,000 retail square feet / 33 residential units / 120 parking spaces



East Zone - Development Options



Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 14: Northeast Corner of Ridge Road and Dixie Highway Development Concept



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Downtown Plan

Figure 15: Potential Viaduct Enhancements



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Downtown Plan

Figure 16: Entry Gateway and Mixed Use Development Concept



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Figure 17: Dixie Highway Streetscape Improvements



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Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 18: 183rd Street Streetscape and Redevelopment Concepts



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Village of Homewood

Master Plan

Downtown Zoning

ZONING MODIFICATIONS

To implement the Master Plan, existing zoning districts should be adjusted to accommodate more of a mixed-use, denser Downtown. The following modifications should be considered (See also Figure 19: Potential Zoning Modifications):

B-1, Central Business District

The primary zoning district in Downtown is the B-1, Central Business District. It should be maintained as the base zoning for Downtown with the following modifications:

Permitted and Special Uses

- Stand-alone multi-family residential buildings should not be permitted in B-1. The only residential units permitted in this district should be those that are above first-floor commercial uses.
- Funeral Homes should be permitted only as a special use in the B-1 District.
- Schools, other than trade or business schools, should be permitted only as a special use in the B-1 District.

Building Height

- Building height in the B-1 District should be changed from 5 stories or 50 feet to 4 stories without a height restriction.

Yard and Bulk Regulations

- The current 3.0 Floor Area Ratio requirement should be eliminated to allow for flexibility in designing 4-story buildings.

PL-2, Public Lands/Open Space District

The PL-2 District only need modification as follows:

- If Independence Park is relocated and expanded, the designation should be moved to the new location.
- If Veterans Memorial is expanded, the entire park should be in PL-2.
- The entire railroad corridor should zoned PL-2.

R-1, Single-Family Residential District

The only R-1 District in the Downtown is west of the tracks and across Park Avenue. No changes are seen in the near future.

R-2, Single-Family Residential District

The existing R-2 District in the south-central portion of the Downtown Study Area should be rezoned to allow higher residential density. The Master Plan assumes this area will remain residential but indicates future development with mid-density townhouses and higher density multi-family buildings. The R-2 District north of 183rd Street should be rezoned to R-4 to allow higher density. The R-2 District south of 183rd should be rezoned to B-1 to accommodate future mixed-use development.

R-3, Townhouse/Transition District

Two R-3 Districts within the Study Area should be rezoned to R-4 to allow higher density residential uses. The R-3 District west of the tracks and across Park Avenue should remain R-3 to allow a buffer between Downtown and adjacent single-family homes. The Master Plan also calls for an R-3 District southeast of Irwin Park.

R-4, Multiple-Family Residential District

The R-4 District should be expanded Downtown to be the primary residential zoning district. The area warrants higher density within a close proximity of the train station and core commercial blocks.

Bulk requirements allowed through the R-4 District also need to be further examined to potentially allow increased densities. In particular, the minimum lot area required for each dwelling unit needs further study. Current R-4 standards are as follows:

- Townhouse Dwellings – 4,300 s.f. per unit (10 units per acre)
- Multi-Family Dwellings – 3,100 s.f. per unit (14 units per acre)

Typical residential densities in a downtown focused on transit-oriented development generally range from 15 to 40 units per acre depending on community scale and character. An overlay zone district could be used just for Downtown so that the R4 districts do not need to be adjusted Village-wide.

ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT

A zoning overlay district should be considered for Downtown. An overlay zone would supplement the base zoning district regulations. The geographic area of the overlay zone would be indicated on the Village's official zoning map and could coincide with the Downtown boundaries. The overlay would supplement multiple zoning districts that currently exist throughout the area while allowing flexibility with increased densities, adjusted parking regulations, and stricter design controls. The primary purpose for a Downtown overlay zone would be:

- To allow increased residential density in R-4 up to 40 units per acre.
- To encourage first-floor retail on appropriate blocks.
- To allow 4-story residential buildings in R-3 and R-4 Districts.
- To allow reduced parking requirements in the Downtown while considering whether locations are near the train station or have opportunities for shared parking.
- To better regulate building, site, landscape, and signage design as enforced by the Site Plan Review Committee.

A single overlay for the Downtown can provide special provisions that apply just to the area. Regulations are applied spatially, and because Downtown boundaries have been identified, the overlay can be easily distinguishable on the zoning map.

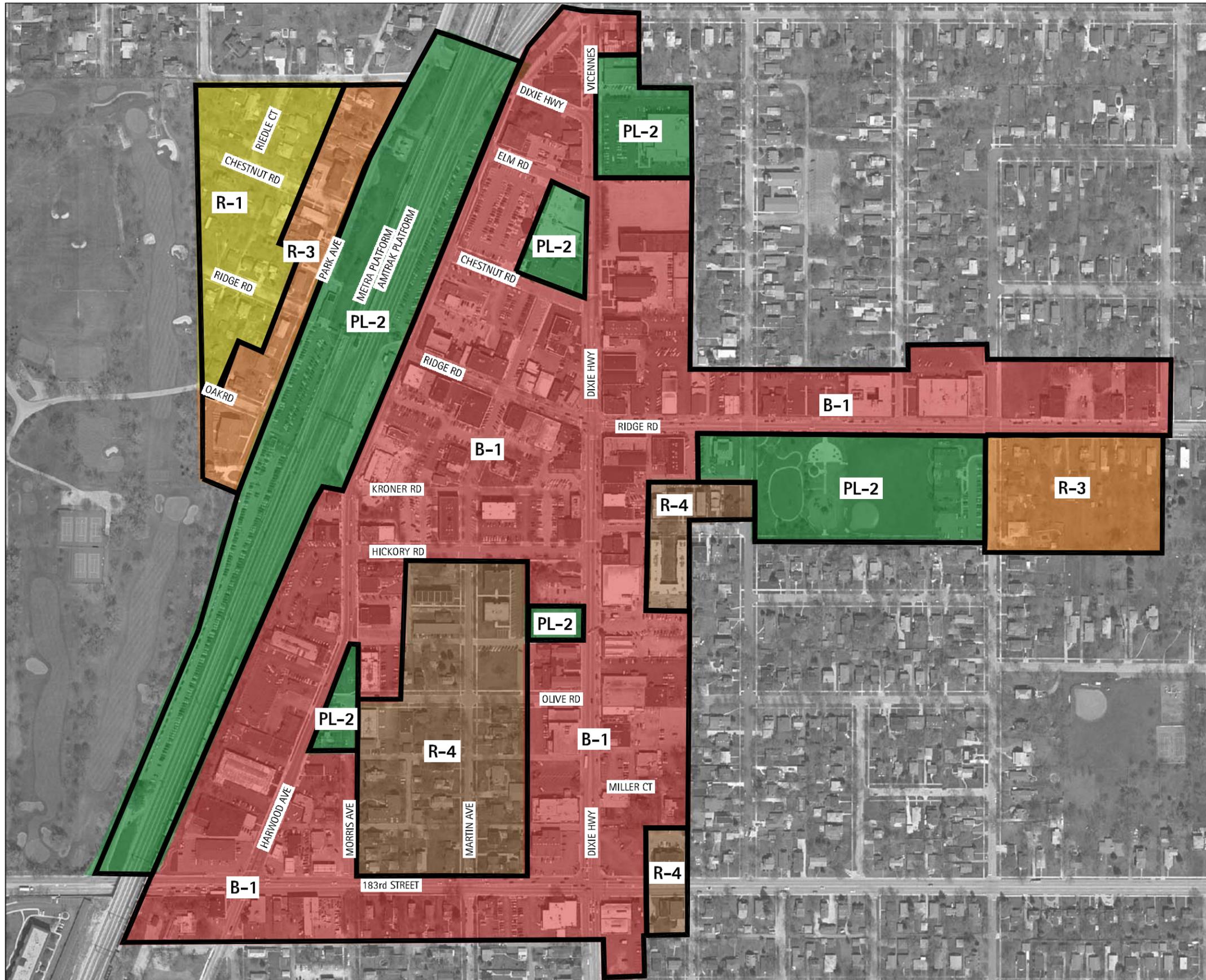
Parking requirements in the Downtown can also be augmented through an overlay zone. Typically the overlay would allow a reduction in required off-street parking spaces because of the proximity of the train station and potential for shared parking.

The Village's parking ratios require 2 spaces per single-family residence, 1.5 per multi-family residence and 3 to 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail or office floor area. An overlay zone could allow a reduction, for example, to 1 to 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit and 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial floor area.

It could also establish thresholds for requirements that would eliminate the need to provide parking for retail establishments under 2,000 square feet, or some other square footage as deemed appropriate by the Village because of the multi-block walking nature of the central shopping blocks.

An overlay zone could include more stringent or relaxed setback and height requirements and could allow the use of design guidelines for reviewing future development proposals.

Signage standards could also be included the overlay zone for Downtown. Business signage is an important design element that is sometimes overlooked or not associated with building design. Ensuring signage fits into the character of the building and overall Downtown design theme would be the primary reason for incorporating sign guidelines into an overlay zone.



Legend	
PL-2	Public Lands and Open Space District
R-1	Single Family Residential District
R-3	Townhouse/Transition District
R-4	Multiple Family Residence District
B-1	Central Business District

Village of Homewood, Illinois
Homewood Downtown Plan

Figure 19: Potential Zoning Modifications

Village of Homewood

Master Plan

Transportation

To address existing transportation issues and accommodate future development, the Master Plan incorporates numerous transportation improvements including increased parking, modifications to the roadway network serving the Study Area, new traffic signalization, and enhanced pedestrian facilities.

POTENTIAL TRAFFIC SIGNAL (183rd Street/Park Avenue)

Currently, Homewood experiences considerable pass-through traffic along Dixie Highway through the Downtown Study Area. Much of this traffic is regional, not originated from or destined to Downtown, and is using Dixie Highway to bypass congestion along Interstate 80.

To provide an alternative route, the 183rd Street/Park Avenue intersection is designated as a potential traffic signal location. Park Avenue at 183rd Street currently is under stop sign control and is restricted to southbound right turns only because of visibility issues. As a signalized intersection, vehicles could turn left from southbound Park Avenue to eastbound 183rd Street, thus allowing Park Avenue to act as an alternative route between Dixie Highway on the north and the east side of Homewood.

A traffic signal at the 183rd Street/Park Avenue intersection should be interconnected and coordinated with the existing signal system along 183rd Street between Governors Highway and Dixie Highway. In addition to installing a traffic signal, Park Avenue may need to be widened to provide an additional southbound turn lane at the intersection.

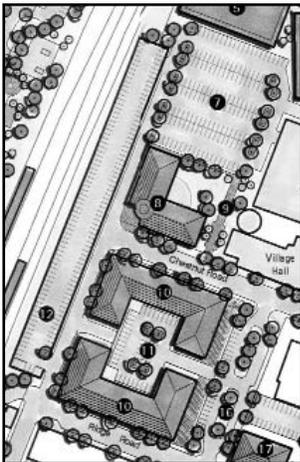
While not all traffic is expected to shift to Park Avenue, this alternate route will provide another option for drivers to bypass peak-hour traffic congestion along Dixie Highway in Downtown.

POTENTIAL TRAFFIC SIGNAL (Dixie Highway/Park Avenue)

As Park Avenue is established as an alternate route bypassing Dixie Highway through Downtown, the Dixie Highway/Park Avenue intersection may require the installation of a traffic signal in the future. This traffic signal would help serve northbound traffic along Park Avenue. A second benefit of a traffic signal at this



Recommendations for the Dixie Highway viaduct include improving its appearance as a gateway to Downtown.



A parking deck is shown as part of the redevelopment concept for the area between Village Hall and the railroad tracks.

location is that it clarifies right-of-way and may improve safety for vehicles and pedestrians at the intersection.

VIADUCT IMPROVEMENTS (at Dixie Highway)

Currently, the railroad viaduct spanning Dixie Highway is dark and unattractive for motorists and pedestrians and creates visibility issues. It is recommended that the Village pursue funding and coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the railroad companies to improve this grade-separated rail structure. Needed improvements include reducing sight visibility constraints, addressing stormwater and flooding issues, providing increased lighting, and enhancing the overall aesthetic appearance for motorists and pedestrians.

CLOSURE OF HARWOOD AVENUE (at Dixie Highway)

The Master Plan incorporates the closure of Harwood Avenue just south of Dixie Highway along with the parking access opposite Harwood Avenue on the north side of Dixie Highway. Currently, the close proximity of the intersection to the adjacent underpass creates vehicle-vehicle and vehicle-pedestrian safety issues. This roadway closure eliminates the vehicle and pedestrian conflicts immediately east of the grade-separated rail structure. Pedestrians will no longer conflict with turning vehicles immediately after passing under the railroad structure. Vehicles will no longer attempt to make dangerous turns from Harwood Avenue onto Dixie Highway without proper sightlines.

CONVERT EAST COMMUTER LOT TO PARKING DECK

To increase the number of commuter parking spaces serving the Metra station, the Master Plan includes converting the existing surface parking lot along the east side of the tracks to a two-level parking deck. The upper level would remain at or slightly above the existing grade and would be accessible at the south end of the lot. The lower level would be below the existing grade and would be accessible near the north end of the lot. To maximize the number of spaces and minimize the infrastructure, ramps between the two levels are not included. Access between the two levels would be available via Harwood Avenue. The existing surface parking lot provides 107 spaces. The two-level parking deck is estimated to provide approximately 254 spaces, resulting in an increase of 147 spaces. These spaces will serve commuters using

Village of Homewood

Master Plan

Metra and general public parking demand for nearby businesses and events.

CONVERT ELM STREET TO PARKING ACCESS

With the redevelopment of the properties south of Dixie Highway and east of Harwood Avenue as presented in the Master Plan, the parking serving the redeveloped properties and the municipal parking lot are consolidated. The consolidation of the parking includes converting Elm Street from a local roadway to a parking access.

CONVERT MARTIN TO TWO-WAY NORTH OF RIDGE

To improve access to the area bound by Dixie Highway on the north and east, Ridge Road on the south, and Harwood Avenue on the west, the Master Plan includes converting Martin Avenue north of Ridge Road to a two-way street with a landscaped median. Currently, this leg of Martin Avenue is one-way northbound. In addition to converting the street to a two-way street, the plan incorporates increasing the on-street parking from 15 to 19 spaces, resulting in a gain of 4 spaces.

An alternate configuration would have Martin Avenue remaining one-way northbound with additional on-street parking on the west side of the street. With this option, the number of on-street parking spaces on Martin Avenue north of Ridge Road increases from 15 to 37 for a gain of 22 spaces. Either configuration depends on the redevelopment of the adjacent bank site to allow room for traffic lanes or parking.

CONSIDER CLOSURE OF OLIVE AT HARWOOD

The plan illustrates the potential closure of Olive Road at Harwood Avenue. Long-term development options for this location would allow the memorial on the north side of Olive Road to be linked to the green space on the south side.

SURPLUS PARKING WEST OF HARWOOD AVENUE

As part of the Master Plan, the properties on the west side of Harwood Avenue and south of Olive Road would be redeveloped into mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail uses and residential condominiums above. This redevelopment includes 264 parking spaces to serve the new uses as well as surplus parking

to serve Metra commuters. Of the 264 spaces, the redeveloped retail and condominium uses will require 197 spaces, resulting in 67 surplus spaces for Metra commuters.

RAILWALK BETWEEN PARKING AND STATIONS

A convenient “railwalk” path is included to link the surplus parking provided for Metra commuters to the commuter station. This railwalk path would run along the east side of the railroad tracks linking the surplus parking spaces, created as part of the redevelopment of the properties west of Harwood Avenue and south of Olive Road, to the pedestrian underpass serving the Metra station. This path provides a safe, direct pedestrian route between the station and parking.

In addition to the specific transportation improvements incorporated in the Master Plan, a few general improvements are recommended to enhance transportation conditions within the Downtown. These recommendations are summarized below:

- **Establish Consistent Parking Restrictions:** On-street and off-street public parking spaces within the Downtown Study Area currently have numerous hourly restrictions. The inconsistent parking regulations can confuse visitors as well as hinder enforcement efforts. Hourly parking restrictions should provide enough time for visitors to be able to shop, eat, and make multi-purpose trips within the Downtown area without having to move their vehicle. At the same time, the restrictions should prevent Metra commuters and business employees from occupying public parking spaces throughout the day and limiting parking supply for shoppers. An hourly parking limit in Downtown Homewood should be consistently posted at 3 or 4 hours.
- **Develop Parking Maintenance and Enforcement Agreements with Downtown Businesses:** To address the maintenance and enforcement issues with business-owned parking lots within the Downtown Study Area, the Village and business owners should coordinate to establish a parking agreement. This agreement would help business owners to provide their customers with well-maintained parking and enforceable restrictions. The Village would be able to provide

Village of Homewood

Master Plan

consistent wayfinding for parking locations and enforce parking restrictions on business-owned lots.

- **Consider Removing On-Street Parking on Dixie Highway North of Ridge Road:** The Dixie Highway/Ridge Road intersection currently experiences peak-hour congestion and has little potential to increase capacity with physical improvements. To maximize the available pavement along Dixie Highway, on-street parking should be eliminated along the west side of Dixie Highway between Ridge Road and Chestnut Street. This removal of on-street parking will allow southbound through traffic to maneuver around left-turning vehicles that exceed the turn lane storage. If redevelopment occurs on the northeast corner of Dixie Highway/Ridge Road, on-street parking along the east side may be removed.
- **Utilize Shared Parking Opportunities:** Shared parking serves uses with different periods of peak parking demand, such as office and retail. Establishing shared parking areas maximizes the efficiency and utilization of available land and minimizes the area needed to provide parking.

The Master Plan for Downtown Homewood incorporates numerous transportation components. Potential traffic signals along Park Avenue at 183rd Street and Dixie Highway would help develop an alternate route for through traffic to bypass Downtown Homewood. Improvements to the Dixie Highway railroad structure and the closure of Harwood Avenue at Dixie Highway will improve safety conditions for vehicles and pedestrians. Additional commuter parking is included in the Plan by converting an existing surface lot to a two-level parking deck and providing surplus parking at redevelopment sites along Harwood Avenue south of Olive Street. Developing consistent hourly parking restrictions throughout the Downtown area and establishing an agreement with business owners will help direct visitors to convenient parking locations and improve parking enforcement.

Wayfinding and Signage

A wayfinding/signage plan has been prepared that identifies strategic locations for directional and identity signage. A clear, identifiable signage program that incorporates a special design theme will increase visibility and recognition of Downtown Homewood. The program should include the following types of signs:

- **External Directional Signs** – Placed throughout the Village to guide visitors and shoppers from expressways and major roads to Downtown.
- **Gateway Identity Signs** – Placed at key Downtown entrances and intersections.
- **Internal Directional Signs** – Placed within Downtown at key locations to guide visitors and shoppers to parking lots, Village Hall, the Library, Train Stations, and other activity generators.
- **Identity Signs** – Placed throughout the Downtown to reinforce the image and identity of Homewood.
- **Informational Kiosks** – Informative sign boards that provide transit/business/event information and Downtown Maps.

The following strategic locations should be considered for each sign type (see Figure 22 for the full Conceptual Signage System):

EXTERNAL DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

Eight potential locations have been identified to direct motorists to Downtown:

- Dixie Highway at North Village Limits
- Dixie Highway at South Village Limits
- 183rd Street at West Village Limits (Kedzie Avenue)
- 183rd Street at East Village Limits (Halsted Street)
- 183rd Street at Riegel Road
- Halsted Street at Ridge Road



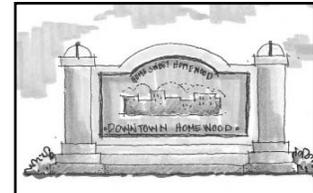
Village of Homewood

Master Plan

- Halsted Street at Maple Road
- Governor's Highway at Crescent Road

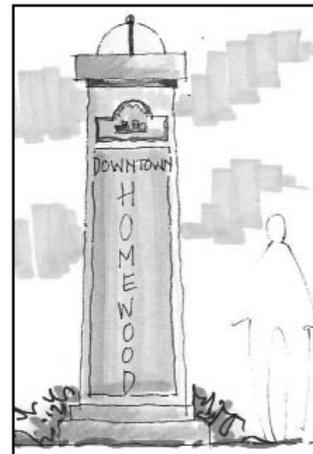
GATEWAY SIGNS

Downtown gateways should reflect the Village's character and history through the use of high-quality materials such as stone, masonry, and/or metal. They should provide residents and visitors with a sense of arrival into a special area within the community. Where room permits, landscaping and lighting should be incorporated into the gateway feature.



Potential locations for gateway signs have been identified to welcome visitors to Downtown Homewood:

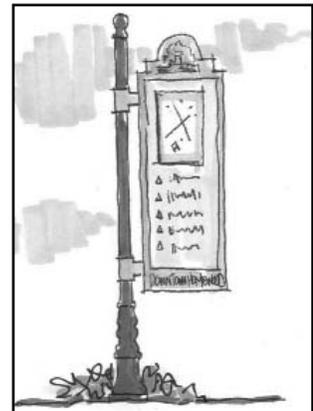
- Dixie Highway at Park Avenue (possibly on the Train Viaduct)
- Dixie Highway at Pine Road
- 183rd Street at Park Avenue (possibly on the Train Viaduct)
- 183rd Street at Dixie Highway
- Ridge Road at Gladville Avenue



INTERNAL DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

Directional signs should incorporate similar materials and mounting/bracketing systems to maintain consistency with the Village's existing signs, but could be designed to add unique elements, color, and/or graphics for Downtown. Potential locations have been identified for directional signage that directs motorists to parking areas and activity generators like Village Hall, the Library, Metra/Amtrak stations, Irwin Community Center, and Post Office. These signs could be located at the following locations:

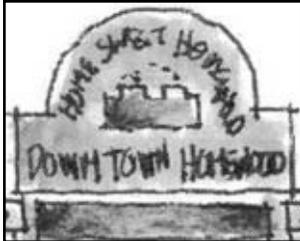
- 183rd Street at Harwood Avenue
- 183rd Street at Dixie Highway (Northbound Approach)
- 183rd Street at Dixie Highway (Westbound Approach)



- Harwood Avenue at Olive Road
- Harwood Avenue at Kroner Road
- Dixie Highway at Olive Road
- Dixie Highway at Hickory Road
- Dixie Highway at Kroner Road
- Dixie Highway at Elm Road
- Ridge Road at Gladville Avenue
- Ridge Road at Gottchalk Avenue
- Ridge Road at Dixie Highway

Further study of the specific locations for internal directional signs will be conducted during the signage design process.

IDENTITY SIGNS



Identity signs should be installed throughout the Downtown to provide area recognition. Identity signs can be placed anywhere that does not conflict with pedestrian or vehicular circulation. Signage types could include plaques or banners, which incorporate area colors, logos, or images. Permanent and temporary banners on light poles are one example of identity signs that could be located throughout Downtown. Ridge Road, Dixie Highway, and 183rd Street are appropriate locations for banners. Signs that identify Downtown parking lots will need property owner cooperation and coordination.

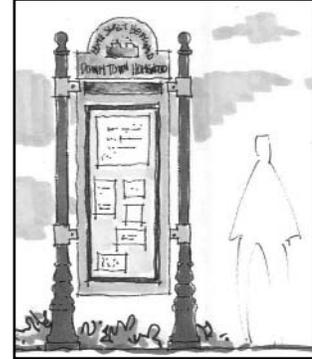
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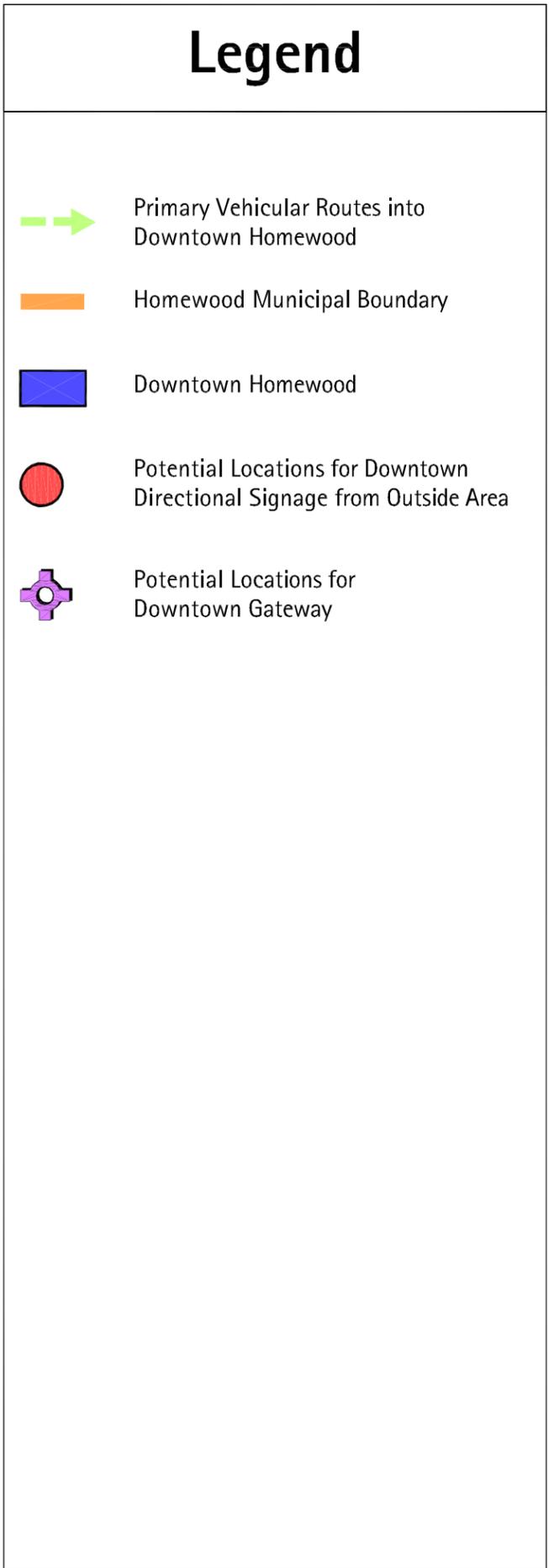
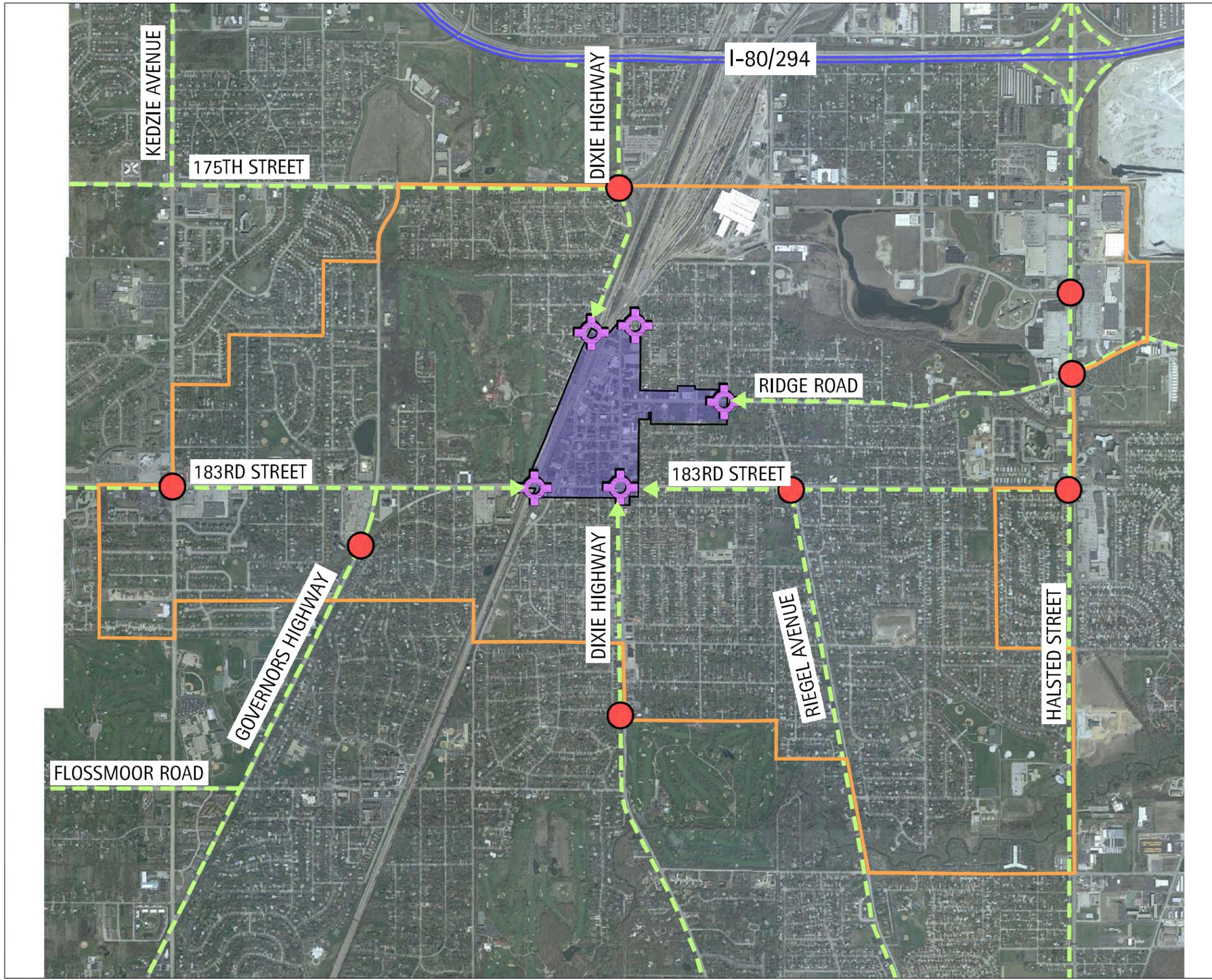
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INFORMATIONAL KIOSKS

Information kiosks should be considered for special locations in Downtown to provide information on area special events, notices, businesses and places of interest. Kiosks should be scaled for pedestrian use and could include maps, business and open space locations, event listings, and historical information. Potential locations for informational kiosks have been identified:

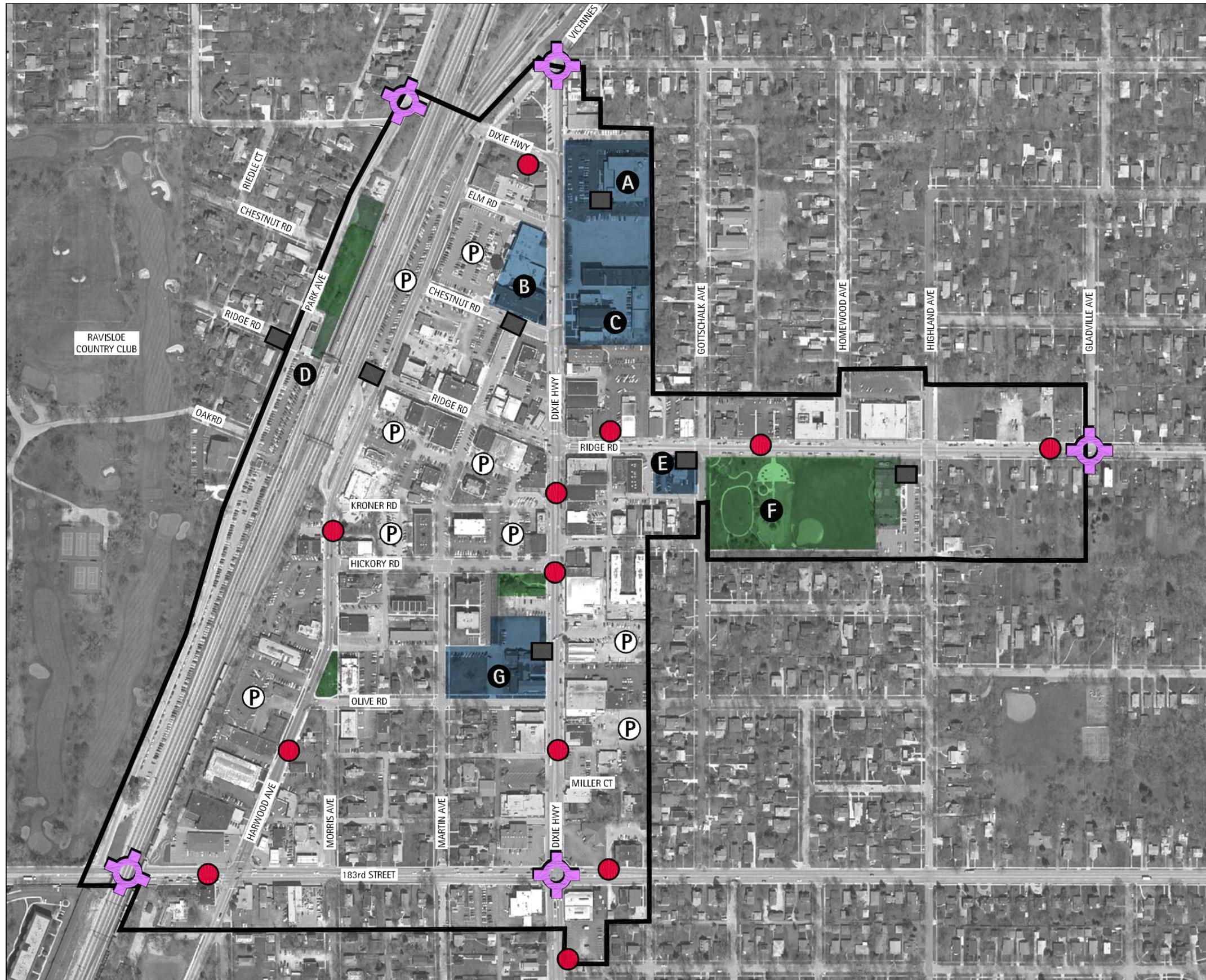
- Irwin Park Community Center
- St. Paul's Church
- Post Office
- Library
- Village Hall
- Train Station





Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 20: Regional Wayfinding to Downtown



Legend

Land Use

- Civic and Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Downtown Boundary

Signage

- Potential Downtown Gateways
- Potential Informational Kiosk Locations
- Potential Downtown Directional Signage Locations
- P Potential Downtown Shared Parking Lots

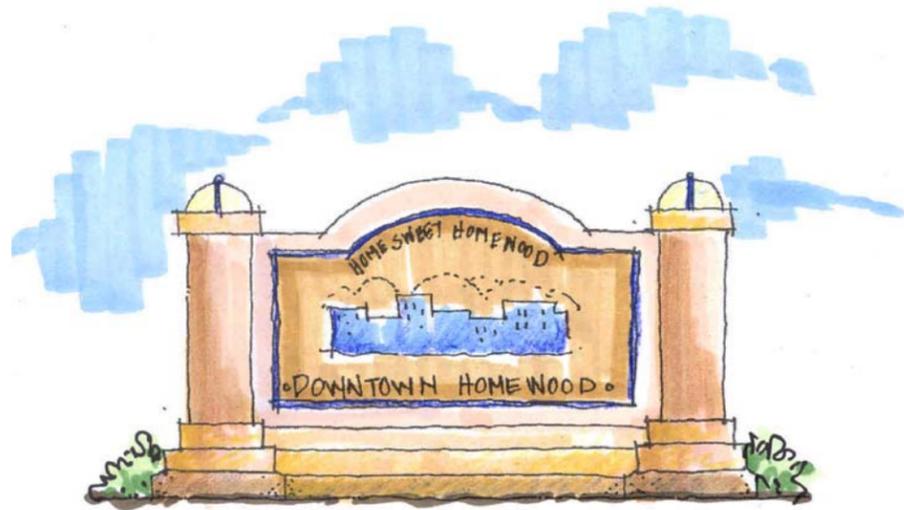
Activity Generators

- A Library
- B Village Hall
- C St. Joseph's Church
- D Metra/ Amtrak Stations
- E Post Office
- F Irwin Park
- G St. Paul's Church

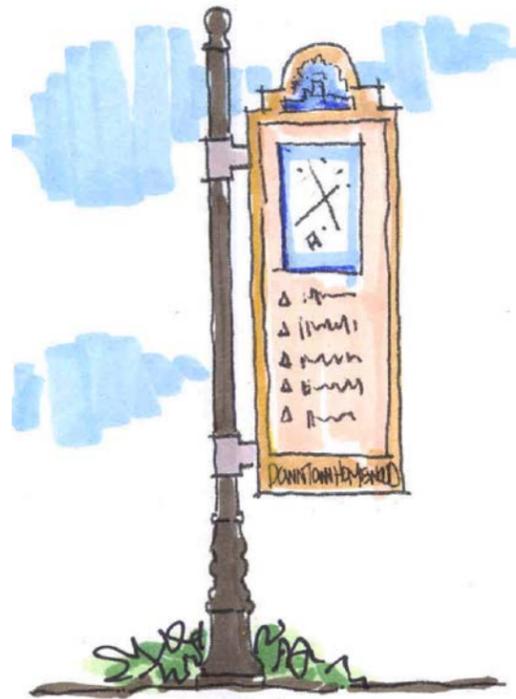
Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 21: Downtown Wayfinding/Signage

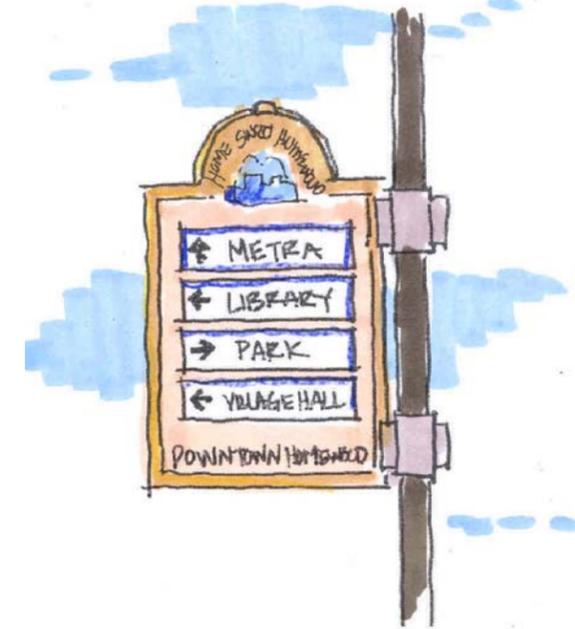




1 Downtown Major Gateway Feature



2 Stand Alone Directional Sign



3 Mounted Directional Sign



4 Decorative Street Sign & Pole



5 Informational Kiosk



6 Downtown Gateway Pier

Village of Homewood, Illinois
Downtown Plan

Figure 22: Conceptual Downtown Signage System

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Design Guidelines



Building holding a corner.

SITE DESIGN

Building Setbacks

- New construction should have a zero-setback from the street property line where possible to reinforce the streetwall. Existing buildings set back from the sidewalk should include landscaping and fencing to maintain the streetwall and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Corner buildings should have a zero-setback from the street and the secondary street property line to hold or frame site corners along both street frontages. Interesting architectural elements at the corner should be encouraged.
- New construction should have a zero-setback from the interior side property line unless necessary for pedestrian access through the site.
- Gangways and narrow alleys between buildings are discouraged unless necessary for pedestrian access to and from parking areas to front entrances.
- Where gangways and narrow alleys between buildings exist, they should be gated with decorative fencing and/or arches, lit with decorative fixtures, or clearly signed for visibility and security if they are used for pedestrian access.
- Primary store entrances should be located along the primary street frontage, with secondary entrances located behind or along a secondary street.
- Setbacks are allowed and encouraged if an outdoor café is planned. The village will determine the appropriate setback distance required.



Parking behind buildings with improved rear facades.

Parking Areas

- Parking spaces and lots should be at the rear of the building where possible. Parking areas in front of buildings are discouraged. Shared parking between businesses and uses in lots and decks is encouraged wherever possible.
- Dedicated parking for single businesses is discouraged. Shared parking should be considered to minimize the visual impact of land devoted to parking and to provide parking more efficiently.
- Parking curb cuts along the street should be minimized and businesses encouraged to share access points.
- Owners, employees, and residents should park on secondary streets, in the rear of parking lots, or in future parking decks rather than occupy spaces on primary streets or prime parking areas.
- Parking areas should be screened with fencing and landscaping if they cannot be located behind buildings.
- Parking area lighting should be designed to Village standards and minimize impact to surrounding properties.
- Parking areas should be designed to accommodate snow removal and storage.

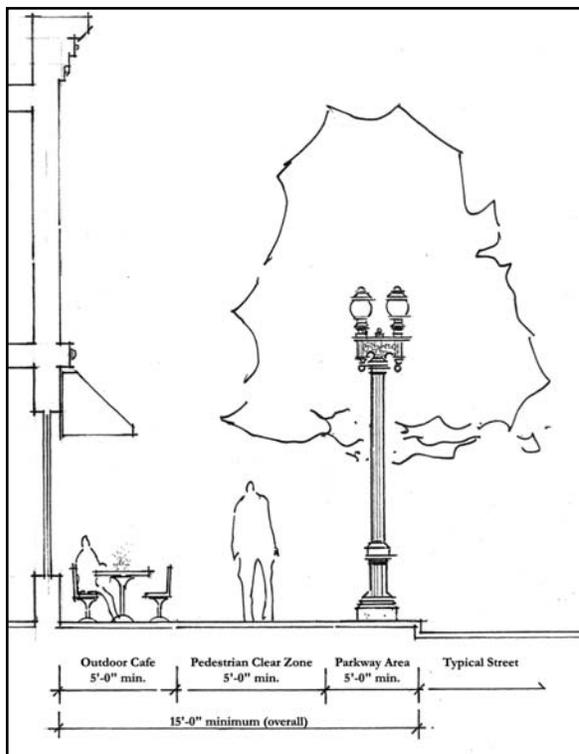
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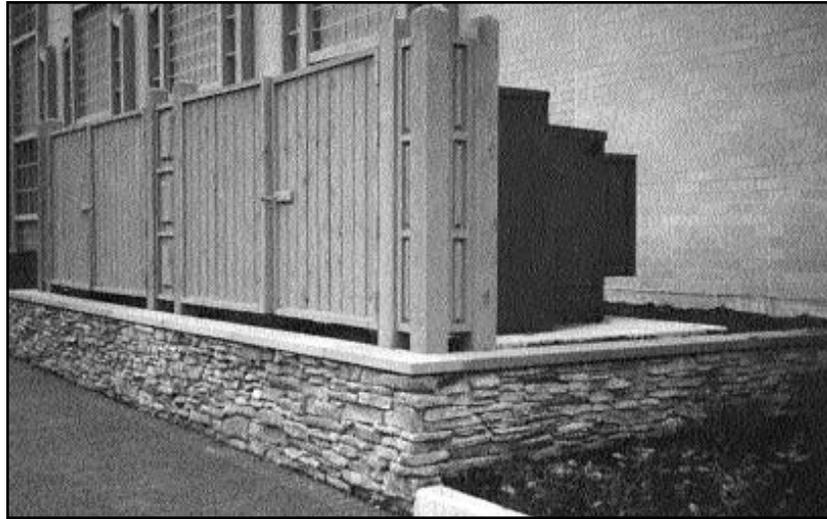
- All new development in the Downtown should enter into parking lot enforcement agreements with the Village of Homewood.

Outdoor Cafes

- Outdoor cafes/seating areas are encouraged throughout Downtown to make the street more active and enhance the overall pedestrian-oriented character.
- Outdoor cafes should allow at least 5 feet of sidewalk clear space to maintain proper circulation. Second-story terraces and recessed café spaces for outdoor dining are encouraged where sidewalk space is limited. Second-story terraces or recessed cafes should be integrated into the design of restaurants when possible
- Outdoor cafes should be defined with removable decorative fencing, pavers, walls, and/or landscaped planters.



Optimal sidewalk widths for outdoor cafes, parkway zones, pedestrian movement, and landscaping.



Screened utility/trash area

Service Areas

- Accessory service areas behind buildings are not always designed in a manner consistent with the front or sides, and are often visible to pedestrians. Loading, trash, and utility areas should be incorporated into site plans and building designs.
- Loading, trash, and utility areas should be enclosed and screened from street and sidewalk views. Screening materials should complement adjacent buildings and be effective in every season.
- Loading, trash, and utility areas adjacent to a building should be designed as an integral component of the building.
- Single loading, trash, and utility areas for businesses are discouraged. Shared service areas between businesses should be considered for ease of maintenance and improved aesthetics.
- Loading, trash, and utility areas should be designed to accommodate snow removal and storage.

BUILDING DESIGN

- Building design in the Downtown should be oriented toward pedestrians and transit. To maintain an active pedestrian environment, buildings should be oriented toward streets, sidewalks, and/or public plazas.

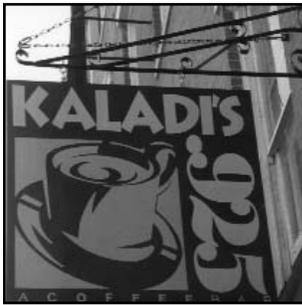
Village of Homewood

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- Architectural design should articulate and enhance buildings, especially those at street corners because of their prominence and visibility. Where appropriate, features such as a cupola, atrium, clock tower, and/or varying rooflines should be considered to add visual interest to the Downtown.
- Architectural design at the ground level should reflect and preserve the quaint retail street character of Homewood.
- Building orientation, setbacks, and design elements should encourage continuity between developments.
- Retail and other active uses are strongly encouraged at the ground level.
- Building entries on mixed-use buildings should be clearly defined and articulated to decipher between residential and retail entrances.
- Rear building entrances and facades should be designed in a manner consistent with the front and side facades, especially when parking is located behind buildings.
- Rear parking lots should be clearly defined for each building/use. Access to rear parking lots should be clearly defined and visible from the street.

Scale & Massing

- Building scale and massing should be determined by the relationship of the subject site to adjacent structures. Buildings should maintain the streetwall rhythm and relate to secondary building facades. Rehabilitations and additions to existing buildings should also respect these relationships and contribute to the overall continuity of the streetwall. Recessing of residential components of mixed-use development should be encouraged in all new development and required of any building over three stories tall.
- New development should be designed to provide a seamless transition between differing uses and adjacent buildings through the use of step backs, building design elements, landscaping, and/or screening.



Blade sign examples

Building Heights

- Building heights within the Downtown should not exceed four stories. However, in all instances building heights should respect surrounding uses, streetscape context, building scale and massing and design.
- Building heights in Downtown should respect the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Buildings in the two- to four-story range are appropriate for the Ridge Road and Dixie Highway corridor because of existing scale, massing, and adjacent residential uses.

BUSINESS SIGNAGE

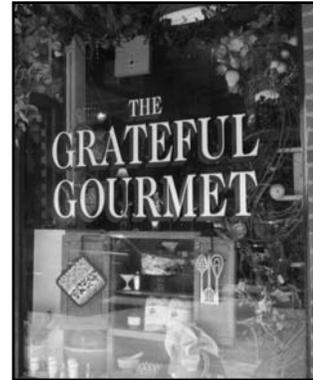
- Business identity signs can take a variety of forms, and a range of business signage options should be encouraged. These include:
 - Wall or Building Mounted Signs
 - Window Lettering
 - Small Overhanging or Blade Signs
- Business signs that are discouraged include:
 - Neon Signs
 - Fabric Banners
 - Backlit Plastic Signs
- Window lettering, either painted or vinyl-applied, is also encouraged to minimize visual clutter along the street, but should also be proportional to the size of the window. Coordinating and balancing the size of signage creates a more attractive streetscape that minimizes competition between sign messages.
- Business signs should be proportional to the building facade and oriented toward viewing by pedestrians. These signs should not project more than 3 feet from the face of the building.
- Business signage should be simple and incorporated into a building's architecture. Such signs should serve to identify a

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business, while contributing to the attractiveness and pedestrian friendliness of Downtown. The quality, size, placement, and look of signs should all be considered in the overall design of the building.

- Decorative overhanging or blade signs should be allowed in Downtown with the size controlled and coordinated with a building's façade design. Decorative "icon" signs such as coffee cups, barber poles, toothbrushes, and ice cream cones should be considered. Sign brackets, hardware, and lighting systems should be kept to a minimum and screened or incorporated as decorative elements in the overall building design.
- Decorative overhanging or blade signs should not exceed 6 square feet in size with a maximum height of 3 feet and placed at a minimum 9 feet above the sidewalk. They should extend no more than 3 feet from the face of the building.
- Business signs that protrude from building facades should be oriented to pedestrian rather than vehicular traffic in size and placement.
- Overhanging signs should be limited to one sign per business, including "icon" signs.
- Signs should be constructed of high-quality, solid, and durable materials.
- Sign colors and materials should be consistent with the colors and materials of the building and awnings.
- Business signs should be placed on the front of buildings only, unless the building is on a corner.
- Business signs should not obstruct or obscure architectural details or significant architectural elements.
- Business signs should be placed at least 1 foot below the cornice lines of buildings.
- Sign lighting should be carefully considered in the building design. Back-lit panel signs are discouraged. If direct lighting is used, glare, brightness, visible hardware, and maintenance issues should be addressed. Strategically placed lamp fixtures



Window lettering example



Decorative trash can

that are compatible with the sign design and building architecture are encouraged for illuminating signs.

- Reader-board signs and billboards should not be placed anywhere in the Downtown.

Temporary Signage

- Temporary signs, window pin-ups and flyers should be avoided.

STREETSCAPE/LANDSCAPE

- An attractive and effective streetscape will provide visual continuity from block to block and define the Downtown as a special place.
- The current streetscape design installed along Ridge Road and some parts of Harwood Avenue and Dixie Highway should be continued throughout the Downtown, especially on streets that provide important pedestrian links to activity generators.
- An effective and efficient street lighting system consistent with the character of the community is encouraged.
- The developer is responsible for installing Village-approved streetscaping within all new developments in the Downtown.
- Painted and/or paved crosswalks should be provided at important intersections.
- All paths and pedestrian-ways should be Americans with Disabilities Act accessible.
- All plazas and open space must be designed to meet ADA requirements.
- Decorative metal benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks should be provided at high-activity pedestrian areas, such as important intersections in the Downtown.
- Decorative stands for newspaper vending machines should be considered to consolidate clutter and screen views.
- Pedestrian paths, bicycle routes, and multi-purpose trails are encouraged throughout the Downtown to provide strong

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Decorative newspaper rack



Public art

connections to activity generators. These paths should incorporate decorative pavers, lighting, and seating.

- Additional plazas and open spaces should be considered as parts of new development or redevelopment.
- Decorative planters should be placed in plazas and along pedestrian paths and sidewalks where they will not impede safe flow of pedestrians.
- Decorative paving such as brick, clay pavers, stone, or stamped concrete should be considered when designing the hardscape for new plazas and open spaces.
- Existing and future open spaces should incorporate special features such as fountains, artwork, plantings, and other elements.



Public art

Streetscape Elements – More Examples



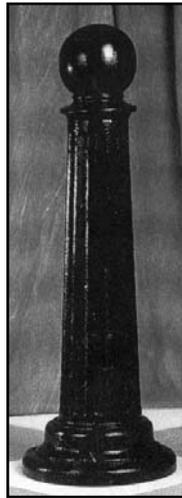
Decorative trash cans



Decorative bench



Bollards



Clock tower



Water fountain



Fountain/decorative pavers



Fountain/public art

Village of Homewood

Implementation

SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION

A major commitment will be needed by the Village and business/property owners to develop opportunity sites in the Downtown to further promote Downtown Homewood as a thriving mixed-use district. An implementation strategy for the Master Plan should include the following components:

- Identification of Priority Projects
- Village Code Changes
- Expanded Role for Site Plan Review Committee
- Building Improvement Program
- Continued Streetscape Design/Engineering/Construction
- Capital Improvement Programming
- Common Parking Easements
- Developer Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

There are a variety of funding sources that may have potential to address building, streetscape, infrastructure, and development projects in the Downtown, including:

- Special Service Area Financing
- Business Improvement District
- Business Development District
- Tax Increment Financing (Homewood already has a Downtown TIF)

The Village should begin implementation by further examining these programs as well as other potential funding sources such as State and Federal funding and grant programs.

Priority Projects

The following should be considered as priority or first phase projects for implementation:

- Northeast corner of Ridge Road and Dixie Highway
- Northwest corner of Ridge Road and Martin Avenue

- Village Hall Parking Lot Site Redevelopment
- Train Station/Pedestrian Tunnel Improvements
- Independence Park Relocation/Redevelopment
- Expanded Streetscape and Street Furniture
- Harwood Avenue Closure at Dixie Highway

Village Code Changes

The Village should further review all codes related to Downtown to determine revisions needed to accommodate the physical changes and development scenarios recommended in the Master Plan. Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance have been identified in the previous section of this report.

Site Plan Review Committee

The Village should consider expanding the role of the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) to further assist Staff and Plan Commission with the review of architectural, landscaping, site, and signage design aspects of development projects. The expanded authority or role of the SPRC could be limited to projects in the Downtown or Village-wide.

The SPRC, along with Staff and appointed/elected officials, would use the Master Plan and its recommendations, Design Guidelines and development concepts to review new development proposals, as well as existing building improvement projects. The SPRC could also assist Staff and Plan Commission in reviewing/revising the Village development codes and establishing a comprehensive building improvement program for Downtown.

Building Improvement Program

A key first step toward the revitalization of existing buildings should be a coordinated program for improving deteriorated and unattractive buildings. Such a program could include:

- A more detailed building conditions study for selected properties.
- Design drawings for visible building walls/facades by one

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Implementation

architect hired by several property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, or the Village.

- Inclusion of several buildings into one construction package to reduce costs and create a more dramatic and immediate physical change.
- Shared financing through special loan programs by local banks and/or matching grant programs using designated funding sources such as Tax Increment or Special Service Area financing.

Streetscape Design and Construction

Another critical step in the Downtown improvement process will be the continued enhancement of the streetscape and pedestrian areas. Areas that already have implemented the Village streetscape palette should be maintained. The overall streetscape theme should be continued to address the following items:

- Special Paving on Corners/Crosswalks
- Landscaping
- Planters and Tree Grates
- Benches/Trash Cans/Ash Trays
- Newspaper Corrals
- Lighting
- Bike Racks
- Gateways/Signage/Kiosks

Capital Improvement Programming

Funding sources will need to be identified in the Village Capital Improvement Program budget to finance projects sponsored or owned by the Village. If capital improvements need to be phased based on funding availability, then the following should be targeted.

- Harwood Avenue Closure at Dixie Highway
- Wayfinding and Signage Improvements

- Updated Streetscape
- Veterans Park Expansion

Common Parking Easements

The limited amount of available land within Downtown requires innovative solutions to provide more parking, or to clarify perceptions over the lack of available parking. Common parking easements may be a way to address this need while linking and sharing parking lots.

A parking easement could:

- Increase parking supply via redesigned lots and/or sharing parking within lots.
- Improve traffic circulation of multiple-stop shoppers along Dixie Highway.
- Enhance physical conditions, improve parking lots, and increase maintenance
- Possibly reduce parking lot ownership costs through economies of scale.

A common parking easement could be structured as follows:

- Property owners would allow common use of private parking lots and interconnected driveways.
- The lots would then be reconfigured and connected across adjacent properties.
- An independent third party would assume responsibility for maintaining the easements (parking lots) including reconstruction, cleaning, painting, repairing, and snow removal.
- Property owners would pay a proportional fee for such services. The fee would be based on lot size under Special Service Area or Business Improvement District financing.
- All shared lots should have decorative perimeter fencing, efficient lighting, and appropriate landscaping.

Village of Homewood

Implementation

The Village should research the feasibility of establishing a common parking easement for existing and future parking areas throughout Downtown, especially along the Dixie Highway corridor.

Parking Enforcement

To address the current problem of spillover commuter parking demand occupying private parking that serves Downtown businesses, the Village should actively pursue enforcement agreements with private parking lot owners. These agreements will allow the Village to ticket parking violators as well as provide identifying signage to direct Downtown visitors searching for parking. The enforced parking lots will help ensure that parking is utilized to its fullest potential.

Developer Recruitment

The Village should issue Requests for Proposals for the development of the Village Hall parking lot.

The Bank site and Tom's Restaurant site, which would involve several property owners, are other short-term development opportunities. However, because the Village does not control these sites, it would not seek proposals from developers. Cooperation of the property owners, possibly with coordinating assistance from Village staff, could help get these key sites ready for developer solicitation.

Funding Sources

SPECIAL SERVICE AREA

A Special Service Area (SSA) is a state-authorized financing program that can be administered by the Village that provides financing resources for a specific area. Special tax assessments are paid by the property owners in a designated area. An SSA is initiated by property and business owners wanting certain services above those already provided by the Village, or other services not provided such as advertising, marketing, parking, loan programs, capital improvements, and maintenance.

A group of contiguous property owners vote to form as SSA consisting of all properties that would benefit from the services and elect to levy an additional property tax to pay for the services. If approved by the Village Board, the tax would be levied and distributed to the SSA on an annual basis.

A Special Service Area Commission is formed with representatives of businesses and property owners to collect the funds and administer the services. The Commission, along with the Village, would hold public meetings to discuss the benefits of the SSA with the community. The entire process to establish an SSA can take between six and 12 months. An SSA is a useful implementation tool for improving, managing, and maintaining commercial districts and should be considered for the Downtown.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a state-authorized development program that municipalities can establish for improving designated areas. The benefits of BIDs include:

- Use of eminent domain for acquiring property for redevelopment projects.
- Acquisition, management conveyance, or disposition of property according to redevelopment plan.
- Acceptance of grants/loans from the Federal or State government.
- The right to borrow funds and issue bonds as deemed necessary.
- The right to enter into contracts with any public or private agency or person.
- The rights to sell, lease, trade, or improve real property acquired in connection with the Master Plan.
- The ability to employ persons as necessary for planning, administration, and implementation of the Master Plan.
- The ability to expend public funds as necessary for planning, administration, and implementation of the Master Plan.

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- The ability to establish by ordinance or resolution, procedures for planning, administration, and implementation of the Master Plan.
- The ability to create a commission to act as the agent for the Village for Master Plan redevelopment.

The advantage of a BID is the versatility in using its powers and funds for a wider range of initiatives and activities that are available under an SSA. The BID could be an effective tool for the Village and should be further investigated.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a state-authorized program that is administered by the Village to provide targeted financial resources for a specific redevelopment area. Homewood has a downtown TIF.

A TIF District is structured as follows:

- Property values in the designated area are established at a base point to represent the base value.
- All government entities with property taxing authority in the area continue to receive tax revenue generated from the “base value.”
- The incremental tax value created by development is taxed at the overall rate levied by governments.
- The tax revenue generated from the incremental property value is distributed to the TIF fund administered by the Village to pay for eligible redevelopment costs.

Eligible costs include TIF Studies, property acquisition, demolition, rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, certain financing costs, job training, and environmental remediation.