

# *City of Elmhurst*

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Imagining The Future: Community-Wide And Sub-Area Plans

Prepared by: **HNTB**

April 2009





# Acknowledgements

## acknowledgments

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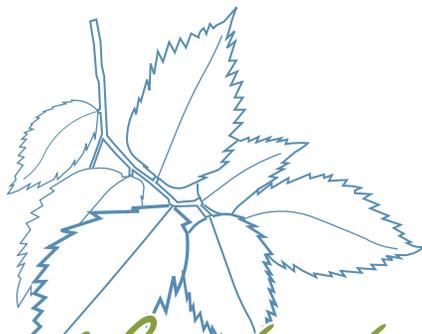
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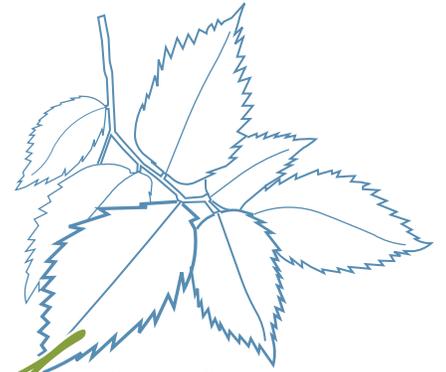
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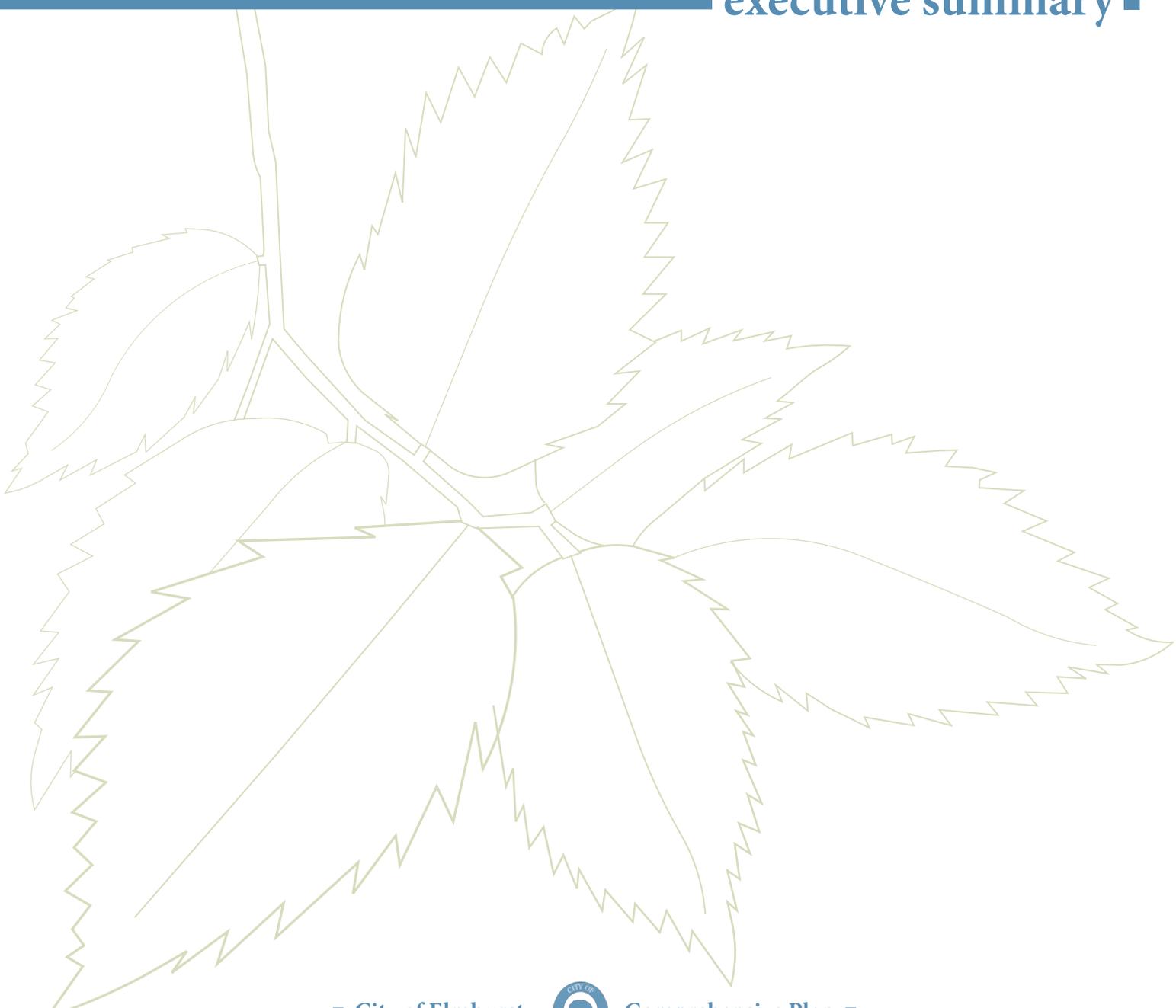
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*Executive Summary*  
■ executive summary ■





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Elmhurst's Comprehensive Plan is the chief tool for guiding and facilitating growth and redevelopment within the community, as well as planning for the delivery of public services in a timely and efficient manner. A comprehensive plan is a long-range document that is geographically comprehensive and generally plans decades into the future. This Comprehensive Plan was prepared through the intensive efforts of City residents and leaders. The Comprehensive Plan is a formally adopted statement of policies that articulates a future vision for Elmhurst and describes the actions that City decision-makers can take to turn this vision into reality. These actions include capital improvements, development controls and incentives, and partnerships with other levels of government, non-profit organizations, or private businesses to achieve specific objectives.

The Comprehensive Plan process followed a vigorous public participation process that included the following phases:

- **Citizen Outreach and Vision:** Activities focused on garnering citizens' views regarding current and future needs of the community through interviews and community workshops.
- **Community Scan:** A document analyzing existing conditions of the community (Community Scan Report, July 2007; HNTB).
- **Imagining the Future:** A preliminary draft of the future framework for the City, including detailed sub-area plans for nine areas within the community. (Imagining the Future: Preliminary Community-wide and Sub-area Plans, April 2008; HTNB).
- **Vision Program Documentation:** The Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of the extensive stakeholder participation process, and reflects the aspirations, goals and vision for Elmhurst that were articulated within the first three phases of this planning effort. The final document has been developed for community review and adoption, and includes the community's preferred future land use and development framework, policy framework, and recommends a series of actions for achieving the plan's goals and objectives.

In the Vision of Elmhurst, the City is recognized as a unique community that is an integral part of the larger region. The Vision addresses the following elements:

- Collaborative Governance,
- Quality Design and Urban Form,
- Economic Competitiveness,
- An Efficient Transportation System,
- Quality Community Facilities and Services, and
  - Strong Neighborhoods.

The Vision forms the core of the Comprehensive Plan and provided a policy framework through which key community planning elements, including, land use and development, transportation, economic development, housing, community facilities and services, natural resources, sustainability, and urban design, are addressed.

The major policies contained in each of the elements are summarized below. While presented separately, the individual policies are designed to work together to support realization of the Vision. Actions that the City can take to improve its transportation system, for example, are key to realizing the Plan objectives of promoting the recommended future land use pattern, providing residents with access to employment opportunities, and encouraging investment in the sub-areas. Similarly, the strategy of encouraging reinvestment in existing housing, a cornerstone of the Plan, will enhance neighborhood vitality, stimulate economic activity and increase the City's tax base.



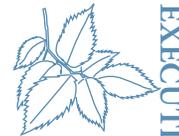
## SUMMARY OF PLAN ELEMENTS

### Land Use and Development

The Future Land Use Framework is intended to provide a blueprint of the future development pattern of the City of Elmhurst by indicating the type and organization of uses that would most effectively help the City meet its comprehensive planning goals. The land use plan works in conjunction with the Zoning Ordinance, a regulatory tool that guides implementation of the land use plan. The Future Land Use Framework is a policy guide intended to provide general direction over the life of the Comprehensive Plan, while the zoning ordinance defines allowable uses on specific parcels of land. A major focus of the land use strategy is to update the City's zoning code to reflect goals, objectives and policies recommended in the Plan, which include:

- Reinforcing mixed use development in designated locations, such as downtown and in sub-areas,
- Maintaining strong residential neighborhoods by protecting the quality of existing housing stock and ensuring compatibility of rehabilitated homes,
- Sustaining the downtown and Cultural Campus as a vibrant and distinctive destination and encouraging high-density residential development to foster an active economic center,
- Expanding commercial and employment development to meet community service needs and support a higher standard of living,
- Encouraging the creation of community visual identity through the utilization of design elements, and
- Ensuring that the design of development supports and does not adversely impact adjacent land uses.





## Transportation

In Elmhurst it is possible to enjoy a small-town quality of life that is within commuting distance of the region’s major economic activity centers. The backbone of the city’s transportation system is the grid street network which is complemented by the city’s excellent access to highways and mass transit. During the next ten years, traffic is likely to increase due to redevelopment, increases in density within the community and neighboring municipalities, and Elmhurst’s location along a potential high-capacity roadway that would provide access to O’Hare International Airport. Future transportation challenges may include:

- Facilitating adequate traffic circulation throughout the city while retaining a sense of scale and place,
- Designing streets that do not adversely affect residential neighborhoods,
- Providing adequate parking facilities in commercial and employment areas that are contextually sensitive and do not visually dominate the landscape; and
- Encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation, including walking, biking and mass transit.



Location Map

## Economic Development

Elmhurst’s location at the intersection of multiple highways, proximity to regional population centers, availability of commuter rail service, and high-quality workforce have geographically and demographically positioned the city for

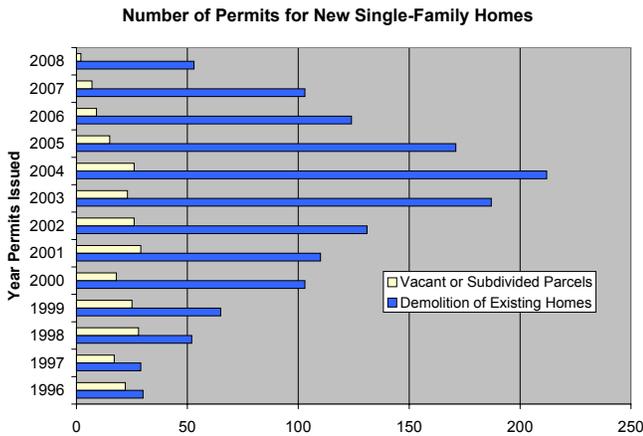
sustained economic growth. The challenge is to maintain and improve the city’s function as a regional employment center and encourage and support development that increases the tax base. Strategies to meet this challenge must be broad-based and should include:

- Diversifying the economy to expand the tax base and alleviate reliance on residential property tax through the attraction of commercial, industrial, and employment development,
- Maintaining high-quality infrastructure to support business and residential development and integrate new technologies to sustain marketability,
- Providing financial incentives to attract target industries and support reinvestment efforts, and
- Encouraging improved education and training within the public school system and through workforce training partnerships with Elmhurst College.

## Housing

Elmhurst offers a wide variety of housing types that include historic homes, post-WWII housing, newer homes that have been constructed as a result of residential redevelopment, and condominiums and rental units. The range of housing options makes the city a desirable place for a variety of different ages and household types, including individuals, families and empty-nesters. Single-family housing accounts for about three-quarters of all housing stock, however the downtown is seeing a significant increase in the amount of multi-family housing stock. One of the City’s largest housing policy challenges is to facilitate the redevelopment of the housing stock in a manner that responds to market forces while visually and functionally complementing the existing housing stock. Recommendations for this and other housing issues include:

- Encouraging a wide variety of housing types to meet the evolving needs of its residents, including single- and multi-family housing, as well as affordable units for seniors, starter or lower-income residents,
- Providing financial incentives to increase homeownership opportunities for City residents,
- Maintaining at least ten percent of the total housing stock as affordable to ensure economic diversity and sustainability;
- Regulating redevelopment to maintain contextually-sensitive neighborhood development,
- Encouraging sustainable building practices, and
- Maintaining the quality of existing neighborhoods by encouraging equal access to facilities and services, as well as enforcing appropriate property maintenance and code adherence.



*Current Housing Comparison*

### Community Facilities and Services

Elmhurst provides excellent community facilities and services, including public utilities, public safety (police and fire), parks and recreation, education, health, and governmental and institutional uses. Sustaining the quality of public education is an important Plan objective, with implications for neighborhood vitality, employment, and economic investment. The City should upgrade and maintain all community facilities and services as redevelopment shapes the community and community sub-areas, allowing equal access to all facilities for all residents. Recommendations to maintain this system include:

- Coordinate the provision and upgrade of municipal services in all new development and redevelopment projects,
- Implement public works recommendations,
- Implement the community facilities recommendations included in the Downtown Plan,
- Promote adaptive reuse of the current Elmhurst Memorial Hospital facility,
- Maintain cultural and educational resources available to residents and visitors through collaboration with the Park District, the Cultural Campus, Elmhurst College and Elmhurst Memorial Hospital,
- Provide a quality telecommunications system to foster advanced commercial/employment development, and
- Demonstrate “green practices” through the incorporation of green elements into public facility buildings.

### Natural Resources

Elmhurst’s natural features and resources

are an essential part of the community, providing a restorative balance between the built and natural environments. The community is crossed by various waterways, lakes, wetlands and wooded areas. The Plan recommends that the City build on current programs and projects to preserve and enhance the community’s natural resources, as well as promote long-term environmental sustainability. The following recommendations summarize pertinent goals, objectives and policies set forth in this Plan:

- Preserve natural resources within the community to maintain environmental processes,
- Encourage the use of sustainable and complementary development practices, and
- Maintain standards to promote recreational use of natural areas, encouraging environmental education.

### Sustainability

Sustainability seeks to keep human needs and natural resources in balance by emphasizing the use of renewable resources. Policies that promote sustainability are incorporated in almost every aspect of the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter seeks to take those recommendations a step further through the creation of a City-wide sustainability program. Recommendations for increased sustainable development within the community include:

- Implementing the land use plan because it supports a cohesive and complementary mix of uses that will result in more efficient activity patterns, including the co-location of jobs and housing,
- Providing alternative transportation options to residents of all income levels to increase mobility while reducing the amount of overall carbon emissions generated in Elmhurst;
- Encouraging sustainable building practices for individual, municipal and business development, from green building practices to overall sustainable site design, and
- Updating City codes to make daily sustainable actions attractive to residents, such as recycling programs and alternative energy supply.

### Urban Design

Elmhurst is known for the human scale and historic character of its built environment. The urban design policies of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to strengthen the visual image and identity of the City. To achieve this goal, public improvement projects should incorporate rigorous design standards in order to set a positive example for private development. Recommendations include:

- Promoting the preservation and protection of properties of local historical or architectural value and steer redevelopment of commercial and residential proper-





- ties to complement community character,
- Developing design guidelines and a streetscape improvement plan to enhance the appearance of neighborhoods, local business districts and major thoroughfares,
- Enhancing the downtown through a series of public improvements already defined in the Downtown Plan (2006), and
- Encouraging extensive landscaping as means to buffer land uses, provide pedestrian amenities and promote community character.



## COMPARISON WITH 1990 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### What We Achieved

The City of Elmhurst's first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1990. Like the current Plan, it included extensive community involvement and participation which formed the fundamental framework for many of the Plan's recommendations. While the previous plan's accomplishments are too numerous to cite here, major achievements guided by the 1990 plan include:

- Downtown improvements, including emphasis on a stronger overall market position, development and redevelopment opportunities, and definition of the ultimate boundaries of the Downtown. Key achievements include new residential, commercial, and institutional developments as well as establishment of the Elmhurst College/Cultural Campus improvement programs.
- Significant stormwater management improvements, including Elmhurst Quarry and large detention storage facilities at Eldridge Park.
- Redevelopment of the southern end of the City, including Emerald Towers, Elmhurst Memorial Center for Health, Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church, Park Place Retirement Community, and the new Elmhurst Memorial Hospital.
- Enhanced home value and residential quality.

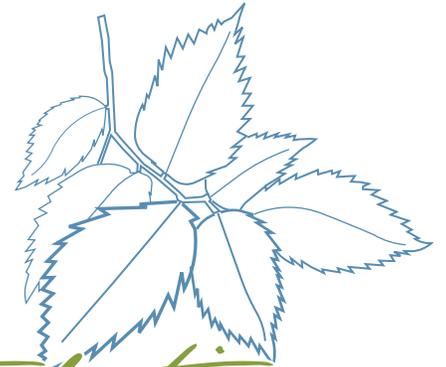
### What We Plan to Achieve

The new Plan is built around many of the same fundamentals as the previous plan. These are clearly articulated in the Vision for Elmhurst, found in Chapter 2. Among these elements, the new Plan continues to emphasize and reinforce the quality and character of the City's residential neighborhoods. The City's compact nature and grid street system will continue to be an asset in the future. A continued emphasis on intergovernmental coordination will also be required to ensure quality and responsive community services and facilities.

Through the public involvement process, the planning program emphasizes several important elements, including:

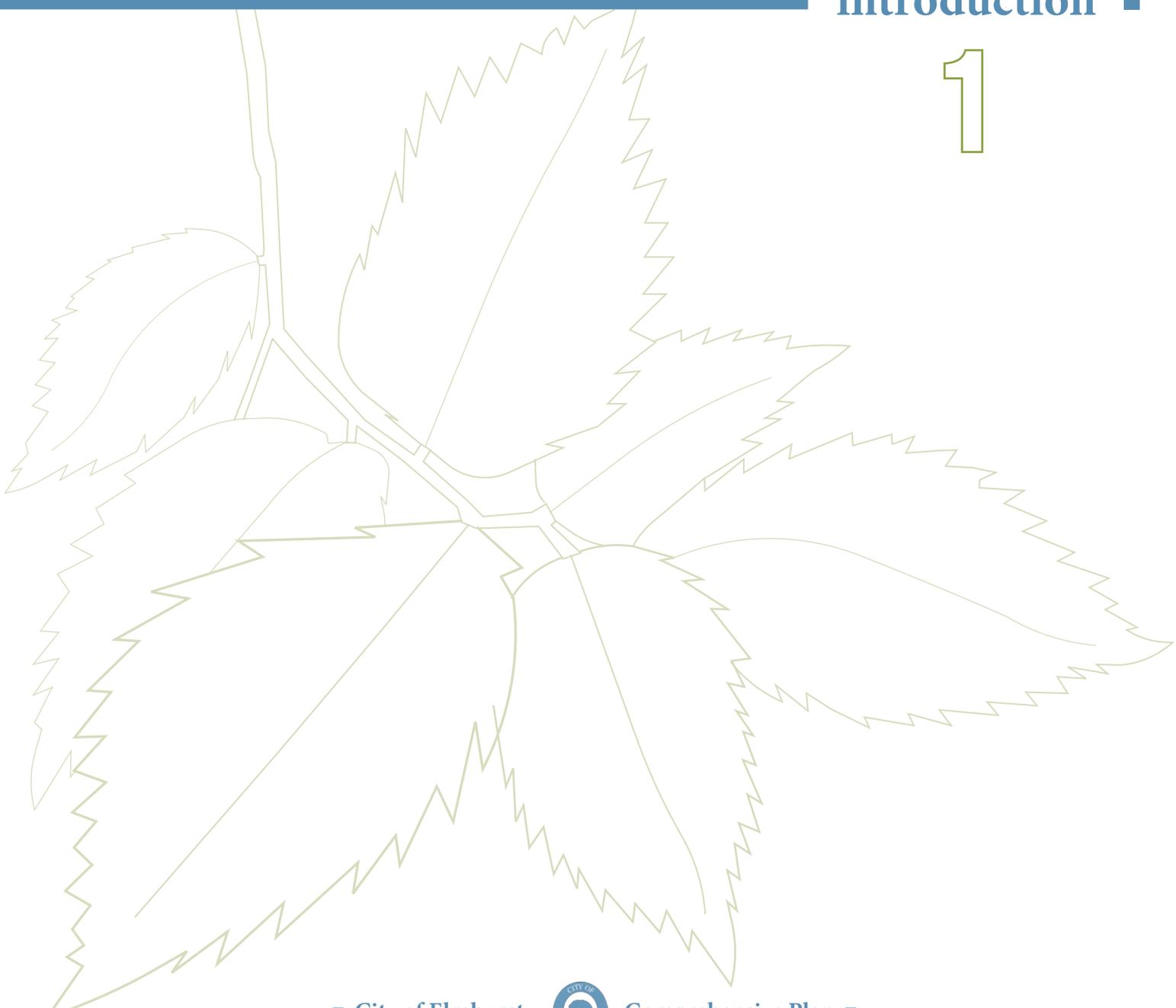
- **Community Sub-Areas:** The new Comprehensive Plan focuses on nine community sub-areas. These locations are comprised of primarily non-residential land uses, generally located along highly visible transportation corridors and gateways, as well as within the City's neighborhood commercial shopping areas. As a mature community with few new areas for development, the Plan seeks to leverage the economic development possibilities from these locations while ensuring stable and compatible land use relationships with adjoining areas.
- **Regional Travel Patterns:** Growth in the greater metropolitan area has caused an increase in congestion on major regional and community roadways. Plans for improvements to O'Hare International Airport and its entrance and exit-ways, in proximity to the City of Elmhurst, suggest the potential for further congestion. While regional transportation facility improvements are necessary, the City also has a role in protecting the integrity of the compact Elmhurst street system and hierarchy. For instance, in recent years, cut through traffic has threatened neighborhood quality and safety. The Comprehensive Plan includes a variety of ideas and recommendations that can be implemented to help maintain the street system function as designed.
- **Neighborhood Character:** Beginning in the early 1990's residential redevelopment began to reshape the City's housing stock. While the trend was not universally accepted in the community, reinvestment was underway and that residential redevelopment would result in an improved housing stock taking the City through its next 30-35 year housing cycle. With Elmhurst's rising affluence, balancing this trend with the need to sustain a work force and affordable housing has become a new challenge that the community will need to monitor in the future.
- **Sustainability:** The notion of sustainability has moved beyond a concept of convenience for those that choose to embrace it as a necessary way of life. Communities of choice in the 21st century will fully embrace the design and development principles and standards surrounding a sustainable future. Alternative energies, methods of stormwater management, and an increase in multimodal travel options are but a few of the technology and behavioral changes successful communities will undergo in the near future. Change is rapid in this subject area and the Comprehensive Plan begins to anticipate the role Elmhurst will have in transforming the community.





*Introduction*  
introduction ■

1





## INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Elmhurst’s official policy guide to future land use, development and conservation over the next ten to fifteen years. It provides guidance for current and future growth through discussions related to topics including land use, transportation, economic development, housing, community facilities and services, natural resources, sustainability, urban design and governance. It describes the vision and provides the goals, objectives, policies and recommendations to direct the city’s present and future physical, social and economic development.

Unlike City codes and ordinances, a Comprehensive Plan is an advisory tool to be consulted and considered by the Zoning and Planning Commission, City Council and other officials and staff when land use changes and capital improvements are proposed. It is long-range in orientation and intended to express general community goals and aspirations yet is specific enough to guide day-to-day land use and development activities.



## A BASIS FOR PLAN MAKING

The vision described in this Plan is rooted in the visions of Elmhurst that were outlined in the Comprehensive Plan (1990), the Cultural Campus Collaborative Report (2004), and the Downtown Plan (2006). Elmhurst’s tradition of community planning and its wealth of existing community assets provide a strong foundation from which to effectively guide the future physical, social, economic, and environmental growth of the city.

This plan presents goals, objectives, plans, and strategies which can be used to guide future growth within Elmhurst. While the goals and objectives provide overall direction, the functional planning areas and related implementation strategies are focused on specific issues and topics that were identified through the stakeholder participation process as most significant for the City.

The goals and objectives provide a way to move towards the implementing the vision for Elmhurst, which is presented in the next chapter. The plans and strategies, based on input received from the Zoning and Planning Commission, City staff, and community members, provide a blueprint for the future of Elmhurst. They provide an overall framework and a basis for making decisions with regard to land use and development, transportation, community facilities, urban design and sustainability initiatives. More detailed concepts are presented for sub-areas that were identified through the stakeholder participation process as having the greatest potential for change in the future. The land use

and sub-area recommendations described in this report were developed after a series of workshops in which alternative strategies for key sub-areas were generated and discussed.

## Planning Context

Elmhurst is centrally located within the Chicago metropolitan region: it is less than twenty miles from downtown Chicago and approximately fifteen miles from O’Hare International Airport. It is very well connected to the entire region by major expressways, including I-294, I-290, and I-88 (see Figure 1: Vicinity Map). It also has excellent transit access. The Metra Union Pacific West Line provides commuter rail service from Elmhurst to downtown Chicago to the east and to other suburban communities located along the rail line to the west. Elmhurst is only 15 minutes away from the

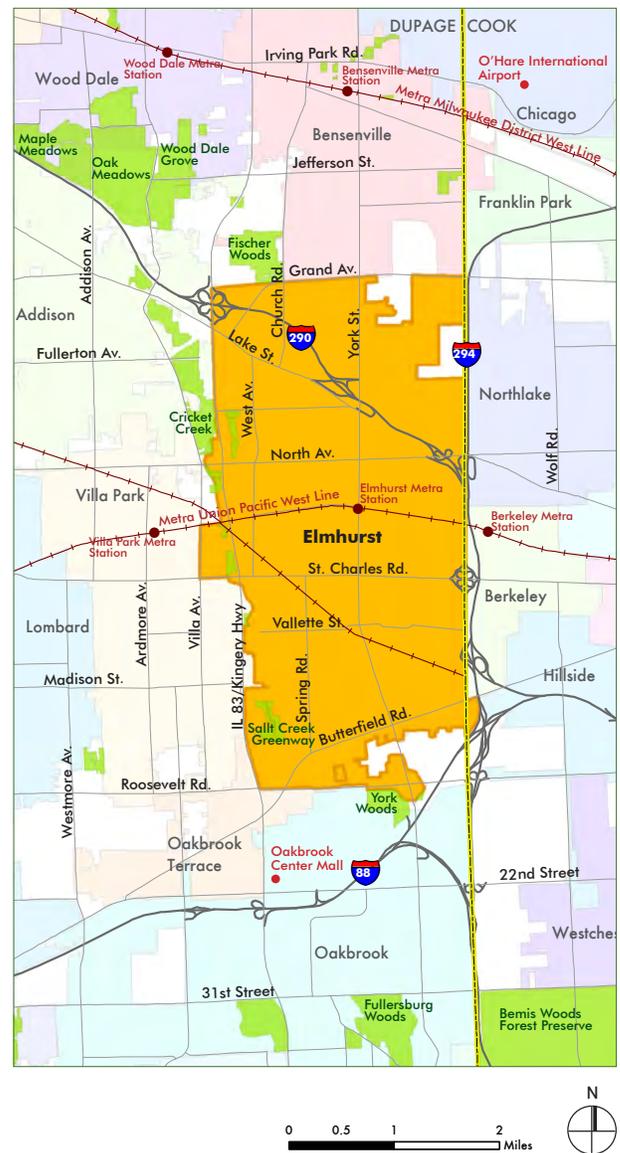


FIGURE 1: VICINITY MAP



Oak Brook shopping center area. Several forest preserves that provide recreational opportunities for residents are also present in close proximity to Elmhurst. The city is surrounded by mature suburban residential communities, including Bensenville to the north, Northlake, Berkeley and Hillside to the east, Oakbrook and Oakbrook Terrace to the south, and Addison and Villa Park to the west. In addition to all of the land within Elmhurst's municipal boundaries, this plan also addresses the unincorporated area south of Grand Avenue and east of York Street as well as the unincorporated area in the southeast corner of Elmhurst, generally bound by Harrison Street and Euclid Avenue.

### Purpose of the Plan

The City of Elmhurst is approaching a critical juncture during which critical growth and developmental policy decisions will heavily influence the physical, economic and social landscape of the community for years to come. It is a built-out, mature suburb with little available vacant land for development, yet pressures for additional development within the downtown and community as a whole indicate a significant potential for change in the future. Additionally, a number of the sub-areas are on the brink of major change – change the City should proactively seek to direct for the benefit of the entire community. Residential redevelopment is affecting older residential areas of the city, potentially altering the character of these neighborhoods. The Elmhurst Memorial Hospital is in the process of relocating its Berteau Avenue operations to its existing campus at the southern end of the city. The adaptive reuse of its medical facility on Berteau Avenue must be undertaken in a way that replicates the positive relationship that Elmhurst Memorial Hospital built with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Increased traffic, potentially from the proposed O'Hare Western access improvements, could bring increased travel down York Street.

The State of Illinois “Local Planning Technical Assistance Act” encourages local government comprehensive planning. A comprehensive plan is:

- A long-range document that is geographically comprehensive and plans decades into the future,
- Is policy-oriented and provides a framework from which to make future decisions, and
- Relies on community input and, as such, should offer multiple opportunities for and forms of community input and review.

The Local Planning Technical Assistance Act provides incentives for developing comprehensive plans in two ways. First, technical assistance grants can be made available from the state to write or revise a local comprehensive plan. Second, compliance with the statute enables the City to re-



*The historic York Theatre in Downtown Elmhurst*

ceive other state funding which could potentially support a variety of municipal services and operations.

Plans must address the following elements: issues and opportunities (vision), land use, transportation, community facilities, telecommunications infrastructure, natural resources, housing, economic development and public participation. Optional elements include natural hazards, agriculture and forest preservation, human services, community design, historic preservation and the adoption of sub-area plans as needed.

To receive a technical assistance grant within five years after the effective date of the Plan, land development regulations, including amendments to the City's zoning map and any land use actions, should be consistent with the new or revised comprehensive plan. Adoption of the Elmhurst Comprehensive Plan and Sub-area Plans places the City in compliance with the act, and enables the City continued access to State of Illinois funding sources.

This Comprehensive Plan will provide the overall direction for future land use and development patterns. As opportunities arise in the City to guide and direct land use changes, the Plan will serve as a valuable resource to decision-makers. Reviewing the maps, goals, objectives and policies contained within the Plan will ensure that decisions regarding public and private investments are made within the framework of the long-range vision laid out in the Plan.



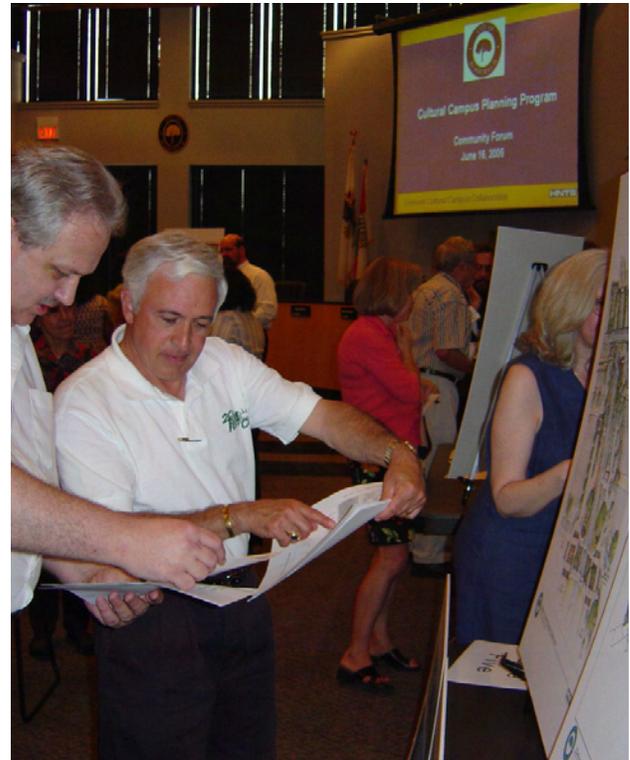
Without the benefit of a clear statement of community expectations and aspirations, there would be little criteria upon which to evaluate land use and development decisions. The Comprehensive Plan fulfills this purpose. It has been developed with substantial community input and represents the conclusion of a two-year planning process.

## Planning Process

The Comprehensive Plan update was guided by the City Zoning and Planning Commission, with the support of the Department of Planning, Zoning and Economic Development of Elmhurst. The City developed an approach to preparing the new Plan, which included a high level of public involvement to ensure that the Plan is a true reflection of community aspirations.

Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan began with community input and a documentation of the existing conditions. A market assessment examining the potential commercial and residential market was completed (Market Assessment, City of Elmhurst, April 2007; Goodman Williams Group). With continued citizen participation, issues and opportunities were identified, and goals and objectives were established relative to a unified vision for the city. The major steps included:

- **Phase 1: Citizen Outreach and Vision:** Activities focused on garnering citizens' views regarding current and future needs of the community through interviews and community workshops. A series of interviews were conducted in December 2006 to support this phase.
- **Phase 2: Community Scan:** A document was produced analyzing existing conditions of physical, socio-economic, community facilities and services, environmental and related features of the community, including an examination of internal and external factors influencing the city's future (Community Scan Report, July 2007; HNTB). Three public workshops, along with workshops with students of York High School, Immaculate Conception High School, and Elmhurst College, were held in January and February 2007 with the public to learn about additional community issues and opportunities. The Community Scan was brought before the Zoning and Planning Commission in May 2007.
- **Phase 3: Imagining the Future:** This step provided a preliminary draft of the future framework for the city, including detailed sub-area plans for nine geographies.



*Community Planning Meeting*

A series of four workshops with the public and City staff were conducted October through December 2007 to receive community input on the future visioning plans (Imagining the Future: Preliminary Community-wide and Sub-area Plans, April 2008; HTNB). The draft framework and Plan were brought before the Zoning and Planning Commission in April 2008, followed by three public presentations throughout April and May 2008 to receive final community comments.

- **Phase 4: Vision Program Documentation:** This document represents the culmination of the previous three phases. Following a rigorous community assessment and evaluation of the preliminary plan, the final Comprehensive Plan was developed for community review and adoption and includes the community's preferred future land use framework, policy framework, and recommended implementation activities. The updated Comprehensive Plan will serve as a guide for Elmhurst's development over the next ten to fifteen years.

## Organization of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into eleven chapters. Chapters 2 through 10 provide information on the nine elements as stipulated in the Local Planning Technical As-



sistance Act; Chapter 11 provides recommended strategies and activities for implementation of the Plan.

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. Issues and Opportunities
- Chapter 3. Land Use and Development
- Chapter 4. Transportation
- Chapter 5. Economic Development
- Chapter 6. Housing
- Chapter 7. Community Facilities and Services
- Chapter 8. Natural Resources
- Chapter 9. Sustainability
- Chapter 10. Urban Design
- Chapter 11. Governance

The contents of the Comprehensive Plan are supported by the Community Scan and the Preliminary Community-Wide and Sub-Area Plan documents. These reports, while important elements of documentation of the planning process, do not constitute the official adopted plan and policy; the Comprehensive Plan does. The Plan, then, is the governing document when inconsistencies arise between the content of these previous documents and this Plan.

### Integration of the Elmhurst Downtown Plan

Downtown Elmhurst, the civic and commercial center of Elmhurst, is continuing to develop as a significant shopping and entertainment destination in the area. The City completed and adopted a Downtown Plan in June 2006 to guide the future growth of its downtown. The Comprehensive Plan, therefore, addresses the future development and growth for the balance of Elmhurst while complementing the downtown development framework outlined in the Downtown Plan. Parts of the Downtown Plan will be referenced throughout this document, but are not intended to comprehensively summarize the issues addressed with the Downtown Plan. For more details on certain aspects of downtown planning, please reference the complete Downtown Plan, which is available as an appendix.



### USE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan should be used by all City departments, committees, agencies and other community organizations and private interests. The plan is relevant to all citizens and property owners in Elmhurst. In particular, the Zoning and Planning Commission, City Council and City staff will have a special role in administering the Plan. Many of the Plan's recommendations are directed to both public and private actions and improvements. The interface between the majority of public and private interests are primarily managed by the City of Elmhurst.



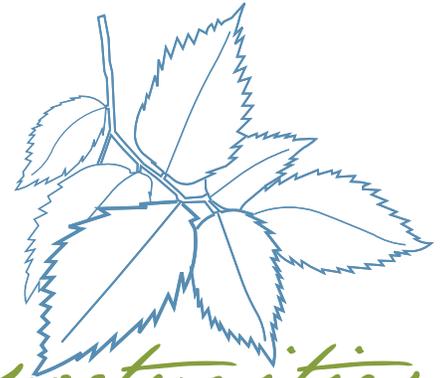
*Gateway entry sign*



*Downtown Elmhurst*

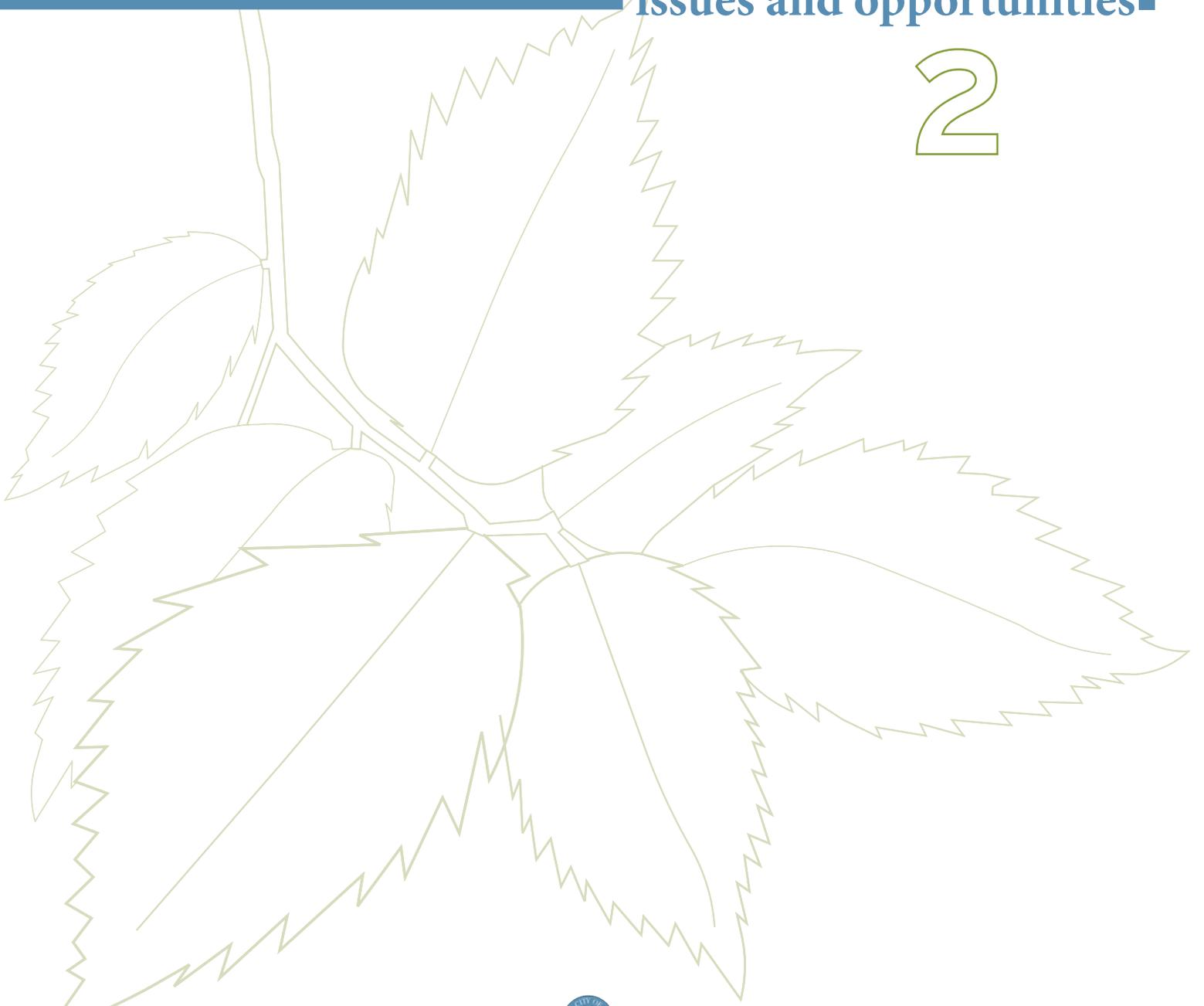
In general, policies and recommendations described within in the Plan are of equal importance and influence. The community vision, and its associated goals and objectives, however, form the core of the plan. When reviewing private or public plans and initiatives, compliance with these elements should be a priority within the evaluation process, as they most directly embody the values expressed by the community in the preparation of the Plan.





*Issues and Opportunities*  
■ issues and opportunities ■

2



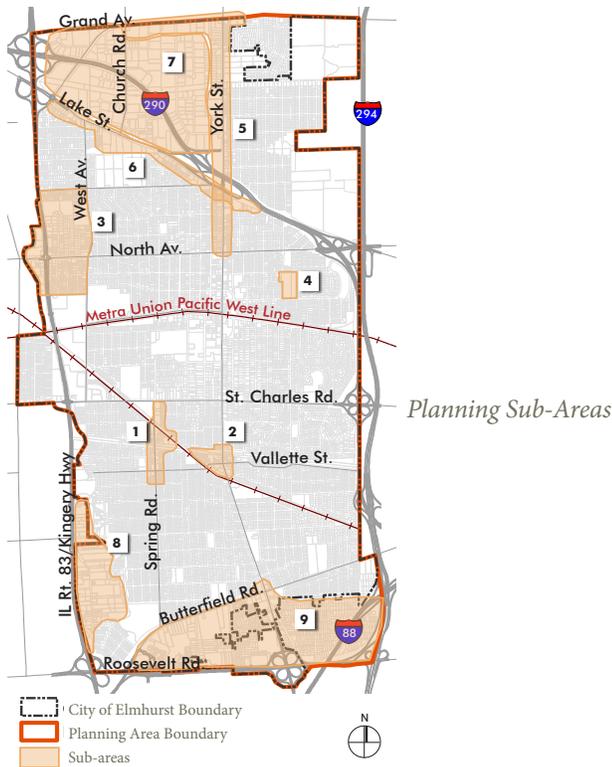


### Public Participation

The Comprehensive Plan was guided by an extensive public involvement process. From the beginning of the process and continuing through every milestone, community workshops were conducted to gain valuable community input, as well as receive reactions and input to proposed ideas. Additionally, stakeholder interviews were conducted with Elmhurst citizens to receive more focused input on such topics as education and economic development. Each step of the plan involved a review before the Zoning and Planning Commission.

Nine sub-areas were identified as presenting the greatest opportunity for change within the city, and were subject to a more detailed level of examination and analysis at each stage of the planning process. These areas include:

1. Spring Road Business District
2. York/Valette Business District
3. North Avenue / Route 83 Area
4. Elmhurst Memorial Hospital (Berateau location)
5. North York Street and Grand Avenue Corridors
6. Lake Street Corridor
7. Elmhurst Employment District (area west of York Street and north of Lake Street)
8. South Riverside Drive Corridor
9. Yorkfield Area



The HNTB team utilized its technology tool SketchPlan-Builder™, based on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, to allow participants of the sub-area planning exercises to create alternative land use and development ideas for the future of the community, establishing a high level of informed decision making in the planning process. The options generated at these workshops provided input into the development of a Future Land Use Framework and Sub-Area Plans, discussed in more detail in *Chapter 3: Land Use and Development*.

### Key Planning Themes

Through community meetings and public involvement activities, Elmhurst residents identified a full range of issues and opportunities facing the community in the future. With the benefit of this input, several themes which capture community input were identified:

- Elmhurst enjoys a wide range of cultural, entertainment and community facilities that distinguish the city from other communities in the region.
- Infill development and redevelopment has had a positive affect for the community as a whole, however the level of intensification has become a concern.
- Continued diversification of housing is important, as well as the need to provide opportunities for first-time homebuyers and senior citizens.
- Citizens of Elmhurst share a strong sense of volunteerism and community pride. An open community and a high level of collaboration are essential to the community’s long term success.
- The City and associated public service agencies should continue to provide high-quality community services and facilities.
- Sustaining and improving the community’s non-residential tax base is important to generate necessary resources to fund government services.
- Traffic volume is increasing community-wide, and steps should be taken to ensure continued safety.
- Quality design of and appearance of private and public improvements remains a priority.
- The city’s commercial districts outside of the downtown should benefit from streetscape and design enhancements, as well as improvements to pedestrian safety.
- Downtown Elmhurst remains an important focal point of the community for local services, entertainment and governance.





The following statements complement and build upon community themes and values to present a unified vision for the future of Elmhurst.

**Collaborative Governance**

Elmhurst’s strength and vitality can in part be attributed to the strong relationships maintained among government agencies, institutions and community organizations in meeting long-range and daily living needs of the community. Elmhurst should continue a high level of intergovernmental and agency collaboration.

**Quality Design and Urban Form**

The City will accomplish its development objectives by insisting on high quality design and materials. In the majority of the community, the City should encourage pedestrian-oriented design concepts that are consistent with Elmhurst’s historical development patterns.

**Economically Competitive**

The City will remain economically competitive by offering modern business parks and office, warehouse, and industrial areas, as well as retail and commercial service areas. These businesses will provide employment opportunities to residents while enhancing the non-residential tax base.

**An Efficient Transportation System**

Elmhurst should continue to effectively manage and mitigate localized traffic and congestion issues throughout the community. Mobility should continue to be enhanced through improved access to public transit. The City should continue to monitor and correct travel patterns which might otherwise threaten safety to pedestrians and cyclists.

**Quality Community Facilities and Services**

Because quality community facilities and services provide an important backbone in a largely residential community such as Elmhurst, continued cooperation and investment in community facilities and services are essential to maintaining Elmhurst’s overall quality of life.

**Strong Community Neighborhoods**

The City should continue to provide quality infrastructure and support to its residential neighborhoods to ensure their long-term aesthetic appeal and high quality of life.

Goals and objectives have been developed for each of the topics presented in the following chapters. They are intended to support public and private sector activities and decision-making that is consistent with the overall vision for the city. The framework plan and recommendations included in the Plan have been developed to directly complement these goals and objectives.

Goals and objectives play a critical role in the creation of a comprehensive plan:



**GOALS** describe a desired outcome toward which planning efforts should be directed. In a comprehensive plan they are typically broad-based and long-range in focus.



**OBJECTIVES** describe the actions that should be undertaken to advance towards achievement of the planning goals.

