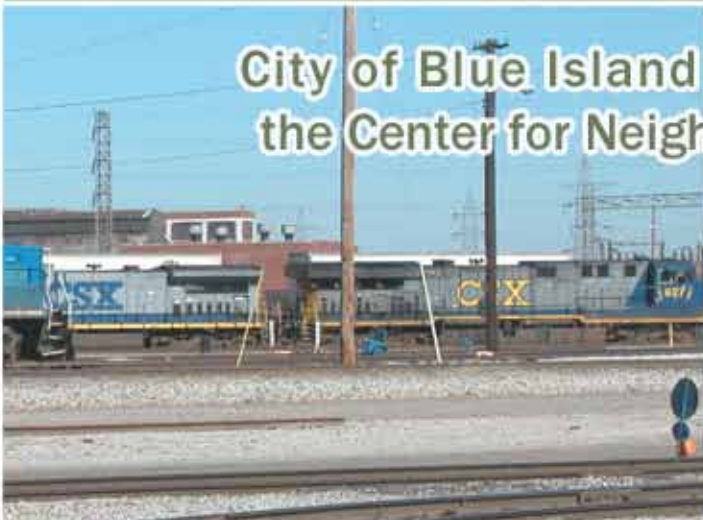




Blue Island Plan For Economic Development (Executive Summary)

City of Blue Island With Support From
the Center for Neighborhood Technology



DRAFT



June 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CITY AND ITS PATTERNS

Blue Island is a 4.5 square mile, 170-year-old city of 23,500 people that touches the southwest corner of Chicago. Blue Island grew up as a transportation and industrial center with a main street that met local commercial needs. The present land use and infrastructure of Blue Island reflects this legacy:

Industrial Pattern: The northeast, west, and south edges of Blue Island are industrial areas, home to 98 industrial businesses that employ approximately 3,400 workers. These areas are served by several arterial highways, two expressways, five freight railroads, an intermodal freight terminal, and the Calumet Sag Channel that runs through the middle of town. While Blue Island retains a strong industrial base, plant closures over the last three decades have weakened it. Some 220 acres of vacant industrial land currently sit idle.

Main Street Pattern: Blue Island's central business district (locally called "uptown") follows a traditional pattern of businesses lined along a main street (Western Avenue) and serving the convenience retail and professional service needs of local residents and visitors. Uptown contains institutions that draw people to Blue Island, most notably St. Francis Hospital. The Pronger Smith Clinic, a branch of Moraine Valley Community College, quality restaurants and shops (especially a set of regionally well-know antique stores) also attract visitors. A pair of Metra commuter stations on Vermont Street just east of uptown, from which passengers may access three rail lines and different Chicago Loop destinations, also brings hundreds of commuters to the Uptown area daily. An active Chamber of Commerce and a dedicated Main Street Association have worked to preserve historic buildings and foster a value-added traditional atmosphere in uptown. But Blue Island has no department stores; these have been replaced by large shopping centers in nearby towns, and the main street district is not as busy as it once was or as its buying power and anchoring institutions suggest it should be today.

Blue Island is creating this economic development plan to revitalize the city's economy by building on its strengths. The core strategy of this plan applies two economic development concepts to Blue Island's situation:

- *Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)* involves the integrated development of homes, retail and service businesses, a pleasant walking environment and other public amenities within a half-mile radius of a public transit station. (This radius around the Vermont Street stations encompasses the entire main street/uptown district.)
- *Cargo-Oriented Development (COD)* entails the development of manufacturing and distribution businesses in select locations that benefit from access to multiple types of freight transportation, proximity to complimentary businesses, and a large local industrial workforce. (Each of Blue Island's three industrial areas possesses the basic assets for a COD.)

GOALS, PRINCIPLES, STRATEGIES, TERMS & DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Goal

The goal of this plan is to foster development that will create jobs and raise local tax revenues in Blue Island while improving the environment and the quality of life of its citizens.



Principles

In addition to this plan's goal there are several principles that have guided its development:

- **Affirm Blue Island's identity.** Blue Island is a city with 170 years of history, valued commercial and industrial businesses, a distinctive natural environment that figures strongly in every day life, and communities whose families represent a unique blend of economic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Blue Island is a special place cherished by its residents, and the city's economic development plan should preserve and enhance its identity.
- **Plan to Capture Blue Island's real development potential.** Blue Island residents have a strong sense, confirmed by outside analysis, that their city has far more potential to create new jobs, businesses, and desirable homes than it currently displays. While remaining stolidly realistic, make the city's plan bold enough to capture its actual potential for economic development.
- **Make development inclusive.** Be sure that development benefits current residents and businesses as much as it attracts newcomers, and lower income residents as much more prosperous households. If there are situations where existing homes or businesses need to be replaced with new development, be sure that residents or business owners are adequately compensated and assisted in their relocation. Follow a "build first" principle by which homes or businesses are not removed until desirable replacements are available.
- **Make development work for business and the environment:** Development should not sacrifice the quality of life in neighborhoods to achieve business growth. In fact, business development in Blue Island should attract more investment and be more successful because environmental concerns are basic to the economic development plan.
- **Direct development planning and oversight from the community.** To ensure that the other principles are followed, be sure that all community residents have opportunities to participate in the planning process and that the proposals of the plan are formed and approved by legitimate representatives of the community. Build procedures for ongoing community input and review into the implementation plan.

- **Make a practical development plan.** At all costs be sure that the economic development plan does not just sit on a shelf. Make plans that the City can implement by leveraging investments from other levels of government and the private sector. Recognizing that a substantive plan will take years to implement, lay out a clear path for the plan's implementation.

Objectives

Objectives of the plan are specific are stated in Section IV, in the context of each of the plan's nine basic proposals for sustainable economic development.

Development Areas

TOD Area: Blue Island's TOD opportunities are centered around its Vermont Street Metra stations. The TOD area encompasses Blue Island's main street or central business district. So in Blue Island a TOD plan is also a plan to optimize the development of main street. Information about the city-wide population that uses the main street district is relevant to the plan, and the success of the TOD project will impact the entire city.

COD Area: All three of Blue Island's industrially zoned areas (on the northeast, western, and southern edges of the city) have layered freight transportation assets and strong potential for COD.

MARKET CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Blue Island's market opportunity for TOD is determined by these facts:

- The city's population and property values are growing rapidly. (e.g., the average home price rose by 39% and equalized assessed value grew by 17% since 2000.)
- Blue Island has more buying power per square mile (and so more capacity to support local businesses) than most south suburbs because its population is somewhat more dense. Workers and visitors drawn to Blue Island increase this buying power.
- None of the 25 large shopping centers within a five-mile radius of Blue Island are located in the city. The established position of nearby towns would make competition in the large shopping center arena difficult for Blue Island.
- Blue Island's main street district, with its historic preservation, anchoring institutions, and quality businesses gives the city a market identity in a niche that is difficult to replicate and has few competitors in the south suburbs.
- The dual Metra stations on Vermont Street should provide an important asset to Blue Island's main street district, but the actual contribution of these stations is less than it might be for two reasons: (1) The allocation of surrounding land for industrial uses or surface parking prevents hundreds of households from living in and contributing to this desirable area. (2) Conditions for walking in the station area and to the main street district are unpleasant and perceived as dangerous because of poor street and rail crossing design.
- The center of the main street district also presents uncomfortable situations for walking customers, e.g., crossing shopping streets that are fast one-way highways, finding little greenery or inviting public space.

Blue Island needs to overcome these problems of land use, residential density, and street design in order to prosper with a main street market identity and valuable transit resource.



Blue Island's market opportunity for COD is determined by these facts:

- Large economic trends associated with long-distance sourcing of products and just-in-time manufacturing and stocking, are making access to freight infrastructure more important than it has been for two generations, especially in the Chicago region, which is the hub of the North American freight transportation system.
- Despite decades of contraction, concentrations of businesses in several industrial fields occur in the Blue Island area. Their presence can help to attract similar businesses.

- Relative to other Chicago area communities, Blue Island workers are appropriately educated and prepared for industrial work. They are more likely to have a high school or community college education and industrial work experience.
- Despite Blue Island’s assets for COD, any industrial project in Blue Island must overcome three serious obstacles:
 - Brownfields conditions real and perceived;
 - Cook County tax rates that are higher than those of any other Illinois county;
 - The perception that Cook County industrial property values will not appreciate.

As a result of these impediments, approximately 223 acres of land in Blue Island are now vacant. Approximately 150 of these acres are in contiguous blocks. In some cases additional vacant acres are adjacent in neighboring towns.

In Blue Island the industrial development opportunity is to use the advantages of access to freight infrastructure, existing business concentrations, and a ready industrial workforce (the elements of a COD), with a careful application of incentives from the public sector, to overcome impediments and restore more than 150 acres of vacant land to productive use.

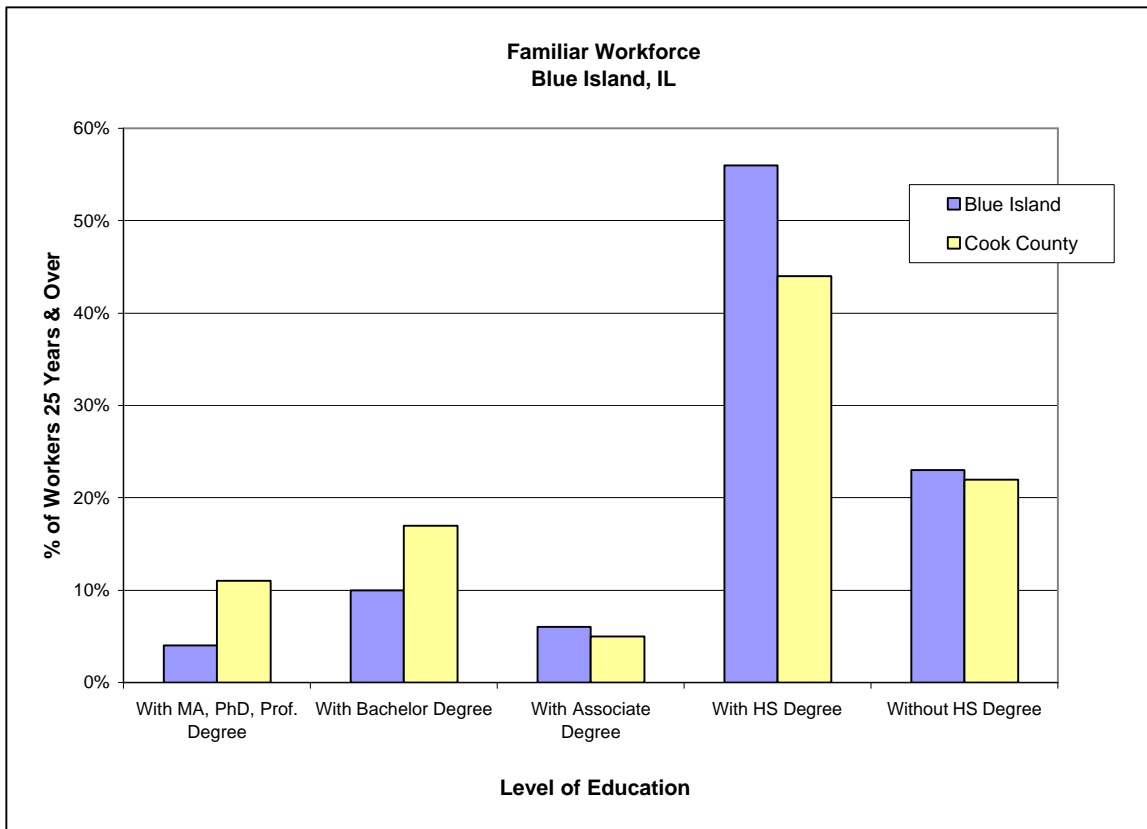


Figure 2. Education Level of Blue Island’s Workforce

COMMUNITY PLANNING INPUT

This economic development plan is being created through a community-based approach in which all Blue Island residents are invited to participate. The planning process involves direction by a group of community leaders, a series of four large community meetings, and other channels. To date, two large and one smaller community meeting have been held in which more than 100 residents provided input for the draft plan proposals.

In the first meeting residents learned about the concepts of TOD and COD and shared information and opinions through a series of exercises. In a structured discussion they expressed their opinions about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) facing Blue Island. Then in an Image Preference Survey™, residents responded to photos as means of expressing their preferences for different types of buildings and streetscapes. The second community meeting presented the results of the first session and used them as guidelines for an interactive charette process in which participants, in tables of 4-8 people identified areas they wanted to develop and how to develop them using maps, markers, and tracing paper.

Input from these meetings is incorporated in the preceding information about the city and its markets, and residents' vision for change is reflected in the proposals for TOD and COD outlined on the following pages. After this draft plan has circulated in Blue Island for several weeks, it will be reviewed in a third meeting where residents will say whether or not the draft accurately presents their concerns and aspirations for the community. The plan will be revised in light of this input. Then the corrected plan will be presented for conformation and adoption in a fourth meeting.



AREA & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

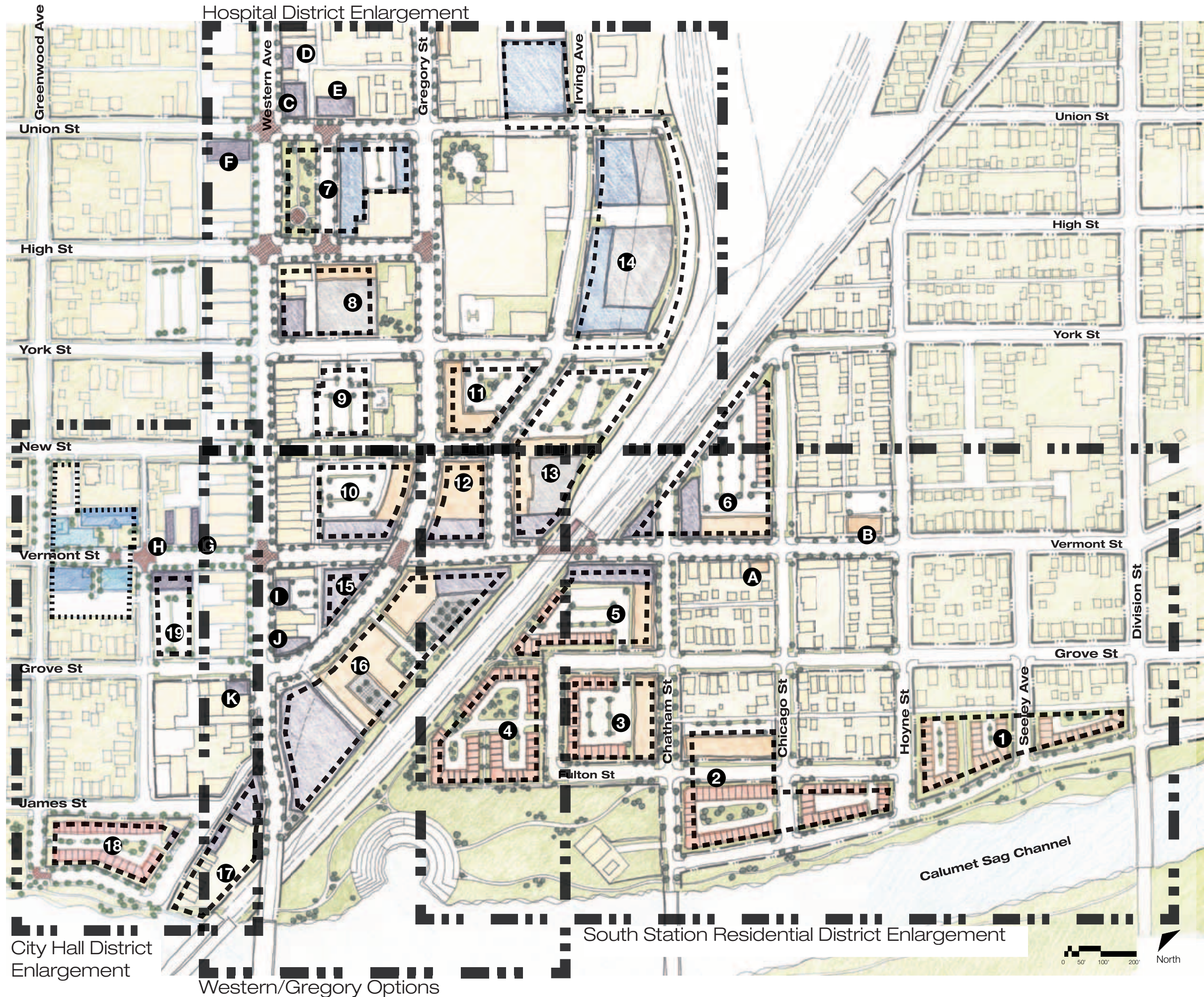
The Blue Island Plan presents nine basic proposals for development: proposals for development in three sectors of the TOD area, proposals for COD in all three of the city's industrially zoned areas, proposals for three city-wide programs that will guide and support development in TOD and COD areas.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Proposals

In the south station residential district, within a quarter-mile of the Vermont Street Metra stations, this plan proposes development of more than 400 quality condominiums and town homes overlooking the Calumet Sag waterfront, creation of a nature and recreation trail along the Cal-Sag Channel, establishment of a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment, and 37,000 s.f. of commercial space along a corridor of mixed use development connecting the stations to the main street district. Land for these improvements will be made available primarily by relocating highly valued industrial businesses from this area to land that better serves their needs and from shifting Metra surface parking to the industrial land that will be vacated. Up to 40 private homes would also need to be replaced by denser housing, with their present owners paid fair market value plus relocation costs.

In the hospital district and northern part of uptown this plan would create an improved environment for institutional and commercial development by measures that include: shifting parking lots from Western Avenue to "interior block" parcels, facilitating the development of mixed use buildings (with first floor retail and apartments or offices above) to increase residential density, establishing a town square on expanded park land, changing Western and Gregory Avenues from one-way to two-way streets, and adding greenery, improved lighting and crosswalks to the streetscape. Feasible and desired enterprises would be attracted to this upgraded mixed-use retail district including specialty clothing stores, children's product stores, a book store, a live theater, and additional or expanded quality restaurants.

In the south main street area the primary task will be to rebuild the Gregory and Western intersection to allow two-way traffic flow. This will entail addressing the Gregory overpass, either by retrofitting it as a street friendly to pedestrians and the surrounding landscape or by demolishing it. When this is accomplished, it will be possible to build a significant commercial or mixed use development overlooking the Cal Sag on the east side of Gregory at Vermont. It will also become feasible to stimulate the development of the James Street and Old Western Avenue neighborhoods by measures that include: extending the Cal Sag nature trail, facilitating the development of quality housing, and building a pedestrian and bicycle bridge across the channel.



Key

Potential redevelopment parcels are identified on the plan to the left. These parcels are separated and noted in the two following categories:

A Infill Redevelopment Parcels

Smaller developments on existing parcels are noted with a white letter in a black circle. These parcels require little infrastructure change and can be redeveloped at any time during the process.

1 Large-scale Redevelopment Parcels

Larger scale redevelopment can occur on parcels noted with a white number in a black circle and a dashed black line outlining the potential site. These parcels will require City input and aid for redevelopment.

City Hall District

A smaller dash outlines potential redevelopment of the City Hall area.

Enlarged Plans

This outline marks the four enlarged plans outlined on the following pages.

Key Building Types:

- Existing Buildings
- Residential: Townhouse
- Residential: Multifamily
- Public
- Mixed-use
- Structured Parking



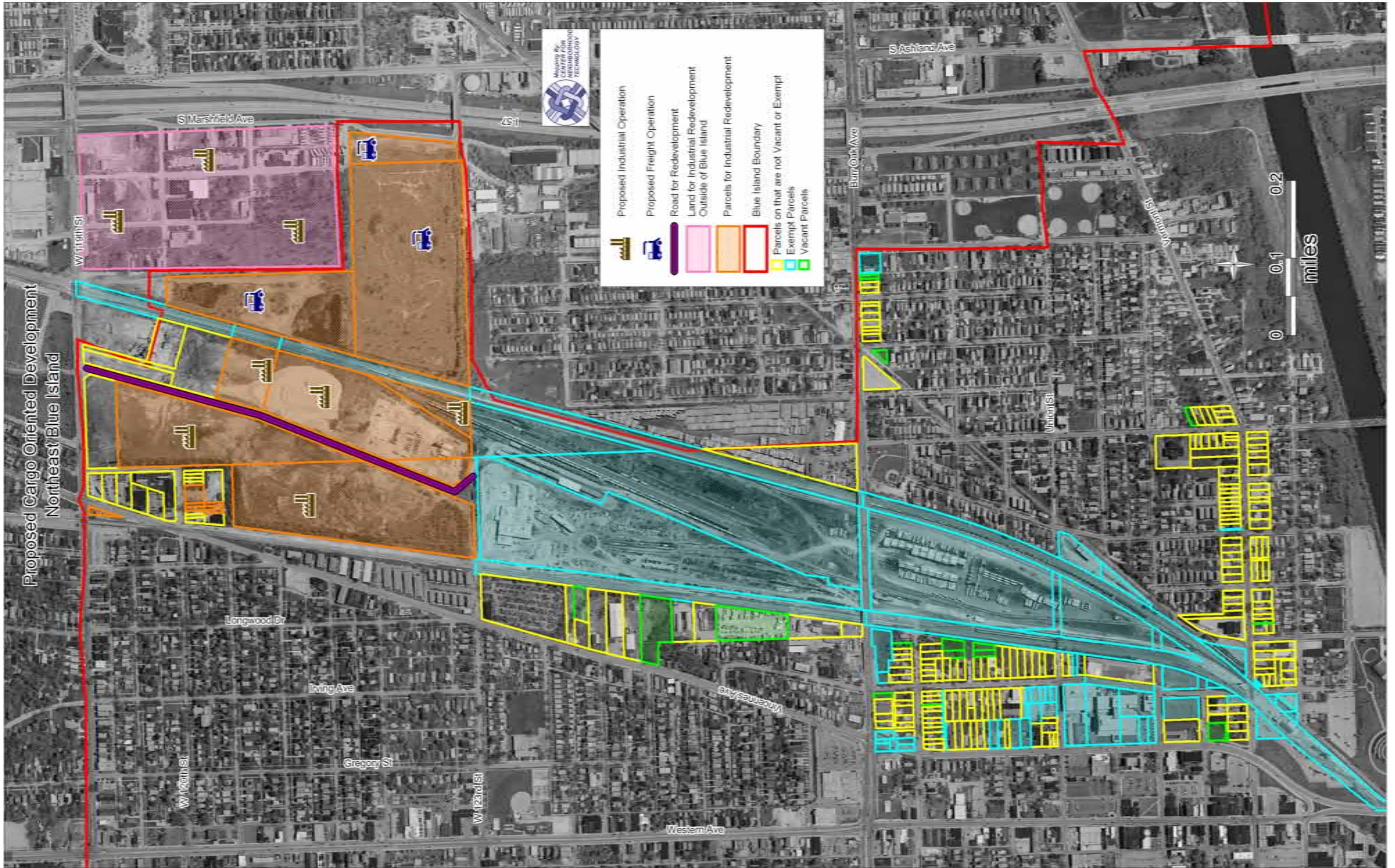
Cargo-Oriented Development (COD) Proposals

In the northeast industrial sector this plan seeks the redevelopment of 115 acres of vacant industrial land (90 acres of it owned by the City of Blue Island) at a site with excellent access to I-57 and freight railroads. This development will offer desirable sites to industrial businesses relocating from the TOD area, and should generate about 680 new industrial jobs. Businesses will be built along a dedicated truck road through industrial land, eliminating more than 5,000 heavy truck trips per month through Blue Island streets. Current limited uses of some of this land, for a soccer field and for outdoor industrial storage, must be relocated before these parcels are developed.

In the west industrial sector, which runs along Wireton Road, Blue Island's border with Alsip, and the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Railroad line, a primary objective is to locate complimentary ethanol and energy generating gasification plants on the old Premcor oil refinery site in neighboring Alsip. This development would establish a new employment center on the border of Blue Island and could lead to lower energy costs for Blue Island businesses. Whether or not these plant developments occur, the City will work with the marketing department of the IHB to fill in some six acres of vacant industrial land with businesses that would benefit from this location's access to rail.

In the south industrial sector, between 135th and 139th Streets, this plan proposes the redevelopment of some 60 acres of contiguous, vacant industrial land in an area served by several freight railroads. Development of the logistics/manufacturing enterprises for which this land is suited should generate approximately 600 new industrial jobs. In another part of the industrially zoned south sector, the City would need a long-term plan to relocate several dozen households to residential neighborhoods before the entire sector could be used for industrial development.

Proposed Cargo Oriented Development
Northeast Blue Island



Proposed Industrial Operation
Proposed Freight Operation
Road for Redevelopment
Land for Industrial Redevelopment Outside of Blue Island
Parcels for Industrial Redevelopment
Blue Island Boundary
Parcels on that are not Vacant or Exempt
Exempt Parcels
Vacant Parcels



City-wide Program Proposals

Zoning and Design Standards: Blue Island's current zoning code does not include provisions for the type of intensive mixed use development that is necessary for TOD, nor design guidelines that would support commercial development of consistent quality and pedestrian-orientation in the main street district. Current ordinances also do not provide for buffering of industrial from residential neighborhoods that is desirable for COD. The City, therefore, needs to revise its zoning code and establish commercial design standards. This work should be one of the prime responsibilities of a city planner who should be hired to execute major tasks of this plan, along with the city's project management consultant and a planning commission of citizens. Because zoning code and design standards development is a major task, interim guidance based on this plan should be issued for the consideration and specifications of projects in the short term.

Worker Training and Job Placement: This plan seeks to maximize the number of city residents employed in Blue Island's current and new businesses. A proposed means of accomplishing this objective is a worker education, training, and referral service of benefit to local employers. To develop this service the City will need to establish a network of partnerships: with local education and training institutions, with community organizations for outreach, and with a public employment referral/placement agency.

An intra-city public transportation system is proposed as a way to support main street district development, industrial employment, transportation savings for many Blue Island households and improved local and regional air quality. To create this system the City will work with Pace to establish a shuttle bus service linking the Vermont Street Metra station(s) and the main street shopping and hospital district, with employment centers and residential neighborhoods. The City will also work with the Center for Neighborhood Technology to introduce a car sharing service, with the Transportation Operations office of the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) to coordinate car and van pooling networks, and with the Chicagoland Bike Federation and the League of Illinois Bicyclists to plan a useful network of bicycle paths.

Resources for Development

The City of Blue Island will strive to fund and execute all of the proposals of this plan through a series of partnerships with private developers and investors and with public agencies at the county, regional, state and federal levels. This plan identifies more than 20 distinct public programs through which the City can secure funds, professional services, or incentives for private investment to carry out different aspects of its plan, but is far from exhaustive. The sections of the plan that describe individual proposals discuss some of the potential sources of public support that are most applicable to that proposal. Appendix D of the full Blue Island Economic Development Plan provides a more comprehensive list of relevant public development resources identified through this planning effort.

Cumulative Costs and Benefits of Proposed Development

In a plan with so many variables only rough estimates of costs and benefits can be made at this time. Recognizing these limitations, careful estimates were made in order to indicate the financial scale of this plan, the likely proportions of public and private investments needed to carry it out, and the level of benefits flowing to Blue Island if the plan is executed successfully. In summary these estimates indicate the following requirements for implementing the Blue Island Plan over ten years:

- Total investment needed to implement this plan: \$250 to \$255 million.
- Investment expected from the private sector: \$234 million or 94% of the total to \$232 million or 91% of the total.
- Investment from public sources other than the City of Blue Island: \$10.9 million or 4.4% of the whole to \$12.2 million or 4.8% of all investment.
- Investment by the City of Blue Island: \$6.3 million or 2.5% of the total to \$10.0 million or 3.9% of all investment. The City's net investment (after revenues from property sales) is projected to fall within a range of \$3.6 million to \$5.1 million. These projected investments do not include land swaps.

The estimated benefits of achieving the plan's development objectives include:

- The creation of 1,700 to 2,100 permanent jobs in Blue Island or adjoining communities.
- The addition of 900 households to the Blue Island community and some \$44 million to \$49 million in annual purchasing power to the Blue Island economy.
- Approximately \$3 million in increased annual property tax revenue and \$3.4 to \$4.4 million in annual sales tax revenue to the City of Blue Island.

Figure 5. Total Project Costs and Benefits: Low Capital Investment

Cost Estimates - Low					Benefits									
Project	Private	Public (non-city)	Blue Island	Total Cost	Temp. Jobs	Perm. Jobs	Sales Tax Revenue	Total Property Tax Revenue	Prop. Tax Revenue to City	Prop. Tax Revenue to Sch. Dist.	Buying Power	Sale of Land	Future Annual Parking Revenue	Total Revenue to City
TOD Projects														
South Station I	\$83,967,324	\$684,322	\$1,008,592	\$85,660,238	46	16	\$29,280	\$740,960	\$139,126	\$457,744	\$7,571,575	\$92,221	\$0	\$862,461
South Station II	\$49,480,116	\$469,575	\$530,921	\$50,480,612	30	1	\$30,400	\$474,260	\$89,049	\$292,984	\$5,203,737	\$71,522	\$134,784	\$710,966
Hospital/Main Street	\$43,838,895	\$617,486	\$1,749,747	\$46,206,128	43	184	\$190,720	\$485,328	\$91,127	\$299,822	\$5,093,605	\$287,594	\$33,660	\$997,302
South Main/James S	\$51,154,270	\$1,495,716	\$667,970	\$53,317,957	52	23	\$116,418	\$579,740	\$108,855	\$358,147	\$6,635,453	\$0	\$0	\$696,157
TOTAL TOD	\$228,440,606	\$3,267,099	\$3,957,230	\$235,664,934	170	224	\$366,818	\$2,280,288	\$428,158	\$1,408,697	\$24,504,370	\$451,337	\$168,444	\$3,266,886
COD Projects														
Northeast	\$1,807,000	\$3,084,700	\$859,300	\$5,751,000		685	\$1,206,690	\$411,075	\$77,185	\$253,950	\$8,912,177	\$1,800,000		\$3,417,765
South	\$2,715,600	\$3,332,600	\$725,800	\$6,774,000		610	\$1,692,140	\$278,618	\$52,315	\$172,122	\$7,936,391	\$466,650		\$2,437,408
West	\$533,200	\$935,700	\$82,100	\$82,100		250	\$166,440	\$27,405	\$5,146	\$16,930	\$3,252,619	\$0		\$193,845
TOTAL COD	\$5,055,800	\$7,353,000	\$1,667,200	\$12,607,100		1545	\$3,065,270	\$717,098	\$134,646	\$443,003	\$20,101,188	\$2,266,650		\$6,049,018
Citywide	\$601,102	\$275,000	\$682,500	\$1,558,602										
TOTAL ALL TOD, COD & CITYWIDE PROJECTS	\$234,097,507	\$10,895,099	\$6,306,930	\$249,830,636	170	1769	\$3,432,088	\$2,997,385	\$562,803	\$1,851,700	\$44,605,558	\$2,717,987	\$168,444	\$6,712,878

Net Blue Island Investment	\$3,588,944
Total Increase in Blue Island Annual Revenue ¹	\$6,597,917
Increase in Blue Island City Government Revenue	\$4,163,335
Increase in School District Property Tax Revenue	\$1,851,700
Increase in other Property Taxing Body Revenue	\$582,882

Figure 6. Total Project Costs and Benefits: High Capital Investment

Cost Estimates - High					Benefits									
Project	Private	Public (non-city)	Blue Island	Total Cost	Temp Jobs	Perm. Jobs	Sales Tax Revenue	Total Property Tax Revenue	Prop. Tax Revenue to City	Prop. Tax Revenue to Sch. Dist.	Buying Power	Sale of Land	Future Annual Parking Revenue	Total Revenue to City
TOD Projects														
South Station I	\$83,704,824	\$749,947	\$1,205,467	\$85,660,238	46	16	\$29,280	\$740,960	\$139,126	\$457,744	\$7,571,575	\$92,221	\$0	\$862,461
South Station II	\$49,367,729	\$1,223,100	\$3,282,783	\$53,873,612	30	1	\$30,400	\$474,260	\$89,049	\$292,984	\$5,203,737	\$71,522	\$134,784	\$710,966
Hospital/Main Street	\$43,533,292	\$679,418	\$1,993,418	\$46,206,128	43	184	\$190,720	\$485,328	\$91,127	\$299,822	\$5,093,605	\$287,594	\$33,660	\$997,302
South Main/James S	\$51,154,270	\$1,495,716	\$667,970	\$53,317,957	52	23	\$116,418	\$579,740	\$108,855	\$358,147	\$6,635,453	\$0	\$0	\$696,157
TOTAL TOD	\$227,760,115	\$4,148,181	\$7,149,638	\$239,057,934	170	224	\$366,818	\$2,280,288	\$428,158	\$1,408,697	\$24,504,370	\$451,337	\$168,444	\$3,266,886
COD Projects														
Northeast	\$1,359,000	\$3,438,500	\$809,500	\$5,607,000		1025	\$2,149,850	\$411,075	\$77,185	\$253,950	\$13,335,739	\$3,375,000		\$5,935,925
South	\$2,081,200	\$3,405,800	\$1,287,000	\$6,774,000		610	\$1,692,140	\$278,618	\$52,315	\$172,122	\$7,936,391	\$1,098,000		\$3,068,758
West	\$533,200	\$935,700	\$82,100	\$1,551,000		250	\$166,440	\$27,405	\$5,146	\$16,930	\$3,252,619	\$0		\$193,845
TOTAL COD	\$3,973,400	\$7,780,000	\$2,178,600	\$13,932,000		1885	\$4,008,430	\$717,098	\$134,646	\$443,003	\$24,524,750	\$4,473,000		\$9,198,528
Citywide	\$599,400	\$275,000	\$682,500	\$1,556,900										
TOTAL ALL TOD, COD & CITYWIDE PROJECTS	\$232,332,915	\$12,203,181	\$10,010,738	\$254,546,835	170	2109	\$4,375,248	\$2,997,385	\$562,803	\$1,851,700	\$49,029,120	\$4,924,337	\$168,444	\$9,862,388

Net Blue Island Investment	\$5,086,402
Total Increase in Blue Island Annual Revenue ¹	\$7,541,077
Increase in Blue Island City Government Revenue	\$5,106,495
Increase in School District Property Tax Revenue	\$1,851,700
Increase in other Property Taxing Body Revenue	\$582,882

IMPLEMENTATION

Development Functions and Roles

As the preceding project descriptions and estimates indicate, the City of Blue Island will implement this plan primarily by working and investing as a catalyst of private and public resources. Carrying out this role for nine concurrently advancing projects will require the coordinated efforts of elected officials, professional staff and consultants, and residents. The concluding section of the plan describes the roles and internal management arrangements of this cooperative effort. Some key features of these arrangements are highlighted in the following points.

Plan Implementation Management (City Planner): The professional in this new position will have the responsibility for moving the implementation of this plan forward on a day-to-day basis. He or she should be the primary author of proposals for funding, cooperative development agreements, and requests for proposals involved in the plan's implementation. He or she should routinely manage the network of relationships that is critical for the plan's realization.

Project Review and Management (Project Management Consultant): The City has engaged a Blue Island professional firm with a combination of expertise in city planning, architecture, engineering, and project management, to review serious proposals for development, to assist approved projects as they go forward, and to ensure that quality standards are met in the execution of projects.

Community Participation and Ancillary Development Roles (Not-for-Profit Organizations): Not-for-profit organizations may perform some development functions that the City cannot carry out as effectively or flexibly. They may call on their members to volunteer in development efforts, bring significant groups of citizens into discussions of development policy and options, and solicit some philanthropic and public funds to support development more readily than the City.

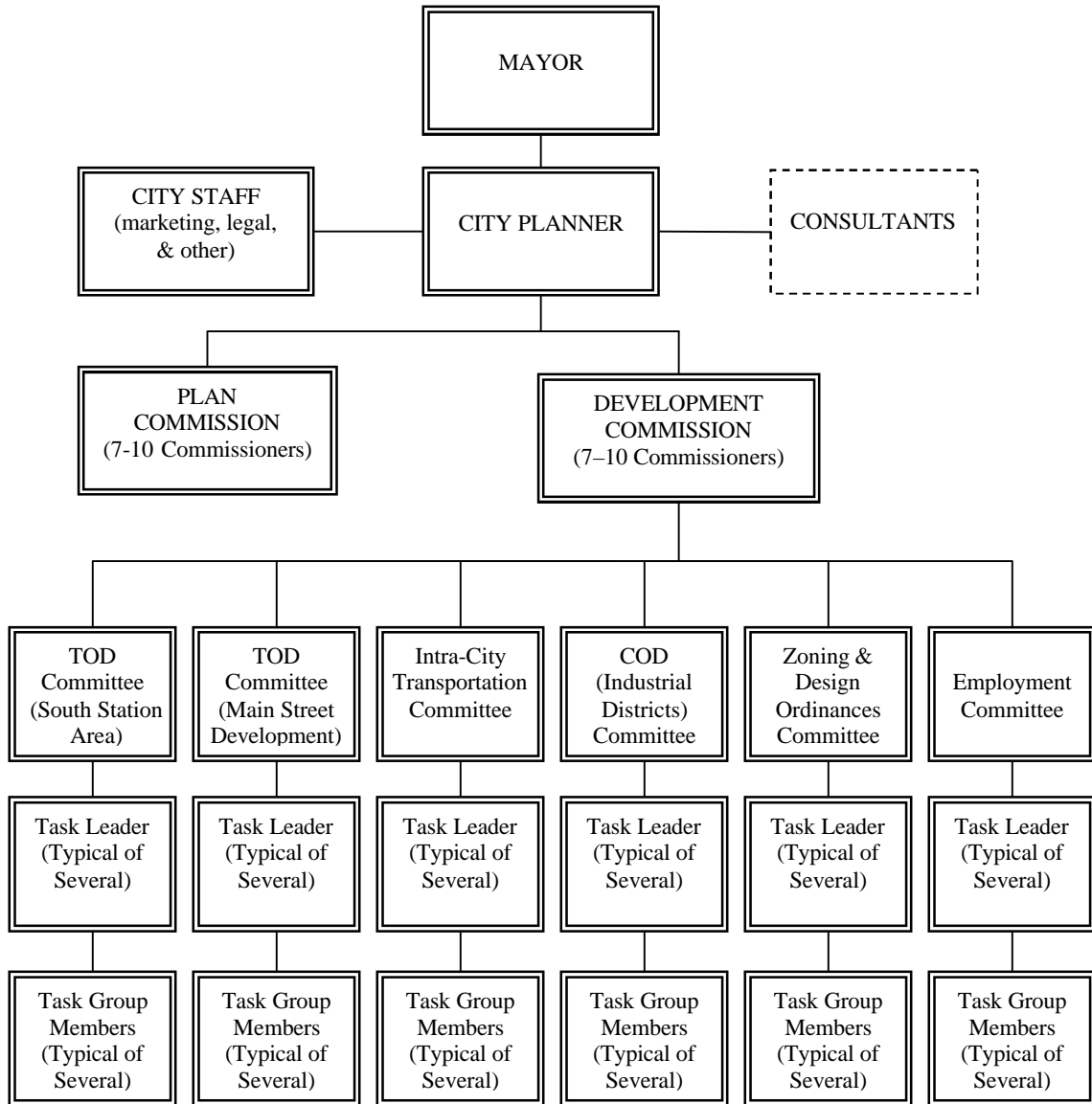
Community Oversight and Participation in the Development Process (Development Commission and Plan Commission) The City Council will establish two citizen commissions. A "Development Commission" will organize stakeholder participation in actions taken to implement the Blue Island Plan. This commission will include standing committees working with staff to achieve each of the major aspects of the Plan. Every resident who wants to play a constructive role in the development effort is needed and can find a place in one of the committees of the Development Commission. The functions of the Development Commission are distinct from those of the "Plan Commission", which will be responsible for the evaluation and approval of individual projects, in keeping with the Plan, as they are proposed by developers.

Evaluation and Strategic Planning (Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)): Given adequate funding from its financial sponsors, CNT proposes that during the next two years its staff will attend regular meetings of Blue Island's Working Group and Steering Committee, coordinate semi-annual reviews of progress in implementing the Blue Island Plan and draft semi-annual updates of the plan document, and devote up to 200 hours per year of professional time to development tasks selected by the City.

Leadership and Executive Management (Mayor of Blue Island): The Mayor will be the executive of the professional development team and the leader of the voluntary effort to implement the Blue Island Plan.

Leadership and Fiscal Discipline (City Council of Blue Island): Initially the City Council will adopt the Blue Island Plan as the City’s primary development policy. The Council will allocate the City’s resources for implementation of the plan as they are needed and vote on major implementation decisions including amendments to the plan.

Figure 7: Blue Island Plan and Development Organization Chart



Project Quality Assurance, LLC
1 July 2005

Evaluation and Revision of the Blue Island Plan

Any complex plan that extends over years requires periodic review and revision. This is especially true for a program such as the Blue Island Plan that involves alternatives for achieving major objectives and requires public and private partnership, accordingly:

- *The plan should be revised semi-annually.* Recommendations for revisions of the plan should be determined in quarterly meetings of the full Working Group. A winter revision should be modest and tactical. A summer revision of the plan should follow from an annual meeting to review the development process and the plan. All community residents should be invited and meetings should be heavily promoted. With the benefit of the input from this broad group, changes in outlook and basic strategy may be considered in revisions of the plan.
- *The City will also secure bi-annual evaluations of the plan from objective reviewers* who might come from a university, a public policy institute, a consulting firm, or a public agency in a distant location.
- *Substantive amendments to the plan will be approved by the City Council.*

NEXT STEPS

This document is a draft of the Blue Island Plan that will be reviewed by the Working Group for the plan's development, by advisors to the City and CNT, and by community residents in a large public meeting. The draft will be revised in light of these reviews. When the Working Group is satisfied that public comments have been adequately addressed, the plan will be recommended to the Blue Island City Council for its adoption. Upon acceptance by the Council, the document will become the Blue Island Economic Development Plan and the primary economic development policy of the City.

Upon adoption, the development scenario described in this plan will be implemented, beginning with a press conference and launch celebration.

Figure 8. Blue Island Development Time Frame

Blue Island Economic Development Plan														
Development Time Frame														
Major Tasks	Estimated Range of Times/Duration (Years)													
	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15			
TOD, South Residential District														
Reach land use agreements with key partners (Metra, MWRD, industrial businesses)	█													
Apply for/Receive applicable public funds (Enhancement, CMAQ, IEPA) (IHDA, HUD) (NMTC, IDCEO)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Construct Calumet Sag nature trail		█	█	█	█									
Relocate industrial businesses & 40 private homes from district		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Relocate Metra parking		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developer(s) of new homes		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Build pedestrian way improvements		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Consolidate Metra stations		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developer(s) of mixed use buildings, Vermont		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
TOD, Hospital District & North Main Street														
Reach land use agreements with key partners (St. Francis, Pronger Smith, other uptown property owners)	█													
Apply for/Receive applicable public funds (NMTC, CDBG, US EDA, IDCEO, IDOT)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Redistribute parking (off Western Ave, to Irving & interior blocks)		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate/Build parking structure		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developers of mixed use buildings		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Reach agreement with IDOT on street patterns		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Convert Western & Gregory to two-way street pattern		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Develop & introduce zoning & design standards		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Create a public square		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate expansion/location of retail & service businesses		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
TOD, South Main Street (Western & Gregory)														
Reach agreement with IDOT on intersection design	█													
Apply for/Receive applicable public funds (IDOT & US STP) (NMTC, IDCEO, US EDA) (IEPA) (IHDA, HUD)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate rebuild of Western & Gregory intersection		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developer major commercial project, Gregory		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developers of mixed use buildings		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Expand/Attract retail & service businesses		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Extend Cal Sag nature trail to Greenwood		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Build pedestrian/bike bridge over the Cal Sag		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate rehab/construction of homes in James St area		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
COD, Northeast Industrial District														
Reach Agreement with Iowa Interstate on Intermodal T Site	█													
Reach Intergovernmental Agreement with Calumet Park	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Apply for/Receive applicable public funds (CMAQ, US STP, IDOT) (IDCEO, Cook C) (IEPA, USEPA)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate construction of truck road from 119th to 123rd		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Relocate soccer field & storage from development area		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Assess brownfield condition, plan/launch necessary remediation	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Select & work with developer(s) of industrial sites	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Relocate industrial businesses from TOD area		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Relocate/Develop new industrial businesses in this COD area		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Blue Island Economic Development Plan											
Development Time Frame											
Major Tasks	Estimated Range of Times/Duration (Years)										
	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
COD, West Industrial Sector											
Reach agreements with plant developers/owners	█	█									
Reach intergovernmental agreements with neighboring towns	█	█									
Apply for/ seek assignment of public funds (IDCEO, Cook C, NMTC) (IEPA, USEPA) (IDOT)	█	█									
Facilitate opening of energy plants at proposed Alsip site	█	█	█	█							
Facilitate industrial retention & infill development	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
COD, South Industrial Sector											
Apply for and receive of public funds (IEPA, USEPA) IDCEO, Cook C, US EDA, NMTC, IDOT	█	█									
Assess brownfield condition, plan/launch necessary remediation	█	█	█	█	█	█					
Secure site control of "triangle" development area	█	█									
Select & work with developer(s) of industrial sites in triangle	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Facilitate industrial retention & infill develop in all south sector	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Create & implement consistent land use plan for south sector	█	█									
Advocate better expressway connections for south sector	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
City Wide, Capacity Building											
Hire Blue Island city planner	█										
Engage project management consultant	█										
Establish implementation Working Group & Planning Comm	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Retain capacity	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
City Wide, Zoning Reform & Design Standards											
Seek funding for zoning & design standards (US EDA, professional services discount/ contribution)	█	█									
Issue interim guidance consistent with Plan	█	█									
Engage specialist consultant	█										
Revise zoning code & establish design standards	█	█									
Implement procedure for project review	█	█									
City Wide, Worker Training & Employment Program											
Establish Partnerships (local education & training institutions, comm organizations, public employ services, workforce boards)	█										
Apply for/ receive and assign public funding (IDCEO, USDE, IDE, private foundations)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Interview major Blue Island employers	█	█									
Facilitate development of programs responsive to employer needs	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Implement new education & training programs	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Promote recruit for new programs	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
City Wide, IntraCity Transportation System											
Reach working agreements with key partners (Pace, CNT, CATS, CBF, business comm leaders forming TMA)	█	█									
Apply for and receive of public funds (CMAQ, new JARC, Pace service commitments)	█	█									
(Design & commit budget with local match & rider fees)	█	█									
Establish shuttle bus service	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Establish car sharing service	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Establish coordinated car/van pooling system	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Establish bike path system	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█