



City of Elmhurst, IL

Strategic Plan for Economic Development



APRIL 2017

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Introduction

ELMHURST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MISSION

To retain, expand, promote, and attract business and industry within Elmhurst so as to enhance the local economic climate, increase the City of Elmhurst's revenue base, increase the value of commerce, and create employment opportunities that are conducive to improving the quality of life in Elmhurst.



WHAT IS *Economic Development*?

"The main goal of economic development is improving the economic well being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life.

As there is no single definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy, or program for achieving successful economic development. Communities differ in their geographic and political strengths and weaknesses. Each community, therefore, will have a unique set of challenges for economic development."



- From the International Economic Development Council Reference Guide

INTRODUCTION

'Close to Everything, Unlike Anything,' Elmhurst is an ideal location with proximity and easy access to major market places. Situated as the eastern gateway to DuPage County, Elmhurst is located sixteen miles west of downtown Chicago at the crossroads of key Illinois expressways. Conveniently located along the UP-Metra train line, Elmhurst features 25-minute express service to Chicago and is just minutes from O'Hare and Midway Airports. This dynamic suburban city is home to more than 44,000 residents and 2,500-plus businesses. In 2016, over \$167million in private funds were invested in Economic Development related projects throughout the city. In order to protect and enhance this investment in economic activity, the City has revised its Strategic Plan for Economic Development to continue to set clear and attainable economic development goals and objectives.

There are many moving parts to economic development. Elmhurst must continue to be a proactive municipality. Creating and sustaining a business friendly environment, building relationships, and becoming a key player in facilitating and regulating dealings among viable businesses and willing property owners allows Elmhurst to maintain, strengthen, and grow its economic development profile.

This Plan is primarily intended to: 1) Provide guidance for the City Council, staff, and the City's Economic Development Partners for the next 3-5 years, 2) Set priorities and develop rational approaches to economic development, 3) Identify new business opportunities, and 4) Facilitate overall economic growth to enhance Elmhurst's quality of life and economic health.

Economic Development Strategies

PROGRESSIVE APPROACH

The City of Elmhurst has a long history of successful efforts to improve the economic climate of the community. Elmhurst's economic "well-being" has directly benefited from these previous efforts, and it is important for the community to maintain this progressive approach to ensure the community's success in the future.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

This Plan reinforces current strategies and reviews opportunities identified in the 2009 City of Elmhurst Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan), 2015 North York Street Corridor Plan, and 2016 Downtown Plan (Downtown Plan). The Plan emphasizes retention and attraction activities that should be employed throughout the Elmhurst community. Key strategies include:

- Concentration on business retention and expansion as vital aspects of economic development.
- Enhance Elmhurst “employment areas” (business/industrial) with supportive business environments, considering potential re-development opportunities and/or upgraded infrastructure where appropriate.
- Continue utilization of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Special Service Areas (SSAs) to address acute redevelopment needs in prominent areas.
- Proactively planning for expiration of TIF I as well as future incentives and programming in new TIFs IV and V to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment.
- Promote, market and “network” the community through website, social media, and networking with professionals through ICSC (International Council of Shopping Centers), AIRE (Association of Industrial Real Estate), CRBA (Chicagoland Restaurant Brokers Association) IEDC (International Economic Development Council), IEDA (Illinois Economic Development Association), and real estate professionals.

Economic Development Partners

RESOURCE TEAM

A number of agencies outside of City Government have supported, and continue to support, economic development in Elmhurst. Together with staff, these partners in Economic Development act as a diverse Resource Team for development and assist in business attraction, expansion, and retention efforts.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

ELMHURST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

A key aspect of the City's economic development efforts is the Economic Development Commission (EDC). Per the Elmhurst Municipal Code, the purpose of the Commission is "promotion of the new and continued economic growth and vitality of the City." Among their duties, the EDC is charged with establishing, maintaining, and promoting communication among the City, other government agencies, businesses, trade and industry organizations, and other local organizations and institutions, for the purpose of maintaining and improving the economic health of the City. They are also responsible for recommending to the City Council actions and programs that enhance the City's economic development efforts.

Comprised of fifteen (15) members, the EDC is made up of volunteers within the Elmhurst community having an interest in economic development. The group includes high-level professionals in the areas of sales, finance, marketing, commercial real estate or retail/industrial/manufacturing business operations, or any combination thereof. Their knowledge and love of Elmhurst combined with their professional expertise, bring a depth and breadth of expertise to their roles. In addition to monthly meetings, the EDC also meets in sub-committees focused on various aspects of economic development, they also conduct retention visits, and host the annual Women in Management and Real Estate Broker Forums.

The EDC was responsible for the development of this Plan and will assist in its implementation. The EDC will be charged with advocating specific strategies and recommendations essential and required for the Plan's success.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

PROPERTY OWNERS, REAL ESTATE PRACTITIONERS, & DEVELOPERS

Enhancing existing relationships and developing new partnerships are vital for economic development success. The City actively networks with property owners, real estate practitioners, and developers operating in Elmhurst and within the Chicagoland region as a whole. The Elmhurst Economic Development team also recognizes that a high volume of professionals in these fields have chosen to make Elmhurst their home. The depth and breadth of that hometown talent pool is a huge asset for Elmhurst. The Economic Development Team works with interested developers, property owners, and real estate practitioners operating and/or living within Elmhurst to best leverage their collective experiences and skills to benefit the Elmhurst community.

LOCAL BUSINESS GROUPS

The following local business organizations represent businesses throughout Elmhurst; they are joined together in the mission of promoting an environment that creates success for local businesses and our community:

- Elmhurst City Centre
- Spring Road Business Association
- York & Vallette Business Association

Additional information is available in the appendix.



ELMHURST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

A strategic business partner, the Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce and Industry works on business and economic development initiatives in partnership with the City and local business associations. Established in 1918, the Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce & Industry promotes an environment that creates success for local businesses and the Elmhurst community. The Elmhurst Chamber serves the needs of some 600 member businesses, not-for-profits, and individuals through programs, products, services, and events that provide opportunities for networking and business referrals, business promotion, business education, governmental affairs, and leadership building. The Chamber also represents the interests of business on legislative issues at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

CHOOSE DUPAGE

The Goals of Choose DuPage are to support local municipal economic development initiatives; grow, retain, and attract office, retail, industrial and commercial businesses; and address policy issues critical to the needs of business. Choose DuPage is dedicated to establishing DuPage County as a premier global business location by working to expand and diversify the DuPage County economy through actions that stimulate business investment in its communities and generate desirable job opportunities for DuPage County residents.

UTILITIES

Commonwealth Edison
(800)334-7661

Nicor Gas
(888)642-6748

ELMHURST COLLEGE PARTNERS

Elmhurst Partners draws on the considerable resources and educational expertise of Elmhurst College. As part of its ongoing development as a superior institution of higher learning, the College created Elmhurst Partners in 2001 as a corporate training arm, advancing the College's commitment to adult education and lifelong learning. Today, Elmhurst Partners offers customized training and development, academic programs and a wide array of consulting services. Elmhurst Partners is a one-stop shop for businesses and organizations. In addition to their training and academic services, Elmhurst Partners can connect businesses with student interns through the Center for Professional Excellence and provide information about the College's robust calendar of events.

ELMHURST PUBLIC LIBRARY

Elmhurst Public Library supports Elmhurst's dynamic local business community by offering services to help interested parties start, run and grow their business. In 2017 the Library plans to open a Maker's Space to further connect with area businesses. Business owners located in Elmhurst are entitled to an EPL business library card which grants access to the following services:

- Business Center with workspace for individuals and groups
- Access to Copy Center and Poster Printer
- 3-D Printing
- Meeting Rooms and Group Study Rooms
- Creative Studio
- Business Programs featuring professional speakers and monthly Elmhurst Business Connection opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Illinois SBDC at College of DuPage offers their expertise to entrepreneurs and small business owners through affordable and valuable Advising, Training, and Resources.

Advising: The SBDC provides one-on-one counseling services to new and existing businesses at no charge. They will review business plans and discuss financing options, bank loans, SBA and state-backed loan programs, marketing, management and other topics of concern to business clients.

Training: The SBDC conducts nearly 50 seminars and workshops throughout the year that address topics important to all business owners; providing information that is timely, relevant and immediately applicable in a real-world environment.

Resources: The SBDC reference section can be a valuable resource. They offer general information, information on business plans or financing, and assistance in conducting a financial analysis for a company, .

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The Illinois Department of Commerce (DECO) is the State Agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois. Their main focus is to retain and create jobs in Illinois by marketing to:

- Existing businesses, encouraging them to reinvest and create more jobs for Illinois citizens;
- New businesses, inviting them to relocate, invest, and create new jobs;
- International companies, positioning Illinois as a global business destination for Foreign Direct Investment;
- Entrepreneurs and investors, connecting resources to support their startups and ventures; and
- Locally and globally, promoting Illinois as a world-class tourism and film destination.

The Department is organized into the following Offices that are laser focused on economic growth for the State of Illinois: Business Development; Community Development; Employment & Training; Energy & Recycling; Energy Assistance; Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology; Film; Tourism; Trade & Investment; and Urban Assistance

Economic Development Specific Recommendations

GOALS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

The recommendations listed within are intended to address those areas deemed most important to the City's economic development efforts over the next 3-5 years. Emphasizing and enhancing existing relationships and developing new partnerships within the business community, local and regional organizations, and relevant professional associations has been and will continue to be a cornerstone to Elmhurst's economic well-being across all goals.



1. EMPLOY A BROAD-BASED BUSINESS RETENTION PROGRAM

Retaining existing businesses and helping them grow is key to ensuring the economic health of a community. A vibrant and diverse business base not only improves the quality of life for current residents, it also increases marketability of an area for businesses looking to relocate or expand. In an era of rapid social, cultural, and technological change Elmhurst needs to take a proactive approach to addressing the current and future concerns of its business community. Actively listening to the Elmhurst business community and establishing meaningful partnerships helps keep and create local jobs and businesses. In short, a strong Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program is essential.

Business retention visits are currently spearheaded by the Economic Development Commission. Staff likewise meets with businesses on a regular basis and conducts outreach efforts to those businesses in need of assistance. Implementing the State of Illinois CORE, formal retention and expansion program, establishes a standard process that can easily be communicated to businesses. This will also allow for the gathering of consistent, comparable data, with which to gauge the community's business climate in-line with best practices. The City will compliment CORE efforts by continuing to utilize the current retention program through the EDC.



EMPLOY A BROAD-BASED BUSINESS RETENTION PROGRAM

ACTION PLAN

- Emphasize and enhance existing relationships and develop new partnerships with the business community as well as local, countywide, and State organizations for business retention efforts.
- Develop and maintain constant and ongoing communications with building owners to determine building status, tenant status, and availability (tenant status is important in determining retention efforts).
- Actively participate in CORE, Illinois' first formal statewide initiative to bring together economic development partners to create a unified business retention and expansion strategy as a compliment to the current business retention program. CORE is designed to identify and remove barriers to business growth and increase investment both locally and statewide by employing a systematic approach to understanding and identifying statewide trends, as well as enabling state and local stakeholders to better address economic development needs.
- Provide opportunities for connections, partnerships, leads, and referrals.
- Utilize participation of EDC members, Elmhurst Chamber, City Centre and other business associations where appropriate for tasks such as referrals, e-mail blast preparations, business retention meetings, and following up on information gathered during retention visits..
 - Continue to conduct individual meetings within various business sectors/areas (e.g., industrial, Spring Road, etc) with assistance from EDC.
 - Continue to utilize EDC to prioritize individual business retention visits and review data collected.
 - Continue to develop a business focused communication plan including the new economic development blog, Front Porch, LinkedIn and other social media, monthly e-blasts, etc.

2. BUILD ELMHURST BRAND AS WELCOMING, VIABLE, AND SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

City staff, along with the Economic Development Commission, actively assist businesses looking to move to Elmhurst. They likewise seek out and contact those businesses which are expanding in the Illinois and Midwest marketplace that have been identified by market assessment reports and other sources as being a gap in the community. Staff and the EDC will work with the City Council and Zoning & Planning Commission to create and promote a pro-business environment (ex: Zoning, Incentives, TIF Districts, Women in Management Event), identify community benefits (ex: Close to Everything, Unlike Anything video), and utilize professional contacts.

To aid recruitment going forward, the City's Economic Development Team will focus on Elmhurst becoming known as a business friendly environment. This includes offering timely license and permit processes, updated zoning and signage requirements, workforce amenities, business ready sites, and personalized assistance. They will also work in conjunction with the Explore Elmhurst program, Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce & Industry, DuPage County Visitor & Tourism, Choose DuPage, and the State of Illinois to market and promote Elmhurst.



BUILD BRAND AS A WELCOMING, VIABLE, AND SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

ACTION PLAN

- Emphasize and enhance existing relationships and develop new partnerships within the business community as well as local, countywide, and State organizations for business recruitment.
- Target businesses based on: information gathered through professional organizations, focusing on businesses which are expanding in the Illinois marketplace, as well as those businesses identified through quarterly Market Assessment Reports, and other applicable sources.
- Use networking and broker contacts developed through International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), Chicago Restaurant Brokers Association (CRBA) and other professional organizations and continue to better utilize the many brokers and related professionals who reside in Elmhurst.
- Support commerce by using information gathered from building owners, real estate professionals, and the EDC to determine space availability, identify opportunities for new development, and connect stakeholders and interested parties.
- Conduct and participate in business focused events to promote the community, identify opportunities, connect stakeholders, and share success stories.
 - Attend ICSC, IEDA, IEDC, CRBA and related events as determined to promote community and maintain community "viability" in the "marketplace."
 - Foster ongoing communications and networking with regular event attendees and contacts.
 - Continue hosting and expanding upon annual EDC Events such as Retail Broker and Women in Management events and build new events such as: a quarterly business spotlight in conjunction with the Library, business park stakeholder meetings, business area stakeholder meetings.
- Effectively communicate the best assets Elmhurst has to offer including but not limited to: location, residential growth rates, optic accessibility, new home building rates, Express Metra service, DuPage County tax structure, airport and highway transportation access, etc. and amplify the messages of the CBD and other Elmhurst retail areas.

BUILD BRAND AS A WELCOMING, VIABLE, AND SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

ACTION PLAN CONTINUED

- Identify potential community incentives where appropriate and strategic (e.g., TIF, sales tax rebate, façade program, business loan program, etc).
- Maintain and enhance City website information regarding economic development including quarterly review of all information posted, updated available properties information, and continued utilization of new Economic Development blog feature to share updates, success stories, and business testimonials. Review and Enhance the Close to Everything, Unlike Anything video and other economic development related print materials in a timely manner.
- Utilize participation of EDC members, Chamber, City Centre and other business associations where appropriate for coordination of referrals, recruitment meetings, following up on responses, event coordination, etc.
- Utilize the rebranded Explore Elmhurst website, new City website, social media, and other communication outlets to continually inform and educate the community, applicable business professionals, and prospective business owners about economic development related activities, regulations, and opportunities grounded in a defined brand platform.
- Examine ways to remove barriers to conducting business including but not limited to: annually reviewing the zoning list of permitted and conditional uses in conjunction with market trends, examining other business related zoning issues such as signage requirements in commercial and industrial areas throughout the community, supporting businesses with a streamlined permit process, and pursuing general changes to processes and codes accordingly.
- Promote local education and professional opportunities through the Library, College, Hospital, and other local agencies.
- Expand business recognition through blog, and research other ways in which to recognize and promote businesses including but not limited to highlighting business special events, charitable programs, anniversaries, and other news.

3. DEVELOP A BUSINESS PARK PLAN

The City of Elmhurst has three Business Park areas: The area which includes Industrial Drive/Church Rd./Lake St./Grand Ave., the Riverside Drive Area, and County Line Rd. These areas enjoy a consistently low vacancy rate, provide a high percentage of the city's daytime population (people who eat, shop, and explore), and provide a stronghold of economic diversification for Elmhurst. Despite being in demand, the Business Parks are disjointed, lacking in amenities for the workforce, and in many cases the structures themselves are outdated. Creation of a Business Park plan will assist these areas in sustaining a competitive environment and high usage rates into the future.

Revolutionary advances in technology leads to fewer employees and dramatic trends toward Globalization make the retention of business park occupants as crucial as recruitment. Enhancing communication and relations within the business park community and developing consistent outreach efforts, both structured and diverse, will optimize the ability for all parties to collaborate, exchange information, and grow.



DEVELOP A BUSINESS PARK PLAN

ACTION PLAN

- Promote Elmhurst's three distinct business park areas as sites for commercial as well as industrial endeavors.
- Become a known resource for businesses in these areas through an aggressive increase in retention and expansion visits, establishing annual events that allow business operators accessibility to City team members, and developing a directory with supply chain information within the business parks.
- Seek out opportunities to increase the quality of life for the workforce operating out of these areas as well as business satisfaction. As the economic engine of the Elmhurst economy, these areas supply the highest concentration of daytime occupants to the City who in turn support local stores and restaurants. Providing amenities to these areas aids in recruitment and job satisfaction and helps to keep our business parks viable. Likewise quality of life factors into business expansion and retention of successful business. Opportunities to consider include but are not limited to:
 - Promote updates to area such as scheduled street re-surfacing.
 - Research viability of beautification programs for tree and seasonal planting.
 - Investigate employee amenities such as bike and walking paths.
 - Examine the need for increased safety measures including pedestrian crosswalks and visible police presence in the evenings.
 - Continue to discourage disinvestment by property owners and acknowledge property enhancements.
 - Examine accessibility needs for the area to train and other public transportation.
- Promote local education and professional opportunities for workforce through the Library, College, Hospital, and other local agencies and partner with said facilities to address workforce needs such as specialized training opportunities.
- Expand business recognition through blog, and research other ways in which to recognize and promote businesses in the business parks including but not limited to highlighting business special events, charitable programs, beautification efforts, anniversaries, and other news.

4. ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT BEYOND 2021

Elmhurst implemented TIF financing in the late 1980's as the foundation of its downtown revitalization strategy. The City added a Special Service Area (SSA) in the 1990's forming the City Centre. These financial mechanisms allowed for beautification of the area and the introduction of the popular Retail Grant, and Facade Programs.

TIF I expires in 2021. Utilizing existing TIF dollars to enhance the area and support business growth and retention in the City Centre inline with the new Downtown Plan prior to the expiration of the TIF is a priority. Prior to the expiration of the TIF an estimated 525-plus new residents will call downtown Elmhurst home, beginning with those who began moving into Elmhurst 255 in September 2016. Planning for the downtown City Centre beyond 2021 must take into consideration the needs of these new residents as well as the increased daytime population generated from increased office space likewise planned for the area.

This goal proactively plans for beyond 2021 to lay a foundation that will allow the City Centre to continue to thrive; retaining current businesses, attracting new businesses, and meeting the needs of an increased residential and office population, when the inducements from TIF I expire.



ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT BEYOND 2021

ACTION PLAN

- Identify programs currently in place that will lose their funding mechanism at the expiration of TIF I and those that may still be operational through SSA dollars.
- Inspire action to preserve, improve, and create vibrant public spaces in-line with the 2016 Downtown Plan. For example:
 - Installation of electronic signage over the underpass.
 - Explore lighting options for Schiller Passageway, fountain area, individual tree uplighting etc.
 - Explore the addition of welcoming and directional signage in City Centre ie: on Addison Parking Deck, and throughout City Centre.
 - Beautification and upkeep of rear portions of commercial properties visible to public.
 - Bike infrastructure and storage.
 - Metra Station redesign.
- Complete a Power of 10 Placemaking* process to determine where to focus support for utilization of TIF funding prior to expiration of the TIF to redevelop, rehabilitate, or in some way improve the condition of the area.
- Reexamine existing incentives to determine if they require adjustments to maximize the use of TIF dollars in-line with the 2016 Downtown Plan.
- Continue to promote resident, guest, and business access to City Centre as an outstanding public gathering space.
- Be creative, flexible, and open to new development opportunities within the remaining TIF timeline and assist in moving potential projects through the approval process in a timely fashion, allowing for the best return on investment during active TIF years.

* Power of 10 Placemaking is a concept utilized by the Project for Public Spaces that builds off the idea that it is not enough to have just one great place in a neighborhood - you need a number of them to create a truly lively public space or downtown. IE a great place needs to have at least 10 things to do in it or 10 reasons to be there.

5. REVIEW, UPDATE, IDENTIFY, ESTABLISH, AND PROMOTE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Incentives are tools to influence business decisions in order to spur the growth of companies and jobs in specific locations. Though project fundamentals come first, incentives always matter and can be a powerful motivation central to decision making. Quality of incentives offered matters more than quantity, knowing what Elmhurst wishes to accomplish in a particular area is important to understand before introducing new or modified incentives.

As the City enters into the last few years of TIF I, as TIF IV begins to gain momentum, and as TIF V begins, Elmhurst's existing incentives need to be reexamined in order to maximize their benefit and encourage investment and development. Likewise, the City needs to identify and establish potential new incentives to help revitalize and grow new TIF areas as well as established business districts outside of the TIFs. Awareness of programs offered by different groups from Public Utilities to State and Federal government entities is also vital when promoting opportunities in Elmhurst.



REVIEW, UPDATE, IDENTIFY, ESTABLISH, AND PROMOTE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

ACTION PLAN

- Review existing programs offered by City of Elmhurst and suggest updates if needed, ie: do these programs need to be updated or are they still true "incentives" for doing business in Elmhurst, will the same programs available in the CBD work for other TIF Districts, what other programs exist that could benefit Elmhurst's economic health.
- Research incentives used throughout Illinois and the United States to identify potential community incentives where appropriate and strategic in three areas:
 - **Direct Incentives:** monetary assistance provided to one or more businesses or through an organization authorized by the local government; including grants, loans, equity investments, loan insurance and guarantees, and training subsidies.
 - **Indirect Incentives:** grants or loans provided to businesses or community organizations that provide support to businesses or promote business investment or development.
 - **Fee-based or Tax-based Incentives:** Tax or fee credits, refunds, exemptions, or property tax abatement or assessment reductions.
- Familiarize City staff, City Council, EDC, and business community with available State and Federal programs; paying particular attention to changes in State offered programs such as potential elimination of Enterprise Zones and EDGE tax credits.
- Familiarize City staff, City Council, EDC, and business community with available incentives from Public Utility providers as well as non-monetary incentives such as access to workforce training and programming by community partners such as Elmhurst College and the Elmhurst Public Library.
- Examine the potential for creating TIF based incentives in TIF IV and TIF V to encourage development and reinvestment in these TIF Districts. Make suggestions to City Council as deemed appropriate by staff and the EDC.
- Promote incentives through website, social media, and at applicable trade shows and networking events.

6. CONTINUE TO PURSUE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE CITY'S ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Pursuit of opportunities to enhance the City's economic well-being is a continuous process. Each year, City staff will develop a more specific work plan to identify which recommendations and action steps will be undertaken for the upcoming year. This work plan shall be developed in conjunction with the City's annual budgeting process, which establishes City-wide goals for the upcoming calendar year. Here are some ways in which the City has already pursued new opportunities to enhance economic well-being of the community:

- Created the full time position: Business Development Coordinator
- Enhanced website presence with Economic Development blog
- Integration of Location One Information Systems (LOIS) site selection program
- Increased affiliations with Economic Development related agencies
- Created the full time position: Communications Manager
- Developed and Implemented Explore Elmhurst rebranding
- Developed and Implemented Explore Elmhurst Trolley & Sweepstakes
- Video: 'Close to Everything Unlike Anything'
- EDC and City Council review of TIF eligible areas
- Enhanced Role of EDC Commissioners
- Formation of EDC Sub-Committees



CONTINUE TO PURSUE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE CITY'S ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

ACTION PLAN

The proposed amended action plan for this item would include but not be limited to the following:

- Work with EDC Subcommittees.
- Develop stratagem to position the City's business parks for long term success.
- Help position the City Centre and other retail areas for long term success. Pursue zoning changes in-line with the Downtown Plan, best business practices, and market trends.
- Forward EDC Subcommittee findings, as appropriate, to Zoning & Planning Commission, Development, Planning and Zoning Committee, and City Council.
- Pursue methods of disseminating Elmhurst's assets including LinkedIn, YouTube, and other social media, news columns, and cable television coverage of economic development and related activities.
- Pursue Elmhurst shopping promotional efforts with Explore Elmhurst, local business association partners, and DuPage Visitor & Tourism through: online social and review media, Cable television, news columns and features, networking, and other opportunities.
- Review of current retail grant and façade programs to ensure their maximum effectiveness to economic development. Identify and implement additional incentive programs. Expand formal incentive programs to business areas outside of the TIF I boundaries.
- Advocate on business issues with City, State, and Federal agencies and actively seek grant dollars for projects to enhance the City's economic well-being.



Appendix A

Summary of Existing Conditions



Summary of Existing Conditions*

Community Snapshot

Elmhurst is home to over 46,000 people, and offers a dynamic mix of location, transportation and business-friendly tools that make it one of DuPage County's most attractive locales. A vibrant downtown and unique business districts combined with a regional hospital, state-of-the-art library, nationally recognized Liberal Arts College, local museums, and top-rated schools and parks, make Elmhurst a hub for activity. The City's close proximity to O'Hare and Midway Airports is a key advantage. Easily accessible to I-290, I-294, I-90, I-355, and I-88, Elmhurst is a gateway to every Chicagoland destination. Busy commuters benefit from the Metra Union Pacific West line. Used by over 2,300 people daily, the Metra station is located in the heart of downtown Elmhurst, and offers morning and afternoon commuters express service to Chicago's Ogilvie Transportation Center.

Elmhurst is uniquely positioned as the home of a number of cultural facilities and institutions as well as a variety of local organizations. The Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art, Elmhurst Art Museum, and Elmhurst History Museum, along with Elmhurst College and the Elmhurst Public Library, comprise a unique collection of facilities collectively referred to as Elmhurst's "Cultural Campus," steps from Elmhurst's Downtown City Centre.

The Elmhurst Public Library offers various economic benefits to the community. The original library opened on March 22, 1916 with 830 books and has grown to become one of the leading economic providers in the City of Elmhurst. The library provides residents with support, resources, and a friendly environment for the Elmhurst patrons to pursue a love of reading, connect with others, and to access to information, technology, and business amenities. The Elmhurst Public Library issues library cards to local businesses and allows businesses in the community to utilize their meeting rooms and computer labs. The Elmhurst Public Library also provides numerous resources, such as high-definition, state-of-the-art video conferencing, full-color printers, computers with loaded essential software, business research material, personalized research assistance, and so much more. The Library's amenities allow local businesses to easily accommodate their clients and agents.

The city is home to excellent park and school districts. The Park District manages 28 parks covering 468 acres featuring 18 playgrounds, 12 picnic areas, 68 athletic fields, 19 dedicated facilities, and 5.5 miles of trail including access to the Illinois Prairie Path. Elmhurst Community School District 205 consists of 14 schools (8 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, and York Community High School as well as an early childhood center and young adult transition program). Additionally, Elmhurst is home to several faith based education institutions offering preschool through high school.

* Demographic stats provided from a December 2016 Economic Overview from JobsEQ

Summary of Existing Conditions (continued)

Elmhurst College provides significant benefits to the Elmhurst community. Named one of the top 10 colleges in the Midwest, according to U.S. News & World Report, Elmhurst College ranks among the best values in the region offering nearly 60 undergraduate majors and more than 15 graduate programs, Elmhurst College features an enrollment of approximately 3,300 students with approximately 1,400 of these living in college housing or near campus. The College is a private, four-year university that offers a range of employment opportunities, including faculty, administrative, and staff positions along with competitive compensation and benefits. The College employs approximately 500 regular employees and roughly 200 adjunct faculty members per semester.

Elmhurst College not only offers employment opportunities but also encourages its students to seek employment and internships within the community. More than 80 percent of Elmhurst undergraduates gain on-the-job experience through internships or service work, and 93 percent of Elmhurst graduates find full-time employment or enter graduate school within a year of graduation. The College's robust career programs include more than 2,000 options for internships and other professional experiences.

Elmhurst Hospital, part of the Edward-Elmhurst Health Network was rebuilt from the ground up in 2011. The new, state-of-the-art acute care hospital incorporates the latest trends in healthcare facility design and innovations in comfort and has earned the prestigious Planetree Distinction. From the soothing water features to the private, hotel-like patient suites, the hospital is a uniquely warm and comfortable place for all who enter its doors. The hospital employs over 3,000 workers and 600 physicians. The hospital staff is committed to excellence in medical and surgical care, behavioral health, cardiology, emergency care, maternity, neurosurgery, oncology, orthopedics and pediatrics. As a patient at Elmhurst, you are cared for by an expert medical team, including nationally-recognized nurses. In 2015, Elmhurst Hospital earned Magnet Recognition. Additional services include a skilled nursing facility, the Palliative Care Unit, the Center for Pain Management, the Sleep Disorders Center, the Breast Health Center, the Cancer Center and Family Birthing Center. The prevalence of the hospital provides various economic benefits to the City, such as employment, business transactions, and aids in the attraction and maintenance of other businesses and industries.

Special Service Areas:

The City's use of Special Service Areas (SSA's) has typically focused on physical improvements such as streetscape, sidewalks, paving, and related enhancements. One notable exception is the use of an extensive SSA for the implementation and management of an organization dedicated to Downtown marketing, maintenance and services program, which is commonly known as the Elmhurst City Centre. An SSA was also implemented for the Spring Road Business District as a funding mechanism for streetscape improvements.

Summary of Existing Conditions (continued)

Tax Increment Financing

Elmhurst has a very successful legacy of using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to address acute redevelopment needs in prominent areas. Elmhurst's TIF Districts have been well-documented and quantified. (Further information is available from the Illinois Tax Increment Association and provides further evidence to support this.) The TIF Districts have resulted in revenue sharing with other taxing bodies and significant property value increases and early releases of properties in the TIF districts. The City has strategically implemented TIF with a results-oriented approach in five distinct areas: Downtown Elmhurst (TIF I), the Lake/Walnut District (TIF II), Route 83/St. Charles Road (TIF III), North York Street Corridor (TIF IV), Lake/West District (TIF V). The success of Elmhurst's TIF areas contributes positively to the entire community's financial well-being, as investment in key strategic areas appears to encourage investment throughout the City.

The Downtown TIF has resulted in a trend-setting rejuvenation of the Central Business District, with an attractive appearance and business environment of shops, restaurants, entertainment uses, and services. The Lake/Walnut District, which expired in 2016, now features several large-scale developments that have successfully changed the face of the Lake Street corridor. These include: Elmhurst Lake Street Auto Group (Toyota, BMW, Jaguar) dealerships, Spring Hill Suites by Marriott Hotel, and the headquarters of Superior Ambulance. Route 83/St. Charles Road resulted in successful expansion and redevelopment of a large-scale commercial center, Elmhurst Crossing, with Kohl's, Whole Foods, Party City, Portillos and many other stores. This project saw the successful relocation of the Elmhurst Public Works Facility, thereby providing additional land for the Elmhurst Crossing Project. The North York Corridor is beginning to gain momentum and have begun to show a return on investment to the community. Early projects include the highly successful Mariano's development, LA Fitness with retail outlot development, and the recently completed mixed use development, Elmhurst 255, featuring 192 luxury apartment units, 12,000sf of retail space, 150 covered public parking spots, and a community plaza. TIF V came online along the Lake Street corridor in 2016 and will be the home to the Elmhurst BMW expansion project.

Business Parks

Elmhurst business parks are boutique in nature. The business park areas are essentially built-out. Many buildings in the business park are 20,000 – 50,000 square feet. This has created a niche for companies of that size. The City's industrial market conditions are generally healthy and stable. The city's location and transportation are largely the reason for these conditions. Land prices (and resulting lease prices) are generally stable in the Elmhurst market. City staff, the EDC, and City Council, continue to foster relationships in the business community. Meetings with business and property owners in these areas began in 2016. A goal for 2017 is to begin developing Business Park Plan to focus on workforce, accessibility, and beautification in these areas.

Summary of Existing Conditions (continued)*

Industry & Workforce Snapshot

The City of Elmhurst benefits greatly from the many different industries and businesses that generate employment and revenue opportunities for its residents. The City has a resident labor force of 23,534 with a participation rate of 65.9%. In Elmhurst, 64% of residents ages 25-64 have a bachelor's degree or higher, which compares to 30.9% in the nation.

The City's strong industries and businesses are considered vital economic development strengths among its stakeholders. The largest job sector in Elmhurst is Health Care and Social Assistance, employing 7,170 workers. One major contributor in the health care industry that is providing significant economic benefits is Elmhurst Hospital. The next largest job sectors in Elmhurst are Wholesale Trade (4,011 workers) and Educational Services (3,367). The sectors with the largest location quotients (LQs) are Wholesale Trade (3.02), Health Care and Social Assistance (1.51), and Construction (1.46). Over the next ten years, employment in Elmhurst is projected to expand by 1,713 jobs; the fastest growing sectors are expected to be Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,481 jobs), Construction (+226), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+182).

The largest major occupation group in Elmhurst is Office and Administrative Support Occupations (5,488 workers), followed by Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (3,582), and Sales and Related Occupations (3,416). The highest average wages per worker in Elmhurst are found in Management Occupations (\$113,100), Legal Occupations (\$101,500), and Computer and Mathematical Occupations (\$83,100).

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in the community is projected to grow 0.5% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 1.2% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 0.5% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 1.5% per year.

* Demographic stats provided from a December 2016 Economic Overview from JobsEQ



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Appendix B

Business Districts



City Centre

Anchored by the 10-Screen York Classic Cinemas Theatre, and home to a large variety of restaurants, boutique shopping, and services, Elmhurst's downtown City Centre is the heart of Elmhurst. Located along Metra's Union Pacific/West line with express service to Chicago, the City Centre stretches from Virginia Street on the south, continues north to North Avenue at York and Addison Streets and includes all east/west streets in between, as well as Palmer Drive. Whether shopping for a unique gift, enjoying a delicious meal with friends at a sidewalk cafe, or relaxing by the plaza fountain after a fitness class, there is always lots to see and do in the City Centre. Walking distance from Elmhurst College, three distinct museums, and the award winning Elmhurst Public Library, the City Centre is host to many community events such as the Rock the Block Party. The City Centre is bustling with development activity including a new 690-space public parking deck with first floor retail that opened in 2016 and the new Fitness Formula Centre (FFC) set to break ground in Summer 2017 among other projects.



Spring Road

Under the guidance of the Spring Road Business Association, the Spring Road Business District is a bevy of activity. With a steady flow of pedestrians and bicyclers fresh from the Illinois Prairie Path and the surrounding residential area, Spring Road is the "it" place to shop, dine, and stroll on the southwest side of the City. A myriad of family owned and operated restaurants and bars dot the landscape welcoming families during the day and providing an energetic neighborhood nightlife. If the unique shopping, bakeries, and services found along Spring Road were not enough, it is also the backdrop for Chicagoland's 3rd largest St. Patrick's Day Parade, holiday festivals, and summertime Music at the Gazebo.



York & Vallette Streets

Located just south of the Illinois Prairie Path and scenic fountain area, at the crossroads of York and Vallette Streets is an inviting collection of goods and services with convenient parking, easy walkable access, and hometown appeal to residents and guests of all ages. The area is home to several retail shopping venues with specialty shoppes such as Bachabee's, A Book Above, KT Colors, and Luscombe Music plus many more established stores and businesses, service providers, and restaurants. Neighborhood residents and visitors alike take advantage of this treasure trove of delights that offers up dining favorites like HB Jones, Mamma Maria's, Riley's, and Southtown Hotdogs. The York & Vallette business district is also the host for the Elmhurst Farmer's Market, Fall Fest, and a multitude of holiday events sponsored by the York & Vallette Business Association.



North York Corridor

The North York Corridor was the subject of an extensive review in which resulted in adoption of the North York Plan(PDF) in June 2015. Encompassing York Street from North Avenue north to Grand Avenue, the area is experiencing a transformation as new development and reinvestment brings new opportunities and excitement to the area. Along with several commercial strip malls, fast food chains, service providers, car dealerships, and shops the North York Corridor is home to Mariano's, a new development anchored by a free-standing LA Fitness facility, Goldfish Swim School, and the future expansion space of Brewpoint Coffee. With easy access on and off of the I-290 extension and close proximity to O'Hare Airport and the Western Access O'Hare project, this area continues to grow business.

Lake Street / Grand Avenue

These east/west arteries of northern Elmhurst are a hub for car dealerships and restaurants and serve as the gateway to the City's largest Business Park. Both streets also house office buildings, and hotels and offer easy access on and off of the I-290 extension and close proximity to O'Hare Airport and the Western Access O'Hare project.

Business Parks

With unparalleled proximity to O'Hare Airport, I-90, I-294, and I-290, establishments located within Elmhurst's Business Parks are able to take advantage of transportation gateways to the rest of the world. The Elmhurst community features three primary concentrations of industrial activity: the area located between Lake Street and Grand Avenue primarily west of York Street, the area between IL Route 83 and Salt Creek situated between Butterfield and St. Charles Roads, and along Elmhurst's eastern border at County Line Road south of Grand Avenue. Elmhurst is proud to be the corporate headquarters for many highly regarded enterprises including but not limited to Superior Ambulance, Semblex Corporation, McMaster-Carr Supply Co., and the North American Headquarters of Gerber Collision and Glass.

Intersection of York Street & Butterfield Road

Located minutes from the Edward Elmhurst Health campus, this lively intersection in South Elmhurst has several smaller restaurants and fast food options. Among the shops and fun stops you'll find here are DiLeo's Restaurant, Jewel Osco, Ace Hardware, Pik a Pot and Paint, various service providers, and Oberweis Dairy.

Intersection of IL Route 83 & St. Charles Road

This vibrant intersection houses three distinct corners of activity. The northwest corner features both Krave and Back Alley Gourmet Burgers restaurants; Smashburger, Potbelly, Total Hockey and more are located on the southeast corner; and the Elmhurst Crossing development is on the northeast corner. The Elmhurst Crossing development spans north along IL Route 83 and includes but is not limited to multiple dining options such as Chick Fil A, Portillo's, and Nothing Bundt Cakes; great shopping destinations including Whole Foods Market, Kohl's, Party City, Hallmark, Bath & Body Works, Shoe Carnival, Petco, The Avenue, and Dress Barn.

Intersection of IL Route 83 & North Avenue / North Avenue

Consistently recognized as one of the busiest intersections in Illinois, the intersection of IL Route 83 and North Avenue has activity on every corner. Whether you are stopping by Emilio's Philly for a quick sandwich, spending the night at the Courtyard by Marriott, or zipping thru the Starbucks drive-thru, this busy intersection is always a hub of activity.



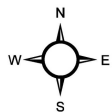
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Appendix C

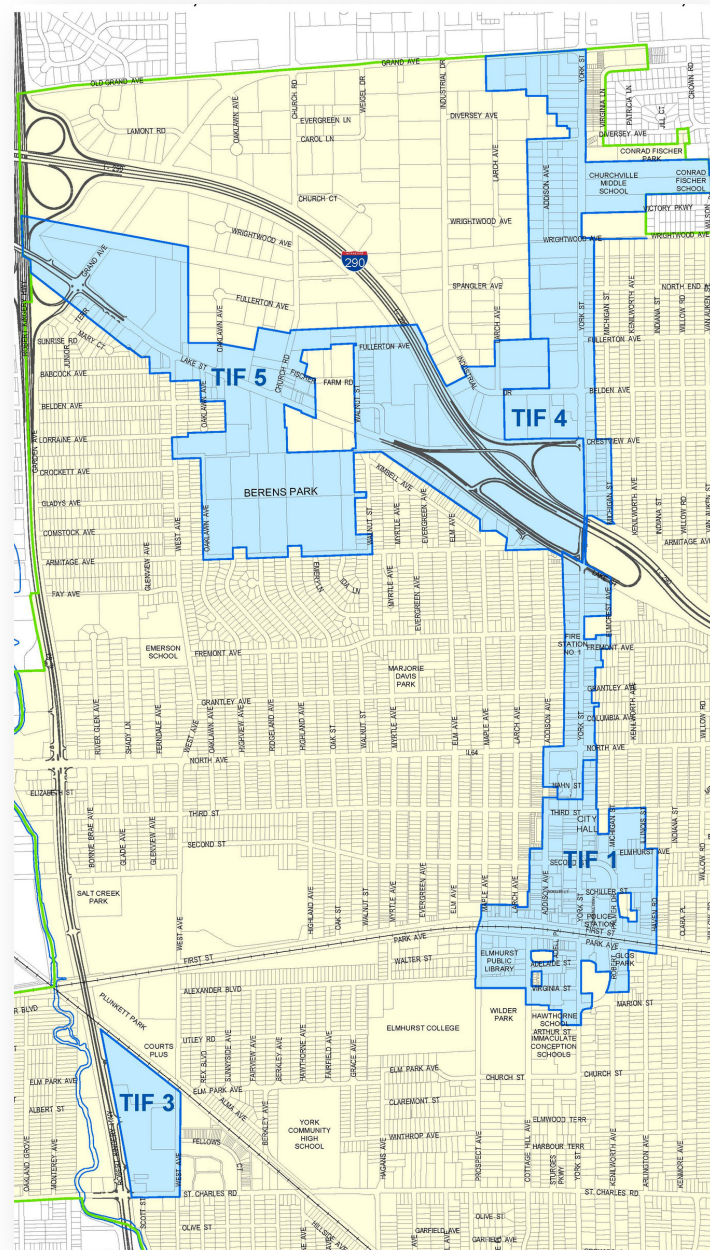
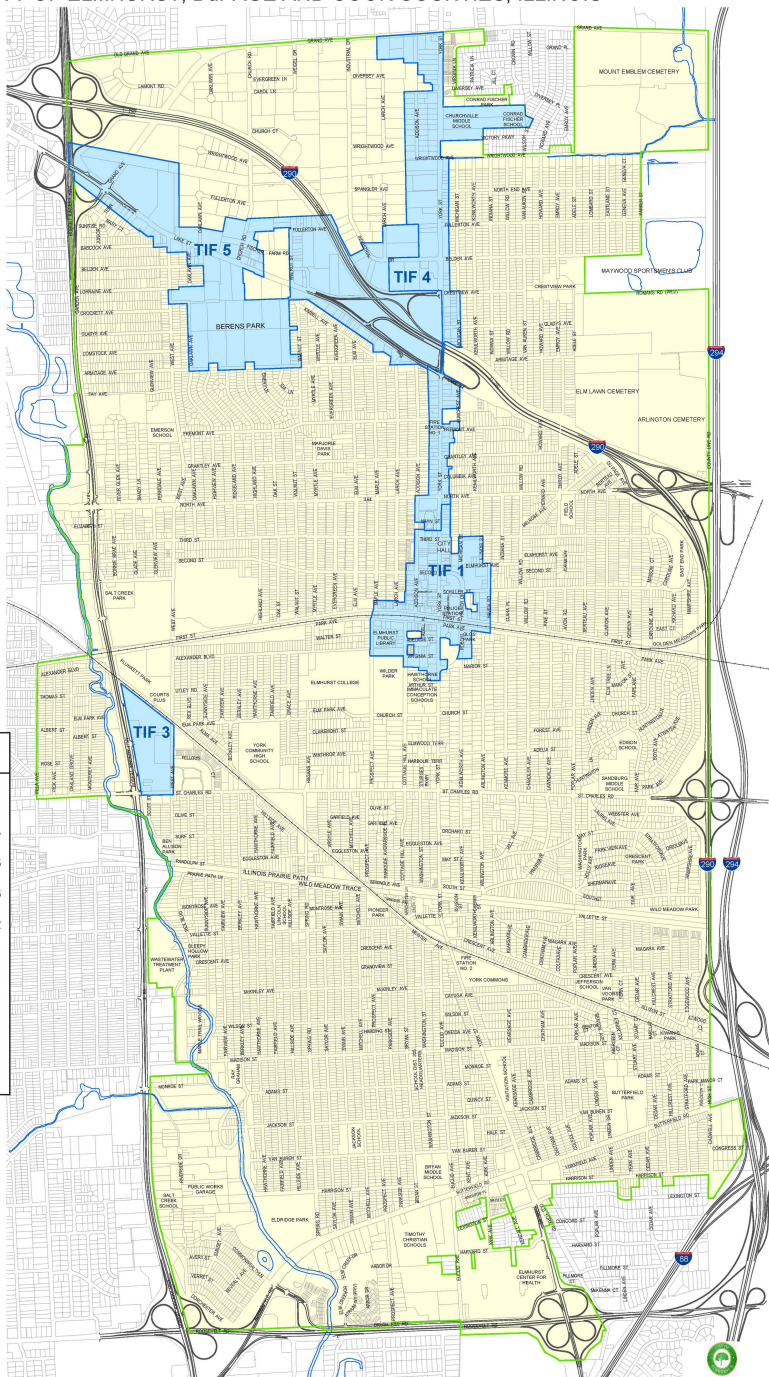
TIF Map



TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS CITY OF ELMHURST, DuPAGE AND COOK COUNTIES, ILLINOIS



- TIF DISTRICT**
- TIF 1 Established by Ordinance O-17-86
 - Amended by Ordinance O-29-2004
 - Amended by Ordinance O-22-2006
 - Amended by Ordinance O-23-2006
 - Amended by Ordinance O-49-2012
 - Amended for Sales Tax Boundary by Ordinance O-15-89
 - TIF 3 Established by Ordinance O-33-96
 - TIF 4 Established by Ordinance O-52-2012
 - TIF 5 Established by Ordinance O-64-2016



Appendix D

Document Resources

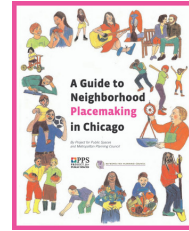


Document Resources

This document relied significantly on the following sources:



2009 City of Elmhurst
Comprehensive Plan



A Guide to Neighborhood
Placemaking in Chicago
(2008)



2016 City of Elmhurst
Downtown Plan



University of Oklahoma
Economic Development
Institute Course Materials:
Business Retention &
Expansion Core
Ethics
Incentives
Strategic Planning
(2016)



2015 City of Elmhurst
North York Corridor Plan



International Economic
Development Council
Reference Guide & Materials
(2016)

In Addition, staff researched scholarly articles and professional publications on strategic planning for economic development and referenced Economic Development Plans for: Buffalo Grove, IL; Bloomington, IL; Rockford, IL; Hatfield, MA; Northfield, MN; Richland, WA; Tacoma, WA; and Tulsa, OK.