VILLAGE OF ALSIP

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

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GLOSSARY

Active Transportation: Any form of human-powered transportation, such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, inline skating, or skateboarding.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT): Average daily vehicle traffic on a roadway.

Bicycle Parking: Facilities such as bike racks or lockers provided to secure bicycles at destinations.

Bikeway: A generic term for any road, path, or way that is specifically designated for bicycle travel, whether exclusively or shared with other modes.

Commuting: The act of traveling from one's place of residence to their place of work or study, typically on a regular basis. This term encompasses all modes of transportation used for this purpose, including walking, biking, driving, and public transit.

Complete Network: A transportation network that integrates all modes of travel, ensuring that routes for walking, cycling, public transit, and driving are interconnected and accessible.

Complete Street: A street that is designed to support all modes of transportation

Complete Street Policy: A transportation policy that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities, regardless of their mode of transportation.

Connectivity: The degree to which streets, paths, and other transportation infrastructure are linked to provide direct, continuous routes for non-motorized travel.

Crosswalk: A designated area for pedestrians to cross a road, typically marked by painted lines or other surface treatments to enhance visibility and safety.

Mode Share: The percentage of travelers using a particular type of transportation, such as walking, biking, driving, or public transit, out of the total number of travelers.

Non-Motorized Transportation: Any form of transportation that does not involve motorized vehicles, including walking, cycling, and the use of personal mobility devices like scooters and wheelchairs.

Public Transportation: A system of transport for passengers in shared vehicles available for use by the general public. This includes buses, trains, subways, trams, para-transit, and dial-a-ride.

Road Diet: The reallocation of road space to better accommodate all users, often involving the reduction of vehicle lanes to create space for bike lanes, wider sidewalks, and transit lanes.

Off-street Path: A multi-use path located adjacent to a roadway but separated from it, providing a safe route for bicyclists and pedestrians away from vehicle traffic.

Streetscape: The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, sidewalks, street furniture, trees, and open spaces, collectively forming the street's character.

Traffic Calming: Physical design features or strategies implemented on roads to reduce vehicle speeds. Common examples include speed bumps, road narrowing, and raised crosswalks.

Walkability: The measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Factors influencing walkability include the presence of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, safety, and the proximity of destinations.

Wayfinding: Information systems, such as signs or maps, designed to guide travelers along routes or through unfamiliar environments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are deeply grateful to our elected officials for their invaluable guidance throughout the planning process of the Alsip Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. Your leadership and vision have been instrumental in shaping this project. We also express our sincere appreciation to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) for their generous funding and the dedicated staff who have been pivotal in driving this initiative forward. Additionally, we thank our partner agencies for their unwavering support and insightful input, which have greatly enriched this endeavor. Finally, we are deeply grateful to the residents of Alsip for their meaningful feedback and active participation, ensuring that this plan truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

VILLAGE BOARD

- Mayor John Ryan
- Trustee Catalina Nava-Esparza
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VILLAGE STAFF

- Michael Fraider (Public Works Director)
- Becky Smith (Assistant to the Mayor)
- Geoff Aggen (Village Engineer)

CONSULTING TEAM

- Epstein

PARTNER AGENCIES

- Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Cook County Department of Transportation & Highways
- Pace Suburban Bus
- Alsip Park District
- Alsip Chamber of Commerce
- Alsip Industrial Association
- Alsip-Hazelgreen-OakLawn School District 126
- Atwood Heights School District 125
- The Major Taylor Cycling Club
- Worth Township
- Neighboring Muncipalities (Robbins, Crestwood)
- Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail
- Active Transportation Alliance
- Ride Illinois
- Coca-Cola
- Landis-Berry Plastics
- Crown Cork & Seal
- Greif Containers

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

I am writing to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your active participation and invaluable contributions to the planning process that has shaped the future of Alsip's transportation network. Your engagement and feedback have been instrumental in developing a plan that prioritizes safety, accessibility, and sustainability for all members of our community.

Our collective efforts have highlighted the importance of creating a transportation system where walking and bicycling are not only viable options but also safe and enjoyable experiences. As we move forward, I am committed to realizing a vision of Alsip where residents of all ages and abilities can navigate our streets with confidence and ease. This vision includes creating a well-connected network that ensures the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists alike.

I would like to thank our partner agencies, including the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, the Illinois Department of Transportation, and various local organizations, for their steadfast support and collaboration throughout this process. Your expertise and resources have been critical in advancing our shared goals.

Together, we are building a future where active transportation options contribute to the health, well-being, and vibrancy of our community. I look forward to continuing our work together to make Alsip a model of safe and accessible transportation for all.

With sincere appreciation,

Mayor John Ryan

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VISION & GOALS

VISION & GOALS

This plan envisions Alsip as a place where walking and bicycling within the Village is safe and comfortable for people of all abilities making walking or bicycling the most desirable choice for residents.

GOAL 1: IMPROVE EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Improving equity and accessibility ensures that all community members, regardless of income, ability, or location, have safe and convenient access to active transportation options. This involves addressing disparities in infrastructure quality and availability, particularly in underserved areas. By prioritizing inclusivity, the plan aims to create a transportation network that benefits everyone, fostering greater social and economic equity.

GOAL 2: IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Enhancing pedestrian infrastructure focuses on creating safer, more accessible, and connected walkways and crossings. This includes the installation of sidewalks, pedestrian signals, and safe crosswalks, especially in high-traffic and school areas. Improved pedestrian facilities encourage walking as a viable mode of transportation, promoting health and reducing vehicle congestion.

GOAL 3: INCREASE BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Increasing bicycle infrastructure aims to expand and enhance the network of bike lanes, paths, and parking facilities to encourage cycling as a primary mode of transportation. This goal involves creating safe, continuous, and well-maintained routes that connect key destinations such as schools, workplaces, and recreational areas. By doing so, the plan seeks to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and promote a healthier lifestyle.

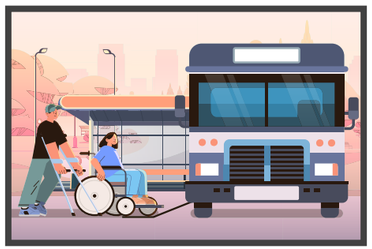
GOAL 4: IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Improving public transportation infrastructure focuses on enhancing the accessibility, efficiency, and connectivity of transit services. This includes upgrading bus stops, shelters, and routes to ensure they are safe, comfortable, and convenient. Other benefits of this goal include reducing reliance on personal vehicles, lowering traffic congestion, and increasing mobility for all residents.

BENEFITS OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

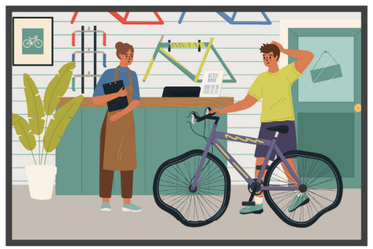
Safety for Vulnerable Road Users

Vulnerable road users include pedestrians, bicyclists, and road users that are young, aging or have a disability. For these road users the biggest threat they face is drivers. Creating a safe experience for these users includes mitigating these risks. This can be done by providing a separate path, slowing down traffic speeds, providing crosswalks, and more.



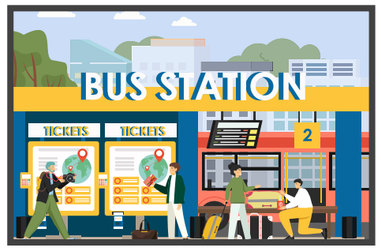
Increased Accessibility for All Residents

Creating an accessible experience means that all people can use transportation infrastructure. Creating accessible infrastructure includes ADA ramps, paths, and sidewalks that are continuous, smooth, and traversable by users with wheelchairs or walkers. A specific challenge in Alsip is sidewalks that are not continuous, creating dead ends for users.



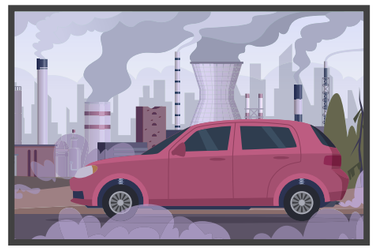
Economic and Community Benefits

There are numerous economic benefits to increased walking and bicycling infrastructure. This infrastructure is known to increase property values, quality of life, and local tourism. In Alsip, this would include visitors to the Cal-Sag trail. Quality of life can be improved by decreasing health care costs through increased physical activity, improved sense of community enhanced by more interactions between neighbors, and more.



Reduced the Financial Burdens of Transportation

Local walking and biking infrastructure can encourage and enable residents to leave their cars at home for some trips which reduces the car operating costs. With robust regional walking and biking networks paired with reliable public transit systems residents can reduce the number of vehicles they need or go car free completely. This reduces or eliminates the largest portion of transportation cost, car ownership.



Reduced Emissions from Transportation

On-road passenger transportation accounts for 13.4% of greenhouse gas emissions in Alsip. Shifting transportation mode away from cars and towards active transportation is a key strategy to reduce these emissions. Reducing emissions is an important step to mitigating global climate change and improving air quality. On a local level global climate change will result in more days with extreme heat in the summer and increased rain in the spring. Not preventing this could result in flooding and increased cases of heat related illness.

Increased Physical Activity

The U.S Department of Tranposrtations webpage for “Physical Activity From Transportation” recommends that adults exercise for 150 minutes per week which is just over 20 minutes per day. In 2008 fewer than 5% of adults exercised for more than 30 minutes per day. In Cook County walking trips are most commonly between 0 to 20 minutes and bike trips are most commonly between 0 to 30 minutes. Adding walking and biking trips to a weekly routine can help adults reach the recommended amounts of physical activity.

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

GATHERING FEEDBACK

Gathering feedback as part of the planning process is crucial to ensure that the bike and pedestrian plan meets the needs of the entire community. To ensure engagement is equitable bilingual materials were used to reach a diverse audience and ensure that Spanish speakers can fully participate. By attending community events and actively engaging with residents where they are, the project team can incorporate feedback from a wide range of voices, including those who are often underrepresented. This initial phase of engagement is just the beginning; there will be numerous opportunities for residents to provide input throughout the planning process. By prioritizing inclusivity and ongoing dialogue, the plan is committed to creating a plan that truly reflects the aspirations of all community members.

FIGURE 1: WALKING TOUR WITH ALSIP RESIDENTS | Source: Epstein

Public engagement takes place in three phases to ensure community feedback is front and center throughout the process. The first phase gathers experiences from residents using the current infrastructure and learns about their vision for the Village's future. The second phase gathers preferences on locations and types of strategies to be recommended throughout the Village. The final phase of engagement will give people the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations in the draft plan.

Public engagement takes many forms throughout the process. The largest and most robust source of feedback is the online surveys. These surveys are supplemented with walking and biking tours, business owner focus groups, and community events. These engagement methods combine to provide both quantitative and qualitative data regarding transportation throughout the Village, which is incorporated into this plan.

FIRST PHASE

- **Community Survey***
- **Trail Signage Placement***
- **Bicycle Tour***
- **Walking Tour #1***
- **Virtual Map Exercise ***
- **FunFest***

SECOND PHASE

- Design Charrette
- School Open House(s)
- Walking Tour #2
- Alsip FallFest
- Trunk-or-Treat

THIRD PHASE

- Virtual Presentation/Q&A
- All Hallow's Eve Carnival
- Breakfast with Santa
- Winter Fest
- Santa's Landing
- Poster/Sign Campaign

*** Completed events**

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Village of Alsip sits in southern Cook County, 26 miles from downtown Chicago, and 11 miles west of the Indiana border. The Cal-Sag Channel runs along the southern border of the Village. History has shown that transportation systems are a driving force for changes in population, land use, and development in municipalities. Understanding the people, places, and current transportation systems in Alsip enables planners to develop systems that support the community.

The Village of Alsip has a rich history shaped by its transportation infrastructure. The Village was settled in the 1830s and was named after brickyard owner Frank Alsip. The completion of the Cal-Sag Canal in 1922 and the subsequent population boom from 1930 to 1950 were pivotal moments in Alsip's growth. The 1950s saw further expansion with the widening of the Cal-Sag Canal and the initial construction of Interstate 294, tripling the population by 1970.

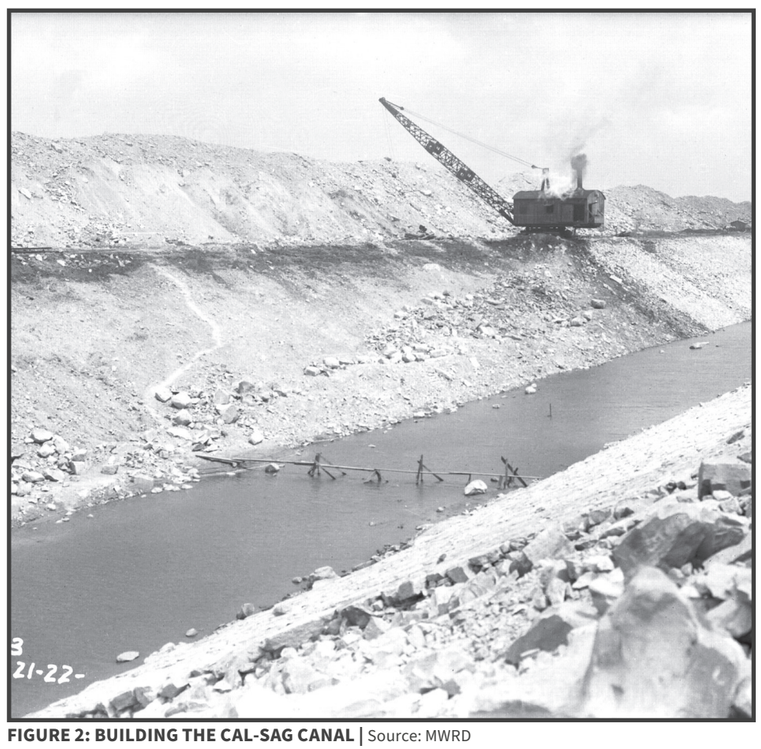
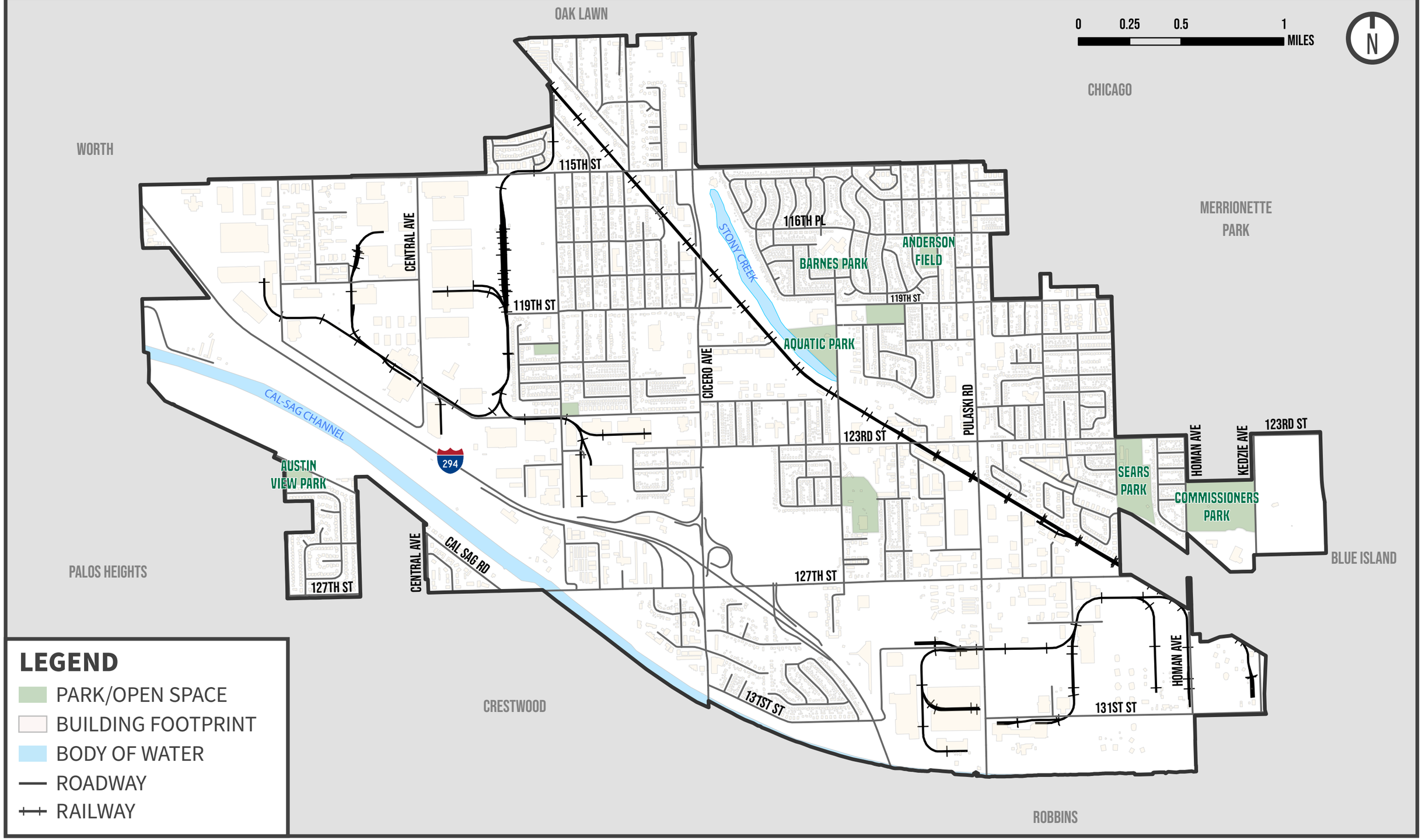


FIGURE 2: BUILDING THE CAL-SAG CANAL | Source: MWRD

Today, transportation continues to play a crucial role in shaping the community, but the focus has shifted towards enhancing quality of life. Modern transportation improvements prioritize safety, reducing traffic congestion, and expanding mobility options. The Cal-Sag Canal, a key industrial artery, has be upgraded to also accommodate recreational activity, with 13 miles of completed trails and plans for an additional 13 miles. By prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, Alsip is creating safer transportation options, reducing traffic, and fostering a more connected community.

Today, Alsip is a village that balances its rich industrial past with modern suburban living. The community enjoys a mix of residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and green spaces, making it an attractive place to live, work, and play.

FIGURE 3: MAP OF ALSIP



PEOPLE

This section provides a detailed overview of the demographic composition of the area, highlighting key population characteristics such as age, income levels, and ethnic diversity. Following the demographic overview, an equity analysis is conducted to assess how transportation policies and infrastructure impact different community groups, ensuring that planning and development efforts are inclusive and equitable.

DEMOGRAPHICS

As of the 2020 Census, Alsip's population stands at 19,063, reflecting a slight decline since 2000. The median age has risen to 39.5, with a 10% increase in adults aged 50 and over. The racial and ethnic makeup has shifted significantly: White residents now constitute 46.6% of the population, down from 76.7%, while Black and Hispanic or Latino populations have grown to 24.6% and 23.5%, respectively. The median household income is $59,123.

HOUSEHOLD DATA

Alsip has 7,683 households, with 63% owning their homes and 36% renting. Owner-occupied households average 2.7 people, while rental households average 2.03. Renters typically spend a higher percentage of their income on housing compared to homeowners.

CAR OWNERSHIP

In Alsip, 5.4% of households lack access to a car, and 46.5% have only one car. Car access is more limited among renters, with higher percentages of households having either no car or only one car available.

EMPLOYMENT

Residents commonly work in downtown Chicago, Alsip, and Bedford Park, which influences commute modes and times. Nearly 87% of residents work in the private sector, with the top industries being health care and social assistance (23.4%), retail trade (15%), and manufacturing (11.3%). Retail trade workers are the most likely to use public transit, while no manufacturing workers use it.

COMMUTE

Cars are the dominant mode of transportation, with 87.4% of workers driving or riding to work. Walking and biking are minimal at 1.7% and 0.5%, respectively, while 5.1% use public transit. The average commute time is 31 minutes, with over a quarter of residents commuting more than 45 minutes. Public transit riders face significantly longer commutes, with 94% traveling 45 minutes or more. Lower-income residents are less likely to drive alone and more likely to carpool or use transit, with less than 60% of those earning under $10,000 driving alone, compared to over 90% of those earning above $75,000.

PEOPLE WHO WORK IN ALSIP

Workers commute to Alsip from across Cook County and beyond, with the most common zip codes being 60803 (Alsip), 60453 (Oak Lawn), and 60629 (Chicago communities near Midway Airport). However, these areas represent only 10.8% of the total workforce in Alsip.

GO TO APPENDIX A.1 TO SEE A MAP WHERE RESIDENTS WORK

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

ALSIP IS AN AGING COMMUNITY, WITH A GROWING NEED FOR PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSIT FACILITIES.

The median age in Alsip has risen to 39.2 years, with 17.5% of the population aged 65 and over. This aging population underscores the need for accessible pedestrian infrastructure, particularly near residential areas, health facilities, and shopping centers.

ALSIP'S WORKFORCE IS MORE CONCENTRATED IN LOWER-WAGE INDUSTRIES.

The top industries for Alsip residents are health care and social assistance (14.9%), retail trade (15.0%), and education (8.8%). These sectors often employ lower-wage workers with non-traditional working hours. These employees may benefit from having low cost transportation options.

ALSIP RESIDENTS HAVE LONG COMMUTES AND LONGER PUBLIC TRANSIT TRIPS.

The average commute time for Alsip residents is 32.2 minutes, with a significant portion (94%) of public transit commuters traveling 45 minutes or longer. These commuting averages and trip times are higher than its neighbors and the regional average.

CAR OWNERSHIP IN ALSIP IS NOT A GUARANTEE, AND NOT AN OPTION FOR MANY RESIDENTS.

Approximately 457 households (5.9%) in Alsip do not have access to a vehicle, 3,385 households (44.1%) have only one vehicle. The higher percentage of Alsip households with limited or no vehicle access, compared to the county and region indicate a greater need for additional transportation options.

ALSIP IS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY AND ONLY GETTING MORE DIVERSE.

In Alsip, the Black and Hispanic or Latino populations have increase to 23.5% and 24.6% of the population. With the community diversifying transportation improvement should be targeted to ensure there are no racial or ethnic disparities.

EQUITY ANALYSIS

Equity in transportation planning is crucial to ensure that all community members, particularly those from marginalized or underserved groups, have fair access to mobility options. This is essential for connecting individuals to essential services, employment opportunities, and social activities, thereby improving overall quality of life and reducing social inequities. Prioritizing equity in transportation planning also addresses historical imbalances where transportation impacts have disproportionately impacted marginalized communities. Remedying or alleviating these inequities is imperitive for all planning work moving forward.

Although numerous metrics can assess transportation equity, this plan structures the equity analysis into three key categories: *Demographic Representation and Population Needs*, *Accessibility and Connectivity*, and *Affordability and Financial Accessibility*.

DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION AND POPULATION NEEDS

Demographic representation and population needs analyzes the population in a way that looks for groups that may have additional needs in order to travel throughout the community safely. These population groups include those with disabilities, children, and adults over 75.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Accessibility and connectivity looks at how accessible and available amenities are to the population, and how this impacts the population's mode of transportation. Job accessibility is analyzed by looking at the number of jobs that can be reached via a 30-minute public transit ride. Walk Score is used to determine the density of amenities that are close enough to walk to.

AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

Transportation costs looks at how much of a person's income is being spent on transportation. Transportation costs include purchasing a car along with all ongoing costs such as insurance, gas, registration, and more. In areas where residents are reliant on cars, unexpected costs such as maintenance can put financial strain on a household or reduce their mobility.

GO TO APPENDIX A.2 FOR FURTHER EQUITY ANALYSIS

KEY EQUITY FINDINGS

ALSIP'S POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY IS GROWING.

Alsip's percentage of residents with disabilities (11.5%) is comparable to Cook County's average but lower than in Robbins and Merrionette Park. This highlights the need for ADA-compliant infrastructure, including accessible sidewalks, crosswalks, and transit options, to support these residents.

A LACK OF TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY AND CONSISTENCY PREVENTS RESIDENTS FROM ACCESSING JOBS.

Alsip offers access to 68,644 jobs within a 30-minute transit ride, which is higher than in Crestwood and Palos Heights. Enhancing transit options could improve job accessibility for Alsip residents, making it easier for them to reach employment opportunities without a car.

AUTOMOBILE DEPENDENCY DRIVES A HIGH TRANSPORTATION COST FOR MANY HOUSEHOLDS.

Owning a car has the largest impact on household transportation costs. Annual transportation costs for Alsip households are $14,370 (20% of total household costs). Reducing this financial burden required efficient public transit and safer infrastructure for biking and walking.

ALSIP'S DIVERSITY IS ONE OF ITS GREATEST ASSETS, BUT REQUIRES DIVERSE ENGAGEMENT.

Alsip has a more diverse racial and ethnic composition compared to several neighboring communities. This diversity suggests a need for culturally inclusive community planning and services that reflect the needs of all residents.

ALSIP'S WIDE RANGE OF AGES UNDERSCORES NEED FOR MORE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES.

The skew towards both very young and older adults in Alsip suggests that active transportation options could greatly benefit these age groups, promoting mobility and independence while enhancing safety.

PLACES

Given the size of Alsip, trips that begin and end within the Village limits are the ideal distance for walking, biking, and rolling, but roadway design often makes driving the only safe option. Indentifying common destinations for residents will help prioritize where safety improvements would have the largest impact.

LAND USE

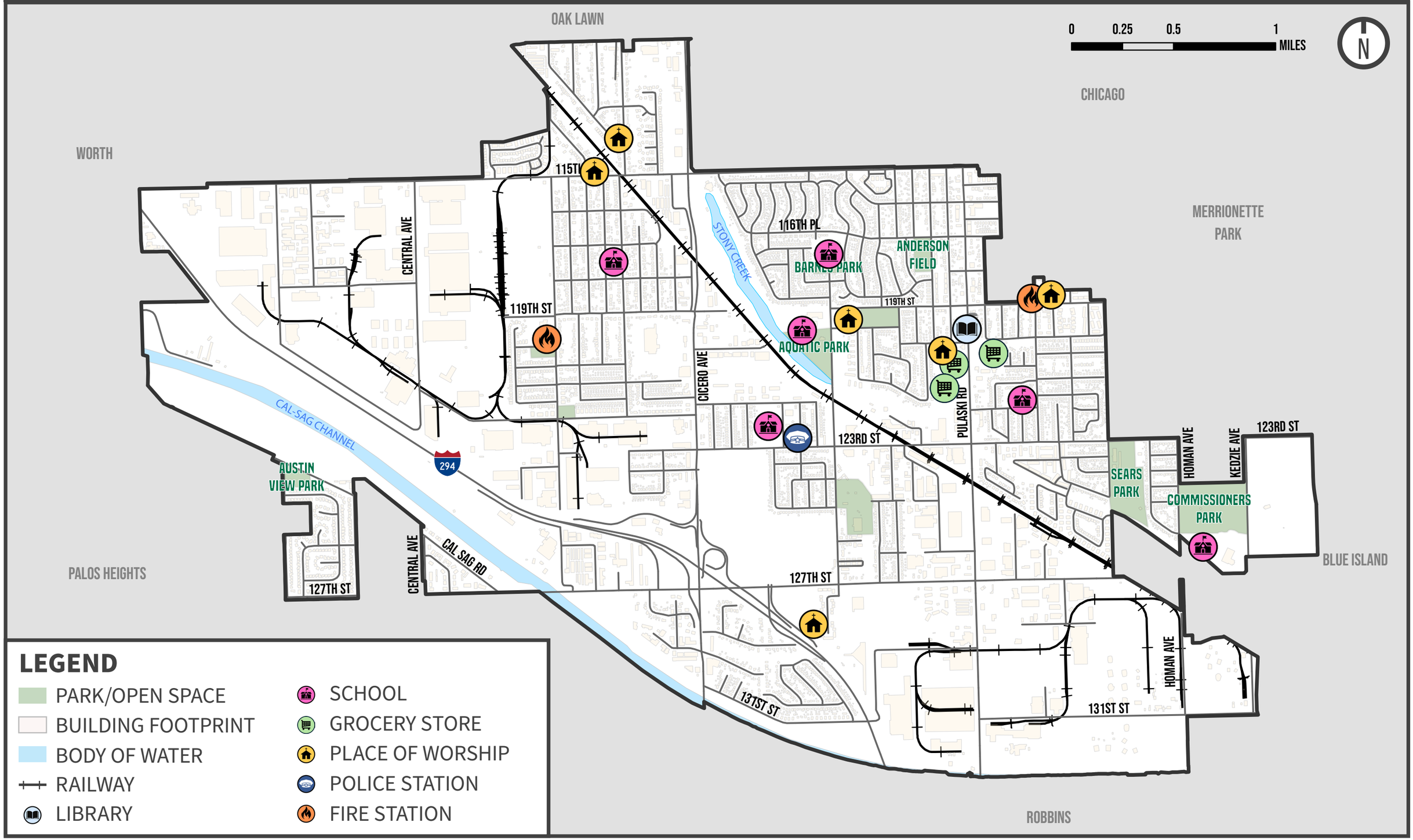
The predominant land use in Alsip is industrial, occupying nearly 28% of the Village land, primarily along the Tollway in the west, northwest, and southeast. The emphasis on accommodating heavy machinery and vehicle traffic in these areas often results in challenges for non-motorized travel, making it difficult to integrate safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Single-family residential land accounts for just over 19% of the land use, with the largest sections in north and northeast Alsip, consisting of 4,678 units. Multifamily housing, which makes up 3.45% of the land use, provides 3,262 housing units and uses 15% of all residential land while housing 41% of households. The multifamily housing is scattered throughout the Village, often adjacent to industrial land. Alsip also contains three cemeteries—Restvale, Burr Oak, and First Evangelical—covering 180 acres and accounting for 4.2% of the land. Additionally, there are five cemeteries bordering the Village that are not open to through traffic. The main commercial corridors are along Pulaski and Cicero, with businesses predominantly catering to car traffic, such as gas stations, fast food outlets, and big box stores.

AMENITIES

Most of Alsip's open space lies in the westernmost and easternmost parts of the Village, comprising 7.62% of the land, contributing to a more livable and accessible community. Green spaces can include paths that enhance pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity. Identifying and ensuring connectivity to amenities such as parks, schools, healthcare facilities, and recreational centers is crucial for enhancing residents' quality of life and promoting equitable access to essential services. By mapping these amenities and improving connectivity, urban planners can encourage sustainable transportation, reduce traffic congestion, and promote active lifestyles. Addressing gaps and barriers in the transportation network through community feedback ensures that all residents can conveniently reach the amenities they need.

👉 **GO TO APPENDIX A.3 FOR FURTHER LAND USE ANALYSIS**

FIGURE 4: VILLAGE & NEIGHBORING AMENITIES



TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Transportation systems are built to move people and goods around. Within Alsip there is a combination of roads, sidewalks, trails, public transportation & rail that comprise the entire system.

A community's transportation network is a complex system that includes various modes of transport to ensure smooth and efficient movement for all residents. Roads form the backbone; connecting neighborhoods and facilitating the movement of private vehicles, public buses, and freight. Well-maintained roads with clear signage, traffic signals, and designated lanes for different types of vehicles enhance safety and reduce congestion. In addition to roads, rail systems provide an essential mode of transport for longer commutes and industrial cargo.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are integral parts of transportation networks, promoting active transportation and reducing reliance on motor vehicles. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities make it safer and more convenient for residents to walk or cycle to their destinations. These facilities must be designed to ensure accessibility for people of all ages and abilities. Well-connected pedestrian and bicycle networks allow people of all abilities to travel via the mode of their choice.

Public transit facilities, including buses and light rail services provide critical connectivity within the community and to surrounding areas. Efficient public transit systems should have frequent, reliable services with well-placed stops and shelters to protect passengers from the elements. Comprehensive transit networks reduce traffic congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and provide equitable transportation options for all residents, including those who do not own private vehicles.

Ensuring the safety of all transportation modes through proper infrastructure, maintenance, and enforcement of traffic laws is essential for creating a sustainable and inclusive transportation network.

FIGURE 5: BRIDGE OVER THE CAL-SAG CANAL | Source: @Properties

ROADWAYS

The Village of Alsip has 80 miles of roadway.

Jurisdiction defines which government entity is responsible for the road. The Village of Alsip is responsible for 72.4% of Village roadways. The State of Illinois has jurisdiction over 13.5% followed by Cook County at 6.9% and private roads at 6.7%. Due to the different road jurisdictions creating and maintaining a well-connected bicycle and pedestrian network requires intergovernmental collaboration.

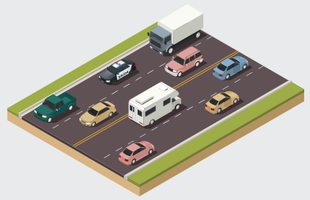
Cicero Avenue and Pulaski Road are either completely or mostly operated by the State. These two streets are key north-south routes in the Village, connecting the southern border to the northern border. South of 127 Street (another State route), Pulaski Rd. is under Cook County Jurisdiction.

The only privately owned and operated roadway is the Tri-State Tollway (I-294). The tollway connects Alsip to Indiana in the east and Wisconsin to the north through Lake County. The tollway still has an negative impact on bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. The tollway can be challenging to cross requiring a longer route and additional infrastructure. Bridges and underpasses used to cross the tollway may not be comfortable or safe for pedestrians.

Roads also have functional classifications which defines the type of traffic they see. Cicero Ave, 127th St, and Cal-Sag Rd are all principal arterials moving traffic to the tri state tollway. Ridgeland and Pulaski are minor arterials. Major collectors include 115th, 123rd, 119th, 122nd, and Kostner.

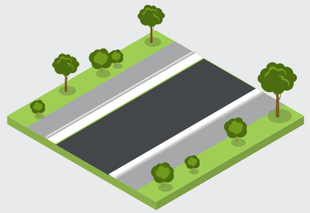
EXPRESSWAYS AND ARTERIALS

Interstates are divided roads intended only for vehicle traffic providing good connectivity for long distance travel throughout the country. Principal arterials move a large volume of traffic and are built to connect different types of land uses and municipalities. They are used for longer trips rather than shorter trips within the Village.



COLLECTOR ROADS & STREETS

Major collectors can run through residential areas and connect them to commercial and industrial areas. They have higher speeds than local roads but more signals to allow for the road to collect cars from the local roads. Non-major urban collectors are a type of major collector that run through rural areas, serving county seats and larger towns. Minor Collectors are similar to major collectors however are used on roads with less residential and commercial density



LOCAL ROADS

Local roads are meant to provide access to all the adjacent land uses. There are frequent driveways and roads allowing people to reach all land uses. They are meant to direct users to larger roads rather than be used for through traffic.

FIGURE 6: FUNCTIONAL CLASS

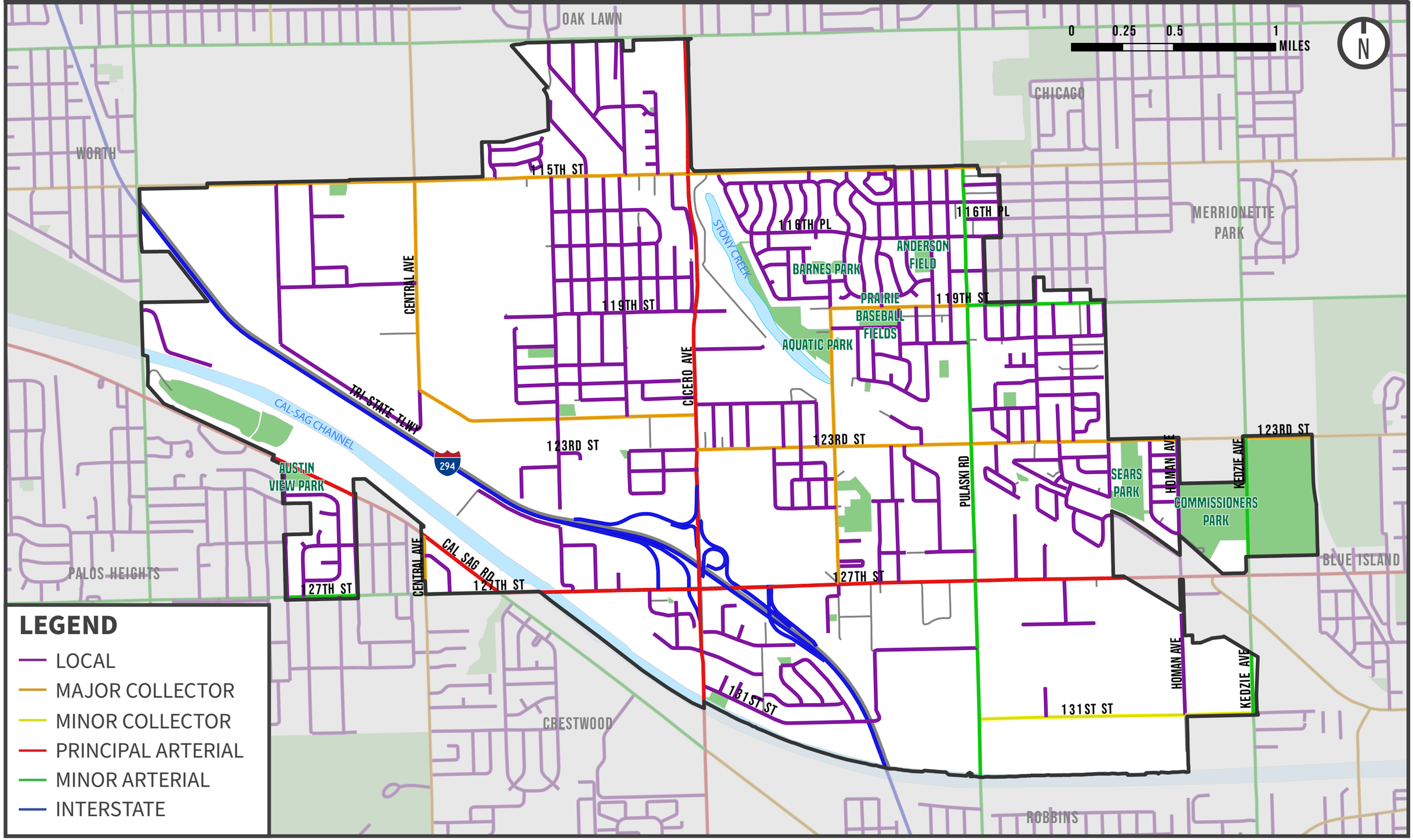
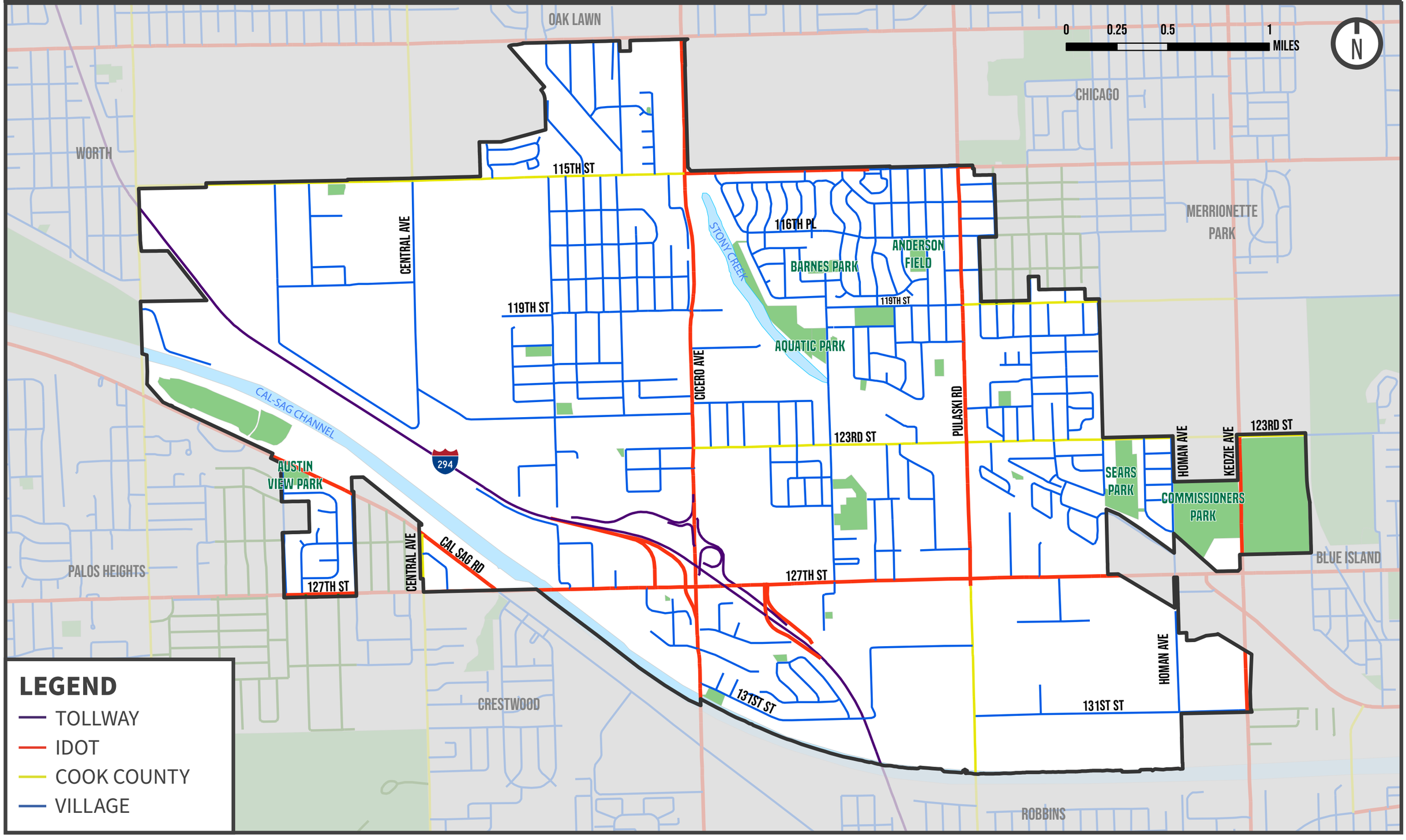


FIGURE 7: ROADWAY JURISDICTION



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

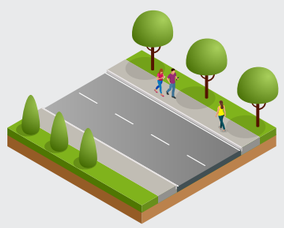
EXISTING PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Pedestrian facilities in Alsip are inconsistent. Some neighborhoods with complete sidewalk networks, crosswalks, and trees. Other neighborhoods have incomplete sidewalks that start and stop without warning leaving pedestrians with the options of walking across grass or on the road. Sidewalks are often lacking completely in industrial areas making those work places hard to access by foot.

Crosswalks are present at large intersections but the high number of lanes and volume of traffic still make the intersections stressful to cross. With a large number of lanes and a priority of moving cars down the road pedestrians may feel rushed while crossing the street or threatened by cars trying to turn right on red.

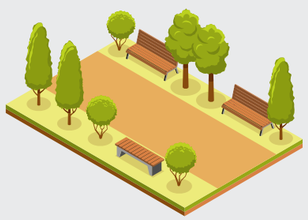
While there are some instances of street furniture - such as benches - those instances are few and far between. This is uninviting to pedestrians and may result in shorter trips by foot.

👉 GO TO APPENDIX A.3 FOR WALKABILITY ANALYSIS



SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are paved paths typically located alongside roads, providing a designated space for pedestrians to walk safely away from vehicle traffic. They are essential for ensuring pedestrian safety and accessibility in both residential and commercial areas. Sidewalks often include features like curb ramps, tactile paving, and street lighting to enhance usability for all users, including those with disabilities.



SHARED USE PATH

Shared use paths are off-road trails designed to accommodate various non-motorized users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and sometimes skaters or joggers. These paths are generally wider than sidewalks to allow for safe passing and are often located in parks, greenways, or along rivers and scenic routes. Shared use paths provide a safe, recreational, and transportation route that is separated from motor vehicle traffic.

CROSSING FACILITIES

Crossing facilities are infrastructure elements such as crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and pedestrian bridges or underpasses that help pedestrians and bicyclists safely cross roads. These facilities are crucial in high-traffic areas, intersections, and near schools to reduce the risk of accidents and enhance accessibility. Crossing facilities often include features like traffic signals, raised medians, and curb extensions to improve visibility and safety for all users.

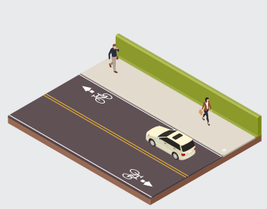
EXISTING BICYCLE FACILITIES

In Alsip, the existing bicycle infrastructure is reflective of a typical suburban community, where a mix of facility types is utilized to accommodate both recreational and commuter bicyclists. The network includes marked bike routes, shared lane markings (sharrows), shared use paths, and regional trail connections. These facilities collectively aim to enhance connectivity and safety, facilitating access to local amenities such as parks, schools, and commercial districts.

The composition of Alsip's cycling infrastructure, while effective in covering key areas, is representative of the gradual development of bike-friendly amenities in suburban landscapes. Unlike urban centers with dense populations that might require more extensive segregated cycling lanes, suburban areas like Alsip often develop their bicycle networks in stages, starting with shared use paths and marked routes that require less modification to existing roadways.

Enhancing this network with additional facilities such as dedicated lanes or cycle tracks could further improve safety and usage rates, yet the current setup provides a functional baseline that supports a growing cycling culture within the community.

👉 GO TO CHAPTER 4, COMFORT FOR BICYCLE LEVEL OF ANALYSIS



SHARED LANE/MARKED BIKE ROUTE

Shared lane markings, commonly known as sharrows, are road markings that indicate a lane is shared by both bicyclists and motor vehicles. These markings guide bicyclists on where to position themselves on the road and remind drivers to expect and share the lane with bicyclists. Sharrows should be used on low volume residential streets.

BIKE LANES

Bike lanes are designated lanes on roads where biking is encouraged. These lanes are typically marked with painted lines, symbols, and sometimes colored pavement to distinguish them from general traffic lanes. The quality of bike lanes differes; with a curb protected bike lane providing physical separation while painted lanes creates more predictable interactions between bicyclists and motorists but no physical barrier to protect bicyclists.

REGIONAL TRAIL

Regional trails are extensive networks of interconnected pathways that span across multiple cities or regions, providing long-distance routes for recreation and commuting. These trails are designed for a variety of non-motorized users, including bicyclists, walkers, and runners, and often link parks, natural areas, and urban centers.

FIGURE 8: PEDESTRAIN NETWORK

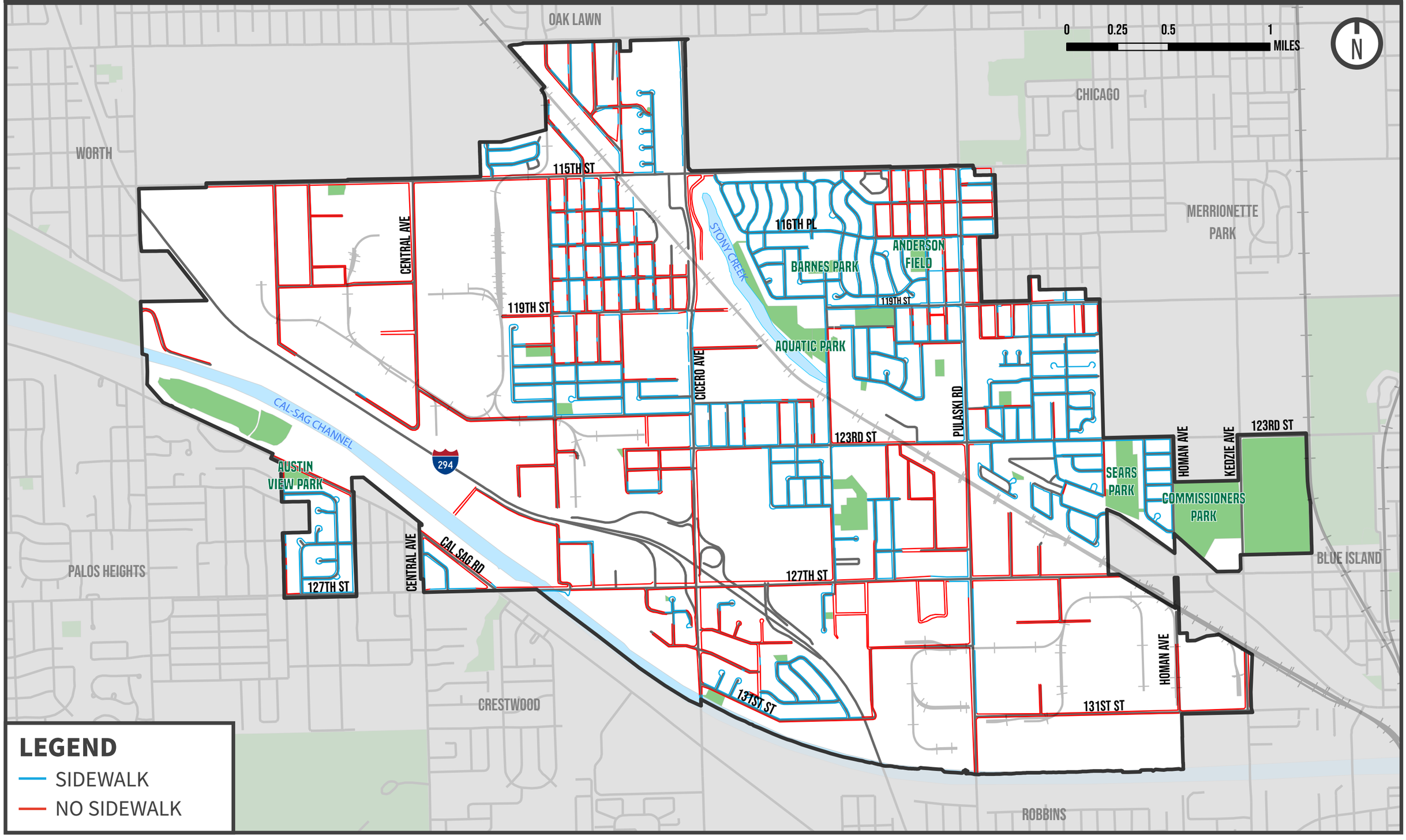
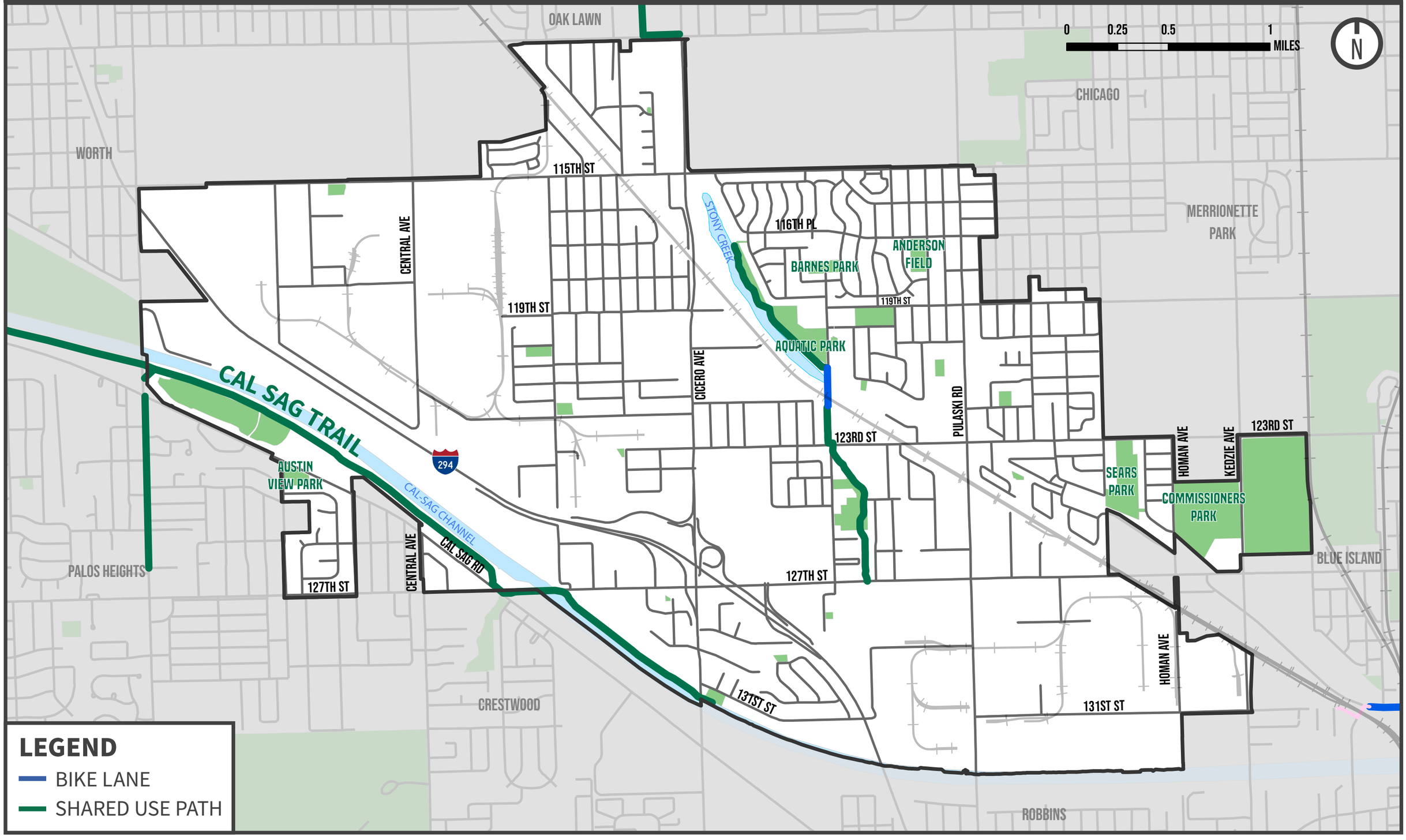


FIGURE 9: BICYCLE NETWORK



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation is a vital service that offers shared mobility options, including buses, trains, and other vehicles, to help people move efficiently and affordably across urban and suburban areas. While Metra and the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) do not have direct operations within the Village, they are accessible near its borders, providing crucial links for residents who need to travel accross the region. Many Alsip residents rely on these services to connect to broader transit networks, making regional travel to Chicago and surrounding areas more convenient.

Within Alsip itself, the primary public transportation service is provided by Pace Suburban Bus, which operates three key routes through the Village. The #383 bus route is particularly important, as it connects the CTA Orange Line station at Midway Airport with Oak Forest, running through Alsip along Cicero Avenue. This route offers half-hourly service on weekdays and hourly service on weekends, making it a reliable option for daily commuters and weekend travelers alike.

The #385 bus route is another crucial link, connecting the CTA Orange Line station at Midway with the Rivercrest Shopping Center in Crestwood. This route travels through Alsip along Pulaski Road and 127th Street, providing hourly weekday service and ensuring that residents have access to important shopping and employment centers.

There are a total of 41 bus stops within the Village. The majority of stops do not have any amenities. Only four of these stop have benches and three of those four stops also have shelters.

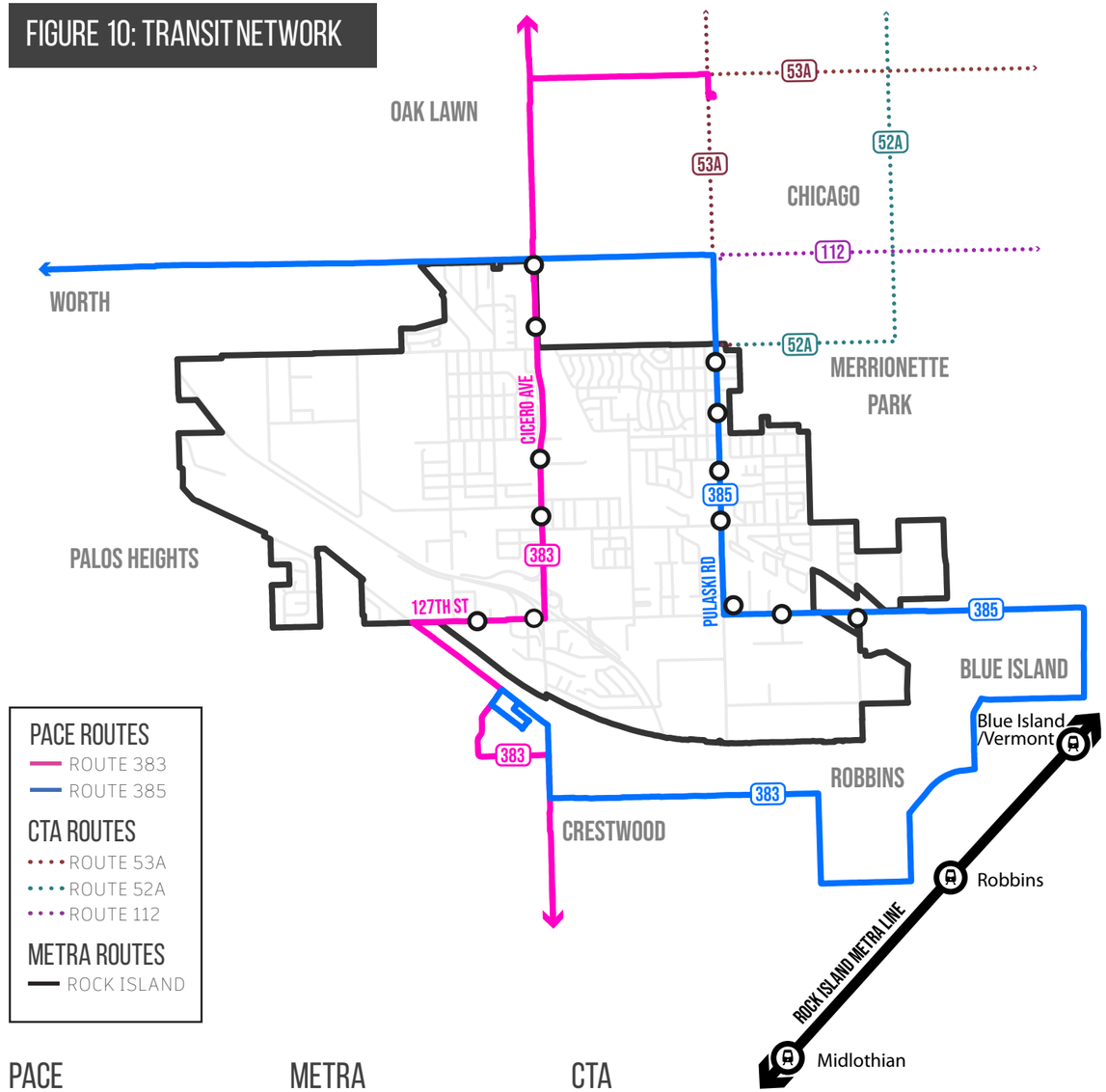
Additionally, the CTA bus route 53A, which has its southern terminal at 115th and Pulaski, provides a valuable connection for Alsip residents to the Wrightwood Metra Station and the Kedzie Orange Line station. This route runs east on 115th Street and then turns north on Kedzie Avenue, offering access to both local and regional transit options.

A CASE STUDY IN ALSIP TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY

Consider Maria, a fictitious Alsip resident who works downtown Chicago and relies on public transportation for her daily commute. Maria's journey starts with catching the Pace Route 385 bus, which stops less than half a mile from the Blue Island Metra station. Despite her efforts to plan ahead, the earliest bus arrival at the Metra stop is at 7:09 AM, leaving her with a 16-minute wait for the next Metra train departing at 7:25 AM towards downtown Chicago. This wait time, combined with the 30-minute Metra ride, results in a total commute time of at least 45 minutes. The disjointed scheduling between Pace and Metra services means that Maria often experiences longer wait times, contributing to an inefficient and frustrating commute.

Additionally, the financial burden on Maria is significant. A one-way trip using both Pace ($2) and Metra ($3.75) costs $5.75, while monthly passes for Pace ($60) and Metra ($75) amount to $135. Maria would need to take at least 24 one-way trips per month for the monthly passes to be cost-effective. The alternative of using the SouthWest Service (SWS) line from the Worth Metra station involves even longer wait times, sometimes up to 30 minutes, while the Metra Electric (ME) line offers a shorter wait of 9 minutes but an extended travel time of one hour.

FIGURE 10: TRANSIT NETWORK



PACE

PACE is the suburban transit provider for the Chicago Metropolitan area. They have two routes that travel through the Village of Alsip

METRA

Metra is the suburban rail provider for the Chicago Metropolitan area. There are no routes that travel through the Village. There is one route that travels past Alsip to the north with a station in Worth and one to the south with a station in Blue Island

CTA

CTA is the Chicago Transit Authority. They provide both rail and bus service to the city of Chicago. Since Alsip borders Chicago their buses are accessible to some residents.

RAILWAYS

The IHB Railroad is the one active rail line that travels through Alsip. It travels northwest along the Stoney Creek and has two spurs. One spur breaks off west of Homan Ave entering the industrial corridor. The second breaks off at Chapel Hills Gardens Cemetery and travels south across 115th and into the eastern industrial corridor. 36 freight trains per day use the main tracks. The crossings at 123rd and 115th results in 108 and 144 vehicle hours delay per weekday respectively. The main tracks have at-grade crossings at 123rd, S Kostner and 115th. The southern spur has at grade crossings at Pulaski, 129th and 131st. The northern Spur has at-grade crossings at 115th, 122nd, Central Ave and Laramie.

While these rail crossings cause delays for vehicles they also provide benefits to the Village. They are a more sustainable way of moving freight when compared to trucks. Trucks are a major source of carbon emissions and particulate emissions.

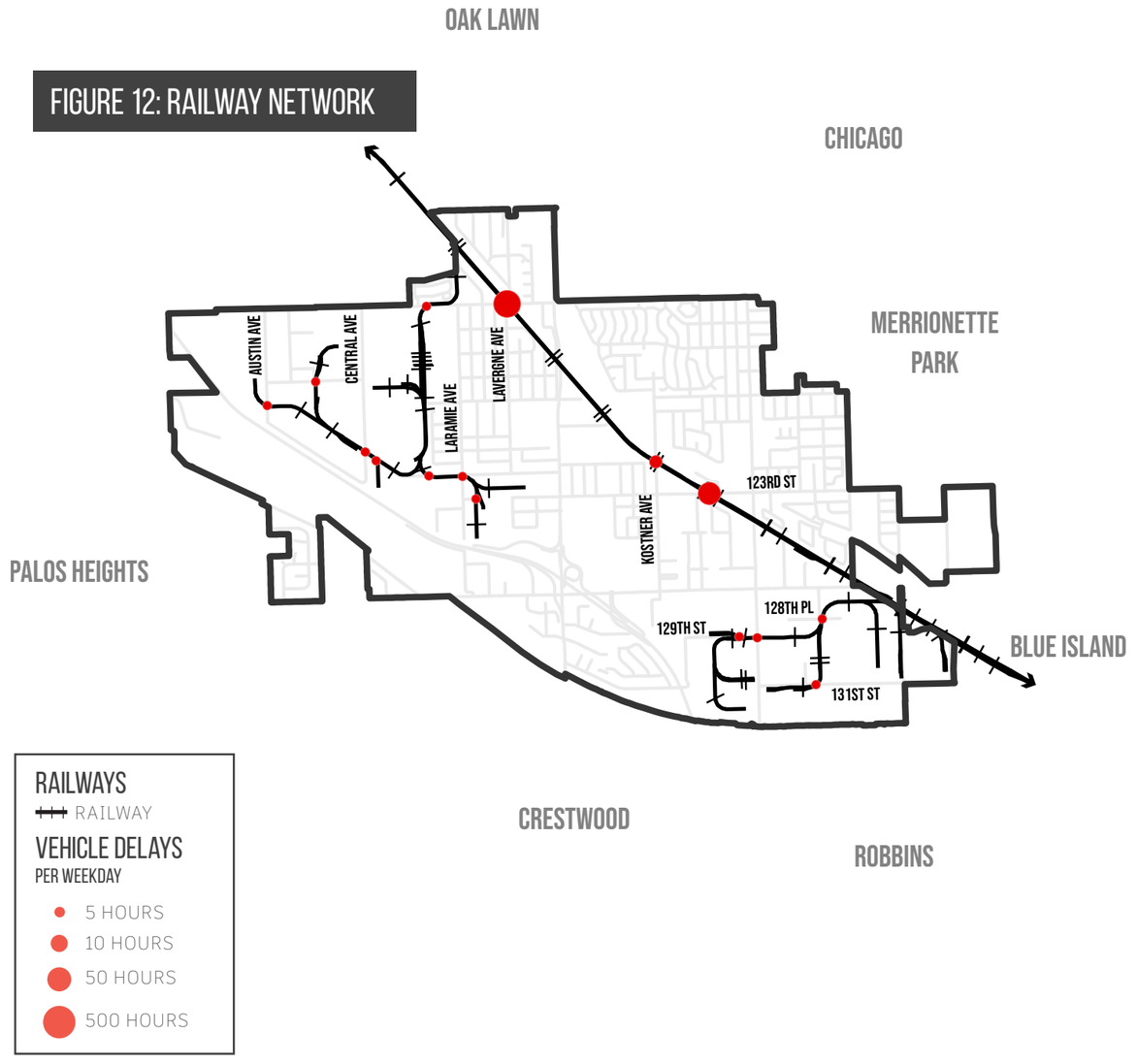
The difference between truck traffic and rail traffic is flexibility. Trucks can more easily stop and move out of the way for other vehicles such as ambulances or be rerouted. trains are on a set path and can not quickly be stopped or rerouted in response to a local emergency.

FIGURE 11: AT GRADE RAIL CROSSING
Source: Illinois Commerce Commision

WHY IS RAIL SAFETY IMPORTANT TO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING?

Rail safety is crucial to active transportation planning because it ensures the safe coexistence of trains with pedestrian and bicycle networks, preventing crashes and promoting a secure environment for all users. Well-designed rail crossings, clear signage, and effective barriers help protect pedestrians and bicyclists, reducing the risk of collisions and injuries. Integrating rail safety measures into transportation planning fosters a seamless, connected network that encourages active transportation while maintaining the efficiency and reliability of rail services.

FIGURE 12: RAILWAY NETWORK



RAIL LINES TRAVELING THROUGH ALSIP

The tracks running through Alsip are owned by Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB). The main track saw an average of 36 trains per day in 2023.

TOTAL VEHICLE DELAY IN ALSIP

There are 282 hours of vehicle delay caused by the at-grade rail crossings in Alsip. These all occur at the 3 intersections along the main track when crossing 123rd St, Kostner Ave and 115th St

ROAD JURISDICTION AT RAIL CROSSINGS

All of the at-grade railroad crossings occur on either county or local roads. Where the rail intersects with state roads there are bridges to allow both trains and vehicles to move simutaneously.

PLANS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS

Plans, policies, and programs collectively reflect the Village's past, current, and future goals and visions. Historical plans document previous strategies, current policies guide daily decisions, and future programs outline long-term visions for sustainable growth and enhanced quality of life. Together, they create a cohesive roadmap aligning efforts and resources toward the Village's aspirations.

PLANS

Plans play a critical role in guiding the development and improvement of infrastructure within the Village, particularly for bicycles and pedestrians. These plans vary in scope, with some focusing narrowly on specific infrastructure, while others address broader areas and topics, offering comprehensive strategies for enhancing mobility and connectivity. Although many of these plans were created over a decade ago, they provide valuable recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. It is essential to regularly assess these plans to evaluate their implementation and the impact of changes within the Village.

POLICIES

Policies serve as a powerful tool for Village trustees and elected officials to enact change within the community. Through ordinances, zoning changes, and other regulatory mechanisms, policies can influence the design and development of infrastructure, ensuring that considerations for bicycles and pedestrians are integrated into roadways, land use, and urban planning. These policies help shape the built environment.

PROGRAMS

Programs are essential for fostering a culture of active transportation within the Village. Managed by the Village and its parnters, these initiatives aim to encourage residents to adopt new behaviors, such as walking or biking more frequently. Examples include incentive programs like discounts at local stores for those who walk or bike, as well as events like Bike to School or Work days.

FIGURE 13: PRAIRIE PATH DEAD END IN SEARS PARK | Source: Epstein

EXISTING PLANS & POLICIES

APPROVED PREVIOUS PLANS

Many plans were completed for Alsip and the region over ten years ago. These plans include the Alsip Park District Bicycle Plan (2011), the Southwest Conference of Mayors Bicycle Plan (2012), the Comprehensive Plan (2013), and the Cicero Avenue Corridor Plan (2014).

The Alsip Park District Bicycle Plan (2011) is focused exclusively on bicycle-related issues, identifying best practices and policies for infrastructure improvements. It also specifies streets where new bicycle infrastructure, such as shared lanes or concrete-protected bike lanes, should be implemented.

The Southwest Conference of Mayors Bicycle Plan (2012) is a regional initiative aimed at improving bicycling infrastructure across the southwest suburban region through collaboration and planning among local governments. The plan identifies 18 potential corridors for bicycle infrastructure and categorizes them into priority tiers. It also advocates for the adoption of policies and additional infrastructure to encourage bicycling throughout the region.

The Alsip Comprehensive Plan (2013) is a broader, long-term strategic document that outlines the community's vision, goals, and policies for growth and development. While it includes strategies for pedestrian and bicycle improvements, these are less specific compared to other plans, focusing instead on supporting existing plans and fostering regional connectivity.

The Cicero Avenue Corridor Plan (2014) is focused on improving the Cicero Avenue corridor from 55th Street to 127th Street, with specific recommendations for enhancing safety and connectivity. This includes a proposed grade-separated crossing at 111th Street and efforts to connect the Stoney Creek Trail and add a new path along 115th Street, integrating the corridor into the broader regional trail network.

EXISTING VILLAGE POLICIES

In 2019, the Village adopted its Complete Streets Policy, which mandates that all transportation infrastructure projects accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders, regardless of age or ability. This policy is integrated into public and private projects, ensuring the inclusion of elements like parkway trees, signage, ADA ramps, and street lighting, with any exceptions requiring Village board approval.

Additionally, the Village has an ordinance that prohibits bicycles on sidewalks within business districts.

HOW DO PREVIOUS PLANS COEXIST WITH THE CURRENT PLAN?

Previous plans, such as the Alsip Park District Bike Plan, Southwest Conference of Mayors Bicycle Plan, Alsip Comprehensive Plan, and Cicero Avenue Corridor Plan, play a crucial role in informing the current plan by highlighting evolving funding opportunities, gauging resident support for new recommendations, and incorporating successful past recommendations. These plans provide a historical context and insights into how funding landscapes have shifted, allowing for strategic adjustments to secure necessary resources. They also reflect community feedback and engagement, demonstrating a growing resident appetite for enhanced infrastructure and amenities. By adopting and building on previous recommendations, the current plan ensures continuity, leverages past successes, and addresses ongoing community needs in a dynamic and responsive manner.

4

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

Many types of infrastructure, land uses, buildings, and people come together to make up the Village. The previous chapter examined these individual components. This chapter will explore how these components fit together; in some places, there is a symbiotic relationship while in others, conflict arises. Different methods to reduce conflict are also discussed.

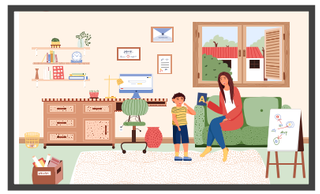
The Village has areas where positive connections enhance the community's livability. For example, schools located in the heart of residential neighborhoods help keep students close to their educational institutions, fostering a sense of community and safety. The Village also benefits from it's large industrial zones, which are strategically grouped together. This clustering minimizes the impact of industrial activities on residentital areas by concentrating pollution, truck traffic, and other associated burdents away from residential areas.

Conflicts within the Village arise in various locations, creating challenges for residents. One significant issue is the presence of large roads designed to move heavy traffic through the Village rather than with the residents and businesses in mind. These roads often act as barriers for residents, separating neighborhoods from schools, parks, and other essential amenities. These roads not only divide the community but also create safety concerns, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists who must navigate these busy corridors. Additionally, the industrial corridor, while effectively grouped, occupies land along the river that is currently being rehabilitated for recreational use, leading to a conflict between industrial activities and the desire to create a more accessible, natural space for residents. Smaller, yet highly impactful, conflicts include vehicle crashes, which pose a significant safety risk to all road users. These incidents are especialy dangerous for pedestrians and bicylists, who are more vulnerable when sharing the road with vehicles.

FIGURE 14: PERSON WALKING DOWN THE CENTER OF 115TH | Source: Epstein

CONNECTIONS

Key connections in the Village make transportation systems work better for people. This section looks at how various parts come together. Some locations have infrastructure that allows for movement of people while in others there are barriers.



CONNECTIONS TO SCHOOL

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are essential for safe and accessible routes to schools, promoting walking and biking among students, and reducing traffic congestion during school hours. Key considerations include the installation of well-maintained sidewalks, clearly marked crosswalks, and dedicated bike lanes to ensure the safety of young commuters. Traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps and pedestrian signals, are also critical around school zones to protect students. Additionally, providing bike racks and organizing walking school buses or bike trains can encourage more families to choose active transportation, fostering healthier lifestyles and greater independence for students.

CONNECTIONS TO WORK

Creating robust bicycle and pedestrian connections to workplaces enhances commuting options, lowers commuting costs, and supports sustainable transportation goals. Integrating bike lanes and pedestrian pathways into the broader transportation network ensures that employees have convenient and safe routes to work, reducing reliance on personal vehicles and contributing to lower carbon emissions. Employers can further support this by offering secure bike parking, locker rooms, and shower facilities. Additionally, developing bike-sharing programs and providing incentives for active commuting can increase the adoption of these modes, promoting a healthier workforce and reducing overall traffic congestion.

CONNECTIONS TO AMENITIES

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities play a vital role in connecting residents to local amenities such as parks, shops, and community centers. Continuous, well-lit pathways and clearly marked bike lanes are essential to ensure safe and enjoyable travel. Wayfinding signage helps navigate routes, while connectivity to public transit expands access to those traveling longer distances. These facilities should be designed to accommodate all users, including those with disabilities, ensuring inclusivity. By enhancing these connections, communities can encourage more active lifestyles, increase foot traffic to local businesses, and create a more vibrant and accessible environment for all residents.

BARRIERS TO SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

The Village is covered by three different school districts and is home to six schools; four elementary, one upper grade, and one junior high. All six schools are public. Despite all residential areas appearing to be within walking or biking distance of school the disjointed school districts results in some students attending a school further away from their home.

Hazelgreen Elementary School, despite being located in awalkable area, is not easily accessible on foot for all its students. The residential area it serves includes a section north of 115th Street, a four-lane road with a speed limit of 40 mph. To cross with a traffic signal students would have to walk an additional quarter mile to Cicero which may deter walking or encourage unsafe crossing. Additionally, the school serves a neighborhood south of both I-294 and the Cal-Sag canal which are both major barriers to getting to school.

Stoney Creek Elementary School serves neighborhoods bounded by 115th Street, the railroad tracks, Pulaski Road, and Cicero Avenue. While there are fewer major transportation barriers within this area, some streets still lack complete sidewalk coverage on both sides. The school also serves students from Oak Lawn who live north of 111th Street, requiring them to cross both 111th and 115th Streets. These are four-lane roads with 40 mph speed limits and limited stoplights, making crossings hazardous. Additionally, these students must navigate around St. Casimir Cemetery via Cicero Avenue, which further complicates the route.

Lane Elementary School primarily serves neighborhoods bounded by the railroad tracks, 127th Street, Pulaski Road, and Cicero Avenue. While there are limited major transportation barriers within these boundaries, many streets lack complete sidewalk infrastructure. The school also serves two additional neighborhoods to the west of Cicero Avenue. Many students must cross at Cicero at 123rd Street one of the most dangerous intersections in the village.or Cicero and 122nd Street.

George Washington Elementary School is situated on the eastern border of Alsip. Students living just west of the school benefit from a good connection via a path through Sears Park. However, students living in the area bounded by 127th Street, Crawford Avenue, and the tollway face significant challenges; they would have to travel along 127th Street, which lacks complete sidewalks on either side, limiting safe access to the school.

Medow Lane School serves students from the northeast corner of Alsip. These students face challenges in reaching the school as the most direct route is east along 119th Street. The presence of a cemetery and a commercial area further reduces connectivity and complicates access to the school. Addressing these challenges would require coordination between Alsip and Merrionette Park.

Nathan Hale Primary School serves students living in the area bounded by the tollwayand the Cal-Sag Canal. The Cicero Avenue bridge over the canal lacks pedestrian or bike facilities, making it difficult for students to cross safely. Alternatively, students could take the Cal-Sag Trail to 127th Street and then use residential roads to reach the school, but this route requires crossing Cal-Sag Road, a minor arterial, which may still pose safety concerns.

Chippewa Elementary School, located in Worth, serves a small neighborhood of Alsip. This neighborhood is very close to the school, with residential streets offering good sidewalk coverage and paths connecting cul-de-sacs to the school. However, one apartment complex is separated from this neighborhood by Cal-Sag Road, a principal arterial, which could create a significant barrier for students walking or biking to school.

Looking at the service areas for each school will be vital to ensuring all students have safe access to their school when walking and biking.

BARRIERS TO WORK CONNECTIONS

The majority of residents in Alsip drive to works rather than taking public tranist, walking, or biking.

There are many barriers to using public transportation for commuting. First, is the built infrasturucture. There are 41 Pace bus stops in Alsip, a quarter of which lack sidewalk connections, making them unsafe to access, especially for those with mobility devices. Additionally, many connected stops do not have pavement extending to the curb, and only three stops have shelters. The lack of amenities creates an unwelcoming experience for transit users.

Second is the bus routes. The buses run through the village along Cicero, Pulaski, and 127th. These routes run through the commercial areas of the village but not the industrial areas. The final leg of the route will be completed either by walking or biking.

The Village's industrial areas are difficult to access by walking or biking due to their separation by major thoroughfares and lack of pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. These facilities are improtant for both workers who want to take public transit and those who want to walk or bike to work. Currently, 16.1% of workers are local; either living in Alsip or the surrounding zip code. These workers are within biking distance.

Improving connectivity in these areas could make walking, biking, and public transit more appealing for those who work in Alsip.

BARRIERS TO AMENITY CONNECTIONS

Alsip has commercial corridors rather that a downtown or shopping mall. Having commercial corridors can concentrate amenities such as grocery stores and the library but are build around a major road which provides good car access while acting as a barrier to other road users. A desire path between 120th and the Jewel-Osco parking lot shows that the current connection to the grocery store is not working.

Green spaces are an amenity residents have good connections to. Alsip has 4.46 acres of accessible park acreage per 1,000 residents. This is higher that Cook County at 3.57. These parks are well distributed throughout residential neighborhoods.

Within these parks there are numerous trails. These trails can be used both for travel and recreation. The Stony Creek Trail is a combination of off-street paths and on street bike lanes that ends just north of Prairie Junior High School. This trail does pick up again in Oak Lawn but the connection along Cicero or another parallel route does not currently exist. On the east side of the Village the Sears Park path and Commissioners Park path are connected via a short section on a residential street. Both trails have multiple entrances and exits giving nearby residents good access.

There is room for improvement to increase access to parks and trails outside of a resident's neighborhood. Accessing these parks and trails would require crossing barriers such as at-grade railroad tracks, high speed roads, and high traffic volumes.

A regional amenity for Alsip is the current terminus of the Cal-Sag trail. The terminus of the Cal-Sag Trail in Freedom Park is not easily accessible to most resident in Alsip. Residents must cross the tollway, which can be done using an underpass which leads them into an industrial section of the Village. Residents could travel north to 127th and meet up with the Stoney Creek Trail, but a gate in the parking lot, no safe crossing, and the Apollo trail not continuing all the way to the street are all barriers for riders.

DIRT PATH FROM 120TH ST TO JEWEL-OSCO PARKING LOT, ALSIP, IL

COMFORT

The Comfort section assesses the ease and stress levels associated with navigating the transportation network, utilizing analyses to gauge the quality of travel experiences for all road users. These analyses help identify areas where improvements can enhance user satisfaction and safety, particularly for non-motorized travelers.

SAFETY & COMFORT ANALYSES

In planning, safety and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians are often determined through two key analyses: Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (ILTS) and Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS).

Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (ILTS) Analysis focuses on the specific stress points that bicyclists and pedestrians encounter at intersections. This analysis evaluates factors such as traffic signal timing, intersection design, visibility, and crossing distances to determine how these elements contribute to or alleviate stress. Understanding these stress levels is crucial for redesigning intersections to be safer and more accommodating, thus improving the overall travel experience for non-motorized users.

Bicycle Level of Service Analysis (BLOS) measures the quality of the cycling environment along roadways and dedicated bike paths. By examining aspects such as lane width, traffic volume, surface conditions, and proximity to moving traffic, this analysis provides a graded assessment that helps pinpoint areas needing improvement. Enhancements based on this analysis aim to increase the safety and enjoyment of cycling, encouraging more people to choose biking as a preferred mode of transport

Additional comfort elements include streetscaping features that enhance the aesthetic and functional appeal of roadways for pedestrians and bicyclists. Elements such as shaded pathways, benches, ample lighting, and barrier-protected bike lanes not only improve safety but also contribute to a more pleasant and engaging street environment. These features are integral to transforming streets into welcoming spaces that support active travel and enrich the community fabric.

FIGURE 15: PRAIRIE PATH DEAD END IN SEARS PARK | Source: Epstein

BICYCLE LEVEL OF SERVICE

Below are the various levels of the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS), which assess the quality and safety of cycling environments. The breakdown also includes the percentage of Village roadways that fall within each BLOS category, highlighting the current conditions for bicyclists in the area. *This assessment was based on the National Association of Transportation Officials' Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) methodology.*

Excellent

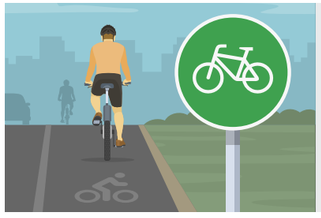
6.1% OF VILLAGE ROADWAYS

Excellent bicycle level of service offers wide bike lanes or dedicated paths, low traffic volume, and calm speeds, making it suitable for all types of bicyclists including beginners.

Good

64.4% OF VILLAGE ROADWAYS

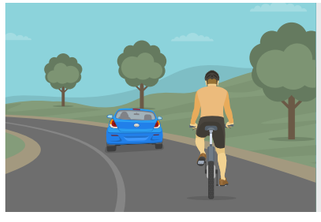
Good bicycle level of service provides adequate bike lanes, moderate traffic, and reasonable speeds, comfortable for the majority of bicyclists.



Fair

1.9% OF VILLAGE ROADWAYS

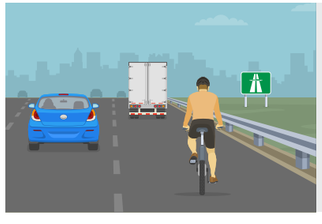
Fair bicycle level of service features basic bike facilities, higher traffic volumes, and speeds, suitable for regular bicyclists with some experience.



Poor

3.4% OF VILLAGE ROADWAYS

Poor bicycle level of service has minimal bike facilities, high traffic, and faster speeds, only advisable for more experienced bicyclists.



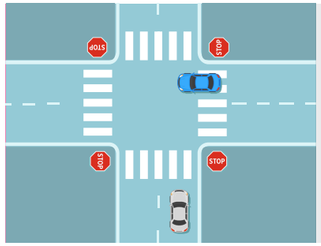
Very Poor

24.3% OF VILLAGE ROADWAYS

Very Poor bicycle level of service has no bike facilities, high traffic, and faster speeds. These roads are not advisable for any bicyclists.

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS

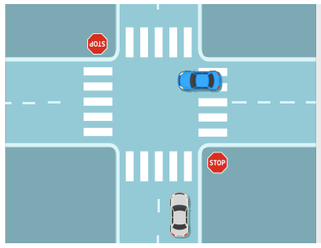
Below are the various levels of the Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (ILTS), which evaluate the stress and safety conditions that bicyclists and pedestrians experience at intersections. The breakdown also details the percentage of Village intersections that fall within each ILTS category, providing insight into the current stress levels and safety for non-motorized users at these critical points. *This assessment was based on the Montgomery County Planning Level of Service (BLOS) methodology.*



Low Stress

51.0% of Intersections in Alsip

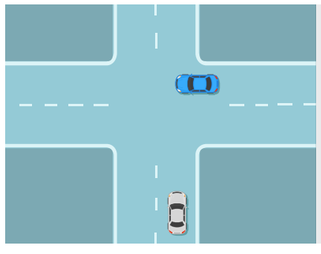
Low stress intersetions are fully signalized with dedicated cycling signals or traffic signals. These intersections are located on streets with low vehicle speeds; typically under 20 mph.



Moderate Stress

2.7% of Intersections in Alsip

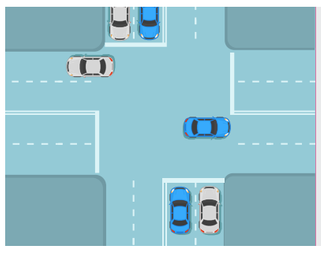
Moderately stressful intersections are partially signalized or unsignalized with minimal cycling facilities. These intersections are located on streets with moderate vehicle speeds; typically 20-30 mph.



High Stress

2.7% of Intersections in Alsip

High stress intersections are unsignalized intersections or have minimal traffic calming features. These intersections are located on streets with higher vehicle speeds; typically 30-40 mph.



Very High Stress

43.5% of Intersections in Alsip

Very high stress intersections have high-speed traffic and are located on streets with multiple lanes of traffic. Even with traffic signals these intersections can be high stress.

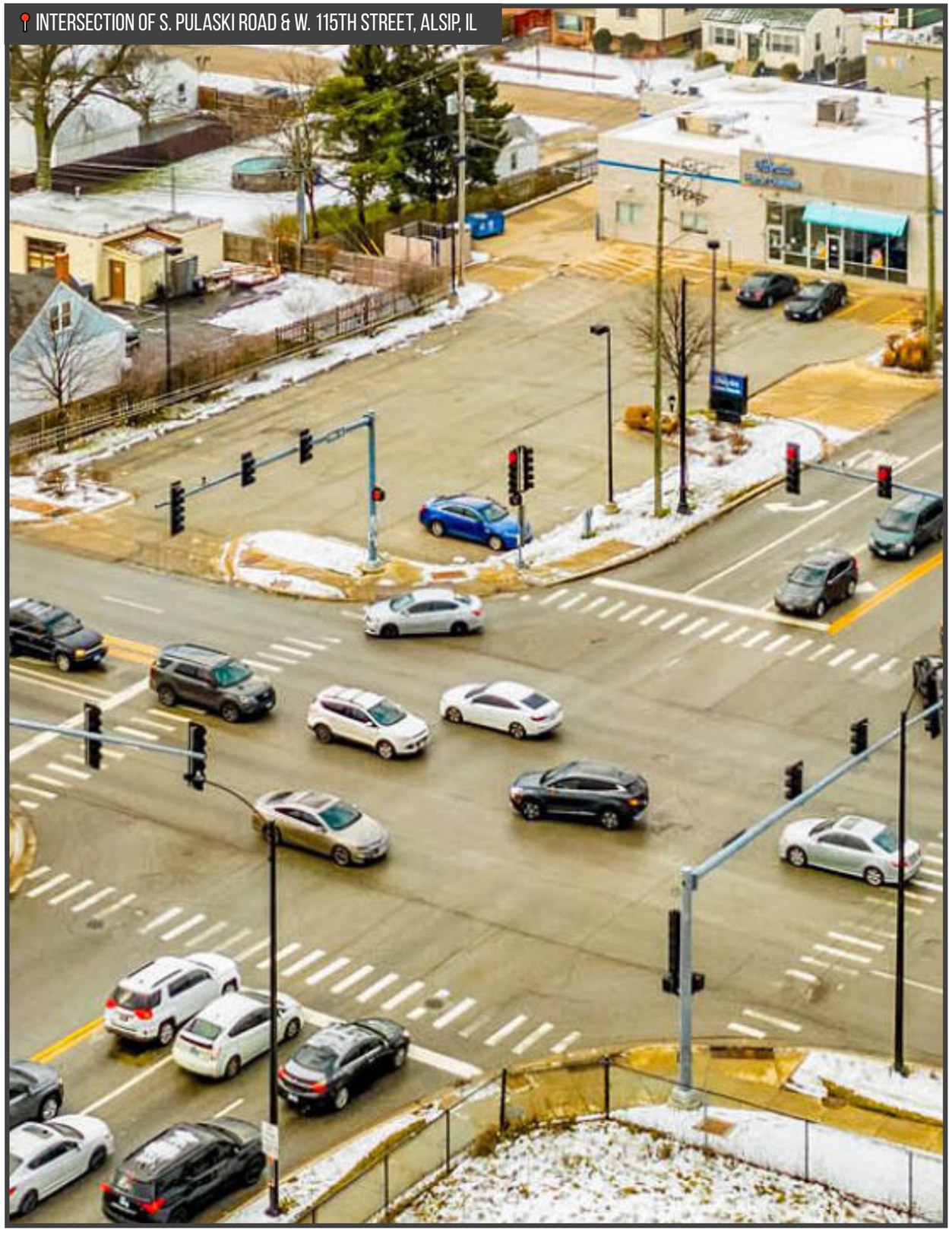
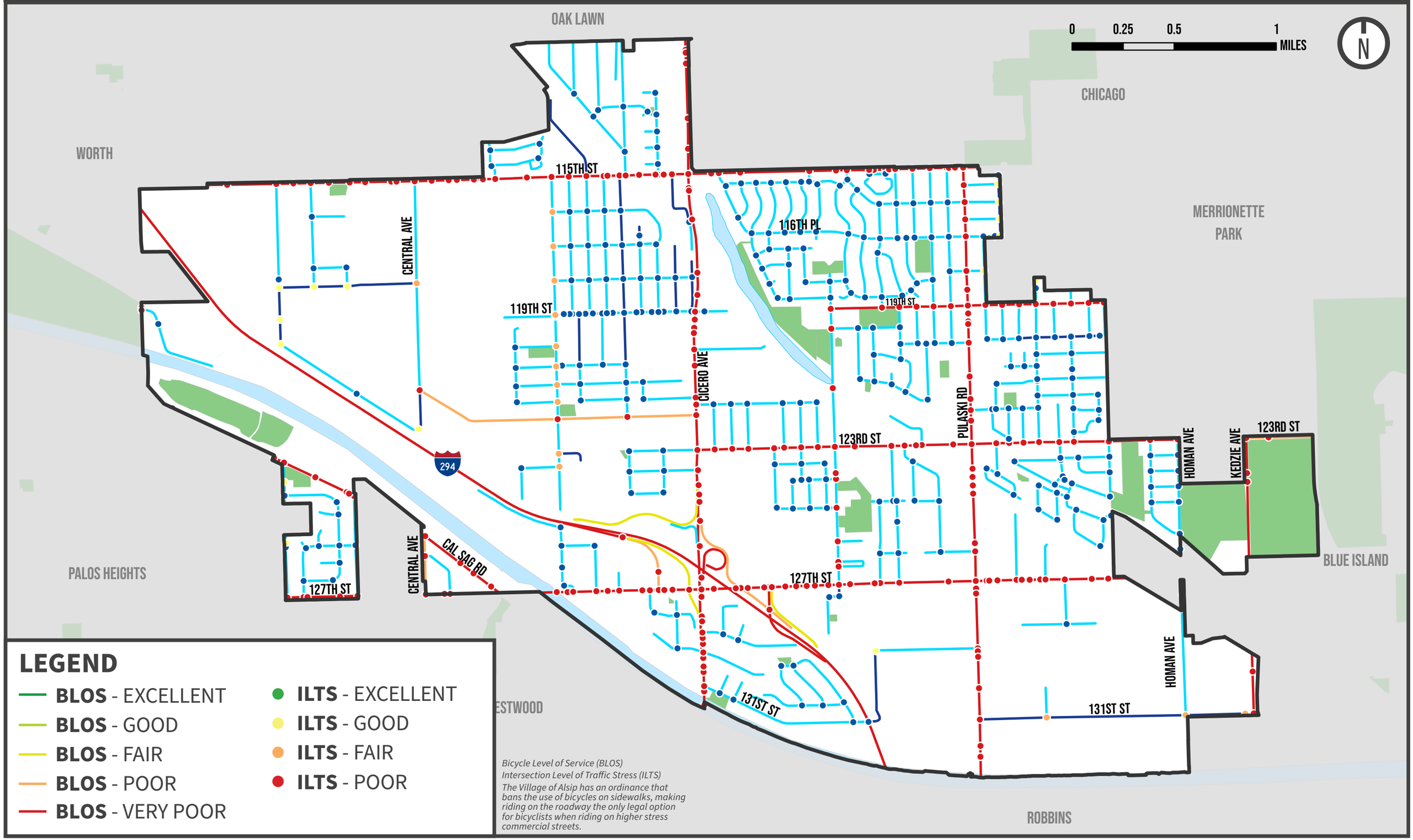


FIGURE 16: INTERSECTION LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS & BICYCLE LEVEL OF SERVICE



Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS)
Intersection Level of Traffic Stress (ILTS)
The Village of Alsip has an ordinance that bans the use of bicycles on sidewalks, making riding on the roadway the only legal option for bicyclists when riding on higher stress commercial streets.

CONFLICTS

This analysis focuses on identifying and understanding key areas that impact safety and functionality on roadways for non-motorized users. Detailed crash analysis explores high-incident areas, incorporating data from truck routes, high Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) regions, and high-speed roadways. Additionally, land and infrastructural barriers that impede walking and bicycling are examined, highlighting the need for targeted improvements to enhance safety and accessibility.

CRASH ANALYSIS

Crash analysis can identify crash trends to determine locations that need safety improvements and the contributing factors that need to be addresses through a change of design, signage, or enforcement. By analyzing detailed collision data, locations with high incidence rates are identified, revealing common hazardous patterns such as poorly designed crosswalks, inadequate traffic signals, and areas where pedestrian and cyclist paths intersect with heavy vehicle traffic. These insights guide the implementation of targeted safety measures such as enhanced signage, improved pavement markings, and optimized traffic signal timing. The objective is to address specific safety deficiencies that contribute to incidents, thereby reducing crashes and enhancing road safety for everyone.

BARRIERS TO SAFETY

In Alsip, the primary safety barriers for pedestrians and bicyclists stem from high-speed, wide roads that accommodate heavy traffic volumes, including freight vehicles. These elements combine to create a challenging environment for non-motorized users. The wide roads and high speeds facilitate rapid vehicle movement but often lack adequate safety provisions such as pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and traffic calming measures.

The analysis of these issues in Alsip focuses on identifying specific locations where the integration of high-speed traffic and heavy truck flows most significantly impact pedestrian and cyclist safety. By examining traffic patterns, accident data, and roadway design, this analysis aims to pinpoint critical areas needing infrastructure improvements.

FIGURE 17: CAR CRASH

CRASH ANALYSIS

VEHICLE CRASHES

Between 2018 and 2022, Alsip recorded 3,759 vehicle crashes, resulting in 1,089 injuries and 7 fatalities. Most crashes occurred on principal arterials such as Cicero Avenue, 127th Street, and Cal-Sag Road.

Injury types in traffic crashes range from minor to fatal and are categorized by severity to guide emergency response and safety improvements. Fatal injuries involve loss of life, while A, B, and C injuries range from severe incapacitation to moderate visible harm and minor or possible injuries.

The fatalities occurred on the interstate, major collectors, and other principal arterials. Injuries were most common on principal arterials, followed by the interstate and minor arterials, while the fewest injuries were recorded on non-urban major collectors and roads with a median barrier.

Crashes were most likely to occur in daylight, with peak times between 2 PM and 4 PM, aligning with the times when driving is most common according to CMAP's travel survey. Although there were fewer crashes between midnight and 4 AM, the number of crashes during these hours was disproportionately high compared to the lower volume of drivers on the road.

CRASHES INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

Out of the 3,759 crashes in Alsip, 31 involved pedestrians and 11 involved bicyclists. Pedestrian crashes resulted in 30 injuries and 1 fatality, while cyclist crashes led to 10 injuries and no fatalities. 95% of crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists resulted in injuries, compared to 20% of all crashes. The majority of pedestrian and cyclist crashes occurred during daylight hours, with failure to yield the right of way being the leading cause. Most cyclist crashes occurred at locations with traffic signals, whereas pedestrian crashes were more likely to happen in areas without traffic controls.

CRASHES INVOLVING TRAINS

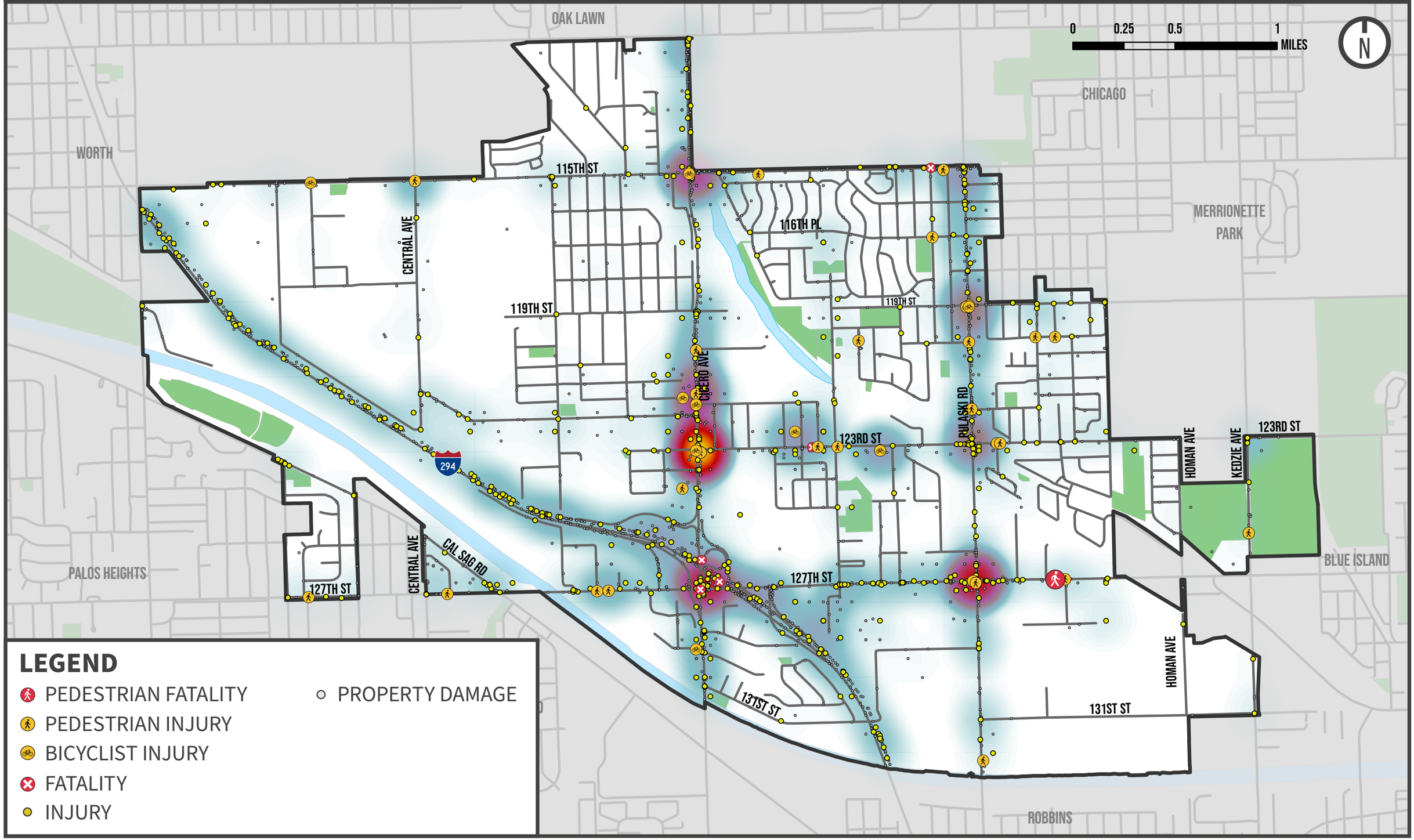
From 2018 to 2022, there were five crashes in Alsip involving trains, two of which resulted in injuries. According to a report by the Cook County Department of Transportation & Highways, Alsip was identified as a hotspot for train-related incidents within Cook County. From 2012 to 2021, there were seven incidents involving either pedestrians or vehicles and trains; four of these were pedestrian suicides, and three were auto crashes, resulting in two fatalities.

HOW DO CRASHES AFFECT THE PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL ACTIVE TRANSPROTATION EXPERIENCE?

Crashes can significantly deter active transportation by creating a perception of danger, which discourages residents from walking or biking, especially in areas with a history of frequent or severe accidents. When pedestrians and bicyclists are involved in crashes, it often highlights the inadequacies in existing infrastructure, such as the lack of safe crossings, poorly marked bike lanes, or insufficient traffic calming measures. These incidents can lead to a decrease in the number of people willing to use active transportation modes due to fear of injury or worse. Over time, this can result in lower physical activity levels within the community, increased reliance on cars, and a decline in the overall vibrancy and connectivity of the area.

Consider the hypothetical case of Maria, a resident of Alsip who lives in one of the multifamily housing units near an industrial zone. Maria used to bike to work every day, enjoying the exercise and the opportunity to reduce her carbon footprint. However, after witnessing a severe crash at a busy intersection she crosses daily—where a cyclist was struck by a speeding car—Maria became increasingly anxious about her own safety. The intersection, which lacks proper bike lanes and has heavy truck traffic, now feels too dangerous for her to navigate. As a result, Maria has stopped biking altogether and now drives to work, even though it's a shorter distance by bike. This shift not only increases her transportation costs and contributes to traffic congestion, but also diminishes her overall well-being and connection to the community. Maria's experience reflects how crashes can have a profound impact on residents' transportation choices, pushing them away from healthier, more sustainable modes of travel due to safety concerns.

FIGURE 18: CRASH ANALYSIS



BARRIERS TO SAFETY

BARRIER OVERVIEW

Barriers to safety, such as truck routes, high-volume roads, wide streets, and railroad crossings, hinder safe movement for pedestrians and bicyclists..

Truck routes, designed for the efficient transport of goods, often cut through areas where pedestrians and bicyclists navigate. The presence of large, fast-moving trucks on these routes presents substantial safety risks, particularly for vulnerable road users. Trucks have larger blind spots and require longer stopping distances.

High volume roadways, characterized by a large number of vehicles, further exacerbate safety concerns for non-motorized users. The sheer number of cars, combined with higher speeds, increases the likelihood of crashes. The constant flow of traffic can make it difficult for pedestrians to find safe gaps to cross. These roads are identified using by AADT counts.

Wide roadways, designed for more traffic lanes, create significant safety challenges for pedestrians and bicyclists by increasing crossing distances and encouraging higher vehicle speeds.

Railroads, reduce the mobility in the village. State routes in Alsip have bridges allowing traffic to move uninhibited and therefore attracting a high volume of vehicles. Routes pedestrians and bicyclists more commonly use have at-grade crossings subjecting them to long wait times. Without adequate crossing points pedestrians and bicyclists many try to cross where safety infrastructure is not present.

The physical design of railroad tracks can also be problematic for bicyclists and wheelchair users, as the gaps and uneven surfaces can cause wheels to become trapped, leading to falls or collisions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

The presence of these barriers often forces pedestrians and bicyclists to take longer, less direct routes to avoid hazards, reducing the overall efficiency and appeal of walking and biking. This can lead to lower levels of physical activity and a higher reliance on motor vehicles, contributing to traffic congestion and environmental issues. The perception of danger can also discourage walking and cycling.

Addressing these safety concerns is crucial for fostering a more inclusive, active, and connected urban environment where all modes of transportation can coexist safely and efficiently.

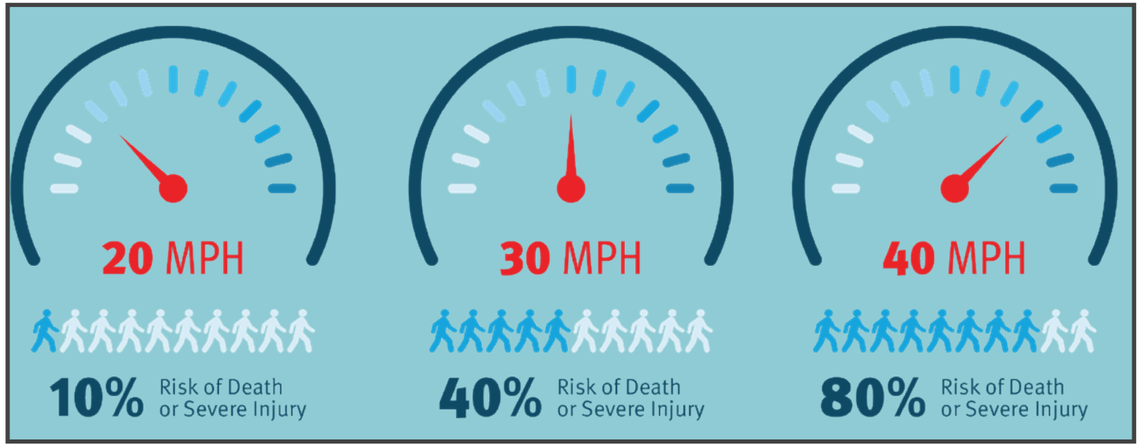


FIGURE 19: SEVERE INJURY OR DEATH RISK AT VARYING VEHICLE MPH
Source: Chicago Department of Transportation

CONFLICTS KEY FINDINGS

LOW LIGHTING OR DARK CONDITIONS IS A THROUGHLINE IN MANY CRASHES RESULTING IN INJURIES OR FATALITIES.

A significant number of fatal crashes occurred during low-light conditions, such as early morning or night, even when roads were lighted. This highlights the need for enhanced visibility measures during these hours to improve safety. Currently, all residential street lights in Alsip have been retrofitted to LED.

VULNERABLE ROAD USERS EXPERIENCED WORSE OUTCOMES THAN AUTOMOBILE DRIVERS OR PASSENGERS.

The crash analysis revealed that crashes involving unprotected road users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists) were disproportionately fatal or resulted in severe injuries.

RURAL AND UNMARKED HIGHWAYS WERE PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS, ESPECIALLY FOR PEDESTRIANS.

Crashes on rural and unmarked highways within Alsip, particularly those involving pedestrians, were often severe. This finding suggests that these roads require better traffic control measures.

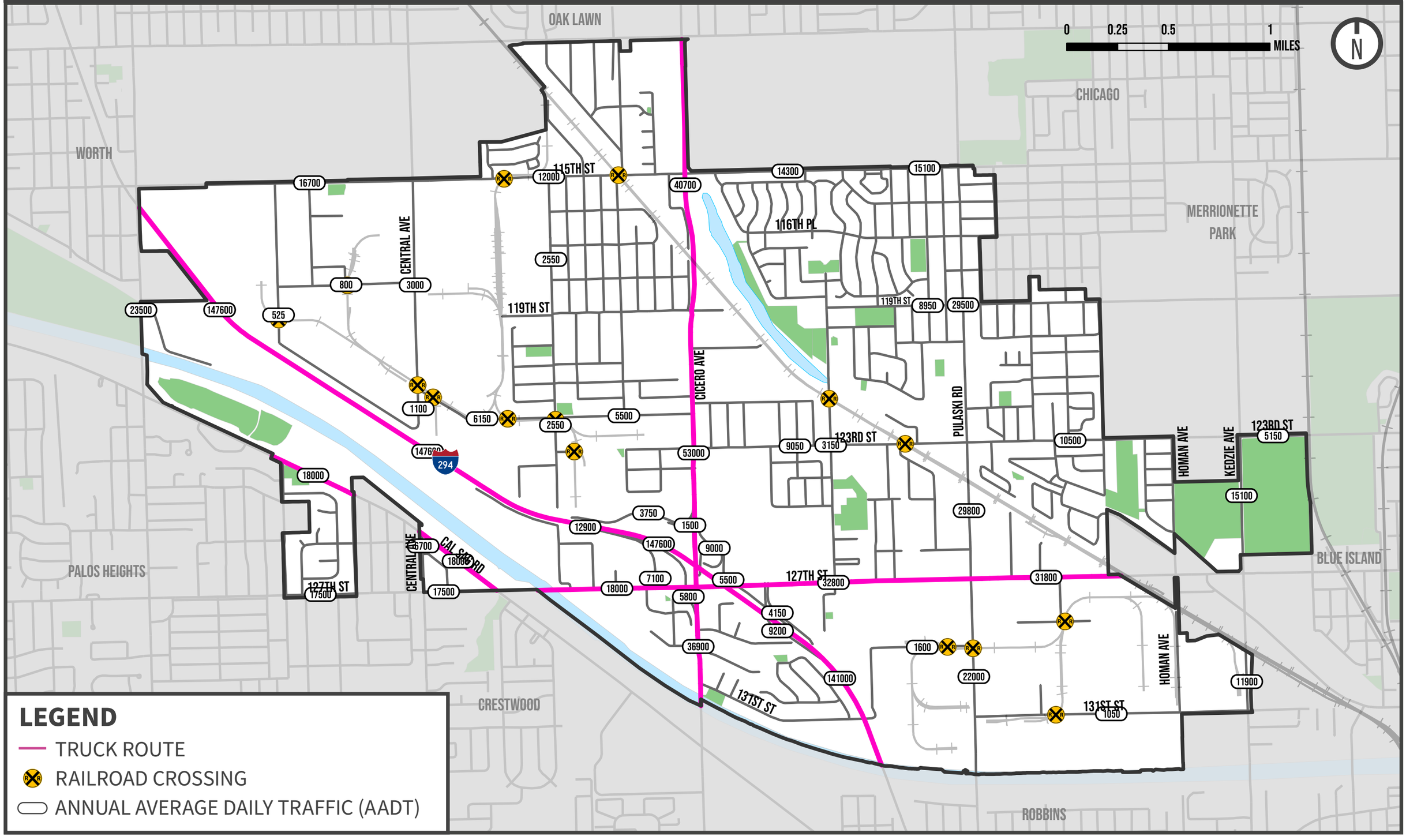
HUMAN ERROR AND POOR DRIVING BEHAVIOR HAD DEADLY CONSEQUENCES.

A significant number of crashes were attributed to human errors, such as failure to reduce speed, improper lane usage, and disregarding traffic signals.

MAJOR COLLECTORS WERE MAJOR ISSUES FOR ALSIP RESIDENTS AND TRAVELERS.

Major collector roads in Alsip were identified as frequent sites of severe crashes, particularly those involving turning movements and rear-end collisions, suggesting that these roads pose specific dangers.

FIGURE 20: TRUCK ROUTES AND ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

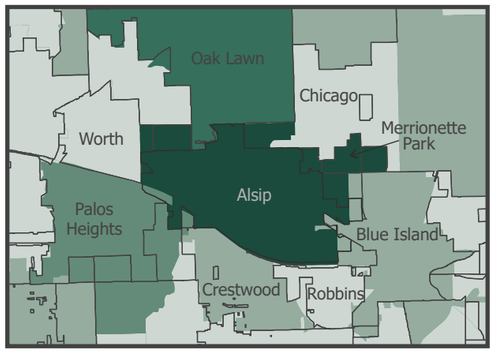


APPENDICES

A.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

PEOPLE WHO WORK AND LIVE NEAR ALSIP

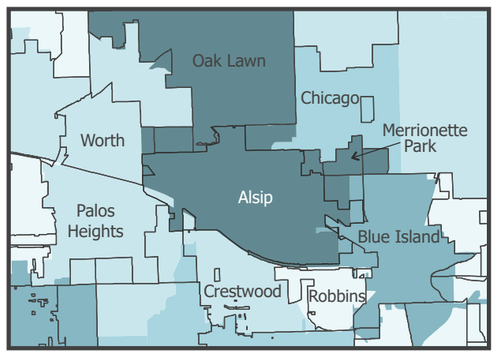
FIGURE 22: WHERE ALSIP RESIDENTS WORK



Number of employees who work in the area

0 — 476

FIGURE 21: WHERE ALSIP EMPLOYEES LIVE



Number of employees who live in the area

0 — 545

A.2 EQUITY ANALYSIS

Demographic Representation and Population Needs

Alsip's demographics reveal a unique profile compared to its neighboring communities. When looking at the percentage of population Alsip has the third lowest White population and second highest Hispanic/Latino population and Black population compared to surrounding communities.

The median age in Alsip is 39.2 years, which is younger than Crestwood and Palos Heights but older than Robbins and Blue Island. Over a quarter of Alsip's population is under 20 years old, comparable to Blue Island and Chicago (Mt. Greenwood). This younger demographic highlights the importance of safe routes to schools and recreational facilities. Children and teenagers needs a more forgiving environment as they are shorter making them less visible to drivers as pedestrians and cyclist. As new drivers they are still learning the risks of driving. Additionally, the 6.9% of residents aged 75 and older underscore the necessity for safe and accessible pedestrian paths for seniors.

The percentage of people with disabilities in Alsip (11.5%) is in line with Cook County's average but lower than in Robbins and Merrionette Park. This indicates that a substantial portion of the population requires accessible infrastructure. Ensuring that sidewalks, crosswalks, and transit options are ADA-compliant and safe for all users is critical.

The youth and individuals with disabilities populations require a dual focus in Alsip ensuring infrastructure that supports both youth mobility and accessibility needs.

TABLE 4: DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION, ALSIP & NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

Community	Race and Ethnicity Percentages			Median Age	Under 20 (percent of population)	75 and Older (percent of population)	Individuals with Disabilities (percent of Population)
	White	Black	Hispanic/ Latino				
Alsip	**47.1%**	**23.5%**	**24.6%**	**39.2**	**26.0%**	**6.9%**	**11.5%**
Crestwood	73.5%	10.8%	10.7%	47.5	17.4%	11.2%	13.2%
Palos Heights	87.0%	2.4%	8.2%	51.3	21.1%	13.4%	13.0%
Worth	74.1%	2.5%	16.9%	40.9	22.5%	6.6%	14.2%
Blue Island	21.1%	31.6%	45.9%	37.0	25.5%	4.5%	10.7%
Robbins	6.4%	87.2%	5.7%	32.6	23.1%	5.8%	14.3%
Merrionette Park	66.6%	8.4%	23.4%	41.3	17.0%	5.9%	13.7%
Chicago (Mt. Greenwood)	-	-	-	38.5	28.4%	5.7%	-
Cook County	41.6%	23.0%	25.6%	37.3	19.4%	5.2%	11.1%

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Alsip's demographics, transportation habits and accessibility, reveal critical insights when compared to its neighboring communities. Roughly 5.5% of Alsip residents commute via public transit, which is comparable to neighboring Crestwood and slightly higher than transit rates in Palos Heights and Worth. However, transit use is higher in Blue Island, indicating an opportunity to improve public transit use in Alsip. Alsip's job accessibility within a 30-minute transit ride stands at 68,644 jobs, which is higher than Crestwood and Palos Heights, but significantly lower than Blue Island. This data highlights the need for enhanced transit options to improve job accessibility and equity, ensuring that residents can easily access employment opportunities without relying on private vehicles.

In terms of active transportation, 2.3% of Alsip residents commute via walking or biking, which is higher than in Crestwood and Robbins but lower than Palos Heights and Chicago (Mt. Greenwood). The Walk Score for Alsip is 47 out of 100, indicating a somewhat car-dependent community, similar to Robbins but less walkable than Worth and Palos Heights. This suggests that Alsip may need to invest in better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to promote safer and more accessible active transportation options. Enhancing walkability can also contribute to improved health outcomes and reduced transportation costs for residents.

The poor accessibility and connectivity in Alsip's bicycle, pedestrian and transit networks have significant equity implications. The low public transit usage and moderate walk score highlight the barriers faced by residents, particularly those without access to private vehicles, in accessing jobs and essential services.

These disparities can be addressed by, adding bike lanes, improving sidewalk conditions, and ensuring safe crossings. These measures would not only support a more equitable transportation system but also foster a more inclusive community where all residents, regardless of income or physical ability, can move around safely and conveniently.

TABLE 5: COMMUTE SHARE AND AVAILABILITY, ALSIP & NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

Community	Commute Via Public Transit	Job Accessible in 30-Min. Transit Ride	Commute via Walking or Biking	Walk Score
Alsip	**5.5%**	**68,644**	**2.3%**	**47**
Crestwood	5.5%	44,225	1.3%	54
Palos Heights	5.2%	47,731	3.4%	79
Worth	4.2%	84,795	2.8%	87
Blue Island	10.7%	165,362	1.9%	63
Robbins	3.5%	42,290	0.8%	46
Merrionette Park	8.2%	49,290	2.5%	72
Chicago (Mt. Greenwood)	4.8%	-	3.5%	56
Cook County	15.8%	361,396	5.0%	-

HOUSEHOLD TRANSPORTATION COSTS

Alsip's Economic and transportation demographics in comparison to its neighboring communities reveals significant insights into equity and safety planning for bicyclists and pedestrians. On average, Alsip's median household income of $59,123 is lower than Crestwood and significantly below Palos Heights, but higher than Blue Island and Robbins. Alsip residents spend 42% of their income on housing and transportation costs. The relatively high proportion of income spent on these essentials highlights the economic pressure on Alsip residents, making affordable and accessible transportation options crucial for ensuring equity.

The transportation costs in Alsip are significant, with residents spending 20% of their income on transportation alone, similar to Crestwood and Worth but higher than the county average. Alsip's annual transportation costs amount to $14,370, which is higher than Blue Island and Robbins, indicating a heavy reliance on personal vehicles. This is further evidenced by the annual vehicle miles traveled per household, which stands at 16,892 miles, higher than Blue Island and Robbins. These figures underscore the necessity for efficient public transit and safer infrastructure for biking and walking, reducing dependency on cars and alleviating financial stress on residents.

Considering these economic pressures, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian safety and connectivity becomes essential for Alsip. With an average monthly housing cost of $1,345, comparable to Worth but higher than Blue Island, many Alsip residents might find it challenging to afford additional transportation expenses. Improved walkability and bikeability can provide cost-effective alternatives to driving, promoting equity by making it easier for lower-income residents to access jobs, education, and services. Safe and accessible infrastructure, such as protected bike lanes and pedestrian crossings, can reduce transportation costs, promote healthier lifestyles, and enhance the overall quality of life, particularly for those who are economically disadvantaged.

TABLE 6: DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON BETWEEN ALSIP AND THE SURROUNDING COMMMUNITIES

Community	Mediam Household Income	Housing & Tranportation costs (% of Income)	Housing Costs (% of Income)	Transportation Costs (% of Income)	Average Monthly Housing Costs	Annual Transportation Costs	Annual Vehicle Miles Travels Per Household
Alsip	**$59,123**	**42%**	**22%**	**20%**	**$1,345**	**$14,370**	**16,892**
Crestwood	$65,074	39%	20%	19%	$1,199	$13,826	16,541
Palos Heights	$101,037	54%	33%	21%	$1,997	$14,746	17,369
Worth	$54,071	41%	22%	19%	$1,331	$13,801	15,888
Blue Island	$51,989	37%	19%	18%	$1,144	$13,064	14,961
Robbins	$34,760	35%	17%	18%	$1,038	$12,865	14,421
Merrionette Park	$45,100	34%	16%	18%	$950	$12,937	14,533
Chicago (Mt. Greenwood)	$106,538	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cook County	$72,121	44%	28%	16%	$1654	$11,705	12,720

A.3 LAND USE IN ALSIP

The land use patterns have a direct impact on the feasibility and appeal of active transportation modes such as walking and biking. The Village's significant industrial land use, which occupies nearly 28% of the land, primarily along the Tollway and in other industrial zones, creates substantial challenges for integrating pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. These areas are designed to accommodate heavy machinery and vehicle traffic, which often results in an environment that is inhospitable or even dangerous for non-motorized users. The focus on facilitating the movement of goods and large vehicles typically leads to wider roads, fewer pedestrian crossings, and a lack of dedicated bike lanes, all of which deter active transportation.

In contrast, the single-family residential areas, which make up just over 19% of the land use, are more conducive to walking and biking due to lower traffic volumes and slower speeds. However, these residential zones are often disconnected from key destinations like commercial areas or public transit hubs, which limits the practicality of walking or biking as a primary mode of transport. The location of multifamily housing, which accounts for 3.45% of the land use but houses 41% of households, presents another challenge. These higher-density residential areas, often located on the border of ingle family residential and another land use, results in less infrastructure to support safe and convenient active transportation, further discouraging residents from walking or biking.

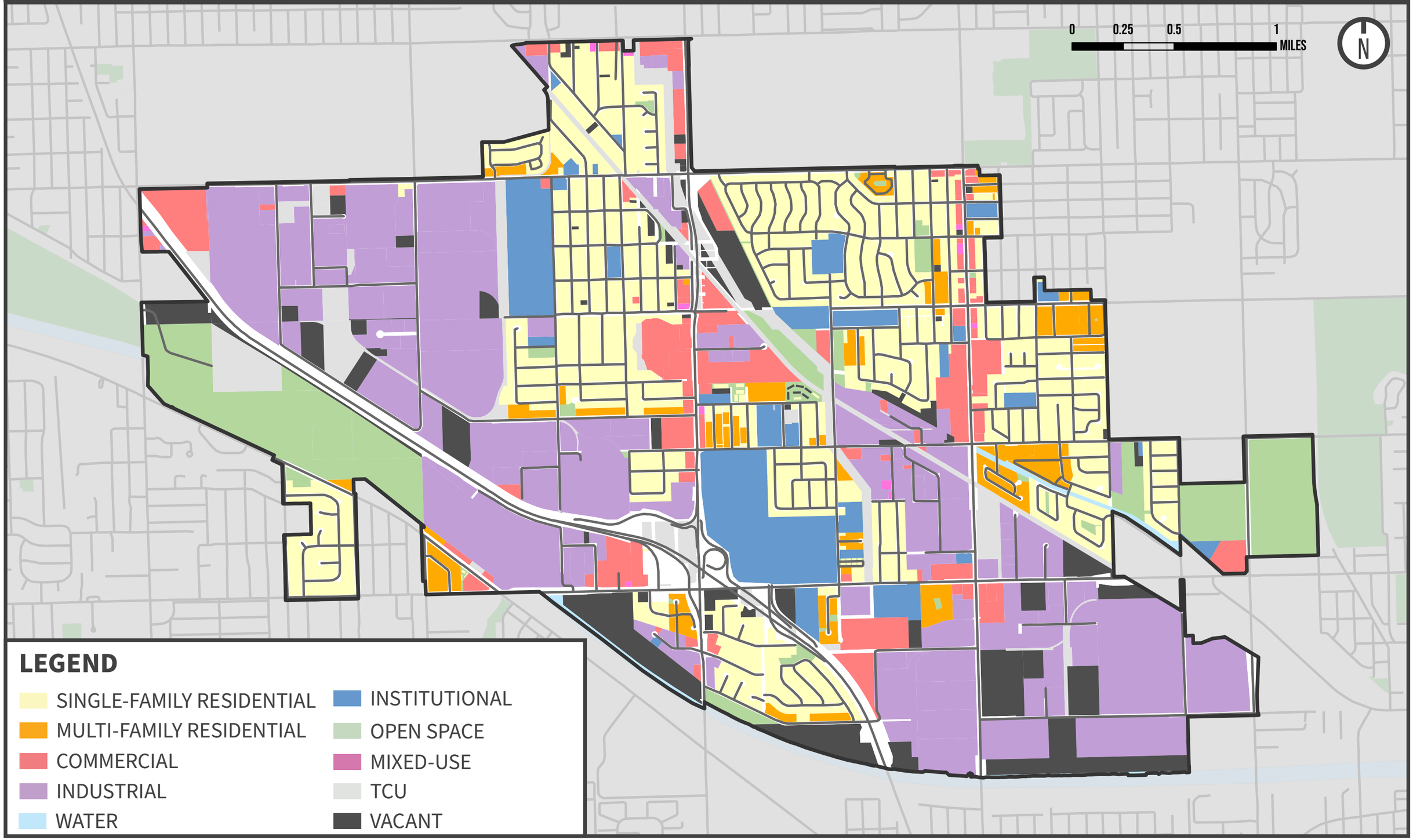
Commercial corridors along Pulaski and Cicero, dominated by businesses catering to car traffic, such as gas stations, fast food outlets, and big box stores, reinforce a car-centric culture. The design of these areas typically prioritizes vehicle access and parking over pedestrian and cyclist safety, making it difficult to integrate active transportation options. Wide roads, expansive parking lots, and few pedestrian crossings make these corridors less accessible and appealing for those on foot or bike.

Moreover, the presence of cemeteries, which occupy 4.2% of the land within Alsip and are often not open to through traffic, creates additional physical barriers that disrupt the continuity of pedestrian and cycling routes. The lack of throughfares in these areas forces pedestrians and bicyclists to take longer, less direct routes, which reduces the efficiency and appeal of active transportation. The challenge of navigating around these large, inaccessible spaces adds to the difficulties of creating a cohesive network of safe and convenient routes for non-motorized users.

Prioritizing connectivity and accessibility can foster a culture of active transportation. This can be achieved by integrating pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure into both new developments and existing industrial, residential, and commercial areas. For example, industrial zones could be designed with separated bike lanes and safe pedestrian crossings to ensure that residents can move safely between these areas and adjacent neighborhoods. In residential zones, particularly multifamily housing areas, infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and traffic calming measures could make active transportation a more viable and attractive option. Additionally, rethinking the design of commercial corridors to prioritize pedestrian access and safety over car traffic would help create a more balanced transportation environment that supports active modes of travel.

By addressing the disconnect between current land use patterns and the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists, Alsip can create a more integrated and sustainable transportation network. This would not only enhance safety and accessibility for all residents but also contribute to a healthier, more vibrant community by encouraging more people to choose walking and biking as part of their daily routines.

FIGURE 23: LAND USE



A.4 WALKABILITY INDEX

WALKABILITY INDEX

The EPA's Walkability Index is a comprehensive measure used to evaluate the walkability of a specific area, taking into account various factors that influence pedestrian accessibility and convenience. It considers elements such as population density, land use mix, and street connectivity. Population density is a key component, as areas with higher population densities typically support more amenities and services within walking distance, making them more walkable. This factor assesses the number of people living in a given area, reflecting the potential for pedestrian activity.

Land use mix is another critical aspect of the Walkability Index. This factor evaluates the diversity of land uses within a neighborhood, including residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational areas. A higher mix of land uses means that residents can access various destinations, such as grocery stores, schools, parks, and restaurants, without needing to rely on a car. The presence of diverse destinations within a short distance encourages walking as a convenient and practical mode of transportation.

FIGURE 24: LACK OF SIDEWALKS ON 119TH ST | Source: Epstein

Street connectivity is also a fundamental component in calculating the Walkability Index. This factor assesses the directness and availability of routes within a neighborhood, including the presence of intersections, crosswalks, and pedestrian pathways. Highly connected street networks typically feature shorter block lengths and more intersections, providing multiple route options for pedestrians and reducing the distance between destinations. Good street connectivity facilitates easier and safer pedestrian movement, enhancing overall walkability.

Additional factors that may be considered in the Walkability Index include the quality of pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks, lighting, and crosswalks, as well as safety from traffic and crime. The presence of well-maintained sidewalks, adequate lighting, and safe crossing points contributes to a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Furthermore, the perception of safety from traffic and crime can significantly impact walkability, as areas perceived as unsafe may discourage walking, regardless of other positive factors. Combining these elements, the Walkability Index provides a comprehensive assessment of how conducive a neighborhood is to walking, supporting urban planning and development aimed at enhancing pedestrian accessibility and quality of life.

The National Walkability Index scores block groups on a scale of 1-20 with four categories. The categories are Least Walkable (1-5.75), Below Average Walkable (5.76-10.50), Above Average Walkable (10.51-15.25), and Most Walkable (15.26-20).

CMAP WALKABILITY LAYER

CMAP maintains a separate, region-specific index called the Walkability Layer. This layer gives locations points based on home many amenities such as supermarkets, libraries, transit stops, and job locations. It also considers physical characteristices such as parcel size, tree canopy coverage, block size, and density. Finally, areas are penalized for having a high number of crashes and low population.

WALKABILITY IN ALSIP

According to the National Walkability Index, no block groups in Alsip are considered to be "least walkable." The block groups that are classified as "Below Average Walkable" are predominantly industrial areas. Only a few smaller industrial areas are within "Above Average Walkable" block groups. The Village's "Above Average Walkable" block groups tend to consolidate in one area. This area runs down the center of the village, mostly between Cicero and Pulaski as seen in Figure 24. The only block group that is considered to be "Most Walkable" in the Village lies east of Pulaski and north of 123rd.

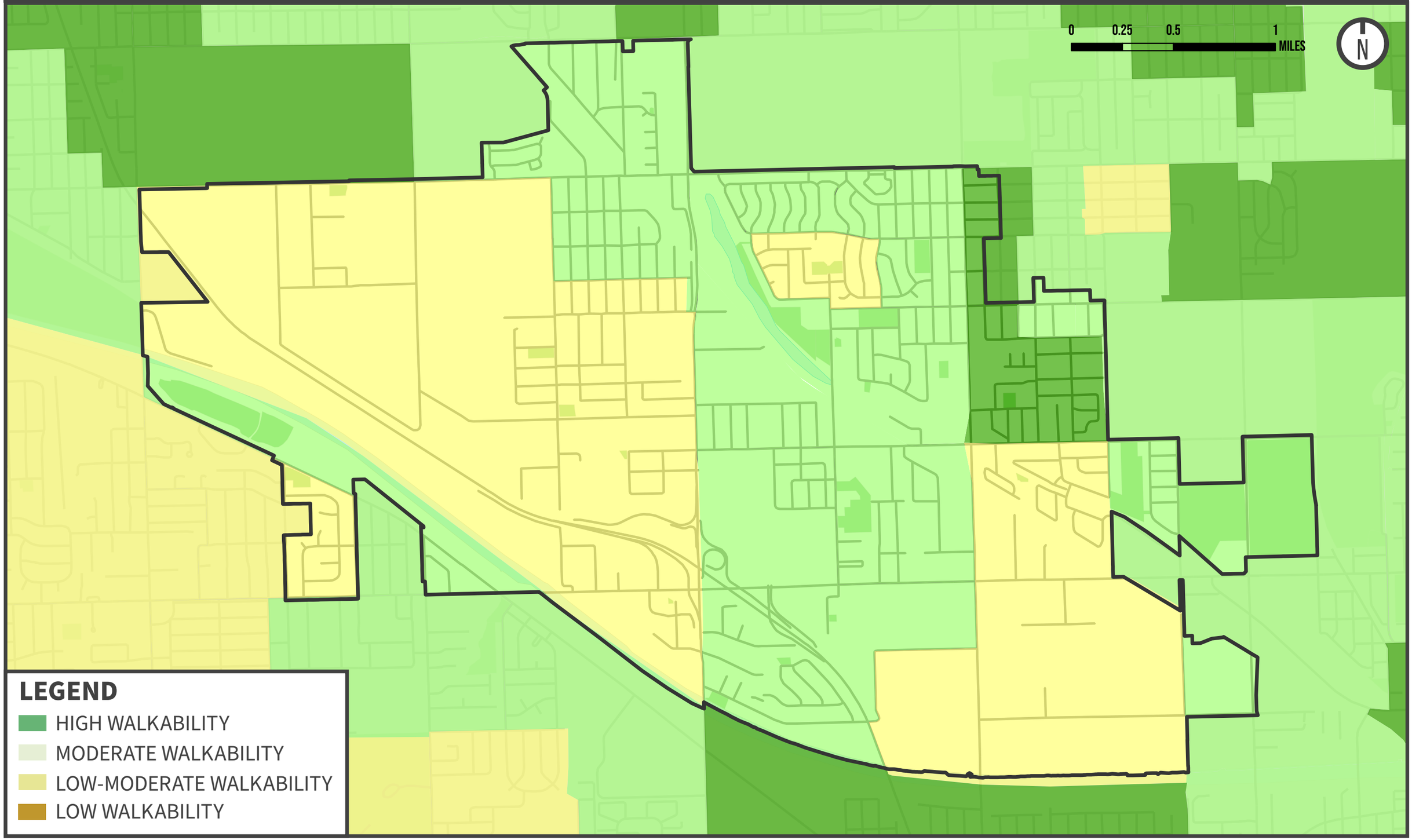
According to CMAP's walkability layer, Alsip has no high walkable areas as it relates to a person's work. 61.5% of the Village is considered to have moderate walkability and 38.5% has low walkability.

While these metrics provide good insight as to whether or not people can walk in these areas and how many amenities they can miss some of the smaller details that ultimately impact how frequently residents choose to walk. These missing details will be filled in through community engagement efforts.

TABLE 7: PEDESTRIAN ACCESS & WALKABILITY METRICS

Community	Walkability Index		
	High Walkability	Moderate Walkability	Low Walkability
Alsip	**0.0%**	**61.5%**	**38.5%**
Crestwood	0.0%	43.7%	56.3%
Palos Heights	0.0%	22.9%	77.1%
Worth	12.5%	78.6%	8.8%
Blue Island	45.6%	45.1%	9.3%
Robbins	0.0%	30.4%	69.6%
Merrionette Park	0.0%	100%	0.0%
Chicago (Mt. Greenwood)	90.1%	9.9%	0.0%
Cook County	67.8%	19.0%	13.3%

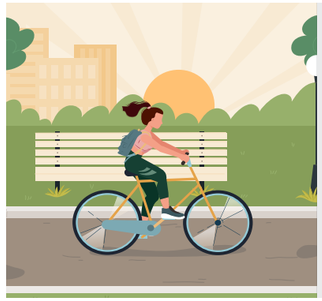
FIGURE 25: WALKABILITY



A.5 PREVIOUS PLANS & POLICIES

PAST APPROVED PLANS

Below is a summary of the previous plans involving the entirety of Alsip or specific corridors.



Alsip Park District Bike Plan

The Alsip Park District Bike Plan offers strategic recommendations to improve connectivity within the park district by developing a cohesive network of bike-friendly routes that link parks and recreational facilities. This plan is specifically focused on bicycle-related issues, outlining best practices and policies for effective implementation. It also highlights specific streets where bicycle infrastructure should be introduced, detailing the types of infrastructure needed, such as shared lanes or concrete-protected bike lanes.

Southwest Conference of Mayors Bike Plan

The Southwest Conference of Mayors is a Council of Mayors organization dedicated to regional collaboration and planning. It focuses on addressing common issues, such as transportation and infrastructure, to enhance the quality of life in the southwest suburban region.

This Plan is focused on Bicycles only. It identified 18 different potential corridors in the region and placed them into tiers of priorities. The Cal-Sag trail fell in tier one and 111th street was placed in tier two. It also encouraged policies and additional infrastructure that encourage bicycling around the region.

Alsip Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan is a long-term strategic document that outlines a community's vision, goals, and policies for guiding growth, development, and land use decisions over an extended period.

This plan included many strategies involving pedestrian and bicycle improvements. These strategies were less specific given the broader nature of the plan. It focused on policies that will support the specific ideas of existing plans and continued efforts to create regional connections in the region.

Cicero Avenue Corridor Plan

This plan focused on Cicero from 55th Street to 127th street. It included some specific recommendations at various intersections such as a grade separated crossing at 111th. It also includes regional perspective working to connect the Stoney Creek Trail and adding a path along 115th.

VILLAGE POLICIES

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

the Village of Alsip adopted a **Complete Streets policy** in 2019. Complete Streets policies are guidelines that ensure transportation infrastructure is designed and operated to enable safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders, regardless of age or ability.

The Village's Complete Streets Policy mandates the accommodation of all road users, including pedestrians, persons with disabilities, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers, to foster better connectivity within the town and enhance access to trails, places of employment, and businesses. This policy is incorporated into all public and private projects, including new constructions, reconstructions, and maintenance, ensuring the gradual integration of complete streets principles. Specific elements such as parkway trees, signage, ADA ramps, and street lighting are considered in project implementations, with exceptions to the policy requiring Village board approval and documented justification.

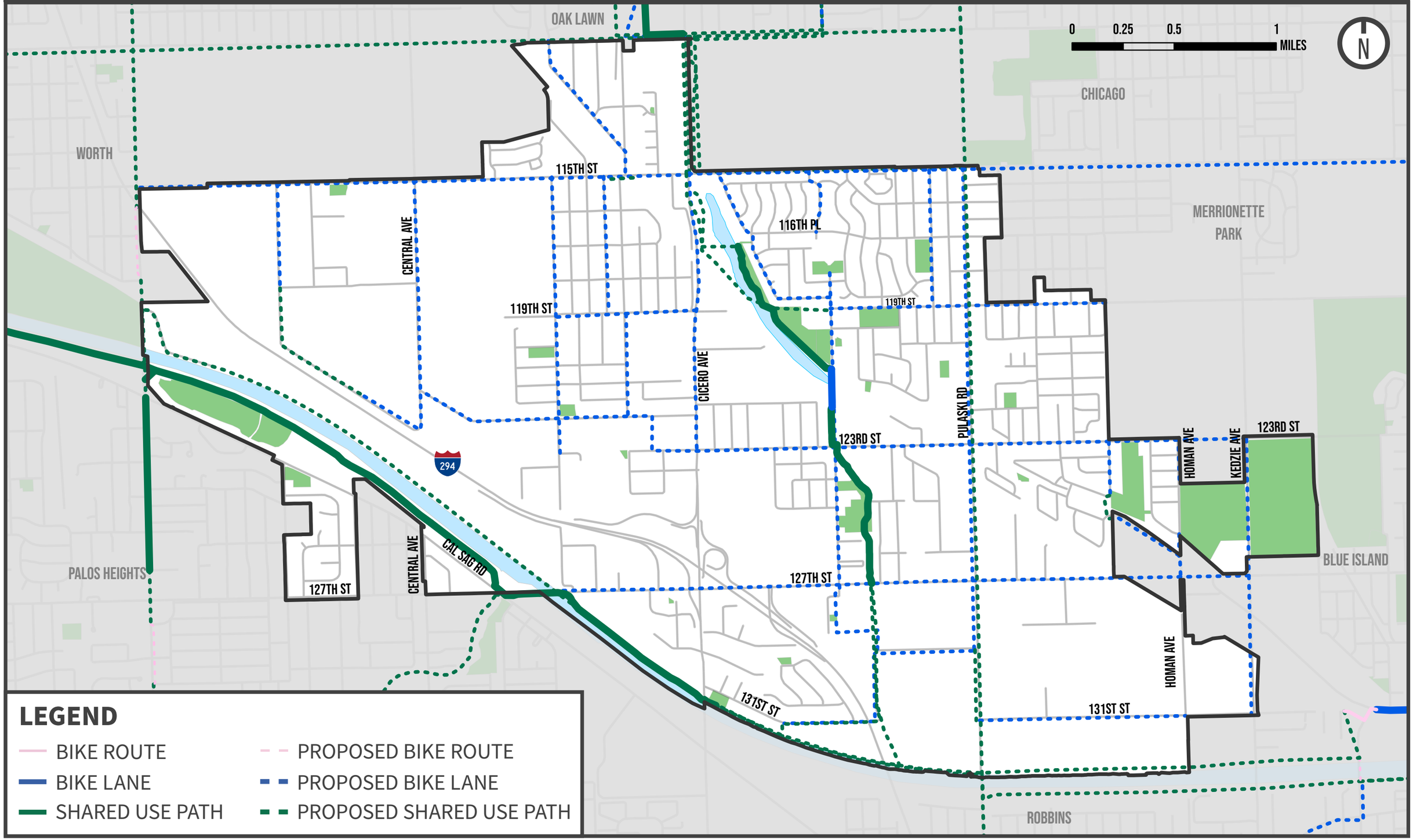
The policy also emphasizes the development of a connected network of complete streets that link essential community resources such as schools, parks, and business districts. It prioritizes safety, access, and mobility across various transportation modes and requires coordination with private entities and external agencies to align roadway improvements with comprehensive community standards. This collaborative approach aims to meet local and community needs effectively while fostering a robust sense of place.

Performance measures including the installation of sidewalks, traffic calming measures, and public lighting are set to evaluate the effectiveness of the Complete Streets Policy. These metrics are reviewed annually to assess progress and adjust strategies as necessary. Implementation responsibilities are designated to appointed Village officials and departments, who also undergo ongoing training in complete streets and active transportation policies to ensure a sustained and informed commitment to the policy's objectives.

BICYCLES ON SIDEWALKS

The Village has an ordinance that **bans the use of a bicycle on sidewalks** within business districts.

FIGURE 26: PLANNED & PROGRAMMED FACILITIES



B.1 BLOS METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The primary goal of the BLOS is to categorize roadways into four distinct levels of service for bicyclists. This classification aids in identifying routes that are conducive to cycling for all ages and skill levels, and those that require improvements to enhance safety. It serves as a guide for infrastructure development, aiming to reduce traffic-related stress for bicyclists and encourage cycling as a safe, viable mode of transportation.

FORMULA

The BLOS score is calculated using a formula that considers several critical factors impacting cyclist safety and comfort:

BLOS = MAX (0, 10 – Speed Penalty – Traffic Penalty + Road Width Benefit + Shoulder Width Benefit – Parking Penalty)

Formula Components:

- **Speed Penalty:** Applies a stress increment for speeds over 30 mph, acknowledging that higher speeds increase risk and stress for bicyclists.
- **Traffic Penalty:** Increases stress for AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) above 3,000 vehicles, as heavier traffic poses greater danger.
- **Road Width Benefit:** Awards points for roads narrower than 25 feet, which typically have slower traffic and are perceived as safer by bicyclists.
- **Shoulder Width Benefit:** Adds points for each foot of shoulder width beyond 2 feet, providing a buffer zone that enhances cyclist safety.
- **Parking Penalty:** Deducts points for parking on either side of the road, accounting for potential hazards like dooring and reduced effective lane width.

CATEGORIES

The BLOS score categorizes roadways into four levels of traffic stress:

- **Excellent:** Routes in this category are ideal for all bicyclists, including children, families, and those who are inexperienced. They typically feature dedicated bike lanes or paths, low traffic volumes, slow vehicle speeds, and strong safety measures, making the cycling experience safe and enjoyable.
- **Good:** These routes are suitable for the majority of adult bicyclists. They may have some vehicle traffic but include adequate bike infrastructure, such as bike lanes or wide shoulders, and moderate traffic speeds. Most bicyclists will find these routes comfortable and manageable.
- **Fair:** Routes in this category are more appropriate for confident adult bicyclists who are comfortable with some challenges. These routes may involve riding alongside moderate traffic with limited bike infrastructure, requiring more vigilance and skill to navigate safely.
- **Poor:** These routes are only advisable for experienced bicyclists who are accustomed to navigating heavy traffic, higher vehicle speeds, and minimal bike infrastructure. They present significant challenges and are stressful for less experienced riders.
- **Very Poor:** This category represents routes with the highest level of risk and difficulty. They often lack any bike infrastructure and feature heavy, fast-moving traffic, making them generally unsafe for cycling. These routes are only suitable for the most experienced and confident bicyclists.

B.2 ILTS METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The main goal of the Intersection LTS is to classify intersections into distinct stress levels, from low stress that is suitable for all bicyclists, including children and inexperienced riders, to high stress that only the most experienced should navigate. This classification assists in pinpointing critical areas where interventions can make cycling safer and more accessible, thereby promoting cycling as a safe and practical mode of transportation across urban environments.

FORMULA

The Intersection LTS is calculated using a formula that incorporates various elements that influence how stressful an intersection is for bicyclists:

LTS = Base Score – Traffic Control Adjustment + Traffic Volume Adjustment – Crossing Distance Adjustment + Visibility Adjustment

Formula Components:

- **Base Score:** A starting point that reflects an average intersection's level of stress. Traffic Control Adjustment: Modifies the score based on the type of traffic control present (e.g., traffic lights, stop signs, roundabouts), with more predictable, cyclist-friendly controls contributing to a lower stress score.
- **Traffic Volume Adjustment:** Increases stress for higher traffic volumes, as more vehicles can make intersections more hazardous for bicyclists.
- **Crossing Distance Adjustment:** Deducts points for wider intersections, as longer crossing distances increase exposure to traffic and risk.
- **Visibility Adjustment:** Adds points for good visibility at intersections, decreasing stress when bicyclists and drivers can easily see each other.

CATEGORIES

The LTS scores classify intersections into four levels of traffic stress:

- **LTS 1 - Low Stress:** Represents intersections that pose minimal stress, suitable for bicyclists of all skill levels, including children.
- **LTS 2 - Moderate Stress:** Appropriate for most adult bicyclists, these intersections may have more complex layouts or higher traffic volumes but still maintain manageable stress levels.
- **LTS 3 - High Stress:** Suitable for experienced adult bicyclists who are comfortable navigating complex traffic situations and busier intersections.
- **LTS 4 - Very High Stress:** Advised only for very experienced bicyclists, these intersections typically involve multiple traffic lanes, high vehicle speeds, or poor visibility.