

August 12, 2013

Developer Panel Summary Report

Blue Island, IL

Prepared by:



Introduction

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has invested over \$3 million of its own funds during the past 13 years to complete approximately 75 transit-oriented development (TOD) planning studies through the RTA's Community Planning funding program. This program funds TOD planning studies that promote walkable, mixed-income, mixed-use development co-located and/or well-connected to retail and business uses in transit station areas while also increasing overall access to transit.

While there are many success stories from communities that have implemented their plans, several communities have encountered obstacles and barriers to implementing recommendations found in their completed TOD planning studies. The RTA would like to further invest in the communities we have worked with previously by offering an opportunity to receive additional technical assistance and support towards implementing their plans. In 2011, the RTA launched a new program targeting those communities that have completed a TOD planning study through the RTA Community Planning Program and have illustrated a need for technical assistance and support with implementation. The projects eligible as part of the RTA's TOD implementation technical assistance efforts is now a part of the RTA's Community Planning Program. From the RTA's perspective, pursuing and achieving implementation of these plans can result in more efficient transit operations, improved access to transit services and a potential for increased ridership for all three of our Service Boards (Metra, Pace and CTA). Implementation efforts can also increase private investment in TOD areas while promoting the principles of sustainability and livability.

As part of these increased efforts, the RTA is working with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in Chicago to facilitate discussions between individual communities and development experts to shed light on the future of TODs and how this relates to the changing market and economy.

Developer Panel Participants

Tony Manno, RTA

Cindy McSherry, ULI Chicago

Janice Morrissy, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA)

Lakeshia Wright, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA)

Greg Terwilliger, McShane Construction Company

Shawn Temple, Weston Solutions

Sarah Wick, Related Midwest

Art Zwemke, Robert Arthur Land Company

City of Blue Island Participants

Jason Berry, Community Development Special Projects Manager

Nicholas Crite, Planning Director

Mark Miller, Project Coordinator

Background Information

In 2009, the RTA awarded funding to the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) to study the communities within the SSMMA service area located along the Metra Electric Line, Rock Island Line, Southwest Service and the proposed SouthEast Service Line. This study created station area and developer typologies for each of the stations as well as development and design guidelines. The 119th Street Station was included in this typology study and is one of five station areas within the City of Blue Island. The area to the west of the station consists of single-family homes with a few multi-family units along Vincennes Avenue and 119th Street. A majority of the area to the east of the tracks is occupied by vacant industrial buildings and unimproved industrial parcels that are used for outdoor storage and processing.

The site sits on the border between the City of Chicago and Blue Island, creating an opportunity for the site to be a gateway from Chicago to Blue Island. The City currently has control over the parcels represented in the map.

The parcels under discussion are currently used for the following purposes (*See the **Study Area map** below for reference to specific parcels*):

- Operating landscape supply business along 119th St. (Parcel I)
- Storage yard for underground pipe company (Parcel B)
- Large stockpile of gravel material (Parcels C & D)
- Closed cement plant (Parcel H)
- Closed landfill (Parcels A, F, E, & G)
- Ad hoc soccer field (Parcel A)

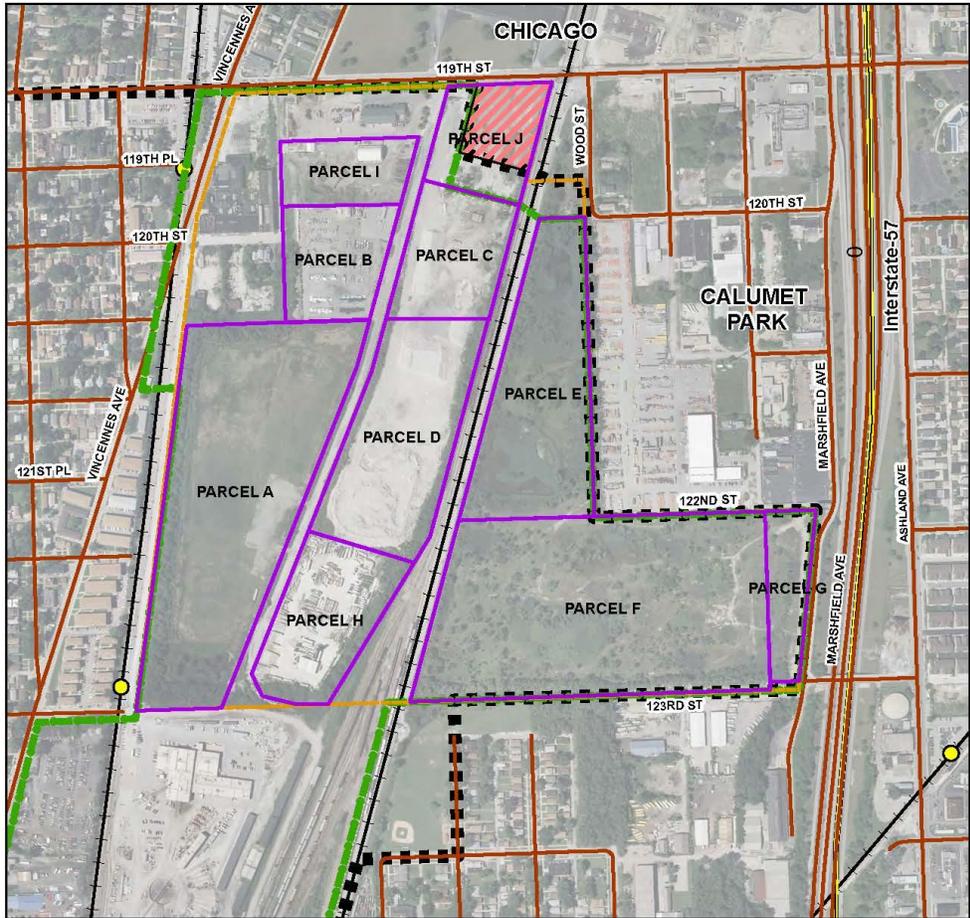
There are additional site not represented in the map that lie just to the west of Parcels I & B and just to the north of Parcel I. These properties are not currently owned by the City of Blue Island and contain unsightly and unsafe properties.

In 2010, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) was awarded a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Challenge Grant to seed the Southland Community Development Loan Fund (Loan Fund). SSMMA partnered with Enterprise Community Partners and the Chicago Community Loan Fund to manage the Loan Fund. The Loan Fund is currently a \$6 million fund offering financing for predevelopment and acquisition strategies for transit-oriented development (TOD) in the Southland region. The Fund supports the development of mixed-income, multifamily rental housing as well as mixed-use developments that combine housing and retail. All project sites must be located within one-half mile of quality transit services, which includes Metra stations and major fixed-route bus transit.

In recent years, new retail development containing big box retailers Target, Jewel-Osco, and Petco have been constructed at the NWC corner of 119th Avenue and Marshfield Avenue (Marshfield Plaza), east and north of the 119th Street Station along the southern edge of the City of Chicago.

The City of Blue Island has a rare opportunity to create two distinct new developments, one on the parcel of land immediately east of the 119th Street Station that has potential for commercial, residential and recreational uses and the other that is adjacent to a Calumet Park business park that may have commercial and industrial development potential.

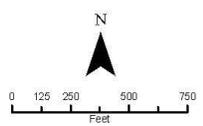
Study Area



NE Mixed-Use Commercial Park

119th and Vincennes
Blue Island IL

- NE District Study Area
- TIF 4 Boundary
- Blue Island: City Limits
- METRA Stations in City of Blue Island
- Original Parcels by PIN #
- Proposed Parcel Division per Redevelopment (mostly City-owned)
- Parcel in NE District Redevelopment Area: Part of City of Chicago



MAP 1: Parcel Map with Original PIN Boundaries

Map prepared by:
City of Blue Island
Community Development Department
03/21/2010

Summary of Key Recommendations from Discussion

Short-Term

- City should complete the acquisition of vacant buildings at the SEC of 119th Street and Vincennes and to control of the entire site 92 +/- acre area (Parcels A, B, I);
- Demolish vacant buildings and clean-up site;
- Beautify and maintain the SEC of 119th and Vincennes and consider a “pop-up” Farmers Market to draw attention to the area and begin to create a gateway into Blue Island;
- Review all existing ground leases on the larger collective site and work with the lessees to adjust expiration dates so all leases expire around the same time. This will allow the City to have more control over the future development of the area;
- Create a Development Plan for the West and East Parcels;
- Suggest that Christy Weber Landscaping relocate to the SE portion of the site east of the railroad tracks;
- Continue to encourage usage of vacant land for soccer and other recreational activities and create more visibility to the surrounding area.

Long-Term

- Relocate all industrial uses to the east of the Rock Island District (RID) tracks to create an industrial park adjacent to I-57;
- Encourage industrial uses with an outside storage component to minimize building of structures on top of the old landfill area;
- Attract a higher-visibility retail business to **Parcel G** by taking advantage of the interstate frontage and easy access off Marshfield Avenue;
- Explore attracting a local community grocery store use on the SEC of 119th & Vincennes and senior housing and/or other innovative multi-family residential options on the subject site west of the RID tracks and north of the landfill footprint;
- Explore ways to incorporate a commuter waiting area into future development immediately adjacent (and east) of the railroad tracks at the 119th Street Station.