

2019/2020 Local Technical Assistance and Community Planning Programs

Application Number: 75

Project Title: University Park TOD Plan

Applicant: Village of University Park



Project Description:

The 1,100 stall University Park Metra Station is centrally located within University Park, with ample opportunity for Transit-Oriented (TOD) development in the area. The University Park Metra Station is the southernmost station on the Metra Electric line and an important collector for commuters from south suburban communities in Cook County and Will County, as well as students who commute to Governors State University. However, the full range of the station's community development benefits have gone unrealized due to untapped development potential and station access limitations. To address these challenges, the Village is seeking assistance through the CMAP Local Technical Assistance and RTA Community Planning programs to develop a multifaceted TOD Plan for the University Park Metra Station Area. This project would leverage an awarded \$2.5 million federal investment in station and parking upgrades by exploring related development and access opportunities.

The Village is requesting the technical assistance funding to develop an implementable TOD Plan for the project area, which includes three elements:

- 1) TOD Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update;
- 2) Local Road Safety Plan; and
- 3) Last Mile Mobility Strategy.

First, the Village aims to update and refine the high-level land use plan for the area that was developed through the Village's 2014 Comprehensive Plan (Plan), which calls for the level of subarea analysis proposed herein. The Plan loosely calls for a range of mixed-use, commercial, recreation, townhomes, single family, and conservation and open space land use. The Village would like to refine this land use plan and develop a range of products that will support new development within the TOD area that aligns with CMAP's ON TO 2050 plan, Invest in Transit, and the Village's forthcoming Planning Priorities Report. Outputs would include: a data- and market analysis-driven land use plan with renderings that can be used to attract developer interest. The Village is also interested in implementing a ULI Developer Panel to support this effort.

Second, the Village will develop a local road safety strategy that will, complementing nearby crossing safety improvements currently underway. The intersection of Governors Highway and University Parkway (known locally as Stuenkel Road) is a known high-crash corridor. The Village is currently coordinating with IDOT, ICC, CN, and Metra to implement short-term and long-term safety enhancements at this crossing. We would like to integrate these projects into a local road safety plan that not only addresses current safety concerns, but also considers future development and access requirements (e.g., increased motorist traffic, increased pedestrian traffic, introduction of micromobility vehicles).

Third, the Village would like to develop last mile mobility strategies that will improve access between the Metra station and other points of interest within the community. Strategies should be developed for the pedestrian, transit, motorist, and shared-mobility modes of travel and connect transit riders to employment centers (e.g., I-57 Industrial Area; Governors State University; Town Center); schools, residential areas, and parks.

This TOD Plan will put the Village on a path towards sustainable, resilient, and equitable development within the TOD area.

Project Location: The project location is the area surrounding the University Park Metra Station. Multimodal connections to other points of interest within University Park, including Governors State University, industrial development to the west, as well surrounding communities will also be considered as part of this effort. A 0.5-mile radius will be used as a baseline geography for the study area.