

CHAPTER 8

TRANSPORTATION

The Village's transportation system includes a surface road network, commuter rail, freight rail, and a network of bikeways and sidewalks. Three major highways, which carry significant local and through traffic, run through the heart of the Village, including Hough Street (Route 59), Main Street (Lake-Cook Road); and Northwest Highway (Route 14). While the Barrington Metra station provides a critical transportation option for commuters, it also brings significant traffic to the Village Center during morning and evening rush hours. The recent acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway by Canadian National presents new transportation obstacles for the Village. As traffic congestion and energy costs increase, alternate transportation options will become increasingly important in the Village.

A variety of regional entities have significant control over transportation activities in Barrington, such as IDOT, Metra, Union Pacific, Canadian National, Lake County, and Cook County. The Village also works with many other planning agencies such as BACOG, the Northwest Municipal Conference, and the Chicago Area Metropolitan Planning Agency to address regional transportation issues. Increased interagency cooperation will be key to successful transportation planning in Barrington.

The following objectives and specific policies regarding mass transit, freight, vehicular traffic, signalization, the local street system, bikeways, pedestrian enhancements, and Village Center needs are established to guide future actions:

1. New developments with a high concentration of residents and/or employees should be located near existing mass transit facilities or should provide access to mass transit facilities.
2. The Village should continue to work with the railroads to provide grade separated crossings for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, where appropriate.
3. The Village should establish and maintain quiet zones along the railroads. To further reduce the sound impact of the railroads, the Village should explore sound buffers between residential neighborhoods and railroad tracks.
4. Hough Street and Main Street should not be widened.
5. The Village should improve traffic safety and traffic flow wherever possible.
6. Traffic should be kept at the posted speed limit through residential neighborhoods by continued traffic law enforcement in problem areas.
7. The Village should continue to maintain and improve streets in a timely and efficient manner.
8. All new developments should be served by publicly dedicated roadways.
9. A village-wide bikeway system should be enhanced to connect key Village destinations and provide links to regional bikeways. New developments should be encouraged to install new bicycle facilities and to connect to the existing bikeway network.
10. A continuous network of sidewalks throughout the Village, connecting commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and schools, parks and other institutional uses, should be developed to increase pedestrian movement. New developments should be encouraged to install new sidewalks and to connect to the existing sidewalk network.
11. Pedestrian right-of-way crossings should be clearly indicated and strictly enforced at intersections throughout the village, especially at school crossings and at high traffic areas in the Village Center. Where applicable, the Village should work with IDOT to develop improved pedestrian crossings.
12. A long-term Village Center parking plan should be continually updated to meet the needs of shoppers, employees, commuters and residents.

13. Public parking lots should be well marked, accessible, attractive and safe. Improved signage should be provided at underutilized public parking lots.

MASS TRANSIT

The Barrington Metra Union Pacific Northwest Line station is a critical asset to the Barrington area. Located in the heart of the Village, Metra rail provides a reliable alternative to automobile dependence for commuting to Chicago. Not only does it serve the residents of the Village, it serves many commuters from the BACOG area and beyond. Many residents are attracted to the Village because of its access to mass transit. Moreover, the use of the Barrington Metra station reduces regional traffic congestion and air pollution. The continued provision and expansion of commuter rail services along the Union Pacific railway is important to the future of the Village. Furthermore, the Village should work toward enhanced access and commuter parking alternatives, such as a parking deck.

To further reduce commuter vehicle traffic, the Village of Barrington also supports shuttle bus service. It is recommended that Pace Suburban Bus establish either contracted or direct services to a broader coverage area, especially to Tower Lakes, Lake Barrington Shores, Lake Zurich, Deer Park and South Barrington, to provide direct access to the Barrington Metra station. The Village should continue to support the agreements between the townships and Pace, which provide for affordable public transportation for the senior citizen population, such as the Dial-A-Ride program and other similar programs. New and existing developments that are sited outside the Village Center with high concentrations of employees or residents are encouraged to provide bus shuttle access to the Metra station.

FREIGHT

On December 24, 2008, the U.S. Surface Transportation Board (STB) approved the Canadian National Railway's (CN) purchase of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company (EJ&E). In CN's proposal to purchase the EJ&E, the company indicated freight trains through Barrington would increase from about five per day to as many as twenty-six per day. The Village has many concerns with the EJ&E's acquisition by CN, including its local impacts on public safety, traffic congestion, the environment, and the economy. As such, the Village has requested the STB and CN address these concerns. One solution to such concerns is the proposed Route 14 underpass of the CN rail line. A grade separation at the CN/EJ&E and Union Pacific tracks, which would include grade separation at Hough Street and Main Street, is also recommended. The Village should continue to seek funding for such mitigation efforts.

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

The volume of traffic, particularly on Main and Hough Streets, has been a major concern of Village residents for many years. A considerable amount of this traffic is regional in nature and therefore, significant improvements can only be achieved through regional approaches. To help alleviate the traffic problem on Hough Street, the Village of Barrington recommends that the Illinois Department of Transportation continue with plans for the northerly extension of Illinois Route 53 beyond Lake-Cook Road.

Even with the completion of regional roadways, a heavy concentration of traffic will continue, due to growth in the immediate area and the existing barriers to movement. Movement must be accommodated efficiently to serve existing businesses and to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian accessibility for Barrington area residents. Alternate traffic solutions, including selected intersection and roadway improvements and routes, should be explored and studied. Funding should be sought for intersection improvements at the following three locations:

1. Northwest Highway and Hart Road
2. Main Street and Eastern Avenue

3. Hough Street and Hillside Avenue

The Village should ensure proper improvement and development of streets within existing and proposed subdivisions, including sidewalks, street trees, curbing and drainage.

TRAFFIC SIGNALIZATION

Future signalization may be warranted where two arterial streets intersect or where a collector street intersects with an arterial street. Signalized or controlled intersections should be considered when areas are developed or redeveloped. Existing and future signalization should continue to utilize the OPTICOM or comparable traffic pre-emption system for ease of ambulance and fire trucks in responding to emergencies. In addition, traffic signalization is recommended for a location along South Northwest Highway that would lead directly to the commuter lot.

COMPOSITION OF THE LOCAL STREET SYSTEM

To improve local traffic, the following street system improvements are recommended:

Lake Zurich Road

As part of the Citizens Park redevelopment, Lake Zurich Road has been reconfigured to allow for an improved intersection with Route 14. There has been some consideration of the extension of Lake Zurich Road to the signal at Berry Road. Should a grade separation occur at Route 14 and the CN/EJ&E tracks, Lake Zurich Road may need to be reconfigured again.

U.S. Route 14 (Northwest Highway)

Several improvements to Route 14 may be considered. A pedestrian pathway and green space buffer should be encouraged along this route, as well as the provision of pedestrian connections. The burying of utilities and appropriate street tree installation should also be encouraged. In order to facilitate redevelopment opportunities along West Northwest Highway, additional signalized intersections should be considered.

Route 14 is a critical thoroughfare for the entire Barrington area. It is the roadway with the largest traffic volume in the Village. Furthermore, Route 14 is the most direct route to Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital and the Barrington Public Safety Facility. The proposed increase of CN freight traffic along the rail line will greatly affect traffic flow along Route 14 and emergency response times. As such, the Village strongly recommends that the CN install a Route 14 underpass to mitigate these anticipated problems.

Illinois Route 59 (Hough Street/Barrington Road)

It is strongly recommended that the current width of Route 59 be maintained within the Village of Barrington. If Hough Street were to be widened, the character of the Village would be severely degraded due to the destruction of homes, businesses, and trees along the route. Moreover, the widening of Route 59 would create barriers for pedestrians and would greatly decrease the walkability of the Village. In order to improve traffic along Route 59, strategies should be focused on reducing road-railroad conflict and improving traffic flow at local and regional intersections.

Lions Drive

Through two recent development projects, the Village has secured future access opportunities via Lions Drive. First, through an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Barrington Park District, the Village has acquired control of the east-west and north-south portions of Lions Drive. However, at this time, the Park District is licensed by the Village to allow for Langendorf Park access and parking improvements in

Lions Drive. Second, a recent amendment to the Shops at Flint Creek planned development allows for possible future vehicular and pedestrian access north across the creek to Lions Drive.

Applebee Street

To help improve accessibility to the Village Center for local residents, do not rule out, when appropriate, extending Applebee Street from Main Street to Station Street, with vehicular impacts on the residential neighborhoods mitigated.

To promote commercial enhancement and connectivity within the B-R Mixed Business Residential District, the Village should consider extending Applebee Street westward to Grant Street.

BIKEWAYS

An update to the 1997 Barrington Bikeway Study has been completed and is attached as Addendum: Bikeways, to the Comprehensive Plan. The Bikeways Addendum and map (see Figure 7, Bikeways Planning Map) has been drafted to meet the needs of the Village, including the following targeted groups: children/students, families/general public, commuters, and cycling enthusiasts. The following are the goals of the Bikeway Plan:

1. Provide for safe and continuous bicycle connectivity within the Village, especially to the Village Center, between neighborhoods, and to all Village “assets,” such as the library, schools, parks, Metra station, etc.
2. Provide for connectivity to bikeway systems in neighboring communities.
3. Encourage bicycling activity within the Village among residents and non-residents.

PEDESTRIAN ENHANCEMENT

In both commercial and residential areas, pedestrian accessibility and safety conditions need improvement. As of July 22, 2010, drivers in Illinois are now required to stop, not just yield, for pedestrians in the crosswalk. The Village should work on a campaign to educate the public of this new law while also improving pedestrian crossings so that they are more visible to drivers. In particular, the Village should work with IDOT to develop improved pedestrian crossings along Hough Street and Main Street. Safe and accessible pedestrian ways, which include wide sidewalks, curb extensions, well-marked crosswalks (striped, colored, and ADA compliant), and signage, should be implemented throughout the Village. To further encourage pedestrian activity in the Village Center, the Village should explore various options for pedestrian street crossing enhancements, including overpasses, underpasses, and at-grade crossings.

The Village has created a sidewalk plan (see Figure 8, Master Sidewalk Plan) for the entire Village, which encourages pedestrian linkages throughout. The Master Sidewalk Plan indicates existing and future sidewalk locations. The Village also has a more detailed sidewalk plan that is updated regularly. This detailed plan sets priorities for sidewalk installations and identifies corridors for developer installation or contribution.

VILLAGE CENTER TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

The Village Center is a unique part of Barrington and has special needs with respect to transportation. These special needs focus primarily on parking facilities and pedestrian/bicycle circulation. The key objectives related to Village Center transportation needs are outlined below.

1. Pursue highly centralized, convenient, and visible public parking facilities, including structure parking, to help maximize the potential of the Village Center.
2. Encourage and extend the current system of pedestrian and bicycle routes to effectively connect the

Village Center and Metra station to surrounding neighborhoods.

3. Explore options for pedestrian enhancements in the Village Center.
4. Retrofit existing public parking facilities with bicycle parking and encourage business and property owners to develop bicycle parking as redevelopment occurs.